

Military Discourse during the Gaza War via Digital Platforms: A Comparative Analytical Study of Palestinian Resistance and Israeli Military Discourse

Mahran Issa¹ 

École Supérieure de Journalisme ESJ Paris Corresponding author: mahran.issa@hotmail.com

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Abstract

This study aims to identify the nature of military-media discourse circulated on digital platforms during the Gaza war and its impact on international relations, through a comparative analytical study of the speeches of the Palestinian resistance spokesperson (Abu Ubeida) and the Israeli army spokesperson (Daniel Hagari). The study belongs to descriptive research and employs the survey method based on content analysis of a sample of 40 military speeches: 17 by the resistance spokesperson and 23 by the Israeli army spokesperson, from Oct. 7, 2023, to early January 2024. The study material was collected from statements available on Telegram and YouTube, which served as two principal platforms for disseminating military discourse and communicating directly with local and international audiences. The findings show that the humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza ranked first in the resistance discourse 76.4%, while the captives issue ranked first in the Israeli discourse 30.4%; the Israeli discourse relied on propaganda, disinformation, stereotyping and repetition with a clear absence of evidence, whereas evidence and logical and emotional appeals were consistently present in the resistance discourse. The role of religion was also clearly present in both discourses. The findings further showed that the digital environment broadened the circulation of both speakers' messages and connected military communications to a battle of narratives directed at transnational audiences.

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Introduction

The Al-Aqsa Flood operation, carried out by the Palestinian resistance factions on Oct. 7, 2023, constituted a pivotal event both in the history of the Palestinian struggle against the Israeli occupation and at the global level, given repercussions that remain present and are rapidly unfolding in the positions of states, international organizations, and peoples alike. The military-media discourse of the Palestinian resistance spokesperson "Abu Ubaida" was present from the first day of the battle, addressing the frameworks and reasons that drove the Palestinian resistance to carry out the operation, while the accelerating pace of the Israeli army spokesperson's statements accompanied the war that the Israeli army declared on the people of the Gaza Strip (Badr, 2023; Fayez et al., 2026a).

Meanwhile, the Israeli army's media machine worked synchronously and in parallel with the military machine on the battlefield in the Gaza Strip. From the earliest days, the Israeli media and press apparatus was mobilized to prepare domestic and foreign public opinion — especially Western public opinion — to support the war based on

reaction. From the very start of the war, Israeli military discourse included precise, targeted de-ascriptions, such as describing Palestinians as "human animals," or attempting to link the resistance to terrorism and the ISIS organization, with the aim of stripping them of their humanity and facilitating the work of the military machine in killing and destruction (Arnaout, 2023; Hagari, 2024a; Hagari, 2024b).

More seriously, the official discourse of the United States and its allied Western states received and treated what was issued by the Israeli army spokesperson as a reference point for behaviour in their limitless support for the killing operations (Arnaout, 2023; Badr, 2023; Abdel Maksoud et al., 2026). By contrast, the discourse of the Palestinian resistance spokesperson began to set new rules for the shape of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, given the international — and especially regional and Arab — engagement it witnessed, the largest in the history of the Palestinian cause, which before the operation had been suffering from marginalization, settlement expansion, siege, and almost daily killing in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and Jerusalem. It proceeded from pillars most notably: the Palestinian right to legitimate resistance within international law, steadfastness on the battlefield, a return to the origin of the conflict, and the mobilization of domestic and foreign publics around the justice of the Palestinian cause (Hamdani & Mash'ati, 2023; Al-Ababneh et al., 2026).

Military discourse during this war acquired a prominent digital dimension, because of its direct transmission to the public via digital platforms, which enabled military spokespersons to present their narrative of events beyond the boundaries of traditional military communication. These platforms became an arena for circulating messages, images, and field footage, expanding the scope of the discourse from local audiences to regional and international ones—granting military discourse an increasingly significant role in the battle of narratives and in shaping the international image of the two warring parties.

Proceeding from this contrast between two discourses competing to represent the same event before local and global audiences, the researcher, through following the military media discourse associated with the Gaza war (Fayez, 2024; Isbeetan & Adway., 2026) observed a clear divergence in the nature of the discourse, its significations, and the direct and indirect messages embedded within it by the two parties to the confrontation—particularly given the circulation of these discourses via digital platforms and their direct reach to multiple audiences within and beyond national borders.

Accordingly, the research problem is defined as the analysis and measurement of the messages and the categories of form and content contained in the military media discourse of both the Palestinian resistance, through its spokesperson "Abu Ubaida," and the spokesperson of the Israeli army, "Daniel Hagari," during the Gaza war, as it appeared across digital platforms.

The study derives its importance from the fact that the Al-Aqsa Flood operation is the largest event in the history of the conflict between the Palestinian resistance and Israel, which drew the world's attention at both the official and popular levels after interest in the Palestinian cause had declined due to many changes. The war on the Gaza Strip attracted the attention of states, the international community, and peoples until it became the pivotal event across all Western and Arab media, and the military discourse

during it whether from the Palestinian resistance or the Israeli army played an important role in shaping viewpoints and official, popular, and international positions, with clear international, regional, and popular focus on the discourses of the two military spokespersons.

The study accordingly seeks to answer a central question: What is the nature and character of military discourse during the Gaza war, and what are its potential implications for international positions and relations? From this, the following sub-questions branch out: What are the most prominent issues addressed in the two discourses? What appeals, persuasion strategies, and patterns are employed in them? What frames of reference, actors, and terminology does each discourse employ? Who is the target audience, and what is the significance of timing in each? Then, what are the potential implications of the characteristics of the two discourses for international positions and relations, within the context of the political and field developments accompanying the war? And what role do digital platforms play in expanding the circulation of the two military discourses and their reach to local, regional, and international audiences?

Accordingly, the study aims to: examine the aspects of form and content encompassed in the military discourse of the Palestinian resistance movement and the military discourse of the Israeli army; identify and analyse the principles and main points that each of the two military spokespersons focuses on through their media discourse; compare the two parties' media-military discourses across several indicators and measurement models, and gauge the extent to which the differences between the two discourses contribute to supporting the Palestinian cause; and finally, explore the potential implications of the two military discourses for international positions and relations, interpreting them within the context of the discourse's interaction with the political, military, and humanitarian developments accompanying the war. The study derives additional significance from its examination of the circulation of military discourse across digital platforms and their role in expanding its reach to audiences and contributing to shaping the international image of the two parties to the war.

Literature Review

This study intersects with three fields of literature: literature on the structural transformations of the Palestinian cause in light of the Al-Aqsa Flood operation, literature on propaganda and media coverage of war, and literature on the analysis of war discourse as a hybrid discursive genre combining the military, political, and media. The following presents a critical synthesis of the most prominent findings of these fields, leading to the identification of the research gap that the current study fills.

Structural Transformations of the Palestinian Cause

There is consensus among researchers who have addressed the repercussions of Oct. 7 that the event reshaped the position of the Palestinian cause within the international system, even if their approaches differ in angle. The study by Thanaa Fouad Abdullah (2024) argued that the ensuing war was not an isolated local confrontation but rather revealed two strategic issues: the first concerning the fate of Israel's existence as orig-

inally a Western-American colonial project in the Arab region, and the second concerning the fate of American hegemony in the Middle East amid transformations of the global order toward a multipolar world.

This structural reading intersects with the conclusion of Al-Sheikh (2024) that the Al-Aqsa Flood operation reintroduced the Palestinian cause in a new reality after it had taken on a marginal Arab and international dimension amid division and the course of Arab normalization and reinforced the conviction of major powers of the need to find a settlement based on the rights of the Palestinian people to establish their independent state. In the same vein, Nadia Al-Saleh (2024) saw in the battle an opportunity for Arab states to reach a genuine resolution of the conflict and to disavow normalization agreements, after international public opinion began to place what was happening in Gaza in its proper context.

However, the study by Marize Younes (2024) shifts the discussion from the geopolitical level to the value level, tracking the collapse of the global moral system to the point of demonizing Palestinians and stripping them of their humanity, the double standards in legal discourses, and the fall of academic narratives before the horror of the annihilation of place and people. The study by Nesrine Zahida (2024) adds a complementary documentary dimension using immersive-reality tools to preserve the material and human evidence of war crimes from disappearance and denial, and to free victims' narratives from spatial and temporal constraints, serving accountability, justice, and collective memory.

These bodies of literature thus come together to draw the background of the current study: an event that returned the cause to the international forefront, a global value crisis exposed by the war, and an intense struggle over narrative and documentation.

Propaganda and Media Coverage of War

At the level of media performance, the literature reveals a structural bias in Western coverage of the war. The field study by Othmania Abdel Qader (2024), on a sample of 34 media and communication specialists, found that Western media were entirely biased toward Israel's narrative, and that Western news channels used tools of falsification and disinformation in Favor of Israeli propaganda, thereby violating the principles and functions of social responsibility theory, which presumes objective presentation and interpretation of events and adherence to the principle of truthfulness. This finding is understood more deeply when read in light of literature that has historicized the Hasbara apparatus as an entrenched institutional propaganda structure rather than an incidental practice — one that, in every war, performs the function of justifying the targeting of civilians and shifting blame toward the Palestinian side (Hamad, 2023; Bazian, 2023; Al-Makhzoomy et al., 2026) — and in light of what critical reports from within Israel itself have documented regarding the gap between Hasbara's myths and its realities (Greenfield & Rothman, 2012).

Critical historical literature has, for decades, deconstructed the founding myths of the Israeli narrative, from the claim of "a land without a people" to the claim of a national liberation movement (Christison, 1987; Pappé, 2018), while literature on alternative

coverage has documented the transformation of the question "Do you condemn Hamas?" into a coercive framing device in Western interviews that strips events from their historical context (Khamis, 2023).

Together, these works indicate that Israeli propaganda during the Gaza war remains an extension of an accumulated narrative structure that has found a nurturing environment in Western coverage since the founding of Israel a conclusion that grants the comparative analysis in the present study its interpretive foundation.

Analysis of War Discourse

At the level of discourse analysis, the study by Marchenko (2020) showed that military-political discourse and military-media discourse represent two distinct, though overlapping, institutional patterns, with the former serving as a normative reference for the latter and different means of manipulation present in the formulas of each. This is a theoretical distinction on which the current study builds in isolating the military spokesperson's discourse as a unit of analysis independent of political statements, while tracking the interaction between the two.

The study by Wen et al. (2024), through comparing the discourses of the Russian and Ukrainian presidents in the Ukraine war, showed that the language of conflict increases the polarization of identities and social actors through the amplification of external enemies, and that legitimacy discourse — which frames war as a necessity and justifies it to domestic and foreign publics is marked by depth, entrenchment, and reach, mechanisms that find their counterparts in the Israeli discourse under analysis here, lending the comparison a cross-case dimension.

The study by Alminawi (2024) is the closest in subject matter, having analysed all of the statements of the Qassam Brigades spokesperson "Abu Ubaida" during the first three months of the war using the tools of conceptual metaphor theory and critical discourse analysis, concluding that his speeches foreground their ideology and expose the aggression of the Israeli side against the Palestinian people and its occupation of the holy land, and recommended further research into the discourses of Palestinian factions.

Military Discourse across Digital Platforms

Digital platforms have reshaped military discourse by shifting it from a media system dependent on journalistic mediation to direct communication that integrates the official statement with image and video, addressing local and international audiences simultaneously. Within this environment, military discourse has become part of strategic communication, digital diplomacy, and image management during conflicts. The study by (Massa & Anzera, 2023; Fayez et al., 2026b) showed that the Israeli army's use of digital platforms was linked to constructing strategic narratives, presenting military operations, and managing the contest over the interpretation of events before the public.

These platforms have also redistributed the capacity to produce narrative between states and non-state armed actors, granting parties with limited media resources a broader scope for reaching external audiences and presenting their objectives within

political, humanitarian, and legal frameworks. The study by (Bos & Melissen, 2019) demonstrated that non-governmental groups use digital communication flexibly to frame their positions and address local and international actors, while the study by (Hedling et al., 2022) clarified that interaction, engagement, and resharing expand the presence of military messages, turning the audience into an active element in the circulation of war-related narratives.

The digital environment has also placed military discourse under continuous scrutiny for credibility, given its presence alongside images, testimonies, and counternarratives circulating now events occur. The strength of discourse has become tied to the speed of response, the consistency of the message, and its ability to withstand visual evidence, while silence or contradiction leads to a decline in trust and institutional reputation (Uwalaka, 2026). Hoskins (2021) notes that the intensity of the circulation of war images expands the presence of suffering before the public, while its political and humanitarian effects are shaped through the interplay of media framing, credibility, and political context.

It is evident from the preceding synthesis that the available literature has either addressed the geopolitical and value-related contexts of the war without the discourse itself or studied media coverage of the discourse of the military actors themselves or analysed the discourse of a single party — as in studies of Hamas's discourse alone — or the discourses of other wars, such as the Ukrainian case.

The current study therefore fills a clear gap through a systematic comparative content analysis of the discourses of both military spokespersons together, over the same time period and using the same analytical tool, and by linking the results of the analysis to the variable of international relations — that is, combining the fields of media and international politics within a single research design, while tracking the role played by each discourse in influencing local, Arab, and international audiences and the positions of states and organizations. The study also addresses the two discourses in the context of their circulation across digital platforms and their reach to audiences that transcend national borders.

Theoretical Framework

From the outset, Israel attempted to portray the Oct. 7 operation as an isolated event, on the grounds that Hamas launched an attack that threatened the State of Israel and that the latter has the right to defend itself. The West immediately fell in line with this narrative, which was stripped of the historical context of the conflict, and this was clearly manifested in the question "Do you condemn Hamas?" which dominated global media outlets (Ahmed, 2023). However, there are many contexts that were overlooked, which can be summarized in four interrelated tracks.

The first: the failure of the Oslo settlement project. The agreement between Israel and the Palestinian Authority failed to reach an independent Palestinian state after colliding, in 2000, with final-status issues (refugees, borders, Jerusalem, land), and the peace process itself turned into a tool for entrenching and perpetuating the occupation and seizing further land through settlement expansion (Qablan, 2015), to the point that Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas expressed, in his speech of May 12, 2021, a

state of despair and anger, addressing Israel and the United States by saying: "Enough is enough, leave us alone" (Al Jazeera Channel, 2021).

The second: the increase in Israeli settlement in the Palestinian territories. According to a report by the Jerusalem Centre on settlement in the wake of Oslo for 2023 — the year in which the October 7 attack occurred — there was a sharp, almost explosive rise in settlement rates since the signing of the agreement in 1993, exceeding 240%, and the number of settlers in the West Bank and occupied Jerusalem doubled from 225,000 to 780,000 (Mafarja, 2023). Former U.S. President Barack Obama acknowledged that the odds of a two-state solution succeeding are "very dim" (DeYoung, 2015), while his Secretary of State John Kerry stated that continued settlement negates the possibility of withdrawal to the '67 borders and threatens the peace process and the establishment of a Palestinian state (Kerry, 2016).

The third: the siege imposed on the Gaza Strip since 2006, following Hamas's victory in legislative elections whose integrity was attested to by former U.S. President Jimmy Carter (Nassif, 2006). The Strip went through four consecutive wars in which 5,418 Palestinians were killed, most of them civilians; Israel destroyed thousands of commercial establishments and factories, and unemployment rates rose to 47% among youth before the Al-Aqsa Flood operation (Hales, 2022; Abu Shammala, 2017). The United Nations warned of a safe drinking-water crisis affecting more than 90% of the population (United Nations, 2022), and efforts to render Gaza unlovable appeared evident through subjecting it to a long-term military controlling every detail of life by sea, air, and land (Al-Shawaf, 2023; Al Jazeera Net, 2017; Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor, n.d.).

The fourth: the decline in the importance of the Palestinian cause and the acceleration of the normalization track with Israel. The Former President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Peter Maurer, stated in 2017 that global interest in the Palestinian Israeli conflict was declining (Maurer, 2017), while statements by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, eight months before the Oct. 7 attack, revealed that his priority was normalization with Arab states before peace with the Palestinians (Gold, 2023). In his speech before the UN General Assembly on Sept. 22, 2023, he displayed a map showing the occupied Palestinian territories as part of the State of Israel (Al Jazeera, 2023), in clear violation and disregard of the Arab consensus in the 2002 Arab Peace Initiative (Al-Sheikh, 2024).

The Formation of the Israeli Military Discourse

Israel builds its military discourse on several principles and foundations that have remained consistent across all its spokespersons. Israel has relied on numerous narratives, myths, and legends in its occupation of the land of Palestine, blending the religious with the political, economic, media, and military. Historian Ilan Pappé pointed to ten myths on which the settler-colonial project was built, most notably that "Palestine was a land without a people," and the myth of considering the Zionist movement "a national liberation movement for Jews" rather than a colonial movement (Pappé, 2018) narratives documented by early critical literature (Christison, 1987).

Hasbara translates as "explanation" or "interpretation," and is considered Israel's propaganda machine and the main tool of public and digital diplomacy, functioning in every Palestinian war to justify the targeting of civilians and shift blame for large numbers of civilian deaths onto Hamas or Palestinian factions (Hamad, 2023; Bazian, 2023; Greenfield & Rothman, 2012). Alongside it operates the military censorship body, established with the founding of Israel in 1948 on the basis of the Emergency Defence Regulations of 1945, affiliated with the "Aman" Military Intelligence Directorate; the military censor has the authority to order press materials to be submitted for review before publication (Shalhat, 2023; Rajab, 2019; Ismail & Hamiyeh, 2023).

Digital platforms have granted this discourse a broader scope for circulating the Israeli narrative and directing it toward international audiences. As for the formation of the official Israeli army spokesperson's office, it operates under the leadership of Daniel Hagari, a senior-ranking officer, and is fully subordinate to the Chief of Staff, comprising several branches staffed by approximately 100 officers and 350 soldiers in compulsory and regular service (Ismail & Hamiyeh, 2023).

Four central methods dominated Israeli military discourse during the Gaza war:

First: Propaganda. Hasbara and the military-media apparatus relied on propaganda to criminalize the Palestinian resistance and justify massacres, to the point that Former U.S. President Joe Biden repeated, before Jewish leaders at the White House on October 11, unverified claims of "beheaded babies," before later retracting them (White House, 2023). Netanyahu, for his part, used claims of "the rape of women" without evidence to mobilize international human-rights organizations against the resistance (The Times of Israel, 2023) — claims that Hamas denounced, noting their contradiction with the testimonies of released Israeli female captives (Al Jazeera Net, 2024b).

Second: Disinformation. Israel worked to place international organizations under suspicion, by accusing UNRWA employees of participating in the Oct.7 attack (Fabian, 2024), which prompted 15 countries to suspend funding for the agency, before a number of them resumed funding after Israel failed to provide evidence substantiating its claims (Popular Conference for Palestinians Abroad, 2024; Minister for Foreign Affairs, 2024).

Third: Stereotyping. Through entrenching the question "Do you condemn Hamas?" in Western media interviews (Khamis, 2023), attempts to isolate Hamas from the Palestinian people in statements by Former U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken (U.S. Department of State, 2023), and, most seriously, the use of animalistic stereotyping in the statement of the Defence Minister, who took pride in imposing a "total siege," describing Palestinians as "human animals" (Arnaout, 2023), with support from pressure lobbies in the West for the narrative that Israel is the victim (Al-Sebai, 2023).

Fourth: Repetition. Officials and official spokespersons kept repeating the same terms — "ISIS of our time," "pure evil," "Hamas started the war" — until they were echoed in the discourse of a number of Western states, including French President Macron's statement about enabling the international coalition against the Islamic State to fight Hamas (Euronews, 2023); spokesperson Hagari continued repeating them months into the war (Hagari, 2024a; Hagari, 2024b), without any mention of the

roughly 7,000 Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails, including 1,319 administrative detainees held without trial (Mansour, 2023).

The Formation of the Palestinian Resistance's Military Discourse

The Palestinian resistance underwent a qualitative media transformation with the Al-Aqsa Intifada in 2000, establishing media offices affiliated with its military apparatuses, with each armed faction appointing an official spokesperson. As for the Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, the armed military wing of Hamas, the official public emergence of its spokesperson "Abu Ubaida" began with the announcement of "Operation Dispelled Illusion" in 2006, after which he took on the official title "Media Spokesperson for the Qassam Brigades" following Israel's withdrawal from the Gaza Strip in 2005 (Al-Wahidi, 2024; Al Adwan et al., 2026).

With the development of resistance activity, the media file came to represent a dedicated unit known as the "Media Brigade," led by the Qassam spokesperson and staffed by an estimated 300–350 personnel across various specializations (a private interview conducted by the researcher, 2024). Abu Ubaida gained considerable popularity among Islamic and Arab audiences, who awaited his speeches to learn the course of resistance operations, and since Oct. 7 he has gained enormous appeal across the Arab and Islamic world (Hamdani & Mash'ati, 2023; Russia Today, 2023; Awayes, 2023).

The Qassam spokesperson's discourse has continued to invoke the Palestinian people's right to resist occupation and colonialism, affirming that the Palestinian resistance aligns with international law, with a direct and constant connection to the religious issue and the affirmation that the blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque is a red line, in addition to linking his discourse to the Arab condition, considering the Palestinian cause first and foremost an Islamic issue, then an Arab issue, then a national one.

The Role of the Two Discourses on International Relations

The Israeli military discourse faced various challenges in influencing global public opinion, and the world split into two camps: an axis led by the United States, joined by Britain, Germany, and France, which showed unlimited support for Israel, and another axis led by China and Russia, joined by many other states even Western states such as Spain, Ireland, and Norway held that the conflict did not begin on October 7 and that the solution lay in recognizing the Palestinian state.

Despite Western support, official American discourse faced demonstrations and criticism from academic elites and university students; the university movement supporting the Palestinian cause in the West is considered the largest of its kind in both scope and character (Al Jazeera Net, 2024a). Israel did not respond to the calls of the majority of the world's states for a ceasefire, nor to the warnings of 13 states, including the G7, against an invasion of Rafah (Al Jazeera Net, 2024c), and European states warned that they would recognize the Palestinian state (Asharq Al-Awsat, 2024).

At the level of international organizations, the war exposed their fragility as a result of their inability, over nearly nine months, to stop the fighting; UN Secretary-General António Guterres denounced the Security Council's inability to take decisive resolutions despite invoking Article 99 of the UN Charter for the first time since he took office

(Al-Siyasa Magazine, 2024), and he denounced violations of international humanitarian law, describing the killing of civilians as unprecedented (Al Jazeera Net, 2023a).

The United Nations added Israel to its "list of shame" for the first time in its history due to its violations against children (Amouri, 2024), while the Israeli prime minister launched a sharp attack on Guterres, with Israel accusing him of moral deviation and calling for his resignation (Al Jazeera Net, 2023c), while Human Rights Watch criticized the West's silence over Israel's crimes in Gaza and accused it of hypocrisy (Al Jazeera Net, 2023b).

UNICEF warned that what is happening in Gaza is "a war on children" (Al Jazeera Net, 2024d), the World Health Organization considered that the catastrophe would exceed imagination in the event of an invasion of Rafah (United Nations, 2024), and international organizations spoke of the collapse of food systems in the Strip (United Nations, 2023; UNICEF, 2024).

For the first time in its history, Israel stood before the International Court of Justice to be investigated for genocide, as well as before the International Criminal Court against officials within it, and the failure of public diplomacy and Hasbara became a source of concern within Israel itself (Eglash, 2024). Hamas called for multiple international guarantors to end sole U.S. control over the conflict (Al Mayadeen, 2024), while the war opened a broad debate about the necessity of forming a new world order (Anadolu Agency, 2023).

Methodology

The study sheds light on the reality of military-media discourse and its role on international relations through the Gaza war. It belongs to the field of descriptive media studies, digital communication and to social studies, as it covers an issue intertwined between the fields of politics and media.

Within this framework, the study used the survey method to identify and analyse the content of the messages of the military-media discourse of the Palestinian resistance spokesperson and the Israeli army spokesperson that is circulated across digital platforms, in order to determine the importance accorded to different issues and topics in the discourse, in terms of quantity and type, and its effect on international relations.

The study population consists of all the military-media discourses circulated across digital platforms of both the Palestinian resistance spokesperson "Abu Ubaida" and the Israeli army spokesperson "Daniel Hagari" related to the 2023 war on Gaza, while the study sample consists of 40 speeches: 17 by the Palestinian resistance spokesperson and 23 by the Israeli army spokesperson, covering the period from Oct. 7, 2023, to early Jan. 2024.

The sample included all speeches available across the spokespersons' digital platforms during the study period, as the speeches did not appear daily, but rather according to the situation on the ground.

The researcher relied on content analysis as a tool to describe and analyse the manifest content and explicit substance of the military-media discourse of both spokespersons, in terms of form and content, and according to how well it served the study's objectives

and significance. The speeches were collected from open sources through the Telegram and YouTube platforms, as two digital platforms for circulating discourse and reaching audiences, then transcribed and subjected to an analysis form designed for this purpose, which included the categories: issues, temporal significance, target audience, appeals and persuasion strategies and style, the purpose of the discourse, the frame used, the actors involved, and terms and labels — multi-choice categories in which more than one option could be selected within a single speech.

The nature of the circulation of military discourse differs between the two platforms: Telegram relies primarily on channels, direct subscription, and the forwarding of posts, which makes it closer to an audience that has already chosen to follow the content, whereas YouTube relies on search and algorithmic recommendations linked to user interests, which allows the discourse to reach a wider and more diverse audience. The study used the two platforms solely for the collection of discourses, without measuring the volume of engagement or the extent of reach across them.

At the level of processing and analysis, the study combined quantitative and qualitative approaches: frequencies were recorded and percentages calculated for each category in the discourses of each side separately, and the categories were ranked in descending order according to their presence, allowing for a systematic comparison between the two discourses within the same time period. The quantitative results were then subjected to an interpretive qualitative reading linking the significance of presence, absence, and ranking to the contexts of the war and to the study's conceptual framework, leading to the extraction of the dominant discursive patterns of each side and the tracing of their reflection on the positions of states and international organizations.

The validity of the content analysis tool was verified by presenting it to a number of specialists in media, international relations, and research methodology, with the aim of reviewing the clarity of the analytical categories, their relevance to the study's questions, and their coverage of the dimensions of the military discourse under examination. The proposed modifications were incorporated into the wording of some categories and their operational definitions before the form was adopted in its final version.

The researcher adopted a unified coding sheet that included the issues, temporal significance, target audience, appeals, persuasion strategies, objectives, frames, actors, and terminology. The coding sheets were then reviewed after the coding process was completed to match the selections against the adopted operational definitions. This review contributed to enhancing the internal consistency of the coding and standardizing the application of the categories across all the discourses included in the sample.

The study addresses the military discourse of the Palestinian resistance and the Israeli army as the primary subject of analysis, while positions and international relations constitute an interpretive domain for discussing the implications associated with the analysis's findings. These implications are addressed considering the discourse's interaction with the political, military, and humanitarian developments accompanying the war, in a manner consistent with the nature of the descriptive study and the content analysis tool employed.

As for the boundaries of the study, they are distributed as follows: the thematic boundaries, represented in the speeches of the spokesperson for the Palestinian resistance movement, "Abu Ubaida," and the speeches of the spokesperson for the Israeli army, "Daniel Hagari"; the temporal boundaries, extending from the seventh of Oct. 2023 to early Jan. 2024; the spatial boundaries, which target occupied Palestine through the speeches related to the war on Gaza; and the digital boundaries, represented in the discourses circulated across the Telegram and YouTube platforms.

The content analysis methodology allows for identifying the characteristics of the two discourses and comparing the issues, appeals, frames, and target audiences within them. It also helps in discussing their potential implications in the international domain. These implications are understood within the broader context of the war and the field developments, political positions, images, and testimonies circulated during it. Thus, the relationship between the discourse and international positions is read as an interpretive and probabilistic relationship within the limits permitted by the study's sample and its methodological tool.

The study's results remain bound by several limitations that should be kept in mind in any generalization. The sample was limited to the period extending from Oct. 7, 2023, to early Jan. 2024, and to the discourses of two spokespersons only, excluding other discursive actors in the war. The speeches were collected from open sources via the Telegram and YouTube platforms; with the documentation gaps this may entail. Furthermore, the manifest-content-analysis tool, for all its quantitative precision, does not capture the full range of implicit and metaphorical meanings of the discourse.

Finally, measuring the impact on international relations faces the difficulty of isolating the discourse variable from the concurrent material and field factors; the results are therefore read within the limits of correlation and significance rather than strict causality, and it is recommended that they be supplemented by future studies covering longer phases of the war and other discursive levels.

Results

The researcher analysed a total of 40 speeches by both the Palestinian resistance spokesperson and the Israeli army spokesperson: 17 speeches for the former and 23 for the latter, from the beginning of the Al-Aqsa Flood operation on October 7, 2023, to early January 2024. The following presents the most prominent findings of the analysis according to the categories of the content-analysis form.

Issues Addressed in the Two Discourses

Table 1 shows that the issue of (the humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza) ranked first in the Palestinian resistance's discourse at 76.4%, followed by the issue of captives at 58.82%, while the issue of (the future of Gaza after the war) ranked last at 0%. As for the Israeli army's military discourse, the issue of (captives) ranked first at 30.4%, followed by the humanitarian catastrophe at 21.73%.

The resistance's discourse focused primarily on protecting civilians and exposing the features of the catastrophe on the ground, in flagrant contradiction with international law, drawing the attention of all levels (states, organizations, publics) to the scale of the catastrophe caused by Israel in Gaza, and returning the Palestinian cause to the

top of global attention after it had nearly fallen into oblivion as a result of normalization processes.

It is notable, with the exception of the humanitarian catastrophe as the present variable, that the importance of the issues did not change from the resistance's point of view compared with earlier discourses since the start of the siege on the Gaza Strip in 2006 (Al-Alam Channel, 2013; Al-Quds Al-Arabi, 2016); this constancy in the importance of the issues (captives, violations against Al-Aqsa Mosque, ending settlement, lifting the siege on Gaza) symbolizes the preservation of Palestinian constants.

Meanwhile, the issue of Israeli captives topped the Israeli spokesperson's discourse, aimed at drawing the attention of the international community, especially Western allies, and diverting attention from the humanitarian catastrophe occurring in the Strip. The Israeli discourse bypassed all the legitimate demands of the Palestinian resistance and made no mention of lifting the siege, the violations at Al-Aqsa Mosque, or ending settlement, nor did it address the future of Gaza after the war, as a result of disagreements within the political and military levels in Israel over the "day after" the war (Lis, 2024; Arab Centre for Research and Policy Studies, 2024; Al Jazeera Net, 2023).

Table 1

Comparison of the most prominent issues addressed in the military discourse of the Palestinian resistance and the Israeli army

Issue	Palestinian resistance discourse (%)	Israeli army discourse (%)
Humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza	76.4	21.7
Prisoners' issue	58.8	30.4
Violations against Al-Aqsa Mosque	29.4	—
Displacement of the population	17.6	17.4
Lifting the blockade on Gaza	17.6	—
Halting settlement activity in Jerusalem	17.6	—
Truce and ceasefire	11.7	8.7
Arab role in the issue	11.7	—
Assassination of Hamas leaders	5.8	13.0
Humanitarian aid in Gaza	5.8	8.7

Temporal Significance and Target Audience

The analysis showed that the topics addressed in the resistance's military discourse ranked first in terms of (immediacy) at 88.2%, then the significance of (the hour) at 58.8%, then the significance of (the day) at 52.9%. The resistance focused on immediate temporal significance for the battle and consistently tried to keep domestic and foreign audiences informed of developments on the battlefield as they happened, which made it faster in announcing combat operations than the Israeli army spokesperson, who was consistently delayed by a day or two.

In the Israeli spokesperson's discourse, by contrast, the significance of (time in general) ranked first at 39.1%, consistent with Hasbara's basic role in explaining and justifying the actual conduct of the Israeli army in the field against civilians.

Regarding the target audience, (the Palestinian, Arab, and Islamic audience) ranked first in the resistance's discourse at 100%, aimed at reassuring the Palestinian audience about the course of the battle and raising its morale in order to preserve the domestic front, and at framing the Palestinian cause as an extension of the Arab and Islamic depth, to the point that hardly any of Abu Ubaida's speeches lacked the call "O masses of our nation, O free people of our nation."

In the Israeli spokesperson's discourse, the (Israeli audience) ranked first at 39.1%, given the anxiety surrounding domestic society and the daily demonstrations demanding a prisoner-exchange deal, followed by the Western and Palestinian audiences at 34.7% each — reflecting the need to justify its actions and attempt to influence and steer Western public opinion, and to attempt to destabilize the Palestinian domestic front and turn it against the resistance. refer to Table 1, 2 and 6.

Appeals, Persuasion Strategies, and Style Used

Table 2 shows that (emotional appeals, logical appeals, and presenting the other side negatively) ranked first at 100% in the discourse of the Palestinian resistance, with a high presence of evidence, proof, and citation of facts (70.5%), whereas (self-defence and presenting the other side negatively) ranked first at 78.2% in the Israeli spokesperson's discourse, with a clear decline in the citation of facts (13%) and the use of evidence and proof (21.7%).

Table 2

Appeals, Persuasion Strategies, and Style Used in the Two Discourses

Category	Palestinian Resistance (%)	Israeli Army (%)
Emotional appeals	100	60.8
Logical appeals	100	21.7
Self-defence	88.2	78.2
Presenting military strength positively	70.5	39.1
Presenting the other side negatively	100	78.2
Fear/intimidation strategy	88.2	30.4
Appealing to instincts	70.5	73.9
Use of evidence and proof	70.5	21.7
Citation of facts	70.5	13
Offensive discourse style	88.2	13
Defensive discourse style	82.3	26

To verify the significance of the differences between the two discourses in the use of evidence and proofs, a chi-square test of independence was applied to the actual frequencies, where this category appeared in 12 speeches out of 17 in the discourse of the Palestinian resistance, and in 5 speeches out of 23 in the discourse of the spokesperson for the Israeli army. Table 3 shows the results of the test.

Table 3

Results of the Chi-Square Test for Differences in the Use of Evidence and Proofs

Variable	Palestinian Resistance	Israeli army	χ^2 Value	Degrees of Freedom	Significance Level	Cramer's V
Use of Evidence and Proofs	12 of 17	5 of 23	9.545	1	0.002	0.488

The test results show a statistically significant difference between the two discourses in the rate of use of evidence and proofs, with the chi-square value reaching (9.545) at a significance level of (0.002). The Cramer's V coefficient value of (0.488) indicates a medium effect size tending toward strength. The significance of this result is confined to the difference in the pattern of employing evidence within the two discourses, while the assessment of credibility is linked to the nature of the evidence presented and the extent of its consistency with the facts and examples addressed by the qualitative analysis.

To identify the nature of the relationship between persuasion strategy and target audience, a cross-tabulation was conducted linking the use of evidence and proofs to targeting the Western audience for each military spokesperson, and the percentages were calculated within each category of evidence use. Fisher's exact test was also used to measure the significance of the relationship, given the small size of some of the expected frequencies, as indicated in Table 4.

Table 4

Relationship Between the Use of Evidence and Proofs and Targeting the Western Audience

Military Spokesperson	Use of Evidence and Proofs	Does Not Target Western Audience	Targets Western Audience	Total
Abu Ubaida	Used	10 (83.3%)	2 (16.7%)	12
Abu Ubaida	Not Used	4 (80%)	1 (20%)	5
Hagari	Used	2 (40%)	3 (60%)	5
Hagari	Not Used	11 (68.7%)	5 (31.3%)	16

Note: The percentages represent the proportion of the targeted audience within each category of evidence and proof use, and the results were calculated according to the cases for which shared data on the two variables were available.

To measure the strength of the relationship and its statistical significance, Fisher's test was used alongside the Cramer's V coefficient, and the results were as shown in Table 5.

Table 5

Significance of the Relationship Between the Use of Evidence and Proofs and Targeting the Western Audience

Military Spokesperson	Number of Cases	Significance Level per Fisher's Test	Cramer's V
Abu Ubaida	17	1.000	0.040
Hagari	21	0.325	0.252

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the results of the statistical analysis.

The results show that 60% of Hagari's speeches that used evidence and proofs targeted the Western audience, compared to 31.3% of his speeches that lacked the use of evidence, with a Cramer's V value of 0.252, indicating a limited relationship, while the significance level reached 0.325. As for Abu Ubaida's discourse, it showed an almost clear difference between the two categories, with a significance level reaching 1.000. These results indicate that the relationship between the use of evidence and targeting the Western audience remained within the bounds of descriptive trends and did not reach the level of statistical significance.

The official Palestinian resistance spokesperson focused on emotional appeals: he began every speech with the basmala and Quranic and prophetic citations and urged Arabs and Muslims to support the Night Journey and Ascension of their Prophet and to preserve their holy sites, using terms with strong emotional connotations such as "ghetto graduates" and "scum of nations." He also consistently presented logical appeals, such as refuting the reasons given for the Al-Aqsa Flood operation and responding to and denying statements by Israeli officials and often followed his speeches with video clips documenting resistance operations, indicating the currency of the recording and his close, real-time following of battle developments; many of his expressions, in the Palestinian dialect, became Arab icons (Arabi21, 2023; Fayez, 2022).

It should be noted here that the official political level in Israel, headed by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, used emotional appeals from the very first moments and framed the conflict in explicitly religious terms, invoking the Old Testament's "Amalek" and biblical and Talmudic quotations in his messages to soldiers — connotations that, within the Zionist mindset, point toward annihilation and genocide (Al-Dabesh, 2023).

As for the evidence used by the Israeli army's spokesperson, much of it became a source of ridicule, especially when the Israeli army stormed Al-Shifa Hospital and the Nasser, Kamal Adwan, and Al-Rantisi hospitals without providing any evidence or proof to substantiate its claims that the resistance used the hospitals as military bases; the World Health Organization described Al-Shifa Hospital, after it was stormed, as having become a "death zone" (Darwish, 2023).

The Purpose of the Military Discourses

Table 6 shows that the objectives of the resistance's discourse all appeared at 100% and in a single ranking, as every speech by the resistance spokesperson included all of the objectives listed, whereas the objectives in the Israeli spokesperson's discourse were distributed unevenly, led by (denouncing the resistance) at 86.9% — meaning here denouncing the October 7 operation in a manner consistent with propaganda

and disinformation — followed by (addressing Western public opinion) at 82.6%, given Israel's great need to promote its narrative in the face of the scale of violations and crimes committed.

(Highlighting achievements) came last at 26%, which the researcher attributes to the Israeli army's predicament in the Gaza Strip and the lack of clarity regarding the future of the Strip, and its failure, up to the time of writing the study, to achieve the objectives announced by the Israeli prime minister (eliminating Hamas, recovering the Israeli captives, eliminating Hamas leaders).

Table 6

The Purpose of the Military Discourses of Both Sides

Objective	Palestinian Resistance (%)	Israeli Army (%)
Highlighting military capabilities	100	39.1
Highlighting material and human losses	100	43.4
Denouncing violations	100	86.9
Mobilizing Arab public opinion	100	34.7
Addressing Western public opinion	100	82.6
Highlighting the humanitarian image in Gaza	100	43.4
Highlighting achievements	100	26

Frames Used in the Two Discourses

Table 7 shows that the frames of (military and political responsibility) and (hegemony) ranked first at 100% in the Palestinian resistance's discourse, followed by the (victim) frame at 94.11%. The Qassam spokesperson's discourse gave priority to military and political responsibility toward the Palestinian people, combined with the legitimacy of resistance against occupation, and the hegemony frame was consistently invoked, especially American hegemony, unlimited American support, and U.S. complicity in the crime, while the presence of the victim frame was important for breaking the Israeli persistent narrative of itself as the victim and the weaker party.

In the Israeli spokesperson's discourse, the (victim) frame ranked first at 73.9%, followed by the (conspiracy) frame at 69.5%; the spokesperson sought to indicate that Hamas was the aggressor that started the war and that Israel had been subjected to a conspiracy led by Iran against it, and was therefore waging an existential war.

The researcher considers that the scale of the massacres and killing committed against Palestinians is in no way consistent with the victim and conspiracy frames, as revealed by earlier statements by the Israeli heritage minister that "dropping a nuclear bomb on the Gaza Strip is one of the possibilities" (Al-Ghad, 2023) — statements condemned by all states.

Table 7

Frames Used in the Military Discourse of Both Sides

Frame	Palestinian Resistance (%)	Israeli Army (%)
Conflict	82.3	39.1
Military and political responsibility	100	21.7
Humanitarian concerns	23.7	47.8
Hegemony	100	34.7
Conspiracy	82.3	69.5
Victim	94.11	73.9
More than one frame	17.6	17.3

Actors, Terms, and Labels

The analysis showed that (the Palestinian resistance) represented the first-ranked actor at 100% in both discourses, with (the Israeli army) ranking second in the resistance's discourse at 60.8%, as the official spokesperson invoked it to compare and match evidence and logical and emotional appeals against statements by Israeli leaders, while international organizations ranked last for both sides, given their weak role in stopping the massacres committed against Palestinians.

At the level of terminology, the designation (Al-Aqsa Flood) remained present at 88.2% in the statements of the official Qassam spokesperson, while Israel's designation of the war as (Iron Swords) was entirely absent from its spokesperson's discourse, despite its biblical and Talmudic connotations (Aitani, 2023); the Israeli prime minister wanted to change the name of the war to gain popular and international acceptance, but failed to do so (Russia Today, 2024).

The term (the Hamas movement and Qassam) topped the Israeli spokesperson's discourse at 95.6%, directly linked to the term (terrorism), which appeared twenty times across twenty-three speeches. He also employed the term (ISIS) to stereotype the Palestinian resistance.

Discussion

By linking the results of the analysis to the theoretical framework and to the preceding literature, the findings are read critically on five levels: the function of religion in the two discourses, the structure of the Hasbara crisis, the limits of discursive interpretation, institutional asymmetry, and finally the theoretical implications at the level of international relations.

First: The status of religion appeared clearly in both discourses; however, a critical reading reveals a fundamental divergence in its function within each. In the resistance spokesperson's discourse, reliance on Quranic text and prophetic hadiths served a mobilizing, foundational function: returning the conflict to its origin by framing the Palestinian cause first and foremost as a religious issue, then a national and patriotic one, and nationalizing the battle by treating Al-Aqsa Mosque as a red line addressed to the entire Islamic world.

In the Israeli discourse, by contrast, the political level's invocation of the Old Testament's "Amalek" and biblical and Talmudic quotations in messages to soldiers served

to legitimize excessive force; invoking "Amalek," with its connotations within the Zionist mindset regarding a drive toward annihilation, constitutes a religious framing of a war that was meant to be marketed to the West in secular, legal language (self-defense, fighting terrorism) (Al-Dabesh, 2023).

This exposes an internal contradiction within the Israeli communication strategy: the narrative directed at the West, of "the only secular democratic oasis in the Middle East," is undermined by a parallel, annihilationist biblical discourse, causing the internal and external discourses to work against one another, whereas the resistance's discourse-maintained consistency across its religious, national, and legal references simultaneously.

Second: The analysis revealed a disparity in the presence of evidence and proof between the two discourses, with the proportion reaching 70.5% in the resistance's discourse and 21.7% in the Israeli discourse. Some of the resistance's statements were accompanied by field footage documenting operations and responding to statements by the Israeli army, whereas Hagari, in many of his statements, relied on materials that provoked controversy and ridicule among audiences, which diminished their standing as evidence in terms of the nature of international relations with Israel. These included the paper schedule he displayed inside al-Rantisi Hospital, presenting it as a guard rotation schedule for hostages, and the tunnel he displayed in the vicinity of al-Shifa Hospital, presenting it as evidence of its use for military purposes. These percentages measure the extent to which evidence was present within the discourses included in the sample, while the discussion of credibility and propaganda strategy is based on the qualitative analysis of the nature of these examples and the degree of their clarity and consistency with the facts, images, and testimonies in circulation.

The reading reveals a fundamental difference in negative characterization employed by the two sides. Israeli discourse relied on framing the resistance within concepts of terrorism, ISIS, and pure evil, and the accompanying official discourse expanded to include descriptions that strip Palestinians of their humanity, along with calls for their killing, displacement, and the destruction of Gaza. By contrast, the negative characterization in the resistance's discourse was linked to the occupation, military operations, and the violations committed against Palestinians. Accordingly, describing the Israeli discourse as propagandistic or misleading is grounded in specific categories within the analysis, and in documented examples of repetition, stereotyping, dehumanization, and contradictions between certain claims and the circulating visual facts.

As for Telegram and YouTube, the study treated them as environments for the dissemination of military discourse and as sources for sample collection, with the analysis focusing on the content of the published messages and their discursive characteristics. Accordingly, discussion of the role of the two platforms is limited to their function in enabling the circulation of discourse outside traditional media mediation, while studying audience engagement, participation rates, spread, and reach would require other data and analytical tools.

The evidence presented by the spokesperson such as the paper duty roster at Al-Shifa Hospital, or the small, engineered tunnel turned into counterevidence that undermined his discourse, and often became a subject of ridicule. This is consistent with the

conclusion of war-discourse literature that legitimacy discourse, which frames war as a necessity, may take root domestically but breaks down externally when contradicted by visible facts (Wen et al., 2024).

Given what critical literature has documented that the "weaker victim" narrative, which succeeded in the 1967 context, is no longer credible when set against a major, nuclear-armed regional power imposing a comprehensive siege on Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and controlling land, sea, and air space (Hamad, 2023; Musleh& Khlouf, 2026) the problem thus lies in the distance between the narrative and reality, not in the efficiency of conveying the narrative, which explains the acknowledgment by Israeli circles that the state is "failing dismally in its public diplomacy" (Eglash, 2024).

Third: Methodological integrity requires that discourse alone not be held responsible for the shift in public opinion and international positions; military discourse is a variable operating in interaction with the material realities of the war — the scale of destruction, casualties, famine, and siege — and with the flow of images, which itself constituted an independent force of persuasion.

The study's own data reveal a telling paradox in this regard: the Western audience ranked low among the target audiences in the resistance's discourse (17.6%), while it was among the most targeted audiences in the Israeli spokesperson's discourse (34.7%) and among its objectives (82.6%); nonetheless, a wide segment of Western public opinion, particularly the younger generation and university students, shifted against Israel.

This paradox can be explained considering media framing theory, as the effectiveness of discourse is linked to its ability to construct a frame that aligns with visible realities and audience values. The Israeli discourse focused on self-defence and combating terrorism, at a time when the Western audience was watching images of victims, destruction, and the humanitarian crisis. This contradiction led to a decline in the presence of the Israeli narrative and a rise in the humanitarian frame in interpreting the events of the war. This is also attributable to the enormous volume of images and videos that emerged from Gaza because of the war, which included massacres against children, women, and the elderly, as well as against civilian buildings and healthcare and educational institutions. This could not fail to affect the new Western generation, which is considered more adept at comparing facts. Likewise, the sheer scale of the massacres was inconsistent with the justifications of self-defence or with international law, particularly the Fourth Geneva Convention and its protocol, values that command respect among Western audiences, which caused the shift to work against Israel's Favor.

Reception theory and decoding theory help in understanding this result, as the audience interacts with messages and reinterprets them according to their experiences, positions, and the sources they follow. The gap between the Israeli discourse and the circulating scenes drove segments of the Western audience, particularly youth and university students, to read the Israeli narrative critically. Thus, the increased intensity of the discourse directed at the West increased the opportunities for it to be examined and compared against the facts. This reading explains the indicators observed by the study within its methodological limits.

This suggests that the party that lost the global battle of image was the party that invested more in addressing the West, and that the shift was not so much the fruit of the resistance's discourse — directed primarily at Palestinian and Arab audiences — as it was the fruit of the exposure of the gap between the Israeli discourse and the facts on the ground; the study's results are therefore read within the limits of correlation and significance, not as proof of a strict causal relationship between a particular discourse and the shift in international positions.

Fourth: The results confirm the thesis of structural asymmetry between the two discourses pointed to by the literature on hybrid discourse (Marchenko, 2020) but add to it a revealing comparative dimension: the Israeli army spokesperson operates within a constrained institutional structure — full subordination to the Chief of Staff, military censorship determining what is published, and political pressure from a government divided over the war's objectives and the “day after.” This constraint was reflected in turbulence and contradiction between his “professional” discourse and statements from the political level, ranging from calls to strike Gaza with a nuclear bomb to describing Palestinians as human animals — statements by politicians undermining what the military spokesperson was trying to build before the Western audience.

By contrast, the resistance's discourse operated within a unified frame of reference since before the war, with clear harmony between the political and military levels around the same demands (ending the war, freeing captives, lifting the siege, ending settlement and attacks on holy sites); this consistency, together with the immediacy of the discourse and its temporal precedence in announcing events, constituted its most prominent discursive competitive advantage.

Fifth: At the level of international relations, the results carry dual theoretical implications. On one hand, the UN Security Council's inability to stop the war, despite invoking Article 99 of the Charter, and the United States' repeated use of its veto power against any resolution to end the war, reinforce the realist interpretation that makes power the fundamental tool of foreign policy and exposes the disarray of the unipolar world order as the power sponsoring the international order sacrificed its own organizations for the sake of its ally, foreshadowing the world's transition into a “post-international-organizations” phase and a return to disorder.

On the other hand, Israel's appearance for the first time in its history before the International Court of Justice on charges of genocide, the International Criminal Court's pursuit of its officials, the placement of its army on the UN's “list of shame,” and the expansion of European recognitions of the Palestinian state, all indicate that international institutions have not entirely lost their normative and symbolic function, and that the cost of long-term reputation has become an actual constraint on Israel and its allies.

More seriously, the Israeli discourse itself ultimately conceded the limits of power; spokesperson Daniel Hagari's statement that “ Hamas is an idea. Anyone who thinks we can eliminate Hamas is wrong,” made after nearly eight months of a war whose declared first objective was to eliminate the movement, represents a moment of discursive exposure that refutes the narrative of isolating the resistance from its popular

base, and reveals the distance between the war's declared objectives and its undeclared ones, for which the discourse continued to serve as a cover.

Conclusion

The October 7th operation represented a major challenge at the level of the traditional narratives and terminology that Israel had continued to promote and tried to reinforce through its army's official spokesperson and its political and military spokespersons, through methods of propaganda, disinformation, repetition, and stereotyping, in an attempt to undermine the narrative of the origin of the conflict.

The official Israeli army spokesperson focused his discourse primarily on the domestic audience, in order to stabilize the domestic front amid the major shock to public confidence in the army, and then on the Western audience in search of backing; but his narrative met with sharp criticism at the level of many Western states and publics. By contrast, the resistance's discourse remained clear from the start, focused on the Palestinian people's right to freedom, resistance to the siege, the release of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails, ending the attacks on Al-Aqsa Mosque, and ending settlement, while maintaining its constants and remaining in harmony between its political and military levels.

This paper showed that the Western audience ranked low in the resistance's discourse, despite being the most targeted audience in the Israeli spokesperson's discourse. It also revealed clear confusion and inconsistency between political and military statements on the Israeli side, in contrast to the harmony between these two levels in the Palestinian resistance's discourse. Finally, Israel demonstrated marked technological and digital superiority, exercising control over social media platforms and their decisionmakers to restrict content supportive of the Palestinian cause.

Epistemically, the study offers a quantitative and qualitative reading of the characteristics of the two discourses within the context of the shifts witnessed in global public opinion toward the Palestinian cause during the war. Digitally, the study examines the discourses within the context of their circulation via Telegram and YouTube and clarifies the presence of visual evidence and competing narratives within this context, within the limits of a content analysis that focused on published messages and excluded the measurement of engagement, algorithms, and reach.

The study recommends extending the analysis to later war phases, comparing how both discourses evolved, and linking political-level discourse to that of the two military spokespersons. It also calls for audience-reception research and critical discourse/conceptual metaphor analysis to uncover implicit meanings. Notably, both sides replaced their spokespersons during the war: Abu Ubaida's successor kept the same name after his death, and Effie Derin succeeded Daniel Hagari on March 27, 2025, signalling the position's symbolic importance.

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