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## The Geopolitics of Narrative Inequality: A Transitivity Analysis of Media Discourse on the Gaza War and Its Implications for SDG 10

Alman Naufal<sup>1</sup>, Tri I. Hardini<sup>2</sup>, Neidya F. Sunendar<sup>3\*</sup>

<sup>1,2,3</sup> Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Indonesia

Correspondence: E-mail: [neidyafahma@upi.edu](mailto:neidyafahma@upi.edu)

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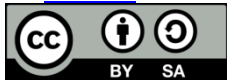
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### ABSTRACT

Media discourse crucially shapes global perception, reflecting geopolitical dynamics and representational inequalities beyond mere economic terms. However, SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) currently fails to address these discursive disparities. To bridge this conceptual gap, this study aims to uncover how representational inequalities are linguistically engineered in conflict reporting and articulate the urgency of integrating critical literacy into the SDG 10 framework. Applying transitivity analysis to a 15,791-word corpus (20 articles) from French (France 24) and Arabic (Al Jazeera) media, the study reveals systematically divergent framing. Findings demonstrate that Francophone media adopts a diplomatically sanitized lexicon, over-utilizing Verbal processes to distance audiences from the reality of violence. On the other hand, Arabosphere media actively challenges structural violence and demands accountability through explicit Material processes. Consequently, determining who is framed as the "Actor" or "Goal" in Gaza is crucial, as micro-level grammatical choices can obscure or justify severe physical destruction. These stark discursive differences underscore an urgent need for a new SDG 10 target focused on literacy equality and fact verification, which is vital to ensure equitable discursive opportunities and dismantle global hegemony.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The war in Gaza has caused explicit, systematic destruction in every possible area: social order, public health, higher education, and psychological well-being (AbuZarifa et al., 2026; Khatatbeh et al., 2026; Noairat et al., 2026). This conflict has created compounding crises and a constant threat of death that impact the mental health of both children and adults (AbuZarifa et al., 2026; Aldabbour et al., 2026; Awad et al., 2026; Fekih-Romdhane et al., 2025). However, the trauma of this physical warfare is worsened by a secondary, systemic injustice: information discrimination and unequal media representation. Intense media exposure not only directly affects the psychological state of those involved (Khatatbeh et al., 2026) but also subjects the conflict to global discourse hegemony. Mass media coverage often constructs conflicting realities of the war depending on geopolitical standpoints, utilizing unequal framing to distract international audiences from the facts on the ground. This discriminatory media framing is a profound form of global inequality that marginalizes victims of conflict. However, despite these explicit representational inequalities in plain sight, the United Nations' framework for reducing inequalities (SDG 10) fails to address this discursive disparity. In recent years, SDG 10 targets appear to focus almost entirely on areas that are "safe," sterile, and technocratic, such as small businesses, climate synergies, and entrepreneurship (United Nations, 2024). By neglecting the issue of global information tyranny and media bias, the current SDG 10 framework lacks a real agenda to restore equal discursive opportunities, thereby allowing the systemic discrimination of marginalized populations in international reporting to persist.

*"Ensuite,"* the Gaza war has been addressed only in online commentaries (Altahmazi & Abid, 2025), formal institutions (Ilie, 2022), and parliamentary discourse (Giaxoglou, 2018) that did not uncover structural inequality and discourse framing, how the media discourse present conflict through their choice of linguistical features need to be examined to uncover unequal rights of sovereignty (Orts, 2016) which leads us to reality of the elite feuds (Shrikant & Sierra, 2022). In Gaza, determining who is "the Actor" and who is "the Goal" is not a matter of reputation; it inflicts real and direct material consequences that potentially justify horrendous and inhumane physical destruction of human lives and infrastructure, part of a geopolitical structural impunity that ignores international humanitarian law (Robles & Castor, 2019).

In general, language is globally orchestrated to maintain dominance, deaden public empathy through confusing overcommunication, and label any attempt to voice justice by the oppressed as a security threat that must be silenced (Danziger, 2025; Hansson, 2015; McCambridge, 2022). Previous studies have demonstrated, critically, theoretically, and empirically, the dismantling of ideological bias and representational injustice, as well as encouraging public critical literacy regarding conflict discourse. However, although findings such as the enforcement of active agency (Shalaby, 2024), the dismantling of euphemism and pacification (Alkhawaldeh & Alserhan, 2025), the concretization of targets (Abdo et al., 2026), the selection of news sources (Tenorio, 2026), the amplification of elite voices (Adzonyoh, 2026), moral binding through institutional authorization (Sutkutė, 2026), the conversion of events into rational-legal imperatives (Jović-Lazić, 2026), the control of public emotion (Vlasova, 2026), symbolic construction (Oymak, 2026) have been done and strengthen various critical reviews, it has not been concretely found research that conducts significance testing between

two languages nor critical analysis through transitivity (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2013, 2009). Whereas conducting those two things not only has the potential to provide practical critical linguistic literacy solutions through critical identification of subjects, verbs, and objects, but will also provide a concrete view of how two languages from two different outlets and states statistically have significance and different ways of delivering conflict discourse; this is the aspect that becomes the uniqueness of this study.

Therefore, although research limitations are present in terms of analysis that is based only on the comparison of two media institutions (France 24 and Al Jazeera), this research still offers novelty in terms of methodological as well as theoretical viewpoints within the study of conflict discourse. The divergent cultural and political contexts in which France 24 and Al-Jazeera operate present a compelling case for a detailed investigation as samples to uncover significant functional differences. Therefore, this paper aims to comparatively analyze the discourse of war in the recent Gaza conflict as presented by France 24 and Al-Jazeera. Thus, the dominant rhetorical strategies and systemic lexical choices implemented by both discourses will be identified to uncover the conflicting framing they employed critically.

To conduct the deep linguistic analysis, this study uses the Transitivity system in SFL. This system helps analyze how a clause shows an experience by breaking it into three main parts: the Process, the Participants, and the Circumstances (Alexander, 2019; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2009, 2013). The choice of process type and the assignment of participant roles such as 'Actor' and 'Goal' serve as fundamental ideological mechanisms in conflict reporting. In news coverage of Gaza across French media such as France 24 and Arabic media such as Al Jazeera, micro level grammatical choices can either obscure or justify physical destruction. An analysis of transitivity patterns across both corpora reveals a starkly asymmetrical distribution of agency that forms the grammatical foundation of representational inequalities, a dimension currently absent from the SDG 10 framework. To bridge this conceptual gap, the present study examines how transitivity choices across French and Arab media corpora provide insight into disparities in conflict reporting discourse, while also investigating how such an analysis facilitates critical literacy to support SDG 10 in reducing global inequality.

## 2. METHODS

This study implements a mixed-methods design: quantitative non-parametric statistics (Modarres, 2020) to establish empirical patterns, followed by qualitative critical analysis (Creswell, 2009; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018) to interpret them. The variables in this data are categorical, namely "Language Type" (Arabic and French) and "Process Type" (Material, Mental, Relational, Behavioral, Verbal, Existential). Chi-Square Test of Independence is necessary to determine whether a statistically significant difference in proportions exists in the transitivity preferences between the two languages. It is important to note that these statistical measures do not directly address critical social dynamics; they provide an objective, empirical baseline to then qualitatively and critically interpret these micro-level functional linguistic differences. After that, it allows us to explore their deeper social implications, including how linguistic structures may facilitate social emancipation and align with the goals of SDG 10.

Given the non-identical corpus sizes (the French text contains 8,166 words, while the Arabic text contains 7,625 words), comparing unnormalized frequencies can produce measurement bias. We solved this using a simple ratio. We calculated the numbers per one thousand words so we could compare the texts on a fair level. The preliminary results showed some clear differences. For instance, Arabic used the Material process heavily. It reached 74.62 times per one thousand words in the Arabic text, while the French text only showed 43.23. This normalization provides a fair descriptive picture before entering the inferential testing stage.

The corpus data consists of the twenty most recent articles from August 8, 2025 to August 14, 2025 that exclusively reported on the war in Gaza, which are published in two distinct media outlets regarding the languages and origins: France 24 and Al-Jazeera. The news network choices are based on their representation of influence and reputation. France 24 is a French state-owned international news network that represents a French (and broadly, a European) perspective on global events, broadcast to the world. Its editorial line reflects the official French perspective on international affairs. Al Jazeera is arguably the most influential and recognized media outlet from the Arab world that also operates a network of highly popular channels with 21.5 million subscribers, making its YouTube audience vast. While acknowledging that no single media outlet can wholly represent the immense diversity and complexity of the entire "French-language" or "Arabic-language" geopolitical discourse, these two networks serve as highly significant, contrasting case studies. They are selected for this study not as absolute representatives of their respective languages, but rather as prime exemplars of major, state-backed international broadcasting that hold significant power in shaping global public opinion.

The selection of texts from this specific one-week period is driven by the density of the phenomenon rather than longitudinal coverage. This timeframe represents a critical geopolitical turning point characterized by an intersection of intense conflict, humanitarian crises, and highly polarized media narratives between France 24 and Al Jazeera. In the context of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), the adequacy of a corpus size is determined by its qualitative depth and relevance to specific discursive events rather than its sheer volume. As Fairclough (2004, p. 6) asserts, "The sort of detailed text analysis I introduce is a form of 'qualitative' social analysis. It is rather 'labor-intensive' and can be productively applied to samples of research material rather than large bodies of text." Therefore, establishing a highly focused temporal boundary allows for the meticulous, micro-level grammatical dissection required in this study. This approach aligns with established event-driven sampling practices (e.g., Chen & Li, 2023), where heightened geopolitical uncertainty and shifting narratives necessitate deep qualitative examination rather than broad, surface-level temporal comparisons.

Moreover, the selection of the August 8–14, 2025 timeframe employed a purposive event-driven sampling strategy. This specific week was selected due to the unprecedented convergence of four critical events that acutely polarized international public discourse: (1) the approval of a controversial settlement expansion plan and a new military offensive in Gaza City; (2) joint declarations by over a hundred NGOs condemning the systematic blockade of humanitarian aid; (3) escalating famine conditions compounded by attacks on aid-seekers; and (4) the targeted killings of

journalists, which directly implicated media networks in the conflict. This dense convergence provides an optimal site for observing how different media institutions discursively construct competing realities of the war.

To systematically isolate relevant discourse, data collection was conducted via search engines using targeted Boolean search strings adapted for both languages (e.g., ("Gaza" OR "Zaytoun") AND ("military plan" OR "aid blockade" OR "settlement") AND (site:france24.com/fr OR site:aljazeera.net)). For the transitivity analysis, the fundamental unit of analysis is the clause. In Systemic Functional Linguistics, the clause is the primary grammatical site where representational choices (processes, participants, and circumstances) are realized, allowing for a meticulous micro-level dissection of agency and ideological framing (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2013). This research excluded opinion pieces, editorials, video transcripts, and articles published outside the designated timeframe.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1 Result

We ran a simple Chi-Square test to compare Arabic and French media discourses. We checked Table 1 to see if these two languages favor completely different types of verb processes. The results in Table 2 showed a massive gap between them, hitting an  $X^2$  of 46.387 with a p-value under 0.001. Our data passed all the strict rules. The numbers prove that no category dropped below five, while the lowest expected count safely stayed at 10.76. Because this p-value sits so far below the normal limit, we can completely reject the null hypothesis. Both languages clearly build their sentences differently.

Table 1. *Normalized Corpus Quantification and Identified Transitivity Process*

| Transitivity Process Type | Arabic Corpus (N = 7.625) |                |                 | French Corpus (N = 8.166) |                |                 | Ratio Difference (Arabic vs. French) |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|-----------------|---------------------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------------------------------|
|                           | Frequency (f)             | Percentage (%) | per 1,000 Words | Frequency (f)             | Percentage (%) | per 1,000 Words | Delta per 1,000 Words                |
| Material                  | 569                       | 55.78%         | 74.62           | 353                       | 45.78%         | 43.23           | +31.39                               |
| Mental                    | 0                         | 0.00%          | 0.00            | 0                         | 0.00%          | 0.00            | 0.00                                 |
| Relational                | 213                       | 20.88%         | 27.93           | 136                       | 17.64%         | 16.65           | +11.28                               |
| Behavioral                | 20                        | 1.96%          | 2.62            | 13                        | 1.69%          | 1.59            | +1.03                                |
| Verbal                    | 201                       | 19.71%         | 26.36           | 261                       | 33.85%         | 31.96           | -5.60                                |
| Existential               | 17                        | 1.67%          | 2.23            | 8                         | 1.04%          | 0.98            | +1.25                                |
| Total                     | 1,020                     | 100.00%        | 133.77          | 771                       | 100.00%        | 94.41           | +39.36                               |

These clear numbers prove that the different grammar choices are not random accidents, but rather strict editorial rules designed to show opposite views of the Gaza war. Table 2 reveals the exact cause of this massive split. French heavily overuses speaking verbs while Arabic strongly favors action words. Quantitative data shows that Verbal Processes in the French corpus occupy a massive portion, namely 33.85%. This reflects the orientation of Western journalism, which often hides

behind the principles of bothsidesism and objectivity by delegating claims to third parties. In practice, the Gaza war is not reported as a barrage of mass destruction and death, but reduced to a diplomatic debate among politicians or bureaucratic warnings from international organizations. For example, "*ceux qui veulent aujourd'hui reconnaître un État palestinien recevront une réponse...*" a déclaré Bezael Smotrich ("those who want to recognize a Palestinian State today will receive an answer..." said Bezael Smotrich), *Emmanuel Macron a condamné... et appelé à la création d'une "mission de stabilisation"...* (Emmanuel Macron condemned... and called for the creation of a "stabilization mission"...), *Le ministère égyptien des Affaires étrangères a condamné "dans les termes les plus forts" le plan israélien* (The Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs condemned "in the strongest terms" the Israeli plan).

Table 2. *Inferential Significance Test Results (Pearson Chi-Square Test)*

| Statistical Test                       | Statistic Value     | Degrees of Freedom (df) | Asymptotic significance (2-sided) | Hypothesis Decision    |
|----------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------|
| Pearson Chi-Square (chi <sup>2</sup> ) | 46.387 <sup>a</sup> | 4                       | p < 0.001                         | H0 Rejected (p < 0.05) |
| Likelihood Ratio                       | 46.099              | 4                       | p < 0.001                         | Significant            |
| Linear-by-Linear Association           | 30.825              | 1                       | p < 0.001                         | Significant            |
| N of Valid Cases                       | 1,791               | —                       | —                                 | —                      |

These clauses in the previous paragraph position political figures (Smotrich, Macron, Egyptian Ministry) as the Sayer. This word choice ignores the real victims. The media uses speech verbs as a safe shield so they only have to report who blamed whom, rather than proving the brutal facts on the ground. Loud political drama completely silences the suffering Gazan civilians. The expression of violence through Material processes, which occupy the largest portion (45.78%), holds vastly different material action properties between the French and Arabic corpora. Material processes in the French corpus largely center on administrative actions, legislative acts, or tactical military policies generally sterilized from blood and violence, as seen in the following examples: 1) *Le ministre israélien des Finances, Bezael Smotrich, a approuvé... les plans d'une colonie...* (Israeli Finance Minister Bezael Smotrich approved... plans for a settlement...), 2) *Les grandes ONG internationales n'ont pas encore pu livrer d'aide humanitaire à Gaza.* (Major international NGOs have not yet been able to deliver humanitarian aid to Gaza), 3) *L'armée israélienne a annoncé mercredi 13 août l'avoir "approuvé".* (The Israeli army announced on Wednesday, August 13, having "approved" it).

### 3.2 Discussion

In other words, the discourse produced in the French language has demonstrated elite dominance by providing veiled objectivity by distancing the audience from the reality of violence through utterances and quotations. A stage for Western political elites (e.g. Kaja Kallas, Anthony Albanese, Guido Crosetto) and institutions (e.g. CPJ, Al Jazeera); victims' voices are silenced through the legitimacy of official intermediaries to voice reality. The granting of the stage and such moral

credibility sidelines and places in a defensive position human rights perspectives, minority group voices, as well as victims (Adzonyoh, 2026). The discourse stage is also utilized by elites with institutional authorization in order to transform controversial political decisions into incontestable moral obligations (Jović-Lazić, 2026; Sutkutė, 2026); the practice of source selection and the use of direct utterances in conflict news is not a neutral journalistic practice (Tenorio, 2026).

The bloody tragedy that occurs in conflict regions is sterilized with verbs such as *a déclaré* (stated), *a annoncé* (announced), and *évoque* (mentioned), which makes this humanitarian crisis merely a diplomatic commodity or information exchange; an instrument of symbolic construction that transforms tragic events into orderly and normative official discourse (Oymak, 2026; Vlasova, 2026). In fact, French media continues to frame death as a verbal process where the perpetrators of violence are hidden behind the framing of report sentence structures; the elite hegemonic narrative that reduces victims' suffering to a passive humanitarian tragedy must be rejected with various efforts to encourage critical literacy (Bani Abdo et al., 2026). This provides an understanding that the shifting of responsibility and the main agents causing the crisis within the discourse continue to be influenced by media ownership and frame selection (Shalaby, 2024), while the agency and responsibility of the attacking party are blurred behind passive constructions and institutional terms (Tenorio, 2026). In addition, the Actor is the Israeli minister or military; the Goal, acting as the object of their material actions, is not humans or civilian infrastructure, but abstract entities like "settlement plans" or "military operations." The word they chose to use is just way too sanitized and completely avoids showing the real chaos and destruction happening out there (Sailan et al., 2026; Trisko Darden et al., 2026). This clever trick hides the massive scale of physical violence by making horrible events sound like everyday paperwork. This cold approach potentially kills reader empathy. It completely covers up the guilt of the attackers and fails to give any fair attention to the suffering victims.

On the other hand, discourse in the Arabic language directly confronts the audience with Material processes by showing physical realities and aggression in conflict areas explicitly. The choice of specific phrases pointing directly to military actions (such as "Israeli airstrikes" and "Israeli assault") explicitly establishes who holds control over those destructive actions (Shalaby, 2024). The frontal identification of military violence perpetrators serves to dismantle the euphemistic terms of the media that often obscure the attacking party and position suffering as if it occurred without a clear perpetrator (Al-Khawaldeh & Alserhan, 2025); Arabic discourse texts show consistency in placing the military party as the active subject perpetrators of violence ("*جيش الاحتلال*" / occupation army, "*طائرات الاحتلال*" / occupation aircraft). There is no doubt regarding who holds control over the destructive actions. That certainly pins military actors as active subjects by asserting structures of legal and political accountability for the violence that occurred (D'Andrea et al., 2026).

Then, selected material verbs such as *دمر* / to destroy, *نسف* / to blow up, *ارتكب مجازر* / to

commit massacres clearly target physical and tangible things such as "منزل 300" (300 houses), "حي الزيتون" (Zaitun neighborhood), and civilians, which describe the physical impact directly without any ambiguity in order to explicitize the intensity of military attacks against civilian targets (Al-Khawaldeh & Alserhan, 2025; Shalaby, 2024). Those quantified numbers also aim to validate the scale of physical destruction (Bani Abdo et al., 2026; Shalaby, 2024). This framing of Arabic language discourse actively counters the "symmetrical war" narrative. By using diction such as الإبادة (genocide) and إعادة احتلال (re-occupation), the text dismantles hegemonic agendas and demands direct responsibility in order to demand political and legal accountability directly (Bani Abdo et al., 2026; Al-Khawaldeh & Alserhan, 2025).

### ***Discursive Resistance through Victim Visibility and Actor Clarity in Arab Media***

Arabic news channels do the exact opposite. They fight back with very direct words. Using action words most of the time is not just reporting the news, but actually recording a bloody tragedy. They always clearly name the exact attackers. They never hide the ruined targets either. Putting the military as the main cause of these cruel crimes destroys their favorite excuse of self-defense and finally brings true fairness to the story. By not obscuring the perpetrators through passive forms, the Arabic media affirms the suffering, breaking down the silencing of victims' voices, which fundamentally aligns with realizing the essence of equality.

For example, the Arabic media reported the attack in the Al-Zaytoun neighborhood with a series of clauses leaving no ambiguity regarding agency distribution: 1) شنت طائرات الاحتلال الإسرائيلي... غارات (Israeli occupation aircraft launched... attacks). Here, the Actor is طائرات الاحتلال الإسرائيلي (Israeli occupation aircraft), the Process is شنت (launched), and the Goal is غارات (attacks), 2) ارتكب مجازر بحق عدد من العائلات الفلسطينية (committed massacres against several Palestinian families). The Actor is omitted but clearly points to the Israeli army, the Process is ارتكب (committed), and the Goal is مجازر (massacres). This grammatical system is reproduced across the corpus as shown in... حشود المجوعين (Israeli occupation forces targeted... crowds of starving people), and اغتالت إسرائيل أيضا عددا من صحفيي شبكة الجزيرة (Israel also assassinated a number of Al Jazeera network journalists). Israel is consistently positioned as the active and agentive party committing the processes of killing, destroying, and targeting. This party aims at civilians and vulnerable groups inherently not constituting military targets, such as: منازل (homes), المستشفيات (hospitals), المدارس (schools), النساء والأطفال وكبار السن (women, children, and the elderly), and, in a specifically recurring theme, منتظري المساعدات (aid seekers) or المجوعين (starving people). The material processes once again positioned Palestine as the passive victim of relentless attacks.

The Arabic media also reported سرق جنود الاحتلال الإسرائيلي منزلها (Israeli occupation soldiers stole from her home), placing the Actors in a criminal process, with the Goal being Palestinian families' properties and savings. Just as in the French media, the Palestinians are grammatically

underlined as victims who suffer, endure, flee, and seek help, but not as a party actively resisting in a military sense, like يتدافع الآلاف إلى مراكزها يوميا على أمل الحصول على المساعدات (thousands rush to its centers daily hoping to get aid). This systematic absence is a powerful ideological choice that no longer interprets this as a two-sided military battle, but as a unilateral attack by a powerful army against civilians, emphasizing the construction of a legal and moral framework of genocide and crimes against humanity. This attempts to eliminate the justification of military necessity for Israel's actions, because no military resistance is depicted in the reporting; the only available interpretation for the continuous targeting of homes, hospitals, and aid seekers is that the civilian population itself is the target.

We also found verbal processes similar to those in the French media involving Palestinian officials, humanitarian workers, and international bodies demonstrating factuality and authority, such as: قالت المنظمات الموقعة... إن السلطات الإسرائيلية رفضت (The signatory organizations said... that Israeli authorities refused), أكد جهاز الدفاع المدني في غزة أن عمل هذه المؤسسة يشوبه الاضطراب (The Civil Defense in Gaza confirmed that the work of this institution is marred by chaos), أوضحت الوزارة... أن إجمالي حصيلة الضحايا... ارتفع (The Ministry [of Health] clarified that the total death toll... has increased) where the verbs قال (said), أكد (confirmed), and أوضح (clarified) are used for these sources to position them as reliable narrators of reality.

When the Israeli side becomes the Sayer, the situation differs vastly from the French media. Their speech is often framed with verbs creating a degree of doubt or distance, interpreting their statements as less credible claims rather than factual reports. The word choice ادعى (claimed) or زعم (claimed/alleged) signals to the reader that this is a controversial and self-serving statement, which should not be taken at face value. For example, in... بدوره، ادعى وزير الشتات الإسرائيلي عميحي شيكلي (In turn, Israeli Minister of Diaspora Amichai Chikli claimed... that many relief organizations operate as a cover) and, in... الإدارة... يدعم (Smotrich claimed that the plan has the support of... the American administration), this systematically validates the humanitarian or Palestinian narrative while undermining the Israeli narrative.

The systematic assignment of destructive agency to Israeli forces and victimization to Palestinians also unfolds in Relational Processes, which adopt definitive calculations dissecting ideological assessments. For instance, in إسرائيل حولت مراكز توزيع المساعدات الإنسانية في غزة إلى "مصائد للموت" (Israel has turned humanitarian aid distribution centers in Gaza into "death traps"), this is not a description of an unfortunate outcome, but a reclassification of humanitarian spaces into deliberate slaughterhouses. Similarly, Mustafa Barghouti's analysis is presented through a series of relational processes defining the Israeli settlement plan by its destructive consequences: مشروع... لا يعني فقط تقسيم الضفة... بل دفن فكرة الدولة الفلسطينية (Smotrich's project does not only mean dividing the West Bank... but also burying the idea of a Palestinian state).

The Arabic media frames the conflict in Gaza within presuppositions of illegality, prosecutable violations, and criminal intent by consistently nominalizing it into lexicons such as حرب الإبادة ('war of genocide'), عدوان ('aggression'), and مجزرة ('massacre'). The power of these lexical choices is not merely descriptive but constitutes serious legal accusations under international law, implying a deliberate intent to destroy and eliminate a specific national group. This strong language changes the whole story from a basic political fight into a massive international crime. It exposes the pure cruelty of dropping bombs on defenseless crowds without any real reason or respect for human life. Recent Arabic news totally ignores Hamas. They only write about helpless civilian groups. These journalists absolutely refuse to call the attacking troops a normal defense force or legitimate national army (Evans, 2010; Nazifatul Mardiah & Abdul Basid, 2025; Savelsberg, 2015). They simply call them جيش الاحتلال الإسرائيلي. Sometimes they make it even shorter and just write الاحتلال, which means the occupation. This specific word choice changes everything. It paints Israel as an illegal group breaking world laws rather than a country protecting its borders. Because of this, every single move made by الاحتلال is automatically seen as an illegal invasion. Dead Palestinians are respectfully called شهداء. This powerful word means martyrs, bringing a very deep cultural and religious respect to the fallen victims. It transforms them into brave heroes. Finally, terms like المنتظري المساعدات, والمجوعين, and النازحين prove these victims were just starving people, aid seekers, and displaced refugees.

Arabic news demands true justice like عقوبات (sanctions) and محاسبة (accountability). They avoid soft diplomatic talk and use strong words to show clear results, writing إن تصرفات إسرائيل دون إنصاف. توجيه أية عقوبات إليها تؤدي إلى انهيار القانون الدولي. This means unpunished Israeli actions will definitely destroy international law. They even describe Smotrich's plan using فكرة الدولة الفلسطينية. This phrase means it will completely crush the idea of a Palestinian state, using specific grammar that promises it will definitely happen. Relief agencies also use strong words like تؤكد التدهور المعيشي للسكان. This translates to confirming the worsening living conditions, which proves that the terrible suffering and Israel's obvious guilt are undeniable facts (Damanhoury & Saleh, 2025; Doufesh et al., 2026). The news pushes strict moral duties by repeating strong words like يجب (ought to) and يجب (must), seen in phrases like بل ينبغي النظر إليها ككارثة إنسانية (but this ought to be viewed as a humanitarian disaster). They constantly demand action by saying a ceasefire must be declared immediately (ويجب فتح الممرات) and aid routes must open up (يجب إعلان وقف إطلاق النار على الفور). Finally, they insist the guilty attackers must face the law (ويجب محاسبة مرتكبيها أمام القانون).

Unlike French media, Arabic news builds a highly trusted team. They gather facts from a united global front. Huge charities like Oxfam use the word اتهمت (accused) to make serious charges, while United Nations agencies provide heavy proof about the deadly famine. Local groups like the Gaza Ministry of Health share actual death tolls using strong factual verbs like أكد (confirmed), أوضح (clarified), and أفاد (reported). Israeli officials get a completely different treatment. The writers deliberately make the Israeli side sound suspicious by only introducing their statements with

doubting verbs like ادعى (claimed) and زعم (alleged). This clearly paints their defensive statements as obvious lies.

### ***Encourage Critical Literacy with its Implication to SDG 10***

This grammar analysis successfully exposes how news outlets manipulate their daily stories. People who consume news from mainstream European channels often get trapped believing everything is perfectly objective, which is why introducing critical reading skills is crucial to help readers question why certain attackers magically disappear from headlines or why dead civilians are suddenly labeled as normal structural side effects. Understanding that grammar is a political weapon creates true critical awareness (Lloyd, 1972; Rubini & Azis, 2019). This powerful mental awakening acts as an absolute requirement for modern social freedom, because today we are no longer fighting physical empires but rather battling to free our minds from sneaky neocolonial narratives that try to keep us completely passive instead of turning us into fierce social critics. We absolutely cannot ignore this massive media problem because it actively ruins global progress. This unfair media framing directly hurts the core goals of SDG 10 (Asif et al., 2026; Tan et al., 2026).

Reducing global inequality goes way beyond just fixing unequal wealth distribution, because this United Nations target heavily demands total social inclusion for everyone and the absolute destruction of any discriminatory practices that are secretly hiding inside global journalism and modern cultural media rooms. The French news examples perfectly prove how the press actively creates massive political unfairness. By purposely cleaning up the explicit and actual language of war, softening brutal military violence into boring administrative procedures, and treating a bloody humanitarian disaster like a simple diplomatic disagreement, these media networks deliberately protect powerful leaders from ever taking the blame. This dangerous framing completely removes any sense of accountability from the real aggressors, proving that society must desperately learn how to break down discourse so we can finally fight back against this hidden representational discrimination and hold the media to a truly honest standard of reporting (see Table 3). This practice fails to promote the inclusion of victims' voices (violating the spirit of Target 10.2). It delivers discriminatory discursive treatment where the lives of certain groups in other parts of the world are framed invisibly compared to the suffering of Western allies (violating the spirit of Target 10.3).

Table 3. Enforcing Media Equality and its Implications for SDG 10

| Pillar                                         | Core Objective                                        | Key Implementation Mechanism                                                                                    |
|------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Global Critical Literacy Education             | Dismantle media bias and institutional propaganda.    | Integrate media deconstruction modules into national education curricula in developing nations.                 |
| Global South Independent Journalism Protection | Safeguard non-hegemonic and on-the-ground narratives. | Provide structural, legal, and technological support for independent and citizen journalists in conflict zones. |
| Mandatory Transitivity Summaries               | Prevent the linguistic manipulation of atrocities.    | Require transitivity-based summary tables at the end of sensitive geopolitical or conflict reports.             |

To mitigate the inequalities and discriminatory framing established in media discourse, we introduce a novel SDG 10 sub-target: "Ensuring Literacy Equality and Fact Verification" (see Table 3). Implementing this sub-target would empower citizens to evaluate information critically, enhancing their capability to filter propaganda and identify double standards in the reporting of global conflicts, such as those in Gaza and Ukraine. And then, we also hope to help break the censorship machine of global superpowers and algorithmic biases. With the pillars in the system, we will finally be able to establish absolute transparency regarding perpetrators and victims, eliminating evasive passive voice. We also offer a model template to be embedded in each of the discourses that report potential conflicts of interest in terms of geopolitical issues (see Table 4).

Table 4. SDG 10.B Transitivity Fact Summary for Media Discourses

| <b>Transitivity Element</b> | <b>Definition</b>                                     | <b>Example Application</b>         |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Actor                       | Who acted? (The explicit perpetrator)                 | Military Force X                   |
| Process                     | What was the specific action? (Active material verb)  | Dropped bombs / Fired upon         |
| Goal                        | To whom or what was it done? (The victim or target)   | Civilians sheltering in Hospital Y |
| Circumstance                | Where, when, or how did it happen? ( <i>Context</i> ) | During a mandated evacuation order |

Analysis of the Arabic corpus uncovers a journalism model functioning as affirmative resistance. By placing the military committing crimes in the Actor position and strictly exposing victims in the Goal position, this media attempts to tear down the information asymmetry status quo. Transitivity analysis makes us realize that achieving SDG 10 is impossible as long as the global discourse architectural structure remains lopsided. If the suffering of millions is not proportionally acknowledged within the public language space, political and humanitarian interventions will continue to walk with a limp. Critical literacy supported by the SFL framework acts as an ethical intervention tool demanding representational justice (see Table 4). Language equality that displays the suffering of both sides completely and as it is remains a fundamental absolute requirement for social, political, and legal equality.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The significance of this transitivity analysis is highly crucial in translating the abstract goals of social emancipation and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) into tangible discursive practices. The empirical findings of this study demonstrate that inequality and discursive exclusion (Target 10.2 & 10.3) are actively engineered at the clause level. As evidenced by the French corpus, mainstream media can cover up guilty parties and silence marginalized voices by over-utilizing Verbal processes, which privilege Western elites and sanitize bloody humanitarian crises into sterile diplomatic exchanges. This linguistic choice distances the audience from the reality of violence, effectively blurring the agency of the perpetrators.

On the other hand, the Arabic discourse illustrates how linguistic structures can serve as a form of decolonial resistance to counter the Global North-South asymmetry (Target 10.6). By heavily deploying explicit Material processes (e.g., "to destroy," "to blow up") and active subjects (e.g.,

"occupation army"), the text confronts the audience with physical realities, dismantles euphemistic framing, and demands direct political and legal accountability.

Ultimately, mastering SFL-based critical literacy is not merely an academic skill, but a necessity for the global community to "read between the lines." Equal participation in SDG 10 requires equitable agency in public discourse. By equipping ordinary people to recognize how institutional manipulation occurs through sentence engineering, society can begin to challenge the hegemonic narratives of the ruling elite and demand representational accountability in the international public sphere.

**DECLARATION OF AI-ASSISTED TECHNOLOGIES**

The authors acknowledge the use of Gemini 3.1 Pro in the preparation of this manuscript solely for proofreading, improving grammar, and enhancing the clarity of the text. All AI-assisted content has been thoroughly reviewed, edited, and validated by the authors. The authors assume full responsibility for the final content, the academic integrity, and the originality of the research presented herein.

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**AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS STATEMENT**

| Name of Author        | C                              | M | So | Va | Fo | I | R                          | D | O | E | Vi | Su | P | Fu |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|---|----|----|----|---|----------------------------|---|---|---|----|----|---|----|
| Alman Naufal          | ✓                              | ✓ |    |    | ✓  |   |                            | ✓ | ✓ |   |    |    |   |    |
| Tri Indri Hardini     |                                |   |    | ✓  |    |   | ✓                          |   |   |   |    | ✓  |   |    |
| Neidya Fahma Sunendar |                                |   |    |    |    |   |                            |   |   | ✓ |    | ✓  | ✓ |    |
| C : Conceptualization | I : Investigation              |   |    |    |    |   | Vi : Visualization         |   |   |   |    |    |   |    |
| M : Methodology       | R : Resources                  |   |    |    |    |   | Su: Supervision            |   |   |   |    |    |   |    |
| So: Software          | D : Data Curation              |   |    |    |    |   | P : Project administration |   |   |   |    |    |   |    |
| Va: Validation        | O : Writing - Original Draft   |   |    |    |    |   | Fu: Funding acquisition    |   |   |   |    |    |   |    |
| Fo: Formal analysis   | E : Writing - Review & Editing |   |    |    |    |   |                            |   |   |   |    |    |   |    |

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT**

The authors state no conflict of interest.

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