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The Functionalization of Macrostructures in the Online News Reports for the Purpose of Demonization: A Critical Discourse Study of BBC and CNN's Coverage of the pro-Palestinian Protesters in April and May 2024

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ABSTRACT: The critical discourse analysis of the current study points out that the BBC and CNN engage in the functionalization of macrostructures to demonize the pro-Palestinian movement in the universities of The United States and The United Kingdom through covert discursive attacks due to their effectiveness in condemning and discrediting the peaceful protesting students who are blameless and beyond reproach at the peak of the protests in April and May 2024. The study relies on Van Dijk's (2012) categories of ideological analysis. The analysis demonstrates that the demonization of the protesters within the headlines and lead paragraphs of the BBC and CNN's online reports, rests on several discursive practices, such as stigmatization, defamation, and the systemic erasure of the laudatory representations associated with the protesters. The discourse of the demonization strip the protesters of any positiveness and confine them to the frames of antisemitism, destabilization, communal insecurity, aggressiveness, and illegality. In the course of demonization, there is an implicit legitimization of the authorities through idealization of them while overlooking any unfavorable aspect associated with them.

1. INTRODUCTION

The present study frames the macrostructures as communicative instruments that are functionalized by the media toward the recipients. Communicatively, the macrostructures; within the current context the headlines and the lead paragraphs, make the overall meanings of the texts more amenable for comprehension and understanding by the recipients. The macrostructures in this manner, functionalized in media discourse to orientate the recipients' cognition towards a particular conceptualisation of the texts. Ulatowska and Champman (1994, p.30) observed the previous guiding role of the macrostructures and its cognitive value. They characterized the macrostructures as "cognitive structures because they are primarily considered organizational devices of meaning". Distinctively, they are actual semantic structures, such as the headlines and the lead paragraphs. These semantic structures represent a global meaning, which is constructed out of the lower-level meanings or the microstructures. The construction of the news macrostructures rests upon the news journalists and producers or what can be fairly called, the author's model of the macrostructure construction. In accordance with the previous model, Reutzel (2016) saw that the author's success in constructing an organized representation of meaning in a text or simply a macrostructure, relies on organizing the ideas of the text by using identifiable text structures. In the wake of Gaza War between Hamas and Israel, in October 2023, the macrostructures were employed by the BBC and CNN for demonizing the pro-Palestinian protesters.

The headlines and lead paragraphs were exploited ideologically against the protesters and to emphasize We versus Them discourse. They strip the protesters of any positive indications. The coverage always confines the protesters to the frames of anti-Semitism, destabilization, communal insecurity, disorder, illegality, and confrontation with the authorities, including the security, political, and academic authorities. A further point of contention, the employed language refrains from praise to the different representatives of the authorities in an excessive manner, but it never denigrates, cautiously commends, and highlights the negative consequences of the protests on them. The current study resorts to a critical discourse methodology to expose the mentioned ideological practices which were conducted against the pro-Palestinian protesters. The adopted methodology is well equipped to provide meaningful answers to the following questions:

1. How do several linguistic choices and their ideological categories in the macrostructures engage in demonizing the pro-Palestinian protesters?
2. How does the macro-level analysis reveal that the BBC and CNN follow the ideological strategies?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The Macrostructures and the Ideological Strategies

The foundational notions of the macrostructure concept, such as those manifested in Teun A. Van Dijk's book *"Macrostructures: An Interdisciplinary Study of Global Structures in Discourse, Interaction, and Cognition"* 1980, are made the concept predominantly characterized by the features of determinism and the logical vision that a producer advocates or the particular understanding that is adopted by a recipient. The determinism characterizes the macrostructures is a common feature in several disciplines of the social sciences and humanities. In the linguistic theory of discourse, for example, terms like "theme", "topic", "gist", or "upshot" necessitate clear description. The macrostructures are represented through the point of a dialogue. In microsociology, interested in the analysis of interaction in social contexts, it seems relevant to account for the fact that interaction and action can be explained at different levels in terms of global actions. In artificial intelligence and cognitive psychology, it has emerged that the processing of interaction and discourse (e.g., in comprehension, storage in memory, and production) cannot be adequately elucidated without the global organization of intricate information.

Van Dijk (1980, p.1) pointed out that the macrostructures have a factual flexibility. They can be highlighted as semantic and linguistic structures or as cognitive entities in a form of a conceptual pressure for the discourse practitioners. He defines them as "the higher-level semantic or conceptual structures that organize the 'local' microstructures of discourse, interaction, and their cognitive processing". Van Dijk's definition of the macrostructures is not very far from that of Allen (2010, p.151). For him "macrostructures are global semantic information only relative to the microstructures of discourse, cognition, and interaction".

In light of the foregoing, the macrostructures have the ability to determine overall meanings and to condense several sequences of utterances, sentences, actions and interactions, and news events. Distinctively, these features make the macrostructures play a pivotal role concerning the issues of ideological connotation and dividing the words into US and Them groups. Le (2006, p.45) leans towards the idea that there is a relational foundation between the macrostructures and the fourth ideological strategies of Van Dijk (2012, p.34). Macrostructures are identified in the negative or positive representation of Them and US that they eventually have. So the macrostructures reflect the ideologies; the socially shared representations that serve group interests. In other words, they have the ability to:

- Expressing/ emphasizing information that is positive about Us
- Expressing/ emphasizing information that is negative about Them
- Suppressing/ de-emphasizing information that is positive about Them
- Suppressing/ de-emphasizing information that is negative about Them (Van Dijk, 2012, p.34).

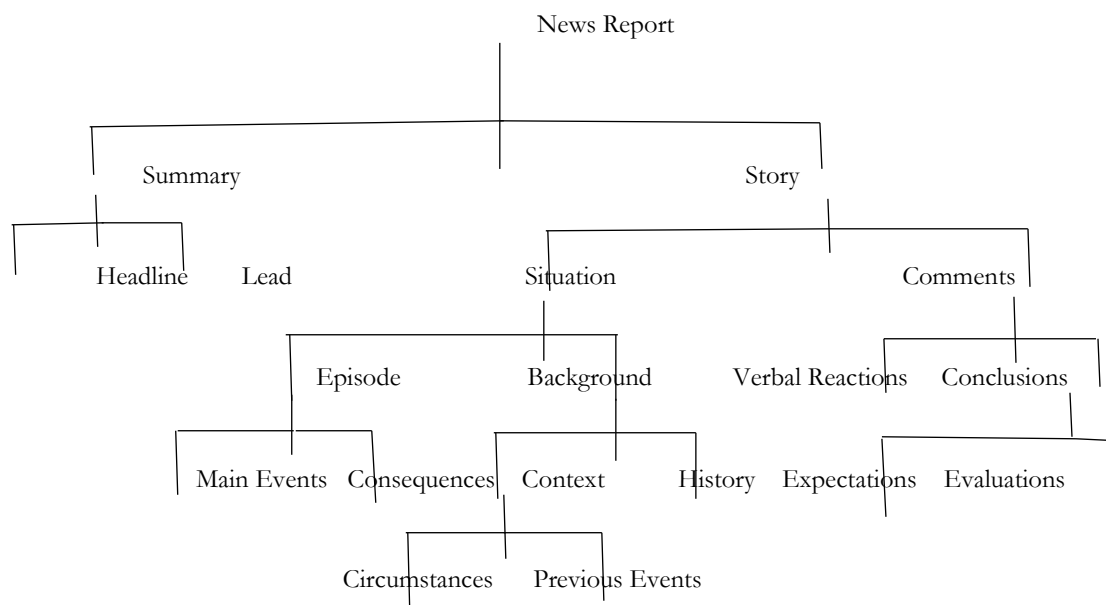
2.2 The Retrieval Power of the Headlines and Leads

The discussion over the admissibility of the headlines and lead paragraphs as rigorous macrostructures is based on several cognitive and spatial indications. Cognitively, the retrieval and understanding of information from the different items of a news story make a modest contribution to the situation model of the readers, which was manifested in the headlines and leads. "For news discourse, this would suggest that reading the headlines and the leads would produce the same recall effects

as reading the whole news stories. In that case, people just skimming the paper would recall just as much" (Van Dijk, 1988, p.152).

Spatially, the headlines and leads are the summary of news and the products of the micro-level details. The reduction makes the senders and the recipients directly in front of the topic or the upshot of the details. Van Dijk (2015, p.119) reinforced the category of the headlines and leads in his division of the components of news reports:

Figure 1 *The Higher-Level Categories of News Reports and Their Constructing Categories (Van Dijk, 2015, p.119).*



In support of the above arguments, Bonvillain (2016) described the headlines and leads as the preferred textual categories for denoting the topics and to guide the readers to the whole image of the overall meaning. They also have the ability to direct the attention, understanding, and the memory of the readers ideologically to align them with particular group at the cost of another:

They strategically function for readers as explicit instructions on how to construe the overall meaning, macrostructure, or topics of news reports. Headlines and leads may also focus on other aspects of the news so as to manipulate the attention, understanding, and memory of the readers. Thus, an account of an otherwise largely peaceful demonstration may typically focus on the violence of a small group of demonstrators. Similarly, the headlines of the coverage of 'race riots' focus on black violence rather than on police violence. Stories about religious differences, e.g., on Muslim women, focus on Their deviance, such as wearing a hijab, rather than on Our prejudices, intolerance, or xenophobia (Bonvillain, 2016, p.83)

According to Caple and Bednarek (2018, p.123) the headlines have different functions:

1. Because they summarize and abstract the story, they have an informative function.
2. Because they attract the attentions of the readers, they have an interpersonal function.
3. Because they maximize news worthiness, they have a news value function.
4. Because they provide a lens on, stance toward, or angle on the rest of the story, they have a framing function.

Suter (1993) stated that leads work on maintaining the attracting function of the headlines. They also anchor and enhance the gist of the news story. They also introduce the orientation material that means the setting, identification of the actors, place, time, and the main event. It concerns answering who, what, when, and where questions because they are the carriers of the basic facts. "So the lead in the News Report is a summary with standard thematic elements, thus, disclosing core information about the entire story, and also the beginning of the News Story" (Suter, 1993, p.175).

2.3 The Pro-Palestinian Protesters' Reactions to the BBC and CNN's Reliability

In light of the Israeli war crimes in Gaza, the pro-Palestinian protesters call for freedom, human rights, and dignity for the Palestinian people. They demand stop killing kids, ceasefire, stop sending the US weapons to Israel, asking the universities to divest from the military manufacturers who supply weapons and military technology to Israel. They work to cut the relationships with the universities that cooperate with the Israeli government to suppress critique and Israeli settler colonialism. They call upon naming the Israeli military operation in Gaza as genocide, mourning the Palestinian loss of life, permitting the pro-Palestinian students to call out freely, without being punished for their opinion, and finally, ending the presence of the police on the campuses (Mimaki, 2025, p.233).

The pro-Palestinian protesters do not feel that their humanitarian cause concerning Gaza draws sufficient media attention suitable to the scale of suffering and tragedy. This situation always generates stances taken by the pro-Palestinian protesters against media outlets. On 14 October 2023, the protesters sprinkled red paint on the outside wall of the BBC's headquarter in London to express their indignation towards the coverage of the BBC of the Gaza war. The protesters state that, "There is Blood on BBC Hands" because it is "Being complicit in manufacturing consent for the occupation's genocide of Palestinians" (Elston, 2023, para.5).

The protesters point out that the BBC engages in other propaganda games such as, inviting the Palestinians to comment only when Israelis are killed and does not invite them when Palestinians are killed (Elston, 2023, para.6). Within a consistent framework, On 14 October 2023, multiple pro-Palestine activists protested outside CNN's headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia, against the biased coverage of CNN for Israel in favor of Palestine. The protesters criticized the partial coverage of the Gaza war. They see that the coverage of CNN relies on taking the Israeli government's statements at face value while imposing tight restrictions on quoting and reporting the Palestinian perspectives and the views of Hamas (Kovalik, 2024). The stance of pro-Palestinian protesters towards news media is not restricted to a certain period. On 8 January 2025, the pro-Palestinian protesters again protested against the BBC's pro-Israel bias according to a release issued from "Palestine Solidarity Campaign" homepage (Elston, 2023, paragraph.1).

2.4 Recent Studies on Demonization

Recent critical discourse studies deal with demonization as an individual or partisan political practice. The current critical scene of demonization identifies overt ideological practices and data and explicit orientations against particular groups. The study of Al-Sabagh, Rezvani, Al-Jameel, and Hadian (2025) highlights Trump's language, which is directed against Arabs and Muslims. The study pointed out that Trump's discourse reinforces societal division, or US vs Them discourse. It also contributes to the reproduction of discrimination and the provocation of the Islamophobia. Another piece of evidence, Cervi, Tejedor, and Puca's (2025) study. It sheds light on the demonization discourse of the Spanish PRR party Vox. The study points out that the members of the party attack the feminist activists unambiguously through demonizing terminology, such as "witches" or "the monsters". It also shows that these terms frame the party's point of view concerning the feminist movement in Spain and in Europe. Comparing to the previous studies, the current one deals with more complicated data.

The mass-media professional communication platforms, which are represented here by the BBC and CNN, do not explicitly declare ideological orientations. They prefer to insert the ideological orientations through professionalism, tact, embeddedness, and the underlying meanings. The study also aims to expose several demonizing practices, in the forms of stigmatization, systemic erasure of positive representation, and the implicit legitimization of the authorities. The study in the process of justifying that the mentioned practices form the main pillars of the demonization. It does not only decode the demonizing discourse, but it also frames it under a particular definition. It defines demonization as an ideological practice with verbal representations. The demonizing media of a particular group perform these practices explicitly and often implicitly against the members of a demonized group to portray their members as aggressive, chaotic, and motivated by threatening intentions concerning stability and societal peace and assigning disruptive and malicious motivations for them. Engaging in implicit demonization prevents any claims related to objective coverage based on robust evidence. The implicit demonization also seeps quietly and entrenches in the minds of the in-group members.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Nature of Study and Data Selection

The current study is a qualitative one. It aims to analyze the latent content of communication according to the analytical categories of the adopted framework of the analysis. It provides editorial occurrences for the categories of the framework to match between the demonizing language of the BBC and CNN and the framework of the analysis. The components of data of the corpus analysis are the BBC and CNN's headlines and lead paragraphs concerning the pro-Palestinian protesters. The official pages of the BBC and CNN are the sources of the headlines and lead paragraphs. The period of the news reports are April and May 2024. These months represent the most significant wave of the demonstrations and the peak of the protests:

After more than six months the beginning of the Israeli military carnage in Gaza, between April and May 2024, a significant mobilization formed against Netanyahu's government. Students from hundreds of universities across the Western world united in their demand: an end to the conflict in Gaza (Caravani & Labini, 2025, p.99).

3.2 Framework of Analysis

The study relies on Van Dijk's (2012) categories of ideological analysis because the demonization is an ideological practice that reflects the ideological strategies:

- Express/ Emphasize positive information about Us.
- Express/ Emphasize negative information about Them.
- Suppress/ De-emphasize negative information about US.
- Suppress/ De-emphasize positive information about Them.

The presence of the analytical categories is supported by the linguistic choices that the BBC and CNN employ in the headlines and leads of the reports about the pro-Palestinian protesters in the mentioned period. Alphabetically, the first ideological category is **actor description**. According to Van Dijk (2006, p.735) the ideological orientation is responsible on attributing particular descriptions for individuals. The lead paragraph of the third BBC report describes the protesters as **infiltrators**. It is a word that makes the readers exhibit aversion towards protest because it is legally charged and it carries a one-sided viewpoint.

Burden is the second category. Van Dijk (2012, p.49) dealt with burden category as the kind of argumentation that depends on presenting premises to be taken for granted, as self-evident and as adequate reason. It serves to present the struggle that the members of the ingroup, such as state officials, exert to face the burdens of the outgroup members. In the headline of the fifth CNN report, the phrase "to **grapple** with" triggers a **burden** category to portray the pro-Palestinian protesters as a chaos-inducing group. The **consensus** includes the *transpartisan linguistic choices* and the semantic notions, namely, "*the metonymy*" (Telo, 2023, p.107), which is "a figure of speech in which effect stands for cause or part for whole". The consensus occurs through the nominal structure "**Universities UK**" in the headline of the BBC's eighth report. It makes the opinion look like a unified institutional voice. The structure assumes that the characterization of the protests from an implicitly negative perspective, as an event that requires actions, occurs through a unified institutional voice.

Van Dijk (2012) noted that the inserting of a **counterfactual** argument allows the people to introduce absurd and negative consequences on alternatives that they have not been reported by anyone and they are represented in terms of warnings and advices. The counterfactual is found in the lead paragraph of the eighth BBC's report. In "*if protests against the Israel-Gaza war interfere with life on campus*". The counterfactual construction denotes that the protests are in a path that disturbs the university life. Beside its rhetoric nature, **euphemism** is an important semantic move aiming to mitigate the negative opinions and acts as those related to racism and discrimination. It concerns in a positive self-presentation. The verb phrase "**to defuse the situation**" is in a state of euphemism in the lead paragraph of the seventh CNN's report. **Fallacies** commence logic and reasoning via the procedural errors "Fallacies are procedural errors in reasoning or logic leading to unsound conclusions" (Sharma & Chandra, 2004, p. 451). In the BBC's headline of the first report "Columbia University: Pro-Palestinian protests refuse to disband", the BBC relies on presenting a subjective conclusion and refrains from mentioning the reality of the protesters' refusal. This maneuver achieves two objectives simultaneously. First, the subjective conclusion contributes to present pro-Palestinian protesters in a negative way, as stubborn and opposed to peaceful solutions. Second, leaving the protesters' refusal point of view unmentioned excludes anything positive about the

protesters. In this way, the journalist creates the headline with reliance on the suppressed evidence fallacy. The BBC tends to overlook important evidence and information and instead presents a subjective conclusion.

Generalization is the category that focuses on shifting the concrete and limited nature of actions and events to an abstract and generalized nature. The use of generalization makes the claims broader and more persuasive. There is a generalization in the lead paragraph of the first CNN's report through the abstract noun "*antisemitism*". It associates the university campuses with antisemitism as a collectivized and general logo for the pro-Palestinian protesters. The headline of CNN's second report also has the phrase "*campus protests*" which makes all the campus protests, without any exception, under the lens of condemnation by the readers. **Hyperbole** is a kind of art of exaggeration. It overstates a point for emphasis or dramatic effect. By magnifying truth, hyperbole creates a sense of urgency, excitement, or humor depending on the context.

Van Dijk (2000, p.100) mentioned that there is a dual oppositional dimension concerning the relationship between hyperbole and euphemism because "the negative characteristics of the outgroup will tend to be expressed in hyperboles, those of the ingroup will usually be expressed in euphemism". In the headline of the BBC's second report, The verb '*condemns*' has a hyperbolic meaning, and it is used to slander someone or something in a definite and strong form. The BBC's headline of the seventh report also triggers a hyperbole in the phrase "*Students occupy*". 'Occupy' is a verb with strong connotations, for example, army occupies territories under the backing of armed groups. It suggests aggressive or illegal acts in the face of opposition. **Implication** means, "something implied or suggested as naturally to be inferred or understood" (Glazier, 1998, p.610). CNN in the headline of the sixth report uses the adverb "*actually*". It implies that the pro-Palestinian protesters do not reveal all their wants and they may have desires which are against the interests of the public. It can also imply that the protesters have hidden agendas.

Van Dijk (2000, p.39) emphasized that the premise of **lexicalization** is the choosing of a single word or a group of words instead of another word or words for contextual reasons, such as the opinions of the speaker about a person, a group, or their actions. The lead paragraph of the fifth CNN's report uses the word '*tactics*'. The lexical choice "tactics" conveys an impression that the advanced officials of the universities deal with the protests in a planned rather than spontaneous manner. It also amplifies concerns related to the pro-Palestinian protests, as an issue that requires subtle and planned arrangements to be confronted.

National self-glorification is implemented through relying on Language that has positive references to or praise for a specific country, its history, traditions, principles, and the cross-partisan efforts to tackle a particular issue, or to legislate certain laws (Van Dijk, 2012). CNN in the lead paragraph of third report employs national self-glorification through "*the bipartisan*". It is an edited and imposed word that represents an acclaimed preface that concerns the national efforts of American Parties. Van Dijk (2012) clarified that the **polarization** category represents a schema that depends on the opposition between Them and Us groups. CNN uses the polarization in the headline of the seventh report, the headline puts CNN through the pronoun "*we*", in the side of the readers or ingroup solidarity to address the aspects and situation of the out-group.

Presupposition is a strategy that aims at manufacturing a supposed truth, which is supported by its possibility to be taken as for granted and unchallenged so presuppositions are "often used to assume the truth of some proposition when such truth is not established at all" (Van Dijk, 2006, p.739). The BBC's employs the presupposition in "*their university campuses*" in the lead paragraph of the sixth BBC's report. The construction presupposes that the students engage in aggressive acts against their universities. It carries an emotional denotation because the students meet their safe academic haven in a hostile way. There is also another presupposition in the headline of the BBC's fifth report, in the common noun phrase "*Gaza war protesters*". It presupposes there is an unknown group that occupies a university building. The presupposition does not mention the name of the group. This piece of information can lead the readers to justify the act of the protesters in barricading themselves inside the building.

Virtually in all contexts, speakers may use 'vague' expressions, that is, expressions that refer to fuzzy sets, or do not have well-defined referents. Vague adverbs 'very', nouns 'thing', quantifiers 'few, a lot', and adjectives 'low, high', among other expressions, may be typical under **vagueness** category (Van Dijk, 2012). The lead paragraph of the seventh CNN's report resorts to a vague expression. The verbal construction "*are trying*" triggers a vagueness. The vague expression does not state what the tries or their nature that the school administrators follow. It works on masking the truth that the major

form of this tries is resorting to the police and the coercive solutions, and the report does not tell any other forms of tries. Finally, According to Ventre (2016, p.172) **victimization** through discourse is "a process which entails presenting oneself as a victim of others". **The lead paragraph of the eighth CNN's report** constructs victimization. The verb, **"influenced"** generates a victimization meaning. It portrays the students whose their universities witness pro-Palestinian protests as victimized and they do not receive the campus life that they dream of and endeavor to as if the protests are evil or wrongdoing.

The linguistic triggers of the demonizing discourse take place through 16 headlines and 16 lead paragraphs from the BBC and CNN as these macrostructures listed in the lists below.

Table 1 The BBC's Headlines and Lead Paragraphs

Seq	Headlines	Lead Paragraphs
1	Columbia University: Pro-Palestinian protesters refuse to disband	Pro-Palestinian protesters have refused to disband from Columbia University's main campus after a midnight deadline was set by the institution's president.
2	Columbia University: White House condemns antisemitism at college protests	The White House has condemned "blatantly antisemitic" statements during ongoing student protests against the war in Gaza.
3	Crackdown or compromise? A tale of two US campus protests	The police arrived in force at dawn on Saturday, with orders to clear "infiltrators" from the Gaza war protest camp at Northeastern University in Boston.
4	Gaza Protests: Police raid on Columbia protest ignited campus movement	At dawn on Wednesday 17 April, a small group of students pitched their tents at Columbia University, demonstrating against Israeli military action in Gaza and calling on their university to stop doing business with companies they see as supporting the war.
5	Gaza war protesters occupy university building	Students protesting against the war in Gaza have barricaded themselves inside a university building
6	More UK students occupy university building	More students are occupying their university campuses in the UK in protest against the war in Gaza.
7	Students occupy UK university campuses in protest over Gaza	Pro-Palestinian students have occupied some university campuses in the UK, to protest against the war in Gaza.
8	Universities UK say protests may require action	Universities "may need to take action" if protests against the Israel-Gaza war interfere with life on campus, the president of Universities UK has said.

Table 2 CNN's Headlines and Lead Paragraphs

Seq	Headlines	Lead Paragraphs
1	ADL gives Harvard and a dozen other Universities failing grades on campus antisemitism	The Anti-Defamation League has graded 85 American universities for their policies to protect Jewish students from antisemitism on campus. It gave Harvard and 12 other schools an "F." Just two schools got an "A."
2	Amid campus protests, some teens and parents reconsider	Earlier this year, an 18-year-old high school senior from New York City had planned to enroll at Columbia University's sister school Barnard College in Manhattan as an

	enrollment decisions	early decision student. But after her parents saw heightened tensions over the Israel-Hamas conflict surface across some US campuses, including at Barnard and Columbia, they went back to her list.
3	House passes antisemitism bill as Johnson highlights campus protests	The House voted on Wednesday to pass the bipartisan Antisemitism Awareness Act, a vote that comes amid heightened concerns over antisemitism with Israel at war with Hamas and as pro-Palestinian protests have sprung up on college campuses across the country.
4	More than 2,100 people arrested on campuses since pro-Palestinian protests began. Here's what you should know	More than 2,100 people have been arrested on college and university campuses across the nation since April 18 as schools prepare for spring commencement ceremonies, according to CNN's review. The first demonstrators were detained at Columbia University two weeks ago
5	Universities continue to grapple with pro-Palestinian protests ahead of graduation ceremonies	Universities across the United States have adopted a number of tactics in recent weeks to prevent disruptions by pro-Palestinian protesters at graduation ceremonies. Some universities have reached agreements with on-campus demonstrators, while others have cited safety concerns and canceled, postponed or relocated their school wide ceremonies
6	What the pro-Palestinian protesters on college campuses actually want	College campuses across America have been shaken by unrest that has resulted in clashes with police, shut down some classrooms and captured the attention of the nation
7	What we know about the protests erupting on college campuses across America	College campuses across the United States have erupted with pro-Palestinian protests, and school administrators are trying — and largely failing — to defuse the situation.
8	Your kid's college is engulfed in protests. What should you do?	Whatever their personal or political allegiances, many college students are seeing their experience on campus influenced by the Israel-Hamas war.

4. MACRO-LEVEL ANALYSIS

The study seeks here a more contextual and systemic analysis of the macrostructures. It aims to analyze the headlines and the lead paragraphs of the fourth report in both the BBC and CNN, with a solid consideration that these components are correlated macrostructures.

4.1 Analysis of the Fourth BBC's Reports

The **headline** is:

"Gaza protests: Police raid on Columbia protest ignited campus movement"

The journalists of the BBC news frame the headline to be an example for lessening the presence of the police officers, and at the same time to amplify the reaction of the protesters. The existential **presupposition** in the common noun phrase **"police raid"** mitigates the police intervention. It presupposes, contrary to what happened here, a short sudden attack by a small number of the police officers. The intervention was a planned security operation implemented by the members of the NYPD and it is the largest police department in the USA. The operation happened through employing the highest state of readiness, as the paragraph five mentions this:

Soon after, officers from the largest police department in the US, wearing riot gear and wielding handcuff, arrested more than 100 students, the first time mass arrests had been made on Columbia's campus since Vietnam War protests more than five decades ago.

The headline contributes to a negative presentation of the pro-Palestinian students. It describes the result of the reaction of the protesters as an *"ignited"* one. The use of the referenced **hyperbolic** verb makes the readers think that the protesters may resort to violent and aggressive acts to prove their stance in front of the police. The sixth paragraph indicates that the reaction is not an ignited and it pertains to establishing a new encampment only:

By the next day, another protest camp was established at a different lawn just a few metres away.

The **lead paragraph** is:

"At dawn on Wednesday 17 April, a small group of students pitched their tents at Columbia University, demonstrating against Israeli military action in Gaza and calling on their university to stop doing business with companies they see as supporting the war"

The lead paragraph makes use of an existential **presupposition** in the common noun phrase *"Israeli military action"*. It also has a euphemistic function. It reframes the topic of the protests in the USA universities. The protesters demonstrate against the collective punishment targeting all the people in Gaza. The common noun phrase downplays the occurrence of violence, atrocities, and massacres under the responsibility of the Israeli forces. The lead paragraph also makes use of the hedging construction *"they see"* in the complex phrase "calling their university to stop doing business with companies they see as supporting the war". The construction is an **implication**, and it delegitimizes the opinion as a mere individual opinion. It also distances the readers from the protesters. The complex phrase is a paraphrase for the worldwide appeal of the boycott. The BBC employs every effort to ignore the boycott appeal from the macrostructures because it can construct a positive mental model. The boycott is a civilized and peaceful act. It contributes to conceive the protesters positively by the readers. Moreover, the employment of the hedging construction "they see" is an implication, and it implies that the opinions of the protesters are under the lens of right and wrong concerning the role of the concerned companies in supporting the war and the Israeli army. It also implies the objectivity of the BBC, and at the same time, argues the credibility of the protesters.

The credibility issue confers high levels of skepticism among the readers that the companies in fact do not support the Israeli war on Gaza. This issue would be an objective, if the protesters were stated about the part of supporting the war. The protesters at Columbia University appeal of a boycott to all the companies that have relationships and joint works with Israel because of the role of Israel as a state including its army, to the suppression of freedoms, the absence of justice, and the deprivation of the Palestinian people the means of a dignified life. All these issues can be summarized in that the protesters condemn the Apartheid Israeli control over the Palestinians but the BBC avoids addressing these claims to keep the positive face of Israel. On the other hand, the Columbia University protesters clearly declare that they are against the apartheid imposed by Israel in their statements, as the one in (2023, para. 15) "Divest from companies profiting from Israeli apartheid, noting that both former Columbia and Barnard presidents unilaterally and anti-democratically ignored the student body referendums to divest in 2020 and in 2018".

4.2 Analysis of the Fourth CNN's Report

The **headline** is:

" More than 2,100 people arrested on campuses since pro-Palestinian protests began. Here's what you should know "

The construction of the headline can be described as a process of multi-category delegitimization. There are several framing categories that target the pro-Palestinian protests. The numerical quantifier *"more than"* in the phrase 'more than 2,100' is one of the **vagueness** patterns. The use of 'more than' conceptualizes the arrests through a magnified perspective and leads to enhance the perceptual inflation of negativity. The intended negativity of the pro-Palestinian protesters is also reinforced through the word *"people"* that is an **actor description** form. It can easily make the readers think that the pro-Palestinian protests are penetrated, and on a wide range, by people who are not students, or not affiliated with Columbia University. This kind of magnifying a marginal issue reporting deviates from factual reality. The fifth paragraph of the report mentions that

there were seven people arrested who were not students in the protests of Columbia University, and this can happen in every gathering.

There is a structural presupposition after *"what"* in 'Here's what you should know'. It presupposes that there is pressing information and the readers may need to know it. It captures readers' interest towards CNN because the pronoun 'You', makes the readers the central focus and creates a profound sense of direct communication, relevance, and connection, and it establishes immediate engagement. The sentence renders the headline a directive one because it suggests that this is the reliable knowledge that the readers must get, without regard for alternative viewpoints. It contributes to formulate a particular epistemic block that resists opinions such as the protests are peaceful, the students are dynamic actors, their demands are legitimate, and the violence of the state.

The **lead paragraph** is:

"More than 2,100 people have been arrested on college and university campuses across the nation since April 18 as schools prepare for spring commencement ceremonies, according to CNN's review. The first demonstrators were detained at Columbia University two weeks ago".

The structure of the lead paragraph is consistent with the headline by means of the recurrent use of vagueness in *"More than 2, 100"* and the actor description by the word *"people"*. At this stage, the lead paragraph entrenches the negative representation of the pro-Palestinian protesters and does not introduce new information, which the readers have negative mental models of the pro-Palestinian protests. The persistent emphasis on designating a criminal-like news coverage of the protests in the headline and in the lead paragraph in the passive constructions, *"have been arrested"*, and *"the first demonstrators were detained"*. They imply that the pro-Palestinian protesters have a criminal identity, and the lead paragraph reposes the implication by utilizing the expressions 'the nation' and 'spring commencement ceremonies' as victims of the pro-Palestinian protests. The desired perception of the readers could have been different if they had known that the detentions and arrests occurred due to the installation of some tents on the campuses.

4.3 Findings of the Study

The study discusses the following findings which are related to the first question:

How do several linguistic choices and their ideological categories in the macrostructures engage in demonizing the pro-Palestinian protesters?

The discursive linguistic choices of the headlines and lead paragraphs, or critically, the macrostructures and their ideological categories, demonize the pro-Palestinian protesters through adopting the negative other-presentation and through focusing on emphasizing negative information about the protesters. The headlines and lead paragraphs encode the macrostructures with several categories, such as actor description, polarization, burden, victimization, counterfactuals, fallacies, generalization, and hyperbole. These categories are able to:

- 1.(Actor description and Polarization) initiate a discursive distancing between the recipients and the pro-Palestinian protesters.
- 2.(Burden and victimization) frame the pro-Palestinian protesters as the reason behind the suffering of the universities. This represents a blame attribution strategy.
- 3.(Counterfactual) imply that the protesters may engage in negative acts in the future and, this represents a hypothetical threat construction.
- 4.(Fallacy) highlight just a part of the truth without mentioning any positive information about the protesters, and this reflects a systemic erasure of positive representation of them.
- 5.(Generalization) relate in an overall form between the protesters and antisemitism and, this creates a discursive identity construction.
- 6.(Hyperbole) frame threat amplification by portraying the protesters as responsible for the aggressive and illegal acts.

The second section discusses the findings of the second question:

How does the macro-level analysis reveal that the BBC and CNN follow the ideological strategies?

The macrostructures follow a simultaneous in-group/ out-group representation. This representation employs latent meanings, which are represented by presupposed, hyperbolic, implied, vague, and actor-descriptive structures, to function in two roles simultaneously. The first role engages in mitigating the acts of the members of the in-group, namely the universities, police, and Israel and framing them through an emotional language to align the readers with them. This role achieves:

- 1.De-emphasize negative information about US. (The universities, Police, Israel)
- 2.Emphasize negative information about Them. (The pro-Palestinian protesters)

The second role is to amplify and condense the image of the protesters negatively and delegitimize and trivialize their views. This role is achieved through leveling tacit and meticulous accusations against the protesters concerning the nature and intentions of the protest's participants. In this role, CNN promotes itself in a positive way as a reliable source for discussing the demands and ideas of the protesters. The second role achieves the following ideological strategies:

- 1.Emphasie positive information about US. (CNN)
- 2.De-emphasize positive information about Them. (The pro-Palestinian protesters)

5. CONCLUSIONS

The study concludes that the macrostructures are functionalized as communicative pillars to demonize the pro-Palestinian protesters by the BBC and CNN and to interact with the recipients through the peak of the protests in April and May 2024. The BBC and CNN resort to negative representations of the protesters, relying on emphasizing any piece of negative information about them, and at the same time, they refrain from mentioning any positive aspects and demands about them. The ideological discourse of the channels is different when it revolves around different authorities, such as universities and the police. The BBC and CNN frame the authorities by highlighting any information about them positively. They ignore and do not promote any negative information about them.

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