The Gaza Conflict 2013 and Ideologies of Israeli and Palestinian Media: A Critical Discourse Analysis

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Abstract:

In this research, I investigated the media coverage of two Israeli and two Palestinian media sources through the escalation of violence in Gaza in the period 20-25 December, 2013. The main purpose behind this research was to reveal how ideologies affect media articles in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (IPC). This study compares the language use between the Israeli and Palestinian media. It also compares the language use between Israeli left wing and right wing media. In addition to the comparison in the language use between Palestinian Hamas owned media and independent media.

I investigated how ideology influenced media discourse using qualitative research and by applying critical discourse analysis. The main methods of CDA used in the analysis were Discourse Historical Approach, argumentation strategies and the role of social actors. CDA’s purpose in my research was to expose how language use in the analyzed media texts manipulated power and ideology. The research consisted of 31 press articles from four media outlets. Two from local Israeli online newspapers, Haaretz and The Jerusalem Post (JP). Two from local Palestinian online news agencies, Maan News Agency (Maan) and Al Ray.

The analysis of the corpora revealed how media framed social actors to create distance between the two sides of the conflict. The Hamas owned media, Al Ray, portrayed the Israeli characters in a different way than the independent owned media, Maan. This is similar to the left wing media, Haaretz, which framed the Palestinians differently than the right wing media, JP. The analysis showed the media discourse in times of conflict and examined their potential role. The study answered questions regarding the approaches used by media in constructing in groups and out groups. The analysis also revealed differences within the reporting of the Israeli and Palestinian media. However, the research raised more questions that are relevant for further research within the field of media and ideology.
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1. Introduction:

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict (IPC) is not like any other international struggle. It is a conflict over land, between two parallel but never converging Semitic nations. It is a complicated struggle over wealth and resources, which is related to the balance of international and regional powers. The IPC represents the global conflict between East and West and its interactions. For almost a hundred years, this conflict has been a dominant issue in local and international media. The essence of this conflict appeared after the creation of the State of Israel in 1948 in the Middle East. The creation of Israel over the Palestinian lands led to the first Arab-Israeli confrontation in 1948. Since then, many wars have been fought chiefly among them is the six days war of 1967. The war culminated in the Israeli occupation of the Sinai Peninsula, the West Bank including East Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip, and the Golan Heights. For a detailed overview on the IPC see Context Chapter.

The Gaza–Israel conflict, which is a part of the IPC, is taking place in the region of the Gaza Strip and southern Israel since 2006. The main parties involved in this conflict are Israel and Hamas. The cycle of violence escalated in the Gaza Strip following the winning of Hamas in the Parliamentary elections in 2006. The conflict worsened as a result of the Israeli blockade on Gaza and Hamas rocket attacks. This was further compounded with the split of the Palestinian Authority to Fatah government in the West Bank and the Hamas Government in the Gaza Strip. According to United Nations – OCHA- annual report on protection of civilians (2014), the Israeli army killed 2,350 Palestinians and injured 7,700 between the years of 2007-2014. About two thirds of the casualties were killed during the “Cast Lead” offensive in 2008 on Gaza. During the same period, 37 Israelis have been killed and 380 injured by the rocket attacks launched from Gaza.

In November, 2012, Israel launched a massive attack of bombarding Gaza for eight days. As a consequence, Hamas fired several rockets targeting a number of cities in southern Israel. The eight day war ended in a cease fire agreement, which was sponsored by the then Egyptian president Mohamad Mubarak. However, the continuous Israeli attacks on Gaza and Hamas ineffective counter attack against Israel made the agreement too weak to function. The cycle of
violence and Israeli attacks and confrontation with the Muslim political parties of December 2013 is an example in point.

In the last two decades, several peace treaties have been signed between Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) to normalize relations between the two sides. The first peace treaty was the Oslo Accord of 1993. However, the peace treaties were never totally accepted by either Palestinians or Israelis. The majority of Palestinians could not see real peace with Israel without a permanent, fair and just settlement of the Palestinian refugee problem. In addition to the establishment of a sovereign and independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital (Bazzi, 2009).

Similarly, the majority of Israelis did not accept settlement with the Palestinians unless the later guaranteed the Israel security by stopping all forms of armed resistance (Gans, 2008). Thus, the IPC has continued to engendered hostility and antagonism between the two conflicting parties.

The conflict articulated common collective beliefs of the two societies through summits, speeches, religious sermons, educational and cultural practices. However, the conflict was expressed mostly in the mass media. The representations and expressions of this struggle by media apparatuses formed the frameworks of ideological meaning about the IPC (Bazzi, 2009, p. 3). The ideological and political components expressed in media language by both sides created the representation of the conflict. In this research, I did not examine who was right or wrong. I only focused on how beliefs of the two sides were producing meanings through media apparatus. More specifically, I analyzed media discourse in times of conflict.

1.1 Sampling of the research:

The research was conducted on 31 press articles from four media outlets. Two from local Israeli online newspapers, Haaretz and Jerusalem Post (JP), and two from local Palestinian online news agencies, Maan News Agency (Maan) and Al Ray. The articles were gathered throughout the period 20th-25th of December 2013. I collected the articles online using keywords as: Gaza, fire, Hamas, escalation and rockets. I ended up with seven articles from Al Ray ten articles from Maan, six articles from Haaretz and eight articles from JP. It is important to note that the starting
date of my research, December, 20\textsuperscript{th} marks the beginning of the recent escalation of violence in Gaza. The last date of my research, 25\textsuperscript{th} of December marks the peak of violent events between the two sides.

\textbf{1.2 Research Problem:}

I investigated the media coverage of two Israeli and two Palestinian media sources through the escalation of violence in Gaza during the period of 20-25 December, 2013. The motive behind this research came along after I read that some Palestinian and Israeli media editors claimed that their articles are firmly credible and objective with unbiased content (Jamal, 2000). That was why I decided to analyze content of media articles using critical discourse analysis (CDA). CDA is the only methodology used in this study as it analyzes how language gain power by the use which media apparatuses makes of it (Bazzi, 2009, p. 19). Moreover, CDA as explained by Wodak (2009) investigates critically social inequality as it is expressed and legitimized by language use. The purpose of applying CDA in my research was to expose how language use in the analyzed media texts manipulated power and ideology. CDA is the right method to analyze the Israeli Palestinian media discourse in times of crises and to identify the hegemonic instinct behind the journalistic text in both sides. In order to explain the way both sides impose hegemonic order to filter information and legitimize their actions. Also as a Palestinian myself, I wanted to criticize the reporting approaches in the Israeli and Palestinian news. I wanted to question issues of credibility and representations of truth, and to explore how the language of media is used as a weapon in promoting wars and hatred.

\textbf{1.3 Research Purpose and Questions:}

The main purpose of this research is to reveal how ideology affected media articles in the IPC. Therefore, I studied the dominant ideologies for both sides and analyzed the discourse in the articles and investigated how ideology shaped the language use. The study has more than one objective that helped in achieving the main purpose. First objective is to investigate the difference- if any- in language use in the Hamas owned media and Palestinian independent media, and the Israeli right and left wing media. The second objective is to give exclusivity to
this research. Given that it is the first study to conduct CDA on the media contents of two Israeli and two Palestinian news sources to cross compare the language used in the four media articles. The third objective is to try study the role of local media in the IPC. The forth objective is to study the news language of the Hamas owned media agency. Since it was launched recently, I wanted to investigate how Hamas’s news agency reflected their latest political stand towards Israel.

From general to particular, the central questions of this study include:

1. Does the language use in the articles prove the use of war reporting language?
2. What are the main differences in language use between the four media sources?
3. How social actors are represented in discourse of the analyzed media sources?
4. How language use in the articles constructed in groups and out groups?
5. How does language use in the articles label social actors more or less positively or negatively?
6. What are the discursive strategies used in the articles to legitimize the actions of in groups and criticize the actions of out groups?
7. How do journalists and editors express involvement in the articles?

1.4 Research Significance:

The importance of this research was to develop the meaning of media discourse and ideology in order to form relations of power towards “The Other”. The research discussed frameworks of analysis, historical context and carried out critical language analysis. The research aimed to find relations between language use in the media and ideology. The significance of the research is owed to the combination of media and conflict. This combination gives a fertile ground to analyze the ideological function of language. The analysis of this study revealed how language can be used to express ideology and identity. In an addition to explaining how nationalism can justify crimes against humanity.
Moreover, the research proved past assumptions about media and conflict. In other words, this research confirmed the theories of war reporting that media play a negative role in reporting conflicts. Nonetheless, the research analyzed for the first time the official Hamas news agency and compared it to both Israeli and Palestinian media.

1.5 Overview of the Study:

The research includes six chapters. The first chapter, Theoretical Background, describes the existing theoretical approaches to the problem of the research. It discusses ideology and discourse in the context of power struggle. Among the political ideologies discussed are nationalism, Zionism and Islamism. The chapter then associates ideology to media, and describes how ideology can affect media content. In the end, the chapter offers a definition of the notion of “Othering” in War Reporting theory.

The second chapter, Methodology, discusses the definition and concepts of CDA. It introduces Ruth Wodak (2009) Discourse Historical Approach (DHA) in CDA and describes its key principals. Afterwards, steps and categories of analysis are presented. The chapter describes that the analysis goes through two phases, thematic analysis and in-depth analysis. The first analysis, investigates the thematic topics of the articles. The in-depth analysis adopts the DHA approach of discursive strategies with emphasis on argumentation strategy by Krzyżanowski (2010) and the taxonomy of social actor representation by Van Leeuwen (2008).

The third chapter, Context, provides all the needed information to understand the essence of the research problem. The chapter includes an overview of the IPC with a historical background. It provides information on the Hamas-Fatah conflict and the blockade of the Gaza Strip. Moreover, the chapter presents the Israeli and the Palestinian contradicting views on the conflict with a discussion on the role of the media in the struggle.

The fourth and fifth chapters, deal with Description of Empirical Material and Analysis, describe the corpora of articles and apply the respective analytical categories discussed in the methodology chapter. And finally, the concluding chapter brings together the research findings
with a link to theories discussed in the first chapter and context in the third chapter. This chapter also provides a perspective on future research and recommendations on the research problem.

1.6 Limitation of Research:

The first limitation of this research is the methodology. Since, CDA is based on meta-theoretical and epistemological criteria, the researcher uses subjective interpretation and selection of data in a specific social context. Thus, it is somehow problematic in terms of reliability - repeatability of finding across samples- (Wood & Kroger, 2000). In qualitative research and discourse analysis, interpretation is always contextualized and provisional, which gives a room for a new interpretation as well as other developments. Moreover, CDA as a research faces the same problematic issue with validity, as the researcher’s interpretation is only one version of many other meanings. This is a result of discourse, which is socially constructed and has multiple meanings. In other words, the assessment of a study cannot be true or false (Wood & Kroger, 2000). My research about the use of language in the Israeli and Palestinian news can be covering only one aspect that corresponds to my own assumptions and subjectivity. Thus, it may not be repeated by other researcher or it cannot be evaluated as valid or not. However, I tried to avoid these limitations by following scientific criteria to choose the research sample. For example, I analyzed the content of the articles before knowing the source of the article, to avoid subjectivity and bias. This is important because I am a Palestinian, and I might have a tendency to support the Palestinian side of the conflict. Another limitation of the research was the lack of quantitative research, which could have helped reach a generalization. The interpretation of data is only valid on the 31 articles in the same sources within the analyzed period of time.
2. Theoretical Background:

People’s actions and thoughts cannot be separated from the communicative means they use to perform them. Language and society are therefore inseparable. According to Fowler (1979), linguistic meanings and ideology are indivisible, and they both depend on social structure. Therefore, linguistic analysis is a powerful tool for the study of ideological processes, which mediate the relationship of power and control (Fowler, 1979, p.188). Matheson (2005), however, argues that the violence of war is not what happens after negotiation ends, but it is a direct result of language. Since organized violence depends on language to organize it, from persuading to planning and executing. Language is used in wars to justify human actions through ideology that is the set of ideas involved in the ordaining of experience and making sense of the conflict (Fowler, 1979, p.81). Analyzing language use provides an image of the ideological struggle over meaning in and between individual texts. Also analyzing ideology indicates the struggle of its dominance in discourse.

In this chapter, I will define the meaning and the structure of ideology according to van Dijk (1995), especially in the context of complex relationships between cognition, society and discourse. I will present Eagleton’s (1991) definition of ideologies as confined to power struggles. I will discuss Althusser’s contribution to the theory of ideology and false consciousness and what he names “Ideological State Apparatuses” (Althusser, 1971). Furthermore, I will explain political ideologies such as Zionism, Islamism and nationalism. Lastly, I will describe the relationship between discourse, ideology and media.

2.1 The definition of Ideology:

Ideology can be defined as the set of ideas that constitute the goals and interests of a certain group in a society. Ideologies can also be described as belief systems shared by social groups. More specifically, van Dijk (2006) defines ideologies as socio-cognitively axiomatic principles. Ideologies are significant since they construct the core identity, self-image, actions, aims, values and norms of a social group. Ideologies also determine the social groups’ relations to other social groups. Thus, a deeper understanding of the ideology of a social group is crucial, as it may
influence what is accepted as true or false. Ideologies have the epistemological sense and they form the basis of specific arguments or explanations or even influence specific understanding of the world in general (van Dijk, 1998).

In order to understand the theory of ideology, van Dijk (1998) states that one needs to understand the complex relationships between cognition, society and discourse. Ideologies, he argues, are based on ideas, and ideas can be considered psychological, social or political. Ideologies are therefore part of social structure and social cognition. They exhibit the relationship of power and dominance between the social groups, and characterize the mental dimension of society or groups. Additionally, ideologies provide the common sense for judgments, so they can act as basic guidelines for social perception. That is why values are essential to ideologies. However, while some values are or can be seen as universal (e.g. equality, truth), this does not mean that ideologies are all universal. Each social group is assumed to make a self-interest selection of various values, and use them to serve their social position and goals (van Dijk, 1995).

This leads us to Marxist view of ideology. The latter suggests that ideologies can be a set of ideas proposed by the elite class of the society (van Dijk, 1998). Marx initially found ideology as the way in which the contradiction between essence of society and its appearance is hidden. Ideology, in this view, conceals the contradictions between the appearance and essence of society, and therefore benefits the status quo and the ruling class (Eyerman, 1981). According to Marx, there is always an ideological battle between classes in the society for hegemony which can be described as ideological domination of society (Gramsci, 1991). Hegemony is created by forming alliances with other classes so the dominant class can ideologically rule by consent. On the other hand, the proletariat also fight for hegemony. Thus, the working class proposes a new ideology and tries to gain support for it from other classes (ibid). For that reason Marx views that in a classless society there will be no ideology, as the appearance will be equal to the essence of a classless society. Laclau & Mouffe (1985) explain that Marx defines the consciousness of the class is the way in which it fights the ideological battle against the dominant class. Therefore, leading to the theory of class consciousness as an ideology opposed to the dominant ideology of society.
Althusser (1971) has a different view of ideology than Marx. Althusser claim that ideology will exist even in a classless society, because there will be the need for people to relate to society (Althusser, 1971). Van Dijk, on the contrary, assumes that ideologies are not always limited to domination. Though, there are some dominant ideologies imposed by dominant groups, but dominated groups can have their independent ideologies. Eagleton (1991) disagrees with van Dijk and supports Marx by asserting that ideologies are confined to power struggles and are central to the reproduction of social life.

2.1.1 Ideological Debates:

Van Dijk (1995) discusses a major debate on the study of ideologies, which pertains to whether ideologies are dominant by definition, or not. He also questions the ability of ideologies to dominate the minds of the people. This debate challenges Marx and Engels' view on ideology as a dominant unified concept of the elite. However, different types of social groups develop certain group ideologies. Especially in the context of conflict and competition, which suggests that there might be a unified ideology of the ruling class or the dominant class (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985). This led van Dijk (1995) to assume that if there was a unified ideology of the dominant class, it will be geared towards maintaining this class’s position, power, access and wealth in the society. He concludes that dominated groups accept the ideology of the elite class in the society and perceive it as an ideology that serves their best interests. Therefore, van Dijk suggests that the elite groups somehow have the power to control the mind of the masses. As ideologies are usually acquired through discourse, and the elite control the means of ideological production, specifically in the mass media. This means that, most probably, the elites have the power to control the ideologies of the dominated groups (Bazzi, 2009).

2.1.2 The Structure of ideologies:

Van Dijk (2006) introduced several structures of ideologies. He argued that there are no private or personal ideologies, but ideologies are socially shared belief systems that provide values to
facilitate everyday situations. In addition, van Dijk (2006) and Eagleton (1991) agree that ideologies are about the promotion and legitimization of the interests of social groups against other rival social groups. Where ideologies are conscious, well-articulated systems of belief. However, van Dijk refuses to define ideologies between the margins of true and false, but as a partisan, self-serving truth of a specific social group. Opposite of Eagleton (1991), who tries to describe ideologies in terms of truth and false. Moreover, ideologies serve as the definitive basis of the social discourse, and sometimes function to legitimize domination or articulate resistance as in the case of Islamic or Zionist ideologies (van Dijk, 2006). Although ideologies are socially shared, not all members of groups acknowledge these ideologies equally. Members can act or behave based on the acquired ideology, but are not always able to originate its beliefs overtly. That is why there are expert “ideologues” that are usually responsible for explaining and reproducing the group ideologies (ibid).

2.2 Political ideologies:

Most political parties in the world base their political agenda on an ideology that has certain ethical ideals, principles and doctrines. Political parties share common ideologies in order to explain how society and politics serve the interest of the party and maintain its power. Some parties have strict ideologies and other parties have multiple ideologies, but all parties identify themselves with a certain kind of political ideology to allocate power and to persuade others (Mills, 1997).

As mentioned earlier, an ideology is a collection of ideas. Political ideologies can contain economic systems such as the case of socialism or they can identify a position on the political spectrum as in the case of nationalism. Finally, some political ideologies can be based on a combination of religion and politics. Zionism and Islamism provide clear examples of the latter.

2.2.1 Nationalism:

Nationalism is a political ideology defined as the individual's attachment with a particular nation. Nationalists recognize nations as constructions of humans and a system of meaning that requires an internal cohesion that lends systematic meaning. Gellner (1983) defines nationalism as the
political principle that holds that the political and national unit should be congruent. He asserts that nationalism only became a sociological necessity in the modern world (Gellner, 1983, p.1). In general, nationalism's core belief is in the primacy and significance of the nation, and it follows that national belonging is meaningful and important to the well-being of societies. Nationalists propagate a doctrine that nations are the natural divisions of humans, who should have a natural right for self-determination, even though they sometimes propagate the supremacy of a specific nation over another (Finlayson, 2007).

Historically, Grosby (2005) asserts that humans have created several criteria to form different groups and distinguish these groups from one another, which later, developed into nations. As a result, millions of people have died throughout history on behalf of their nations. Nationalism, therefore, can be interpreted as a human tendency to divide itself into conflicting groups, where the nation is the only thing that demands unconditional loyalty and sacrifice in the face of the enemies- other nations- (ibid).

Anderson (2006), however, introduces the concept of “imagined communities”, where the nation is a socially-constructed community, imagined by the people who perceive themselves as part of that group. According to Anderson, the nation is an imagined community, because regardless of the actual inequality that may exist in each community, nations are always considered as a deep comradeship of people willing to die or kill for such limited imagining. On the whole, Anderson disregarded nationalism, nation, nationality and nationalism as “notoriously difficult to define, let alone analyze” (Anderson, 2006, p.3).

In the context of this research, Israeli nationalists justify their belief of creating an Israeli state over the Palestinian land as their natural right for self-determination. While the Palestinian nationalist justify their resistance against the Israelis as their right to defend their nation. Both people are ready to kill or die for the sake of the nation. The Palestinians believe that they have the right to claim the state of Palestine and end the occupation as it was their land for thousands of years (Jawad, 2006). The Israelis claim that the state of Israel is built on their original land
(historical Palestine) and they existed there two thousand years ago, hence, they have the right to own it (Myers, 1988).

2.2.2 Zionist Ideology:

Zionism is an ideology that is classified as ethno-cultural nationalism, where members of groups sharing a common history, religion or culture have interests in adhering to their culture by the right to national-self-determination. (Gans, 2008). The core belief of Zionism is the need of metamorphosis of the scattered Jewish community in the “Diaspora”, so they can be united in the promised land of Palestine (Schwartz, 2009). In order to rebuild and replant this land and revive the Hebrew language and preserve the Jewish culture and religion (ibid). Zionism is an ideology that supports Jewish identity by the creation of a Jewish nation in the territory defined biblically as the land of Israel. Zionists oppose the assimilation of Jewish people into other societies. Zionists advocate Jewish migration to Israel to be a majority in their own nation and to avoid anti-Semitism and discrimination which historically occurred in the Diaspora and resulted in the holocaust (Myers, 1988). Zionism can also be called Jewish nationalism, with the core belief that all Jews constitute one nation and not only a religious or ethnic community in the Diaspora.

Historically, the World Zionist Organization, established by Theodor Herzl in 1897, declared that the aim of Zionism was to establish a national home for the Jewish people secured by public law (Myers, 1988). Zionism's choice of Palestine is linked to the Jewish religious attachment to Jerusalem and the Land of Palestine or what they called “Eretz Israel”. However, the politics of Zionism in conquering the Palestinian land was influenced by nationalist ideology and by the colonial ideas of claiming and settling in other parts of the world (Schwartz, 2009).

Another core concept of Zionism is the claim that Jewish people have the right to possess all land between the Nile River in Egypt and Euphrates River in today’s Iraq, as mentioned in the Old Testament (Jawad, 2006). However, Palestine is still the most important land in the core belief of Zionism, as they consider it the “promised land” of their people and they have the right to return to it. As this territory was controlled by two Jewish mini-states, Judea and Samaria in
the 1st century before it was destroyed by the Romans (Gans, 2008). That is why Zionists believe that the state of Palestine should be for Jews and controlled by Jews (Myers, 1988). Based on that Zionism attempted to realize the ideal return to Zion (Jerusalem) and desired to revive a dormant Hebrew culture by bringing it into contact with contemporary intellectual and cultural currents. Myers (1988) explains that Zionist ideology was stimulated by the increasing expressions of the nationalist sentiment among Europeans during the second half of the 19th century.

### 2.2.3 Islamist Ideology:

In this paper, I will not discuss Islam as a religion, but I will briefly talk about Islamism as an ideology often mobilized in the context of the IPC. Islamic ideology is the view of Islam not solely as a "religion" in the narrow sense of theological belief, private prayer or worship, but also as a way of life with guidance for political, economic, and social behavior (Shepard, 1987).

Consequently, Islamism is not anymore a religion but rather an ideology with a clear doctrine that can create an “Islamic State” based on the Sharia law. Islamism believes that Muslims should have an "Islamic State," that is, a state in which the law is based on the Sharia (Shepard, 1987).

Singh (2012) views Islamism in Palestine as an ideology that fuses anti-secular, anti-colonial, anti-Zionist principles that is shaped by doctrine drawn from the Quran and other Islamic sources.

“In other words, it uses the language of political Islam to harness classical Islamic symbols and conceptions to modern secular ideologies and concerns – in this case, the Palestinian quest for a nation-state,” (Singh, 2012, p. 8)

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1 Sharia law is the moral code and religious law of Islam and it has two primary sources; the precepts set forth in the Quranic verses (ayahs), and the example set by the Islamic prophet Muhammad in the Sunnah; which is the way of life prescribed for Muslims on the basis of the teachings and practices of the Islamic prophet and his interpretations of the Quran.
In order to understand the core beliefs of Islamism and the political parties in Palestine who adopted Islamism (e.g. Hamas), one should have a fair knowledge of the IPC – See Context Chapter-. Nevertheless, one of the building blocks of Islamism in Palestine is the moral obligation of Jihad, which is framed as being central to the fight for the Palestinian state (ibid).

Jihad is an Islamic term that asserts a religious duty of Muslims to fight under the name of God against those who do not believe in Islam as a religion. However, Jihad in the context of Palestine means the holy and rightful fight against the Israeli occupation. Muslims who fulfill their jihad duty and die during the battle are considered martyrs and heroes in the society, where they are portrayed as idols who sacrificed their lives for the cause of liberty. Nevertheless, martyrs are promised to go to heaven according to the Quran, and they are recognized as fighters for the sake of God (Singh, 2012). For example, Hamas’s Islamism ideology is to participate in military jihad against Israel to achieve the holy goal of an independent Palestinian state on the land that is occupied by the Zionists.

Nonetheless, Jawad (2006) explains that Islamists view Palestine as a holy land for Muslims, since it is the land of Prophet Mohammad ascension to heaven. It is also the land of an inalienable endowment for all Muslims till the Day of Judgment. In the common sense of Islamism, the asymmetrically powerful infidel, Israel, is responsible for the theft of the holy land (ibid). Consequently, jihad is an individual duty of every Palestinian and Muslim to both resist the despoiling of a sacred land as well as fighting for Palestinian national rights, freedom and dignity against Israeli oppression.

Singh (2012) mentions another core belief of Islamism in Palestine, which is the reformist approach to the crisis of the occupation by society’s return to the path of Islam. In other words, Islamism hopes to achieve the liberation of Palestine by transforming society, through education and preaching, into an Islamic society that accepts a state of Palestine based on Quran and Sharia law. For example, Hamas believes that a step forward for the liberty of Palestine will be the conversion of the Palestinian society into a “true” Muslim society.
2.3 Ideology and Discourse:

Discourse as defined by Fairclough (1999) is not solely texts or documents, but much as a network of relations of power and identity. Discourse studies of newspapers, speeches, texts, and letters is important to understand the identity and relationship between people and groups. Since discourse is socially constitutive and socially shaped (ibid)

Fairclough (1999) adds that discourses are forms of social action and interactions, located in social contexts, where the producers of discourses are not only subjects but rather members of groups and cultures. Discourse norms are socially shared and acquired with mental dimensions that are embedded in social situations and structures. Consequently, social structures, relations, representations and ideologies are legitimated and constructed in text and talk (ibid).

However, discourse is not the only ideologically based social practice, but it is even more crucial in the creation and distribution of ideologies. Language use, text and communication are primarily used by group members to learn, persuade, and convey ideologies. Discourse is used to distribute ideologies to other in group members and to alienate them from out group members. In other words, to understand ideologies, it is crucial to understand their discursive manifestation (van Dijk, 1998).

Van Dijk (2006) explains that ideologies are expressed and reproduced in the social practices of their members or social group, and most ideologies are acquired and confirmed through discourse. This can be seen where ideologies are acquired by generalizing mental models or by explicit ideological guidelines by ideologues, such as religion (ibid). Also, ideologies tend to be explicit in case of conflict and resistance, where most individuals acquire the ideologies from the discourse of ideologues. Taking into account that language use in general and discourse production such as media, in particular, depend on and is influenced by the communicative situation and context of the language users (Bazzi, 2009). For example, a Palestinian journalist
will refer to suicide bombers as freedom fighters. In contrast to the Israeli journalists who will refer to them as terrorists.

Moreover, the connection between discourse and ideology can be through context models. According to van Dijk (2006), context models control discourses in general to make sure they are socially appropriate for their audience. Hence, context models can be ideologically biased depending on the social context, for example, by the lexical choice in the discourse (ibid). The content of discourse is controlled by subjective interpretations of the audience and authors, which can relate discourse to ideology by the mental models, where people understand a discourse if they are able to construct a model for it. Thus, news on the IPC are produced on the basis of subjective models. Similarly to the case of context models, where the news are most probably ideologically biased towards the socially shared attitudes and ideologies. As van Dijk (2006) states:

“Ideologically biased event models typically give rise to ideological discourses, in which events or actors are described more or less negatively or positively, depending on the ideological bias of the mental model” (ibid:22).

It is important to note that the relation between ideologies and discourse is often indirect. Even though there are socio-cognitive processes that underline the production of ideological discourse. Discourse is not always ideologically transparent, as many producers of the discourse try to hide their ideologies (van Dijk, 2006). For example, discourse that express specific ideologies uses discursive structures and strategies by the use of pronoun (we, or, them) that refer to in group or the latter to out group. Or by specific intonation and expressions of words. Van Dijk stresses that ideologies can only influence contextually variable structures of discourse and not obligatory grammatical structures. Since the lateral are the same for all speakers of the same language. Thus, meanings are more prone to ideological context than syntactic structures, as ideologies are beliefs and they tend to form meanings of discourse. Furthermore, syntactic structures and rhetorical figures such as metaphors are used to emphasize or de-emphasize ideological meanings, but as formal structures they have no ideological meaning. For example, ideological discourse is generally organized by a strategy of a positive “us” presentation and a negative “them” presentation.
Ideologies are also manifested in discourse by specific attitudes, since the major socio-cognitive function of ideology is to organize a shared opinion towards social issues. Attitudes in this context refer to schematically organized forms of evaluative social cognition and not personal reactions (van Dijk, 2006). For instance, under the control of Zionist ideology, there will be collective social attitudes towards Palestinian nationalism. These attitudes are communicated through discourse as axiomatic ideological propositions.

Another major dimension of ideology in discourse, explained by van Dijk (2006), is the selection of word meaning using lexicalization. Lexical items work as codes for opinions in social representation context, and not in personal opinion expressions. In our context, the Palestinian media calling the Palestinian jihadists “freedom fighters”, and the Israeli media calling the same group terrorists, is a perfect manifestation of how lexical terms are based on ideological decisions.

2.4. Media and ideology:

In many instances, ideologies are understood, in a negative way, as systems of dominant ideas of the elite class in the society (Eyerman, 1981). The negative side of ideology is salient in Marx’s term “false consciousness”, which means the failure of the society to see things as they really are. Ideologies are described as hegemonic ideas and beliefs that are used by the dominant groups of the society to persuade the dominated groups of their position and power in the society (Eyerman, 1981).

Althusser (1971) contributes to the theory of false consciousness in what he calls “Ideological State Apparatuses”, which is the reproduction of the ruling ideology without the repression of the state, but by means of religious, media, and educational institutions instead. Another important ideological concept by Althusser (1971) is the “imaginary relations” of individuals. This concept means that individuals are born as conceptual subjects but are altered by their ruling Ideological State Apparatuses to be situated in this study for example, either pro-Israeli subjects or pro-Palestinian subjects, to generate a dominant ideology.
Bazzi (2009) adds that people can develop their own belief systems, but at the same time one cannot deny that individuals are, in many ways, victims of their own interpellation systems. Media can be a strong example, where people are daily exposed to massive inculcation of concepts (e.g. terrorism, martyrdom, resistance, freedom), which can influence the individual's beliefs and perceptions of a particular conflict (ibid). The imaginary relations, explained earlier by Althusser, can be illustrated in the Israeli and Palestinian media, where the Palestinian audience is mainly subjected to Arab or Muslim media. On the other side, the Israeli audience is mainly subjected to western or Israeli media. Ideological State Apparatuses can be observed in the Palestinian media, where Palestinian fighters are portrayed as martyrs with heroic identity, especially during times of violent clashes with Israel. While they are portrayed as murderers with a terrorist identity, in the Israeli and Western media (Bazzi, 2009). The audience also seems to perform what Althusser (1971) calls “rituals” of a special interpellation system.

Nevertheless, media discourse in times of conflict can be politically sensitive and composed by a particular interpellation system and ideological acknowledgment between the dominant and the dominated groups. This suggests that the context of media can be easily manipulated by ideological layers of representations; context and identity. And can easily produce ideological positions of in groups and out groups, but still can be seen rightful in the news (Bazzi, 2009). However, Bazzi (2009) highlights an important point that formulation of ideology is not always the result of State Apparatuses, but can be also the result of people’s consent and approval of the system of ideas. In most cases, media institutions in times of conflict tend to focus on the positioning of subjects by their own Ideological State Apparatus, where the media depending on its authority perform a particular interpellation system in the target situation. For example, the media tends to sympathize with the victims of its in groups while it dehumanizes the victims of the out groups – worthy versus unworthy victims- (ibid).

As a summary, Matheson (2005) assumes that the truth and knowledge around the world is partly constructed by each media member and institution. For that reason, media institutions should be recognized as members of society with subjective perceptions, and their views of events should be perceived as angles of reality rather than the absolute truth.
2.4.1 Media reporting of War:

In times of uncertainty and battles, people have the tendency to be persuaded by the media that gives a meaning to a confusing reality (Mral, 2006). This suggests that media has a major ethical responsibility while covering conflicts, as language in the media has the power to nourish either violence or peace. Nowadays with the electronic and visual media, journalists have a unique power to influence the public and to call for hatred and more violence to stop the enemy (Luostarinen, 2002). For example, the photographs published by journalists in times of war are chosen through a maze of standards and a process of editing to portray the conflict within a certain political agenda (Nohrstedt, 2009). Images of war are “the outcome of the struggle for our sympathies and antipathies to dominate our attention and emotional engagement,” (Nohrstedt 2009, p.84).

War reporting is evident when journalists are no longer neutral observers of the conflict, but they choose to be part of it, making their involvement salient in the narration, utterances, and reporting (Nohrstedt, 2009). The definition of war reporting is when the media’s mission transforms from a watchdog into a voice responsible to demoralize and dehumanize the enemy (Mral, 2006). This means that articles are no longer written to inform the public, but are written to persuade the public to take an action and support one side of the conflict (Nohrstedt, 2009).

War reporting can be analyzed, like any discursive text, in terms of use of language. This type of analysis makes the researcher aware of the power and effect of media discourse (Fairclough, 1999). It is crucial for the analysis of language use to consider the role of actors in media. For example, who is included or excluded in the article? Which actors are foregrounded or backgrounded? Press articles can be considered an example of war reporting when the conflict is portrayed in the text as a battle between two opponents with one goal: winning. Just like in a sport’s arena, where the only focus is on who advances, who suffers more casualties and material damage, and finally which player is getting closer to achieve the goal (Galtung, 2002).
2.4.2 Us-versus-Them reporting:

The term “Othering”, is the process by which “imperial discourse creates its others” (Eide 2002, p.29). Othering is the result of the struggle of individuals or groups to establish their own identity in relation to others, by emphasis on the differences between us and them. This is mostly established in a hierarchical way to reduce the Other’s position (Eide, 2002). Media plays a major role in the times of war in highlighting the differences between the two sides of the conflict, which contribute to a reinforcement of boundaries that will eventually lead to discrimination (Eide, 2002).

Othering is another component of war journalism. The creation of a borderline between us and the other becomes a necessity in times of conflict in order to distance the traits of the other from “our” culture (Ottosen, 1995). And to exaggerate the differences in order to demonize the other and to portray the conflict in terms of good-us - vs. evil- them- (ibid). A key indicator of Othering is the use of terminology and the choice of foregrounding or backgrounading the characters in the text.

The analysis of Othering in this research will be based on Discourse Historical Approach (DHA) by Wodak (2001). The analysis of actors in the press articles will be examined through discursive strategies. These strategies can be evident in the positive self-representations or negative other representations (Wodak, 2001). Actors in the text can be constructed implicitly or explicitly throughout the whole article by strategies of reference and prediction (ibid).
3. Methodology Chapter

3.1 Principles of Critical Discourse Analysis:

The term Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) regards "language as a social practice" (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997) and consider the context of language use to be crucial as it reveals the relation between language and power (Wodak & Meyer, 2001). CDA in research is used as a critical linguistic approach to testify the overt relationships of struggle and conflict as it is expressed, constituted and legitimized by language use (Wodak & Meyer, 2001). However, in order to study discourse, the researcher needs to understand the relationship between a particular discursive event and its context. As CDA does not only focus on analyzing text, but rather require a description of the social structures and context. This is emphasized in the following statement:

“CDA gives a rise to the production of a text, and of the social structures and processes within which individuals or groups as social historical subjects, create meaning in their interaction with texts" (Wodak & Meyer, 2001, p. 3).

Therefore, CDA has three concepts: power, history and ideology. Fairclough (2003) identified CDA as an ideological work based on interpretative and explanatory discourse analysis, where the link between text and society is mediated. CDA acknowledges that discourse is historical, constitutes society and culture, and is a form of social action (Fairclough N., 2003). Van Dijk (1993) presents similar view of CDA, as he describes CDA a type of research that investigates social power abuse, and endeavor to understand, expose and resist these social inequality in discourse. Another definition regarding media discourse describes CDA as a complementary method used to unpack news, in order to show how underlying meanings, opinions and ideologies are related to the text. Hence, it is an analysis of cognitive, social, political and cultural context (van Dijk, 1991, p.116). Historically, discourse analysis and the relationship between power and language saw emergence in the 1970s with the work of linguistic scholars like Kress and Hodge (1979), van Dijk (1985), Fairclough (1989) and Wodak (1989). Furthermore, CDA is an approach founded on the idea that there is an unequal access to social
recourses as they are dominated by elite of the society. For this reason, the pattern of access to discourse and communicative events is an essential element for CDA. In other words, CDA aims at critically investigating social inequality, since it is expressed and legitimized by language use (Wodak, 2009). Moreover, van Dijk (1993) assumes that language is not a neutral tool for transmitting messages, as it constitutes a particular way of understanding the world. Thus discourse analysis is both a theory of language use and a method of analyzing language use.

Fairclough’s (2003) affirms that discourse practice is inherently linked to the power of discourse participants, as it is organized by the wider social formation, in which the text producers and receivers act in specific roles. Besides, given that texts are embedded in the context of its production and reception, any critical analysis of discourse will combine the description of linguistic features at the micro-level of text with their explanation at the macro-level of social context (ibid). Additionally, Fairclough (2003) argues that society shapes and constitutes discourse:

“Discourse constitutes situations, objects of knowledge, and the social identities and relationships between people and groups of people. Discourse is constitutive both in the sense that it helps sustain and reproduce the social status quo, and in the sense that it contributes to transforming it” (Fairclough, 2003, p. 8).

In this study, I will use CDA to investigate the notions of social actors and contexts in order to analyze the political ideologies in the media discourse of the empirical material. I will adopt DHA by Wodak (2009) with the emphasis on the taxonomy of social actor representation by Van Leeuwen (2008) and the argumentation strategy by Krzyżanowski (2010).

The purpose of discourse analysis in my research is to highlight how language use in the media texts can manipulate power and ideology, since discourse has the power to frame people’s ideology by asserting specific identities and distorting facts to justify crimes (Bazzi, 2009). Consequently, I consider CDA as the only method that can deeply analyze the Israeli-Palestinian media discourse in times of crises. CDA is an adequate qualitative method that identify the hegemonic instinct behind the media texts, in order to understand how hegemonic order is used to filter information and legitimize reasons for particular war against the other nation (Bazzi, 2009).
3.2 Key concepts and principles of DHA:

According to its general principles, the DHA starts with recording the setting and context of the corpora of text. As discourse can only be interpreted and described in a specific context and it must be confronted with historical events and facts (Wodak, 2009). DHA is the adequate method for my research since it is interdisciplinary, involving theories, methods, research practice and practical application. The historical context is taken into account in interpreting texts and discourses, as the historical context of the IPC is vital while interpreting the corpora of articles. Also, historical orientation allows to scrutinize how recontextualization functions as an important process in linking texts and discourses using interdiscursivity over time (Wodak, 2009). In addition, the texts must be described at all linguistic levels, taking into consideration that text and discourse are always located in a historical context, including future contexts of reception (ibid). Moreover, the DHA is problem oriented and focuses on the unequal distribution of power by analyzing the historical and political background knowledge of specific discursive occasion (ibid). As a consequence, discourse-historical research links textual analysis back to the contexts of discourse production, distribution and reception as well as the wider social context.

Nonetheless, DHA was developed in the field of discourse studies to discover latent power dynamics and the range of potentials in agents. As Wodak (2009) explains that DHA approach integrates knowledge about historical sources and the background of the social or political field, within which discursive events are embedded. Discourse is defined on DHA as a macro-topic of context-dependent semiotic practices of social action and as a socially constituted and socially constitutive (Wodak, 2009). The key principles of DHA in this study are discourse, text, interdiscursivity, intertextuality and recontextualization, as they will be explained below.

**Discourse**: Fairclough (1999) define discourse as the language use in speech and writing and as a form of social practice. Discourse is a vague terminology, but it is used to describe any kind of verbal or written communication that describes a social practice and implied a dialectical relationship between the discursive event and the situation, institution or social structure that
frames it. However, the discursive event is both shaped by social actors and also shape social actors (Fairclough, 1999). Another definition by Krzyżanowski (2010) describes discourse as a “context-dependent semiotic practices that are situated in a specific fileds of actions” (ibid:75). Krzyżanowski (2010) explains that discourse is the social activity of making meanings with language, or it is a social action controlled by social habits that is found in the context and meaning of language. Moreover, discourses are described as hybrid, where new topics and field of actions can emerge through the notions of intertextuality and interdiscursivity. Discourse should not be interpreted as texts or documents, but rather as a network of relations of power and identity (Krzyżanowski, 2010). Accordingly, discourse studies of newspapers, speeches, texts, and letters is important to understand the knowledge, identity and relationship between people and groups.

Fairclough and Wodak (1997) view discourse as any part of any language text, spoken or written that constitutes representations, relations and identity. Hence, discourse represents particular social relations between people and social identities, which can be described in the context and purpose of the text. Wodak explains discourse in one sentence; “Discourse implies patterns and commonalities of knowledge and structures.” (Wodak, 2009, p. 39)

Text: van Dijk (1993) explains text as a concrete realization of abstract forms of knowledge as text illustrates concrete oral utterances or written documents. Wodak (2009) explains text as a specific and unique realization of discourse. In other words, text is described as instances of language that are assembled to form a meaning. There are several distinctions between texts and discourse. Wodak (2009) views text as the physical product, while discourse is the process and meaning derived from the reader’s interaction with the text. Further distinction is made by Fairclough (2003), who argues that text, unlike discourse, cannot be contextualized, or decontextualized; it only can be shifted into a different context.
**Intertextuality and Recontextualization**: Intertextuality is described as the linkage of all texts to other texts, both in the present and in the past. This linkage can occur through the reference of a topic or its main actors or events, or through the reappearance of a text’s main arguments in another text, the latter of which is described as recontextualization (Van Dijk, 2001). Recontextualization is a process that extracts text or meaning from its original context (decontextualization) in order to introduce it into another context. Since the meaning of texts depend on their context. Recontextualization implies a change of meaning, and often of the communicative purpose too. Thus, taking an argument from a text is a process of decontextualization, and restating the same argument in a new text is labeled as recontextualization (ibid).

**Interdiscursivity**: indicates that topic oriented discourses are linked to each other in various ways, such as a discourse on the IPC often refers to topics of other discourses such anti-Semitism. Additionally, interdiscursivity is the combination of different, historically contingent, genres and discourses with a text and is often integrated with another linguistic parameter (Wodak, 2009). Thus, context is crucial in the analysis of discourse, since representation of social actors is shaped by discursive and social practices (Van Leeuwen, 2008).

### 3.3 Steps and Categories of Analysis:

Although there are many approaches to conduct CDA on media texts, I chose a combination of Ruth Wodak’s DHA and Theo Van Leeuwen’s systemic-functional model of representation of social actors. I see the former and the later as most appropriate to analyze Palestinian and Israeli press articles. The analytical part of this study operate within two level of analysis; thematic analysis and in depth analysis.

#### 3.3.1 Thematic analysis:

The aim of thematic analysis or what is also called entry-level analysis is to highlight the contents of the analyzed texts and to ascribe them to particular discourse. In addition to highlight
the diversity of topics discussed in the empirical material (Krzyżanowski, 2010). According to van Dijk (1991), discourse topics summarize the text and can be described as semantic macro-propositions which they form the thematic structure of the text. Additionally, Krzyżanowski (2010) defines topics as a way of inductive analysis, where it is a process of decoding meanings of texts and ordering them into lists of key themes and sub-themes, in order to analyze the discourse embedded in the texts.

Additionally, I will adopt Krzyżanowski’s (2010) approach of thematic analysis of topics in media texts using headlines and a clear-top down semantic hierarchy of texts. Thus, I will designate key topics for each press articles in order to establish a map of discourse topics, allowing for recontextualisation of topics. The analysis of discourse carried out hence forth is by definition that of the macro topics, topics and sub-topics in the texts by establishing a list of major topics of discourse (ibid).

### 3.3.2 In-depth Analysis:

After the analysis of key topics of discourse, DHA in-depth analysis distinguishes between the topics, which are written about; the discursive strategies employed; and the linguistic means (Wodak, 2009, p. 38). Additionally, in order to explore how discourses and texts change due to political contexts, DHA takes four context layers into account. The intertextual and interdiscursive relationships between texts, genres and discourses. The history of texts. The linguistic social variables. And the frame of specific context of a situation (ibid).

The discursive strategies refer to plan of practices adopted to achieve a particular social or political goal. Discursive strategies can be evident, for example, in the positive self-representation or negative other representation in the press articles by using the strategies of justification/legitimization of inclusion/exclusion. Examples on discursive strategies are nomination strategies, where social actors are constructed by the use of categorization devices, such as naming/not naming actors. Another similar strategy is predication, which aims to label social actors in positive or negative manner. However, in table 1, I will describe the discursive strategies used in this research.
I am interested in the above five types of discursive strategies, because they are all involved in the positive self and negative other presentation, which I will be analyzing throughout the corpora of my study. In this research, emphasis will be placed on the argumentation strategies, or what is called, topoi, through which positive and negative attributors are justified. Topoi as explained by Wodak (2009) are general key ideas from which specific arguments can be generated. The key category of the in-depth analysis carried out below is that of topos (plural topoi), which can be viewed as the headings under which arguments can be classified (Krzyżanowski, 2010, p. 83). Therefore, the analysis seeks to highlight the links between the topics discovered and the topoi deployed (ibid). In this research, the primary focus of analysis will be on topoi and related elements of argumentation such as humanitariansm, threat and numbers. This research focus on inductive and content related approach to argumentation/topoi, where I will search for structures of arguments that are pragmatically filled with contents and specific for analysed discourse (Krzyżanowski, 2010). Hence, the goal for topoi analysis is to discuss the analyzed discourse and define the different arguments supplemented with metaphorical languages in constructing national identity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Devices</th>
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<td>Construction of in groups and out groups</td>
<td>Metaphors, membership categorization</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prediction</td>
<td>Labeling social actors more or less positively or negatively</td>
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<td>Argumentation</td>
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<td>Intensification, mitigation</td>
<td>Modifying the epistemic status of a proposition</td>
<td>Intensifying or mitigating utterances</td>
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*Table 1 description of discursive strategies (Wodak, 2001, p. 74)*
3.3.3 Representation of social actors:

I will focus on the representation of social actors by Van Leeuwen (2008) to further investigate the linguistic means in DHA. The reason for opting Van Leeuwen’s model exists in the fact that this is the only comprehensive framework in CDA studies that I found, which focused on social actors in discourse when analyzed from a social standpoint. This approach will assist me to speculate on some linguistic questions such as; how can unworthy subjects be incriminated through the language structure itself? Who is assumed to be causing violence in a particular struggle? Whose side of the story is being retailed? How can text strategy extract one’s sympathies towards the worthy victims or in groups or on the contrary, increase one’s hostility towards the ideological enemy?

It is important to note that social actors are essential analytical category in discourse as they are the textual instantiations of models of the self and others, both individual and collective (Van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 37). The following elements of analysis of Van Leeuwen’s (2008) method function as one of the essential criterion for the analysis:

- **Inclusion/Exclusion**: Social actors in the text are sometimes backgrounded (de-emphasized) or foregrounded (emphasized) to serve certain purposes.
- **Suppression**: Social actors in the text are sometimes omitted in order to highlight or hide an occurrence.
- **Role allocation**: Social actors can be represented as active forces, or they can be passivated, represented as recipients, whether positively or negatively benefiting from the action.
- **Functionalization**: It occurs when social actors are referred to in terms of what they do.
- **Impersonalisation**: Can be realized through abstraction or objectivation. The former occurs when social actors are represented by means of a quality assigned to them. The latter occurs when social actors are represented by means of reference to a place or thing.

I have chosen the above five elements of analysis as they are the most applicable tools on the corpora to understand how the Palestinian and Israeli media describe the social actors in the
press articles. Consequently, the representation of social actors in my study will be grounded in linguistics, and the use of language and grammar in shaping the role of actors in the society (Van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 38).
4. The Context

I will briefly present an overview of the IPC with links to history and recent incidents in order to provide a general understanding of the fundamental nature of the dispute. In few words, the IPC is a continuing struggle between the Israelis and the Palestinians since the late 19th century. The conflict became salient under the British mandate of Palestine between the Jewish immigrants and the Palestinian population in Palestine. The Jewish immigration later initiated a core struggle between Arab nations and Israel (Roy, 2007). The essence of the conflict is the claims of the two nations (Palestinians and Israelis) of the right of owning the land of Palestine (Rotberg, 2006). Even though many attempts have been and are still being made to resolve the conflict by adopting the two state solution. They still have not reached a complete resolution and census of both sides (Rotberg, 2006).

4.1 History of the IPC:

According to Bickerton (2009), the first prominent event of the conflict was the 1917 Balfour Declaration, which was a letter from the United Kingdom’s Foreign Secretary Arthur James Balfour to the leader of the British Jewish community. Balfour promised the Jewish community a national home in Palestine with the British pledge to facilitate the achievement of this project. The British government used their best endeavors to fulfill their promise to the Jewish community, first by defeating the Ottoman Empire in 1917, and second by occupying Palestine after the First World War. Afterwards, the British government replaced the military administration in 1920 of the mandate by a civil administration and delegated the control of the administration to a Zionist-Jewish commissioner.

Moreover, the conflict roots began with the birth of nationalist movements among the Jewish – Zionists- and the Arab residents. This later escalated into the major conflict in 1947. In that year, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the implementation of a plan that divides the Land of Palestine. Offering the Jewish population 56% of the total land, and the Palestinians
43% (Roy, 2007). The Arab nations and the Palestinians rejected the UN partition plan, and saw no justice or rationale in the UN division of land (Jawad, 2006). As the plan seems to ignore the fact that the Palestinians were the inhabitants, and were the majority between late 19th century and 1947. The Palestinian population grew from 327 to 1.5 million respectively (natural population growth). Despite massive Jewish immigrations into Palestine. The Jewish population in Palestine at that time increased from 13 thousands in late 19th century to almost 500 thousands by 1947.

Tension between the Palestinians and the Jewish community grew and in late 1920’s erupted and continued until 1948, when the British left. In 1948, the first regional war involving surrounding Arab states and the newly formed state of Israel irrupted resulting in what the Arabs refer to as Al- Nakba (The Catastrophe) or in Hebrew as Milkhemet Haatzmaut (war of Independence). Combined forces of Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Iraq fought the Israeli forces in an attempt to liberate the land of Palestine from the new Israeli occupation (Bickerton, 2009). The war continued for ten months and ended in the substantial defeat of the Arab troops. Israel took control of 60% of the Palestinian land – even more than what was proposed in the UN partition plan-. Israel took over most of the Palestinian land, except the West Bank which became under Jordanian military administration, and the Gaza Strip, which was under the Egyptian military administration. Jawad (2006) asserts that the result of this war was devastating for the Palestinians, where hundreds of people were killed, and 700 thousand Palestinians were expelled from their home towns to become refugees in neighboring countries. Meanwhile, the Jewish migration into Palestine increased significantly, for example, between the years 1948-1951, the Jewish population increased from about 650,000 to slightly over 1.3 million (Tessler, 1994). At the same time, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) was founded in 1950 to oversee the welfare of 960,000 Palestinians who were now living in camps registered refugees (Jawad, 2006). During that same period, the main features of Israel’s political system were established: a parliamentary democracy with a unicameral legislature (called the Knesset) (Tessler, 1994). In early1960’s, the Palestinian resistance organizations came to existence, in the form of Fatah and The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). However, in 1964, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) was founded, under the auspices of the Arab
League, as the only organization that represents the Palestinian people in the Diaspora (in the refugee camps) and inside Palestine (Tessler, 1994). The PLO was recognized as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people by more than 100 states. The PLO at the time was seen as a threat to Israel and was considered as a terrorist Organization by Israel and the United States until the Oslo Accords of 1993 (Bickerton, 2009).

Furthermore, the tension between the Israelis and the Arabs grew, until Israel and the Arab states of Jordan, Syria, and Egypt fought another war in 1967. The war ended with the Israeli victory over the Arab troops, and the Israeli Occupation of the Gaza Strip and Sinai Peninsula from Egypt, the West Bank including East Jerusalem from Jordan and the Golan Heights from Syria (Bickerton, 2009). After the war, Israel was able to integrate the west Jerusalem declaring it as the eternal capital of Israel, which aggravated the situation and tension even further (Roy, 2007).

4.2. The IPC Conflict during the 1990’s:

Nonetheless, the Palestinians' dream of a Palestinian state was never achieved. As Israel occupied the whole land of Palestine and started building Israeli settlements in and around Palestinian cities in the West Bank and the Gaza strip, which in 1987 marked the outbreak of the First Intifada (uprising) between the Palestinians and the Israelis (Bickerton, 2009). The uprising was initiated by Palestinian civilians, mainly youth, and their main tool or weapon was throwing stones on the Israeli troops. At the end of the Intifada in 1991, thousands of Palestinians and tens of Israelis had lost their lives, and thousands more of Palestinians were held as political prisoners in the Israeli jails. The intifada did not succeed in achieving its goal of an independent Palestinian state (Bickerton, 2009). The Intifada ended when the PLO and the Israeli government decided to start peace negotiations, which culminated in the signing of the Oslo Accords. The first Oslo Accord was signed in 1993, and the second followed in 1995. The goal of the peace process was focused on achieving a peace treaty between the two sides which would eventually grant Palestinians the right to self-determination. The negotiations resulted in the Israeli recognition of the PLO as a legitimate representative of the Palestinians and a negotiations partner (Bickerton, 2009).
Bickerton (2009) explains that the main issues that were discussed in the Accords were the Israeli settlements, the status of Jerusalem, the PLO governance over the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and the Palestinians refugees' right of return. However, the negotiations failed to promise a Palestinian state. Oslo Accords were based on previous negotiations between the PLO and Israel, such as the Camp David Accords in 1978. The Oslo Process later became an endless cycle of negotiations, suspensions, mediation and restart of negotiations, without a concrete consensus on a final resolution. A number of minor agreements were reached until the outbreak of the Second Intifada in 2000, which ended the peace negotiations (Bickerton, 2009).

The second Intifada started in 2000 after the failure of Oslo agreements to end the Israeli occupation and offer the Palestinians the right to self-determination and the creation of their own state (Pressman, 2003). The PLO leader at the time, Yasser Arafat, decided the beginning of the Second Intifada that the road to a Palestinian state is no longer through peace negotiations, but by armed resistance (ibid). Both sides suffered high numbers of casualties among civilians and fighters. Palestinians death toll was several thousands and the Israelis several hundreds. The Palestinians' method of fighting was throwing stones, bomb attacks, and gunfire. While the Israeli methods involved tanks, gunfire and air strikes (Pressman, 2003). The second intifada never actually ended, but a truce and agreements were achieved in 2005, following the election of Mahmoud Abbas as the successor of Yasser Arafat. Mahmoud Abbas and Ariel Sharon declared a truce at the summit of 2005, which took place in the Egyptian resort of Sharm al-Sheikh (Pressman, 2003). Meanwhile, Ariel Sharon, the Israeli prime minister at the time, implemented his Gaza pullout plan. However, after the pullout of Israeli settlers from Gaza, and placing them in settlements of the West Bank, Hamas militants started the trend of firing mortars at southern Israel, which created some friction between Hamas and Abbas’s government (ibid).

4.2.1 The Hamas- Fatah conflict:

Hamas, “Islamic Resistance Movement”, emerged at the beginning of the first intifada, or uprising, in 1987, with the goal of liberating Palestine through armed resistance. Hamas became the main opposition of the Palestinian Authority (PA) and refused all peace negotiations with Israel. According to Graham (2006), the conflict between Hamas and Fatah, the two largest
Palestinian political movements, has its roots in the 1993 Oslo Accords. At that time Yasser Arafat, PLO and Fatah leader, started the interim agreement with Israel, which was rejected by the Hamas movement. The tension between the two movements increased in the mid-90s. The PA was trying to negotiate with Israel, and Hamas was embarking on a series of bomb attacks inside Israel (Usher, 2006). The tension between Fatah and Hamas eased with the outbreak of the second Palestinian intifada, and the armed wings of both factions launched armed operations against Israel (ibid).

With the death of Yasser Arafat in 2004, Mahmoud Abbas was elected as Fatah’s new leader and the second president of the PA. Hamas boycotted this elections. However, in 2005, a conference of Palestinian national dialogue was held in Egypt, which resulted in the Cairo Declaration (Brown, 2010). The declaration called for integrating all Palestinian factions in the PLO, including Hamas. This has paved the way for Hamas to participate in the upcoming parliamentary elections (ibid). Hamas, in the elections of 2006, won a substantial majority of seats on the Palestinian Legislative Council, with Fatah lagging in second place. As a result, Fatah controlled the presidency, and Hamas controlled both the legislative branch and the cabinet. Afterwards, both parties repeatedly failed to reach an agreement to share the government. This resulted in the split of the Palestinian Authority in 2007, where Hamas took absolute control of Gaza Strip, while Fatah controlled the West Bank. The PA became two separate authorities, both seeing themselves as the legitimate representatives of the Palestinian people (Brown, 2010). In 2011, a treaty called The Cairo Reconciliation Agreement was signed by both parties in an attempt to unite them. Nonetheless all the negotiations were ceased after the UN upgraded the Palestinian status to an observer state (ibid). Brown (2010) argues that the gap between Fatah and Hamas is generally seen as a division between a religious ideology (Hamas), and a secular one (Fatah). The latter has emphasized on nationalist symbols, unlike Hamas, which was created in as the Islamic Resistance Movement and as an extension to the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. In an addition, Hamas based its hostility against Israel on religious bases, even though, as Brown (2010) mentions, Hamas' religious struggle with Israel has turned more political in the recent years.
4.2.2 The Blockade of the Gaza Strip:

Israel and Egypt have implemented a land, air and sea blockade of the Gaza Strip since 2007 as a consequence to the takeover of Hamas. The blockade resulted in economic sanctions against the PA, as Hamas is considered a terrorist organization by the United States and Israel. Moreover, after Hamas seized all governmental institutions replacing Fatah in the Gaza Strip, Egypt and Israel sealed the border crossing with Gaza as they claimed that security was no longer guaranteed from the Palestinian side (Roy, 2007). The Israeli government claims that the blockade is compulsory to limit Palestinian rocket attacks from the Gaza Strip, even though the blockade prohibits food, medicine, goods or even people from entering or leaving the area (ibid). The blockade continues until this day, although Israel allowed some humanitarian aid to enter the strip in 2010. Nevertheless, between the years 2007-2012 nearly 2,300 Palestinians have been killed and 7,700 injured by Israeli forces, about two thirds of them during Operation Cast Lead, which was the Israeli invasion of Gaza in 2008. During the operation, 37 Israelis were killed and 380 injured in rocket attacks launched from Gaza (Roy, 2007). The war ended with a unilateral ceasefire.

Another war erupted in Gaza, when the Israeli forces launched Operation Pillar of Defense in 2012, when Israel bombarded Gaza for several days, and the military wing of Hamas fired several rockets targeting different cities in Israel. The escalation occurred after the Israeli military forces assassinated the head of the military wing of Hamas, who they blamed for rocket attacks into southern Israel. The eight day war ended in a cease fire agreement, which was sponsored by the Egyptian president at the time. However, the cease fire agreement became under threat of collapsing a year later due to increased tension and confrontation between incidents between Islamic Jihad (another Islamic political party in Gaza) and the Israeli troops in December 2013.

4.3 Diverging views on the conflict:

The Israeli and Palestinian societies have both developed narratives about the conflict that Tal & Salomon (2006) explain as “Ethos”. Ethos is defined as central societal shared beliefs that
provide a dominant orientation in the society, which also sets the epistemic basis for the present direction of a society. The authors continue to explain that the structure and functioning of the society is based on coherent and comprehensive beliefs that justify the system and patterns of knowledge. The perception of conflict is a form of ethos, where it shapes the fundamental beliefs of the people. Ethos provides a clear picture of the conflict and an image of one’s own group and the rival group (Tal & Salomon, 2006).

4.3.1 Israeli views on the conflict:

There is a common belief in the Jewish community that the return to the land of Israel is an existentialist need after 2000 years of exile (Roy, 2007). The majority of Israelis consider their existence in Israel as their absolute right. Many believe that the Jewish nation has its roots in Israel and despite thousands of years in exile, they were able to linger close and keep spiritual ties with their homeland (Tal & Salomon, 2006). Another widespread belief is the Jewish right to create their own state, especially after their persistent experiences with anti-Semitism in the Diaspora that resulted in the holocaust (ibid). Therefore, the occupation of Palestine, including the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, was justified by the majority of Israelis as their right to retain these territories. Consequently, the majority of the Israelis refute the Palestinian claims of owning lands in the West Bank or the Gaza Strip (Tal & Salomon, 2006). The Palestinian state was denied by the majority of Israelis, as they claimed that the Palestinians are part of Arab nations and Palestine never existed (Tal & Salomon, 2006). Moreover, most Israelis question the Palestinians' attachment to their land. The majority of Israelis claim that the land was neglected by the Palestinians, and the Jewish people came back and cultivated it (ibid). Roy (2007) explains that the need for security for the Jewish citizens is another reason why most Israelis support the army. This is because all the neighboring countries are considered hostile to Israel, and an army is needed since Israel is in a constant state of war. On the other hand, the Israelis' persistence on Jerusalem as the capital of Israel comes from the belief that the *Old Temple* was built in Jerusalem. The old Temple has a high religious significance in Judaism, but it was destroyed during history and Islamic religious icons were built on top of it (Tal & Salomon, 2006).
4.3.2 Palestinian views:

Jawad (2009) explains that the majority of the Palestinian society shares a contradictory view with the Israeli society of the conflict. Historically, the Palestinians believe that they are the rightful owners of the land, as they have lived there for thousands of years under several military rules during history – examples include the Ottomans and the British- (Jawad, 2006). The author continues to explain that the Palestinians view themselves as deeply rooted and connected to the land of Palestine, and that they existed long before the Jewish presence in the area. Palestinians also believe that the Jewish presence was marginal even in biblical times and was absent for 2000 years. According to Pressman (2003), the majority of the Palestinian society believes in the importance of Jerusalem as a symbol to their religious identity, since Jerusalem has a major role in the Islamic and Christian religions throughout history. Moreover, the vast majority of the Palestinians perceive Israelis as illegitimate occupants who took over their land by ethnic cleansing (Pressman, 2003). The Palestinians view the conflict as Israelis are the oppressors and themselves the oppressed. (Jawad, 2006). The core of this belief is behind the incident of Al-Nakba in 1948, where hundreds of thousands of Palestinian civilians, who were mainly peasants, got expelled from their lands by the armed Israeli militant forces and never have been allowed to return (Jawad, 2006). Nonetheless, Jawad (2006) states that the Palestinians view their resistance against the Israelis as their ultimate right to gain their freedom and end the Israeli occupation and oppression.

However, where the state of Palestine should be established as a matter that divides the Palestinians. They are those Palestinians who believe that a Palestine state should be established over the whole of historical Palestine; and those who are content to have their state in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip.

4.4 The role of Israeli and Palestinian media:

According to Slater (2007), the Israeli and the Palestinian media are considered tools of war, as both sides recognize the important role they play and the influence they have in the media both
locally and internationally. Israelis and Palestinians are both aware of the importance of the international audience in their conflict, each side playing the role of victims and displaying the other side as the oppressor. However, the Palestinians being the weaker side depend heavily on the international media to convey their struggle to persuade the international community to intervene in the conflict on their behalf (Wolfsfeld, 2003).

Furthermore, Dor (2004) shows that the Palestinians' main role in their media is to publish images of their casualties and suffering in order to expose the actions of the Israeli troops and damage the Israeli relationships with the United States and Europe. While the main goal in the Israeli media continues to label the Palestinian actions as terrorism to gain more international support (Dor, 2004). In other words, the most salient feature of the Israeli Palestinian media is the contest for domination and expressing the suffering of their people. For example, in the Second Intifada, there were two powerful images that were both extremely exploited by the two sides. The first images were taken of Palestinian boy “Mohammad Al Dorra”, as he was trying to hide from the Israeli fire, by sitting on his injured father’s lap, who tried to protect him unsuccessfully. The boy was eventually killed. The second images were the killing of Israeli soldiers by Palestinian civilians in the center city of Ramallah. The images were used extensively by the Israeli and the Palestinian media to show the brutality of the enemy (Wolfsfeld, 2003).

Wolfsfeld (2003) discusses the differences in approaches within the Palestinian media. He argues that the media owned by the PA -or independently owned-, uses different approaches than the media owned by Islamic groups such as Hamas. Where the latter did not focus on the international audience as the former, but rather adopted the media tactics of Hezbollah in Lebanon, where the Palestinian suicide bombers and martyrs are glorified and praised for injuring or killing Israelis.

In the Israeli media, Slater (2007) highlights an important feature of the leftist press, such as Haaretz. The author says that despite the pro-Israeli reporting of Haaretz, many news commentaries and articles were able to criticize the Israeli policies and actions, such as the building of settlements and the brutal treatment of the Palestinians. However, the Israeli state owned media, or the Right-wing media, such as the JP, mainly focuses on magnifying the actions of the Palestinians in the frame of terrorism and justify to a certain extent the actions of the
Israeli army (Slater, 2007). Another important feature explained by Wolfsfeld (2003) of the Palestinian and Israeli media is demonizing the enemy, where most press articles follow the trend of putting the deaths of “our” side on the front page with details, while “their” deaths are barely mentioned.

Consequently, the general trends of the media on the Israeli and the Palestinian sides are cultures that reinforce hatred toward the other, where there are some exceptions of self-criticism. For example, in Haaretz, many journalists have repeatedly highlighted the moral issues of the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza strip and how it destroys the Palestinian lives (Slater, 2007). Another example of Maan, where many articles have criticized the suicide bombing, as Israeli civilians should not be the target of the Palestinian resistance (Dor, 2004).

Over the years, both the Palestinian and Israeli media have been criticized for their portrayal of the conflict and war with insignificant efforts to promote peace. This can be noted during the Oslo Accords, where most media from both sides focused on the ongoing conflict between the parties on the ground, rather than the peace progress in the negotiations (Wolfsfeld, 2003). Though, at a certain point the media coverage was concerned with signing ceremonies, which provided both societies with real hop that was short lived as this was soon replaced with a new crises. Wolfsfeld (2003) argues that news media play a crucial role in escalating violence by their emphasis on emotions that can bring about a major wave of anger against the enemy and calls for actions of revenge.
5. Description of the Empirical Material:

The unit of analysis for this research relies on press articles from four media outlets. Two from local Israeli online newspapers, Haaretz and JP and two from local Palestinian online news agencies, Maan and Al Ray. The reason the empirical material is a mixture of newspapers and news agencies is that there aren’t well-known Palestinian newspapers or Israeli news agencies that are published in English. Thus I had to collect my empirical material based on the criterion of language. Moreover, each news outlet used in this research has dealt extensively with the recent escalation between the Israeli forces and the Palestinians in Gaza in December, 2013.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>News outlet</th>
<th>Haaretz</th>
<th>The Jerusalem Post</th>
<th>Al Ray</th>
<th>Maan News Agency</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of articles</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 Outline of the Analyzed Articles

The Sample of this study, as presented in table 2, consists of 31 press articles gathered throughout the period 20\textsuperscript{th}-25\textsuperscript{th} of December 2013. I collected my corpora through online search in the archives of the news outlets, using such keywords as: Gaza, fire, Hamas, escalation and rockets. In other words, I have searched all the online archives of articles in my four sources using the five keywords in the six days period. As a result, I ended up with seven articles from Al-Ray news agency, ten articles from Maan, six articles from Haaretz Newspaper and eight articles from JP. It is important to note that the starting date of my research, December 20\textsuperscript{th}, marks the beginning of the escalation of violence in Gaza, where the Israeli forces killed a Palestinian youth and wounded his brother in northern Gaza strip, which later resulted in back and forth violence between the Palestinian movements and the Israeli forces. Also the last date of my research, 25\textsuperscript{th} of December marks the peak of violent events between the two sides, where the Israeli forces killed a Palestinian toddler and injured tens of people, and Palestinian rockets hit a southern city in Israel.

The 31 articles were chosen using systematic sampling, only press articles that has the five keywords (Gaza, fire, Hamas, escalation and rockets) during the six days period were analyzed. Furthermore, all the articles examined in this study were hard news, in order to make the comparison between the four news agencies accurate. Hard news articles are written in a serious tone that covers current events such as war and crime. Also hard news articles are written in the format of a headline, lead and body.

The method of analysis is a critical discourse analysis (see Methodology Chapter), thus I chose limited number of days to get limited number of articles, in order to make a more in depth analysis possible. This is in line with qualitative research that tends to use comparatively small samples in order to focus more on content rather than on numbers (Deacon, 1999).

Hence, in this study the sample selection serves the aim of comparing journalistic practices in parallel situations in the near past of the two conflicting societies, Israeli and Palestinian. Additionally, the sample selection is used to compare the differences between journalistic practices within these two societies. For example, between the left wing media and the right wing media. The chosen sample has an important comparison component, because similar events are reported by four different news outlets but in different approaches.

### 5.1 Sources of the empirical material:

*Haaretz* is the oldest Israeli daily newspaper founded in 1918 by Leib Yaffe under the British Mandate of Palestine. It is published online and accessible in Hebrew, English and Arabic. Haaretz is considered one of the most influential Israeli daily newspapers, and known for its liberal- left wing position in foreign and domestic affairs (Caspi& Limor, 1999). Articles from
Haaretz online newspaper are analysed in the research as an example of the ideology of the Israeli-left wing in media discourse, As Caspi & Limor describes Haaretz as the most liberal newspaper in Israel with its left-wing ideology.

*The Jerusalem Post* (JP) is an Israeli daily newspaper published in English. It was founded in 1932 by Gershon Agron under the British Mandate with the name Palestine Post. However, in 1950, two years after the creation of the state of Israel, it was renamed to JP (Caspi & Limor, 1999). JP also publishes an online edition that was founded in 1996, which is the website I used to retrieve the journalistic articles. According to Caspi & Limor (1999) the newspaper history had multiple shifts in political orientation from left-wing to right-wing, and now it is considered one of the Israeli newspapers that support conservative, right-wing ideology.

*Maan News Agency* (Maan) is a non-governmental organization created in 2002 in the Palestinian territories. Maan owns nine local televisions and radio stations, in addition to an online news website that publishes news in Arabic, English and Hebrew. Maan is considered one of the largest independent Palestinian media with over three million visits per month (Sienkiewicz, 2010). Foreign donors are the main source of funding for the Maan network and news agencies, which makes it an independent media from the Palestinian political movements (Sienkiewicz, 2010). Maan is a valid sample for my research to compare the ideology of this network in the media discourse to Israeli news agencies and Palestinian agencies funded by political parties.

*Al Ray* news agency was launched recently, in February 2013. It was founded by Hamas, which is the Palestinian political party that rules the Gaza strip. Al Ray is considered as the official source of information of the Hamas government and political movement (Benari, 2013). Even though many other news agencies in the Gaza strip share the ideology of Hamas, but I chose Al Ray as the only official source that reports under the name of Hamas government. Al Ray will serve this study by comparing its articles to Maan, JP and Haaretz. It is also crucial to mention that Al Ray agency was opened recently, thus it was not included in any previous analysis before. Therefore, it will be interesting to analyze the reporting language and study the potential role of this media in the recent conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinian in the Gaza Strip.
6. Analysis

In my research, I chose CDA as my methodology. Although there are many approaches to conduct CDA on media texts, I chose a combination of Ruth Wodak’s Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA) and Theo Van Leeuwen’s systemic-functional model of representation of social actors. I saw the former and the later as most appropriate to analyze Palestinian and Israeli articles. The analytical part of this study operated within two level of analysis; thematic analysis and in depth analysis. However, I have explained in details the steps and categories of analysis in the Methodology Chapter. Moreover, the specific discourse analytical approach applied in this study referred to three-dimensional methods, where the first method of analysis consisted of entry level analysis. The second method, analyzed discursive strategies, including argumentation strategies. The third method, which investigated the representation of social actors, will be examined last on the corpora.

6.1 Entry Level Analysis:

During an entry-level examination, a set of discourse topics were mapped out in articles. Topics summarized the most important information and helped presenting the thematic structure of the text. In the analysis, designations of key topics for each text were outlined to establish a map of topics of discourse, thus allowing for recontextualization of topics. In other words, each discourse topic in the text had several subtopics. I mapped the discourse topics and macro topics of each article, and then placed all the topics of the articles in one map and established a map of topics. In the following figure 1, I illustrated the discourse topics map of Al Ray, where the seven articles are scrutinized into discourse topics that were illustrated in the big circle in the middle and macro topics as smaller circles.
Figure 1 Thematic analysis of the Al Ray corpus

Al Ray articles all shared three common discourse topics; *Israeli air strikes on Gaza, Israeli gunfire on Gaza* and *Israeli violation against people in Gaza*. But two of the seven articles shared the lateral discourse topics, with an addition to two discourse topics; *Israeli government closes Rafah crossing and Israel threatens to cut foreign aid to Gaza*. These topics were written in green font, as these two topics were exclusively present in Al Ray, and is absent in the topics of the other analyzed news outlets. All seven articles shared similar topical structure but with slight differences in information presented in the macro-topics. In other words, topics of the articles
shown in the diagram summarized the texts, and specified the important information in the content. Furthermore, the thematic analysis from the Al Ray corpora illustrated the interdiscursive and intertextual relationships between discourse topics and macro-topics. In this diagram, interdiscursivity is indicated by the discourse topics that are presented in the circle in the middle, showing the intersection of discourses inside the articles. Moreover, intertextual relationships in general were represented in micro topics, which were illustrated in smaller circles inside the diagram that are common and shared between different articles. Thus, thematic reference of one text to another was represented in the common macro-topics. The same approach of thematic analysis was performed on the other news outlets (Haaretz, Maan, and JP), as illustrated in the following figures:

Figure 2 Thematic analysis of the Maan corpus
In figure 2, I illustrated the discourse topics map of Maan, where the ten articles were scrutinized into discourse topics that were illustrated in the big circle in the middle and macro topics as smaller circles. The exclusive discourse topics in Maan were *mourning the Palestinian casualties* and *condemning the Israeli airstrikes*, which were presented in the green topics inside the big circle. Furthermore, the majority of the Maan articles demonstrated interdiscursivity by the intertextual relationship between the two common discourse topics, *Israeli airstrikes on Gaza*, and *Israeli gunfire on Gaza* and the macro-topics of the articles, which were represented by the smaller circles.

Figure 3 Thematic analysis of the Haaretz corpus
The discourse topics in the articles of Haaretz were represented in figure 3. Most of the discourse topics are shared themes with the other three news sources, except for the exclusive topic of the Israeli troops kill an innocent Palestinian man. This discourse topic was represented in several macro-topic in one article. Thus allowing intertextuality.

**Figure 4 Thematic analysis of the JP corpus**
The JP corpus had several exclusive discourse topics such as *Palestinians trying to plant bombs across border* or *Israeli minister threatens Hamas*. The discourse topics were discussed and recontextualized in more than one articles throughout the JP corpora.

As a summary, the two discourse topics; *Israeli airstrikes on Gaza, and Israeli gunfire on Gaza* are common in all the four news outlets, where they were presented in every article across the period of six days. However, other discourse topics and macro-topics differ significantly in the articles regardless of the two shared discourse topics. For example, in one of Haaretz news article, the main discourse topics are the two shared topics plus the *Palestinian escalation of terror attacks*, and the *Israeli right to self-defense*. In contrast for Maan, where the same discourse topic was presented, *Israeli air strikes on Gaza*, but with an addition to another discourse topic, which is the *mourning of Palestinian casualties*, and a macro-topic of the *Israeli excessive force against* Palestinians. The Palestrtinian thematic maps and the Isareli thematic maps were summarized in the following diagram:

*Figure 5 Discourse topics of the Analyzed Israeli Newspapers*
As shown in figure 5, the two analyzed Israeli newspapers share all the discourse topics written in black font, but Haaretz exclusively incorporate the discourse topic; *Israeli defense forces kill an innocent Palestinian man*, which is also shared by the two Palestinian news agencies as a macro-topic in their articles. JP, on the other hand, share three exclusive discourse topics as mentioned above, that are not featured in any of the other three news outlets.

As shown in figure 6, the Palestinian news agencies share only two discourse topics, *Condemning Israeli airstrikes on Gaza and Rockets from Gaza hit Israel and Israeli violations against people in Gaza*. However, the two news agencies share similar macro-topics as illustrated in figure 1 and figure 2, but they differ in the thematic topics.

Intertextuality again is apparent in the linkage of texts to other texts, for example; through the reference of same casualties and events, where most of the articles in the corpora include the same list of casualties but in different order. Moreover, the reappearance of same discourse topics and arguments throughout the articles, which is described as recontextualization is salinet
in the articles. For example, the killing of the Isareli employee is recontextualized in the Isareli newspapers as the main reason behind the escalation of violence in Gaza, which runs oppositely to the Palestinian newsagencies, where the same event is used to illustrate the Isareli use of excessive force against the Palestinians.

6.2 In depth analysis:

Discursive strategies or strategies of self-and other presentation are adopted in this study to highlight the particular social, political and linguistic aim embedded in the articles. A more detailed explanation of discursive strategies can be found in the Methodology Chapter. According to (Wodak, 2001), the analysis will help answering the following questions; how are the characters in the articles referred to linguistically? What are the traits and features attributed to them? What are the argumentation schemes used to justify the exclusion of other characters? Are the respective utterances intensified or mitigated? These questions will be answered by analyzing the following discursive strategies:

6.2.1 Discursive Strategies of Self- and Other Presentation:

A) Nomination and prediction strategy: nomination is the construction of in-groups and out – groups, and prediction is the labeling of social actors more or less positively or negatively. These two strategies were salient in all the articles examined in this study. For example, Al Ray reported on Dec. 25th: Israeli occupation army launched air raid, where the word occupation by default alienated the Israeli army, and portrayed them as the enemy and out group. The phrase Israeli occupation was used throughout the articles of Al Ray. In the same article Al Ray wrote; three-year-old girl, Hala Buhairi, was killed and her mother and brother injured in an Israeli bombing. This was an illustration of the construction of in groups, where “our” casualties had names as they are humans, and the “out-groups were the reason behind our suffering. To take an opposite example in JP, as they reported on Dec. 23th: Israeli Defense Forces wound Palestinian trying to plant bomb along Gaza-Israel fence. Also Haaretz reported on Dec. 25th:
The Israeli Defense Forces struck targets in the Gaza Strip. The Israeli forces in JP and Haaretz are portrayed as defense forces rather than occupation forces. Thus, they are the in-group. The Palestinian who tried to plant the bomb or the Palestinians injured during the airstrikes were the out groups and the enemies. The Palestinians in the two phrases had no names and were seen as one entity rather than individuals. Al Ray and JP had salient features of nomination strategies, where the word citizens were only used for their in-groups. Al Ray reported on Dec. 25th: *Israeli occupation artillery shelled on citizens’ land in Eastern Gaza.* In the same article, Al Ray wrote, An *Israeli army spokeswoman said an Israeli man was killed.* JP on Dec. 21st used the same strategy: A *civilian working for the Defense Ministry was shot and killed from Palestinian sniper fire.* In the same article, JP wrote: A *Palestinian man was killed during an Israeli military operation.* This leads to a conclusion that the word “citizen” is often affiliated with innocence, and only “our” in-groups are innocent, thus the out-group cannot be referred to as citizens.

Moving to Maan, the strategies of nomination are presented differently. Maan did not refer to the Israeli army as occupation army, but as Israeli troops or forces. This is interesting as Israel in the perspective of this news agency is no longer an occupation but a legal state. However, nomination strategies were apparent in the categorization of characters, where the Palestinian characters were given names and priority in the articles. Maan reports on Dec.21st: *22-year-old Ismail Najjar was injured in Khan Younis.* Another feature used to construct the out-groups in Maan and in Al Ray was the use of quotation marks on words or phrases stated by the Israeli officials. This was a tool to question the credibility of the source. For example, Al Ray reports on Dec.25th “The *Israeli Minister Moshe Yaa’alon said that the decision based on “security reasons” in a wake of recent escalation in the Gaza Strip.”* It reports on Dec.21st: “An *Israeli spokeswoman said the man was killed while doing “maintenance” work on the border,”*. Maan reported on the same day: ”*An Israeli spokeswoman said Palestinian “terrorists” tried to conceal an explosive device.*” These quotation marks were not used in the statements of Palestinian officials. Maan wrote on Dec.25th, “*Spokesman of the Gaza ministry of Health said that Hala Abu Sheikha, 3, was killed and her mother and brother injured in an Israeli airstrike*”.

As to Haaretz articles, most of the characters in the texts are Israeli spokesman or government officials, which was also the case with JP. There were few Palestinian sources cited, in contrast
for the Palestinian news agencies where they cited Israeli sources, but at the end of the articles. This was also a part of nomination strategy, where only the in-groups were the credible sources. Another feature connected to the strategy of nominations is prediction. The lateral is apparent in both Israeli newspapers, with negative traits attributed to the Palestinians. An example taken from Haaretz on Dec. 23th, “Hamas and Islamic Jihad praised Sunday’s bus bombing”, labeling the out groups (Hamas and Jihad) as inhumane entities who praise the death of the Israelis. This was also a stereotypical trait used by the two Israeli newspapers. “Terrorism incidents are the continuation of previous attacks”, which were sentences written by Haaretz on Dec.21st. In this phrase, Haaretz associated Palestinian violence with terrorism. But it portrayed the Israeli violence as an act of self-defense, as could be seen in the following quote written on the same day, “The Israeli Defense Forces struck targets in the Gaza Strip on Tuesday in retaliation for the cross-border shooting earlier in the day”. JP used the same prediction strategies, as it reported on Dec.20th, “The Israeli Defense Forces fired at a Palestinian man attempting to plant an explosive”. The Palestinians were linked to terrorism and explosives and they were source of threat to the Israelis.

Maan and Al Ray used similar prediction strategies towards the out-groups, where the phrase Israeli troops were always followed by violent events or destruction. For example, an article published by Al Ray on Dec. 22nd wrote: “Israeli violations against Gaza fishermen have not stopped since early 2013”, or “Israeli occupation army artillery shelled on citizens”.

B) **Intensification, Mitigation**: the strategies where events or incidents are either amplified or reduced. These strategies are used often in conflict reporting, where the casualties and destruction of the in-groups are intensified, but the sufferings of the out-groups are marginalized. An illustration of this strategy was notable on the headlines of the articles. For example, on Dec.25th, the headline Haaretz article was: “Israel strikes Gaza after Defense Ministry employee killed in border shooting”. But in Maan, the same event is reported on the same day by the following headline, “Israeli airstrikes a criminal Christmas gift to Gaza”. Al Ray wrote on the same day “Two, including 3-year-old girl, killed, 14 injured in Israeli airstrike across Gaza”. JP published this headline for the same incident “Israeli Defense Forces strikes six Gaza targets in retaliation to shooting of Defense Ministry employee”. In all the Israeli newspapers articles, the
Israeli casualties were granted the entire leads. Palestinian casualties were the center of all the articles in the Palestinian news agencies. For example, Maan wrote two articles out of the ten analyzed to mourn the Palestinian victims. However, it is important to note that Haaretz wrote an article on Dec.25th with the headline “Gazan killed by IDF was collecting scrap-not damaging border fence, says brother”. This is a unique example of intensifying the casualties of the out-groups and portraying them as victims and not as terrorist.

In a similar situation, Maan reported in an article written on Dec.23rd “Gaza rockets hits Israel, no injuries”. Al Ray, on the other hand, decided to ignore the reporting of the incident.

C) **Perspectivation:** A strategy that expresses involvement of the author by reporting, description, or quotation of events and utterances. The four media outlets used the strategy of perspectivation, by the author’s or the editor’s selection of the event and quotation throughout the articles. Al Ray used this strategy by highlighting all the Israeli actions against the Palestinians in their articles in a chronological order. The strategy was used to emphasize the ongoing Israeli violations against the Palestinians. This was also similar to Maan’s approach. This strategy framed the author as a pro-Palestinian, where he or she only focused on describing and narrating the Palestinian side of the story, without any references to the Israeli side. Maan, in contrast to Al-Ray and Israeli newspapers, focused on mourning the Palestinian casualties and reporting their funerals and quoting their families. This was used to show the author’s empathy with the Palestinian victims. Also, Al Ray articles used Israeli officials’ statements, only if they are threatening the Palestinians, or if they are reporting an Israeli causality. Also Al Ray quotes only officials from the government of Gaza, such as the spokesman of Health Ministry, or doctors from a local hospital and local humanitarian groups. Moving to Haaretz, where the narration and description of the articles are opposite to the Palestinian news agency, and the authors focused on the Israeli- narration and Israeli casualties. Most of the quoted statements in the articles were ministers and army spokespeople. Only one articles quoted the brother of a Palestinian causality and a Palestinian human rights group. JP shared a lot with Haaretz and the pro-Israeli perspective. JP also focused on quoting Hamas officials and framing them as a threat. Also JP author’s quoted right-wing Israelis officials other than the army and ministers such as Knesset finance committee chairman, and Knesset speaker.
D) **Argumentation:** the strategy of different forms of political inclusion or exclusion can be discussed inter alia by means of topoi, which is the justification or positive or negative attributions. In the corpora of 31 articles, different topoi were used to connect arguments with conclusion. Each discourse topic presented in the article was linked with an argumentation strategy of one or more topoi. The list of topoi and discourse topics are presented below in table (3).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media source</th>
<th>Discourse topic</th>
<th>List of topoi</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Al Ray</td>
<td>-Israeli airstrikes on Gaza</td>
<td>- Numbers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Israeli gunfire on Gaza</td>
<td>- Responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Israeli government closes Rafah crossing</td>
<td>-Danger and threat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Israel threatens to cut Aid</td>
<td>-Humanitarianism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Israeli violations against people in Gaza</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maan News Agency</td>
<td>-Rockets from Gaza hit Israel</td>
<td>- Responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Israeli airstrike on Gaza</td>
<td>-Numbers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Israeli gunfire on Gaza</td>
<td>-Humanitarianism</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Israeli violations against people in Gaza</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haaretz</td>
<td>Israeli airstrike on Gaza</td>
<td>-Defense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Israeli employee killed in Gaza</td>
<td>-Danger and threat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Escalation of Palestinian terror attacks</td>
<td>-Responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Jerusalem Post</td>
<td>-Palestinian trying to plant bomb along Israel- Gaza fence</td>
<td>-Danger and threat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rockets from Gaza hit Israel</td>
<td>-Responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Palestinian terror group claim responsibility for the death of Israeli citizen</td>
<td>-Defense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Israeli airstrike on Gaza</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 3 Relationships between Discourse Topics and Topoi in the Analyzed Corpora*
The topos of numbers was used by the two Palestinian news agencies. For example, Al Ray stated in the article written on Dec.23rd:

“The number of Palestinian fatalities in the Gaza Strip during the first 11 months of 2013 decreased by 96 percent compared to 2012 (267 vs. 10)”.

In this example, the author of the article was using the argument of numbers to illustrate the need to stop the escalation of violence in Gaza. The comparison between the numbers 267 and 10 was used to show the dangerous consequences of the latest round of violence. The author was trying to argue that the number of fatalities decreased, so it is important to keep their numbers low. And the recent escalation of violence should stop, or else, the number of fatalities will rise again to the level it was at 2012.

Maan used topos of numbers in the following example

“There are 4,000 fishermen in Gaza. According to a 2011 report by the international Committee of the Red Cross 90 percent are poor, an increase of 40 percent from 2008 and a direct result of Israeli limits on the fishing industry.”(Maan, December 22, 2013).

The topos of numbers is used in these articles to reach the conclusion that a specific action should be performed in order to stop the increasing of these numbers. Maan’s topos of numbers is used to call for an action to stop the Israeli violations against Palestinian fishermen. The author stated that a significant percentage of fishermen in Gaza 90% were poor. This percentage of poor fishermen was linguistically constructed in a sentence to blame the Israeli restrictions on fishermen.

The topos of responsibility was common between the four media outlets. Each outlet used the argumentation of responsibility differently to reach the same conclusion. All of the media outlets blamed the out group as the responsible party for the reemergence of violence in the Gaza Strip. People and government should, therefore, act responsibly in order to put an end for the problem. In figure 7, the topos of responsibility is illustrated with example from each media outlet.
Al Ray Reports:

“Israeli violations against Gaza fishermen have not stopped since early 2013. Most recently, Israeli gunboats opened fire on 27th November at Palestinian fishing boats, which were a nautical mile away off the Gaza port west of Rafah city.” (Al Ray, December 22, 2013).

The topos of responsibility was used in this article to blame the Israeli side for all the violations against the Palestinian fishermen. The author constructed the sentences to frame the Israelis as responsible for the situation in the sea for more than a year. Also a recent incident was mentioned to sustain the argument.

Maan Reports:

“Israeli forces frequently shoot at farmers and other civilians inside the Gaza Strip if they approach large swathes of land near the border that the Israeli military has deemed off-limits.” (Maan, December 20, 2013)
The author of this sentence blamed the Israelis for the responsibility of civilians’ death. Maan used the word, frequently, to show how often such incidents occur. The sentence was also constructed to highlight the responsible party behind the killing of farmers and civilians.

Haaretz reported on Dec. 24th: “Defense Ministry hold Hamas responsible for the shooting and for the rocket attacks.” In this sentence, Haaretz put the responsibility on the Palestinian side, by using the statement of Israeli Defense Ministry. This sentence used the topos of responsibility through direct accusations for the Palestinian side. Unlike the examples taken from the Palestinian news sources, where they used facts to hold the other side responsible.

JP reports:

“Terrorism incidents are the continuation of previous attacks, most of which are the result of a lone attacker, or one who has been influenced by the hatred that exists in the Palestinian authority against Israel.”(JP, December 24, 2013).

In this example, JP holds the Palestinians responsible for all the terrorism incidents that occurred over indefinite period of time. The main argument of responsibility used in this sentence was the hatred that existed in the PA, which was reflected on the Palestinian people.

Another topos that appeared in the majority of the Palestinian articles is the topos of humanitarianism. This topos is used to argue that the Israeli actions in the Gaza Strip does not conform to human rights, thus there should be actions to stop it. Maan reported on Dec. 25th “Hamas spokesman called the Israeli airstrikes that killed 3-year-old Hala Abu Sbeikh in central Gaza a war crime”. The use of the phrase “war crime” was to suggest the Israeli violations against Geneva Convention. The main argument in this sentence was that the killing of a 3-year-old girl does not conform to humanitarian conventions.

Another example from Al-Ray:”


This sentence is similar to the previous example. The author quoted human rights group as a credible source to accuse Israel of violations of human rights.
Moving to the topos of danger and threat, which was used by three media outlets (Haaretz, JP and Al-Ray) as one of the main topos in their articles. The topos of danger and threat argue for the conclusion that if there was a specific danger or threat, one should do something against it. Al-Ray used this argumentation strategy in the following example:

“This Israel will use the economy card now as the Gaza people have to no outlets except Karem Abu Salem crossing, which Israel controls”. (Al Ray, December 25, 2013).

This sentence pointed out the real danger behind the Israeli control of the crossing. The argumentation of threat is formulated that if the Israelis closed the crossing, the people in Gaza will be completely isolated.

Haaretz stated in its article on Dec. 22nd. “If Gaza wants it to be quit, it must remain quit, otherwise it will suffer the consequences of the unrest many times over.” The author used this sentence as a direct threat to the Palestinians. The author argued in the words of an Israeli official that if the Palestinian terror won’t stop, Gaza will never see peaceful days again.

Moreover, JP emphasized on the topos of danger and threat in most of its articles, for example, JP reported on Dec. 20th, “Incidents reported throughout the weekend involving Palestinians approaching border to carry out suspicious activity”. This sentence used the argumentation of threat and danger. The Palestinians were seen as one hostile entity that were moving towards the borders in the intention to harm the state of Israel. The use of word, suspicious, indicated for threat that will result in dangerous outcomes. Another example:

“The Iron Dome missile defense system was deployed again as a measure taken out of concern over potential rocket fore from Gaza amid heightened tensions in the region.”(JP, December 22, 2013).

This is another example of the topos of danger and threat. The Palestinians are seen as a threat to the security of the Israeli citizens. As a result, the defense system was deployed to protect the Israelis from the threat of the Palestinian rockets.
The last topos, defense, is exclusively and extensively used by the Israeli newspapers in their articles. The defense topos is used to argue for the right of self-defense in order to legitimize the actions of the Israeli troops. JP, wrote on Dec. 22nd:

“Over the weekend, the IDF opened fire on four separate occasions at Palestinians who entered the forbidden security zones near the fence and refused to vacate the area”.

This example was used to show the reason why the Israeli troops opened fire. This sentence suggested that the Israeli troops had the ultimate right to shoot the Palestinians, because they refused to obey the law. So the Palestinians were a potential threat, and they must be taken down, as means of self-defense.

A similar example written by JP on Dec. 21st:

“The airstrikes were in retaliation for the killing for a Defense Ministry contractor by Palestinian sniper fire on the Israeli-Gaza border earlier in the day”,

The same criterion is used in this example. The Palestinians are a threat because they harmed the Israelis, thus we should act to stop them. Another example used by Haaretz and JP together on Dec. 24th; “The strikes targets were a site to manufacture weapons, and a terrorism infrastructure site in southern Gaza.” This also used the same argument of defense. The Israelis stroked sites in Gaza that were dangerous to the security of Israel.

6.2.2 Representation of social actors:

This approach will assist me to speculate on some linguistic questions that are suggest by Van Leeuwen (2008). These questions are: how can ‘unworthy’ subjects be incriminated through the language structure itself? Who is assumed to be causing violence in a particular struggle? Whose side of the story is being retailed? How can text strategy extract one’s sympathies towards the ‘worthy’ victims or in-groups or on the contrary, increase one’s hostility towards the ideological enemy? I will answer these questions by the use of the following tools:

A) Foregrounding/ Backgrounding: This tool is used in all the articles through the corpora, where some actors are foregrounded, other are background in order to serve the media’s outlet aims. In Al Ray, most articles foregrounded the Israeli troops, and framed them as the essential characters that are causing violence. Examples included: “Israeli occupation launched”, “the
Israeli occupation artillery shelled”, “the Israeli occupation kill one”, Al Ray also foregrounded the Palestinian victims. It reported on Dec.23rd: “A Palestinian citizen was killed in an Israeli firing”. In the same article, Al Ray wrote: “A Palestinian man was shot dead and five other were injured”. Al Ray decided not to report some of the violent incidents caused by the Palestinians. For example in the incident of rocket firing towards southern Israel. Al Ray was the only news source who did not report such incident. An example of backgrounding the violent character of Palestinians is evident where this sentence was put at the end of Al Ray article on Dec.22nd: “The airstrikes come not long after an Israeli man was reported shot dead by a Palestinian sniper”. Also notice that the subject of the sentence is not the Palestinian sniper. Maan used a similar strategy as Al Ray, but only four out of ten use of Israeli troops were foregrounded. Maan used to foreground the Palestinian victims and spokesmen more often than Israeli troops. For example, Maan reported on Dec.21st “Thousands of Palestinians gathered in northern Gaza Saturday for the funeral of a man who was shot dead by Israeli forces”. Or another example:

“A rocket fired from the Hamas-ruled Gaza Strip in the early hours of Monday hit a southern Israel community without causing injuries.” (Maan, December 23, 2013)

Maan and Al Ray foregrounded the Palestinian officials and spokesman and placed them in the beginning of the articles or in the leads. At the same time they backgrounded the Israeli officials and positioned their statements at the end of the articles.

Moving to Haaretz, Most articles foregrounded the Israeli troops, regardless of the action they are engaged in. This is similar to JP where they started their lead with the subject “Israeli defense forces”. However, in Haaretz, the Palestinian casualties were also foregrounded in the articles. For example, on Dec.25th, Haaretz reported “3-year-old Palestinian killed as the Israeli Defense Forces attacks six targets in Gaza”. This was not the case for JP, where the Palestinian victims were usually backgrounded, for example this headline:

“IDF strikes six Gaza targets in retaliation to shooting of Defense Ministry employee”, is followed by a sentence written in a small font” Palestinian toddler reportedly killed, three Palestinians injured; Netanyahu warns” Don’t test Israeli’s resolve.” (JP, December 22, 2013).
B) **Suppression**: this tool tries to define which characters are being omitted or deleted from the sentence, by the use of the passive voice, thus deleting the use of the subject. Along the corpora, this tool was used only twice, by Maan on Dec. 22\textsuperscript{nd}: “A Palestinian man was shot dead and five others were injured in a number of incidents across the Gaza Strip”. The subject of this sentence was deleted, as the audience assumes that the cause of the suffering and violence in this context is the Israeli army. The other example is used by Haaretz on the same day: “Palestinian wounded as violent incidents continue on Gaza border”, where the subject, the Israeli army, is also deleted from this sentence for the sake of reducing their responsibility of the incident.

C) **Role allocation**: Role allocation is the most salient tool used in the articles as the Palestinian news sources agreed that the active actors in the recent escalation of Gaza are the Israelis. The passive actors and the victims are the Palestinian. On the contrary, the Israeli newspapers framed the Palestinians as the active actors and the Israelis as the passive ones. Role allocation in the corpora is summarized below in figure 8:

*Figure 8 Summary of role allocation in the Analyzed Articles*

Role allocation is part of representing social actors as victims or as criminals. Where the lateral is usually giving the active role and the victim is just undergoing the action of the criminal.
D) **Impersonalisation and functionalization:** it is the tool that indicates whether the social actors are being dehumanized by either abstraction or objectivation. Functionalization looks whether social actors are represented in terms of a certain activity. Maan and Al Ray, dehumanized the Israelis by constantly associating them with a violent activity as they were represented in their articles as Israeli forces, troops. Al Ray specifically refers to the Israelis as the occupation forces. This tool is used to impersonalize the Israelis and frame them as only militants or “monsters” who are attacking the Palestinians, rather than human individuals serving in the army. JP, Haaretz, and Maan referred to Palestinian in Gaza as “Gazans”, as a tool of objectivation. This means that the citizens of Gaza are no longer referred to as humans but in the name of the area they reside in. This suggested that they might have some kind of special traits, especially when Gazans are always linked with Hamas terror and Hamas rockets. Moreover, JP associated the Palestinians in most of their articles with terror activities, where the word Palestinian was constantly followed by actions such as planting bombs or firing rockets. However, JP dehumanized the Palestinian victims by portraying them as numbers and as collateral damage of the Israeli right to self-defense. In contrast to Haaretz, when sometimes it blamed the Israeli troops for civilian victims within the Palestinian side.
In the following figure, I summarized the representations of social actors in the analyzed articles:

**Figure 9 Summary of Representations of Social Actors in the Analyzed Articles.**
7. Conclusions:

This study had several purposes. The purpose of comparison between the two Israeli and two Palestinian news sources was to explore the effect of ideology on reporting approaches. Accordingly, the objectives of the study included the exploration of the role of the Israeli and Palestinian media in the recent escalation of violence in Gaza. In addition, this study sought to investigate and analyze the difference between the right wing media and left wing media in Israel, and the difference between Palestinian independent media, and Hamas-owned media. The results of the analysis outlined certain tendencies in media sources and confirmed some of the theories discussed in the theoretical Framework Chapter.

The critical discourse analysis of the four news sources confirmed the theory of van Dijk (1998) that discourse is crucial in the creation and distribution of ideologies. The language use, text and communication are primarily used by group members to learn, persuade, and convey ideologies. Where ideologies are belief systems shared by social groups to construct core identity and determine the relations to other social groups (van Dijk, 2006). The analysis of the 31 articles, illustrates the different approaches of reporting by the four news sources throughout the latest escalation of violence in Gaza during December, 2013.

A deeper understanding of the ideology of the social groups was crucial to determine the reasons behind the different approaches of reporting. One of the reasons is explained by the Marxist view on ideology that there is always an ideological battle between classes in the society for hegemony (Gramsci, 1991). However, in the context of this study, the classes can be replaced by the two sides of the conflict as well as by the right wing and the left wing media that report on such a conflict. Gramsci (1991) explained that hegemony is created by forming alliances with other classes. This can be translated in the agreement on fundamental ideologies between Maan and Al Ray in one hand, and between JP and Haaretz on the other hand. The agreement on core ideologies formed dominant ideologies among the Palestinian and Israeli communities, which provided the common sense for judgments. The interpretation of articles also agree with
Althusser’s (1971) phrase “Ideological State Apparatuses”. It is the reproduction of the ruling ideology without the repression of the state and, instead, by means in the media. Another important ideological concept by Althusser (1971) is the “imaginary relations” of individuals. This concept means that individuals are born conceptual subjects but are altered by their ruling Ideological State Apparatuses to be situated in this study for example, either pro-Israeli subjects or pro-Palestinian subjects, to generate a dominant ideology.

The connection between the analyzed articles and ideology can be seen through context models (van Dijk, 2006). Context models controlled the articles in general to make sure they are socially appropriate for their audience. Hence, context models can be ideologically biased depending on the social context, for example by the lexical choice in the discourse (ibid). In other words, the four media outlets circulated the dominant ideologies in their societies to make sure their content is appropriate for their audience. For example, Al Ray used the word occupation to describe Israel. JP described the Palestinians as violent people. The content of the discourse of the articles was controlled by subjective interpretations of the audience and authors. This related discourse to ideology by the mental models. Meaning that people understood a discourse if they were able to construct a model for it (van Dijk, 2006). Thus, news on the IPC produced basis of context models. The news were ideologically biased on the bases of the socially shared attitudes and ideologies. Context and mental models were salient through the analysis of discursive attitudes and representation of social actors. In which events or actors were described more or less negatively or positively, depending on the ideology of the media source. For more details about ideology and discourse please see Theoretical Framework Chapter.

Nationalism was one of the dominant ideologies that existed in the corpora. It can be seen in the Israeli nationalism, where it propagated the supremacy of the Israeli nation over the Palestinian people. This was evident in the articles of the Israeli newspapers, as they justified the killing of over six Palestinians as a natural consequence of the death of one Israeli. In other words, this created the sense of supremacy of Israeli blood. An Israeli causality is worthy of several Palestinian casualties. Furthermore, the Palestinian nationalism in the articles can be best described as “imagined communities”, which is the term introduced by Anderson (2006) (see Theoretical Framework Chapter). The articles in the Palestinian news sources circulated the
ideology of “imagined communities”, by persuading the audience that the Palestinian nation is worthy to die for, regardless of the inequality in the Palestinian lives.

The significance of ideologies as van Dijk (1998) suggests, is that they construct the core identity, self-image, actions, aims, values and norms of a social group. Ideologies also determine the relations of a group to other social groups. For example, the analysis of argumentation strategies in the press articles is a crucial part in constructing the identity and aims of a social group. For example the humanitarian and responsibility topoi represented in Al Ray and Maan determined that the Palestinians are the victims of the Israeli terrorism. On the other hand, danger & threat and self-defense topoi was used in JP and Haaretz. These topoi constructed the belief that Israel is the victim of this conflict, and it has the ultimate right to defend itself against the Palestinian terror. Thus, a deep understanding of the ideology of a social group is crucial since it may influence what is accepted as true or false. As ideologies form the basis of specific arguments (van Dijk,1998). For this reason, a deep understanding of the ideologies of Zionism, Islamism and nationalism, which are explained in the Theoretical Framework chapter, is a necessity. To help analyze the historical and social context of the discourse presented in the press articles. The importance of such ideologies tends to be explicit in case of conflict and resistance. Most individuals acquire these ideologies from the discourse of ideologues, taking into account the language use in discourse production in media that is influenced by the communicative situation and context of the language users (ibid). This is also prominent in this study, where regardless if the media was an extreme or liberal media, the Israeli media production is pro-Israeli , and the Palestinian media production is pro-Palestinian, in order to be part of the dominant ideology.

Moving away from ideologies, the analysis of the press articles also indicated the notion of war reporting, where the media becomes a battleground, and journalists are no longer observers of the conflict, but rather a part of it as the ideology behind news grows to be more salient than the news itself (Nohrstedt, 2009). This is analyzed earlier in the discursive strategy of perspectivation. The authors and editors of the articles subjectively framed and chose the content of the articles, to transform the media’s mission from a watchdog into a voice responsible to demoralize and dehumanize the enemy (Mral, 2006). This means that articles are no longer
written to inform the public, but are written to persuade the public to take an action and support one side of the conflict, which are explained in the analysis in the argumentation strategies, topoi.

War reporting can be analyzed like any discursive text in terms of use of language; this type of analysis makes the researcher aware of the power and effect of media discourse (Fairclough, 1999). It is crucial for this analysis to understand the role of participants in media in hiding or providing information, which is done through the analysis of representation of social actors. In this analysis, the social actors are investigated in terms of suppression, foregrounding, role allocation and impersonalisation. Media owners have the power to influence the readers’ knowledge and beliefs by selecting social actors and their role. As presented in the analysis, each media outlet used a different approach in presenting their social actors, and in assigning them specific roles. As a result of the representation of social actors’ analysis, it is a must to introduce the term “Othering”. It is the result of the struggle of individuals or groups to establish their own identity in relation to others, by emphasis on the differences between us and them, which is mostly established in a hierarchical way to reduce the Other’s position (Eide, 2002).

The four media outlets played a major role in the recent escalation of violence in Gaza by blaming the other party. This contributed to a reinforcement of boundaries that will eventually lead to more discrimination between the Palestinians and the Israelis (Eide, 2002). Othering is also another component of war journalism. The creation of a borderline between the other becomes a necessity in times of conflict, to distance the traits of the other from our culture. Also to exaggerate the differences in order to demonize the other and to portray the conflict of us-good- vs. them- evil- (Ottosen, 1995). A key indicator of Othering is the use of terminology and the choice of foregrounding or backgrounding the characters in the text, as shown in the analysis.

The analyzed articles from Al Ray and Maan revealed the differences and similarities between Hamas owned media and independent media. Through the use of language, both Palestinian news sources, emphasized on the representation of the Israelis as oppressors and the Palestinians as victims. Al Ray and Maan reported their articles to confirm the Palestinian view on the conflict (see Context Chapter). However, Al Ray shared a contradictory view with Maan regarding the Israeli State. Al Ray represented Israel as illegitimate occupation and Maan viewed
Israel as a legitimate state. The differences in the reporting of the two agencies described the division within the Palestinian community (see Context Chapter). They are those Palestinians who believe that a Palestinian state should be established on the whole historical Palestine (Jawad, 2006). This belief is conveyed through the articles of Al Ray, where the Israelis are only described as militants and occupation. Other Palestinians believe that their state should include the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This perception is circulated through the articles of Maan, and their acknowledgment of the State of Israel. However, it is crucial to highlight the representation of the people of Gaza by Maan, where they were referred to as “Gazans”. This representation can be linked to the Hamas- Fatah conflict, which is explained in details in the Context Chapter. The term “Gazans” can be interpreted as a method of objectivation, which is present when social actors are represented by means of reference to a place (Van Leeuwen, 2008). Another difference between Maan and Al Ray was in the thematic topics between the articles. Maan focused on mourning the Palestinian casualties, and reporting their funerals. Unlike Al Ray who ignored such articles. The reason behind this can be – may be not- that mourning casualties is interpreted as a sign of weakness. Maan operated from the West Bank, and is ruled by Fatah PA, so the casualties of the people in Gaza are not the responsibility of the PA. However, Al Ray is owned by Hamas, which governs Gaza. So the mourning of casualties can show a weakness of the authority in Gaza.

The analysis of Al Ray articles indicated a crucial shift in the reporting of Islamic-owned media. Wolfsfeld (2003), explained that in the Second Intifada, the media owned by Islamic groups such as Hamas adopted the media tactics of Hizbollah in Lebanon. Meaning that media did not focus on international audience, but rather focused on glorifying Palestinian martyrs and celebrating Isareli casualties. However, this was not true. Al Ray and Maan both focused on the international audience, by using argumentation strategies such as humanitarian and numbers topoi. Also they both did not use the word “ martyrs” when referreing to the Palestinian casualties. These interpretations are in agreement with (Brown, 2010) observation that Hamas religious struggle with Isarel is turning more political in the recent years ( see Context Chapter).
The articles analyzed from Haaretz and JP had a unified message that the Palestinians are the violent others. Both newspapers reported the events from the Israeli point of view, and described the Israeli troops as the Defense Forces (IDF). Throughout the articles, the IDF is foregrounded and represented as essential body to protect the security of Israel from the violent Palestinians. Haaretz was more critical to the actions of IDF, where it reported the civilian casualties on the Palestinian side. Haaretz foregrounded the Palestinian casualties, unlike JP where they were backgrounded. Also Haaretz wrote an article on Dec.25 to criticize the IDF killing of an innocent Palestinian man. Haaretz quoted Israeli and Palestinian officials, but JP focused more on right-wing Knesset speakers. The analysis approved Slater(2007) features of the leftist Israeli press. Slater argued that despite the pro-Israeli views of such press, many articles were able to criticize the Israeli policies and actions. This comes to the contrary of right-wing media, where the main focus was to magnify the actions of the Palestinians (Slater, 2007).

Nevertheless, both Israeli newspapers differed from the Palestinian news sources in the use of the argumentation strategies such as defense topos. Defense topos argued that the IDF had the right in firing or striking the Palestinians, because it was a self defense act. JP focused more on publishing articles about incidents that associated the Palestinians with violent actions, such as planting bombs on the borders. Unlike Haaretz, which did not report such incidents in articles, but mentioned them in the end of articles. Also it is important to note that JP and Al Ray were the only two news sources that reported the Israeli threats to close the borders of Gaza. This indicated that the blockade of Gaza is more of a concern to the government of Gaza and the right wing Israeli officials.

Moving to discursive strategies, the analysis showed how media discourse is used to acquire ideologies to other in group members and to alienate them from out group members. This is salient where the Palestinian news agencies are united when it comes to the language use in framing the Israelis as the violent enemy. Also when it comes to the Israeli newspapers in framing the Palestinians as a threat. However, there are slight differences between Al Ray and Maan. The lateral view Israel as a legitimate state with an army, and Al Ray view Israel as an illegal occupation force. Also Haaretz views the Palestinians both in the context of an ultimate
threat, and in the context of victims. This is unusual to JP, where Palestinians are always a threat, and they are not victims, but collateral damage.

Furthermore, the role of the Israeli and Palestinian media was prominent in the recent conflict in Gaza. As Slater (2007) explained that both sides were aware that media is an important tool in war. Both sides were aware of the importance of the international audience in the conflict. This explains why Al Ray used the topos of threat and danger, to show the international audience that Israel is a big threat to the Palestinians in Gaza. This also explains why Haaretz and JP used the topos of threat and danger, in order to justify the actions of the IDF. Hence, striking Gaza Strip and the blockade were fundamental measures to fight the Palestinian terrorism. The four news sources competed to view the “enemy” as the aggressor and their side as the victim.

Additionally, the Palestinians as the weaker side depended heavily on international news media. This is why they extensively used the topoi of humanitarianism and numbers, as their only mean to persuade the international community to intervene in the conflict (Wolfsfeld, 2003).

7.1 Future Perspectives:

Despite the fact that the role of the Israeli and the Palestinian media was not fully explored, CDA investigated the research problem in-depth, and the finding of analysis showed that both sides rely heavily on the trends of war reporting. CDA also revealed certain elements of discursive strategies. Nonetheless, CDA was not enough to understand the role of the media on the IPC. Thus, I recommend further investigation on this topic in future research through reception studies using both qualitative and quantitative approaches.

The strength of this research is that the study approaches a problematic issue from a new angle. It is the first time CDA is executed to compare Hamas owned media, with Palestinian independent media. And also to compare them with Israeli left wing media and Israeli right wing media. Additionally, it is the first time the four media sources were analyzed in the recent escalation of violence in Gaza 2013, and Al Ray was exclusively analyzed in this study, since it was launched recently in 2013. However, the weaknesses, is that the research results might be predictable, confirming the same tendencies and practices in the Israeli-Palestinian media throughout the
conflict. Though, the analysis on Al Ray proved a new tendency for the politics of Hamas towards Israel, which is also worthy of more detailed future research. In general, this research contributes both to the academia and journalistic practices by proving existing trends in the Israeli-Palestinian media. This research has a range of new research questions that can be investigated. For example, it would be interesting to examine the differences in the ideologies of the readers of Haaretz and JP or Maan and Al Ray. Also it would be interesting to study the effect of different approach of reporting on the readers. Such as Peace Journalism (see Galtung, 2002).

7.2 Recommendations:

The role of the news media in violent conflicts is best described by Wolfsfeld (2003), when he compared it to Plato’s allegory of the cave. In Plato’s work, The Republic, he talked about the consequences of the captives who were tied up in front of the wall for a long period of time. The captives only saw the images that were reflected on the wall. This exactly described the language and images presented by the journalists who are brain washed by military and political leaders (Wolfsfeld, 2003). The press articles analyzed in this research represented an extreme portrayals of the other side and justified the killing. Thus, the media resources analyzed remained captives in their own national caves. However, it is not right to conclude that the role of media can never change. Wolfsfeld (2003), gives an important example of the case of Northern Island. Where the news media in Ireland and the UK played a much more constructive role to support the peace process. Unlike the Isr-Pal media reaction to the peace process. The media in Ireland and UK reflected the consensus among both Protestants and Catholics. They also introduced shared media, so both sides can receive the news from the same source. However, the press in Northern Island was less emotional, which lowered the level of the conflict. This example can be a motivating model that can help the Palestinian and Israeli media emerge to support the peace process.
8. Bibliography


Appendix A

Al Ray articles

Two, including 3-year-old girl, killed, 14 injured in Israeli airstrikes across Gaza

12:47 - 25 December 2013

Gaza, ALRAY - Israeli occupation army launched on Tuesday afternoon air raids on different areas of the Gaza Strip. ALRAY reporter said three-year-old girl, then identified as Hala Buhairi, was killed and her mother and brother injured in an Israeli bombing east of Maghazi in central Gaza Strip.

One Palestinian seriously wounded in an Israeli gunfire coming from the north of Beit Lahia town in northern Gaza Strip was then announced died in Kamal Odwan Hospital.

Israeli fighter jets raided on two training sites for Al-Qassam Brigades, the military wing of Hamas, in southern Gaza Strip city of Khan Yunis and al-Bureij district in central Gaza Strip.

Spokesman of Health Ministry Ashraf al-Qidra said one child girl, 3, was killed and 14 others injured in the recent Israeli attacks. "Five citizens and one civil defense worker sustained gas inhalation injury as a result of Israeli missiles' explosion in Khan Yunis city in southern Gaza Strip," he added.

The airstrikes come not long after an Israeli citizen was reported shot dead by a Palestinian sniper near the east border of Gaza city.

An Israeli army spokeswoman said the man was killed while doing "maintenance" work on the border fence. Israeli website Ynet reported that the Israeli man had been working on the border fence when he was shot, and was taken to Soroka University Medical Center in Beersheba.

Earlier on Friday, Palestinian citizen O'dah Hamad, 22, was killed in an Israeli firing near the Beir Hanon (Erez) crossing in northern Gaza Strip.

On the same day, Israeli forces stationed near the border fence east of Jabalia and Khan Younis fired afternoon towards Palestinian youths, injuring three.

Three fishermen survive Israeli gunfire near northern Gaza border

12:42 - 22 December 2013

Gaza, ALRAY - Three Palestinian fishermen survived gunfire coming from an Israeli watchtower to the west of Beit Lahia in northern Gaza Strip, local media reported.

Eyewitnesses said the fishermen were approaching the border with the pre-1948 Palestine areas when the Israeli military fired at them.

The fishermen fled the area without being injured, they added.

Earlier on Sunday morning, Israeli occupation gunboats opened fire towards Palestinian fishermen on board their boats in northern Gaza Strip.

Israeli violations against Gaza fishermen have not stopped since early 2013. Most recently, Israeli gunboats opened fire on 27 November at Palestinian fishing boats which were a nautical mile away off the Gaza port west of Rafah city.

According to stats issued by Al-Mezan Center for Human Rights in November 2013, Israeli occupation navy carried out 132 attacks violations against fishermen since the beginning of 2013.

Israeli forces arrested 18 Palestinian fishermen, injured eight, confiscated seven boats, and unidentified number of fishing nets were destroyed in seven incidents, the NGO said in a report.

Israeli troops kill one, injure three in Gaza border firing

18:13 - 20 December 2013

Gaza, ALRAY - A Palestinian citizen was killed in an Israeli firing near the Beir Hanon (Erez) crossing in northern Gaza Strip.

Medical sources identified the killed as Odah Hamad, 22.

Earlier on Friday, Israeli forces stationed near the border fence east of Jabalia and Khan Younis fired afternoon towards Palestinian youths, injuring three.
"Two youths in their twenties were moderately injured in the foot while near the border fence to the east of Jabaliya refugee camp in the southern Gaza Strip," sources from Kamal Odwan Hospital in Beit Lahia said.

While Israeli troops on the Khuzza' border of the southern city of Khan Younis shot and injured another Palestinian youth while near the fence. He was transferred to a local hospital.

Gaza border areas see frequent firings from the Israeli occupation forces. Farmers are the usual target of the firing incidents. These three cases add to another five wounded as of early December.

According to Palestinian Center for Human Rights, on 14 December 2013, two farmers and a child were wounded in the strip when Israeli forces stationed east of Khan Younis's Khuzza' village opened fire towards them. On the same day, Israeli forces fired a number of artillery shells at open area north of Um al-Nasser Bedouin village, and northwest of al-Nada housing project, no casualties were reported.

On 15 December 2013, a farmer from Ezbet Beit Hanoun in the northern Gaza Strip was wounded when Israeli forces on the border opened fire at a group of framers who were 500 meters away from the said fence.

On 16 December 2013, another farmer, from Jabalia, was wounded in a similar shooting by Israeli forces along the eastern border of Jabalia. He was among a group of farmers who were about 600 meters away from the fence.

On 17 and 18 December 2013, Israeli forces fired from watchtowers stationed east of Beit Hanoun at a number of farmers, shepherds and bird hunters, who all turned away fearing of being shot.

**Palestinian NGO decries Israeli occupation 'excessive force'**

09:44 - 23 December 2013

Gaza, ALRAY - A Gaza-based human rights group on Sunday expressed "deep concern" at what it called Israeli occupation troops' use of excessive force in Friday's fatal shooting of a young Palestinian.

The Palestinian Centre for Human Rights said in a statement that occupation soldiers shot dead Odah Jihad Hamad, 27, and wounded his brother Raddad, 22, as they picked through scrap in wasteland next to the Gaza-Israel frontier at Beit Hanun in the north of the coastal strip.

"Israeli occupation forces used excessive force and directly opened fire at them, although it was clear that the two civilians were collecting steels and plastics from the landfill near the border fence," the PCHR said.

The military occupation claimed it opened fire at Palestinians near the border in response to Palestinian violence, including the firing of a mortar round that hit southern Israel and throwing rocks at soldiers.

The PCHR said troops had also used unnecessary force at a separate border incident on Friday, when they wounded three Palestinians near Jabaliya about five kilometres (three miles) from Beit Hanun in response to stone-throwing at soldiers.

"PCHR is deeply concerned over these crimes, which further prove the use of excessive force by Israeli occupation forces in disregard for the civilians' lives," it said. "These grave breaches constitute war crimes."

AFP contributed

**UN report :Israeli occupation kills 25 Palestinians this year**

11:51 - 23 December 2013

Gaza, ALRAY - Israeli occupation forces have killed 25 Palestinians in the West Bank since the beginning of 2013, at least 20 of whom were civilians unaffiliated with any armed group according to the United Nations.

Of these 25, four were children. Thus far, 2013 has registered the highest number of child fatalities by Israeli forces in the West Bank since 2006.

The most recent child fatality was 14 year old Wajih al-Ramhi, who was killed on December 7 by Israeli troops in the Jelazoun refugee camp near Ramallah.

The number of the injured Palestinians was up to 3653 compared to 3031 in the last year which indicates a clear escalation of Israeli attacks.

According to the report the Israeli occupation forces carries out 77 arrest operation weekly.

The number of Palestinian fatalities in the Gaza Strip during the first 11 months of 2013 decreased by 96 percent compared to 2012 (267 vs 10). The number of Palestinian injuries also decreased from 1,484 in 2012 to 55 so far in 2013.

**Israeli occupation closes Karem Abu Salem crossing indefinitely**

10:42 - 25 December 2013

Gaza, ALRAY - Israeli occupation authorities announced on Wednesday morning the closure of Karem Abu Salem trade crossing in Rafah in the southern part of the Gaza Strip.

The Israeli minister Moshe Ya’alon said that the decision based on “Security assessments” in a wake of recent escalation in the Gaza Strip, the Israeli radio reported.

“If Israel does not enjoy calmness, there will be no calmness in the Gaza Strip either,” added Ya’alon.
Karam Abu Salem is the only commercial crossing in Gaza, through which goods, humanitarian aids and fuel are partially entered to the people of the Gaza Strip. It is closed on Friday and Saturday of each week by Israeli forces.

**Peres threatens to cut aid to Gaza**

Gaza, ALRAY - Moshei Ya'aloun, the Israeli war minister, stated Tuesday that rules of dealing with the besieged Gaza strip have changed.

"Israel will use the economy card now as the Gaza people have no outlets except Karm Abu Salem crossing, which Israel controls," he said.

Analysts said that the Israeli threats are so dangerous as some 1.7 million Palestinians rely on Karm Abu Salem crossing to survive.

A prominent Israeli army official said Tuesday "We will use the economic situation now so as to pressure Gaza; we will see, how can Gaza live for a day without cooking gas."

He added that Palestinians in Gaza are now under mercy of Israel and they should understand that they would pay for everything they do to Israel.

The Israeli president, Shemon Peres, stated Tuesday that Israel will let aids into the Gaza Strip. "Gazans cannot live even for one day without foreign aids. So, we can address the situation well nowadays" Peres said.

Alresalah contributed
Appendix B

Maan Articles:

**Israeli forces kill 1 Palestinian, injure 5 across Gaza Strip**
Published Friday 20/12/2013 (updated) 21/12/2013 22:17

GAZA CITY (Ma'an) -- A Palestinian man was shot dead and five others were injured in a number of incidents across the Gaza Strip on Friday.

Odeh Jihad Hamad, 24, was shot dead, and an unidentified man was injured after Israeli soldiers opened fire near Beit Hanoun crossing in the northern Gaza Strip. Gaza government spokeswoman Isra Almodallal confirmed the shooting, adding that they had approached the fence but details were still unclear.

In another incident, two others were shot and injured east of Khan Yunis, spokesman for the Gaza ministry of health Ashraf al-Qidra said. They were taken to the European hospital south of Khan Yunis with moderate injuries, he added.

Israeli forces also shot and injured two Palestinian men east of Jabaliya in the northern Gaza Strip earlier on Friday. One of them, 23-year-old Mohammad Ayoub, was shot near the eastern cemetery and transferred to Kamal Odwan hospital, medical officials said. The other injured Palestinian was not immediately identified.

An Israeli forces' statement said that "Palestinians caused damage to the northern security fence" and "fired a mortar shell" into Israel, adding that they "rioted and hurled rocks at soldiers in the northern Gaza Strip, and neared the fence in an attempt to enter Israel."

After "calling out to the Palestinians" without success, they used live fire. "Several hits were identified," the statement added.

The Gaza Strip has been under a severe economic blockade imposed by the State of Israel since 2006. Israeli forces frequently shoot at farmers and other civilians inside the Gaza Strip if they approach large swathes of land near the border that the Israeli military has deemed off-limits to Palestinians.

The "security buffer zone" extends between 500 meters and 1500 meters into the Strip, effectively turning local farms into no-go zones.

**Israeli forces fire at Gaza farmers, injure young man**
Published Saturday 21/12/2013 (updated) 22/12/2013 17:46

GAZA CITY (Ma'an) -- Israeli forces opened fire early Saturday at Palestinian farmers in their fields in the southern Gaza Strip, injuring a young man, medics told Ma'an. Palestinian medical sources told Ma'an that 22-year-old Ismail Najjar was injured when Israeli troops surprised farmers east of Khan Younis refugee camp with gunshots.
An Israeli army spokeswoman said Palestinian "terrorists" tried to conceal an explosive devise near the border area with Israel.

"Soldiers called on the suspects to stop," she said. After firing shots into the air, she said the soldiers fired at a Palestinian's "lower extremities and identified a hit."

The spokeswoman quoted Lieutenant Colonel Peter Lerner as saying the army was "required to defend the civilians of the state of Israel."

Locals reported heavy deployment of Israeli military vehicles near the border area Friday after an explosive device thrown from the Gaza Strip hit a military patrol east of Khan Younis. Two young Palestinian men were injured by Israeli fire.

Separately, a young man was shot dead and three others were injured Friday in the northern Gaza Strip.

Israeli forces frequently shoot at farmers and other civilians inside the Gaza Strip if they approach large swaths of land near the border that the Israeli military has deemed off-limits to Palestinians.

The "security buffer zone" extends between 500 meters and 1500 meters into the Strip, effectively turning local farms into no-go zones.

Thousands attend funeral of Gaza man killed by Israeli forces
Published Saturday 21/12/2013 (updated) 23/12/2013 16:31

GAZA CITY (Ma'an) -- Thousands of Palestinians gathered in northern Gaza Saturday for the funeral of a man who was shot dead by Israeli forces the day before.

Various Palestinian political factions were present at the funeral of Odeh Jihad Hamad in Beit Hanoun, and some of the factions threatened to retaliate against Israel for killing the 29-year-old.

An Islamic Jihad leader urged all Palestinian factions to respond boldly to the "ongoing Israeli assaults" against Palestinians in Gaza.

Khalid al-Batsh said in a statement: "The Israeli occupation is responsible the escalation of killings in Gaza and we have to confront these violations."

Hamad's brother told Ma'an Saturday that Hamad was a kilometer away from the border when Israeli soldiers shot him in the head. He said Israeli forces did not allow ambulances to the scene for an hour and a half after the shooting.

The brother added that he himself was shot in the hand.

Hamad's family said he was struggling financially and looking for a job before he was shot.

An Israeli army statement said that "Palestinians caused damage to the northern security fence" and "fired a mortar shell" into Israel Friday, adding that they "rioted and hurled rocks at soldiers in the northern Gaza Strip, and neared the fence in an attempt to enter Israel."

Soldiers responded by shooting one of them to death and hitting several others with live bullets, the statement said.

In another incident Friday, two Palestinians were shot and injured east of Khan Younis, spokesman for the Gaza ministry of health Ashraf al-Qidra said. They were taken to the European hospital south of Khan Younis with moderate injuries, he added.

Israeli forces also shot and injured two Palestinian men east of Jabaliya in the northern Gaza Strip earlier on Friday.

One of them, 23-year-old Mohammad Ayoub, was shot near the eastern cemetery and transferred to Kamal Odwan hospital, medical officials said.

The other injured Palestinian was not immediately identified.
On Saturday Palestinian medical sources told Ma'an that 22-year-old Ismail Najjar was injured near Khan Younis when Israeli troops surprised farmers east of the refugee camp with gunshots.

An Israeli army spokeswoman after the shooting quoted Lieutenant Colonel Peter Lerner as saying the army was "required to defend the civilians of the state of Israel." She said Najjar was a "terrorist" who tried to lay an explosive device near the border with Israel.

The Gaza Strip has been under a severe economic blockade imposed by the State of Israel since 2006. Israeli forces frequently shoot at farmers and other civilians inside the Gaza Strip if they approach large swathes of land near the border that the Israeli military has deemed off-limits to Palestinians.

The "security buffer zone" extends between 500 meters and 1500 meters into the Strip, effectively turning local farms into no-go zones.

**Israeli gunboats fire on Palestinian fishermen north of Gaza**

Published Sunday 22/12/2013 (updated) 22/12/2013 20:21

GAZA (Ma'an) -- Israeli gunboats fired two shells toward Palestinian fishing boats in the Sudaniya area in the northwestern Gaza Strip on Saturday evening, a witness said.

The eyewitness added that no injuries were reported from the shelling.

The Gaza Strip has been under a severe blockade imposed by the State of Israel since 2006. Palestinian fishermen are only allowed to go 3 nautical miles from Gaza's shore, even though Israeli-Palestinian agreement previously agreed on 20 nautical miles. Israeli naval forces frequently harass Palestinian fishermen who near the 3-mile limit, as well as those inside the zone.

There are 4,000 fishermen in Gaza. According to a 2011 report by the International Committee of the Red Cross 90 percent are poor, an increase of 40 percent from 2008 and a direct result of Israeli limits on the fishing industry.

The Israeli blockade has severely limited the imports and exports of the Gaza Strip and has led to frequent humanitarian crises and hardship for Gazans.

**Gaza rocket hits Israel, no injuries**

Published Monday 23/12/2013 (updated) 24/12/2013 10:48

JERUSALEM (AFP) -- A rocket fired from the Hamas-ruled Gaza Strip in the early hours of Monday hit a southern Israel community without causing damage or injuries, Israeli police said.

Bomb disposal experts found the "rocket fired from the Gaza Strip" in a community near the city of Ashkelon, according to police spokesman Micky Rosenfeld. Police said the projectile hit near a school bus stop.

Gaza government spokeswoman Isra Almodallal told Ma'an that Hamas had not confirmed or denied involvement in the incident.

On Sunday, Egyptian security officials told Ma'an that Hamas had fired rockets as part of training that took place throughout the day in Gaza. Some of the rockets fell in Egyptian territorial waters, the officials said.

Over the weekend, Israeli troops shot dead a Palestinian and wounded four others after the army said Palestinians fired a mortar that hit southern Israel, threw stones, and attempted to breach the border.

In a separate incident, a Gazan was wounded by Israeli gunfire after approaching the security fence along the frontier.

Prior to Friday, the last deadly incident in Gaza was on Nov. 1, when four Hamas militants were killed and five Israeli soldiers...
wounded during an army operation to destroy a tunnel from Gaza into Israel. Israel and the Islamist movement Hamas, which rules the southern Palestinian enclave, are committed to an Egyptian-brokered truce that ended a major eight-day confrontation in November 2012.

Young man seriously injured by Israeli fire in northern Gaza Strip
Published Monday 23/12/2013 (updated) 25/12/2013 11:23
GAZA CITY (Ma'an) -- Israeli forces shot and seriously injured a young Palestinian man near Beit Lahiya in the northern Gaza Strip.

Palestinian medical sources confirmed that a young man in his twenties from Shujaiyya neighborhood of Gaza City was hit in the leg and abdomen. He was evacuated first to Kamal Udwan hospital in Jabalia, then to al-Shifa hospital in Gaza City.

An Israeli spokeswoman said in a statement that, "A suspect was identified approaching the security fence in the northern Gaza strip, in an attempt to conceal an explosive device against IDF soldiers."

"The soldiers at the scene called at the suspect to stop, fired warning shots to the air, and once he failed to comply, opened fire towards his lower extremities."

Israeli forces frequently shoot at farmers and other civilians inside the Gaza Strip if they approach large swathes of land near the border that the Israeli military has deemed off-limits to Palestinians.

The "security buffer zone" extends between 500 meters and 1500 meters into the Strip, effectively turning local farms into no-go zones.

The Gaza Strip has been under a severe economic blockade imposed by the State of Israel since 2006.

Israel strikes Gaza after border shootings, 2 dead in violence
Published Tuesday 24/12/2013 (updated) 25/12/2013 14:43
GAZA CITY (Ma'an) -- Israeli air forces launched airstrikes across the Gaza Strip, killing a 3-year-old Palestinian child and injuring her mother and brother, after an Israeli was shot dead at the border in the northern Gaza Strip on Tuesday afternoon.

Spokesman for the Gaza ministry of health Ashraf al-Qidra said that Hala Abu Sbeikha, 3, was killed and her mother and brother injured in an airstrike in al-Maghazi refugee camp.

Later, three Palestinians were injured in an Israeli artillery bombing east of Gaza City.

Israeli forces also launched three airstrikes on a military site belonging to al-Quds Brigades, the militant wing of the Islamic Jihad movement, between Khan Younis refugee camp and the city of Deir al-Balah and in the al-Atatra area of the northern Gaza Strip.

A statement from the Israeli army said that tanks and air forces struck a "weapons manufacturing facility" in the southern Gaza Strip and a "concealed rocket launcher" in northern Gaza, in addition to various "terror sites."

At least six people total were injured in Israeli tank and air strikes, Palestinian medics told AFP.

Earlier on Tuesday afternoon, Palestinian medical sources said the International Red Cross had received reports from the Israeli army that a Palestinian man was shot dead west of Beit Lahiya in the northern Gaza Strip. Later, when they searched the area, they found no body.

An Israeli army spokeswoman said she was unfamiliar with any such communication with the International Red Cross.

But she said that a Palestinian on Tuesday approached the border fence near Beit Lahiya and attempted to lay an explosive device, and that after warning him to stop, Israeli soldiers fired at his lower extremities, identifying a hit.
Palestinian sources also confirmed that a Palestinian was injured near the border in the same area.

Earlier, a Palestinian sniper shot and killed an Israeli Defense Ministry employee working on the border fence in northern Gaza Strip a few hours earlier. An Israeli army spokeswoman said the man was killed while doing "maintenance" work on the border fence.

The Palestinian militant group Popular Resistance Committees claimed responsibility for the shooting, Israeli media reported.

The man was identified as 22-year-old Salah Abu Latif, according to Haaretz. Abu Latif was a Bedouin from the city of Rafat in southern Israel, a police spokesman told AFP.

"One of our snipers hit an Israeli officer, who is in the Engineering Forces of the Israeli army, and seriously wounded him, near the borders between eastern Gaza Strip and Israel," Haaretz quoted the PRC as saying.

Israeli news site Ynet reported that the Israeli man had been working on the border fence when he was shot, and was taken to Soroka University Medical Center in Beersheba.

He died of his wounds shortly after.

**Hamas, PA condemn Israeli airstrikes on Gaza**
Published Tuesday 24/12/2013 (updated) 25/12/2013 13:34

GAZA CITY (Ma'an) -- Spokesmen for Hamas and the Palestinian Authority governments on Tuesday condemned Israeli airstrikes on the Gaza Strip which killed a young girl.

Hamas spokesman Sami Abu Zuhri called the airstrikes that killed 3-year-old Hala Abu Sbeikh in central Gaza a "cowardly crime."

Abu Zuhri said Israel was targeting Palestinian families, and that Israeli threats and raids would not deter Palestinian resistance fighters from "doing their duty."

Separately, PA spokesman Ehab Bessaiso also condemned Israel's attacks on the Gaza strip, calling for international intervention to stop them.

Bessaiso said in a statement that the Palestinian government had contacted international sides to intervene and force Israel to stop its "escalation" of violence in Gaza, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem.

Earlier, a Palestinian sniper shot and killed an Israeli Defense Ministry employee working on the border fence in northern Gaza Strip a few hours earlier.

An Israeli army spokeswoman said the man was killed while doing "maintenance" work on the border fence.

The Palestinian militant group Popular Resistance Committees claimed responsibility for the shooting, Israeli media reported.

The man was identified as 22-year-old Salah Abu Latif, according to the Haaretz newspaper.

**Erekat: Israeli airstrikes a 'criminal Christmas gift' to Gaza**
Published Wednesday 25/12/2013 (updated) 26/12/2013 14:24

BETHLEHEM (Ma'an) -- A senior Palestinian official on Tuesday condemned Israel's recent airstrikes on Gaza, calling the incident a "war crime," a PLO statement said.

"We condemn in the strongest terms this new Israeli war crime against the Palestinian civilians in Gaza Strip which aims to initiate a bloody escalation," Chief Palestinian Negotiator Saeb Erekat said in a statement.
Israel’s “criminal” attack on the Gaza Strip was a “Christmas gift to our isolated civilians,” Erekat said. I
Erekat said Israel was responsible for the death of 3-year-old Hala Abu Sbeikha and injuries sustained by her mother and brother as a result of the airstrikes.
"We hold the Israeli government fully responsible for the consequences of this new act of aggression against our occupied civilian population.”

Erekat called on the United States, European Union, Russia, United Nations, and Arab countries to pressure Israel to stop its “aggression” toward Gaza.
"Today the Israeli government proved to the entire world that they have an agenda of war, not for peace and are only interested in committing crimes against our defenseless civilians.”

Israeli air forces launched airstrikes across the Gaza Strip Tuesday, killing a 3-year-old Palestinian child and injuring her mother and brother, after an Israeli Civil Defense worker was shot dead by a Palestinian sniper at the border in the northern Gaza Strip on Tuesday afternoon.

Gaza lays to rest 3-year-old Palestinian girl killed by Israeli strike

Published Wednesday 25/12/2013 (updated) 27/12/2013 10:59

GAZA CITY (Ma'an) -- Hundreds of mourners in Gaza Wednesday attended the funeral of a 3-year-old girl who was killed by Israeli forces the day before.

Hala Abu Sbeikha, who was killed by an Israeli airstrike Tuesday, was buried in al-Maghazi refugee camp in the central Gaza Strip Wednesday.

Hala's father carried her body to his house, where family members bid her a final farewell, then brought her to the refugee camp's cemetery amid hundreds of mourners.

Her mother told Ma'an: "I was busy teaching my children while Hala was playing in the courtyard, and suddenly a missile came and I couldn’t rescue her."

"The area was quiet before the missile landed,” she said.

Israel launched airstrikes across the Gaza Strip Tuesday, killing Hala and injuring her mother and brother, after an Israeli Civil Defense worker was shot dead by a Palestinian sniper at the border in the northern Gaza Strip on Tuesday afternoon.
Appendix C

Haaretz Articles:

Israel strikes Gaza after Defense Ministry employee killed in border shooting

3-year-old Palestinian killed as IDF attacks six targets in Gaza; Defense Minister: Gaza won't be quiet as long as Israel isn't quiet; IDF shoots Palestinian near security fence.

By Gili Cohen, Shirly Seidler, Chaim Levinson and Reuters | Dec. 24, 2013 | 11:02 PM | 28

The Israel Defense Forces struck targets in the Gaza Strip on Tuesday afternoon, hours after a contract worker employed by Israel's Defense Ministry was shot and killed Tuesday by gunfire originating from the coastal territory.

The Israel Air Force attacked six separate sites across the territory linked to Hamas and the Islamic Jihad. Palestinians said that a 3-year-old girl was killed in one of the attacks on the Al-Maghazi refugee camp, and that her mother and brother were wounded.

The Associated Press said a total of 10 people were wounded in the attacks.

The IDF said in a statement that the Israel Air Force, tanks as well as infantry corps soldiers attacked two sites in the southern Strip, though ground forces did not enter the territory. The IDF said that one of the targets was a weapons building site and defined the second as a "terror infrastructure" site. The IDF also struck two additional sites in the central Gaza Strip and another "terror infrastructure" sites in the north as well.

"The IDF responded with a wave of attacks and are currently considering our next steps," a senior IDF officer said. He added that while the army wants to avoid an escalation, soldiers in the Gaza Division were on high alert "in case the situation deteriorates."

Hamas told Israel's Ch. 10 following the attacks that it was not interested in an escalation with Gaza.

The Palestinian group Popular Resistance Committees (PRC) took responsibility for the morning shooting at Kibbutz Nahal Oz that killed Defense Ministry employee Salah Abu Latif, 22. He was the first Israeli to be killed from Gaza fire since Operation Pillar of Defense in November 2012.

"One of our snipers hit an Israeli officer, who is in the Engineering Forces of the Israeli army, and seriously wounded him, near the borders between eastern Gaza Strip and Israel," the PRC said.

Israeli army officials said that the victim, a resident of the predominantly Bedouin town of Rahat in southern Israel, was hit by a single gunshot, leading them to believe a sniper perpetrated the attack. There was no exchange of gunfire during the incident.

The victim, a civilian who had been helping repair a part of the security fence that was damaged by the extreme winter weather last week, was airlifted to Soroka Medical Center in Be'er Sheva for treatment. He was initially listed in serious condition, but later succumbed to his wounds.

He is the second Israeli to be killed this month and the sixth since September.

In a separate incident Tuesday afternoon, IDF soldiers shot a Palestinian man who approached the security fence in the northern Gaza Strip. Soldiers said the man was hit in the lower torso and was evacuated for medical treatment by members of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Defense Minister: If there's no quiet in Israel, there will be no quiet in Gaza

By Gili Cohen, Shirly Seidler, Chaim Levinson and Reuters | Dec. 24, 2013
Defense Minister Moshe Ya'alon rejected speculations that the terror attacks in the last few days were linked to the shooting on the border, but said that Israel was treating each of the incidents with "utter severity."

He added that the Defense Ministry holds Hamas responsible for the shooting and for the rocket attacks. "We will not let life in the south be disrupted, and we will respond aggressively and painfully to any attack on our authority and against our civilians and soldiers. I suggest Hamas not test our patience and use its authority in the territory. If there is no quiet in Israel, there will be no quiet in Gaza."

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called the attack at Nahal Oz "an extremely grave incident" adding that "not ignore it. Our policy until now has been to thwart and to respond forcefully -- and this is how we will act in this case as well." Netanyahu was visiting the southern town of Sderot, about a kilometer (half a mile) from the Gaza border, at the time of the shooting.

Palestinian Chief Negotiator Saeb Erekat accused Israel proving that it is a "government of terror, not of peace" in carrying out the attacks.

"Israel gave a Christmas present to the Palestinian people by killing a 3-year-old girl," he said.

He added that he had submitted a request to the United Nations, the European Union and the international committee to halt the Israeli attacks.

The victim's employer said he has been working for him for about a year. "He was a young man, and extremely diligent," he said.

He added that the Gaza border has felt calm in recent months, but that in light of Tuesday's incident, they would likely stop working along the border fence.

"We worked for there for a long time and nothing happened, and then suddenly everything started. We got used to wandering around the area freely, but after what happened I don't think we'll go back there. It's scary." IDF soldiers from the Gaza Division have been sweeping the border area in recent days in efforts to locate underground smuggling tunnels. Army officials surmised that the stormy weather last week could help uncover the tunnels infiltrating into Israel.

The shooting near Kibbutz Nahal Oz comes after a spate of terror-related incidents and rocket fire in recent days. A police officer helping to direct traffic outside Ramallah was stabbed in the back on Monday, while his Palestinian assailant fled the scene.

Israeli security forces opened fire at the attacker, but missed.

On Sunday, what could have been a deadly bus bombing in Bat Yam was averted when an alert passenger notified the driver about a suspicious bag on the bus. The driver ordered all passengers to disembark after which a police bomb squad arrived at the site and began inspecting the suspicious object. The bomb exploded, shattering all the bus windows and charring the sides of the vehicle.

Earlier that day, a police found the remains of a Qassam rocket that had been fired around midnight Sunday near a bus stop for transporting children in the Hof Ashkelon Regional Council. The bus stop was only slightly damaged.

**Defense minister: Escalation in Palestinian terror attacks linked to peace talks**

*Moshe Ya'alon says Israel prepared for further escalation; IDF deploys Iron Dome battery in south.*

By Gili Cohen | Dec. 25, 2013 | 6:46 PM | 1

Defense Minister Moshe Ya'alon said Wednesday that the recent escalation in terror attacks is unequivocally linked to the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations.

"The statistics speak for themselves," Ya'alon told soldiers of the Israel Defense Forces' Givati Brigade in the Mateh Binyamin Regional Council. "In recent months, there have been more terrorist attacks and victims. The explanation for this is simple: The moment the subject of the Israeli-Palestinian issue arises, it also unfortunately leads to incitement and hatred, and those are the primary causes of terrorism. And yes, it has to do with the peace process."

The defense minister said the Palestinian Authority was to blame for the incitement, and struck a defiant tone, saying, "We will track down every terrorist."

Ya'alon also said the defense establishment is prepared for the possibility that there will be a further escalation in Palestinian violence. "This includes stationing Iron Dome [Missile Defense System] batteries in the south," he said.

The IDF stationed an Iron Dome battery in Sderot on Wednesday, but said it would "not detail the operational preparedness of the system."

On Tuesday, an Israeli contract worker for the Defense Ministry was shot and killed by cross-border fire from the Gaza Strip. It was the third attack in three days believed to have been perpetrated by Palestinian militants.

The Palestinian group Popular Resistance Committees claimed responsibility for the attack, but the Israeli army said Wednesday that it was not convinced the group was really the attack.

On Monday, a police officer helping to direct traffic outside Ramallah in the West Bank was stabbed in the back. His Palestinian assailant fled the scene and Israeli security forces opened fire at the attacker, but missed.

The Israeli army retaliated to the attack by striking six separate sites across the territory linked to Hamas and the Islamic Jihad. A Palestinian child aged 3 was killed in one of the attacks.

Earlier that day, police found the remains of a Qassam rocket that had been fired around midnight Sunday from the Gaza Strip near a bus stop for transporting children in the Hof Ashkelon Regional Council. The bus stop was only slightly damaged.

95
On Sunday, what could have been a deadly bus bombing in Bat Yam was averted when an alert passenger notified the driver about a suspicious bag on the bus. The driver ordered all passengers to disembark, after which a police bomb squad arrived at the site and began inspecting the suspicious object. The bomb exploded, shattering all the bus windows and charring the sides of the vehicle. One member of the bomb squad was wounded in the explosion.

Hamas and the Islamic Jihad praised Sunday's bus bombing, but stopped short of claiming responsibility. The last explosion on a Tel Aviv bus occurred in November 2012, wounding at least 28 people. An Israeli Arab pleaded guilty earlier this month to planting the bomb for political reasons.

Violence in the West Bank has increased in recent months. At least 19 Palestinians and four Israelis have been killed in the territory since the U.S.-brokered talks on Palestinian statehood resumed in July after a three-year break.

**Gazan killed by IDF was collecting scrap - not damaging border fence, says brother**

_Oudeh Hamad’s brother, who was wounded by the IDF firing near the border fence, says there were no warning shots._

By Amira Hass | Dec. 25, 2013 | 8:03 AM | 12

Last Friday, Israeli Defense Forces soldiers killed Oudeh Hamad, a resident of Beit Hanun in the northern Gaza Strip. Hamad’s brother Radaad was injured. Statements made to the media indicated that the two brothers were attempting to damage the security fence marking the Israel-Gaza border. Radaad, however, told a Palestinian human rights organization that at the time they were collecting scrap metal and plastic from a junk yard.

Oudeh Hamad, 27, and Radaad Hamad, 22, are known among Beit Hanun residents as scrap collectors making their living off of discarded metal and plastic. Radaad Hamad told a field investigator from the Palestinian Center for Human Rights that on Friday, December 20 at midday the two brothers went to the junk yard east of their town, where the northern Gaza municipalities dispose their trash. They worked for roughly three and a half hours, and the area was very quiet.

According to Hamad, they were 50 meters away from the fence at around 3:30 P.M. when IDF soldiers opened fire on them without first firing any warning shots into the air. Oudeh Hamad was hit in the head and fell. Radaad, who managed to take cover when he heard the shots, ran to his injured brother but was shot and wounded in his right arm. He fled the scene and alerted the Red Crescent for help, but due to the fact that ambulances must coordinate their arrival with the IDF, via the Red Cross, the first respondents did not arrive until around 4:15 P.M. Oudeh was declared dead at the municipal hospital in Beit Hanun.

The IDF has designated 300 meters beyond the border fence a buffer zone. It is hard for residents of the crowded Gaza Strip to give up this land, most of which is agricultural land. As such, farmers as well as scrap collectors endanger their lives by trying to work in these areas. They believe that the IDF has excellent surveillance equipment, and that soldiers can tell the difference between armed individuals and civilians.

According to the Palestinian Center for Human Rights, five Palestinian civilians have been killed near the border fence by IDF fire since the cease-fire between Israel and Hamas came into force in November 2012, until Tuesday. Four other armed men were killed near the border this October. In 2013, 55 Palestinian civilians have been injured by IDF fire.

**Rocket from Gaza hits Israel; no injuries**

_Rocket fire comes day after bomb blast on bus near Tel Aviv._

By Shirly Seidler and The Associated Press | Dec. 23, 2013 | 10:25 AM | 1

The Israeli military said a rocket fired from the Gaza Strip hit an open area in a southern Israeli village overnight Sunday but caused no injuries.

Police found Monday morning the remains of the Qassam rocket near a bus stop for transporting children in the Hof Ashkelon Regional Council. The bus stop was damaged only slightly.

The rocket was fired at around midnight Sunday, and sirens sounded in a number of communities in the region. Police said the rocket was fired by Palestinian militants. There has been no claim of responsibility.

"We are continuing to be on the alert and to maintain our routine," said the head of the Hof Ashkelon Regional Council, Yair Farjun, after the incident. "We trust the Israel Defense Forces to know how to locate the sources of the firing and to put them out of commission."

In recent days there have been several unsuccessful attempts to launch rockets from the Gaza Strip to Israel, and landings have been identified in the sea and in Palestinian territories.

On Sunday, an Egyptian military source told the Palestinian news agency Ma'an that a Qassam rocket that was fired during the day from the Gaza Strip landed in Egyptian territorial waters. The Egyptian source added that the rocket landed 300 meters from the coast of Egyptian Rafah, exploded in the water, and there was no report of casualties. Hamas said that the rocket was fired during a military training exercise, and landed by mistake in Egyptian territory.
Also on Sunday, a pipe bomb believed planted by Palestinian militants exploded on a bus in central Israel. The bus was evacuated prior to its explosion and no one was hurt. It was the most serious attack inside Israel in more than a year.

Late last week, a mortar shell was fired into Israel, causing no injuries.

Rocket fire from Gaza has been sporadic since Israel and Gaza's Hamas rulers fought an eight-day battle last year.

Palestinian wounded as violent incidents continue on Gaza border

One Palestinian was killed and four wounded by IDF fire in several incidents on the Gaza border on Friday.

By Gili Cohen, Jack Khoury and Reuters | Dec. 21, 2013 | 1:00 PM | 52

A Palestinian was wounded by Israel Defense Forces fire on the Gaza border on Saturday, following several violent border incidents on Friday.

A 22-year-old Palestinian was killed near Beit Hanoun, in northern Gaza, in one of Friday's incidents, according to Palestinian sources. Four other Palestinians were wounded in incidents that occurred in Khan Yunis in the southern Gaza Strip and in Jabaliya in the north.

The IDF said that its soldiers used live fire to contain a number of violent incidents near the border and "several hits were identified", but did not confirm any dead or wounded.

Palestinians damaged the fence in the northern part of the border, a mortar was fired into Israel, and in one area Gazans tried to cross into Israel, the military said in a statement.

In Saturday's incident, IDF troops opened fire on several suspects who approached the fence and laid an explosive device, the army reported. According to Palestinian reports, however, the wounded man was part of a group of farmers. The incident took place east of Khan Yunis.

On Thursday, a Palestinian man was killed during an Israeli military operation in the West Bank town of Qalqilyah, only hours after a Palestinian was shot dead by Israeli forces in Jenin.

An elite force from the Paratroopers Brigade came under fire while attempting to capture a terrorist cell in Qalqilyah, located some 20 kilometers west of Nablus, the Israel Defense Forces said, adding that the Palestinian was killed after the force returned fire.

Palestinian sources said the man who was killed was 28-year-old Saleh Yassin, a member of the Palestinian general intelligence service.
Appendix D

JP articles:

Defense Ministry employee killed from Palestinian sniper fire on Gaza border

By YAAKOVA LAPPIN, HERB KEINON, JPOST.COM STAFF
LAST UPDATED: 12/24/2013 16:02

Palestinian sniper fire kills Salah Shukri Abu Latyef who was working on Gaza border fence.
A civilian working for the Defense Ministry was shot and killed on Tuesday from Palestinian sniper fire, while working to fix damages caused to the Israeli-Gaza border fence caused by the recent winter storm.
Salah Shukri Abu Latyef, 22, from Rahat, was working for Shabbat Drilling operating a tractor at the Gaza border when he was shot and struck in the center of his chest by a Palestinian sniper, according to the army’s assessment.
He was airlifted to Soroka Medical Center in Beersheba where he later succumbed to his wounds.
Israeli media reported that the Palestinian militant group Popular Resistance Committees claimed responsibility for the shooting.
"The incident occurred very close to the border," one security source said.
"This was his first day working on the Gaza Strip border and unfortunately it was also his last day of life," Latyef’s cousin said.
An IDF spokesman said that the military had limited the access of farmers working in the immediate vicinity of the fence in the aftermath of the attack.
Israel clamped restrictions in the past on Palestinians working inside the Gaza Strip near the security fence to prevent exactly the type of sniper incident that killed an Israeli defense ministry worker on Tuesday, government officials said.
The easing of those restrictions were part of the understandings brokered by Egypt that brought an end in November 2012 to Operation Pillar of Defense against Hamas in the Gaza Strip.
Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu characterized the attack a "very grave incident" that Israel would not let go unanswered.
This attack, unlike the other terror attacks this week, elicited a quick and immediate response from Netanyahu.
"Our policy up until now has been to prevent beforehand and to react with force, and this is how we will act now as well," he said.
Government sources said Netanyahu viewed this incident as particularly serious both within the context of the string of other attacks this week – the foiled bus bomb in Bat Yam, the rocket fire from Gaza and the knifing of a Border Patrolman outside of Jerusalem – and also because it was such a clear violation of the understandings that brought an end to Operation Pillar of Defense.
According to those understandings, Israel eased restriction on Gazans working close to security fence that were clamped on the area because of security concerns.
Netanyahu made his comment as he was just about to fly back to Jerusalem from Sderot, where he went Tuesday to dedicate the new Tel Aviv-Sderot train line.
Netanyahu said that Israel would not tolerate a "drizzle" of attacks from Gaza that would "turn into a storm."
Since Operation Pillar of Defense last year, he said the south has been quieter than it has been for more than a decade. "I am committed to maintaining that quiet, with a strong hand and an outstretched arm. That is our policy."
The cross-border shooting comes after a spate of attempts by Palestinians to plant explosives along the security fence and to damage the barrier in recent days.
Defense Minister Moshe Ya’alon said there was "no direct relation" between terrorist attacks in Israel over the past two days and the cross-border shooting attack.
"We view take a most severe view of them. In Gaza, Hamas is sovereign, and we see it as being responsible for today’s shooting from the Strip and rocket launches over the past today at Israel. We will not allow a disruption to life in the South, and we will respond decisively and painfully to attacks on our sovereignty and against our civilians and soldiers," the defense minister added.
He advised Hamas "not to test our patience," calling on Gaza’s ruling regime to exercise its authority on the ground to prevent further attacks on Israel by other organizations.
"If there won’t be quiet in Israel, there won’t be quiet in Gaza either," Ya’alon warned.
"Terrorism incidents are the continuation of previous attacks, most of which are the result of a lone attacker, or one who has been influenced by the atmosphere of incitement and hatred that exists in the Palestinian Authority against Israel. This is an intolerable
situation from our perspective, and despite the difficulties in dealing with a lone individual incited to murder Jews, we will act with a resolute hand and in various ways to harm anyone who tries to carry out terrorist attacks," Ya'alon pledged. As long as the PA continues to incite against Israel and its civilians, and fails to promote a culture of peace, Israel will have to deal with attacks that result from this, he added. Ya'alon sent his condolences to the family of the fatally wounded civilian, and wished the policeman stabbed on Monday a swift recovery.

Ya'alon ordered the closing of the Kerem Shalom border crossing on Tuesday evening, following escalation on the Gaza border. President Shimon Peres said that "Israel will ensure its own security" and advised Hamas and the Islamic Jihad to stop aggressions against Israel. "If Gaza wants it to be quiet, it must remain quiet, otherwise it will suffer the consequences of the unrest many times over," Peres said.

"Gaza is not under any occupation. It is playing with fire. The world will not continue supporting Gaza if it continues killing innocent people," the president added.

Knesset Speaker Yuli Edelstein said the attack "proves that Hamas and its satellite organizations are determined to harm Israeli citizens without any connection to their religion or ideology." "The trickle of attacks must stop and life near Gaza must be stable and safe," Edelstein added, sending his condolences to the victim's family.

Opposition leader Isaac Herzog (Labor) said he is certain that the recent wave of terror is meant to sabotage peace talks and the possibility of a two-state solution. "We will not give in to terror and will not let it win or determine the State of Israel's interests," Herzog stated. "I trust that the IDF and security forces will act against terror." However, some on the right did not share Herzog's determination to continue negotiating. "The deterioration in security shows once again that the Palestinians don't want peace," Deputy Minister for Liaison with the Knesset Ofir Akunis said. "This is a direct result of the Palestinian incitement against Israel." Knesset Finance Committee chairman Nissan Slomiansky (Bayit Yehudi) said the next release of terrorists from prison, which is planned for next week, should be canceled, calling it "absurd."

"Day after day Israeli residents' lives are endangered and the government continues blindly giving in to the demands of the Palestinian Authority and the Americans. We should put an end to this farce. As long as terror against Israel continues, we cannot release even one terrorist," Slomiansky stated.

In a separate incident, a Palestinian youth who approached the fence on the border with northern Gaza entered the closed security zone, and ignored calls by soldiers to vacate the area. He was shot in the leg and evacuated to a Gazan hospital by the Red Crescent.

Lahav Harkov and Yasser Okbi

**IDF strikes six Gaza targets in retaliation to shooting of Defense Ministry employee**

By YAAKO LAPPIN, JPOST.COM STAFF

LAST UPDATED: 12/24/2013 22:51

**Palestinian toddler reportedly killed, three Palestinians injured; Netanyahu warns: Don't test Israel's resolve.**

The IDF struck targets in the Gaza Strip on Tuesday afternoon in retaliation for the cross-border shooting earlier in the day in which Israel sustained its first casualty since the end of Operation Pillar of Defense in 2012.

The IDF employed the air force, tanks, and infantry to launch a response against six targets in Gaza. Gaza hospital officials said three-year-old Hala Abu Sheikha, was killed by shrapnel during the strike on the Bureij facility. She was standing with other family members outside their home in the nearby al-Maghazi refugee camp and her mother and two brothers were wounded, the officials said.

Three Palestinians were injured from the IAF strike in eastern Gaza, Palestinian news agency Ma'an reported. The strike's targets were a site to manufacture weapons, and a terrorism infrastructure site in southern Gaza, a center for terrorism activity and a terrorism infrastructure site in central Gaza, and two terrorism targets in the north of the Strip had been hit, according to the IDF.

According to Ma'an, the targets included a military sites belonging to the Islamic Jihad's al-Quds Brigades between Khan Yunis refugee camp and the city of Deir al-Balah and in the al-Atatra area of the northern Gaza Strip.

Officials from Hamas, the Islamic group which rules Gaza, and witnesses said IAF aircraft bombed the group's training camps in Khan Yunis and al-Bureij. Witnesses said IDF tanks fired shells east of Gaza city.

"We identified an accurate strike of the targets. All of our planes returned to their bases safely," the IDF Spokesman said.

"Terrorist organizations have made it their goal to harm Israeli civilians. The IDF will act with determination against any element seeking to activate terrorism against the state of Israel. Hamas is the address and it is responsible," the IDF spokesman added.

During the IDF's wave of attacks, infantry soldiers struck targets with anti-tank missiles. "We take a severe view of this, because it occurred on Israeli territory," a senior security source said of the cross-border shooting. He described the targets hit in Gaza as "terrorism infrastructure targets" belonging to Palestinian Islamic Jihad and Hamas.
"We're seeking a strong response, but also to contain this. We do not want to escalate, but we are on high alert in case this deteriorates," the source added. The IDF's Gaza Division has gone on high alert in case of a potential escalation.

"We're prepared for further steps if necessary," the source said. Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu has issued a warning Tuesday evening to anyone who tries to test Israel's resolve by attacking its citizens.

"I wouldn't recommend testing us," he wrote in a Facebook post. "Whoever tried to got hit. Whoever tries to will get hit."

Spokesmen for the Palestinian Authority and Hamas condemned the IAF airstrikes on Tuesday evening, Ma'an reported. Hamas spokesman Sami Abu Zuhri called the airstrikes a "cowardly crime," accusing Israel of targeting Palestinian families, while PA spokesman Ehab Bessaiso called for international intervention to stop the escalation on the Gaza frontier.

Concerned that "escalating violence" could result in "another cycle of bloodshed," United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon warned on Tuesday against further retaliatory strikes from Israel against the Palestinian territories.

Ban condemned "the killing of an Israeli civilian today as a result of cross border fire from Gaza, and the bus bombing near Tel Aviv on Sunday," his spokesman said in a statement.

"He also deplores the death of a young child in Gaza from Israeli retaliatory raids today as well as a number of Palestinian civilian casualties since Friday," the statement said, adding that the secretary-general hopes a two-state solution will end violence between Israel and the Palestinians "permanently."

Kassam rocket fired into southern Israel from Gaza

By JPOST.COM STAFF
12/23/2013 07:47

Security forces find remains of projectile in Ashkelon Coast Regional Council after Code Red sirens alerted.

Security forces on Monday morning located the remains of a rocket fired from the Gaza Strip into southern Israel overnight. The rocket was found in the Ashkelon Coast Regional Council after Code Red sirens were sounded in the area shortly after midnight on Sunday. The projectile exploded near residential homes in the area. No injuries or damage were reported in the attack.

Earlier in the month, three rockets fired toward southern Israel from Gaza failed to reach their destination, falling inside the Palestinian territory. No injuries or damage were reported in the attacks.

IDF soldiers wound Palestinian trying to plant bomb along Gaza-Israel fence

By YAAKOV LAPPIN
12/20/2013 16:09

Incidents reported throughout the weekend involving Palestinians approaching border to carry out suspicious activity.

IDF soldiers opened fire on Palestinians near the fence four times on Friday and Saturday.

According to Palestinian officials, one man was killed and three were wounded in border incidents on Friday.

On Saturday, soldiers shot at the legs of a Gazan attempting to plant a bomb on the border with Israel, wounding him.

The man arrived at the border fence security zone together with others and began trying to place the explosive in the ground, according to army sources.

The incident on the border of the southern Gaza Strip came after the IDF identified suspicious movement by Palestinians in the same area several times.

On Friday, Palestinians approached the fence on several occasions, leading the IDF to dispatch patrols.

During one incident, Palestinians rioted near the fence in northern Gaza, the army said.

Soldiers noticed the Palestinians approaching and vandalizing the fence, prompting security forces to fire warning shots into the air. When the Palestinians failed to leave and began to damage the fence, the troops opened fire, wounding two Palestinians near Jabaliya.

Palestinian medics told the Ma’an news agency on Friday that one of the wounded Palestinians has been identified as 23-year-old Muhammad Ayoub, who was being treated for his injuries at Kamal Odwan Hospital in Beit Lahiya.
By HERB KEINON, LAHAV HARKOV
12/25/2013 01:02

Wave of terror meant to sabotage peace talks and possibility of two-state solution, says Labor party leader Isaac Herzog

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu characterized the cross-border shooting of a Defense Ministry employee on Tuesday as a “very grave incident” that Israel would not let go unanswered.

This attack from Gaza, unlike the other terrorist attacks this week, elicited a quick and immediate response from Netanyahu.

“Our policy up until now has been to prevent beforehand and to react with force, and this is how we will act now as well,” he said.

Government sources said the prime minister viewed this incident as particularly serious, both within the context of the string of other attacks this week – the foiled bus bomb in Bat Yam, the rocket fire from Gaza and the knifing of a border policeman outside Jerusalem – and also because it was such a clear violation of the understandings that brought an end to November 2012’s Operation Pillar of Defense.

Israel clamped restrictions in the past on Palestinians working inside the Gaza Strip, near the security fence, to prevent exactly the type of sniper attack that killed an Israeli Defense Ministry worker on Tuesday, government officials said.

Those restrictions were eased as part of the understandings brokered by Egypt that brought an end to Operation Pillar of Defense against Hamas in the Gaza Strip.

According to those understandings, Israel eased security restrictions on Gazans working close to the security fence.

Netanyahu made his comments as he was about to fly back to Jerusalem from Sderot, where he went to dedicate the new Tel Aviv-Sderot train line.

Israel would not tolerate a “drizzle” of attacks from Gaza, which would “turn into a storm,” he said.

Since Pillar of Defense, the south has been quieter than it had been for more than a decade, the prime minister said. “I am committed to maintaining that quiet, with a strong hand and an outstretched arm. That is our policy.”

Netanyahu said that there had recently been a “certain increase” in attempts to commit terrorist attacks.

“We are foiling them through the IDF, the Shin Bet (Israel Security Agency) and security services, and through our aggressive policy,” he said.

President Shimon Peres spoke out about the escalation on Monday, saying that Gazan terrorists were “playing with fire.”

“If Gaza wants peace, it must behave quietly,” he said. “If not, it will suffer the results of the unrest exponentially. Gaza is under no occupation,” he continued. “If it thinks the world will continue to support it, and contribute to the death of innocents, it is wrong... We will continue to ensure our security.”

Knesset Speaker Yuli Edelstein said the attack “proves that Hamas and its satellite organizations are determined to harm Israeli citizens, without any connection to their religion or ideology.”

“The trickle of attacks must stop and life near Gaza must be stable and safe,” Edelstein said, sending his condolences to the victim’s family.

Opposition leader Isaac Herzog (Labor) said he was certain the current wave of terror was meant to sabotage peace talks with the PLO and the possibility of a two-state solution.

“We will not give in to terror and will not let it win or determine the State of Israel’s interests,” he said. “I trust that the IDF and security forces will act against terror.”

Some on the Right did not share Herzog’s determination to continue negotiating.

“The deterioration in security shows once again that the Palestinians don’t want peace,” Deputy Minister for Liaison with the Knesset Ofir Akunis (Likud Beytenu) said. “This is a direct result of the Palestinian incitement against Israel.”

Knesset Finance Committee chairman Nissan Slomiansky (Bayit Yehudi) said the next release of terrorists from prison, which is planned for next week, should be canceled, calling it “absurd.”

“Day after day Israeli residents’ lives are endangered and the government continues blindly giving in to the demands of the Palestinian Authority and the Americans.

We should put an end to this farce. As long as terror against Israel continues, we cannot release even one terrorist,” Slomiansky said.

Concerned that “escalating violence” could result in “another cycle of bloodshed,” UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon warned on Tuesday against further retaliatory strikes by Israel against targets in the PA.

Ban condemned “the killing of an Israeli civilian today as a result of cross-border fire from Gaza, and the bus bombing near Tel Aviv on Sunday,” his spokesman said.

“He also deplores the death of a young child in Gaza from Israeli retaliatory raids today as well as a number of Palestinian civilian casualties since Friday,” the spokesman said, adding that the secretary-general hoped a two-state solution would end violence between Israel and the Palestinians “permanently.”

Michael Wilner contribute
IDF soldiers fire at Palestinian placing bomb on Gaza-Israel border

By YAAKOV LAPPIN
12/23/2013 19:44

Man was hit by gunfire, though his condition remains unknown; comes after 4 incidents of IDF opening fire on border over weekend.

IDF soldiers fired at the legs of a Palestinian man attempting to plant an explosive on the Gaza-Israel border on Monday evening. The incident occurred on the border with northern Gaza. The man was hit by gunfire, though his condition remains unknown, security sources said.

“The bomb was intended to harm soldiers along the border,” one source added.

It was the fifth time soldiers fired on suspects in the border region since Friday.

Over the weekend, the IDF opened fire on four separate occasions at Palestinians who entered the forbidden security zones near the fence and refused to vacate the area. In at least one case soldiers identified a suspect planting a bomb at the border.

Shortly after midnight, on Sunday, Palestinian terrorists fired a rocket into southern Israel, triggering an air raid siren and sending residents fleeing for cover.

Security forces located the rocket’s remains after sunrise inside an Israeli village, where it fell between homes, failing to cause injuries or damages.

IDF soldiers kill Palestinian near Gaza border, officials say

By REUTERS
LAST UPDATED: 12/20/2013 18:27

Israeli forces shot and killed a Palestinian and wounded three others in three separate incidents of cross-border violence in the Gaza Strip on Friday, Palestinian officials said.

The Israeli military, which has long said the area in Gaza along the border fence is off limits, said it was looking into the reports.

A 22-year-old Palestinian was shot dead by the fence near Beit Hanoun in the northern Gaza Strip. One source said the man was there trying to catch birds.

Three other Palestinians were also wounded by Israeli fire in the Hamas-controlled territory, medical officials said.

Palestinian group claims responsibility for shooting death of Israeli near Gaza border

By JPOST.COM STAFF
12/25/2013 10:49

The Popular Resistance Committees claimed responsibility on Wednesday for the shooting death of the Defense Ministry employee who was working along the separation fence along the border with the Gaza Strip.

In a statement, the group said that the attack was a response to “the crimes of Israel’s occupation which have cost the lives of the Palestinian people” in Gaza and the West Bank.

Iron Dome deployed near Sderot due to heightened tensions with Gaza

By JPOST.COM STAFF
LAST UPDATED: 12/25/2013 16:22

The Iron Dome missile defense system was deployed again near Sderot, Israel Radio reported Wednesday.

The measure was taken out of concern over potential rocket fire from Gaza amid heightened tensions in the region.