

Representation in War Reporting:  
A Critical Discourse Analysis of  
Al-Jazeera and the BBC Web-based English News  
Coverage of the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah War

by

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## Abstract

The present study aims to explore web-based news reports by the BBC and Al-Jazeera relating to the reporting of the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah war, with a view to discovering any significant representation of the selected event. It is possible that the language of war reports reflects divergent attitudes and opinions which are shaped by the beliefs, values and ideologies of different news media. The present study will focus on the analysis of certain salient details of linguistic structure as related to the systems of transitivity, i.e. participant roles and associated process types, the logico-semantic system of expansion and projection, covering the logical relations between clauses, as well as cases of syntactic transformation. The system of transitivity, in particular, is an essential tool in the analysis of the representation of some aspects of reality such as the structure of events and their participants (cf. Fowler, 1991). By conducting a linguistic analysis of the selected news texts in the light of the socio-political and historical context of these texts and of the covered event, the present study presents findings concerning the ways different news outlets can offer varying representations of the same event by employing varying textual structures. Analysis of the corpora of Al-Jazeera and the BBC reveals contrasting representations in the two news outlets reporting on the 2006 war. The discerned similarities in the representation of the covered war could be said to reflect the news outlets' endeavours to adhere to journalistic values, the factual style of the genre of the hard news report and considerations of the targeted audience, which would leave limited potential for partial or biased coverage of events. The discerned differences highlight the ways in which varying political positions and ideologies can shape news reporting and the ways in which differences in ownership and source of revenue could potentially affect editorial freedom and the way journalists function.

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# CHAPTER 1

## Introduction

### 1.1. Research motivation

The starting point in a research adopting CDA as a “problem-oriented”, “critical”, “interdisciplinary” approach is a research topic (Fairclough et al., 2011: 358). This study is motivated by a personal interest in news media and the issues of unbalanced coverage, inaccuracy and inconsistent treatments. It is part of a wider long-term goal dating back as early as the year 2000, when existing journalistic practices in Egyptian media showing blatant bias, particularly in the domains of politics and sport, motivated me to challenge such practices and to investigate the potential of media to shape the way people perceive events and actions mediated to them. Text producers’ selection of specific events to report, their varying representations of what they report, as well as their evaluation of such representations can be explored through discourse analysis of such media genres as news reports. In this way it may be possible to elucidate the ways in which text producers’ attitudes and ideologies can affect their reporting and hence shape audience perception.

However, the question which rises is this: why investigate war news as such? First, the coverage of wars, which typically involve many participants and often controversial issues, is highly likely to show varying degrees of bias in favour of one of the sides over the others. Wars are a cause of human suffering and misery, and there have been a lot of them in the Middle East, amongst other regions in the world. Investigating the way wars are written about or reported on may in some way contribute to greater understanding of the ways in which war news reporting contributes to the perpetuation of warfare and to the continuation of particular wars.

The present study is also motivated by a particular interest in investigating electronic media. A number of factors combine to give internet-based news media discourse its unique importance in the formation and (re)production of ideology (cf. Gruber, 2008: 58-59; Mautner, 2008: 31-32). First, there is the wide selection of major news outlets websites such as the CNN, BBC and Al-Jazeera which are available to a mass audience. Second, for the majority of people, online news media, including websites of news outlets and newspapers and web blogs, have become a real rival to print news media (such as newspapers and magazines) and broadcast news media (such as radio stations, TV channels and networks). Third, the power of the internet to spread ideologies stems from its ability to mediate the same message to millions of people all over the globe, surpassing in this respect other media, such as newspapers which often have limited circulation.

## **1.2. The research problem**

Informing people of what is going on around them – locally, internationally or globally – is an obvious goal of most news media institutions. However, the term

*informing* should not be taken at face value. It is widely held that institutions, their journalists and reporters provide the public with news accounts that in some way shape readers' perceptions and understanding of what is happening both in their own societies and in the wider global context. News media organizations also decide for people what they know and read about in general and during particular times. The fact that the news media act as mediators between events and the way their audience perceive them does not mean that there is not always the expectation that journalists' news accounts should be faithful or truthful representations of reality. The assumption, perhaps held by some people, that journalists have the ability to produce news accounts free from their personal views, values, beliefs and perceptions to reflect reality "as it actually is" may lead readers to "accept these reflections of reality as the most truthful ones" (Allan, 2010: 94).

News media institutions and their journalists and reporters are situated within varying contexts, social, political, cultural and historical, and they operate within these contexts. In addition, news media institutions, their journalists and reporters may well adopt or support certain ideologies, political views and opinions, ones which, many critical scholars think, might be expected to shape and influence the reporting process resulting in providing their audience with a version of reality which, if not read critically, can lead them to accept what is presented as the real world (cf. Jalbert, 1983: 294; Kress, 1983: 134). Fowler (1991: 10), for example, argues that the collective influence of these contextual factors is that the communicated message would be necessarily "reported from some particular angle", i.e. context itself introduces bias to reporting. To put this in slightly different terms, Iwamoto (1995: 59) argues that different *worlds* can be linguistically created out of the same reality in

a way that accords with the different ideologies of different news institutions or their reporters. Journalists, consciously or not, take advantage of linguistic resources, exploiting grammatical constructions or lexical choices to manipulate people's thought (Iwamoto, 1995: 58). If this is correct, it follows that there is no such thing as transparent or neutral language, i.e. a one-to-one correspondence between reality and language used to represent reality. The fact that language both constructs and reflects our collective opinions and ideologies means that language cannot be neutral (Fowler, 1991: 1-2). Language mediates people's varying representations and evaluations.

According to this view, news, as one type of discourse, inevitably patterns or structures whatever it represents. Fowler (1991: 2) argues that, "far from neutrally reflecting social reality" and facts, news is a type of discourse involved in what Berger and Luckmann (1976) call "the social construction of reality". Rather than being a "value-free reflection" of reality, news is a "representation of the world in language"; it is articulated from a particular ideological position and is associated with a conceptual system which structures the linguistic presentation of events (Fowler, 1991: 2, 4, 10; cf. Lakoff, G. 2002). Beard (2000: 18), among other scholars (Allan, 2010; Berger and Luckmann, 1976; Fowler, 1991), claims that "there is no such thing as an unbiased report, no such thing as 'neutral' language".

However, journalistic practice itself adopts a different view of news reporting, one that can have serious consequences. Most news media, including the two selected news outlets, show an emphasis, with varying degrees, on journalistic values.<sup>1</sup> Each news outlet has its declared code of ethics which it claims to adhere to. Objectivity,

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<sup>1</sup> For a detailed discussion on journalistic values/ethics, see section 3.4.4 as well as sections 2.3.1.6 and 2.3.2.3 for a discussion of Al-Jazeera and the BBC codes of ethics.

honesty, fairness, balance, credibility, transparency, impartiality and accuracy are common principles that the selected news outlets claim to abide by.

The media ethics and ideals of objectivity, fairness and the like could represent real challenges to journalists. Journalists and reporters are committed in their news gathering work to journalistic values and standards such as objective and impartial reporting. They hold strong views about factual reporting which is free from partisan values (cf. Allan, 2010: 45; Manning, 2001: 68). Objective news reporting, in theory, restricts any overt expression of personal opinions and emphasizes “impartiality and even-handedness [i.e. fairness]” in news reporting (Sanders, 2003: 42; cf. Schudson, 1995). Journalists and news reporters closely adhere to certain practices that could potentially ensure a higher degree of accuracy and impartiality in reporting, acting as a safeguard against subjective reporting and mitigating any effects of ideological bias (Sanders, 2003: 41). Such practices encourage journalists to seek to adopt neutral language, though such neutrality of language may not exist, as noted above. The notion of (probably nonexistent) neutral language and the claimed journalistic ethics in news media, together with the claimed factuality that characterizes the style of hard news reports, can be systematically challenged by conducting research on how different news media, which claim to adhere to journalistic values, offer different constructions of the same event. This is the focus of the present study.

Journalistic values, particularly objectivity and impartiality, have been widely and frequently discussed and challenged by researchers such as Beard (2000), Edgar (1992), Fowler (1991), Jalbert (1983), Kress (1983), Lakoff (2002), Manning (2001), Mueller (2007), Reah (1998) and Tumber (2004) on different grounds. First,

objectivity and impartiality can be said to promote “the idea of morally neutral journalism” (Sanders, 2003: 43; cf. Reese, 2004: 225; Schudson, 1995: 9). However, it is possible to argue that seeking, or claiming, to conform to neutrality in news reporting might lead to an increased possibility of biased representation through linguistic manipulation. The point here is that a text producer under the pretext of presenting balanced coverage and neutral facts may tend to leave the question of responsibility for actions in reported events open, avoiding explicit verbal attribution of blame to any side, and/or presenting a selection of events, with the result that facts might be partial or blurred and the claim of the media to full factuality undermined (Fowler, 1991: 2; Nordlund, 2003: 7; Stenvall, 2011: 5). Therefore, fair and accurate news reporting seems to be more important than the effort of the news media to achieve neutrality and balance (Mueller, as cited in Stenvall, 2011: 5).

Second, journalistic codes of ethic have also been the subject of critique on the grounds that they may fail to acknowledge the selective and interpretative procedures that some think are involved in the process of news reporting (cf. Edgar, 1992: 112-113; cf. Manning, 2001: 68, Tumber, 2004: 201). Even if the media make a conscious effort to be objective, they may fall short on at least two levels: 1) the level of information gathering and selection, i.e. what is intended to become news, and 2) the level of information representation or mediation. Concerning the former level, events are often reported according to a complex set of selection criteria.<sup>2</sup> These selection criteria play a significant role in turning events, which might not be newsworthy, into *news* while inevitably leaving out other events and hence offering people a partial view of the world (cf. Fowler, 1991: 11-12). Similarly, Lenart (1994: 15) argues that

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<sup>2</sup> These selection criteria, often referred to by the journalistic term *news values*, are discussed in section 3.4.5.

the press, and news media in general, “may not be successful in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about”. This final observation highlights the role of processes of news selection in shaping people’s perception of the world. On the level of representation or mediation, a text producer often picks on one representation of an event from among other possible ones. A news reporter’s choice of an interpretation of a specific event could in this sense be said to be biased (Edgar, 1992: 120). In addition, a complex set of contextual factors, social, political and ideological may, as suggested earlier, result in differential treatment in representation. News reports, in terms of style, may appear to be the most *factual* genre of reporting, when text producers’ overt opinions or comments are absent or kept to a minimum,<sup>3</sup> but since they are, as argued above, a selective and interpretative representation of events, they cannot be regarded as neutral or objective.

It is worth mentioning that within journalistic practice, objectivity has been frequently redefined in an attempt to offer a corrective to the lack of emphasis on accuracy and fairness in existing definitions of objectivity. For example, according to Sanders (2003: 42), objective reporting does not necessarily entail adopting “absolute neutrality” or the existence of absolute truth, rather objectivity requires “removing the distorting effect of prejudice . . . ensuring that full and fair accounts are given of events”. However, one might argue, this view still leaves open an ideological bias resulting from varying views of what constitutes *fair* reporting. Objectivity and impartiality, as well as other journalistic values, are also often formulated as a set of journalistic rules or guidelines that offer journalists guidance in their practices (cf. Manning, 2001: 68; Tumber, 2004: 201).<sup>4</sup> However, the outcome of following these

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<sup>3</sup> See section 3.2.2 for further discussion on the factuality of the genre of the hard news report.

<sup>4</sup> For a discussion of these guidelines or techniques, see section 3.4.4.1.

guidelines, Manning (2001: 69) argues, would not necessarily be an *objective* account in the sense of producing value-free accounts of reality, but rather a *balanced* representation that adheres to rules of objective reporting.

During wartime, the claim of the media to the principle of objectivity and the principle of detachment raises even more debate. The war correspondent is all the time working under the influence of a number of forces – which are often in tension – including the temptation and/or pressure to abandon their commitment to journalistic ethics because of personal, institutional or governmental factors (cf. Sanders, 2003: 44; Sonwalkar, 2004: 221). Examples of such forces are the restrictions that governments and the military impose on war reporting on the one hand, and on the other, personal reactions to, for example, death, and suffering. Reporters may experience conflict between the experience of war calamities on the one hand and the requirement to adhere to impartiality and balanced reporting on the other. A different kind of conflict may be brought about by the effect of patriotic nationalistic emotions, or by feelings of identification with the military who offer journalists protection in their newsgathering work (cf. Sanders, 2003: 69; Tumber, 2004: 201-202; William, 1992: 167).<sup>5</sup> As Richardson notes, “such personal identification inevitably results in an abandonment of journalistic objectivity” (Richardson, 2007: 194).

The general research problem, then, is that since in news reporting it is only through language that events are reconstructed and presented to people, and since news reporters *re-present* facts of the world in language, and since news is often mediated from different perspectives or points of view, there are alternative ways of describing

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<sup>5</sup> For a more detailed discussion of the points raised in this paragraph, see sections 3.5 and 3.5.1.

reality. There also exists a high potential for the undermining of accurate and fair representations in news reporting. While objective, balanced, impartial reporting raises many controversial issues and views, objective news reporting becomes more contested in wartime, when news institutions and their correspondents function under pressures that could affect the reporting process. Given the power of the media to shape public opinion and set socio-political standards, especially in wartime, the absence of fair and accurate reporting in news media can be seen as a social problem which requires due attention. On the one hand, such ideologically-motivated representations often have direct social, mostly negative, consequences, e.g. inviting people to adopt certain views. On the other hand, these representations of events are shaped by attitudes and opinions reflecting socially-shared ideologies (beliefs and values), i.e. these representations are both socially constructive and construed. The systematic, language-based investigation of the representation of events in news media discourse, particularly the representation of wartime events, can be seen as a means of extending our understanding of the ways in which the media communicate different views of events. At the same time, making explicit the relationship between language choices and representations of the world may be a first step to promote and motivate fair and accurate news media.

### **1.3. Research questions**

The research questions stated below serve as focal points for the research; they offer a specific orientation directed towards tackling the research problem through the analysis of representation and evaluation in the discourse of war reports.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Through analytical as well as theoretical work undertaken in the course of the present study, research questions were refined and developed. This process of development is “abductive” (cf. Wodak and Meyer, 2009: 30), rather than linear, i.e. the research questions are formulated and reformulated in the

The present study attempts to find and provide answers for the following research questions to identify how each of the selected news outlets, the BBC and Al-Jazeera, represents the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah/Lebanon war. The following overarching research question will be addressed: **Do the selected news outlets, Al-Jazeera and the BBC, offer different or similar representations of the 2006 war and hence position their readers into adopting certain points of view?**

This overarching research question can be further divided into three detailed research questions. Each of these is stated in terms of Halliday's functional categories, specifically the ideational function on its two planes involving the expression of experiential meanings and logical relations and the interpersonal function (Halliday, 1994: 36, 179), because the linguistic structures used as tools for analysis will be based on Halliday's functional model, as explained below.

1. How does each of the selected news outlets employ different lexico-grammatical structures to represent reality, i.e. in Hallidayan terms, which experiential meanings does each outlet select to represent participants and their actions in the war?

It is important to clarify the following elements of this question.

- 1.1. How do text producers perceive and classify processes and their attendant participants in each of the selected news outlets (discursive construction)?

The main focus here is to explore who or what (participant roles) did what (process types) to whom or what (affected participant), and how/why (under what

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light of the ongoing analysis of the study material and the theoretical assumptions, meantime the analysis as well as the theoretical direction of the thesis depend on the research questions.

circumstances), which is the focus of transitivity (cf. Simpson, 1993: 106; Simpson and Mayr, 2010: 65; Bazzi, 2009: 137).<sup>7</sup> In doing so this study seeks to find answers for the following sub-questions:

- What types of actions (e.g. *material*, *verbal*, *relational*, etc.) are ascribed to the different participants in the war, specifically Hezbollah and Israel, in each of the selected news outlets?
- What types of roles (e.g. *Actor*, *Sayer*, *Senser*, etc.) are assigned to the different participants in each of the selected news outlets?
- How much of news reports of wars concern what was done (*material processes*) versus what was said (*verbal processes*)?
- How are high impact events, i.e. those concerning killing and destruction, are typically reported in each of the selected news outlets?<sup>8</sup>

**1.2.** How do text producers refer to processes and label their attendant participants?

**1.3.** What characteristics, qualities and features do text producers attribute to participants (in addition to their particular participant roles in processes) in each of the selected news outlets (discursive qualification)?

The analytic tools that will be used to operationalize the above research questions are derived from Halliday's functional grammar, and in particular from the transitivity system of the experiential macrofunction (Eggins, 2004; Fowler, 1991; Halliday, 1994, 2004; Richards, 2007; Thompson, 2004). In concrete terms, this involves systematic examination of the "verbs and nouns used to denote processes" (Halliday,

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<sup>7</sup> Transitivity choices reflect syntactic-semantic differences (Richardson, 2007: 197).

<sup>8</sup> These last two sub-questions are adopted from an ongoing project at Macquarie University on war reporting, reviewed in section 4.3.

2004; Wodak and Meyer, 2009), passive transformation (Fowler, 1991), nominalization (Fowler, 1991; Kress, 1983), patterns in word choice, particularly those having a “distinctive evaluative meaning” (Hunston, 2004: 157; Wodak and Meyer, 2009) and lexical processes such as *over-lexicalization* (Fowler, 1991). Other analytic tools include the labelling and categorization of news actors (Reisigl and Wodak, 2001; van Leeuwen, 1996, 2008) which might include the use of categorization devices (Jalbert, 1983; Sacks, 1986: 328-332) as well as expressions with negative semantic load, figures of speech, such as metaphor and metonymy (Mautner, 2008: 38; Wodak and Meyer, 2009).

**2.** How does each of the selected news outlets employ different logical relations to represent reality, i.e. in Hallidayan terms, how does each use logical meanings?

In more detail we have the following elements.

**2.1.** What types of logical relations between processes and their attendant participants, as expressed through the grammar of clause complexes, do text producers make use of in each of the selected news outlets? The analytic tools that will be used to operationalize this research question include the logico-semantic systems of expansion (elaboration, extension and enhancement) and the logico-semantic system of projection (Halliday, 2004: 363)

Taken together, the experiential meanings (meaning as organization of experience) and the logical meanings (meaning as the expression of certain logical relations) combine to form the ideational metafunction (clause as representation) (Halliday,

1994: 179). This particular area of grammatical meaning is what this thesis will focus on in chapters 6 and 7 in order to investigate the overarching question of differential representations of the 2006 war in the selected news outlets.

In addition, though on a smaller scale and in a less systematic manner, this thesis will attempt to answer the following research question focusing on the interpersonal metafunction (clause as exchange) which covers text producers' overt, i.e. lexically and grammatically expressed, evaluation of their representations (cf. Halliday, 1994: 68, 88). Evaluation in news reports, as opposed to other genres within news media such as articles, is kept to a minimum because of the distinctive factual, objective and balanced style characterizing the genre of hard news reports. Overt indications of evaluation would not be expected to be widely discerned in the analyzed texts. Although this area of meaning is not the main focus of this thesis, the related research question is stated here. It is addressed in section 5.4.3 in terms of modality.

**3.** What is the text producer's expressed attitude or stance towards the reported content in each of the selected news outlets, i.e. how does each outlet select from interpersonal meanings?

This question also has distinct elements that are worth stating.

**3.1.** To what extent do text producers position themselves towards the content of their reports? To what extent do text producers distance themselves from or identify themselves with the reported event?

**3.2.** From what perspective(s) do text producers express their opinions? Are text producers' opinions articulated overtly; are they intensified or mitigated; or are they conveyed implicitly?

**3.3.** What range of voices is heard in the selected news reports, i.e. what sources are regularly accessed and cited?

The analytic tools that will be used to operationalize this third question include lexical choices, particularly lexical items having evaluative meaning, the (strategic) use of quotation marks (Kress, 1983; Mautner, 2008), direct or indirect speech (Mautner, 2008: 43; Wodak and Meyer, 2009), modality/absence of modality (Fowler, 1991; Halliday, 1994, 2004; Jalbert, 1983; Kress, 1983; Mautner, 2008) and source attribution and the presence of different voices in the text (Kress, 1983; Mautner, 2008). Source attribution and the presence of different voices in the text can be analyzed on the basis that such aspects of the text can be strategically employed by the text producer to sustain her/his ideology and standpoint without overtly identifying him/herself with (committing him/herself to) what is mentioned.

#### **1.4. Outline of research methodology and theoretical framework**

In attempting to answer the above questions, this research first outlines the wider historical, social and political contexts of the selected event, namely, the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah/Lebanon war, and the main social actors, Israel, Hezbollah and Lebanon. To clarify the context of this war it is relevant to provide a brief account of all the previous conflicts between Israel and Lebanon, with particular emphasis on Hezbollah and its clashes with Israel. The research will also explore the institutional context of

the selected news outlets. The history, ownership and government control, code of ethics and editorial guidelines, reach and viewership, as well as media representation of Al-Jazeera and the BBC will be summarized. In addition, important aspects of the process of news production as well as the process of war reporting, within which news reports function, will be investigated. The rationale for describing these inter-related contexts is to indicate the complexity of contextual forces (social, political and cultural) that produce the ideologies which in turn shape the attitudes and opinions of institutions and individuals, including news outlets and their journalists and reporters. It is these interconnected contexts that are manifest in the discourse of war reports in the form of structured linguistic choices that communicate differential representations of the 2006 war. The main focus of this thesis is the detailed analysis of the linguistically communicated meanings, which can only be understood analytically on the basis of an understanding of the complex context in which they were produced.

While the present study builds on Fairclough's (1995b, 2003, 2009, 2010) approach to CDA as a general theoretical framework, elements from other theoretical and methodological frameworks, such as Wodak's (2009) set of adaptable research questions and Reisigl's (2008) theoretical outline of research practice, are also adapted to serve the purpose of analysis. It is the aim of CDA, according to Fairclough et al. (2011: 358), to explore such aspects of discourse as "the ideological loading of particular ways of using language and the relations of power which underlie them". In order to examine the connection between linguistic structures, on the ideational (experiential and logical) and, occasionally, interpersonal planes of language, and the social values and ideologies they represent, I draw on functional model developed by Halliday (1967, 1985, 1994, 2004). The study also builds on the work of a number of

key linguists who contribute to textual analysis, particularly of news media and the issue of representation, such as Bazzi (2009), Bell (1991), Egging (2004), Fowler (1991), Kress (1983), Richardson (2007), Thompson (2004) and van Leeuwen (1996, 2008). In the process of interpreting the findings of the textual analysis, i.e. the macro-analysis, my study relies on van Dijk's (1998, 2011) approach to the analysis of opinions and ideologies in the press as well as insights from Fairclough's (1995a) approach to the analysis of news media.

The particular focus of the main analysis part of this thesis will be on the analysis of the leads and headlines of the selected news reports. Analyses will refer to the body of news reports only when this relevantly illuminates the analysis of the leads and headlines. Certain linguistic structures, such as transitivity, the passive construction, nominalization, logical relations between clauses, reference, source attribution and lexical choices, will be examined, because they are useful indicators of underlying differences in representations of the world and of underlying ideologies. The aim of this thesis is to compare the two corpora – viz. Al-Jazeera and the BBC – with respect to different choices by producers in using these linguistic structures. The results of the qualitative analysis of selected headlines and lead sentences can be further substantiated by quantitative analysis of the whole corpus of headlines and lead sentences of the selected reports to acquire statistical evidence which can show the generalizability of the results and correct interpretations (Gruber, 2008: 72). Overall the present study tries to gain insight into whether, and how, the way in which the reported event is represented varies between the two news outlets, i.e. whether the selected news outlets offer different or similar constructions of reality.

## 1.5. Specific research aims

The emphasis in this thesis is on providing a detailed and systematic account of certain linguistic (grammatical and lexical) structures that are hypothesized to make a fundamental contribution to the communication or mediation of particular views of events, here in particular the 2006 war. By answering the research questions, given in section 1.3 above, through the systematic analysis of the headlines and leads of selected online news reports, the present study seeks to investigate representation in reporting of the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah/Lebanon war by Al-Jazeera and the BBC.<sup>9</sup> The study also seeks to explore evaluation, i.e. “the qualification of representation *from a specific ideological point of view*” (Fowler, 1991: 66) in the reporting by the two selected news outlets. These analyses are conducted in the light of the socio-political and historical context of these texts and background of the covered event. In doing so, the research also seeks to find out if there are significant patterns of unbalanced coverage and inconsistent treatment of the selected event. The present study also seeks to bring to consciousness the patterns of beliefs, values and ideologies, as encoded in language, which might not be accessible to anyone who does not read between the lines or go beyond the surface structure of the text. To my knowledge, based on reviewing related literature, no studies have been conducted so far focusing on comparing the web-based coverage of different news outlets in terms of the *linguistically mediated* representation of war, and in particular there has been no such study based on the highly relevant lexico-grammatical category of transitivity – that is, who does what to whom and how/why. In other words, who are depicted as performers of actions, what types of actions are ascribed to them, who are the entities affected by these actions, and under what circumstances do these actions happen?

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<sup>9</sup> For the rationale for the choice of these news outlets, section 5.5.2 discusses the criteria of this choice.

These are questions encoded in lexico-grammatical choices and reflected in recurrent patterns. Neither text producers nor (even less so) consumers of text are ordinarily aware of such textual tendencies.

The present study also seeks to reach well-based findings to build on in the formulation of an understanding of the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah war, its events, actions as well as involved sides. This is achieved by means of offering enough linguistic evidence, while contextualizing the selected event within its immediate situational context as well as the wider context – political, social and cultural – and providing enough discussion of the institutional context of news production. In doing so, the study aims – and could be utilized – to reach an understanding of the role news media play in war reporting and in shaping people’s perception and interpretation of war events.

#### **1.6. What the focus on language can tell us**

Nordlund (2003: 1) proposes that politics and journalism are probably the two domains of social practice most accused of using language manipulatively. Both politicians and news reporters produce discourse that can either shape opinions or reinforce opinions already shaped. Investigating these two domains can help trace such manipulative usage.

Analyzing news media language, which itself is central to human behavior, can offer better understanding of the functioning of language in society (cf. Bell, 1998: 65). News media representation of reality, as manifest in their discourses, could be seen as

involving an exercise of hegemony, i.e. having a hegemonic dimension.<sup>10</sup> Seeking to maintain their power and dominance, media owners and investors, the ruling elite and the powerful, as well as governments and the military exercise tremendous control and power on news media institutions so as to represent reality in such ways that help disseminate their own values, beliefs and ideologies as being common sense to the public (Allan, 2010: 95-96; cf. Manning, 2001: 40). News reporting is not simply a neutral reflection, as already noted, of what might constitute reality, rather this process is situated within a network of hegemonic relations that affect the reporting of events in such ways that invite readers to accept certain views, and certain ways, of classifying reality as commonsensical and natural. Analytic engagement with the linguistic detail of news texts can enable researchers to elucidate the role news media discourse plays in the cultural reproduction of power relations by demonstrating and highlighting the ways “the detailed structure of language silently and continuously shapes the ideas presented, moulding them in the direction of established beliefs” (Fowler, 1991: 231-232; cf. Allan, 2010: 96-98).

- Moving one step further to news reports as the major genre within news media, analyzing news reports – in relation to the issues of representation and evaluation – can enable us to compare the linguistic features of news reports with other media genres, such as feature articles and opinions, in relation to the above mentioned issues. Moreover, conducting a linguistic analysis of war reports, as a subgenre of hard spot news reports, can pave the way for doing further research on the language of reporting of hard/spot news in general, such as news of wars, crimes, accidents and disasters,

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<sup>10</sup> The concept of *hegemony*, attributed to the Italian philosopher Gramsci, has been of great significance for critical research conducted on news media in modern societies (cf. Allan, 2010: 96). According to Gramsci (as cited in Allan, 2010: 95), hegemony involves “spontaneous consent” given by the majority of population to “the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group”.

and the language of war reporting in particular vis-à-vis the issues of representation and evaluation. In addition, investigating the issues of representation and evaluation in hard news stories, and specifically in war reports, in online news media, such as the internet, can be useful in comparing one type of news medium with another with regard to these issues.

The potential of news media to shape and direct people's understanding is maximized during wartime when news media become the only source of information and where access to battlefields and streets becomes restricted and exclusive to only daring news reporters. Little research has focused on the potential of the 2006 war reporting discourse to shape readers' perception of the war. An analysis of the 2006 war reporting could offer better understanding of this particular war and the potential of war reporting in directing people towards specific readings and perceptions of war events in certain ways that could lead to the continuation of the war, for example through affecting political decision. News media influence on public opinion during wartime maximizes in the case of online war reporting with its instant update of news coverage and availability to millions of people. To this one might add the potential for research on war news reporting to contribute to news media reform.

### **1.7. Structure of the thesis**

In an attempt to answer the research questions and guided by the specific research aims, this thesis will consist of nine chapters including an introduction and a conclusion. The present chapter states the research problem, provides an overview of the research including the research questions and a brief statement of methodology and theoretical framework and explains the specific research aims and the significance

of the study. The seven chapters constituting the body of this thesis include the research context, media and journalism, discourse analysis of war reporting, theoretical framework and methodology as well as two chapters covering the analysis of the headlines and leads of the selected news outlets as relevant to the selected linguistic structures and a chapter devoted to comparisons of findings, analyses of headlines and leads that refer to the same historical episode across the two data sets, Al-Jazeera and the BBC, and discussion. These chapters are followed by a concluding chapter, chapter 9, which summarizes the present research, presents its findings and identifies the limitations of the study.

Chapter 2 provides the necessary historical and socio-political context of the covered event as well as the background of the selected media outlets. Chapter 3 covers some of the most significant and relevant issues in media and journalism such as media ownership, editorial guidelines, news values and journalistic ethics. It also highlights media research on war reporting. Chapter 4 reviews the work conducted on discourse analysis of war reporting following a number of lines of theoretical inquiry conducted in the area of war reporting discourse. Chapter 5 provides the necessary theoretical and analytic frameworks and meantime discusses the research procedures and the criteria of data selection. Chapters 6 and 7 analyze Al-Jazeera and the BBC corpora of news reports, specifically headlines and leads, in the light of certain linguistic structures as relevant to the issues of representation and evaluation in war reporting. The study identifies and accounts for the similarities and differences between Al-Jazeera and the BBC in their coverage of the 2006 war. Chapter 6 analyzes then juxtaposes the leads and headlines of Al-Jazeera for its representation of the 2006 war along transitivity choices, logical relations between clauses, lexical choices and

relevant analytic tools. Applying the same analytic grid, chapter 7 analyzes then juxtaposes the leads and headlines of the BBC for its representation of the 2006 war. Chapter 8, *comparisons of findings and discussion*, compares and builds on the findings of each of the previous two chapters, while integrating a number of case studies, to reach answers concerning the research questions and the research problem.

In the next chapter I provide a background for the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah/Lebanon war, including its events and participants. I also provide an account of the history of the Israeli-Lebanese conflict introduced in a chronological order. The chapter also offers a background for the selected news outlets, namely Al-Jazeera and the BBC.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **Research Context**

#### **2.1. Introduction**

Given that the broadest framework of the present thesis is CDA, and given that CDA is essentially contextually-sensitive in its approach, linguistic investigation of news media language needs to recognize all the relevant background aspects – social, cultural, political, etc. – of the event selected for analysis. It is against background context that the selected texts were written and it is in the light of this context that they should be read and analyzed. In an attempt to address the fundamental dialectical relation between language and the social, the analysis in this thesis is a two-way one involving “moving back and forth . . . from the microlevel analysis of text to the macroanalysis of discursive and social practice” (Mautner, 2008: 44; cf. Fairclough, 2003). The present chapter provides the background necessary to link the two levels of analysis – the micro and the macro – by providing the socio-political and cultural background of the selected event and the selected news outlets.

Resembling the sub-category “history” (van Dijk, 1988; Bell, 1991) – which in news stories covers background information that goes beyond the near past of the event, the

first part of this chapter provides a background for the action, actors, and setting of the 2006 war between Israel and Hezbollah/Lebanon, the event selected to provide the data for the present study. The first part of the chapter relies on primary sources, such as speeches by Hezbollah's leaders or the party's different publications, in addition to information on Hezbollah websites, for example, moqawama.org and the no longer in operation alghaliboun.net. It also cites a number of books, book chapters, online articles as well as journal articles, such as Bickerton and Klausner, (2007), Gambill and Abdelnour (2002), Fisk (2001), Fraser (2008), Hamzeh (2004), Harik (2004), Karadjis (2006), Kramer (1995), Kuperwasser (2006), Lee (2008) and Norton (2007).

The second part of the chapter serves to provide background for the selected news outlets, namely Al-Jazeera and the BBC. Richardson (2007: 11) points out that "the meanings of an utterance, an argument, a newspaper text or whatever are intimately related to the identity of the producer responsible for its content and the context of its articulation". This second part of the present chapter covers such areas as the origin, history, ownership, viewership and reach and codes of ethic of the selected news outlets.

## **2.2. A brief account of Israel-Lebanon/Hezbollah conflicts**

Lee (2008) refers to the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah War as "the latest chapter" in the ongoing Arab-Israeli conflict. It is also part of the wider Israel-Lebanon conflict which dates back to the year 1948, though the first Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1978 marks its first notable stage. The present section (section 2.2) presents a brief account of the most notable clashes, conflicts and wars between Israel and Lebanon. This account is introduced following a chronological order leading to the 2006 Israel-

Hezbollah war, with particular reference to the main incidents of the war as well as different readings and views of the event. I give particular attention to those conflicts involving Hezbollah, because of its role in the 2006 war. This sub-section (2.2.4) also briefly highlights Hezbollah's evolution as well as the most notable political, ideological and intellectual aspects of the group such as its military reaction towards Western and Israeli military presence in Lebanon and its relations to Iran and Syria.

### **2.2.1. The 1948 war**

While Lebanon had joined the Arab League coalition in the 1948 war against the then newly-established state of Israel that intervened on 15 March in favour of Palestine,<sup>1</sup> Lebanon's minimal military role, particularly on the level of offensive operations, in this war could be due to the close links of the Maronites with the West and their political weight within Lebanon (Bickerton and Klausner, 2007: 207; Fraser, 2008: 45). During the war, under the severe attacks and expulsions by the Israeli forces, large numbers of Palestinians – about 300,000 – fled Palestine, where some 97,000 of them are believed to have crossed the borders taking refuge in southern Lebanon (Fraser, 2008: 47, 56).

### **2.2.2. The 1975 Lebanese civil war**

After Lebanon won its independence from France in 1943, the allocation of power was roughly proportionate to each community's size – providing a Shiite speaker of the parliament while providing a Sunni Prime Minister and a Maronite president. This power allocation mainly reflects the hegemonic relationships that dominated the Lebanese scene at the time (Bickerton and Klausner, 2007: 207; Fisk, 2001: 66-67;

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<sup>1</sup> The 1948 Arab League consists of forces from six Arab countries including, besides Lebanon, Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Saudi Arabia and Iraq.

Fraser, 2008: 113-114; Norton, 2007: 11). The deprived less-privileged – both politically and economically – Shia concentrated largely in southern Lebanon and the northern areas of Beqaa valley had started mobilizing by the 1960s to the south-west areas of Beirut where they felt a sense of identification with the also deprived Palestinians of the refugee camps (Fraser, 2008: 114; Norton, 2007: 12-14). During the same period PLO fighters in Lebanon launched raids along Lebanon's borders with Israel, particularly following Israel's control of the Golan Heights and the West Bank. These frequent raids – much against the interest of the Maronites who enjoyed close connections with Israel – were often followed by an immediate response from Israel. For example, in 1968 Israel's retaliation resulted in destroying 13 civilian aircrafts in a commando raid on Beirut Airport (Bickerton and Klausner, 2007: 208). Following the year 1970 the PLO presence in southern Lebanon intensified and their military attacks against Israel escalated (Bickerton and Klausner, 2007: 208; Norton, 2007: 13-14, 18).

In 1975 an attack on Pierre Gemayel the founder of the Maronite party, the Phalange, and the ensuing bus massacre of Palestinians led to the break out of the civil war between the Maronites and the Druze joined by mostly Muslims factions who were shortly joined by the PLO.<sup>2</sup> Because of the close connections between Gemayel and Israel, the Maronites during the war gained the support of Israel, both having a hatred of the PLO as their common ground. Following a ceasefire in 1976, different Christian leaders established the Lebanese Front whose military arm the Lebanese Forces was mainly dominated by the Phalange. The Lebanese Forces played a significant role in

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<sup>2</sup> Pierre Gemayel is a senior figure in the Gemayel family and the founder of the Phalange – a Maronite party – in 1930.

the following Israel-Lebanon conflicts (Bickerton and Klausner, 2007: 209; Fisk, 2001: 78-88; Fraser, 2008: 114-115).

### **2.2.3. The 1978 offensive (*Operation Litani*)**

Palestinians guerrillas – challenging the authority of the Lebanese government – brought southern Lebanon into the crossfire with Israel in the year 1978. The killing of over 30 people in buses attacked near Haifa by a group of Palestinian guerrillas, who allegedly belonged to the PLO, was followed by another Israeli incursion into southern Lebanon. This Israeli offensive, designed to contain and destroy the military capabilities of the PLO, resulted in hundreds of casualties and ended in three months following pressures exerted by Jimmy Carter the then US president. The agreement was the withdrawal of the Israeli forces from Lebanon, the establishment of a security zone and the deployment of UN troops in southern Lebanon (Bickerton and Klausner, 2007: 209; Fisk, 2001: 123-124; Fraser, 2008: 122; Norton, 2007: 18).

### **2.2.4. The 1982 Israel-Lebanon war (*Operation Peace for Galilee*)**

During the years 1981 and 1982 there were a number of key events that may have paved the way for Israel's invasion of Lebanon. The PLO fighters in southern Lebanon had been launching cross-border rocket attacks that presented an immediate threat to Israel's northern regions. Despite the fact that the US intervention led to a ceasefire, the PLO military capabilities in southern Lebanon and its fighters' ability to launch rocket attacks were seen by Israel as sufficient motivation for military action (Fraser, 2008: 127). Besides the elimination of PLO presence in southern Lebanon, Israel viewed a successful intervention in Lebanon as a means to force Lebanon to

accept or seek a peace agreement with Israel by means of which would diminish the threat to Israel's northern borders (Fraser, 2008: 127-128).

The incident that led to Israel's invasion of Lebanon on 6 June 1982 was the attempted assassination of Shalomo Argov, Israel's ambassador to London by Palestinians who, according to the British Intelligence, were opposed to Arafat's policy (Fraser, 2008: 128). The objectives of the invasion were the elimination of PLO presence in southern Lebanon and the enforcement of a 40-km security zone. Another goal of the invasion was to bring again the Gemayel family to government, as the Phalangist leader Bashir Gemayel had enjoyed very close links with Israel and was known to oppose the PLO and the Syrian presence (Bickerton and Klausner, 2007: 210). Fraser (2008: 128) argues that Israel's plans, which relied for their implementation on Bashir Gemayel, were negligent to Syria's growing role in Lebanon, Lebanon's stability and, above all, the fact that Lebanon itself did not constitute a military threat to Israel. Fraser also argues that the US administration – at that time Regan's – adopted a stance that the Israeli government misread as giving it the green light to proceed (Fraser, 2008: 128).

The incursion, which began with fierce fighting between the Israeli forces and the PLO fighters, escalated to direct collision between the Israeli ground forces and the Syrians, and later developed into an air battle (Fraser, 2008: 129). The fighting, according to Fraser, left behind abandoned and destroyed cities and villages with the numbers of the killed and wounded mounting to hundreds. The offensive had expanded later with the Israeli forces reaching Beirut and putting the city under siege, bombarding it and causing “thousands of civilian casualties” (Bickerton and Klausner,

2007: 210; Fraser, 2008: 129). With the potential of sweeping across the west of Beirut, a region populated by a Muslim majority of 500,000 and intensely defended by some 6,000 PLO fighters, Israel's offensive began partially to lose its support amongst the Israeli public, its army reservists and the US administration (Fraser, 2008: 129).

The early-July bombardment of west Beirut raised the possibilities of "disengagement agreement" supervised by a multinational force to monitor the suggested evacuation of the PLO fighters from Beirut and to guarantee the security of the Palestinian refugee camps after the PLO fighters left the city (Fraser, 2008: 129). Israel's bombardment of west Beirut reached its climax on 1 August with the heavy shelling of west Beirut for 12 successive days, causing immense damage. Military action ended with a ceasefire on 12 August after Israel had ignored repeated calls from the US for ending the offensive (Fraser, 2008: 130). The US-brokered ceasefire prompted the previously-negotiated evacuation of the PLO fighters from Beirut. Under the supervision of a multinational force consisting of American, French and Italian troops, over 14,000 PLO guerrilla fighters left Lebanon by sea and air to a number of Arab countries which welcomed them, including Tunisia, Syria and Yemen.

Following the completion of the PLO fighters' evacuation, the multinational force had left Beirut by 9 September, believing that they had avoided a possible Israeli incursion into Beirut which might have led to substantial casualties (Fraser, 2008: 130). However, the assassination on 14 September of the Phalangist leader Bashir Gemayal, who had close links with Israeli key figures, led to the Israeli forces, contrary to Israeli assurances given to the US, sweeping across west Beirut where the Palestinian refugee

camps were now left defenceless in the absence of the PLO fighters and the multinational force (Bickerton and Klausner, 2007: 211; Fraser, 2008: 131).

The incidents that followed, according to Fraser (2008: 132), marked the end of Israel's presence in Lebanon and put Israel "on the political and military defensive". The Israeli decision to assign to the Phalangist militia, already provoked by the death of its leader, the task of chasing terrorist elements in Sabra and Shatila refugee camps led to the tragic incidents that followed. The Phalangist fighters entered the refugee camps on 16 September and for 2 days killed many of the civilians in areas under the control of the Israeli forces. Israel could not escape the blame for this massacre and for the deaths of some 800 to 1,200 civilians (Bickerton and Klausner, 2007: 211; Fisk, 2001: 389-390).

In Lebanon the consequences were the redeployment of the multinational force in the city – this time joined by British troops – replacing the Israeli troops, with the purpose of protecting the refugees in the camps and separating the fighting sides. The consequences inside Israel, which was held indirectly responsible, were far greater (Bickerton and Klausner, 2007: 211; Fraser, 2008: 132). In 1983, the independent inquiry of the Sabra and Shatila massacre criticized Menachem Begin for his indifferent stance towards the incident and condemned Ariel Sharon the Defence Minister, who was later compelled to resign by Begin who himself resigned in September 1983 (Bickerton and Klausner, 2007: 213; Fraser, 2008: 132-133).

#### 2.2.4.1. The emergence of Hezbollah

The 1982-1985 Israeli invasion of Lebanon, Fraser (2008: 134) argues, is believed to have prompted the emergence of Hezbollah. The departure and evacuation of the PLO from Lebanon during the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon prompted the emergence of new groups, particularly among the Shia communities – groups such as the Amal movement, founded by the Imam al-Sadr in the mid-1970s, and Hezbollah (Bickerton and Klausner, 2007: 211). A number of factors formed the necessary socioeconomic, political, and ideological conditions that led to Hezbollah’s emergence. Norton (2007: 23) claims that the deterioration of Amal’s popularity amongst the Shia community for tacitly welcoming the June 1982 Israeli invasion as a means to break the power of the Palestinian guerrillas was a major stimulus that prompted the emergence of Hezbollah to assist the Palestinians (cf. Kramer, 1995). Both Bickerton and Klausner (2007) and Karadjis (2006) acknowledge the influences of the Iranian Islamic Revolution of 1979 on the emergence of Hezbollah. Bickerton and Klausner (2007: 211) argue that Hezbollah was established as “an umbrella organization of several Shiite extremist groups inspired, funded, and supplied by Iran”. By contrast, Karadjis (2006) argues that Hezbollah emerged as an umbrella organization of the various *pro-Iranian* groups that emerged in 1982 among the Shia in southern Lebanon to fight the 1982 Israeli invasion. Drawing on Iranian funding, Hezbollah established its presence as an Iranian proxy and major political power in Lebanon and the Middle East (Bickerton and Klausner, 2007: 211; Kramer, 1995).<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> This view proposed by Bickerton and Klausner (2007: 253) is opposed by Gambill and Abdelnour, (2002) who claim that despite the conventional view that Hezbollah constitutes an Iranian proxy, Hezbollah had been financially dependent on the Lebanese Shia contributions as well as the group’s businesses in Lebanon, rather than on Iranian funding.

The Hezbollah movement is governed by a council whose post of secretary-general is held by the present Sayyid Hasan Nasrallah (Kramer, 1995). The military wings of Hezbollah include the Islamic Resistance, which is a militia-like formation, and “the organization of the ‘Islamic Jihad’, the clandestine branch of the movement” – reputedly led by Imad Mughniyya (Kramer, 1995). Hezbollah set as its objective the termination of Western presence in Lebanon, expulsion of the occupying Israeli forces from Lebanon, waging jihad against Israel, submission of the Lebanese Phalange militia and the establishing of an Islamic state in the country (Kramer, 1995; Karadjis, 2006).<sup>4</sup> The following section covers issues that are important in understanding and interpreting Hezbollah, in particular Hezbollah’s ideological discourse, controversial rhetoric and practices and intellectual pillars.

#### **2.2.4.2. Ideological and intellectual aspects of Hezbollah**

Because of the movement’s resistance against the Israeli invasions of Lebanon, Hezbollah has been accused of being anti-Jewish. This accusation, according to Karadjis (2006), reflects some sort of common confusion between ethnicities and regimes or systems. One article on Hezbollah’s website, [alghaliboun.net](http://alghaliboun.net), “Judaism is not Zionism”, explicitly states that its fight is against Zionism not Judaism or the Jews (as cited in Karadjis, 2006). While the leader of Hezbollah Hassan Nasrallah occasionally made “anti-Jewish statements”, Karadjis argues that these personal statements, which reflect blurred views, are in disagreement with the movement’s declared principles and Nasrallah’s actual views, which emphasize that “on this land, Muslims, Christians and Jews can coexist together, as they have for hundreds of years, in the framework of a democratic state”.

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<sup>4</sup> As stated in Hezbollah’s founding statement “An open letter to all the oppressed in Lebanon and the world” issued in Beirut on February 16, 1985 (cf. Karadjis, 2006).

The categorization, in certain discursive practices, of Hezbollah as an “Islamic fundamentalist group”, “liberation movement”, or “a terrorist organization” is also important when interpreting the findings of the analysis in this thesis (cf. Fraser, 2008: 134). Judith Harik (2004: 1) argues that while “Hezbollah . . . has transformed itself from a radical, clandestine militia to a moderate, mainstream political party with a resistance wing”, the group is viewed as a terrorist organization by the US, Israel and many Western countries. Following the 9/11 attacks, an argument arose between Lebanon, Syria and most Arab countries on the one hand and the US and Israel on the other over whether Hezbollah is a resistance force or a terrorist group (Harik, 2004: 201). Karadjis (2006) argues that “Hezbollah is a national liberation movement, rather than an ‘Islamist’ or ‘terrorist’ organization”. Many aspects of Hezbollah’s evolution, including its involvement in Lebanese political life, its network of social services, and of course its struggle against the Israeli invasions of Lebanon indicate the movement’s active role in national struggle, particularly when compared to other organisations in the region such as Al-Qaeda. Karadjis (2006) argues that Hezbollah consistently denounced Al-Qaeda’s actions, including the 9/11 attacks, as well as Al-Qaeda’s cross-border attack against Israel launched from southern Lebanon in December 2005. Karadjis (2006) argues that Hezbollah’s military struggle since its emergence in 1982 has essentially been against Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon which lasted 22 years. On many occasions, the group responded to Israeli attacks on Lebanese civilians by cross-border rocket strikes that have resulted in civilian casualties. However, Karadjis (2006) argues that Israel’s massive strikes have been disproportionate with Hezbollah’s rocket attacks and, on the other hand, “firing back while under massive attack is normal in ‘war’ ” and would not usually be labelled terrorism. This disproportionality is also highlighted within the context of the 2006

war. While Karadjis (2006) reports that, whilst the 2006 war was still in progress, Israel's strikes claimed about 750 Lebanese civilian casualties while less than 20 Israeli civilians were killed, Gaber et al. (2009: 246) argues that for every one civilian casualty on the Israeli side there were 10 Lebanese casualties.

A third controversial issue concerns the setting up of an Islamic state. Although Kramer (1995) claims that Hezbollah had declared its objective to be "the transformation of Lebanon (and the region) into an 'Islamic state' ", Karadjis (2006) argues that the accusation of seeking to set up an Islamic state is largely due to Hezbollah's close connections with Iran. Karadjis (2006) points out that it is true that Hezbollah theoretically "calls upon all of them to pick the option of Islamic government"; nevertheless, the movement emphasized that imposition and force should not be the means to achieve this goal. Karadjis argues that the only Christian force Hezbollah fought was the South Lebanon Army, Israel's ally in Lebanon. On the contrary, Hezbollah came into collision with Amal, which is a Shia movement, because of Amal's attacks in 1985 on the Palestinian of the refugee camps who are basically Sunni Muslims and Christians. Karadjis argues that "Hezbollah's actions cut across the sectarian divisions on which Lebanon's 'confessional' system of government is based".

#### **2.2.5. Withdrawal of Israel in June 1985**

Between 1982 and 1984, Hezbollah made a series of deadly operations including massive bombings against American, French and Israeli targets in Lebanon. In 1983 Israel attempted to reach a US-brokered agreement with the Phalange-led government for a permanent halt of the state of war in return for withdrawal of Israeli troops (but

also the Syrians) from Lebanon (Bickerton and Klausner, 2007: 211). However, the months to follow in 1983 witnessed a series of suicide bombings and assassinations against the multinational force in Lebanon and key figures in the CIA. The killing of the CIA chief in Lebanon in a car bomb and the bombing of the American embassy in Beirut by a “pro-Iranian” group killing over 60 people in April 1983 were followed by the killing of 241 American marines and 78 French troops in October 1983 in suicide car bombings that targeted their bases, and were allegedly carried out by the Druse militia and the Shia of south Beirut (Bickerton and Klausner, 2007: 211; Fraser, 2008: 133). Accusations of involvement in these operations were met by denials from Hezbollah leaders (Karadjis, 2006; Kramer, 1995). This series of violent attacks prompted the withdrawal of the US marines on February 1984 was shortly followed by the departure of the multinational troops of France, Italy and Britain from Lebanon, giving Syria an increased role in Lebanon’s affairs (Bickerton and Klausner, 2007: 211; Fraser, 2008: 133).

Following the withdrawal of the multinational force, Israel faced public pressure from within Israel that viewed the Israeli presence in Lebanon as no longer necessary and a similar, yet more intense, pressure from the Shia of Lebanon (Fraser, 2008: 134). The year 1985 witnessed the withdrawal of Israel from Lebanon while keeping a military presence in a narrow security zone along Lebanon southern borders (Bickerton and Klausner, 2007: 213; Gambill and Abdelnour, 2002; Kramer, 1995).

The failure of the Israeli invasion to achieve its goals is reflected in the return of PLO fighters and leaders to Lebanon and in the rise of militias, outbreaks of violence, the taking of Westerners as hostages and the increased political and economic suffering of

the country (Bickerton and Klausner, 2007: 211-212). While the Israeli death toll between 1982 and its withdrawal in 1985 exceeds 500 Israeli soldiers, raising feelings of distress and anger within Israel, the large numbers of Lebanese and Palestinian civilian casualties and the destruction of Lebanon have gained Israel “worldwide condemnation”. Israel’s 1982-1985 invasion of Lebanon had many consequences for the Israeli political landscape, leading to much heated discussions and feelings of shock among many Israeli leaders. It also inflicted weakness and division on the Israeli Army (Bickerton and Klausner, 2007: 213).

The years ahead demonstrated the failure of Israel’s policy of the “iron fist” to confront Hezbollah’s fight against Israel (Fraser, 2008: 134). Prior to and during 1992, Hezbollah’s rocket attacks against Israeli targets in the security zone were always met by targeting Hezbollah’s bases and leaders. For example, in 1992 Sayyed Abbas al-Musawi, Hezbollah’s secretary-general, and his family were killed in an attack (Kramer, 1995). While such a charged atmosphere caused stagnation as regards the Lebanese-Israeli issue, Hezbollah achieved considerable victory in the first elections in Lebanon in 1992 (Bickerton and Klausner, 2007: 248-249).

#### **2.2.6. The 1993 Operation Accountability**

In July 1993 Hezbollah’s rockets fired from southern Lebanon claimed 7 Israeli soldiers in the security zone, leading to severe bombing of southern Lebanon, including over 30 Shiite villages. Operation Accountability, which mainly aimed to destroy Hezbollah’s military infrastructure, resulted in 130 deaths, basically Lebanese civilians, 500 injured and the exodus of some 500,000 Lebanese. The conflict was ended by a US-brokered ceasefire, under the terms of which Hezbollah would stop

attacking northern Israel while still keeping the right to continue its attacks against targets in the security zone. Israel also agreed to stop bombarding Lebanon. Following the ceasefire, nine Israeli soldiers were killed in two bombings targeting the security zone (Bickerton and Klausner, 2007: 252).

### **2.2.7. The 1996 Operation Grapes of Wrath<sup>5</sup>**

During the first months of 1996 Israeli patrols in the security zone were the target of several attacks (Fraser, 2008: 152). In March 1996, a series of bombing attacks against military targets in the security zone raised the number of Israel's losses to six soldiers in three weeks while such attacks did not break the 1993 unwritten understanding, which granted Hezbollah the right to attack Israeli targets in the security zone (Bickerton and Klausner, 2007: 284).

In April 1996 in response to the killing of a number of civilians outside the security zone, an event that Israel claimed was accidental, Hezbollah launched rocket attacks against northern Israel resulting in 36 wounded civilians. In retaliation, Israel began "surgical strikes" against Hezbollah targets which extended to Beirut for the first time since the 1982 invasion, killing 200 Lebanese civilians, wounding hundreds and destroying much Lebanon's infrastructure (Bickerton and Klausner, 2007: 284-285).

The end of hostilities came following the shelling of a UN post where more than 600 civilians had been taking shelter resulting in the deaths of over 100 and the wounding of many others. The 1996 shelling of Qana, which Israel claimed to be unplanned and a "grave error", was seen by some observers as intended to pressurize the Lebanese

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<sup>5</sup> The Israeli Operation Grapes of Wrath is also called *April War* by Hezbollah.

government and the Syrians to suppress and control Hezbollah (Bickerton and Klausner, 2007: 285, cf. Fisk, 2001: 669-671). However, the destruction brought by Israel's operations and the Qana tragedy gained Hezbollah Lebanese sympathy and support, while gaining Israel international condemnation. Questions were raised concerning Israel's integrity, as its reaction was not proportionate to Hezbollah's attacks that claimed no civilian casualties (Bickerton and Klausner, 2007: 286).

The April Understanding, much similar to the 1993 understanding in granting Hezbollah the right to attack military Israeli targets in the security zone and prohibiting the targeting of civilians on both sides, acquired importance from being a written agreement between the Israeli and Lebanese governments. It also gained Hezbollah recognition of the international community (Bickerton and Klausner, 2007: 286; Harik, 2004: 122).

#### **2.2.8. Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon in 2000**

Hezbollah's presence in southern Lebanon was a cornerstone in the Israel-Syrian peace negotiations in 1999. While Israel insisted that Syria restrain Hezbollah and sign a peace treaty with Israel in return for the Golan Heights, Syria viewed Hezbollah's guerrilla war of attrition as a guarantee for Israel's withdrawal from the Golan (Bickerton and Klausner, 2007: 318). For the Lebanese government, Hezbollah's attacks on Israeli targets in the security zone in southern Lebanon which eventually extended to northern Israel were considered a powerful tool to guarantee full Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon. Thus, following the withdrawal of the South Lebanese Army, Israel's ally, from part of the security zone in 1999, the

Lebanese government rejected the deploying of its forces to replace the withdrawn South Lebanese Army (Bickerton and Klausner, 2007: 324).

Israel's presence in the narrow security zone in southern Lebanon which lasted for 15 years came to an end in the year 2000. After a period of unremitting attacks on the Israeli troops by Hezbollah fighters in southern Lebanon and following a decision agreed on in the Israeli cabinet in March 2000, Israeli troops were forced to withdraw from the security zone (Fraser, 2008: 157).<sup>6</sup> While Lebanon agreed to the deployment of Lebanese forces as well as UN forces in the security zone upon Israel's withdrawal to guarantee no attacks on the northern Israeli settlements, during the withdrawal Hezbollah in many incidents launched cross-border strikes on northern Israel and attacked the withdrawing Israelis in southern Lebanon. On 24 May 2000, Israel managed to pull back its remaining troops with no casualties, thus marking the end of the 18-year occupation of Lebanon (Bickerton and Klausner, 2007: 325-326). Israel's complete withdrawal was later followed by the deployment of UN forces along the borders to secure and peace-keep the area (Bickerton and Klausner, 2007: 327).

Hezbollah's military victory in getting the Israelis out of the country gained the group much popularity among all the Lebanese factions. The group's network of social services covering all sectors fostered the group's position as a political power (Bickerton and Klausner, 2007: 326). Hezbollah, apart from its military activities, also runs a number of services such as schools, health centres, pharmacies, textile factories and a radio station which broadened Hezbollah's popularity among all the Lebanese (Karadjis, 2006; Kramer, 1995).

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<sup>6</sup> While Israel has lost 123 soldiers in the security zone between 1995 and 1999, the year 2000 witnessed the killing of 7 soldiers in only 3 weeks early in that year (Bickerton and Klausner, 2007: 325).

In spite of Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon and the deployment of UN and Lebanese forces for the purpose of peace keeping across the borders, there remained feelings of insecurity in Israel up to the end of 2005. Many Israelis perceived the withdrawal as allowing Hezbollah militia more freedom to strategically move and organize along the borders, constituting more threat to Israel with the group's armed presence and its ability to launch cross-border rocket attacks (Fraser, 2008: 157). Karadjis (2006) argues that, except for some border clashes, Hezbollah had not been involved in any cross-border attacks against Israel following its withdrawal from southern Lebanon. By contrast, Gambill and Abdelnour (2002) argue that, while reciprocal attacks had been less frequent than during Israel's occupation of southern Lebanon, the Israeli presence in Shabaa farms became a new excuse for continuing attacks by Hezbollah against Israel (cf. Bickerton and Klausner, 2007: 390). For example, in September 2000, three Israeli soldiers were captured by Hezbollah at the borders with Israel (Bickerton and Klausner, 2007: 331). However, the only notable incident was the killing of five Israeli civilians in March 2002, though Hezbollah denied any responsibility for it (Karadjis, 2006).

As part of the Road Map of 2003 that aimed towards permanent two-state solution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it was planned that by the year 2005 a comprehensive settlement between Israel and Lebanon would be achieved (Fraser, 2008: 177). However, the year 2005 saw the rise of Ahmadinejad, with his outspoken anti-Israeli sentiment and rhetoric, to the presidency in Iran. Considering the already-established close links between Iran, "the world's major Shi'ite power" and major weapons supplier of Hezbollah, and the Shiite group Hezbollah, the situation was alarming (Fraser, 2008: 186). According to Israeli intelligence reports, as reported by Gambill

and Abdelnour (2002), in 2005 Hezbollah possessed a missile force consisting of 7,000 Katyusha rockets capable of hitting deep into Israel, Iran's arms shipments to Hezbollah accelerated and the movement was finalizing its defences in southern Lebanon.

This long history of conflicts and wars between Israel and Lebanon is part of the wider Israel-Arab conflict that began with the Arab-Israeli war of 1948. All of these wars deserve to be the focus of discourse-based research. This thesis focuses on the last chapter of the Israeli-Lebanon conflict, namely the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah war.

### **2.2.9. The 2006 Israel-Hezbollah/Lebanon war**

In Lebanon, the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah war is known as the *July War*, whereas it is called the *Second Lebanon War* in Israel. The 12<sup>th</sup> of July 2006 marks the action which triggers the 2006 war when Hezbollah guerrillas crossed the borders with Israel and attacked an Israeli patrol, killing three Israeli soldiers while managing to capture two more. While Sheik Hassan Nasrallah, Hezbollah's leader, called for a prisoner swap with Israel, the Israeli government – then the government of Ehud Olmert – denounced the attack as “an act of war” and promised retaliation (Fraser, 2008: 190; Lee, 2008). Hezbollah's operation provoked a full-scale Israeli attack, including air strikes, artillery bombardment and ground assault (Fraser, 2008: 190).

#### **2.2.9.1. The 2006 War timeline**

Following the capture of an Israeli officer on 25 June 2006 in the Gaza Strip, where his captors called for a prisoner exchange, Israeli forces entered southern areas of Gaza arresting activists belonging to Hamas. Events escalated with the firing of

rockets at an Israeli town followed by the Israeli forces entering the northern areas of Gaza and the killing of a senior Hamas leader and his family on 12 July 2006 (Fraser, 2008: 190).

The same day – 12 July 2006 – witnessed a major Hezbollah move that was regarded by the Israeli government (Olmert's) as an act of war. At 09:05 am Hezbollah launched a military operation, "Operation True Promise", setting an ambush for an Israeli patrol near the border village of Zar'it. Following diversionary rockets fired at Israeli settlements and military posts, Hezbollah guerrillas attacked two Israeli Humvees with rocket propelled grenades. The guerrillas managed to capture two Israeli soldiers while three others were killed. In an attempt to rescue the two captives, Eldad Regev and Ehud Goldwasser, an Israeli tank chased the guerrillas, but the tank was hit and the crew members were killed. The situation worsened with the killing of one more Israeli soldier while attempting to recover the dead bodies of the four members of the tank crew (Hackett and Schroeder, 2009: 36; Lee, 2008).

Hezbollah's cross-border attack, the kidnapping of two Israeli soldiers and the killing of eight others provoked Israel to respond with a comprehensive military operation, including air strikes, artillery bombardment and ground assault. The targets were Hezbollah strongholds across southern Lebanon and other locations such as Beirut International Airport. Israel's full-scale attack aimed to put Hezbollah under siege and block any aid Hezbollah may receive from Syria or Iran, the group's main allies and weapon suppliers (Fraser, 2008: 190; Hackett and Schroeder, 2009: 36; Lee, 2008).

Well-prepared, trained and better-knowing the geography of southern Lebanon, Hezbollah guerrilla fighters showed strong resistance. The fierce fighting in Lebanon was accompanied by substantial and sustained rocket strikes – Hezbollah’s rocket force consists of some 4,000 Katyusha rockets – inflicting damage on towns in northern Israel such as Haifa and reaching deep inside Israel (Gavriely-Nuri and Balas, 2010: 4; Fraser, 2008: 190). In addition to Hezbollah’s waves of rockets fired into Israel, the group managed to destroy an Israeli warship positioned 10 miles off the Lebanese coast. For about a month, Israel and Hezbollah exchanged fierce rocket and artillery attacks, claiming civilian casualties on either side of the border (Fraser, 2008: 190; Lee, 2008).

The UN Resolution 1701 put an end to the 34-day war, estimated to have displaced over 900,000 Lebanese civilians and 500,000 Israeli civilians. The war is also estimated to have claimed over 1,000 Lebanese and 144 Israelis (of whom 104 were soldiers). Israel, Lebanon, and Hezbollah agreed to a cease-fire starting on 14 August 2006, whereby the Israeli forces withdrew from the country while Hezbollah stopped its attacks (Fraser, 2008: 191; Hackett and Schroeder, 2009: 36). The Lebanese army was to deploy along Lebanon’s southern borders and the UN Interim Force in Lebanon was to supervise the ceasefire. The 2006 Israel-Hezbollah/Lebanon crisis was formally declared a war by Israel on 19 March 2007. On 16 July 2008, as part of a prisoner exchange that prompted some criticism in Israel, Israel turned over four captured Hezbollah guerrillas, the bodies of some 200 other Lebanese and Palestinian fighters and the Lebanese Samir Kuntar in exchange for the bodies of the two captured Israeli soldiers (Fraser, 2008: 191; Lee, 2008).

### 2.2.9.2. Strategic analyses of the 2006 War

Yosef Kuperwasser, former head of the Research Department of Israel's Military Intelligence (Aman), argues that Hezbollah planned the kidnapping of the Israeli soldiers a long time before the 2006 capture of the two Israeli soldiers, basing his claim on a speech by Hezbollah leader in which he explicitly expressed this intention. The group's attack was meant, according to Kuperwasser (2006), to "justify the existence of the organization as an armed force within Lebanon" by demonstrating its strength and dominance. Kuperwasser (2006) claims that Hezbollah did not anticipate Israel's comprehensive offensive, particularly Israel's ground assault and its targeting of the Lebanese infrastructure. The group's assumptions were based on the fact that the Lebanese government lacked control over Hezbollah, that Hezbollah possessed an arsenal of thousands of rockets that could reach deep inside Israel, and that Israel's 18 years of occupation that ended in May 2000 had left very stressful experiences in the memories of many inside Israel. Some of these assumptions agree with statements made by Hezbollah leaders during the war noted in this thesis.

Kuperwasser (2006) argues that Hezbollah Leader Hassan Nasrallah meant to polish his group's image in the Middle East as an organized movement that possessed the military capabilities to defeat Israel. However, Nasrallah, according to Kuperwasser, made a "fundamental mistake" when he assumed that Israel would react with the same restraint it has shown towards the movement's provocative actions since Israel's 2000 withdrawal from southern Lebanon.<sup>7</sup> Israel's retaliation and comprehensive offensive, according to Kuperwasser, reflect its concerns that the progress Lebanon was making towards becoming an independent government free from any Syrian or Iranian

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<sup>7</sup> Before the July 2006 operation, Hezbollah militia tried four times to kidnap Israeli soldiers, which was met at the time with warnings of retaliation from Israel, according to Kuperwasser (2006).

influence – particularly following the departure of the Syrian army from Lebanon in April 2005 – was threatened by the “radical elements” in Lebanon. In addition, Israel’s comprehensive attack, Gaber et al. (2009: 249) point out, was motivated by Hezbollah’s growing military presence in southern Lebanon, which formed a breach of resolution 1559 of the UN. The war in 2006 showed the Lebanese government as lacking both control over Hezbollah as well as the abilities to defend its own territories (Lee, 2008).

The 2006 Israel-Hezbollah/Lebanon war is quite different from other trans-border wars between Israel and neighbouring countries. Rather than relying heavily on ground sweeps – as was the case in the 1982 invasion of Lebanon, Israel relied mainly on air strikes and artillery to combat Hezbollah and damage its strongholds. In 2006 Israel limited its ground attacks, particularly in the first two weeks of the conflict, to cross-border assaults that aimed to neutralize targets belonging to Hezbollah. Powerful ground sweeps, on the other hand, were limited only to the last two weeks of the war, according to Lee (2008). The militant group reacted by launching continuous waves of rockets striking deep inside Israel as far as the Israeli port city of Haifa, inflicting damage and causing civilian casualties.

The massive Israeli strikes against both Hezbollah strongholds and civilian targets can be seen as reflecting a two-fold political and psychological strategy adopted by Israel in this war. The bombing of roads, bridges, airports as well as other civilian infrastructure served to cut-off Hezbollah from Syria and Iran, the group’s main allies and suppliers of weapons. It might be argued that by destroying the Lebanese civilian infrastructure, Israel was trying to depict Hezbollah as bringing to Lebanon death and

destruction, hoping to turn the people against the Shiite militant group. To the contrary, Lee (2008) argues, Hezbollah gained the support of most of the Lebanese people while Israel was attributed blame and responsibility for destroying the country and causing civilian casualties.

On the operational as well as strategic levels, Hezbollah's performance requires particular focus. The 2006 war proved that Hezbollah guerrillas, rather than being a militia, were more like an organized army in their training, techniques, and fighting abilities (Lee, 2008). Kuperwasser (2006) argues that Israel's intelligence was well informed on what resources Hezbollah possessed, which is in complete agreement with the Winograd committee report (Winograd Commission, 2007). The Winograd committee report referred to the fact that following the unilateral withdrawal of Israel in May 2000 without deploying units of the Lebanese Army as was planned, "the ability of Hezbollah to sit 'on the border', its ability to dictate the moment of escalation, and the growth of its military abilities and missile arsenal increased significantly" (Winograd Commission, 2007). Israel was well informed that Hezbollah guerrillas possessed advanced fighting abilities and capabilities, that they were masters of guerrilla tactics, and that they knew better the geography of southern Lebanon. Nonetheless, Hezbollah surprised Israel on the technological level with the range of its rockets, which reached major Israeli cities deep inside Israel for the first time since the 1967 war (Kuperwasser, 2006). Fraser (2008: 191) argues that Hezbollah's potential military capabilities with its relatively primitive rockets reaching into Israel raised questions as regards Israel's defensive capabilities.

Kuperwasser (2006), while acknowledging that “many will remember [Hezbollah] not losing”, stresses that during the 34-day war Israel’s warplanes and artillery attacked 7,000 targets, the majority of them being “targets of opportunity”, a reflection of “Israel’s ability to combine real-time intelligence with air force power”. However, Fraser (2008: 190-191) argues that if neutralizing Hezbollah had been one of the set objectives of the 2006 war, Israel “signally failed” to end the group’s presence and control over southern Lebanon. Lee (2008) also argues that Hezbollah’s unrelenting showering of Israeli cities with rockets suggests the failure of Israel’s air campaign in terms of serving its political or military strategies and ensuring the safety of Israeli civilians. Kuperwasser also referred to the inability of Israeli intelligence to locate all of Hezbollah’s rockets and consequently Israel was aware that “it would be impossible” to totally destroy Hezbollah’s rocket force.

Israel’s apparent failure to achieve the objectives of the war came in accordance with the Winograd committee report to the Israeli government issued in April 2007. The report stated that: “Some of the declared goals of the war were not clear and could not be achieved, and in part were not achievable by the authorized modes of military action”.

### **2.3. The selected news outlets**

This part of the present chapter provides a thorough background of the selected news outlets: Al-Jazeera and the BBC. It also explains the role the selected news outlets play as part of the political context. In doing so, it seeks to explain the choice of these specific news outlets to provide material for the present study. It should be noted that the section devoted to Al-Jazeera is relatively more detailed because it provides

background for the Al-Jazeera Arabic version. This contextual background of Al-Jazeera Arabic is necessary for a better understanding of Al-Jazeera English.

### **2.3.1. Al-Jazeera: changing the political landscape in the Middle East**

Following the toppling of the emir of Qatar by his son Hamad in 1995, Hamad eventually abolished the Ministry of Information, the famous media censorship arm of most Middle Eastern governments. This step, which could be seen as indicating his liberal and democratic views, was followed by the establishing of the Arab network Al-Jazeera (Schulthies and Boum, 2007: 144). Meaning literally *the island*, this Arabic TV channel, officially launched in November 1996, initially hired editors and journalists from the then recently dissolved BBC Television Arabic Satellite Channel, launched a couple of years earlier, who had left the channel after it closed down (Schulthies and Boum, 2007: 144). The emir of Qatar and the founders of Al-Jazeera found a ready-made crew of independent “critically minded” and already well-trained journalists who had the potential to “better represent the interests of the region” (El-Nawawy and Iskandar, 2004: 318). Al-Jazeera’s role in promoting the free flow of information, breaking governments’ and state broadcasters’ monopoly on information and opening up political debate in the Middle East, cannot be underestimated.

#### **2.3.1.1. Arab media landscape prior to Al-Jazeera’s emergence**

El-Nawawy and Iskandar (2004), in outlining the landscape of journalism in the Arab world from which Al-Jazeera emerged, identify three successive stages. The first stage marks the introduction of foreign media to the Arab world in the early 1930s. Starting with the Italian Radio Bari, followed by a number of foreign radio broadcasting companies, such as the BBC (Empire Radio), the French Radio Monte Carlo Middle

East and Voice of America (VOA), the Arab world became the target of fierce competition. The aims of such broadcasting were to influence public opinion and to gain Arabs' interest. The programmes of the foreign broadcasters were dominated by "mandated agendized 'diplomatic' discourses" which directly challenged and conflicted with the presumed journalistic values of objectivity and credibility (El-Nawawy and Iskandar, 2004: 316-317).

The second stage marks the emergence of Egypt's Voice of the Arabs, as the first Arab radio broadcaster promoting "the message of pan-Arab nationalism" in the Arab world and capturing public interest. Whilst the Voice of the Arabs witnessed a severe decline with its coverage of the 1967 war, which misled the public into an imaginary success, a less nationalistic model adopting principles of a free press emerged, though inconsistently, in some Arab countries' print media, particularly in Egypt and Lebanon. While this emerging model allowed access to diverse political views through the media, this diversity can be noticed in the print media, broadcast media were more state-controlled until the late 1990s (El-Nawawy and Iskandar, 2004: 317-318).

The third stage of the development of media and journalism in the Arab region was triggered by the 1991 gulf War and the CNN coverage of that war, which stimulated the birth of war reporting in the Arab world. In the years that followed the Gulf War, the Arab media landscape witnessed the emergence of a number of Arab satellite networks including, among others, Middle East Broadcasting Center (MBC), Arab Radio and Television Network (ART), Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation (LBC) and Orbit, the majority of which were not openly associated with a particular government

or subjected, at least formally, to censorship. However, it is Al-Jazeera that represents the first Arab “24-hour all-news station” with “an extensive international bureau system” (El-Nawawy and Iskandar, 2004: 318).

### **2.3.1.2. Al-Jazeera’s ownership and editorial freedom**

While the network’s staff of reporters, journalists and editors “reflects every political leaning, religious affiliation and educational background in the Arab world”, it is mainly funded by the Qatari government (El-Nawawy and Iskandar, 2004: 319). Despite the fact that the news organization’s journalists do not see its financial dependence on Qatar’s government as influencing their editorial freedom, the news network has not escaped criticism as regards its editorial independence (Allan, 2010: 207).

Al-Jazeera is widely seen as the largest and most influential of the Arab world’s news media organizations (Allan, 2004: 352; El-Nawawy and Iskandar, as cited in Allan, 2010: 207). The network attained this prominent position through its promotion of heated political debates and its aggressive reporting style when dealing with regional affairs (El-Nawawy and Iskandar, 2004: 319). Compared to other Arabic news channels, Al-Jazeera has been seen to enjoy unprecedented editorial freedom manifested in raising many previously-taboo issues, free from governmental censorship and control. This is why Al-Jazeera is viewed by some commentators, such as Volkmer (2005: 364-365), as “a somewhat ‘liberal’ voice within the Arab media world”, aiming to “counterbalance conservative Arab state channels”. Among the general public, the station is also widely seen as allowing its audience the chance to

express their opinions freely, encouraging debate and offering arguments and counterarguments (History of AL Jazeera Television, n.d.).

However, Al-Jazeera's journalistic style and liberal voice have led the network to being viewed as somewhat controversial in the Arab world. While the network's sharp criticism of Arab regimes, which contrast strikingly with the dominant pro-government propaganda, has won the station a huge audience in Arab countries, it simultaneously attracted those regimes' anger. While some Arab governments have banned the station from reporting from their countries for varying periods of time, other countries withdrew their ambassadors from Qatar. The reasons relate to criticism targeting those countries' internal or domestic affairs and policies (Schulthies and Boum, 2007: 145; Volkmer, 2005: 365). Other criticism involves describing Al-Jazeera's style as aiming to "incite rather than inform" (Ajami, as cited in Schulthies and Boum, 2007: 145).

In addition, according to El-Nawawy and Iskandar (2003, 2004: 319), the network has been frequently criticized for its lack of coverage of domestic and local affairs and news in Qatar, suggesting possibly direct political connections with the Qatari government. It is this lack of coverage that has also raised doubts as regards the network's financial dependence on Qatar, although the network, which was exclusively funded by the Qatari emir up until 2001, relies partially on revenue from advertising as well as other funding options, such as the selling of its exclusive footage to other big news institutions, particularly Western ones (Schulthies and Boum, 2007: 144; Schleifer, 2003).

With respect to the network's coverage of international affairs and news, very little influence can be detected whereby the network seems to enjoy editorial independence from governmental control (El-Nawawy and Iskandar, 2004: 319). However, Allan (2010: 207) holds the view that Al-Jazeera's "commitment to providing news coverage from an Arab perspective" could mean that the news network is "ideologically compromised, and as such biased against the US and Israel". However, he adds, for some other critics, Al-Jazeera is seen as "a Zionist tool" and "a front for the Central Intelligence Agency" (Allan, 2004: 352, 2010: 207). Al-Jazeera was the first Arab station to carry interviews with Israeli and Western officials (Schulthies and Boum, 2007: 144).

### **2.3.1.3. Al-Jazeera's controversial war coverage**

It is not surprising then that Al-Jazeera, which is widely seen as the most controversial among all the news media organizations in the Middle East because of its coverage of Arab news, is similarly seen in the West for its coverage of international news (Allan, 2010: 208; El-Nawawy and Iskandar, 2003, 2004). Since its emergence in 1996, Al-Jazeera has become widely known for its coverage of war and conflict and for raising fundamental questions concerning the journalistic values of objectivity, such that both have become the focus of much debate around the world (El-Nawawy and Iskandar, 2004: 319). Al-Jazeera came to be widely known in the West in the early 2000s because of its expanded coverage of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. The channel sometimes outperformed its competitors as a result of its 24-hour satellite link to Kabul and Baghdad as well as its exclusive footage which was used by many channels in the West (Bahaa, 2005). While this has gained the news network its unique position in the world of international news coverage as "a top transnational news

organization”, it has also raised much international controversy, particularly for its coverage of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq (El-Nawawy and Iskandar, 2004: 315).

Al-Jazeera was seen as adopting an anti-Western tone in much of its reporting and was accused of being a mouthpiece for Al-Qaeda and of its leader Osama Bin Laden. Al-Jazeera broadcast (videotaped) messages from Al-Qaeda leaders, particularly in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, for which other networks paid immense sums to rebroadcast. During the 2003 War in Iraq, Al-Jazeera also broadcast images of civilian casualties and US casualties, interviews with US prisoners of war by Iraqi television, beheadings of Western hostages, and images of dead American soldiers being repatriated in coffins. Broadcasting these images, according to Jihad Ballout, the network’s spokesperson, reflects the network’s journalistic ethic of “reporting the war as it was being fought on the ground” (Allan, 2010: 210). Not acting under the same constraints imposed on Western news media by their governments, Al-Jazeera’s reporting jeopardized the control the US military exercised over the news media reporting the war in Afghanistan (War on Terror) (Allan, 2004: 352, 2010: 208-209).

Many American and European media organizations, by contrast, showed respect for Al-Jazeera, because the network presented balanced reporting and reported from diverse angles, adhering to the network’s motto of “the opinion and the other opinion” (El-Nawawy and Iskandar, 2004: 325). For example, during the 2003 Iraqi War, such balanced reporting was manifest in such practices as covering briefings and war updates by both Iraqi and US officials and having war correspondents freely roaming Iraqi cities as well as others embedded with the US marines (El-Nawawy and Iskandar, 2004: 323). During the war, Al-Jazeera led the reporting with the depth of

its coverage. Al-Jazeera's correspondents covered areas of Iraq where no other Western reporters could venture, broadcast from major battlegrounds, and four of the network's correspondents were working as embeds within US and UK military forces (Allan, 2004: 353, 2010: 208). It is this type of close daring coverage by reporters who were roaming the streets, a BBC News reporter commented, that resulted in a type of "disjuncture" between Al-Jazeera's reporting and that of other Western journalists (as cited in Allan, 2010: 208-209). Moreover, the fact that US officials were willing to be interviewed on the network during the war boosted its reputation and emphasized its popularity and role as a media institution (El-Nawawy and Iskandar, 2004: 327). Commenting on this controversy, BBC News has argued that the Arabic-language channel's "forthright style, frank journalism and willingness to discuss taboo issues" have "made it a thorn in the side of governments", both Western and Arab (Al-Jazeera English hits airwaves, 2006).

This controversial coverage also led to the network's headquarters, bureaus and offices being the target of closures and bombings, while its journalists and reporters have suffered arrests and expulsions (El-Nawawy and Iskandar, 2004: 315; Miles, as cited in Harcup, 2007: 23). For example, Al-Jazeera's alleged anti-American slant, Al-Ahram Weekly stated, drew criticism from Washington and led to the hostility of the Bush administration towards the station, as manifested in shelling the network's Kabul and Baghdad bureaus during the 2001 Afghan war and 2003 Iraq war, and the killing of a cameraman when the network's office in Baghdad was bombed, though US officials claimed the bombings were not deliberate (cf. Bahaa, 2005; El-Nawawy and Iskandar, 2004: 325; Tumber, 2005: 377).

#### **2.3.1.4. Al-Jazeera's English Profile: breaking the language barrier**

Al-Jazeera English was “the world’s first English language news channel to be headquartered in the Middle East”. The English language channel also claims to be the first truly globally oriented news channel; the channel has no central location for “command and control” of its news stream (Corporate Profile, n.d.). Al-Jazeera English, whose headquarters are located in Doha, the capital of Qatar, launched its broadcasting on 15 November 2006. Correspondents and technicians, who are basically “translators and pronunciation tutors for the non-Arabic-speaking media”, Wolff (2003) claims, contributed to Al-Jazeera’s leading role. The broadcast material of this 24-hour news channel includes, in addition to news, features, analysis, live debates, entertainment, business, documentaries and sport.

On its official website, Al-Jazeera English claims to be “the English-language channel of reference for Middle Eastern events, balancing [and also reversing] the current typical information flow by reporting from” the Middle East to the West. Al-Jazeera diverted the direction of news, which was flowing from either state-owned censored Arab media or foreign media (Schulthies and Boum, 2007: 144). The English-language channel’s set goals are to “give [a global] voice to untold stories, promote debate, and challenge established perceptions”. The channel also includes in its goals extending the regional perspective of Al-Jazeera Arabic to a global one, through “accurate, impartial and objective reporting” and revolutionizing English-language media, in the same way that its Arabic-language sister revolutionized the Arabic-language media (Corporate Profile, n.d.). However, the English-language channel’s task was never expected to be an easy one. Unlike the Arabic-language channel, which seems to perform solo in the Middle East, with Al-Arabiya emerging recently

as a potential competitor, internationally, the presence of well-established rivals, such as the BBC, CNN and Fox News, presented a real challenge to the newly born channel. However, in October 2007, The Jerusalem Post reported that Israel's biggest cable and satellite provider, HOT Television, would drop CNN and carry Al-Jazeera's English edition instead.

Commenting on the launch of Al-Jazeera's English-language news channel, some critics expected the new channel to adopt a different attitude from the Arabic version. Bradley (2005) reported that the English-language channel is run independently – administratively, financially and editorially – of the Arabic-language version. In addition, the channel's news team includes many non-Arabs whose ideological backgrounds and opinions, according to Bradley (2005), "are far less shaped by core Arab or Islamic issues". Nonetheless, those expectations for and views of the new channel were opposed by many analysts. For example, Khalid Rashidi, professor of Arab studies at Columbia University, argued that the English-language version could present a perspective contrary to the "contextless" and "ahistorical" one dominating US news media. Similarly, one of the channel's presenters has pointed out that it is true that the channel is an international one, but definitely one with a "Middle Eastern feel", BBC News reported (Al-Jazeera English hits airwaves, 2006). Amidst these controversial views concerning the English-language version's expected stance, there remains Al-Jazeera English own commitment that it will follow in the footsteps of the Arabic-language version in counteracting unbalanced reporting by Western networks on Middle eastern issues. This commitment, besides those controversial views, partially explains the choice of Al-Jazeera English as one of the news outlets to present material for my study.

### **2.3.1.5. Al-Jazeera's viewership and reach**

Al-Jazeera combined Arabic and English services have 2,500 multinational staff members, correspondents and journalists recruited from about 40 countries, including almost all 22 Arab countries. Al-Jazeera's unique journalistic style, as well as the intense demand for alternative insights, led to Al-Jazeera's popularity transgressing the boundaries of the Arab region to extend worldwide. This demand has gained the network an international audience reportedly ranging from between 35 to 50 million regular viewers, which puts the news network at the top of the list of Arab news channels in terms of viewership (cf. Allan, 2004: 352, 2010: 207-208; El-Nawawy and Iskandar, 2004: 319; Schulthies and Boum, 2007: 144-5). The number of subscribers to the network soared to four million in Europe during the 2003 war in Iraq, because the channel offered an alternative viewpoint to the Western-style reporting of the war, according to Cozens (as cited in El-Nawawy and Iskandar, 2004: 324). The English-language version claims that it targets a potential audience that exceeds one billion in the West and the rest of the world, with the help of its broadcasting centres strategically placed in Doha, London, Kuala Lumpur and Washington DC, and about 70 international news bureaus. Al-Jazeera, according to Schulthies and Boum (2007: 157), has transgressed the boundaries of the Arab region and the Middle East and "has emerged in the American and Western imagination and discourses".

The English-language channel is also expanding in all areas of new media, reaching millions through its online news reporting, online programmes and mobile technologies. Al-Jazeera's English website (<http://english.aljazeera.net>) receives four to five million page views per week, of which up to 60% come from US, according to Phil Lawrie, the channel's Director of Global Distribution. During the Iraq war, most

UK and US internet users surfing online news websites, according to Allan (2004: 352), thought that “no site in the region [i.e. Arab world] would attract more intense interest . . . than Al-Jazeera”.

While the September 11 attacks marked a shift of Arabic-speaking users of the internet from the CNN Arabic news website to Al-Jazeera’s Arabic-language website, where notably 40% of Al-Jazeera’s site views came from the US, according to Ostrom (as cited in Allan, 2004: 353), Al-Jazeera’s leading role during the 2003 Gulf War and its exclusive coverage and footage gained the news outlet a huge audience, with an estimate of 35 million daily (Wolff, 2003). However, the 9/11 events, according to Schulthies and Boum (2007: 147-148), marked another change in the network’s targeted audience. Following the attacks, Al-Jazeera showed more interest in its international audience by increasing the number of correspondents reporting from outside the Arab region, adding more programmes airing from Western countries, selling its exclusive footage to Western news organizations and introducing the English language version of its website. Al-Jazeera’s English website hit the top of the list of most searched-for keywords on the internet, because of its coverage of the Iraqi war, but the network’s coverage also resulted in the website being repeatedly hacked (cf. Allan, 2004: 355, 2010: 210; El-Nawawy and Iskandar, 2004: 324, 326; Volkmer, 2005: 365). “The popularity of Al-Jazeera’s website was clear evidence of people branching out beyond their normal sources of news” (Karl Gregory of Alta Vista search engine on BBC News Online, 1 April 2003, as cited in Allan, 2010: 210). Al-Jazeera’s online news website, according to Allan (2010: 217), offers an alternative approach to news media from those that mainstream news media – national and local – adopt and reinforce.

### 2.3.1.6. Al-Jazeera's code of ethics

Al-Jazeera issued its “code of professional conduct” in June 2004 (Schulthies and Boum, 2007: 148). On its English-language website, Al-Jazeera sets out its own code of ethics in pursuance of its goals. As stated on the news outlet’s website, Al-Jazeera defines a number of ethical considerations that govern its practices. First, the news outlet commits itself to the values of “honesty, courage, fairness, balance, independence, credibility and diversity, giving no priority to commercial or political over professional consideration” (Code of Ethics, 2010). Second, Al-Jazeera will seek to “get to the truth and declare it . . . unequivocally in a manner which leaves no doubt about its validity and accuracy” while “[distinguishing] between news material, opinion and analysis to avoid . . . speculation and propaganda”. It will also address covered events “with due attention to present a clear, factual and accurate picture”. In addition, Al-Jazeera seeks to “present diverse points of view and opinions without bias and partiality” (Code of Ethics, 2010).

A closer look at these ethics reveals some important points. First, there is an apparent emphasis on impartiality, as opposed to bias. This is made explicit in its stressing adherence to honesty, fairness and credibility, as well as presenting different opinions without bias. This emphasis is also implicitly conveyed elsewhere, as in prioritizing professional considerations over political ones and setting clear-cut lines between reporting facts and speculation. Equally noticeable is the oft-repeated reference to the ethical consideration of reporting facts without colouring them, as evident in phrases such as “present a clear, factual and accurate picture”. This emphasis laid on the *claimed* factuality of news reporting and journalistic ethics by Al-Jazeera forms part

of the research problem.<sup>8</sup> This emphasis can be systematically challenged by conducting research on how news outlets, which claim to produce factual accounts of the world and to adhere to journalistic values, offer different constructions of the same event.

### **2.3.1.7. Al-Jazeera in the media**

Commenting on the unprecedented editorial freedom Al-Jazeera has enjoyed, Wolff (2003) claims that the station's professional team was "confidently turning the free-press argument on the free press itself". However, Al-Jazeera's (lack of) objectivity has been the focus of both much media debate and scholarly research (Schulthies and Boum, 2007: 144-145). Interestingly, Al-Jazeera was accused of being biased towards Israel by a number of Arab countries. For instance, according to a news bulletin on Al-Jazeera, the Bahraini Information Minister accused the station of being "penetrated by Zionists", following Al-Jazeera's airing of footage of anti-US protests in Bahrain without permission (Bahrain bans Al Jazeera TV., 2002). Accusations of infiltration, but this time by Al-Qaeda, were reported in articles in the *Mirror* and *Al-Ahram Weekly* in December 2005 as a pretext for bombing the station's headquarters in Doha as part of the US's history of aggression against Al-Jazeera's offices and crew. Similarly, BBC News reported accusations of bias levelled by Israel at Al-Jazeera during its coverage of the conflict in Gaza in March 2008, which led to imposing a boycott on the Arabic broadcaster's reporters working in Israel. Allegations of "prioritising Palestinian suffering" were met with denials by the channel's Jerusalem bureau chief who accused Israel of trying to intimidate the channel to influence its media coverage (Israel accused al-Jazeera of bias, 2008). The fact that Al-Jazeera was

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<sup>8</sup> The research problem is discussed in detail in section 1.2.

accused of being biased by almost all sides, in favour of almost all views, groups and ideologies, the Palestinian journalist Ramzi Baroud (as cited in Schulthies and Boum, 2007: 145) argues, is due to its “chokingly” balanced stance and allowing an “equal platform to all”.

### **2.3.2. The BBC: the first broadcast service in history**

The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) is a UK-based public service broadcaster. It is also one of the largest broadcasting organizations in the world. The corporation is funded by UK households in the form of a licence fee. The BBC, according to Barnett (2005: 331), is a *public* service corporation offering *public* service journalism funded by the *public*. The services provided by the BBC include national TV channels and radio stations, local/regional TV and radio programming, and a website. BBC’s World Service provides news services in 27 languages on radio, TV and online. The BBC official website states that the services provided by the BBC in the UK are funded by the licence fee. Services such as BBC Worldwide and BBC World News represent the “commercial arm” of the BBC, whose revenue is also used to fund public services (At a glance, n.d.). Richard Sambrook, a director of BBC News, points out that BBC News “gathers and produces national daily news, business, political and current affairs programmes on BBC television and radio”. BBC News also provides news on its 24-hour news channels, such as BBC News and BBC World, and on the website BBC News Online (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/>) (Sambrook, n.d.).

### **2.3.2.1. BBC: History and evolution**

The launch of the British Broadcasting Company (BBC) dates back to November 1922, when radio news bulletins were broadcast in England for the first time in history. In 1927 the British Broadcasting Company became the British Broadcasting Corporation (cf. Briggs, 1995: 3).<sup>9</sup> BBC TV news made its debut in January 1948 and the corporation launched BBC News Online in November 1997, at a time when the internet news market was a place of fierce competition; CNN, for example, had already been online for four years.

On its launch in 1922 the BBC did not have any journalists to report daily news; rather it limited its news reports to summaries supplied by big news agencies, such as Reuters and the Press Association (PA). This situation gradually changed with the BBC building its independence by relying on its own reporters, particularly during the General Strike of May 1926 (Allan, 2010: 48). During the course of the Second World War, the BBC's recently formed War Reporting Unit faced its first major mission, in which its correspondents provided intensive news coverage as well as eyewitness accounts in news bulletins. The introduction of the radio programme War Report was "a turning point in the BBC's war reportage" (Allan, 2010: 52).

It was not until 1954 that news began to appear on a daily basis on television. In these news programmes the BBC carefully observed its commitment to impartiality "as a professional and public duty", so that it could face any potential charges of adopting a partisan stance (Allan, 2010: 58). However, Allan credits many of the developments in broadcast news to Independent Television News (ITN) such as restrictions with

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<sup>9</sup> Among the BBC official historians who have contributed to provide a comprehensive account of the BBC history are Asa Briggs, David Cardiff, Paddy Scannell and Jean Seaton.

respect to observing accuracy and impartiality. ITN was credited other changes, including more freedom being given to news casters in rewriting the news, and interviewing “ordinary people” in television news programmes.<sup>10</sup> Some of these improvements were adopted by the BBC in order to “refashion its television newscasts” in the mid-1950s (Allan, 2010: 59-63).

### **2.3.2.2. BBC News viewership and reach**

BBC News, which is one of the largest global news providers in the world, has more than 2,000 journalists distributed across its 48 bureaus, of which 41 are overseas. In terms of viewership, BBC News has an estimated 260 million viewers and 150 million listeners via its international services. BBC News Online grew rapidly to become one of the most popular news sites and has won major awards, including the Webby award for Best News site. Sambrook (n.d.) reported a viewership of 20 million per event day. According to a poll conducted during the war in Iraq, the BBC reported that traffic to BBC News Online soared to a record of 140 million page views in one week in March 2003 (a typical figure was 45 million).

### **2.3.2.3. BBC values**

The BBC sets out its mission as being “to enrich people’s lives with programmes and services that inform, educate and entertain”. Inspired by these goals, the BBC’s principle values include independence, impartiality, honesty, creativity and teamwork, amongst others. BBC News claims that its journalism strives to be open, transparent, impartial, fair and accurate. It stresses the following as strengths of the news network:

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<sup>10</sup> ITN (Independent Television News) was established in 1955 as a subsidiary of ITA.

“depth of knowledge”, “quality of analysis and range of subjects”, “original first hand reporting and investigations from around the world” (Mission and values, n.d.).<sup>11</sup>

Mark Damazer, deputy director of BBC News, claims on the channel’s official website that, when reporting a story, a BBC correspondent aims “to provide an insight based on evidence and on professional judgement – uncluttered by commercial interest or the need to support a particular proprietor or ideology”. He stresses the BBC’s independence, in that it is “not to be driven by the agendas and interests of newspapers, pressure groups, political parties or governments” (Damazer, n.d.).

#### **2.3.2.4. BBC News style guide**

Being one of the leading and biggest news organizations, BBC News has a commitment to its audience, who are of a multi-national nature, to its journalistic values of impartiality, accuracy and fairness, and to its licence-fee payers in the UK. These commitments put responsibility on those who engage in writing for the BBC. The BBC Style Guide is designed for journalists and more generally for anybody who writes a script for BBC News. This style guide, its final version was produced by John Allen (2003), provides writers with guidance on the clear, effective and correct use of English in their writing of news scripts.

The BBC style guide covers many aspects of English language writing, which are particularly implicated in the process of news writing. Some of these aspects are the use of active and passive, reported speech, superlatives, collective nouns, abbreviations and acronyms, attribution, and simple, troublesome and superfluous

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<sup>11</sup> Also see Sambrook, R. above.

words. For example, while the style guide highlights the potential of the passive to shift the focus to the more important information, the guide emphasizes the importance of using the active voice in news writing, which is mainly “about people doing things” (Allen, 2003: 17-18).

The BBC style guide is another example of the ways in which BBC News is committed to the highest standards of journalism. Journalists and reporters working for the BBC are required to adhere to the corporation’s journalistic values and to follow the rules of good news writing as prescribed by the BBC. However, while BBC journalists and writers are required to write in ways that follow this style guide, the style guide states that BBC writers are also expected by their editors to follow their editorial line and learn editors’ preferences (Allen, 2003: 78).

#### **2.3.2.5. BBC News and government control**

The BBC’s role in the creation of a journalistic culture in Britain is characterized by many critics, such as Barnett (2005: 330-331), as being rigorous and active. This role can be traced to a number of factors basically related to the BBC being a public service broadcasting corporation. First, unlike market-driven and private broadcasters, the BBC is not under the constant pressures of profit-making and cost-cutting, at least in response to investors and share holders’ demands. Priority is given to “high quality, accurate and impartial journalism” over profit and expenditure (Barnett, 2005: 330). Second, in enjoying a relatively stable and predictable source of revenue, the BBC can sustain long-term investment in expensive programming areas, unlike commercial broadcasters who rely on alternative sources of revenue, such as advertising, subscriptions or sponsorship, where an unexpected downturn would require cost cuts.

Third, the BBC's news services, available on television, radio and online, as well as its World Service and its commitment to include comprehensive and rolling news and current affairs coverage, allow the BBC to operate on a uniquely large scale, not only domestically, but also globally, through its foreign correspondents and bureaus worldwide. Moreover, the BBC's commitment to ethical journalism and its "public service ethos" acts as a safeguard against the "dumbing down" of journalism that might be caused by chasing more entertaining, trivial and sensational news, as offered by many commercial broadcasters (Barnett, 2005: 330-331).

However, throughout the developments in the BBC's news service, the corporation's editorial independence and political loyalty have occasionally become controversial issues. During the 1920s, and under the constraints of the corporation's licence conditions, the BBC kept avoiding controversial programming, yielding to direct government surveillance. This avoidance of controversial programming, particularly as regards governmental affairs, raised questions about the BBC's political loyalty. More and more independence and concessions, though minor, were gradually gained, such as the use of live eyewitness accounts, a lifting of the ban on its programming, and turning the BBC into an independent body (Allan, 2010: 48-50). During the 1950s, the BBC once again faced charges of yielding to governmental pressure by agreeing to discontinue its reporting on issues relevant to parliament for fourteen days before being debated. This so-called "fourteen-day rule" put in question the corporation's independence (Allan, 2010: 58).

The year 1926 witnessed the establishment of the BBC by charter as a public service broadcasting corporation, rather than a state-controlled broadcasting company, and as

the sole provider of radio services (and later television) in England (Briggs, 1995: 3; Manning, 2001: 126). Although Britain possesses a well-developed system of restrictive mechanisms to regulate the flow of information, according to Manning (2001: 131), since its establishment the BBC has been formally, as well as informally, subject to government control and pressure (cf. Barnett, 2005: 331). In addition to the corporation's charter, which is subject to periodical review and renewal by the government, other formal influences include the appointments to certain posts, including BBC governor, by the government or ministers, government reviews of the corporation's role and sources of funding, and the constraints imposed on the content of certain programmes and coverage of certain events, although only rarely, in cases of national security (cf. Manning, 2001: 123-127, 131).

Of particular importance are those informal government pressures, particularly as regards news media content, the BBC has felt. The relative autonomy that the BBC has enjoyed since its establishment as a public service broadcasting corporation, in 1926, has occasionally been challenged by government control, which was particularly obvious in the coverage of wars and national crises (Manning, 2001: 131; William, 1992: 162). Examples include accusations of bias or the lack of a patriotic stance in its coverage, implicit as well as overt "arm twisting", and threats touching on such issues as funding. Manning describes a number of cases where such pressures were exerted on the BBC, emphasizing that "such informal political pressure will at least make news editors and managers think particularly carefully before approving news items that are likely to bring a fresh wave of political controversy" (Manning, 2001: 132; cf. William, 1992: 158-160).

### **2.3.2.6. BBC News in the media**

Rather than just reporting, BBC News is also reported about. The Media Guardian website reported in July 2003 that the Israeli government cut its links with the BBC, accusing it of “competing with the worst of Nazi propaganda” in its portrayal of Israel (Deans, 2003). Although corporation correspondents were allowed to report from Israel, they were denied the right to conduct interviews or attend briefings. Israel criticised the corporation for its alleged biased coverage of the Palestinian conflict and its “unbalanced and evil” portrayals of Israel and the Jewish people, which seemed to support “an [obvious] anti-Israel line” in some BBC programmes. The Israeli government, at the time, announced that it would not stop its non-cooperation policy until the BBC reported in a “professional and balanced manner” (Deans, 2003).

The BBC has faced accusations of bias on the part of both pro-Israel groups and pro-Arab media, as regards its coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In 2005, in response to these accusations, an independent panel investigated the issue by conducting research on BBC news programmes for a period of six month. The finding of the research, conducted by Loughborough University, was that the coverage “tended to be ‘in favour of Israelis’ ” (Loughborough University, as cited in Gaber et al., 2009: 240-241). For example, one feature of its representation demonstrating such bias was that there was more coverage of Israeli casualties than of Palestinian casualties.

Conducting an impartiality review of the BBC news coverage of Israel-Hezbollah 2006 war, Gaber et al. (2009) investigated whether accusations of anti-Israeli bias against the BBC could be validated. Gaber et al. (2009) used the BBC’s “revised

editorial guidelines for covering the Middle East” to substantiate, or otherwise refute, these claims of bias. Gaber et al. argue that, “whilst certain aspects of the coverage were problematic”, BBC reporters generally followed the set editorial guidelines, offering a more or less impartial coverage of the war. The discerned cases of bias were in favour of, rather than against, Israel.

This second part of chapter 2 has discussed the contextual background of Al-Jazeera and the BBC. In doing so, this part has highlighted the selected outlets’ evolution, their ownership and editorial independence, controversial aspects in their news coverage, and their journalistic values and viewership. The rationale behind such a detailed discussion is that these aspects help situate the selected news texts within their context of production, while forming part of the wider research context. This discussion, therefore, is essential for a better understanding of the BBC and Al-Jazeera’s representations of the selected event.

#### **2.4. Conclusion**

- The first part of the present chapter provides relevant contextual information – that is, the historical and socio-political background for the action, participants and setting of the 2006 war between Israel and Hezbollah. This war was not an isolated event but part of the long history of conflicts between Israel and Lebanon going back to the British Mandate in 1984. The discussion in this part is necessary to bridge the gap between the micro-analysis of text and the macro-analysis of discursive and social practices. The fact that news reporting is both socially constructed and socially constructive makes it of great importance to highlight the social, ideological and political backgrounds against which the selected news outlets carry out the reporting

of the selected event, the focus of the second part of the present chapter, which can be utilized to offer possible explanations and interpretations when accounting for the different patterns of representation traced in their coverage of the selected event (van Dijk, 1998; Bell, 1998). Van Dijk (2011: 387) emphasizes that in order to explain “ideological discourses” one should take into account a number of factors, which include, in addition to underlying ideologies, “non-ideological” constraints such as “knowledge and conception of the current context of the participants”.

A number of factors, highlighted in this chapter, might suggest a political position adopted by Al-Jazeera that is generally characterized as being anti-Israeli, or rather pro-Hezbollah, at least for this particular event, i.e. the 2006 war. These factors include, among others, the launch, context and structure of Al-Jazeera, its commitment to seek to counteract unbalanced reporting by Western networks on Middle Eastern issues and to extend the perspective of Al-Jazeera Arabic, as well as the repeated accusations of bias made by Israel. By contrast, the BBC is directly funded by UK households, rather than the government, which could be said to promote the BBC’s independence, and the consequent assumption that the news outlet is not driven by newspapers, political parties or governments’ agendas and interests. However, there are times when the BBC has been subject to governmental control, in particular during wartime. In addition, many Western countries, including Britain, classify Hezbollah as a terrorist group, which could potentially shape the way the group is perceived by Western media institutions, including the BBC. These background factors might be thought to influence and shape the ways in which the BBC represented the 2006 war. The analysis conducted in chapters 6 and 7 has the

potential to show whether these inter-related contexts did in fact shape and affect the two selected news outlets' representations of the 2006 war.

One might claim that the BBC and Al-Jazeera, both by theoretical evidence and common assumption, reflect different news media models, i.e. public service broadcasting and commercial broadcasting, which differ in their funding sources. One might equally claim that Al-Jazeera and the BBC reflect different ideological and political attitudes, which could be expected to influence their representation and evaluation of war events. However, there remains the two news outlets' emphasis on adhering to journalistic values, as explicitly stated on their news websites and in their editorial guidelines, as another basic criterion that motivated the choice of these specific outlets. In addition, both news outlets address international audiences, audiences which vary considerably in their political views, backgrounds and expectations. This commitment to journalistic values and the international nature of their presumed readerships could influence the two news outlets' representations of the 2006 war.

The next chapter takes us one step forward towards forming an understanding of the news medium selected to present the data in this thesis, the internet, and the genre of the hard news report. It also outlines some relevant journalistic conventions, discursive practices and other processes of news production that are necessary for a better understanding of the way news media represent events. The chapter discusses war reporting, in particular of wars in the Middle East region.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **Media and Journalism**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

The present chapter aims to situate this study within the larger context of media and journalism by illuminating and integrating multiple dimensions of news media. The chapter critically discusses a number of key topics in media and journalism that are important to a better understanding of news media, news production and news consumption. The chapter first discusses the discourse structure and stylistic features of news reports as the selected genre and of war news as the selected subgenre within hard spot news reports. The chapter also pays attention to online news media with particular emphasis on the characteristics of online news reporting as discourse and online news production. This is followed by investigating important issues in news production including media ownership and proprietors, broadcasting regulations, journalistic standards and news values. The chapter also highlights war reporting with particular emphasis on reporting of wars in the Middle East.

### 3.2. Genre: news reports

The study of media language usually starts with a researcher's interest in investigating the language of a specific genre. Genre is defined as "a set of texts with recognizable formal and stylistic similarities", but more broadly "relates to some common communication situation" (cf. Fowler, 1991: 227).<sup>1</sup> Genres within media include news, letters to the editor, documentaries, weather forecasts, soap operas, music, sports commentary, and so forth. Bell (1991: 13) argues that the two genres that are common to all the primary media of mass communication and that have also been the focus of most research on media and on media language are news and advertising. All daily media are collectively labelled *news media* because they all carry news.

With regard to the press, "everything other than advertising is called 'editorial' ". Editorial copy can be broadly divided into news, service information and opinion (cf. Bell, 1991: 13). Apart from news, the focus of the present research, service information "is often associated with specialist sections such as sports or business pages" and covers such information as weather forecasts and sports results (Bell, 1991: 13). Opinion, on the other hand, includes the news outlet's own stance or point of view on an issue, often called *editorials* or *leaders*, as well as regular contributed columns, letters to the editor and reviews. Although it is by no means easy to separate fact and opinion, Bell highlights a journalistic tradition according to which opinions and news are supposed to be presented separately. Acknowledged opinion copy is always flagged by devices such as standard heading and the writer's name (Bell, 1991: 13). This thesis focus will be on the analysis of the genre of news reports rather than

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<sup>1</sup> For further discussion on genre, see Fairclough (1992: 126) and Swales, J. (1990).

editorials, comment, reviews or leading articles which claim to speak the news outlet's own point of view (Fowler, 1991: 208).

### **3.2.1. The discourse structure of hard news stories**

In analyzing the discourse structure of news stories, Bell (1991, 1998) and Allan (2010: 100-104), building on Labov's framework for analyzing narratives and van Dijk's framework for analyzing news discourse, point out that a news story, particularly the hard news story, typically consists of basic elements. These elements, according to Allan (2010: 100), enable the hard news account to offer readers "a highly formalized construction of the social world". The basic elements within a hard news account are attribution, abstract and the story body.

Attribution refers to the source of the news story, which "can include a credit to a news agency and/ or a journalist's byline", and may also include a dateline which specifies time and place (Bell, 1998: 67). However, attribution is not always explicitly stated. The absence of any sort of attribution either to a journalist/writer as author or to a news agency as provider indicates, according to Bell (1998: 84), that the story must be written by a staff reporter who is not bylined. The abstract of a news story consists mainly of the lead, but could also include a headline, particularly for press news. The importance of the lead lies in that it "covers the central event of the story, and possibly one or more secondary events" (Bell, 1998: 67). It also highlights the setting and participants involved in the main event. The present thesis aims to analyze the representation of war events and their attendant participants. The focus made in the lead on the main event and participants could explain the selection of leads, together with headlines, to be the focus of analysis. The body of a news story often

consists of a number of episodes. Each of the episodes in a news story consists of a number of events, which often involve certain actors and actions and often signal place and time, and may be explicitly attributed to a source (Bell, 1998: 67). The above elements are the central ones in a news story. Other additional elements include the background, commentary and follow-up (Bell, 1998: 67-69).

Each of the four main elements of a news story – the by-line, headline, lead sentence and story body – has a specific producer or author (Scollon, 1998: 192). While the headline and the byline are often written by a sub-editor, the news story body is produced by a journalist or reporter – logically the bylined writer – or is understood to be attributed to a news agency, particularly in the absence of a bylined writer. The lead could be produced by the journalist who is bylined, but it could also be written by the sub-editor, which could well apply to the story body (Bell, 1991: 150, 1998; Scollon, 1998: 192-193).

Although the chronological order of events is apparently “the ‘natural’ [unmarked] - order because it matches [the] discourse structure to the event structure”, i.e. “the order in which [events] are told” and “the order in which [they] actually happened” (Bell, 1998: 94; cf. Brewer, 1985), one distinctive feature of news stories is the violation of the expectation that narratives are usually told in temporal sequence (Allan, 2010: 102; Bell, 1998: 93-96).<sup>2</sup> Rather, news stories may be told with “flashbacks” and “flashforwards” inserted throughout the story, or may be told in a reverse manner (Bell, 1998:100), with effects/ outcomes given priority over causes (Allan, 2010: 102). Such discontinuity of time between sentences, i.e. the “jumbled”

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<sup>2</sup> Schudson (1995: 91) traces the shift from the chronological order to the creation of the summary lead to the early twentieth century.

time structure, can result in “a general lack of syntactic, semantic and discourse cohesion”, which could challenge the reader’s ability to understand or interpret the communicated message (Bell, 1998: 97, 102). Van Dijk has called this the “instalment method” (1988: 43), according to which “an event is introduced then returned to in more detail two or more times”.

This study focus will be on conducting a linguistic analysis of the headlines and leads of the selected news reports, i.e. the study will investigate that element of the news story referred to above as the *abstract*, as a means to analyze representation in the reporting of the 2006 war. The news text body will be referred to only when this relevantly illuminates the analysis of the leads and headlines. The following two sections aim to shed more light on the headline and the lead sentence as the focus of analysis.

#### **3.2.1.1. The lead: the story encapsulated**

In his study, Bell (1998: 69) investigates the “single-sentence story” referring to it as the “minimal well-formed hard news story”. He argues that the single-sentence story can provide a reliable and appropriate basis for examining the structure of longer stories in general (cf. Bell, 1991: 174, 1998: 69). The same argument can equally apply to the lead sentence. Bell (1998: 69) argues that “the news story is always focused in its first sentence”, i.e. its lead, which represents a “micro-story” even if it is followed by a full story. Without a good lead, “the [reported] material may be rejected as a non-story” (Bell, 1991: 152). The lead’s importance is further signalled by setting it off from the remainder of the story in larger and different font (Bell, 1991: 149).

Of particular importance to the present study and one structural explanation for limiting the research scope primarily to the analysis of headlines and leads is the way in which information in a news report is organized. The hard news story – as a “distinctive genre of ‘purely factual’ narrative” – follows a hierarchical structure in the ordering of news, which is based on their news worthiness (Allan, 2010: 100). Writing the hard news story in inverted pyramid style with all the most important (newsworthy) information focused at the beginning, i.e. the headline and the lead, with the news account capable of ending at any point without interrupting or affecting the narrative coherence of what precedes, is a common and well-established journalism practice (Allan, 2010: 101; Bell, 1991: 169, 172-173, 1998: 97; Scanlan, 2000: 153; Scollon, 1998: 197, 231). The remaining details are structured in a descending order of importance, often discursive but also ideological (Allan, 2010: 101). Most of the studies, such as Allan (2010), Bell (1991, 1998), Scollon, (1998), White and Thomson (2008), and van Dijk (1988), investigating the structural organization of news reports agree on “the top down principle of relevance organization in news” (van Dijk, 1988: 43). Scollon (1998) argues that journalists and reporters write news stories in such a way that would allow the editor to cut from the end paragraphs of the news story, i.e. they are aware of the hegemonic position of editors that gives them the right to modify the news story by means of shortening it, a process which itself emphasizes the necessity of placing the most important details towards the first lines in the story, i.e. the lead (Scollon, 1998: 197).

Because of this hierarchical structure in the ordering of news, the lead paragraph plays an important role in establishing the main point of a news story and summarizing the central action (Allan, 2010: 38). Although White and Thomson (2008: 8) propose a

structural organization of a news report that is “orbital” – rather than of an inverted pyramid structure – they refer to the opening of a news story as a “textual nucleus”. This textual nucleus includes the headline and lead sentence of a news report, with the other elements of a news report functioning as “satellites”, i.e. “dependent sub-components”, to that nucleus; a structure that further highlights the unique role headlines and leads play in a news report.

The lead is seen as an encapsulated story bringing together the principle elements of that story. Answers to all the journalistic five Ws and the H (what, when, where, why, who and how) need to be clear to the reader from the very beginning of news reports (cf. Allan, 2010: 101; Scanlan, 2000: 153).<sup>3</sup> Bell (1991: 174) argues that “the lead-as-complete-story consists minimally of the actors, action and place which constitute a single event”. Readers can get the essence or gist of a news story by reading its opening sentence or paragraph, i.e. its lead, and based on that they either proceed to the body or turn to some other piece of news (Bell, 1991: 149).

However, the lead is not only the news story encapsulated, it is the story as seen from a particular perspective. The lead, in providing a summary of the news account’s “essential hook” (Allan, 2010: 101), projects the news story from a particular angle or focuses it in a specific direction (cf. Bell, 1991: 152). The expected factuality of news reports means that explicit evaluation, i.e. expression of attitude or opinion, is either absent or kept to a minimum.<sup>4</sup> However, reporters in deciding on what aspects of a news story should lead the report are necessarily making choices based on their judgement (cf. Schudson, 1995: 91). These choices, Bell (1991: 52) argues, can be

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<sup>3</sup> Though the lead often offers answers to the five journalistic questions, the *why* is “always more problematic”, according to Keeble (as cited in Allan, 2010: 101).

<sup>4</sup> Articles and editorials, on the other hand, allow the text producer to explicitly show her/his stance.

said to implicitly direct readers towards a particular reading of the news story, specifically of the remainder of the story, i.e. the body, which itself can be an indication of the writer's stance and ideology. Schudson (1995: 92) argues that it is the introduction of the summary lead and the inverted pyramid structure that expands "the reporter's field of action and sphere of discretion". It is in this sense that in the news story, Bell (1991: 152) argues, "evaluation focuses in the lead".

It is worth mentioning that both Bell (1998: 75) and van Dijk (1988: 77) have observed, namely, that lead sentences in news stories can often be complex as their syntax and information content are concerned, and such complexity can jeopardize comprehension. Complexity in syntactic structure of leads is discerned in the present study on the level of clause complex as a textual strategy that could serve various discourse functions.

### **3.2.1.2. The headline: an abstract of the abstract**

Within the news story, headlines perform two simultaneous functions: semantic and pragmatic. Whereas the semantic function regards the remainder of the news story text, the pragmatic function regards readers of the news text. Headlines serve the pragmatic functions of attracting the readers' attention and signalling to them the content of the news text. This pragmatic function includes the semantic one; i.e. the headline summarizes the news story and presents the focus of the news text (cf. Bell, 1991: 189; Iarovici and Amel, as cited in Richardson, 2007: 197). Along the same line, Lee (as cited in Moon, 2008: 9) suggests that headlines serve four functions: getting reader's attention, summing up the news story, organizing the news presentation, and indicating the relative importance of the news story.

The headline, as Bell (1991: 150) states, is “an abstract of the abstract”, i.e. it summarizes the lead itself. This reflects what is referred to above as the inverted pyramid style with the important and newsworthy information focused at the beginning of the news report and “progressing through decreasingly important information” (Bell, 1991: 169). Due to the characteristic brevity of headlines, deciding on what to foreground in the headline necessarily involves choices being made. The text producer’s selection of certain information from the lead to foreground in the headline is significant, as it might be indicative of the text producer’s attitude and views. Bell (1991: 152) argues that the representational as well as evaluative functions of the lead are more obvious for the headline, especially when it picks up on one aspect, particularly a minor one, of the story.

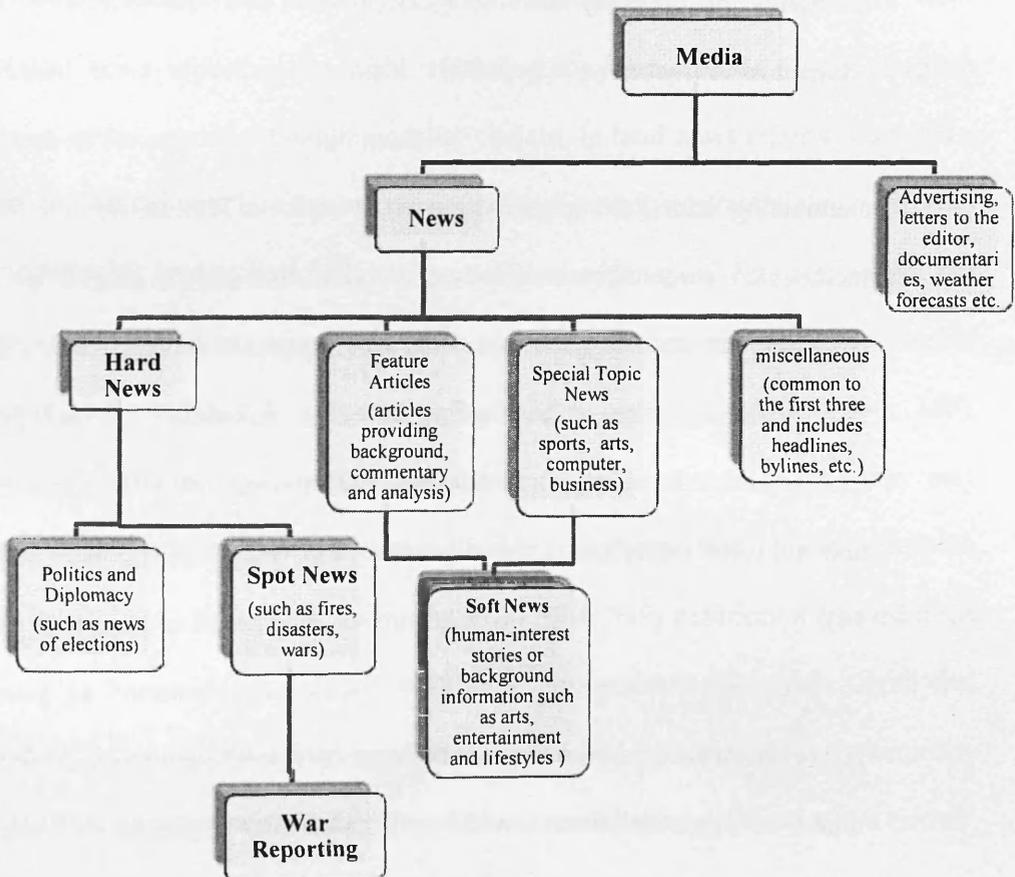
The question which arises is this: is it justifiable to combine the analysis of headlines with an analysis of accompanying leads in news stories? One interesting and significant practice common in editing changes to news copy is the practice in which the original lead sentence is written by a journalist or reporter, and the headline (often formulated after the news story was written) by a copy-editor or copy-writer (cf. Bell, 1991: 150, 1998: 83; Scollon, 1998: 192; Toolan, 2001). Allan (2010: 100-101) argues that the basic function of the headline is that it “represents the principal topic or ‘key fact’ at stake in the account”. Being aware of this potential function of the headline, readers are likely to perceive and interpret the whole news account in accordance with the “ideological criteria” conveyed in the headline (Allan, 2010: 101). Since many people have developed the habit of reading or skimming only headlines, and think that they can predict and restructure the whole news story, misleading headlines have a significant impact (cf. Moon, 2008: 8, 36). It is important to investigate to what extent

headlines and leads match and to point out any contradictions. This shift in authorship might lead to subsequent changes in both the grammar and lexicon of lead sentences which might be invaluable to analyze (Bell, 1991: 150; 1998). As one indicator of this common journalistic practice, Bell (1998: 83) mentions contrast in the modality of the verbs used in the headline and the lead. Whereas the lead may hedge its evaluation, the headline presents the event as unmitigated fact; modality is probably rarely expressed in headlines. Allan (2010: 101) acknowledges this final observation when he argues that headlines of quality news accounts are characterized by the use of a range of lexical items that could be seen as “un-emotive” or “dispassionate”, conforming thus to the principle of objectivity (cf. Matheson, 2005). Another outcome of this common practice is that there might be “a difference of opinion over what constitutes the central news event” in a story, whereby the story, including the original lead, might disagree with the headline (Bell, 1998: 88).

Building on the claim expressed by Bell (1998: 82-83) that the majority of headlines are derived from leads rather than from the body of a news story, an analysis of headlines combined with an analysis of their accompanying leads may disambiguate the headlines and provide more reliable findings. In addition, comparing the headline and the lead may reveal the role that editorial work, as representative of media institutions’ stances and ideologies, plays in representing and mediating facts. On these grounds, this thesis will focus on the headlines and leads of the news reports constituting the coverage by the BBC and Al-Jazeera of the 2006 war. For each news outlet, analysis of headlines is followed by an analysis of accompanying leads. Throughout these analyses any significant similarities and difference are pointed out, as they could be indicative of the news outlet’s stance and ideology.

### 3.2.2. Subgenre: war news as hard spot news

Bell (1991: 1) argues that “within the media, news is the primary language genre”. Within the main genre of news, a number of categories can be investigated including hard news, feature articles, special topic news (e.g. sports, arts, business, technology) and a fourth “residual” or “miscellaneous” category – common to the first three – which includes headlines, crossheads (subheadings), bylines, and photo captions (Bell, 1991: 14-17). The following figure illustrates genre classification within media leading to war reporting, the focus of this thesis.



The present study focuses on war news, which presents one type of the subgenre of what is conventionally called *hard news* as opposed to *soft news*. Hard news refers to up-to-the-minute news that is reported immediately. Hard news encompasses reports

of crimes, death, wars, accidents, violence, discoveries and similar events characterized by their immediacy. *Spot news*, the core of hard news, covers unscheduled events that happen unexpectedly such as fires, natural disasters, a coup d'état, death or kidnapping of a prominent figure and wars which qualify for the category of *breaking news* (Stenvall, 2011). *Politics and diplomacy*, a second major category of hard news, covers news of elections, summit meetings and similar scheduled and expected events (Bell, 1991: 14, 147, 1998: 69). For this latter category, Stenvall (2011) argues, the outcome of the event, rather than the event itself, represents the breaking news category. Within hard spot news, war news is “the ultimate in conflict news” (Bell, 1991: 156).

Contrasting with hard news, soft news is not as “time-bound” as hard news and includes coverage of human-interest stories or background information such as arts, entertainment and lifestyles as well as such topics as climate-change, racism and the like. Features, the most outstanding category of soft news, are articles providing background, commentary and analysis, occasionally “editorialized” (expressing the text producer’s opinion), rather than stories covering immediate events (Bell, 1991: 14).

However, drawing the boundaries between hard news and soft news based on subject matter as illustrated above could blur the distinction between the two types of news (Bell, 1991: 14; cf. Tuchman, 1978: 47). For example, a news report of the events and actions of a war on the one hand and on the other hand a feature article expressing the writer’s opinion on these same actions both share coverage of the same event. However, it is not possible to place them in the same category. Rather than building

the distinction between hard news and soft news on the type of events or actions covered, it is rather more practical to rely on style, particularly tone. As opposed to soft news, e.g. features, where writers “are allowed more liberty of style”, hard news, e.g. news reports, is characterized by a distinctive *factual* news style (Bell, 1991: 14; cf. Allan, 2010; Manning, 2001; Reah, 1998; Sanders, 2003). Hard news reporting supposedly takes a factual approach, answering the five journalistic Ws (What happened? Who was involved? Where, When and Why did it happen?). Separating facts from personal opinion in the reporting of hard or spot news and the double-checking of news accounts to satisfy the public demand for facts have become well-established news reporting practices, according to Allan (2010: 40-41). Explicit judgment, as for example through modality choices, in hard news reports is kept to a minimum in the attempt to adhere to the apparent objectivity characterizing such news accounts (Allan, 2010: 102). Moreover, unlike the genre of features, where the writer’s voice can be heard, in hard news stories explicit reference to the writer is absent, i.e. the “authorial voice” is often backgrounded (Scollon, 1998: 197). Nonetheless, if news reporters are overwhelmed by the covered events, they may produce emotionally-loaded news reports, rather than factual accounts (cf. Stenvall, 2011). This view is in agreement with Allan’s (2004: 349) description of hard news reporting as “ostensibly objective”, with “conventionalized strictures”. Given that hard news stories are meant to be factual, war news reports can be systemically examined to discern how reported *facts* are *re-presented* by different news outlets. This forms one of the aims of the present study.

### **3.3. Web-based (online) news reporting**

The mainline news media include newspapers, newscasts on both radio stations and television networks, and the internet. This section introduces the internet as the medium used to provide the data for the present study, the main characteristics of web-based news reports viewed as discourse and the internet as a news medium and its role in war reporting.

#### **3.3.1. Medium: the internet**

The particular medium used to provide the data for the present research is the internet, the primary media type within the new media (Bell, 1991: 1).<sup>5</sup> The term *new media* is used to refer to computer and mobile phone technologies; however, it is computer technology and the development of the internet that has played the leading role in the rise of information technology in the last few decades (Gruber, 2008: 54). The invention of the new media has had “a tremendous effect on communicative and discursive practices” and has led to, as well as fostered “the emergence of new communicative styles and genres” (Bolter, as cited in Gruber, 2008: 54). Web-based news pages, the source of data in the present study, resembling in this respect newspapers and television networks, form an integral part of the complex network of most news outlets and agencies.

Despite the fact that the internet is “undoubtedly a medium in its own right” and although the term *electronic media* implies the non-use of print, there is a two-way relation between electronic media/the internet and print (Mautner, 2008: 30-31; cf. Deuze, 2008: 201). Many texts which originate in written form find their way to

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<sup>5</sup> For a detailed discussion of the nature of the internet as a medium, section 3.3.2 introduces a number of dimensions along which web-based news reports can be characterized.

websites (Baker, 2006: 31). In many cases the online text is just “an exact replica” of its original paper form. In other cases the transfer of content from print to electronic media might involve varied degrees of “recontextualization”, involving new intertextual relationships adapted to surrounding online material, “dynamization” represented in hyperlinks and “interactivity” represented in readers’ comments and discussion forums (cf. Rusch, as cited in Mautner, 2008: 31). On the other hand, semiotic features characteristic of electronic discourse, such as icons, cursors, pull-down menus and webpage design, have made their way into print as, for example, in advertisements and flyers (Mautner, 2008: 32). The same can be said of internet jargon appearing on different print media such as blogs and chat rooms which are used with similar meanings and functions to their online uses.

### **3.3.2. Characteristics of web-based news reports as discourse**

Gruber (2008: 54) addresses the question “what distinguishes communicative practices in the new media from those in the ‘old’ media” such as newspapers, radio and TV. While one specific medium may allow different communicative forms, a hypertext, among all new media forms of communication, such as emails, chat, discussion forums, and text messages, stands out as the most distinctive form (Gruber, 2008: 58). However, hypertexts have received little scholarly attention compared, for example, with emails, which represent the most researched form of communication in the new media, e.g. Yates (1996) and Gruber (2008), because it was the first available form of CMC (Gruber, 2008: 61).<sup>6</sup> Gruber (2008), for example, focuses on the linguistic properties of the genre of scholarly email discussion lists.

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<sup>6</sup> Gruber (2008: 61) refers to Computer-mediated discourse analysis CMDA as the “discourse analysis of computer-mediated discourse”.

Although “forms of communication are not necessarily associated with one single medium”, Gruber (2008: 55) argues that the realization of one form of communication often differs from one medium to another allowing for “media-specific variations” of the same communicative form. For example, the written (hyper-)text may be associated with different media, such as a book, a newspaper or electronic media. Gruber points out that a specific form of communication such as a hypertext may be realized within the same medium, in this case the internet, as different genres, depending on the social functions and communicative purpose they serve (Gruber, 2008: 55). For example, hypertexts can be realized as news reports, articles, commentaries as well as recipes, software manual and so forth. A news report featuring on a news outlet website represents the communicative form hypertext and is always embedded in a chain of hyperlinks that connects it to a series of related web pages. Genres, as well, may be realized differently in different media, allowing for media-specific variations of genres (Gruber, 2008: 55). For example, the genre of news reports differs in its stylistic as well as linguistic features between the print media and electronic media.

To employ this classification for the purpose of the present study, this thesis investigates online news reports as one genre representing the communicative form written, monologic, stored hypertext. Online news pages of the two international news outlets Al-Jazeera and the BBC (English versions) provide the news reports of the coverage of the 2006 war between Israel and Hezbollah/Lebanon that constitute the corpus of data for the purpose of analysis.

Holly (as cited in Gruber, 2008: 55) proposes a three-dimensional model for the classification of communicative forms which has recently been elaborated on by Gruber (2008) so as to apply it to the new media. Based on Holly's and Gruber's classification, I list below four dimensions that appear to me to be relevant to online news reports.

**(i) Semiotic mode (communicative modality)**, the first dimension of classification, refers to “the semiotic modalities which are . . . available in the different media and forms of communication” (Gruber, 2008: 56). In most cases, almost all types of modality are evident in a web-based news report, which might incorporate written material with pictorial and audio-visual signs. A related feature of web-based news reports is the interplay between multimodality and intertextuality. For example, intertextual references within the (written) hypertext may take the form of an interactive hyper-link to written, pictorial or audio material.<sup>7</sup> The present study focuses on written material as represented in news reports; other audio-visual modalities are not within the scope of analysis.

**(ii) Degree of intended persistence** refers to Erickson's notion that “most forms of computer-mediated-communication . . . are intended to persist for a longer time period” (cited in Gruber, 2008: 56). Different forms of communication may differ in their intended persistence, i.e. they can be stored for varying times. A web-based news report is intended to persist for a longer time than, for example, a turn in a chat communication or discussion forum (Gruber, 2008: 56). Although Mautner (2005, as

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<sup>7</sup> For further readings on intertextuality – the term was first introduced by poststructuralist Julia Kristeva in 1966 – see Allan, G. (2000) and Fairclough (1992). According to Fairclough (1992), intertextuality might be realized either explicitly or implicitly. In the case of explicit realization, Fairclough (1992: 104) points out that “other texts are explicitly present in the text under analysis; they are ‘manifestly’ marked or cued by features on the surface of the text, such as quotation marks”.

cited in Mautner, 2008: 32) claims that print media is more permanent than most web-based material because of the challenges caused by the “ephemeral” quality of web-based data, one can nonetheless offer an equally acceptable counterclaim. While Mautner’s observation applies well to cases of multi-party communication, such as chat moves and instant messages, where a move is always ephemeral, other communicative forms in the internet such as hypertexts, of which news reports represent a genre, are designed to persist for longer times (Gruber, 2008: 58). It is true that the path to most web-based data, including hypertexts, is often due to expire; however, websites’ archives and the more specialized archive sites offer the chance to retrieve data.

**(iii) Instant update of coverage** represents the third dimension of classification. Unlike most print media which are circulated or distributed on either daily, weekly or monthly bases and cannot be updated once they are distributed, web-based news reports can be updated at any moment (cf. Deuze, 2008: 205). This characteristic feature of online news reports gains the medium increasing audience, particularly in such cases where the audience are always in search for the most recent updates, e.g. news of wars and disasters. The selection of web-based news reports to provide the material is partly motivated by this potential of instant update which allows better coverage in terms of both breadth and depth compared to print media, such as newspapers, which do not enjoy this instant update of news, e.g. update is tied to the 24-hour cycle of daily newspapers.

**(iv) The nature of the targeted audience** is another important criterion of classification. News media organizations’ representations of events can be said to be

largely determined by their conception of the nature of their target audience and their likely opinions, beliefs and values (Allan, 2010: 99). Allan (2010: 103) argues that assumptions about the “implied reader” – also *presumed readership, imagined community of readers, targeted audience* – shape the ways text producers construct and represent the world in their news accounts. Similarities and differences discerned in reporting the same event by different news institutions are thus expected to be a reflection of the presumed audience for each of these news outlets (cf. Allan, 2010: 99; Hall et al., 1978: 61). One dimension of online news production relates to the nature of online audiences as well as their expectations and understandings of news. Due to the widespread availability of the internet as an online news medium – going beyond all the social, temporal or spatial boundaries (cf. Mautner, 2008: 31), it targets an international audience more than the more localized newspapers or broadcast television channels and radio stations. This characterization of the internet as an international news medium, which particularly applies to websites of international news organizations, has many consequences. It implies that the presumed readership is of an international rather than local or national type. This perception, in turn, has an effect on the kind of shared knowledge that is and is not presupposed, what Bell (1998: 86) labels “conflicting indicator of the presumed readership”. Deuze (2008: 208-209) argues that the construction of online news audience serves to shape online journalists’ practices and values as well as the practices of online newsrooms production of news in the direction of maintaining the audience. It should be noted that apart from genre differences, despite their significance, and practical academic preferences, such as accessibility of data, I select the internet for considerations related to the nature of its audience, being an international multicultural audience, and the influence of such audience on the way text producers represent the covered events.

Applying these dimensions to the present study, online news reports, according to Gruber (2008: 58), are “conceptually literal [written], multimodal, monological, one-to-many form of communication with a high degree of intended persistence; that is they are produced to be accessible (yet not unchanged) at least for a certain time” and can also be subjected to instant and continual updating. Online news reports which are produced by international news outlets often target international audience.

### **3.3.3. The internet and war reporting**

Allan (2004: 350, 2010: 210) argues that, backed by high-speed, broadband internet access, online news coverage of the 2003 Iraqi War marks the consolidation of “the internet as a news medium” and of online news as “a primary news source”. The advance in information communication technology with notebook computers, laptops, tablets and mobile phones allowing users to access the web consolidates the internet’s position as a primary news source (Allan, 2010: 210). In addition to online news websites representing electronic versions of already existing print media, such as newspapers, other types of online news including news websites associated with international broadcast news media such as the BBC and Al-Jazeera, “online-only” outlets, news-oriented Weblogs, created by bloggers, gained prominence and attracted massive audience since early 2000s (cf. Allan, 2010: 212; Harcup, 2007: 117).

Weblogs, another genre within electronic news media, rely on material from a diversity of web-based sources. Although lacking the structured approach in news presentation characterizing the more official news outlets, the material on news blogs is constantly double-checked by other users, enhancing the reliability and credibility

of such blogs (Allan, 2004: 356-357, 2010: 212, 214).<sup>8</sup> Occasionally, news organizations, such as MSNBC, have their own weblogs, where the content is constantly double-checked by the news outlet's editors for accuracy. Warblogs, a distinct type of weblogs which found its way to the internet following the 9/11 attacks, have put much emphasis on showing the mainstream media biased coverage of wars and other conflicts.<sup>9</sup> War bloggers on the front line, particularly those working independently, enjoy more freedom of movement than news media reporters who work under the limitations set for them by their organizations (Allan, 2010: 213-215).

News reporters, including war correspondents, can occasionally contribute to more than one news genre, i.e. writing news reporters for their news organizations, writing features for their news media website, while having a mixture of news reporting and personal commentary or opinion on their weblogs (Allan, 2010: 214).<sup>10</sup> These diverse contributions reflect the news reporter's ability to take on various identities, i.e. reporter, commentator or blogger, each exhibiting different stylistic requirements. The news reporter is often aware of such requirements and seeks to meet them.

The present study focuses on websites associated with the international news outlets the BBC and Al-Jazeera. The internet as a news medium, and particularly online news websites, has a number of advantages over other media. First, online news media as one form of alternative media offer to a huge audience from all over the world instant accessibility to instant update coverage, live audio-video reports, interactive maps,

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<sup>8</sup> With Weblogs, news is often presented in a "reverse-chronological order" reflecting the immediacy and constant update of the covered events and sources are explicitly acknowledged with embedded hyperlinks leading to other blogs or news websites (Allan, 2010: 212, 214; cf. Allan, 2004: 356-357).

<sup>9</sup> Allan (2010: 210-216) provides further discussion on warblogs.

<sup>10</sup> A case in point for such news reporters is the CNN correspondent Kevin Sites, according to Allan (2010: 214).

animated graphics and so forth, which has frequently resulted in a higher increase in the level of traffic to online news sites. For example, during the 2003 war in Iraq, news website belonging to different news organizations, as well as news blogs became heavily visited and surfed by users, to the extent that some news websites, such as the BBC News site, have repeatedly crashed as a result of high traffic (Allan, 2004: 350, 2010: 210-211; Manning, 2001: 77).

Second, online news media, as evident in news outlets' online websites, as well as news blogs, has the potential to break the constraints imposed on the more local or national news media by governments and authorities and transgresses the boundaries of the available mainstream news media in each country – as well as the boundaries of the “culture of distancing and othering” that tends to marginalize certain voices and views – by integrating and offering its audience “alternative perspectives, contexts and ideological diversity”, particularly in war reporting (Allan, 2010: 211-212, 217; cf. Allan, 2004: 351, 2005: 78). This diversity of perspectives, available particularly on international news websites such as the BBC, CNN and Al-Jazeera, bridges the wide gap between local/national perspectives and other perspectives from around the world, enabling people “to supplement their understanding of alternative, even opposing points of view”, which results in more and more audiences turning to international news websites, as evident during the 2003 war in Iraq (Allan, 2010: 212). This advantage of online news websites is fostered by another advantage of online news media. Unlike the difficulty of gaining access to mainstream media which faces minority, less powerful or marginalized groups, alternative news media available online allow such groups to speak their thoughts and opinions aloud (cf. Atton, 2002; Harcup, 2007: 139; Manning, 2001: 137).

### 3.3.4. Online news production

With the emergence in the 1990s of the internet as a news media and a reporting tool (what is called Computer-Assisted Reporting (CAR)) scholarly research conducted in the field of media and journalism has shifted towards investigating online journalism and news production practices. However, Deuze (2008: 200) argues that this focus has mostly been devoted to newspapers publishing their news online, whereas less attention has been given to online journalism as a distinctive media form, its particular practices and routines and its relation to the news culture. One line of research involves conducting ethnographic research investigating online news production. Paterson and Domingo (2008: 9) bring together a number of ethnographic studies on online news media production, such as Deuze (2008) and Singer (2008), following considerably varied approaches (e.g. interviews, long-term observations, systematic data gathering and analysis) which share the advantage of in-depth face-to-face contact with news workers and their immediate culture.

Online journalism has often been functionally defined in the light of what the medium itself could possibly allow, i.e. its technological affordances, with “multimodality”, “interactivity” and “hypertextuality” as main characteristics (Deuze, 2008: 201). Certain factors combine to give online news media its character as a professional practice distinct from other news media types. Deuze (2008: 203) refers to the role of “technologies, regulations, industry and organizational structure, occupational careers and markets” as the main factors. Of particular significance to the study of online news is Deuze’s (2008: 205) view of online news work as “the production of constantly changing” or “liquid news”. The online news story is subject to constant updates, editing and changes where news updates, segments of breaking news and

changes to developing stories are continuously introduced to the news institution's site.<sup>11</sup> Such distinct practices in online news, Deuze (2008: 205) claims, are not generally governed by any explicit editorial regulations. The outcome of such online news production practices is a different view of such notions as "what a 'story' is", "how a 'deadline' functions" and "when the news is actually a 'finished' product".

Another aspect of online news, which Deuze (2008) highlights, is its independence or separation organizationally and operationally from the offline news departments within the same news organizations. There exists, according to Deuze (2008: 206-207), a lack of integration or collaboration between online newsrooms and journalists and other journalists within the news organization. It is possible that this distinction is reflected in the final product, i.e. the news they produce. Contrary to Deuze's observation regarding the organizational and operational independence of online newsrooms, Singer (2008: 157-158) argues that all news organizations in the developed world produce content for either a print (newspaper) or broadcast (television) media outlet and an affiliated website, though in rare cases the content generated is meant for three media. "Newsroom convergence" is a term used to describe the appropriation of news content produced for "single-platform journalism", i.e. involving one medium, to "cross-platform journalism", i.e. involving more than one medium. Within these converged newsrooms, journalists are required to cooperate to produce cross-platform content where they have previously been competing for it (Singer, 2008: 158). Singer (2008: 170) also refers to the fact that news organizations have begun to integrate online news with print/broadcast news production.

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<sup>11</sup> Section 3.3.2 identifies instant update of coverage as a characteristic of online news reporting.

### **3.4. Important aspects of news production**

News is the product of a “matrix of institutions” rather than of journalists, editors and reporters’ individual experiences and is simultaneously situated within “particular cultural traditions” that influence the entire process of news production and in the light of which news workers function (Schudson, 1995: 12-13). A large number of studies, such as, such as Allan (2010), Bell (1991), Hanlin (1992), Harcup (2007), Hodgson (1987), Lloyd (2004), MacGregor (1997), Manning (2001), Machin and Niblock (2006), Sanders (2003), Schudson (1995), Tunstall (1971), have focused on exploring different aspects of news media production. The following sections survey some of the studies conducted on news media in an attempt to shed light on some of the most relevant aspects of the process of news production, including the different structures of media ownership and their implications on news media production, media proprietorship and the profit motive, broadcast regulations, journalistic ethics and standards and news values.

#### **3.4.1. Media ownership: commercial broadcast vs. public service broadcast**

A basic distinction in news broadcasting is drawn between commercial broadcasting – also known as “market-driven media system” – and public service broadcasting systems. While commercial broadcasters are often funded or licensed by the state, public service broadcasters are “publicly funded by a licence fee”.<sup>12</sup> While the BBC was the first to adopt the public service model in its 1926 Royal Charter (cf. Harcup 2007: 116; Sanders, 2003: 129), almost all big media institutions, including Al-Jazeera, are owned by a single proprietor or by shareholders. While the BBC

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<sup>12</sup> This distinction corresponds to Sanders’ (2003: 129) differentiation between two basic news media models, namely the “market media model” and the “public service model”.

represents public service/commercial type of broadcasting, Al-Jazeera is categorized as a state-funded/commercial network (cf. Volkmer, 2005: 358).<sup>13</sup>

This distinction based on the source of funding can lead to subsequent differences between the two news media models. For example, with commercial broadcasters, media content – heavily influenced by demands of the market – has the ultimate objective of attracting bigger numbers of audience to satisfy advertisers. By contrast, public service broadcasting is financially dependent on the public and functions for the public rather than serving the interests of advertisers (Sanders, 2003: 129).

Another major difference between the two news media models regards the extent of editorial freedom enjoyed. Although Harcup (2007: 116) argues that commercial broadcast companies resemble public service broadcasting in that they are tightly regulated by codes for broadcasting and editorial guidelines, Sanders (2003: 129) argues that, free from any commitment to media owners or advertisers, public service broadcasting would be expected to enjoy higher levels of freedom and commitment to journalistic ethics.<sup>14</sup>

However, news media organizations, including public service institutions such as the BBC, are also under the constant pressure of meeting market demands. Commercial broadcasting companies' preoccupation with raising profit by ensuring more advertising through gaining a higher audience share has direct implications on the pursuit of ethical journalism. Similarly, public service broadcasting is under the pressure of keeping a place in such a highly competitive market while adhering to

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<sup>13</sup> While the BBC public service is funded by a licence fee, BBC World Service offers services that are funded by commercial income for BBC World (see section 2.3.2).

<sup>14</sup> Sanders (2003: 133-135) offers further discussion on owners-editors relation and advertisers' pressure.

ethical journalism. Fierce competition in such a demanding market might lead journalists to abandon their commitment to journalistic values in favour of market demands, which might lead to the “dumbing down” of news journalism (cf. Manning, 2001: 65-66; Sanders, 2003: 128-129).

Similar pressures, but this time from the government rather than the market, are constantly exerted on commercial as well as public service broadcasting. For example, while Harcup (2007: 116) argues that the BBC “operates at arm’s length from government”, Barnett (2005: 331) argues that a “publicly funded institution” such as the BBC is more suitable to “government attempts at lobbying and bullying” than market-driven and commercial organizations.

### **3.4.2. Media proprietors**

A considerable amount of research in news media, such as Allan (2010), Chomsky and Herman (1988), Hanlin (1992), Lloyd, J. (2004), Manning (2001), Schudson (1995), has studied the influences of media owners and the pursuit of profit on the production of news media, editorial freedom and the media commitment to journalistic values. Manning (2001: 81-86) characterizes the networks of power that affect, but also organize news production, as involving “interconnections” among journalists/editors, media proprietors and political elites. On the one hand, power can take the shape of intentional action – either through coercion or persuasion – to have others comply with one’s objectives and demands. Media proprietors through their ownership power can intentionally direct or control editors and the political elites. For example, Allan (2010: 24) sheds light on the influence media owners may exert on the routines of everyday media culture within their institutions. Of particular importance

is the issue of journalistic ethics. In exemplifying the influence and control of media owners on news content, Allan names Rupert Murdoch, the owner of Fox News.<sup>15</sup>

However, Manning (2001: 82) argues that another form of power is exerted by “the structures that place constraints upon proprietors, corporations, editors, journalists and politicians alike”. For example, while proprietors and editors may have their own views and ways as regards news production – selection and presentation of news – they are often governed by the dependence of news media on advertising. News organizations, Manning (2001: 82) argues, are aware of and operate within the limitations and imperatives of both the political and economic environment they are located in. Holding the same view, Schudson (1995: 4), focusing on the American version of news, argues that “the profit motive” could be seen as the main source of weakness in American journalism – something that equally applies to similar forms of journalism worldwide – emphasizing that a free press seems to be less plausible when specific people (e.g. the elite) in a society run it.

- Hanlin (1992) highlights the adverse influence of proprietors’ pressure and the market demands on both editorial independence and ethical journalism. Hanlin (1992: 45) argues that media owners allow editorial independence in matters of content and style rather than in “strategic decisions and political alignment or major issues” where the proprietor has the final say. Although journalists and reporters possess their own values, opinions and beliefs, which might not be in agreement with the news institutions policy whether from political, ideological or ethical perspectives, this discrepancy, according to Hanlin, could hardly find its way down to the news report

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<sup>15</sup> Hanlin (1992: 39-42) discusses Rupert Murdoch as an example of editors-proprietors disputes in quality press.

within normal newsroom routines and practices. First, there is the safeguarding editorial practices of the selection of stories to be covered while marginalizing others and assigning certain stories to particular journalists. Second, news reporters' stories often undergo processes of collation and rewriting by editors during which "political edges can be smoothed, new 'facts' inserted, the angle of the story subtly changed" (Hanlin, 1992: 45, cf. Schudson, 1995: 6). For example, concerning news selection, Schudson (1995: 14) argues that while news stories typically need to answer the five journalistic questions about the main event or action, processes of inclusion and exclusion, or "presences" and "absences", are often involved in the selection of what becomes news, e.g. "what categories of people count as 'who' . . . and what counts as an explanation of 'why' ". These practices of newsrooms, among others, are meant, according to Hanlin (1992: 45), to "ensure that the political line decided by the proprietor or the representational angle determined by the editor can be imparted without direct instruction". However, Schudson (1995: 4) argues that such practices over news media content are often a response to market demands. He emphasizes that the claim that news media content is often determined by those who possess political power or is a reflection of the political views and interests of media owners in "liberal societies" neglects and underestimates any distinctions made between such societies and the press and media in "state-run one party systems" (Schudson, 1995: 6-7). Similarly, Manning (2001: 13-14) argues that processes of news production, including news selection and presentation, are subject to the criteria of audience ratings and subscriptions rather than to media owners' interests.

### 3.4.3. Broadcast regulations: codes of conduct and editorial guidelines

While commercial broadcast companies are funded by the state or corporate tycoons and public service broadcasters are funded by the public, both media styles are regulated by codes for broadcasting as well as editorial guidelines (Harcup, 2007: 116). In counterattacking the outcomes of the takeover of media institutions by corporate tycoons as well as the pressures exerted by governments on media institutions, a number of movements and committees have been formed to secure the media freedom against the big commercial players (Harcup, 2007: 143). Examples are the Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom (CPBF) in the UK and Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR) in the US.<sup>16</sup>

In the UK both commercial and public service broadcast are closely and strictly regulated by regulatory codes such as those of the government's Office of Communication (Ofcom) for commercial broadcasters and the BBC's editorial guidelines (Harcup, 2007: 2). Such regulatory codes for broadcasting, Harcup (2007: 116-117) argues, have prompted a sort of news which is politically impartial. For example, the Ofcom broadcasting code, first adopted in July 2005, emphasizes that news "must be reported with due accuracy and presented with due impartiality".<sup>17</sup> While *impartiality* is defined as "not favouring one side over another", *due* – which is defined by the Ofcom code as "adequate or appropriate" to the nature and subject of the programme – adds a practical or contextualized view of impartiality that takes into consideration factors such as the nature of the topic, possible expectations of the audience, rather than allotting equal coverage to opposing views or representing every

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<sup>16</sup> However, Schudson (1995: 182-183), arguing that even such bodies are occasionally positioned, points out that while Accuracy in Media (AIM) is established in 1969 with the ultimate purpose of pointing out all sorts of left-wing bias, the shift to the right which emerged in the US press during the 1980s prompted the establishing of FAIR, which is the left-wing counterpart to AIM.

<sup>17</sup> For a further discussion on this code, see Ofcom website [www.ofcom.org.uk](http://www.ofcom.org.uk)

side of every argument. The code also stresses that with factual genres of news, “material” facts should not be presented or omitted in such way that could be unfair to any individual or organization (cf. Harcup, 2007: 164-166). The above practical view can also be seen in the BBC editorial guidelines as regards accuracy. While accuracy is perceived as more important than immediacy, the guidelines stress that it should not be limited to “getting the facts right”, rather facts should be “weighted” (cf. Harcup, 2007: 171).<sup>18</sup>

Other regulatory codes include the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) codes for international journalists to which media organizations belonging to over 100 countries are affiliated, the National Union of Journalists (NUJ) code of conduct and the Press Complaints Commission (PCC) code of practice (cf. Harcup, 2007). These codes of conduct lay particular emphasis on a number of professional and ethical standards that journalists should closely follow in the practice of journalism.<sup>19</sup> While these codes of practice emphasize “fair reporting”, “the separation of facts from comment and conjecture”, accuracy and reporting “in accordance with facts of which [the journalist] know the origin” (IFJ), they simultaneously stress that journalists should seek to avoid misleading reporting. Misleading reporting may result from the “distortion, selection or misrepresentation” (NUJ) of information, discriminatory reporting “based on, among other things, . . . political or other opinions” (IFJ), which equally applies to all news media, including online versions (cf. Harcup, 2007: 149-158).

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<sup>18</sup> For a further discussion on the BBC editorial guidelines, see [www.bbc.co.uk/editorialguidelines](http://www.bbc.co.uk/editorialguidelines)

<sup>19</sup> See [www.ifj.org](http://www.ifj.org); [www.nuj.org.uk](http://www.nuj.org.uk); [www.pcc.org.uk](http://www.pcc.org.uk)

#### 3.4.4. Journalistic ethics

One line of inquiry within journalism and media studies, such as Belsey and Chadwick (1992), Edgar (1992), Frost (2000), Harcup (2007), Keeble (2001), Tuchman (1972), Tumber, H. (2004) and Sanders (2003), has focused on tackling the issues of ethical journalism and media ethics from different perspectives. While the postmodern view stresses that “there is no world facts just our construction of them” (Sanders, 2003: 41), there is also the view that journalists “in their news-gathering work continue to be impressed by the apparent superiority of ‘factual knowledge’ which seems uncontaminated by values”. According to Manning (2001: 68), this emphasizes the widely-accepted journalist tradition that distinguishes *facts* from *values*. On the other hand, Schudson (1995), while acknowledging that reporters occasionally possess a “strong political framework” that affects their view of events and actions, they are committed to such journalistic ethics as fair and objective reporting (Schudson, 1995: 4).<sup>20</sup> Rather than being partisans, journalists view themselves as professionals who seek to maintain journalistic and professional ethics at the expense of satisfying their “political passions” (Schudson, 1995: 7).

As outlined earlier in chapter one, news reporters, in an attempt to produce truthful accounts of their reporting of facts, closely adhere to certain practices that could potentially ensure a higher degree of truthfulness in reporting. Sanders (2003: 41) summarizes these journalistic practices as “the striving for accuracy”, “the search for objectivity” and “the removal of bias through getting both sides of the story”. Accuracy, which is one of journalism’s Ten Commandments, is concerned with “getting the facts right, getting to the truth of the matter” (Sanders, 2003: 42). The

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<sup>20</sup> Schudson was specifically referring to the case of the New York Times, in response to Noam Chomsky’s and Edward Herman’s (1988) criticism of the newspaper.

practices of checking sources, attributing information, providing details about people, and the like should be performed accurately to ensure a news story's credibility (Sanders, 2003: 43). The following section will focus on journalistic values, particularly the value of objectivity, as it has been the focus of much heated discussion, particularly in wartime (see section 3.5.1).

#### **3.4.4.1. Objectivity, impartiality and balance<sup>21</sup>**

Situating it within its historical evolution, Allan (2010: 44-45) claims that objective, non-biased news reporting has become institutionalized throughout the 1920s in both American and British journalism as manifest in a number of developments such as moving “interpretative reporting” from hard news sections to political columns, more reliance on quotation marks when attributing sources, and giving more prominence to the by-lined news account.

Objectivity in journalism, according to Schudson (1995: 141), puts constraints on “overt expression of personal impressions” in news reporting and emphasizes the representation of “facts free from partisan values” (Allan, 2010: 45). Objectivity is simultaneously one of the values of journalistic practice that emphasizes “impartiality and even-handedness [i.e. fairness]” in the reporting of news (Sanders, 2003: 42). Impartiality as part of sound journalistic practice necessitates that “news reporters should be free from opinion or bias of any kind”<sup>22</sup> (cf. Allan, 2010: 44). However, Allan points out that “such a commitment to ‘value-free’ reporting has often faced many difficulties when put into practice” (Allan, 2010: 44).

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<sup>21</sup> A detailed discussion of journalistic values, particularly objectivity, is provided in section 1.2.

<sup>22</sup> This requirement is part of the “Canons of Journalism” announced in the year 1923 by the American Society of Newspaper Editors.

Objectivity has been the focus of criticism on many grounds. Most important is the view that objectivity and impartiality in news reporting promote “the idea of morally neutral journalism” that requires the journalist or reporter to present a balanced view under the pretext of being impartial (Sanders, 2003: 43). Reese (2004: 255) argues that this “false balance” could manifest itself in such practices as “neutralizing” or “mitigating” certain attitudes, claims or representations by unduly and unnecessarily juxtaposing them with opposing ones. It is in this sense, Schudson (1995: 9) claims, that “the quest for objectivity itself” introduces bias, a view which has other proponents such as Tuchman (1972, 1987). Objective reporting does not necessarily entail adopting “absolute neutrality”, rather objectivity requires “removing the distorting effect of prejudice . . . ensuring that full and fair accounts are given of events” (Sanders, 2003: 42).

The definition of journalistic objectivity as “representing things as they really are . . . without subjective comment”, i.e. as the production of value-free accounts of reality, has also been the subject of critique as being practically “inapplicable”, on the following grounds. This definition of objectivity “fails to take account of the interpretative procedures inherent to journalism”, where a news report often picks on one aspect or interpretation of the range of possible ones an event offers. This definition also neglects the influences of the processes involved in the making of news as well as practical limitations imposed by the act of reporting itself (Edgar, 1992: 112-113; cf. Manning, 2001: 68; Tumber, 2004: 201). On these grounds, Edgar (1992: 120) claims that “journalism cannot be objective, for that presupposes that an inviolable interpretation of the event as actions exists prior to the report”. A news reporter’s choice of an interpretation of a specific event could in this sense be said to

be biased (Edgar, 1992: 120). Along the same line, Manning (2001: 61, 68) argues that objectivity perceived as the production of value-free accounts of reality in a detached way neglects organizational pressures such as meeting deadlines (immediacy), available space, to be the first among rivals and the influence of news sources. Such pressures necessarily pose constraints on the reporter's ability to "report the whole known truth" and necessarily involve making selections about what news to include and the way it is presented, according to Bourdieu (as cited in Tumber, 2004: 201). It is professionalism itself, i.e. news routines and institutions, according to Schudson (1995: 9), regardless of who runs the media or any individual reporter's stance, that introduces bias to news media.

While acknowledging that the act of reporting news essentially involves interpreting reality and this process of interpretation is necessarily performed in the light of a set of assumptions, beliefs and views whether personal or part of shared background knowledge, Sanders (2003: 43-44) maintains that "subjectivity is not antithetical to truthfulness" when the journalist balances and counteracts it by journalistic standards, including objectivity and accuracy, otherwise subjective interpretations might compromise a news report's truthfulness. Freedom of the press should not thus be viewed as absolute or unconditioned, as manifested in such practices as publishing rumours, inventing stories, hiding facts, suppressing opinions and faking sources. It should be conditioned by the extent to which the press "promotes certain core values" (Sanders, 2003: 69).

Another criticism directed at journalistic objectivity is that while offering news media audience fair and accurate information is established as one of news media set

objectives, journalists are also required, as an essential part of their work, to facilitate audience understanding and perception. This requirement is particularly applicable with certain fields such as politics, by interpreting and analysing information, which, according to Schudson (1995: 28-29, 56), is contrary to the professional goal of objectivity.

The journalistic values of objectivity and impartiality are better viewed, Manning argues, as involving “a set of practices that journalists can *defend* as objective” or as a set of rules that offer journalists guidance in their occupational practices (Manning, 2001: 68; Tuchman, 1972; Tumber, 2004: 201). Objectivity can thus be seen as describing a set of journalistic procedures or rules that journalists attempt to apply or follow to enable them to defend their practices against potential criticism. Such safeguarding techniques include verifying facts while separating them from personal views and analysis, introducing different sides’ versions of reality or conflicting views, and balancing one side’s view/account against those of competing sides by offering sufficient supporting evidence for each. They also include attributing information to their sources, using direct quotes to distinguish the journalist’s *detached* account from the source’s account and the placing of the most important material at the beginning of a news story (Tuchman, 1972: 665-671; Tumber, 2004: 201).

### **3.4.5. News values**

A large number of critical studies focusing on news production have investigated the culture of everyday routine activities of journalists within their news institutions. One line of research, e.g. Bell (1991: 155-160), Fowler (1991), Hall (1981), Harcup (2007:

49-66), Hartley (1982), Manning (2001: 60-64), Machin and Niblock (2006: 46-67), Tuchman (1978), and van Dijk (1988: 119-124), has focused on the ways in which the practices that justify and motivate the selection of certain types of events to constitute news, i.e. determine their “newsworthiness”, reflect and are shaped by certain “news values”, i.e. the ways in which such news values form part of the journalistic practices of news production. Particular attention has been given to the ways values and norms of reporting news reflect the “ideological character” of news and underlie the construction of news that claims to be truthful, impartial or objective representation of reality (Allan, 2010: 71).

The concept of *news values* is of great importance to the understanding of news media. Each moment there are an overwhelming number of events happening all over the world; however, only a few of these events appear in the media, i.e. become news. So, news is not out there ready to be reported, rather reporters are all the time in search for events which are newsworthy. For an event to be newsworthy, it has to meet a set of criteria called *news values*. News values represent a chain of selection criteria which lies between events and their appearing, or not appearing, in the news, i.e. they represent a set of factors which makes it more likely for events to be considered newsworthy. These factors, according to Fowler (1991: 12-16), are both socially constructed and “culturally-bound”. These values “are not neutral, but reflect ideologies and priorities held in society” (Bell, 1991: 156). In other words, the selection process is governed by several socio-political, economic and cultural structures which are realized through institutional practices (Mautner, 2008: 33). The selection of certain events, among the bigger number of events which are not reported,

for inclusion in news reports has the immediate effect of shaping people's view of the world (Fowler, 1991: 11).

The concepts of *newsworthiness* and *news values* as well as the initial set of news values, first proposed by Johann Galtung and Mari Ruge (1965), have been further explored, revisited and modified by several researchers. The claims a story makes to be newsworthy might be seen in the *negativity* of its content, in the presence of *conflict*, together with *involvement of elite news actors*, *reduction of ambiguity*, and possibly enhanced *immediacy* (Bell, 1998: 93; cf. Machin and Niblock, 2006: 48-50). Other selection criteria for newsworthiness are *threshold* (referring to the “‘size’ or ‘volume’ needed for an event to become newsworthy”), *unexpectedness* (“an event is even more newsworthy if it happens without warning and/or is unusual”) and *personalization* (reference to people) (Fowler, 1991: 14). In conformity with the news values of *hierarchy* and *nature of sources*, a news source has to be an authoritative one (Bell, 1991: 191). An “accessed voice” normally belongs to well-established, organized institutions, e.g. government representatives, royals, civil servants, etc. (Fowler, 1991: 22).

News values can also be seen as “inter-subjective mental categories” or “stereotypes” making it easier for text producers and their audience to sort and, thereby, comprehend events and individuals (Fowler, 1991: 17). News media and their audience decide on the relative significance of events by making reference, often implicit, to stereotypes. A *stereotype*, according to Fowler (1991: 17), is a socially-constructed mental category.<sup>23</sup> Stereotypical categories are projected on to the world

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<sup>23</sup> Stereotypes are alternatively called in cognitive linguistics and in semantics *schemata*, *frames* and *paradigms*; *stereotypes* is the term preferred by Fowler.

by both news media and people and fitting into a stereotypical category is a factor contributing to the newsworthiness of an event. “The occurrence of a striking event will reinforce a stereotype”, Fowler (1991: 17) claims, “and, reciprocally, the firmer the stereotype, the more likely are relevant events to become news”.

News values can equally be considered as a set of biases that determine the selection and presentation of what might be classified as newsworthy. For example, because the presence of *negativity* (i.e. bad news) and *conflict* could draw to news media, which are essentially money-making business, large audience and hence advertisers, the news media are often biased towards negative news that also include an element of conflict. Stenvall (2011) argues that different representational strategies could enhance negativity such as using negative intensifying lexis. News media have also a bias towards *the narrative structure of stories*. This means that news is represented in terms of stories that have a plot and involve heroes (protagonist) and villains (antagonists). News media, resembling good storytelling, will often seek to create drama through, for example, controversy. This might involve introducing opposing and conflicting points of view into the story so as to create conflict between the sides of a news story. News media, therefore, frequently employ *master narratives*, i.e. a set storyline involving conventional characters who act in a typical or predictable way. These master narratives represent only certain ways of perceiving events as well as involved participants (cf. Media and political bias, n.d.). This last observation is very important when analyzing the representation of actions and their attendant participants, particularly recurrent patterns of representation.

News values should not be seen as a check-list of features, i.e. guidelines, which is referred to, consciously or not, in order to decide whether or not to report an event (selection); they are rather features of representation, i.e. an event can only be selected if it can be fitted into a certain representation, and so selection involves an ideological act of interpretation (Fowler, 1991: 19). A number of journalistic techniques are employed in order to reshape events so as to meet the set of criteria that determine newsworthiness. Gudmund Hernes, quoted by Nordlund (2003: 8), has proposed a set of techniques which includes, among others, “sharpening”, i.e. the summing up and selection of what angle to use, “concretisation” involving avoidance of abstractions and favouring the specific at the expense of the general, “polarization” where opposites are favoured, “intensification” where conflicts are favoured, and “personification” where events are being described from the point of view of an individual, often with an unusual or interesting quality. When these techniques are applied, they result in a transformation of the account of the reported event; hence the reader is introduced to a representation of the world. Nordlund adds three more strategies used to hide the truth including “concealment”, i.e. withholding relevant information, “distortion” involving various degrees of manipulation of facts by, for example, exaggeration, minimization or equivocation, and “falsification” involving presenting untrue facts.

Judged in the light of its newsworthiness, the Israel-Hezbollah/Lebanon 2006 war, one might argue, can score high in most of Galtung and Ruge’s news values. One might suggest that this event could be highly newsworthy as it satisfies many news values. It represents an extremely negative sudden event of great intensity, a superpower conflict (mainly involving Israel and Lebanon, but indirectly involving the USA, Iran,

Syria and most of the Middle-East countries). It also continued to hit the headlines and stayed in the news for about two months. In addition, the 2006 war involved an elite nation (in this case Israel and its major ally the United States) and a well-publicized leader (in this case Hassan Nasrallah). The Israel-Hezbollah/Lebanon 2006 war is also highly relevant to supreme powers because of the sensitivity of Arab-Israel relationship and its effects on many crucial aspects of world politics and economy.

The above sections discuss some aspects of news media production that are important for an understanding of the context of production of news within which journalists and reporters write news texts. Media proprietors' control and the pressures imposed on news media by market demands, discussed above, often influence and shape news media coverage of events, in particular the selection of what to be reported and how it is represented. Particular attention is given to the two main models of media, namely, public service broadcasting and commercial or state-funded broadcasting represented in this study by the BBC and Al-Jazeera respectively. This difference in the way the selected news outlets are run and funded might conceivably influence their editorial independence and their reporting. The above discussion also highlights broadcast regulations and journalistic values such as objectivity and impartiality. Such regulations and values may also shape and affect the reporting process in ways discussed above. The discussion of news values shows their role in the selection of particular events and actions to become news.

### **3.5. Reporting of wars**

A very large body of literature has been produced on news media reporting of conflicts and wars, including Allan and Matheson (2009), Allan and Zelizer (2004), Chouliaraki, (2007, 2009), Hodges and Nilep, (2007), Knightly (1991, 2000), Mclaughlin (2002), Sonwalkar (2004), Taylor (1998), Thussu and Freedman (2003), Tumber and Webster (2006), and William (1992). This large body of literature produced on war reporting covers a broad range of topics; however, the review provided in this section focuses on certain themes that are important for understanding the contextual factors that affect reporting of wars, with particular reference to wars in the Middle East.

The following sections focus on a number of issues that are important to understand reporting of war. It is relevant to examine governmental and military control exercised over war reporters in order to show how such control may affect and shape the process of reporting a war. The issues of journalistic objectivity and the production of accounts of war that follow the principles of fair and accurate journalism are looked at in detail in order to indicate the sort of tension that underlies these issues in wartime. Particular attention is given to those factors that may result in undermining these journalistic ethics, whether personal as emotional involvement in war reporting, institutional as media owners and editorial pressures, or social as considerations of audience interests and expectations. The last section (3.5.2) focuses on a number of studies that investigate the reporting of wars in the Middle East, as a means to situate the present study within its context and gain insight into war reporting in the region.

War reporting, according to Allan (2010: 195-196), represents an example of the “mediation of distant conflict”, where the flow of news stories of war calamities, violence, suffering could only be done through war correspondents who are “confronted with the challenge of bearing witness to these horrors on our behalf”. In this sense, the process of representing war and its disturbing events, Allan (2010: 196) argues, is “partly constitutive of . . . reality”. Allan (2010: 196-7) highlights what he termed, “the process of journalistic ‘Othering’ ”, which involves the projection of a sense of “we” that could be “explicitly or tacitly mobilized in opposition to a ‘them’ ”. While Allan’s focus is mainly the coverage of news concerned with a particular nation by journalists reporting to this nation, this journalistic othering may also be traced in the reporting by international news media where the mobilization of *we* extends to include *our friends* and of *them* to include *their friends*, which itself could be seen from the perspective of a journalist who is not belonging to *we* but to a political system that is a friend of *we*.

One important aspect of war coverage is the control exercised by governments and the military over news organizations and journalists covering wars. Allan (2010: 198) points out the strategies employed by the British officials during the Falklands War between Argentina and Britain in 1982 to ensure that the war is reported in ways that could gain the public opinion. The British in the Falklands War learnt the lesson from the case of the Vietnamese war where American correspondents covering the war are frequently seen as insinuating opposition to the war by their criticism of the ways the US military viewed and dealt with the Vietnamese (cf. William, 1992: 158-160). These strategies employed by the British government include the selection, mobilization and monitoring of reporters. Examples of such practices include limiting

journalists' access to the fighting, in which case they could only heavily rely on official sources as the only source of information. Other strategies involved denying journalists satellite connections, giving them misleading information, constantly threatening them of pulling them out of the battle field (Allan, 2010: 198-199; cf. Richardson, 2007:180-181). These strategies enabled the government to direct people towards a representation of the war as being between "good us" and the "bad/evil them" (Allan, 2010: 199). For example, in most British newspapers' coverage, particularly in the front page headlines, of the Falklands War, the jargon used to describe the Argentine people was highly derogative and hostile. Against this hostile background, the BBC's patriotic stance was seen by many critics as being "defeatist" and "pro-enemy" (Allan, 2010: 200). Cumings (as cited in Allan, 2010: 200-201) argues that reporting the war "became an instrument of the war itself" where "the transparent, objective immediacy of the all-seeing eye" was replaced by "a radical distanced, technically controlled" coverage.

### **3.5.1. War reporting and the issue of objectivity**

Whereas the earlier discussion of objectivity (see section 3.4.4.1) as a basic journalistic standard or value demonstrates opposing views and much criticism on different grounds, during wartime the principles of objectivity and detachment raise even more debate. War corresponding represents one of those media areas where freedom of the media is constantly challenged (Sanders, 2003: 69). In times of conflict, such as in wartime, reporters function under the temptation and/or pressure to abandon their commitment to "truthfulness" because of personal, institutional or governmental factors (Sanders, 2003: 44), where the outcome could be undermining objective reporting. For example, Sonwalkar (2004: 221) suggests that in war

reporting the correspondent is constantly acting under the influence of two forces – which are often in tension – the socio-cultural background of the journalist on the one hand, and the journalistic values of objectivity, impartiality and fairness on the other. For example, questions as regards who the affected entities – “we” or “they” – are often significant for the coverage of wars and conflicts (Sonwalkar, 2004: 221). Similarly, during wartime, Allan (2010: 197) argues, an objective stance in news reporting often gives way to a patriotic stance. War reporters who follow or adopt a detached dispassionate stance are often accused of being less patriotic or of lacking a nationalistic interest (Tumber, 2004: 201).

Particularly important are the restrictions governments and the military impose on war reporting arguably to safeguard national security during wartime (cf. Sanders, 2003: 69; William, 1992: 167). A source of much controversy and the focus of a large number of studies, such as Knightly (2000) and Sanders (2003), has been the choices journalists during wartime have to make between “unsanitized” and “sanitized” approaches to reporting. While an unsanitized approach would encourage reporting on casualties and highlighting the risks of wars to uncover the truth about wars, a sanitized approach would conceal casualties and war risks in general under such pretexts as avoiding doing harm to the public – or occasionally to governments (Knightly, 2000: 494; Sanders, 2003: 70). The sanitized view, which is occasionally accepted by reporters and editors themselves, would potentially affect the credibility and truthfulness of the report (Sanders, 2003: 70). However, it is arguable whether this sanitization process equally applies to conflicts that do not involve journalists’ own nations. Sanders (2003: 98-99) draws attention to the discrepancy in the reporting of casualties, suffering, pain and agony in wars involving journalists’ countries or other

places or lands, where reporters enjoy more freedom to report on casualties and suffering in wars involving remote people and lands from the journalist's.

Objectivity as involving balanced reporting and impartiality would arguably become meaningless and a far-fetched ideal in circumstances where the news correspondent witnesses the deaths and suffering of people, among other war calamities, while required to report on such horrors objectively. Tumber (2004: 202-203) argues that war correspondents occasionally feel uncertain and confused in such circumstances where they have to make a choice between adhering closely to journalistic objectivity, i.e. acting as mere "observers", and becoming emotionally involved in their reporting, i.e. acting as "participants". Sanders (2003: 99) argues that in such cases a purely factual report would seem "inhuman" for a "morally-engaged" reporter and objectivity should become secondary to fairness. James Cameron, a journalist who reported on the Vietnam War, highlighted one such case where the government-promoted racist tone in reporting the Vietnam War dominated the American media. This tone led to judging a journalist's anti-war view, for example, that in Vietnam there exist human beings, as "non-objective" (as cited in Allan, 2010: 197). Hence, objective reporting could "make acceptable something which in reality was quite unacceptable", as noted by another war correspondent (as cited in Allan, 2010: 197; cf. Chouliaraki, 2009). However, Tumber (2004: 201) claims that war correspondents who get involved emotionally in reporting while covering the human dimension of wars – what is called "journalism of attachment" – has equally been criticized for allowing opinionated, possibly inadequate and "moralizing" reporting of conflicts (cf. McLaughlin, 2002).

On the other hand, Tumber and Webster (2006: 172) argue that far from being manipulated by the military or officials, frontline correspondents often adhere to the tenet of objective reporting and “telling it like it is” with “immediacy” in communicating with their news institutions. This view seems to contradict Tumber’s (2004: 201-2) earlier comment that during wartime journalists’ commitments are often divided between the journalistic values of objectivity and impartiality and the military who protects them while performing their work. Apart from these views, even if one concedes to the view that a war reporter would subdue to military control or adopt media owners’ views, the diverse nature of frontline journalists as a group, the variation in the news they report in terms of quality and the immense quantity of information news organizations receive from them mean that the “finished . . . news report may be quite at odds with any single journalist’s report”, according to Tumber and Webster (2006: 172).

In their study of the journalism of conflict, El-Nawawy and Iskandar (2004: 315), focusing on Al-Jazeera’s coverage of the Iraq War, discuss the network’s approach to Journalism and war coverage, with particular emphasis on “editorial decision-making” and “network responsibilities to audience” as relevant but contested forces in war coverage. El-Nawawy and Iskandar (2004) view the journalistic ethic of objectivity as “the adoption of a position of detachment, rather than neutrality” in reporting. While El-Nawawy and Iskandar (2004: 320) argue that this position adopted by media institutions and affiliated journalists and reporters is characterized by “the absence of subjectivity, personalized involvement, and judgement”, media audiences, on the other hand, are necessarily “contextualized”; they are opinionated and partial. This contextualization, according to the authors, could offer “a corrective to some of the

limitations inherent in the notion of objectivity” and media institutions pursuit of this ideal (El-Nawawy and Iskandar, 2004: 320).

El-Nawawy and Iskandar (2003: 54) argues that the concept of “contextual objectivity” signals the necessity of news media to present news stories in a way that is “impartial yet sensitive to local sensibilities”. The media in their coverage and representation of news attempt to balance and resolve the tension between “objective coverage” – or the non-partisan decontextualized balanced media message – and “audience appeal”, i.e. reflecting the opinionated coloured perceptions and views of media audiences (El-Nawawy and Iskandar, 2004: 321). They add “networks cannot be devoid of perspectives, a perspective that produces and reflects context” (El-Nawawy and Iskandar, 2004: 331). This dual view reflects both the constitutive and constituted nature of the media. Contextual objectivity can be seen as a concept that seeks a balance between two forces, context and objectivity where the intermediate pivotal idea can be seen as fairness and balance (El-Nawawy and Iskandar, 2004: 321). Since the concept of contextual objectivity relates to a particular context of perception, i.e. particular audience, it follows then that what contextually appropriate for a particular audience could be contextually objectionable to a different audience (El-Nawawy and Iskandar, 2004: 326).

While the concept of contextual objectivity could well apply to the Arabic version of Al-Jazeera whose target or presumed audience is basically Arabs, the concept could be contested in the case of Al-Jazeera’s English version website which targets international rather than regional or local audience. For example, the term *martyrs* which is used in reference to the Iraqi civilians killed during the war in Al-Jazeera

reports, according to El-Nawawy and Iskandar (2004: 331), was rarely found in the Al-Jazeera English version reports of the 2006 war in reference to civilian Lebanese casualties. El-Nawawy and Iskandar's study (2004: 320) demonstrates the ways in which media coverage of all the sides of a story, even-handedness or balanced reporting, particularly in times of war, are further complicated and confused if we considered the context within which reporters operate and which shapes the process of reporting. The following section sheds light on such tensions in war reporting in the Middle East region, where the events and actions of the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah/Lebanon war took place.

### **3.5.2. Reporting of wars in the Middle East**

Much of the literature on war reporting has paid attention to reporting of wars in the Middle East, such as Allan (2004, 2010), El-Nawawy and Iskandar (2003, 2004), Miles (2005), Reese (2004), Tumber (2005) and Tumber and Palmer (2004). For example, taking the case of the 2003 Iraqi war, Allan (2004: 348) discusses the internet as a news medium with particular emphasis on Al-Jazeera's online reporting during the war.

One important dimension of war reporting is its potential to shape public opinion through propaganda. The focus of a large number of studies is to explore the ways in which both sides of the 1991 Gulf War, the allied coalition and the Iraqi government, attempted to influence public opinion by utilizing, manipulating and influencing the media representation of the war through propaganda and persuasion. Knightly (as cited in Allan, 2010: 201; cf. El-Nawawy and Iskandar, 2004) argues that news media coverage of the 1991 Gulf War represents an example of how the officials can exploit

the media to “alter public perception of the nature of war itself”. In the British press, Allan (2010) comments, a racially-based “us and them” reinforced by the government resulted in fostering certain descriptive terms. For example, while the Iraqi have a *war machine*, they *kill* and *destroy*, launch *sneak missiles attacks* that cause *civilian casualties*, the British have *army, navy and air force* that *suppress* and *neutralize* and they launch *pre-emptively* causing *collateral damage* (Allan, 2010: 201-203). The absence of any specification as regards the number of Iraqi casualties was due to the military not allowing such figures to be made public. Official control over media coverage of the war, according to Allan (2010: 201), can also be seen in military language that infiltrated journalism with *soft targets* and *collateral damage* replacing *cities* and *civilian casualties*, and the “depersonalization” of Iraqi people by naming the slaughtered Iraqi people *animals* and *beasts*. Allan’s (2010) study provides ample evidence of the ways in which media language is shaped by government and military propaganda and control. The study demonstrates the way in which detailed analysis of the language of news media coverage of wars can tell us a lot about the ideologies that shape and affect war reporting.

Along the same lines, Taylor (1998) explores the ways in which both sides of the 1991 Gulf War, the allied coalition and the Iraqi government, attempted to influence public opinion by utilizing, manipulating and influencing the media representation of the war through propaganda and persuasion. However, the importance of Taylor’s study lies in the fact that it raises a number of considerations that should be accounted for when studying propaganda, particularly in wartime, where the thin line between propaganda and information is frequently confused and obscured. One such consideration concerns the extent to which the military and authorities control and monitor the flow

of information to ensure that the war is covered in accordance with their view and from their own perspective (Taylor, 1998: vii).

Government and military control exercised over war correspondents in their coverage of war events has been the focus of much scholarly research. The 1991 Iraqi war demonstrated the ways in which international news organizations and communication systems can be controlled and manipulated by those in power – in this case the American-led coalition – to disseminate their views and representations of what is happening. During the war the domination of the “international flow of news” by Anglo-American news organizations, which themselves were highly controlled by the military and governments, demonstrates, according to Taylor (1998: 266), both the “information and cultural hegemony” of powerful countries. Moreover, to guarantee that the public are exposed to only the version of the powerful during wartimes, military force is employed to silence enemies’ media and communication systems to ensure information as well as military supremacy (Taylor, 1998: 267). The high degree of control of information sources by the military during wartime makes it essential for correspondents to rely on the military as the principle source of information. The outcome of this dependence could potentially be reporting which reflects the official views or at least be uncritical of them (Taylor, 1998: 267-268; cf. Richardson, 2007: 194-195). Even in those cases where reporters show degrees of restraint towards such cooperation, the source of information – the military – is still the same.

One form of military control, which was employed during the 1991 Iraqi war, is the *pool system*. During the 1991 Iraqi war, the news pool system was tightly controlled

by a pre-censorship system that controls the material “pooled” before it is distributed more widely, although Taylor (1998) argues that censorship was more of information – partly related to “operational security” – rather than of views. Although views – which are more of a concern for the military – are more difficult to control anyway by the military, they are often dependent on the free flow of news and are restricted by imposing censorship on information flow (Taylor, 1998: 269). Although Taylor’s study paid very little attention to the media coverage of the war – particularly the way media is employed to serve propaganda – while providing a detailed account of the war events and the role of policy in the conflict, the study highlights the hegemonic relations that exist in wartimes between governments and the military on the one hand and media institutions and reporters on the other. The presence of such hegemonic relations would necessarily influence and shape the ways in which the war is represented. An analysis of the details of linguistic structure of war news reports could reveal the ways such hegemonic relations find their way into war representation by different news institutions.

Another form of military control over war reporters is the process of *embedding* journalists which has its influences on the coverage of war events and objective reporting. The embedding system, according to Richardson (2007: 193-194) is another means that could enable propagandists control the media. The 2003 Gulf War II witnessed the implementation of a planned well-organized embedding of over 500 reporters and war correspondents with the military. Whereas in previous wars and conflicts, Tumber (2005) argues, news media organizations have relied heavily on official briefings and the pool system, already discussed above, as the sole sources of information, embedding in these wars was poorly organized and journalists were

either denied access to war grounds or provided with highly censored or distorted information (Tumber, 2005: 370-372). The embedding process in the 2003 Iraqi war was planned in advance by government and the military in accordance with news organizations. While the embedding system allowed journalists full access to battlefields and military bases as well as real-time reporting, the embedding process was strictly organized and controlled by the military both on the level of moving and roaming as well as the level of the content of what to be reported. Failing to adhere to the military reporting guidelines meant sanctions on news organizations limiting their access and their ability to report (Tumber, 2005: 373; cf. Richardson, 2007: 193-194). However, Tumber (2005: 373-374) argues that for big news organizations, imposing sanctions on their reporters for “misbehaviour” or limiting their access to battlefields have been made up for by the presence of independent correspondents (unilaterals) who were freely operating and roaming battlefields.

The embedding process, as it also involves a high degree of reliance on the military by embedded journalists for their protection, could lead to objectivity and other journalistic values compromised (cf. Tumber, 2004: 203-204; William, 1992: 164). This problem was minimized during the 2003 Iraqi war, specifically for such news organizations as Al-Jazeera, where both journalists stationed at the media centre in Doha and the unilateral journalists roaming the region allowed for alternative accounts from perspectives different from those of embedded correspondents (Tumber, 2004: 204).

While the above discussion demonstrates the ways government and military control over news media coverage of wars shape and influence war representation and might

result in undermining or compromising objective and balanced reporting, another consideration that could as well influence war reporting is the target audience. Focusing on the case of Al-Jazeera and its reporting of the 2003 Iraqi War, El-Nawawy and Iskandar (2004: 323) argue that Al-Jazeera in its coverage of the Iraqi war has been attempting to strike a balance between its balanced, impartial reporting and the need to offer its audience “the ‘truth’ that fits its context”. This struggle can be seen to be a feature of the coverage by news networks of major conflicts, according to the authors. For example, while Al-Jazeera in the 2003 war reporting focused on the civilian casualties on the Iraqi side and the damage inflicted on the Iraqi cities, the network also interviewed the Iraqi opposition supporting the war despite the dominant opposition to the war among the majority of Arabs (El-Nawawy and Iskandar, 2004: 323-324). Al-Jazeera’s coverage of the US losses in the Iraqi war has been a source of satisfaction for the Arab audience who were surprised to see the weaker Iraqi army inflicting such losses on a superpower (El-Nawawy and Iskandar, 2004: 326), much to the dissatisfaction of the US officials. In commenting on Al-Jazeera’s airing of video footage of American war casualties during the 2003 Iraqi war, El-Nawawy and Iskandar (2004: 327) point out that Al-Jazeera editorial decisions are based on its awareness of its “audiences’ sensitivities” who are basically Arabs. Because of its continuous emphasis in its reporting on Iraqi civilian casualties, the network has been accused by US officials of inflaming the Arab public and of acting as a mouthpiece and propaganda tool for the Iraqi regime. However, apart from the fact that the network was reporting the reality on the ground, some of Al-Jazeera correspondents have been banned from reporting from Baghdad by the Iraqi authorities (El-Nawawy and Iskandar, 2004: 325). El-Nawawy and Iskandar (2004: 322) argue that Al-

Jazeera's attempts to present multiple opinions and realities in its reporting and commentary reflect the network's pursuit of "contextual objectivity".<sup>24</sup>

Considerations of the audience have also been reflected on the rivalry between news media to be the first, resulting in prioritizing immediacy over accuracy. In response to the non-stop demand on the part of the public for immediacy and "liveness", war reporting was revolutionized with the advent of digital technologies and ENGs (electronic news-gathering systems) starting from the 2003 war in Iraq (Allan, 2010: 205; cf. Manning, 2001: 75-80). Digital technologies such as e-mails, night vision equipment, mini-portable TV stations, satellite imagery have offered new modes of war coverage such as the "24-hour rolling news services" which have been widely provided by most big news institutions, and facilitated reporter-editor communication, as in requesting instant reports. These digital technologies also facilitate another type of communication, between presidents and between presidents and their country citizens, thus greatly influencing "tele-diplomacy" (Allan, 2010: 206; cf. Manning, 2001: 76). The advent of digital technologies has also led to the refashioning of war to become more like a war movie, or what might be called "war as fun", which could be seen as a direct outcome of military control over reporters and often comes at the expense of the horrible consequences of war (Allan, 2010: 204; Hedges, 2002: 142-3).

This section highlights some important aspects of the process of war reporting that could potentially affect war representation. These aspects include the pool and the embedding systems and their effect on the reporting process. This effect is evident, for example, in the hegemonic relations between the governments, news institutions and

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<sup>24</sup> For further discussion of the concept of *contextual objectivity*, see section 3.5.1 above.

reports as well as the reliance of news reporters on military sources for both protection and information. This section also illustrates the manner in which war reporting as a process is situated within an environment that is highly controlled by both the military as well as governments. Considerations of the targeted audience interests and the ways they shape the reporting process are also discussed.

### **3.6. Conclusion**

Combining research on news media from different disciplinary perspectives, this chapter outlines some of the main aspects of news media and journalism as a means of situating this study within its larger context of media and journalism. I look at the main genres and sub-genres within media, focusing on the hard news report as the genre investigated in this research in order to show the way the genre itself can shape representations of events. The claimed factuality of the hard news report necessarily shapes the linguistic representation of events. The chapter also examines in detail the distinct features of headlines and leads as a means of providing a rationale for the choice of these two elements in a news report to be the focus of the analysis of representation in this thesis. It is also relevant to examine the internet, the medium selected to provide the material for this research, as a means of understanding the ways in which the internet characteristics, such as instant update of coverage and nature of its audience, can affect the news coverage of events. I also look in detail at different aspects of news production such as media ownership, broadcast regulations, journalistic ethics, and news values because these aspects are particularly implicated for understanding the various discourse and institutional practices that shape and affect the reporting process and media representation of the world. The investigations of war reporting, objectivity during wartime and war reporting in the Middle East

provide insight into the ways in which representation of war is shaped by the immediate situational context within which war reporters are situated, e.g. the battlefield, as well as the political and other relevant contexts that surround war reporters, shaping and affecting their representation of wars.

The aim of this thesis is to analyze the representation of the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah/Lebanon war by the BBC and Al-Jazeera to elucidate the underlying ideological and political positions that can shape and affect readers' perception of the reported event. While chapter two clarifies the political and historical context as well as the situational context, this chapter conducts an analysis of the wider situational context and the discursive practices within which news reporters are situated. Illuminated by these contextual analyses, this study attempts to answer the overarching research question: **Do the selected news outlets, Al-Jazeera and the BBC, offer different or similar representations of the 2006 war and hence position their readers into adopting certain points of view?**

## CHAPTER 4

### Discourse Analysis of War Reporting

#### 4.1. Introduction: News media discourse

Due to the power and influence of news media on contemporary societies, media discourse has been, and continues to be, the focus of scholarly scrutiny. The aim of this review is to outline a number of lines of theoretical inquiry conducted in the area of discourse analysis of news media. This chapter reviews some of the most significant studies conducted in areas related to the analysis of news media, including ideology and news reporting (Fowler, 1991; Jalbert, 1983; Kress, 1983; Nordlund, 2003; van Dijk, 1988, 1998), war reporting discourse (Bazzi, 2009; Dunn et al., 2005; Iwamoto, 1995; Nohrstedt and Ottosen, 2010; Ottosen, 2010; Richardson 2007; Schulthies and Boum, 2007) and the reporting of the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah War as discourse (Gaber et al., 2009; Gavriely-Nuri, 2008, 2013; Gavriely-Nuri and Balas, 2010).

Bell (1991: 1) argues that, within media, the news is “the most researched and arguably the most central genre”. Research on media language has focused on investigating such broad areas as linguistic features of media discourse per se, the way language is manipulated in daily media practices, the way media language reflects

certain linguistic features common in every day communication, what media language can reveal about the practices, values and structures of media, the role of the media in shaping and influencing language and discursive practices in the wider society, what media language reveals about the different cultural and social aspects of a particular society, and the way media representations of events can shape people's attitudes and opinions (cf. Bell 1991: 4).

News media as socially-situated institutions reflect the way cultural, social and political aspects of life are formed and expressed, while simultaneously helping shape these aspects. The importance of analyzing media discourse thus lies in its potential to reveal different aspects about society, i.e. it is socially constituted. Simultaneously, media discourse has the potential to contribute to and shape "the character of society", i.e. it is socially constitutive (Bell, 1998: 64-65, cf. Fairclough, 2009). Bell (1998: 65) argues that an essential prerequisite for the analysis of ideology and power in news media is a thorough linguistic analysis of the news text as being central to a clear understanding of news content.

One specific area of news stories which requires particular attention in the analysis of representation of events is what Carey (1987) labelled the "dark continent" of journalism, namely the two journalistic questions of "why" and "how". There seems to be a lack of focus on two of the journalistic five Ws and the H, namely why and how, which can offer varying indications of text producers' stance and opinion. This shortcoming can be noticed in Bell's study (1998: 75, 89) which investigates what he called the "event structure" of a story in terms of what the story reports as actually happened, when and where the reported actions occurred and who was involved.

Bell's analysis does not seek to uncover, at least explicitly, the two journalistic questions "why" and "how", which frequently have an evaluative aspect, while focusing on the more factual aspects of a news story (what, when, where and who). In the present thesis, the analysis of circumstantial elements on the clause level, conducted as part of transitivity analysis, as well as the analysis of the logical relations among clauses, conducted as part of the logico-semantic analysis, can help highlight the why and how in news reporting.

#### **4.2. Ideology and news reporting**

Ideological systems can be reached via an analysis of language because such ideological systems exist and are expressed in language and simultaneously structure language (Kress, 1983: 124). Most of the research conducted in the area of news media, such as Fairclough (1995a), Fowler (1991), Jalbert (1983), Kress (1983), Nordlund (2003), Reah, (1998), Richardson (2007), and van Dijk (1988, 1998), has focused on conducting content or linguistic analysis of news media discourse to clarify the ways in which ideologies construct the linguistic representation of events and their transformation to news and how such ideologies are articulated in news media language.

In his study of news media, van Dijk (1998) investigates the relations between ideologies, opinions and media discourse in editorials and opinion articles in the press, as these genres are more likely to include explicit expression of opinion. Van Dijk (2011: 382) highlights the distinction drawn between ideologies, as belief systems, and their actual "*uses or manifestations* in ideological practices" such as discourse. He argues that among the different ideological practices, it is through discourse that "the

contents of ideologies can be explicitly *articulated, justified or explained*" (van Dijk, 2011: 387). Van Dijk (1998) argues that the ideologies news institutions, and their journalists and reporters adopt somehow influence their opinions. These ideologically-shaped opinions influence the reporting of the event, i.e. "they structure the linguistic presentation of the event" (cf. Kress, 1983: 134).

Based on the assumption that the formation and expression of opinions and ideologies in the media involve a cognitive aspect, i.e. beliefs and mental representations, and a social aspect, i.e. they are social or institutional, van Dijk (1998: 23-24) introduces a theory of ideology which has three main components: social functions, cognitive structures and discursive expression and reproduction (cf. van Dijk, 2011: 393). For example, van Dijk argues that ideologies serve a main social function, namely "the *co-ordination* of the social practices of group members for the effective realization of the goals of a social group, and the protection of its interests", which involves defining this group's relationship to other co-existing groups. Accordingly, people develop and use ideologies in order to "sustain, legitimate or manage group conflicts, as well as relationships of power and dominance" (van Dijk, 1998: 24, 2011: 382).

Van Dijk's theory of ideology can provide a framework to explain the way ideologies and other beliefs influence the social practices of social actors, and conversely how such ideologies are shaped by discourse as a social practice among group members in social contexts such as the media (van Dijk, 1998: 22-23, 2011: 382). Van Dijk employs a discourse analytical framework to examine the linguistic presentations of ideologically-based opinions in social contexts. This thesis utilizes van Dijk's (1998,

2011: 396-397) idea of the ideological square for the purpose of interpreting the findings of the textual analysis and building a critique.

In another study investigating ideology in news media, Fowler (1991), in his analysis of newspapers, focuses on a number of political factors which dominated the early 1980s, such as the contradictory ideology of “conflict and consensus” adopted by the British government, and which he perceived as having important implications for readers. Fowler (1991: 67) argues that the language of the media embodies the dominant values and beliefs in society. Therefore, making use of some aspects of linguistic theory can help reveal “the ideological layerings of meaning in a given text” (Kress; 1983: 122). The choices text producers made from among the available different linguistic structures and processes at each point in the process of news writing can reflect writers’ purposes as an articulation of their opinions, beliefs and ideological systems (Fowler, 1991: 66). Therefore, representation, according to Fowler (1991: 66), implies “the qualification of representation *from a specific ideological point of view*”. The fact that the ideologies lying behind the different stages of news writing manifest and are articulated through the language of the text means that such ideologies can be reached through linguistic analysis (Kress, 1983: 124-125).

In his study, Fowler (1991: 67) holds the view that “*any* aspect of linguistic structure . . . can carry ideological significance”; however, certain linguistic tools such as transitivity, modality and nominalization are particularly implicated “in the construction of representations, in signifying beliefs and values [i.e. ideologies] when writers are reporting or commenting on the world” (Fowler, 1991: 89). Roger Fowler,

together with Gunther Kress, Bob Hodge and Tony Trew, developed Critical Linguistics as an approach, building mainly on the functional model developed by Halliday. What characterizes Halliday's functional model, according to Fowler (1991: 70), is that it is oriented to "relating structure to communicative function" where all the minutiae of linguistic structures, whether lexical or grammatical, "are conceived of functionally: not merely as formally different kinds of structure", i.e. they are specifically chosen to serve particular functions (Fowler, 1991: 5). Although Fowler criticizes Halliday's early formulation of his functional model for lacking an emphasis on the social dimension of communication rendering language use a matter of individual practice, Fowler (1991: 70) stresses that Halliday, in his later writings, emphasizes that the choices made from the ideational, interpersonal and textual components of grammar are socially constructed, rather than being personal or individual options. Every aspect of linguistic practice is subject to social construction.

One important aspect of the study of representation and ideology in news media is that the expression of ideologies in language essentially involves a cognitive dimension. In his study of ideology in the news, Kress (1983: 120) argues that while reporting involves "an event . . . [being] mediated from a perceiver to someone who is assumed not to have been a perceiver of that event", perception and the consequent reporting of an event proceed on the basis of the text producer's schemata (Kress, 1983: 120). A schema or script, according to Fowler (1991: 43), is a portion of knowledge, often "shared [unconsciously] within a group of people and drawn upon in making sense of the world". Kress (1983: 121) argues that linguistic as well as non-linguistic factors contribute to the processes of schemata formation, as well as their development and/or change. Non-linguistic factors are manifest in the situations and experiences, personal

and social, that people go through. However, it is through language that schemata become articulate, i.e. experiences are “talked about” in a linguistic form (Kress, 1983: 121). So, the journalist or reporter’s schemata, reflected in her/his point of view, intervene, more or less consciously, between the reported event and the recipients of the report. Journalists and reporters are not necessarily aware of the linguistic choices they make as such practices can become taken for granted or common sense to the extent that text producers are not aware that they have made a specific choice. But apart from this issue of intentionality, the point is that what is taken to be *normal* usage can involve and communicate prejudice (Fowler, 1991: 110). Because of the nature of news reporting as a process involving a number of individuals occasionally belonging to many institutions, the final news report is affected by the degree of “alignment” between the different schemata of those involved in this process. For news readers, sharing the text producer’s interpretative schemata, or at least prior knowledge of such schemata, could facilitate *reading* the news report and reconstructing the original event (Kress, 1983: 120-122).

Building on Halliday’s systemic-functional model, Kress (1983: 127-128) applies his methodology to two newspapers reports with the purpose of revealing the ideologies contained in the text and which guide the linguistic selections found in the text in order to reconstruct the original event. While the contexts of perception, writing and rewriting play a crucial role in shaping the original event as well as the initial text and its rewritings, such contexts tend to be practically inaccessible to linguistic analysis. The mediation process, by contrast, based on language, is “accessible to linguistic analysis” (Kress, 1983: 124). Both Fowler (1991) and Kress (1983) utilize Halliday’s systemic-functional model, particularly his notion of transitivity, as a means to

analyze ideology via analyzing text producers' linguistic choices. In the analysis of representation and unpacking any underlying ideologies, the present study builds on Halliday's functional model as well as some insights from Fowlers' analytic tools.

Reah (1998: 54) argues that "it is easy to resist a particular viewpoint or ideology when you know it is being presented to you, but not so easy to resist when the viewpoint or ideology is concealed". In a prominent study, Nordlund (2003: 1), in her analysis of how attitudes are displayed in news reporting covering the field of politics, argues that language is most powerful when used to communicate meanings that are implicit rather than explicit. She investigates different ways of using language to manipulate a message linguistically, e.g. to conceal or reinforce messages with the help of different syntactic manoeuvres. Certain syntactic and lexico-semantic structures are examined such as the (agentless) passive, nominalization, modality and value words, i.e. words with positive or negative loading, and the use of metaphor. The aim is to find out whether the language used in news reporting by newspapers adopting divergent political positions can reveal different attitudes. The analysis covers three articles dealing with politics from the internet editions of the Daily Telegraph, the Guardian and the Morning Star, which, according to Nordlund, respectively adopt conservative, labour and communist positions. Difference in attitudes between the three selected newspapers can be linguistically expressed. While the Morning Star tends to openly display its attitude through the choice of words and the selection of facts, the other two newspapers are less transparent and, besides exploiting word choice and news selection, make use of syntactic devices such as deletion of the actor, nominalization and modality. With the use of metaphors, no significant differences are discerned between the three newspapers as regards their

frequency and their domains (Nordlund, 2003: 32). The potential of concealed ideologies to affect and direct perception, highlighted by Reah (1998) and Nordlund (2003), is significant for the analysis of representation in this thesis. Because the claimed factuality of the hard news report prevents direct linguistic expression of the writer's views in the text, a detailed linguistic analysis of syntactic and lexical choices has the potential to offer a means to analyze differential representations and unpack hidden ideologies.

Acknowledging the ideological aspect of language use, Richardson (2007) argues that journalism, and news media in general, demonstrates huge power in shaping “agendas and public discourse”, reinforcing or challenging beliefs as well as shaping people's opinions of the world. In doing so, news media use of language can help “shape social reality by shaping our *views* of social reality” (Richardson, 2007: 13). Using Fairclough's approach to CDA, Richardson's study seeks to account for how journalistic discourse is produced, how it functions and how it is employed to serve certain aims, e.g. promoting a certain agenda (Richardson, 2007: 8-9).<sup>1</sup> According to Richardson (2007: 1), CDA is “a theory and a method of analysing the way that individuals and institutions *use* language”. Richardson (2007: 10) builds his study of the ways language is put into use in newspapers on a number of hypothetical assumptions. Of particular importance to the present research is the assumption that language use has power. Journalism as a form of communication has a powerful influence on social life through the use of language. Richardson puts it like this “the *power of* journalistic language to *do* things and the way that social power is indexed

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<sup>1</sup> Richardson's (2007) study of the discourse of war reporting and its potential to promote certain political agendas is critically reviewed in section 4.3.

and represented *in* journalistic language are particularly important to bear in mind when studying the discourse of journalism” (Richardson, 2007: 13).

This section demonstrates that not only news media are ideological – all stages of news media production and interpretation are set in ideological relations and structures – but that ideology is expressed through linguistic choices. Therefore, it makes sense to analyse ideology via analysing linguistic choices. Halliday’s transitivity – as one type of linguistic structure – is a useful tool for the analysis of representation of events and any underlying ideologies.

#### **4.3. War reporting discourse**

Different lines of inquiry have focused on exploring the language of media coverage of war, particularly the discourse of war reporting the focus of this thesis. This section of the literature review covers three main lines of inquiry including discourse on war and terrorism, peace and war journalism, and a third line focusing on the analysis of representation in war reporting discourse. The section surveys some of the studies conducted within these lines of research including Dunn et al. (2005), Iwamoto (1995), Nohrstedt and Ottosen (2010), Ottosen (2010), Richardson (2007), Schulthies and Boum (2007) and the Macquarie University ongoing research project.

One line of inquiry, pursued by Hodges and Nilep (2007) and Freedman and Thussu (2012), has focused on the discourse of war and terrorism and the “war on terror”, that emerged following the 9/11 attacks, in an attempt to understand the ways in which this discourse affects people’s understanding and interpretations of this tragic event and the ways it is shaped by its sociopolitical context. Hodges and Nilep (2007) bring

together a number of studies focusing on the discourse of media and terrorism, including Becker, (2007), Lazar and Lazar (2007), Machin (2007) and Schulthies and Boum's (2007), employing different approaches to textual analysis, such as Halliday's (1994, 2004) systemic-functional model and van Leeuwen's (1996) social actors theory. Different theoretical frameworks and methodologies have been adopted, including linguistic anthropology, multimodal analysis, narrative analysis, cognitive linguistics and various forms of CDA.

One prominent study within this line of research is Schulthies and Boum's (2007) analysis of Al-Jazeera's re-contextualization of discourse produced by the US government, the Bush administration, following 9/11. Schulthies and Boum focus their research on exploring the ways Al-Jazeera attempts to define its approach to news media in relation to the expectations of its huge audience in the Arab region, while still adhering to journalistic claims to objectivity. In order to justify its journalistic style and media coverage, Schulthies and Boum (2007: 153) argue that Al-Jazeera introduced the concept of "contextual objectivity".<sup>2</sup> While adhering to balanced coverage by presenting all views/sides of news stories, contextual objectivity emphasizes that due attention should be given to the target audiences' values and beliefs (Schulthies and Boum, 2007: 153; cf. El-Nawawy and Isakandar, 2002: 26). Schulthies and Boum claim that while Al-Jazeera attempts to respond to Arab-Muslim audiences' interests and local sensitivities and to gain their attention, "it angles away from reporting multiple sides of a story" (Schulthies and Boum, 2007: 153).

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<sup>2</sup> I discuss the concept of "contextual objectivity" in more detail in section 3.5.1.

Utilizing the notions of *dialogism*, the *dialogic construction of meaning*, *heteroglossia* and *entextualization* as proposed by Mikhail Bakhtin, Schulthies and Boum (2007: 143-144) explore the ways Al-Jazeera programme presenters in two Al-Jazeera talk shows “entextualize” discourses produced by Western mainstream media and key figures about “Arab and Islamic concepts related to terrorism”. They attempt to explore the ways programme moderators negotiate Western understandings and meanings attached to terms related to terrorism, which is often influenced by the choice of programme guests.

Schulthies and Boum (2007: 146-147) focus on the ways meanings of events are appropriated, and challenged by participants, including audiences and programme moderators, in the absence of original speaker. In this context, programme moderators have the ability to direct the discussion, negotiate meanings, and make choices while recontextualizing utterances made by people who are absent. They argue that the processes of redefining meanings in dialogic interactions are indefinite and continuous until meaning turns to be “authoritative and absolute” by the involvement of some authoritative or powerful figure (Schulthies and Boum, 2007: 148).

A particular term, concept or discourse, Schulthies and Boum (2007: 148) argue, can undergo a process of “dialogization” when such a concept becomes “relativized” or “de-privileged”, thus allowing for varying conceptions or meanings. For example, they highlight some of the ways in which the religious concept of *al-jihad* as well as related concepts, such as *suicide*, are being relativized, thus allowing for the dialogical redefinition and multiple interpretations of such concepts in dialogic interaction on Al-Jazeera programmes (Schulthies and Boum, 2007: 150-151). Redefinitions and

interpretations of jihad, Schulthies and Boum (2007: 149) argue, have given rise to such contrasting labels as “suicide attack/martyrdom operations” and “terrorism/jihad”, which has been the focus of many of Al-Jazeera’s programmes following the 9/11 attacks. One way in which the meaning of the term *terrorist* is being negotiated and contextualized involves employing the contrasting labels terrorist and martyr, where the term *martyr* is used to identify Palestinian suicide bombers but when the term *terrorist* is used it is qualified, as in *the so-called terrorist* (Schulthies and Boum, 2007: 154). It is interesting that the concept of contextual objectivity itself is dialogically redefined as the norm, not the exception, in another of Al-Jazeera’s programmes by both the moderator and the guest. Relevant to the present research is that Schulthies and Boum’s study demonstrates the ways in which varying labeling terms can be employed by text producers to convey certain presentations that are in agreement with their views and ideologies.

In a similar vein, Elizabeth Dunn, Moriah Moore and Brian Nosek (2005) have conducted content analysis of war reporting to explore the ideological stance of war discourse and its potential to shape audience perception. Focusing on news reporting of the 2003 American invasion of Iraq in American newspapers, Dunn et al. (2005: 67) investigate how language can be used to shape perception during wartime. They argue that audience perception of high impact violent actions, particularly their interpretation of these actions as patriotic or terrorist ones, can be influenced and shaped by the ways such actions are linguistically presented. Dunn et al. (2005: 69) examined whether the range of lexical items used in reference to the US differs from that used in reference to Iraq during the invasion. They also explored whether these

differences in reference affected the extent to which the two countries' violent actions were seen by the audience as patriotism or terrorism.

Dunn et al. (2005: 67) conducted a content analysis of a total of 62 articles in American newspapers describing violent actions during the US-led invasion of Iraq. The analysis revealed that the selected media referred to the violent actions of the Iraqi side using words that imply serious damage and "devious intent", while reference to the US and its allies was characterized by the use of "more benign words". Dunn et al. (2005: 67) propose that these differences in word choice have the effect of developing schemata that shape reader's interpretation and classification of actions of violence as terrorism or patriotism, in so doing media representation can construct "people's attitudes towards . . . and memory for . . . violent events".<sup>3</sup>

Dunn et al. (2005: 67-68) argue that perception, categorization and interpretation of objects and events, though often done routinely, can be "profoundly shaped by subtle cues that draw on past experience and alter one's subsequent judgments, evaluations, and actions", as is the case with daily reading of newspapers. The processes of identifying and defining terrorism are often subjectively motivated, with the aim of drawing a clear boundary between the supposedly justified violent actions by the ingroup and the supposedly unjustified ones by the outgroup. Moreover, specific acts of violence which do not meet one's own definition of terrorism could be categorized as terrorism to serve one's own biases (Dunn et al., 2005: 68). What is of significance here is that, even in the absence of explicit use of the word *terrorism*, violent actions can still be perceived as terrorism. Persistently using certain words in reference to

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<sup>3</sup> For a definition of schema, see Fowler (1991) discussed above.

actions of violence committed by the ingroup as opposed to other words associated with the outgroup may have an effect on perceptions of these actions as patriotism or terrorism (Dunn et al., 2005: 69).

Dunn et al. (2005: 70-71) hypothesize that those words denoting destruction and/or devious motivation would be used to refer to violence targeting the US, while benign words would be associated with US violence. For each of the selected articles, Dunn et al. uses corpus tools to establish the frequency of occurrence of each lexical item in connection with each of the two groups, i.e. US/allies vs. Iraq/non-US allies. Their analysis shows that the words *explosion*, *blast*, *threat*, and *plot* are used more often in connection with Iraq/non-US allies, whereas the words *forces* and *campaign* are used more often in reference to the US and its allies (Dunn et al., 2005: 71).

Dunn et al. (2005: 72) then examine whether the observed subtle differences in word choices influence readers' attitudes. Dunn et al. argue that, as a consequence of the intensive media coverage of terrorism since the 9/11 attacks, people have built and developed a "framework of knowledge" about what they consider to be terrorist actions and what constitutes legitimate actions. These well-developed patriotism and contrasting terrorism schemata may shape the way people perceive violent actions. Dunn et al. (2007: 72) propose that readers' exposure to relevant words used to describe violence may activate any of the two schemata, terrorism or patriotism, affecting people's perception and remembrance of these specific acts as constituting terrorism or patriotism. The results of Dunn's et al. study provide evidence that, even in such cases where reference to the actor is not made explicit or obscured, subtle differences in newspapers' terminology "can shape perceived responsibility for and

legitimacy of a violent event” (Dunn et al., 2005: 73). If this is the case, Dunn et al. (2005: 81) propose that by altering a few words in a news text the effect could be that of changing the way readers would interpret a specific act of violence, and in turn their memory for it. By combining content analysis, corpus analysis with an analysis of audience reception, the study by Dunn et al. highlights the ways in which text producer’s choices of different lexical items to describe actions can communicate varying representations of the sides ascribed these actions. The present thesis utilizes frequencies of occurrence both as a starting point for the analysis and to substantiate the findings of the qualitative analysis. However, the present thesis does not adopt a corpus linguistic approach in the analysis of representation for considerations related to the small size of the data. The small size of the data does not necessitate the use of a corpus approach, which is a useful tool in the case of larger corpora. On the other hand, the present study reaches similar findings to Dunn et al. (2005), particularly concerning the ways in which the selected news outlets use different lexical items to refer to the two sides of the war and their actions.

The studies by Schulthies and Boum (2007) and Dunn et al. (2005) belong to one line of research that focuses on exploring the large amount of discourse on terrorism and the war on terror that emerged following 9\11 attacks. Another line of research has focused on the peace journalism model proposed by Johan Galtung, a model which was designed as an alternative to war journalism. Peace journalism aims to “create opportunities for society at large to consider and to value non-violent responses to conflict” (Lynch and McGoldrick, 2005: 5). A large number of studies, such as Hackett and Schroeder (2009), Lynch and McGoldrick (2005), Nohrstedt and Ottosen (2005, 2010), Ottosen (2010, 2012), have focused on peace journalism.

Ottosen's (2010) study focuses on Johan Galtung's peace journalism framework. The writer offers a review of Galtung's model and critically evaluates different views of it. In order to examine the effectiveness and applicability of Galtung's model, Ottosen focuses on some examples from the Norwegian media coverage and research on media coverage of Norway's military participation in the 2001 Afghanistan war. Galtung's model contrasts between two approaches to journalism, namely war journalism and peace journalism. While peace journalism is defined as peace/conflict-oriented, truth-oriented, people-oriented and solution-oriented, war journalism is viewed as war/violence-oriented, propaganda-oriented, elite-oriented and victory-oriented (Ottosen, 2010: 275). This categorization has many implications. For example, it suggests that war journalism by means of war propaganda and conflict promotion supposedly contributes to the perpetuation of wars, whereas peace journalism supposedly contributes to peace by means of revealing its horrors and atrocities, focusing on suffering and victims and exposing the lies that all sides make. Peace journalism also has the potential of revealing war consequences and offering alternatives for action that could lead to peace but are left out by propagandists (Ottosen, 2010: 262, 264, 266).

While the peace journalism model encourages journalists to critically report on wars and researchers to critically evaluate journalists' reporting on wars, the model is simultaneously viewed as not respecting the standards of objective reporting by promoting critical engagement in reporting (Ottosen, 2010: 261). The model is also criticised for being "too dualistic", i.e. a journalist is either a peace journalist or a war journalist, and for suggesting that news media contribute to propagating wars (Ottosen, 2010: 264).

Ottosen (2010: 296) collects the data from the coverage by mainstream newspapers of the military presence of Norway in Afghanistan during the first week of the war. One of the points from Galtung's peace journalism model that was investigated is that war journalism is characterized by being "elite-oriented". For example, Ottosen (2010: 296-297) observes that war reporting was characterized by "US-friendly framing", reliance on voices that are mainly Western, and depicting Norway as "a potential victim of future acts of terror". Ottosen (2010) argues that Galtung's model can be employed as a checklist offering guidelines for both journalists and researchers "in a propaganda-infected landscape".

Another study by Nohrstedt and Ottosen (2010) focuses on some limitations of peace journalism as an approach. The study aims to investigate "the value of the peace journalism model for media studies of conflict communication and opinion building" (Nohrstedt and Ottosen, 2010: 2). Nohrstedt and Ottosen (2010: 2) discuss the application of Galtung's model for the analysis of "the proposal for closer military cooperation" between Norway and Sweden and the ways in which the more opinionated genres of feature articles and editorials "relate discursively" to the proposal.

Nohrstedt and Ottosen (2010: 10-11) emphasize the need to integrate Galtung's approach with the CDA approach, specifically Wodak's discourse historical approach (DHA) (1996) because of specific limitations of Galtung's model. One of the limitations of peace journalism model is its inapplicability to all stages of a conflict and to all conflicts as well as its inability to reveal potential risks of conflicts (Nohrstedt and Ottosen, 2010: 11). Another limitation is its failure to consider

important contextual factors. Wodak's approach, on the other hand, has the potential to analyze interrelated discourses which are evident in Nohrstedt and Ottosen's study in the interplay between mediated discourses and "national and transnational security-policy discourses" (Nohrstedt and Ottosen, 2010: 10). In addition, Wodak's approach is particularly significant as it "opens up to include long historical perspectives in the analysis" (Ottosen, 2010: 263). In this way it allows the researcher to account for absences in the text, i.e. topics which have been overshadowed or ignored because of media control and censorship exerted by, for example, media owners or governments. Nohrstedt and Ottosen's (2010) and Ottosen's (2010) studies demonstrate the efficiency of a CDA perspective in pointing out interdiscursive relations that could have been highlighted, but were absent in the analyzed text.

A small amount of research (such as Bazzi (2009), Iwamoto (1995), Richardson (2007), and the Macquarie University ongoing project), has been done on the discourse of war reporting, utilizing Halliday's SFL and his notion of transitivity, while simultaneously drawing on other analytical approaches. For example, Iwamoto (1995: 58) explores the relationship between linguistic structure and socially constructed reality (representations of reality), examining how language can be used to "systematize, transform and sometimes mask reality". Iwamoto's study is based on the notion that language not only reflects but also constrains perceptions of reality. Iwamoto (1995) conducts a semantic-syntactic analysis of war reporting in Japan during World War II. Specifically, the semantic concept of transitivity in Functional Grammar is applied. Data were drawn from Japanese wartime newspaper reports, including banner headlines and article text.

During wartime “people [are] required to build their own reality from whatever elements they could find”, especially in the media, as people’s main, if not only available, source of information (Iwamoto, 1995: 59). This is mainly due to the restrictions put on information sources, particularly by governments. Iwamoto’s study attempts to analyze the ways in which the press in Japan deliberately built a fictional world, aiming to transform “an undesirable reality”, i.e. defeat, into a victory, with the purpose of avoiding “a breakdown of national morale” during the war (Iwamoto, 1995: 59). Iwamoto employs the participant roles of Agent, Patient, and Range from Halliday’s transitivity system as analytical tools.

Card stacking, according to Lee (as cited in Iwamoto, 1995: 60), is a propaganda device that describes the reporting of defeat as victory. This rhetorical device refers to the situation in which the persuader is selective in her/his choice of the evidence and arguments that build her/his case and fit her/his conclusions to the extent of concealing or distorting (negative) facts (Iwamoto, 1995: 60-61). For example, to communicate a representation of the Japanese as being in control of the situation, Iwamoto (1995: 62) noticed that the Japanese side was often assigned the role of Agent, and was never assigned the role of Patient, even in cases of defeat. On the other hand, the enemy, even in victory, was often grammatically coded as Patient. Moreover, since the entity given the role of Range can be easily perceived as an “apparent Patient”, using a transitive sentence with a Range, rather than a real Patient, (e.g. the imperial army displayed its spirit/ shows courage) could serve to “maintain the discoursal coherency of *agentivity*”, i.e. the Japanese side was represented as involved in positive actions even in the case of defeat (Iwamoto, 1995: 62, 65). The effect of this textual choice is that even in their defeats, the Japanese soldiers were

depicted as if they performed some action or gained something. Viewed within the scope of transitivity choices, Iwamoto concludes that reports that covered news of defeat during the war period shared the same pattern of representation. This recurrent pattern, which involves representing the Japanese side as the performer of action, i.e. agent, who is in full control of war events, i.e. processes, was designed to serve the purpose of maintaining national morale (Iwamoto, 1995: 63).

Iwamoto (1995: 65) observes that lexical choices also served to increase “the sense of ‘agentivity’ and ‘positivity’ ”. For example, the non-agentive word *die* is avoided through using such expressions as *commit suicide*, which makes the grammatical subject an agent, as if soldiers were not killed but rather chose to die. Iwamoto (1995: 65) argues that “these functions all contribute to an overall conceptual framework which maintains a flow of *agentive* rhetoric for the Japanese side”.

Iwamoto’s study (1995: 66) demonstrates how texts can be linguistically manipulated to create a fictional reality, and the way in which “‘the most desirable’ reality is constructed by language to respond to a certain social demand of a given period of time in history”. This is evident in Iwamoto’s study in the way in which the Japanese newspapers represented the Japanese side as “actively ‘shaping reality’ ”, while it had been suffering defeats on the battlefield (Iwamoto, 1995: 66). Iwamoto’s study offers insights into utilizing some of the concepts in Halliday’s transitivity, particularly the role of Range, in the analysis of war representation. The present thesis reaches findings similar to those of Iwamoto’s study, particularly the positive representation of ingroup members even in cases of defeat. However, Iwamoto’s study limits its scope to the analysis of three participant roles (Actor, Patient and Range), which are all

associated with one process type (material processes), thus ignoring other aspects of transitivity, which, if analyzed, could have offered a wider view of the representation of the Japanese side in the war.

In a similar vein, the ongoing interdisciplinary research project “reporting war: mapping meaning and the potential for bias in the news”, which is part of a wider project called “discourses of war” at the Centre for Language in Social Life, Macquarie University, contributes to work investigating war reporting discourse.<sup>4</sup> This project aims to develop better understanding of media bias, particularly in the coverage of war, explore war reporting and investigate the linguistic features of war news reports. In the analysis of the large corpus of media texts collected from Australian as well as international media institutions, such as Al-Jazeera, BBC and CNN, the project adopts an integrated approach, bringing together methodologies from the disciplines of media studies and linguistic analysis, content analysis and multimodal analysis. The news texts used to present the data include different types of war coverage such as news reports, feature articles and commentaries.

Focusing on the news coverage of the Iraq war, the Macquarie research attempts to construct a “semiotic map” of recurrent visual, grammatical and semantic patterns in meaning in order to explore how the war is reported. The large database of media texts this research draws on, together with the mapping of all the choices available for text producers in reporting wars, enable this research to specify not only the choices made, but also those meanings that are absent or underrepresented.

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<sup>4</sup> *Reporting war: mapping meaning and the potential for bias in the news*. (n.d.). Retrieved February 14, 2013, from Macquarie University, Faculty of Human Sciences, Department of Linguistics website, [http://www.ling.mq.edu.au/clsl/reporting\\_war.htm](http://www.ling.mq.edu.au/clsl/reporting_war.htm)

In order to offer better understanding of media coverage of war through the investigation of a large corpus of different genres of news texts reporting on the Iraq war, the Macquarie research explores many important aspects of the discourse of war reporting. For example, the project aims to study the types of events reported on, the ways high impact actions in wars are represented, the entities ascribed agency and attributed responsibility and the voices that are allowed access to news texts and their orientations. The research also focuses on stylistic variations in war reporting, i.e. the ways in which hard news reports differ from feature articles, and opinion pieces in general, in their construction of war. Similarly, the ways the medium itself, e.g. radio, print, internet, affect the reporting of war. The detailed analysis of the selected news texts in the light of these aspects would offer a more comprehensive account of news media reporting, particularly of wars, as one type of discursive and social practice.

This ongoing research claims that existing research focusing on investigating reporting of different events and issues is based on either qualitative or quantitative methods. The large body of research utilizes such approaches as content analysis, discourse analysis or semiotics. In addition to expanding the range of textual features which will be quantitatively analyzed, the Macquarie research seeks to critically interpret the discerned patterns, grammatical and semantic, in news texts in the light of their social, political and cultural contexts. This integrated approach will be applied to a large corpus that extends diachronically while covering a wide range of genres and media types. The Macquarie research project offers very useful insights into the analysis of war reporting which illuminate the analysis of representation in this thesis, particularly in the formulation of the research questions and deciding which areas of war reporting are worth investigating. Examples include the focus in this thesis on

high impact actions and the ways they are reported, and on how much of the actions ascribed to the sides of the war are doings (material) as opposed to sayings verbal.

In another study, Richardson (2007) focuses on the representation of the 2003 Iraqi invasion in British newspapers during the build-up weeks to the invasion and the six-week long military operations prior to Bush's formal announcement that the mission was accomplished. Richardson, utilizing elements from rhetorical theory and linguistic analysis, examines the ways in which this representation reflects and is shaped by the British government strategic interests. In doing so, Richardson (2007: 180) relates the reported content during the specified period and its rhetorical effects to "the social and discursive conditions in which such reports were produced".

Richardson (2007) argues that in the UK the decision to invade Iraq had long been considered before the invasion in March 2003 as evident in many statements attributed to Tony Blair, some of which date back to the year 1998. Getting involved in a new war necessitates, Richardson points out, gaining public consent. For this purpose, the British and the US governments developed a propaganda campaign to propagate the war decision among people in the two countries. While one conventional propaganda technique limits the available options to "for or against war", suppressing all alternatives such as a critical stance or a neutral stance, in preparation for the invasion of Iraq a rather restrictive propaganda technique was devised and applied. This new propaganda technique, Richardson (2007: 178-179) argues, involved further limiting the available choices to "for action" or "complete inaction". Given the undesirable consequences of inaction, including the continuation of torturing and killing of the Iraqis by their own regime, there seemed to be only one choice above all, with all

potential counterarguments undermined or totally excluded (Richardson, 2007: 178-179).

Acknowledging the power of the media to shape public opinion, particularly in wartime, Richardson (2007: 181) argues that governments and the military exert tremendous efforts to control news media as a means to monitor the flow of information. This control enables governments to communicate to the public a version of war that serves their interests and views. In such circumstances, war correspondents and journalists, being exposed to propaganda by governments and the military among other interested parties, become themselves powerful propaganda tools.

Propaganda campaigns, according to Richardson, find their way to news media by means of certain discursive practices.<sup>5</sup> Richardson highlights four discursive practices that facilitate this process including the newsworthiness of a declared war, the need to rely on credible sources as dictated by the principle of objectivity, news media rivalry to be the first, and perception of the targeted audience views. These practices represent, what one might call, wildcards in the hands of the propagandist. For example, newsworthiness of wars and the need for military sources mean that news institutions and their reporters, in return for gaining access to battlefields and to win exclusive stories, would negotiate with gatekeepers, i.e. the military. These negotiations could potentially compromise reporting, for example, by complying with the military rules which put constraints on the reporting process, allowing journalists to report only the military's version of what is going on (Richardson, 2007: 182-184). The news media's relentless attempts to be the first by instantly reporting on what

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<sup>5</sup> The notion of "discursive practice" comes from Fairclough's approach to CDA (see section 5.2).

military sources say without the least verification could also allow propaganda access to news media (Richardson, 2007: 184). Similarly, news media perception (occasionally misperception as in the case of the 2003 Iraqi war) of the targeted audience “sensibilities” and political views could potentially facilitate propaganda access to news media. For example, a perception of an audience who support a war decision might lead the news media to welcome the military propaganda in an attempt to satisfy the audience (Richardson, 2007: 186).

Richardson argues that, during the build-up to the Iraqi invasion the news media used various persuasion strategies to gain audience consent for the war decision by means of representing the war as necessary and desirable. Richardson, in his analysis of the war discourse, traces Aristotle’s “three modes of proof”: *logos*, involving the use of reasoning, *ethos*, or appeal to the character of the arguer, and *pathos*, or appeal to emotion. The three modes were employed to serve the purpose of legitimating and justifying the war decision (Richardson, 2007: 187). Prior to the war, reasoning as a strategy was employed by both the British and the US governments. The two governments explained the war decision as being motivated by two reasons: Iraq’s possession of mass destruction weapons and its close connections with terrorist groups. For example, the term *Weapons of Mass Destruction* (WMD) was coined, according to Richardson (2007: 187-188), to be exclusively used in connection with the Iraqi weapons in order to serve the war propaganda.

In his study of war discourse, Richardson utilizes Halliday’s transitivity system in analyzing the representation of the Iraqi invasion in the headlines of eight British newspapers, four tabloids and four broadsheets, covering the first six weeks of the

invasion. The analysis highlights one important aspect of transitivity: because transitivity allows for different possibilities, text producer's choices usually indicate their points of view, which themselves could be ideologically significant (Richardson, 2007: 197). For example, one significant feature of tabloids headlines is the absence of reference to the UN. This absence, Richardson (2007: 198) argues, is an indication of the insignificance and marginalization of international law in the war. Another interesting pattern of representation involves introducing the British as actors and foregrounding their actions more than the American. Although during the invasion the US had a far bigger role on the operational level with more American soldiers involved in military operations compared to the British, British newspapers represented the British as actively involved in military operations more than the American. This was done as a means to emphasize Britain's active military role in the war against the Iraqi regime tyranny and inhumanity, and simultaneously to justify the British government's role in taking the war decision. Richardson (2007: 200) argues that this feature of representation not only demonstrates "overwhelmingly nationalist news agenda" of British newspapers, but it emphasizes that the invasion, rather than being US-led, was "undertaken by a coalition of equals".

While Richardson uses Halliday's transitivity for the textual analysis, he employs van Dijk's ideological square in interpreting the findings. The ideological square, Richardson (2007: 209) argues, "predicts that the way that two sides are represented . . . will be radically dichotomized" where "such polarisation serves political as well as rhetorical ends". One strategy applied by anti-war newspapers, Richardson argues, involves the exclusion of the US from *our* side in certain occasions so as these newspapers can keep their anti-war position, without criticizing the British troops or

the invasion itself (Richardson, 2007: 214). Richardson's study of newspapers' representation of war offers a clear outlining of the application of CDA as an approach and general theoretical framework to the analysis of news media reporting of war, while his hands-on approach to textual analysis adds value to his study. This study also highlights the adverse role of certain discursive practices in exposing the media to propagandists' control in wartime. Richardson's study offers some useful examples of the application of both Halliday's notion of transitivity and van Dijk's idea of the ideological square.

#### **4.4. The 2006 Israel-Hezbollah War discourse**

Most of the studies covering the 2006 War between Israel and Hezbollah, such as Achcar and Warschawski, 2007; Elya et al., 2009; Harel and Issacharoff, 2008; Kuperwasser, 2006; Tidy, 2012, belong to such disciplines as political science, sociology and economics. It appears that there have been very few studies, such as Gavriely-Nuri (2008, 2013) and Gavriely-Nuri and Balas (2010), drawing on linguistic analysis of the discourse of the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah/Lebanon war to elucidate how the war discourse is employed to serve ideological purposes and how it reflects wider social, cultural or political issues.

Within the field of economics, the study by Elya et al. (2009) explores the ways in which the agricultural sector in Lebanon has been adversely affected by the massive destruction the 2006 war inflicted on the country. Within the discipline of political science, Achcar and Warschawski's (2007) and Harel and Issacharoff's (2008) studies provide an assessment of the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah/Lebanon conflict from various perspectives. Achcar and Warschawski (2007) trace the emergence of Hezbollah

among the Lebanese Shia and the ways the movement acquired its popularity among all the Lebanese factions. The group's relationship with Syria, Iran and Hamas and the roles they, together with the West, played in shaping the Lebanese political landscape constitute part the focus of both studies. While analyzing the factors that led to the 2006 conflict, Achcar and Warschawski also analyze the social as well as political impacts of the war on both Lebanon and Israel. Harel and Issacharoff (2008) attempt to analyze the reasons behind Israel's apparent military failure in the war.

Focusing on the discourse of the 2006 War between Israel and Hezbollah, Gavriely-Nuri (2008) adopts an eclectic approach integrating discourse analysis, gender theories and political science to explore political discourse that dominated some Israeli media during the 2006 war between Israel and Hezbollah/Lebanon. The corpus of this study includes the webpages of two news websites and one print newspaper, representing popular news media produced in Hebrew. Gavriely-Nuri's study does not focus on one specific genre; rather, it covers different types of war coverage including news, articles, columns and reviews, collected during the war period from July 12<sup>th</sup> to August 14<sup>th</sup> 2006. Gavriely-Nuri investigates the way political challenges, such as justifying the involvement in a new war and the "massive" destruction of infrastructure and civilian casualties brought by Israel's bombing of the country, can be translated into "discursive challenges". Gavriely-Nuri hypothesizes that the intensive injection of metaphorical constructions that represents the war as normal and as part of everyday life in Israel, specifically what Gavriely-Nuri (2008: 5) labels "war-normalizing metaphors", could result on the level of political discourse in "annihilating" the war, in spite of all the war calamities. This research seeks to investigate "the construction and application of special discursive mechanisms aimed

at normalizing war or, more generally, justifying, legitimating and purifying the use of violence” (Gavriely-Nuri, 2008: 6).

Considering the history of the long-lasting Israel-Lebanon conflict, particularly its complicated nature during the period from 1982 to 2000, Gavriely-Nuri argues, a decision to start a new war was highly likely to be opposed from within Israel. Ignoring or diminishing the war and its events proved to be unsuccessful as “exclusion techniques” because Hezbollah’s rockets that struck deep inside Israel were too obvious and presented a direct threat to the lives of Israelis that could not pass unnoticed; hence the Israeli media resorted to “metaphorical annihilation”. Inspired by Tuchman who coined the term “symbolic annihilation”, Gavriely-Nuri (2008: 8) defined metaphorical annihilation as “a discursive strategy that systematically uses a fixed series of metaphors in order to exclude a subject, event or situation by blurring its basic characteristics while stressing, if not creating, others”. Certain metaphorical structures were used within the political discourse to serve the purpose of softening and mitigating the basic aspects of the war situation while weakening war implications. Gavriely-Nuri argues that four metaphors were systematically applied: “war is ‘women’s work’, war is a medicine, war is business and war is sport” (Gavriely-Nuri, 2008: 6). Employing such metaphors, besides framing the war as normal, minimized the conflict and concealed causalities on both sides.

During the first weeks of the war, the highly public support of the war showed that the political discourse, in ignoring and diminishing the war, efficiently justified and legitimized the war. The media presented the *fighting in the north*, an expression that systematically replaced the word *war* in the media during the war, as a minor

operation, according to Gavriely-Nuri (2008: 7). However, the fact that the fighting and destruction continued simply made the government's attempt to diminish it more obvious to the public. Thus, a more efficient discursive strategy, what Gavriely-Nuri labelled "metaphorical annihilation", appeared as a response aiming at *normalizing* rather than *erasing* the war (Gavriely-Nuri, 2008: 8). Representing the war as an ordinary event implies that it no longer entails suffering and destruction, hence convincing people to accept military actions and militaristic policies.

One of the four war-normalizing metaphors, found in the discourse of war, presents war as "women's work", where war events are linked to traditional women's activities such as taking care of children, as in "take care of Hezbollah" and cleaning as in "Israel has to cleanse the south of Lebanon". The application of such metaphors depicts the war zone as a private property requiring positive maintenance, hence hedging all the violence and threats to people's lives (Gavriely-Nuri, 2008: 11). Gavriely-Nuri concludes that employing these metaphorical constructions affected the concept of war in two ways. While new characteristics were included, others were "empowered" and while certain aspects were obscured or hidden, others were weakened or softened. Newly introduced features include those characterizing war as "normal", "essential to human existence" and "logical". Features which are concealed or weakened include those which characterize war as "destructive", "dangerous", "aggressive" and "politically oriented" (Gavriely-Nuri, 2008: 16). The importance of Gavriely-Nuri's study stems from its being one of very few studies focusing on the linguistic analysis of media representation of the 2006 war. Focusing on various media types and genres in Israel, the study demonstrates the ways the Israeli media discourse was exploited to affect public perception of war events and direct people

towards certain views of the war. Gavriely-Nuri's study also highlights one important aspect of research adopting CDA as an approach, namely the necessity of situating events within their wider historical, political and ideological contexts in order to critically interpret them.

In attempting to answer the question of whether the BBC was biased against Israel in its coverage of the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah war, Ivor Gaber, Emily Seymour and Lisa Thomas (2009: 242) combine quantitative and qualitative content analyses with news framing analysis and research on film studies to find out the ways in which the different sides involved in the war were represented. The analysis conducted by Gaber et al. (2009: 241) covers all daily broadcast news on the 10.00 pm BBC News bulletin and 10.30 pm ITV News bulletin during the period of the 2006 war. The authors proposed a coding frame consisting of a number of criteria in the light of which the data were categorized and analyzed. As regards the range of voices heard, which can be indicative of the news outlet's stance, the BBC allowed Israeli voices 34.1% and Lebanese and Hezbollah voices 29.9% of the total direct speech. By counting the voices of allies of both sides the time given to Israel and its allies rose to 52% of the total direct speech compared to 38.7% to Lebanon/Hezbollah and allies (Gaber et al., 2009: 245). Another criterion involves the ways in which the casualties were covered. Although the initial percentages seem higher in the case of Lebanese casualties (23.5% and 27.1% in the BBC and ITV respectively) compared to the Israeli casualties (9.3% and 12.8% in the BBC and ITV respectively), Gaber et al. (2009: 246) argues that "given the disparity in casualties – a rough ratio of 10 Lebanese casualties to every Israeli casualty – there was in fact a pro-Israeli bias in coverage by both the BBC and ITV". Therefore, what might appear on the surface level to be a

bias in favour of one side can, with knowledge of contextual factors, turn to be a bias in favour of the opposite side.

Another important news frame in the coverage of the war involves reference made to Iran and Syria, who are Hezbollah's allies and the group's main suppliers of weapons. While reference to Syria and Iran is made 15 times in the BBC, it is noted on 6 occasions in ITV coverage. Gaber et al. (2009: 249) views these references as part of contextualization of the 2006 war coverage by highlighting the wider context of the "war on terror". However, any claims concerning the effects of these references need to consider the context of the reported content, i.e. the ways in which Syria and Iran are represented. As for the way the different sides are referred to, one significant finding concerns the use of the terms "terror", "terrorism" and "terrorist", which were found 32 times in the coverage by the BBC compared to 11 times only in the ITV. While the Israeli army was referred to using these terms one time attributed to a Lebanese spokesperson, these words were used on 10 occasions by Israeli sources in reference to Hezbollah (Gaber et al., 2009: 255). In concluding their study, Gaber et al. (2009: 256-257) argue that although both the BBC and ITV coverage of the war showed bias towards Israel, particularly in relation to accessed voices and reporting on casualties, the two news channels "acquitted themselves well in their reporting of the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah war".

The study by Gaber et al. (2009) highlights many aspects of the coverage by the BBC of the 2006 war, its actions and participants. However, the study lacks a detailed analysis of linguistic structures to substantiate the findings of the quantitative analysis. The detailed linguistic analysis conducted in the present thesis, on the other hand, is

combined with frequency counts both as a starting point for the analysis and to substantiate the findings of the analysis. The present thesis reaches similar findings as regards the BBC, namely that the BBC allows Israeli voices more access to its coverage. The use of terror terminology, on the other hand, has been rarely discerned in the coverage by the BBC in the present thesis compared to Gaber's et al. study.

#### **4.5. Conclusion**

It is clear from the review of literature that most of the relevant studies conducted in the area of media discourse have explored print and broadcast media, whereas a smaller number of linguistic studies have been devoted to exploring new media such as the internet. For example, Bell (1982), Davis and Walton (1983a), Gavriely-Nuri and Balas (2010), Goffman (1981) and Schulthies and Boum's (2007) have focused on broadcast media, whereas Bazzi (2009), Dunn et al. (2005), Iwamoto (1995), Nohrstedt and Ottosen (2010), Ottosen (2010), Reah (1998), Richardson (2007) and van Dijk (1998) have focused on print media. These studies exploring media language have addressed several issues. For example, Davis and Walton (1983a) investigate the labelling of news actors as a means to unpack the ideologies lying behind reporting on a single event. In gathering the data, the samples are acquired from video recordings of television news reported in three countries. Gavriely-Nuri and Balas (2010), utilizing framing theory, investigate the representation of wounded Israelis in the coverage of the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah war by three Israeli television channels. Lutz and Wodak (as cited in Bell, 1991: 5) explore the way people's understanding of the same news story is affected by different rewritings. Van Dijk (as cited in Bell, 1991: 5) investigates the discourse structure of one news story as reported in 250 newspapers in a hundred countries. Compared to this large body of work focusing on

print and broadcast news, less attention has been given to linguistic analysis of news discourse within new media such as the internet. Most of this research, for example, that of Gruber (2008) and Yates (1996), has focused on e-mails and turns in chat communication, whereas less attention has been given to conducting discourse analysis of web-based news reports.

A few studies, in particular Bazzi (2009), Iwamoto (1995) and Richardson (2007) have conducted linguistic analysis of war reporting representation of reality. These investigations of representation have aimed to reflect text producers' stance, highlight unbalanced coverage and inconsistency, and unpack hidden ideologies. To my knowledge, Gavriely-Nuri (2008, 2013) and Gavriely-Nuri and Balas (2010) are the only linguistic accounts of the 2006 war reporting discourse to date.

No studies, to my knowledge, have been conducted so far focusing on comparing the web-based coverage of different news outlets in terms of the *linguistically mediated* representation of war, and in particular there has been no such study based on the highly relevant lexico-grammatical category of transitivity – that is, who does what to whom and how/why.

One point worth commenting on is that most of the studies reviewed above, such as Dunn et al. (2005), Gavriely-Nuri (2008), Iwamoto (1995), Richardson (2007), Nohrstedt and Ottosen (2010) and Ottosen (2010), conduct analysis of media coverage of wars by news media which belong to one of the sides directly involved in the war. This choice could affect the media coverage of wars, evident, for example, in what Richardson (2007) labels “nationalist news agenda”. The present study is different in

that the selected news outlets do not belong to any of the sides directly involved in the war, i.e. they belong to non-combatant countries. The rationale for this choice is explained in detail in the next chapter (section 5.5.2).

The review of literature has also shown that in exploring war reporting a wide range of theoretical frameworks and research approaches/methodologies have been employed. While some studies have relied on Galtung's peace journalism model, other studies have employed elements from Bakhtin's notions of heteroglossia and entextualization, rhetorical theory (Aristotle's three modes of proof), cognitive linguistics and the various approaches of CDA, particularly Norman Fairclough's, Ruth Wodak's and van Dijk's approaches. Different types of analysis have been conducted, for example, rhetorical analysis, content analysis, corpus analysis, semantic-syntactic analysis, in particular the semantic concept of transitivity in Halliday's SFL. The present study builds on Fairclough's (1995b, 2003, 2009, 2010) approach to CDA as a general theoretical framework for the analysis of representation in news reporting. In order to examine the connection between linguistic structures and the social values and ideologies they represent, I draw on functional model developed by Halliday (1967, 1985, 1994, 2004). In the process of interpreting the findings of the textual analysis, my study relies on van Dijk's (1998, 2011) approach to the analysis of opinions and ideologies in the press. The following chapter discusses in detail the theoretical framework, research approach and methodology adopted in this thesis.

The aim of the present study is, therefore, is to analyze the selected news reports from Al-Jazeera and the BBC websites in relation to their representations of the events and

of actors in the 2006 war between Israel and Hezbollah/Lebanon, to explore how such representations and evaluations are shaped by the text producers' attitudes and ideologies, and to examine similarities and differences between the selected news outlets in their representations of the 2006 war.

## CHAPTER 5

### Theoretical Framework and Methodology

#### 5.1. Introduction

The overarching research question in the present study is “Do the selected news outlets, Al-Jazeera and the BBC, offer different or similar representations of the 2006 war and hence position their readers into adopting certain points of view?”

In answering this question, the present chapter introduces the theoretical framework adopted in the present study, the linguistic structures considered in the syntactic-semantic analysis, data selection criteria, data collection and preparation procedures and the research approach including the method of analysis.

#### 5.2. Theoretical framework

The present study advocates a functionalist definition of discourse that views the analysis of discourse as “the analysis of language in use” (Brown and Yule, 1983: 1). This view of discourse focuses on “*what* and *how* language communicates when it is used *purposefully* in particular instances and *contexts*” (Cameron, as cited in Richardson, 2007: 24). To put it in slightly different terms, discourse analysis needs to combine the analysis of linguistic form with an analysis of the functions these forms

are meant to serve (Brown and Yule, 1983: 1). A proper interpretation of news texts needs to acknowledge what the text producer is doing through discourse, i.e. what functions news texts serve, in the light of related contextual factors, which greatly affect both the production and understanding of news. In addition to the cultural, economic, socio-political and historical contexts, other factors need to be addressed when approaching research on news media, including, among others, the institutional environment, the production process and the nature of the audience (cf. Mautner, 2008: 33).

### **5.2.1. General critical approach to discourse: Fairclough's approach to CDA**

The above functionalist definition of discourse represents one facet of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA).<sup>1</sup> Titscher et al. (2000), building on Wodak (1996), present the general principles of CDA, of which the following are the most relevant for the present study:

CDA is concerned with social problems. It is not concerned with language or language use per se, but with the linguistic character of social and cultural processes and structures. Accordingly CDA is essentially interdisciplinary.

Power-relations have to do with discourse . . . and CDA studies both power in discourse and power over discourse.

Society and culture are dialectically related to discourse: society and culture are shaped by discourse, and at the same time constitute discourse. . . .

Language use may be ideological. To determine this it is necessary to analyse texts to investigate their interpretation, reception and social effects.

Discourses are historical and can only be understood in relation to their context. . . .

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<sup>1</sup> Henceforth the abbreviation CDA will be used for Critical Discourse Analysis.

Discourse analysis is interpretative and explanatory. Critical analysis implies systematic methodology and a relationship between the text and its social conditions, ideologies and power-relations. . . . (Wodak, as cited in Titscher et al., 2000: 146)

The present study adopts CDA as a theoretical framework for the analysis of representation in war news reports. CDA as a theory and methodology of analysis has been approached from different angles, such as van Dijk's socio-cognitive model (1998, 2011), the discourse-historical model of Wodak and Reisigl (Reisigl and Wodak, 2001; Wodak, 1996, 2009; Wodak et al., 2009) and Norman Fairclough's approach (1995b, 2003, 2009, 2010). The present study adopts an eclectic approach for the analysis of representation and evaluation in war reports building on Fairclough's approach to CDA as a general theoretical framework. Elements from other theoretical and methodological frameworks, such as van Dijk's (1998, 2011) approach to the analysis of opinions and ideologies in the press and Wodak's (2009) set of adaptable research questions and Reisigl's (2008) theoretical outline of research practice, are also adapted to serve the purpose of analysis.

For Fairclough, CDA means "the analysis of relationships between concrete language use and the wider social and cultural structures" (Titscher, et al., 2000: 149). Fairclough identifies three dimensions in every discursive event according to which the analysis of any news text is conducted. The three dimensions are "text, discursive practice – which also includes the production and interpretation of texts – and social practice" (Fairclough, 1995b: 97). Building on Fairclough, Titscher et al. (2000: 153) argues that procedurally the analysis of texts takes three successive steps: "linguistic properties are described, the relationship between the productive and interpretative

processes of discursive practice and the text is interpreted, and the relationship between discursive and social practice is explained”.

One aspect of CDA which needs particular attention is the social dimension. Fairclough et al. (2011: 357) emphasize the view of discourse as a *social practice*. Describing discourse (language use) as a social practice implies the presence of “a dialectical relationship between a particular discursive event and all the diverse elements of the situation(s), institution(s), and social structures(s) which frame it”. So, while these elements of society shape the discursive event, they are simultaneously shaped by it, i.e. “discourse is socially *constitutive* as well as socially shaped” (Fairclough et al., 2011: 358). Maintaining this dialectical relationship between language and its social dimension, i.e. language is both socially constitutive and socially constituted, CDA, according to Richardson (2007), assumes that:

language ought to be analysed in relation to the social context in which it is being used and the social *consequences* of its use; and, more specifically, the relationship(s) between discourse and its social conditions, ideologies and power relations needs to be examined (Richardson, 2007: 45)

Fairclough’s dialectical approach to CDA emphasizes the need for the analysis of textual evidence, and is oriented towards connecting textual evidence to the “social practices” in which it figures (cf. Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999: 1, 6). CDA, according to Fairclough (1995a: 55) should focus on the ways language is socially shaped (in the present study by institutional practices, considerations of targeted audience, stance and ideology of text producers) and is socially constitutive, i.e. has potential to shape people’s views and interpretations of events.

Another important issue within CDA is that discourse “gives rise to important issues of power” because of its potential to be socially constitutive (Fairclough et al., 2011: 358). As regards news media, CDA is concerned with how social power and ideologies are represented, whether explicitly or implicitly, and reproduced in the news (Titscher et al., 2000: 151). Within news media power is exercised over people by influencing or shaping their attitudes and beliefs through institutional practices (cf. Lukes, as cited in Richardson, 2007: 31). Central to the discourse processes of production, consumption and understanding is power – “the power of social practices on production [text production]; the power of texts to shape understanding [text understanding]; the power of readers to resist such management [text consumption]; and the power of people to reproduce or transform society” (Richardson, 2007: 45). Relations of power and dominance, according to Fairclough et al., are implicated in “particular linguistic conceptualization of the world”, i.e. representations of things and people in discourse (Fairclough et al., 2011: 358). The analysis of war representation by the selected news outlets in this thesis has the potential to reveal the ways in which relationships of power represented in war reporting affect people’s perception and understanding of war events.

According to Simpson and Mayr (2010: 4-5), ideology refers to the ways in which “beliefs, opinions and value-systems” held either individually or collectively by social groups (or institutions) “interact with the broader social and political structures of the society”.<sup>2</sup> Use of language (i.e. discourse) may be influenced by ideology, including political beliefs, and by socio-cultural practices. The critical view of ideology stresses the role ideologies play in the “production and reproduction of [(unequal)] power

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<sup>2</sup> The term ideology is coined in the early 1800s by the French philosopher Antoine Destutt de Tracy and developed by Karl Marx (Richardson, 2007: 32).

relations” between people and groups of people (Richardson, 2007: 240; cf. Fairclough, 2011: 371). Ideologies play an important role in “establishing, maintaining and changing social relations” of power and domination (Fairclough, 2003: 9-10).

Contrary to viewing media as a unified voice with a definite clear bias, it seems preferable to assume that the news media, rather than adopting a specific ideological perspective, might adopt several, sometimes opposed or inconsistent, ideologies (cf. van Dijk, 1998: 26). Traces of this ideological polarity and inconsistency, which may be referred to as multi-ideological perspective, on the part of the one news outlet would be expected to be detected on the linguistic level of analysis. Thorough linguistic analysis of texts can help us understand how dominant ideologies are embedded in language and expressed in and sustained by textual practices.

At the textual level, the present study draws mainly on Halliday’s theory of Systemic Functional Linguistics, which will be discussed in detail in section 5.2.2. Fairclough manages to operationalize “the theoretical assumption that texts and discourses are socially constitutive” through Halliday’s notion of “multifunctionality of language in texts” (Titscher et al., 2000: 149). “Textual analysis [from a CDA perspective] involves the analysis of the way propositions are structured . . . combined and sequenced”, while assigning meaning to various linguistic forms (Richardson, 2007: 38, cf. Fairclough, 1995b). The analysis of transitivity and the logical relations between clauses conducted in this thesis reflect this view of textual analysis.

An interpretative or critical approach towards textual analysis needs to investigate the text in terms of “what is present and what *could* have been but is *not* present” (Richardson, 2007: 38, italics in the original; cf. Fairclough, 1995a: 58, 106). What characterizes Halliday’s SFL is that the system network format that is central to his model of language is all about meaning choice. Choices have to be made throughout the different stages of text production: “the choice to use one way of describing [labelling or categorizing] a person, an action or a process over another; the choice to use one way of constructing a sentence over an alternative; the choice to include a particular fact or opinion or argument over another” and the rest of the choices available to a text producer (Richardson, 2007: 38). A critical approach towards textual analysis also means that elements of textual analysis (vocabulary, grammar, semantics, etc.) should be analysed in relation to the function(s) they perform, whether social or ideological, in their context of usage (cf. Fairclough, 1995a). The analysis of representation in this thesis involves analyzing linguistic structures in the light of their possible functions, while considering options available to text producers.

Textual analysis has to be conducted in the light of the relevant social context involving the processes of text production and interpretation (Richardson, 2007: 39).<sup>3</sup> Titscher et al. (2000: 150) argue that “text production leaves so-called cues in a text and interpretation takes place on the basis of textual elements”. *Textual* analysis becomes *discourse* analysis when news texts are analysed in the light of their social conditions of production (the concerned news institutions) and consumption (the targeted and potential audience) (cf. Richardson, 2007). Text producers communicate meanings in news texts in certain ways to their readers who perceive and interpret the

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<sup>3</sup> This is parallel to the level of “discursive practice” in Fairclough’s model of CDA.

communicated meanings in the light of relevant contextual factors (Richardson, 2007: 39-40). Moreover, readers' "perspectives, agendas and background knowledge" as well as their beliefs and opinions and judgement of text producers can affect the perception and interpretation of the communicated message regardless of any other effects the processes of text production and interpretation can have on the discursive meaning (Richardson, 2007: 41).

Discourse analysis becomes *critical* discourse analysis when the socio-cultural context and the historical context of the concerned communicative event are addressed in the analysis (Fairclough, 1995a: 57; Richardson, 2007: 42; Wodak and Meyer, 2009). The term *critical* from a CDA perspective is related to the term *critique* which describes "the mechanisms for both explaining social phenomena and for changing them" (Fairclough et al., 2011: 358). This level of analysis, according to Fairclough (1995a: 62), "may involve [a particular event's] more immediate situational context, the wider context of institutional practices the event is embedded within, or the yet wider frame of the society and the culture [i.e. the social and cultural contexts]". It is on this level of analysis that CDA attempts to relate discourse, i.e. language in use, to its functions and effects on the wider society as well as the ideological claims texts make. It is also on this level that the influence of society on discourse is accounted for (cf. Richardson, 2007). Fairclough et al. (2011: 361-362) emphasize that "any critical interpretation must per force relate to the social context". The textual analysis involving analysis of the form-content-function of texts, combined with analysis of aspects of text production and consumption, is critically viewed in relation to the wider context (Richardson, 2007: 42). Fairclough et al. (2011: 373) put it like this: "a detailed analysis of the linguistic features of texts", requires a parallel detailed

analysis of “the ways in which it [i.e. a text] is embedded in its social conditions and linked to other texts and social practices, to ideologies and power relations”. It is in this sense that Richardson (2007: 15) argues that CDA is an “interpretative, contextual and constructivist approach”.

### **5.2.2. Approach to the textual analysis of representation: Halliday’s SFL**

This section builds on Halliday’s theory of Systemic Functional Linguistics (1985, 1994, 2004) as well as the work of a number of key linguists who contribute to textual analysis, particularly of news media, such as Bazzi (2009), Bell (1991), Fowler (1991), Kress (1983), Mautner (2008), Richardson (2007) and van Leeuwen (1996, 2008). The hallmark of Halliday’s SFL as a theory is the recognition of three *macrofunctions* realized in lexico-grammatical choices and grammatical structures. Halliday’s three macrofunctions are the following:

#### **(i) The ideational (representational) function**

This function involves the text producer’s representation of the world. It involves lexico-grammatical choices that are realizations in language of the text producer’s experience of the world (Fairclough, 1995a: 58; Halliday, cited in Fowler, 1991: 69). The ideational component of meaning (“metafunction” in SFG),<sup>4</sup> i.e. clause as representation, consists of two sub-components: “experiential” and “logical” (cf. Halliday, 1994: 179-180), which are discussed in sections 5.4.1 and 5.4.2 below.

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<sup>4</sup> SFG stands for Systemic Functional Grammar.

### **(ii) The Interpersonal function**

This function involves the text producer's use of language as a means to be part of an interactive speech event: "the expression of [her/] his comments, attitudes, evaluations", as well as her/his relationship with the text (Halliday, cited in Fowler, 1991: 69). It involves the text producer's evaluation of representations and social relations and interactions established through discourse (Fairclough, 1995a: 58).

### **(iii) The textual function**

The textual function involves uniting individual components of the text into a coherent and cohesive whole and combining the whole with situational contexts (cf. Fairclough, 1995a: 58).

The SFL model of language has been applied to practical analysis of discourse, including media texts. Kress (1983: 128) proposes an analysis of news media texts according to the broad linguistic function of the linguistic structure based on Halliday's systemic functional model. Kress argues that news media analysis needs to account for three sets of linguistic features, which are realizations of Halliday's three (meta-) functions. First, there are "those features which express the speaker/writer's perception and classification of events and their attendant participants – the expression of experiential meanings" and logical relations. Second, there are "those features which express the speaker/writer's attitude towards the proposition and towards [her/] his audience – the expression of interpersonal meanings". Third, there are "features which express the speaker/writer's wish to structure the information which he [she] presents – the expression of contextual meanings" (Kress, 1983: 128).

Since the focus of this thesis is the analysis of representation, it seeks to investigate realizations of the ideational (meta-) function of communication. The study also investigates, though on a smaller scale, the interpersonal (meta-) function. The analysis of representation (of propositional content) closely relates to the ideational function of discourse on its two planes involving the expression of experiential meanings and logical relations (Halliday, 1994: 36, 179). However, the analysis of representation entails an analysis of evaluation; representation implies “the qualification of representation *from a specific ideological point of view*” (Fowler, 1991: 66). The analysis of evaluation relates to the interpersonal function of language involving the expression of interpersonal meanings. Kress (1983: 136) argues that the use of certain linguistic devices for the expression of both experiential meaning and interpersonal meaning represents “the transformation of events or texts in accordance with the ideological framework” of the text producer. He claims that both ways of expression are social, i.e. they both represent an attitude towards the world. Section 5.4 introduces the main linguistic structures in Halliday’s model that are used in this thesis to analyze the representation of the 2006 war.

While the present study draws on Halliday’s SFL as an approach to the textual analysis of data, van Leeuwen’s (1996, 2008) social actor theory is also worth attention when analyzing representation of actions and participants. Van Leeuwen’s theory (1996, 2006) uses Halliday’s SFL system network format to provide a detailed taxonomy of social actors. Van Leeuwen also draws on Halliday’s categorization of participant roles, e.g. Actor, Goal, to draw distinctions between the various socio-semantic categories. The important point is that while van Leeuwen uses Halliday’s notion of transitivity, he perceives Halliday’s participant roles as grammatical, rather

than semantic-functional categories (van Leeuwen, 1996: 43-44). Van Leeuwen's theory has two main dimensions: socio-semantic categories and linguistic structures which are realizations of these categories. No one-to-one correspondence exists between a specific socio-semantic category and one linguistic realization, i.e. there is a lack of "biuniqueness" (van Leeuwen, 1996: 32). Despite the lack of correspondence between van Leeuwen's socio-semantic categories and their linguistic realization, each of these categories is to a certain degree realized linguistically in a set of linguistic structures (cf. van Leeuwen, 1996: 34).

Some categories from van Leeuwen's theory are used to serve the purpose of analyzing representation in this thesis. A main distinction van Leeuwen (1996: 38) draws is between "exclusion" and "inclusion" of social actors in representations. "Radical exclusions", involving the total lack of reference to participants as well as their actions, are particularly implicated in the "critical comparison of different representations of the same social practice" (van Leeuwen, 1996: 39). Of particular relevance to the present thesis is the distinction van Leeuwen makes between "activation" with participants represented as active and dynamic, and "passivation" where participants are represented as "being at the receiver end" of the action (van Leeuwen, 1996: 43-44). The linguistic realizations of these categories are mainly Halliday's transitivity choices. Passivation involves introducing participants as either "subjected" or "beneficialised", which more or less correspond to Halliday's roles of Goal and Beneficiary (van Leeuwen, 1996: 44-45). Another important distinction is drawn between "nomination" which involves representing participants "in terms of their unique identity, by being nominated", and "categorization" which involves representing participants "in terms of identities and functions they share with others"

(van Leeuwen, 1996: 52). There are two types of categorization which are “functionalization” and “identification”. Functionalization involves referring to participants “in terms of something they do, for instance an occupation or role”. Identification involves defining participants in terms of what they are, by, for example, classifying them according to their gender, ethnicity, race and the like (van Leeuwen, 1996: 53-54). While participants can be personalized, i.e. represented as human beings, they can be alternatively impersonalized, i.e. represented by other means that do not have the “semantic feature ‘human’ ”. Impersonalization is of two types: “abstraction” and “objectivation” (van Leeuwen, 1996: 59).

Van Leeuwen’s (1996, 2008) and Halliday’s (1986, 1994, 2004) theories share their focus as being socio-semantic categories (van Leeuwen) or semantic-functional categories (Halliday) rather than linguistic ones. Another noteworthy point is that van Leeuwen argues that his starting point is to “establish the sociological and critical relevance” of the categories he proposes, which is followed by showing how they are realized on the linguistic level (van Leeuwen, 1996: 32). However, van Leeuwen’s study, one might claim, has clearly shown the sociological dimension and critical relevance of his categories mainly in relation to one examined text (the “Race Odyssey”), which has occasionally resulted in a lack of focus on how this can be extended to other texts. Another thing which can occasionally be observed is the presence of an overlap between a number of categories, which van Leeuwen himself refers to when he speaks of the presence of both “either/or” choices as well as simultaneous choices among the different categories (van Leeuwen, 1996: 67). One possible problem with van Leeuwen’s model is that it offers a set of pre-defined socio-semantic categories that may not well apply to all texts; conversely, the discerned

participant roles in a specific text may not fit into van Leeuwen's categories. An alternative approach to analyzing social actors in a text is simply to consider what is found in the participant role slots (and the types of processes associated with these participants); this is the approach adopted in this thesis. Although the present study does not adopt van Leeuwen's theory of social actors in its entirety as an approach to the textual analysis for reasons mentioned above, the analysis conducted in this thesis uses some of van Leeuwen's categories which are relevant to the analysis of representation in the 2006 war.

### **5.2.3. Approach to interpreting the analysis: van Dijk's ideological square**

In the process of interpreting the findings of the detailed textual analysis as well as in the formulation of a well-based critique, I draw on van Dijk's (1998, 2011) approach to the analysis of opinions and ideologies in the press. Van Dijk (2011: 395-396) proposes five categories of meanings that are more evident in ideological discourse and which are particularly implicated in the analysis of ideology. These categories include "group identity and identification", "activity", "norms and values", "group relations" and "resources". Of these categories, the overall category of "group relations" is particularly relevant for the study of ideological manifestations in war reporting. Van Dijk, in reference to this overall category and its social meanings in discourse, states that:

Central to most ideologies is the representation of the relation between our own (in-) group and other (out-) groups, between Us and Them. Given the positive bias in ideological self-schemas, we may thus expect a generally positive representation of Us and a negative representation of Them, at all levels of discourse. This ideological polarization is so pervasive in discourse.  
(van Dijk, 2011: 396)

The category of “group relations” can manifest in (ideological) discourse in an overall strategy that involves “the way in-groups and out-groups are represented” in discourse (van Dijk, 2011: 396-397). The category of group relations defines for group members their allies and opponents; hence it is characterized by its ideological *polarization* (van Dijk, 2011: 386). This polarization manifests on the level of discourse in what van Dijk (1998: 33, 2011: 396-397) labels the “ideological square”, which involves four “complementary overall strategies”, as table 1 shows:

Emphasize [foreground] <i>Our</i> good things [properties/actions]	Emphasize <i>Their</i> bad things
De-emphasize [mitigate/background] <i>Our</i> bad things [properties/actions]	De-emphasize <i>Their</i> good things

1. Van Dijk’s ideological square

The ideological square, as a “complex meta-strategy”, typically involves positive ingroup description (positive self-presentation), and negative outgroup description (negative other-presentation) (van Dijk, 2011: 397). The ideological square is one way of “representing the world – and specifically ‘our’ and ‘their’ actions and position within the world”. The ideological square which appears in most social conflicts and actions can manifest across all linguistic dimensions of a text. It may be expressed in “the choice of lexical items that imply positive or negative evaluations, as well as in the structure of whole propositions and their categories” (van Dijk, 1998: 33). One clear example of this is the use of pronouns. The pronouns *us* and *them* are the prototypical representation of this overall strategy (van Dijk, 2011: 397). It is worth noticing that *us* “may refer to the ingroup or its friends and allies”, and *them* “to the outgroup and its friends or allies”, according to van Dijk (1998: 33).

Van Dijk (2011: 397-398) offers a number of discourse structures and textual strategies that can serve the purpose of positive self-representation and negative other-representation as dictated by the ideological square. These strategies can be realized on the level of semantic structures involving meaning and reference or the level of formal structures. One of van Dijk's strategies that are significant for the analysis conducted in the present study is the strategy of "negative topics". This strategy involves "overall discourse topics" that emphasize, for example, other's threat, criminality and insecurity. Another strategy "agency" involves emphasizing *their* agency or responsibility of negative action more than *ours*. Formal structures which are important to the analysis conducted in Chapters 6 and 7 include the use of word order, order of clauses and the ways they are related, active clauses as opposed to passive clauses and nominalization (van Dijk, 2011: 398).

While this section outlines the general theoretical framework of this thesis, the following section highlights the research methodology. The analysis of news texts is conducted in three steps, corresponding to the three dimensions of any discursive event, as proposed by Fairclough (1995b: 97). These steps include analyzing the text in terms of its linguistic features, relating this linguistic analysis of the text to the contexts of production and interpretation (discursive practice), and explaining these two stages in the light of the wider context (social practice). These three stages can be procedurally realized through Martin Reisigl's (2008) approach for the analysis of interdisciplinary topics such as political rhetoric. Reisigl offers a framework consisting of a sequence of eight stages in research practice which, though meant for the polito-linguistic analysis of political rhetoric, is equally applicable to media war reporting.

### **5.3. Operationalizing the theoretical framework**

The present research adopts a research methodology based on Reisigl's (2008: 100-4) theoretical outline of research practice in politolinguistic analysis as well as Norman Fairclough's (1995a, 1995b, 2009, 2010) theory and approach to CDA.

The starting point of the present research is an awareness of a social problem which is manifest in certain discursive practices and "possesses [certain] linguistic aspects" (Reisigl, 2008: 100; cf. Fairclough et al., 2011: 358). The present study investigates representation in news media language, specifically in war reports, and the ways in which varying representations may affect and shape readers perception of war.

The second step followed in the present research is the collection of data for analysis together with the gathering of relevant contextual information. The processes of data collection and context exploration are governed by a number of criteria. For the present study, the processes of data collection and context exploration focuses on web-based (semiotic media) news reports (genre) constituting Al-Jazeera and the BBC coverage of the war between Israel and Hezbollah/Lebanon (political actors, event) which lasted from 12<sup>th</sup> of July 2006 to 13<sup>th</sup> of August 2006 (specific period of time). However, the defined time span extends to include not only reports produced during the war but also some relevant news reports from the aftermaths of the war. The study covers a number of interconnected discourses including the discourse about the Israel-Lebanon 2006 conflict and the discourse about the parallel Israel-Palestine 2006 conflict, the discourse concerning the Iranian-Hezbollah and the American-Israeli relationships.

The third phase comprises the selection, preparation, examination and sorting of data (Reisigl, 2008: 100). The websites initially selected included the BBC, Fox News, Al-Jazeera and the CNN. After adjusting and narrowing the selection criteria, the BBC and Al-Jazeera were selected, while the other two were excluded.<sup>5</sup> One rationale for the exclusion of CNN is that a big part of its coverage does not constitute direct reporting of the war, i.e. related to the war's economic, agricultural and environmental impacts, which are not within the scope of the thesis. It should be made clear that the selection of certain news outlets to provide the material is also governed by data availability. For example, news reports constituting the coverage of the selected event are no longer accessible in the archives of some news outlets' websites and are therefore not selected. Other criteria were later applied in order to attain a manageable corpus, such as representativeness and salience of the selected linguistic structures, which led to the selection of headlines and leads, as being representative of the whole reports, for analysis. The result of such procedures is a specialized and topic-oriented corpus (cf. Baker, 2006: 26-29).

- The fourth phase of research involves the specification of the research question(s) on the basis of initial rapid checking of the study material. In the fifth phase a small-scale sample qualitative analysis was conducted aiming to further specify the research questions and adjust the analytical tools (cf. Reisigl, 2008: 101).

In phase six, the research proceeds with a detailed linguistic analysis of the selected texts. Though the present study is essentially qualitative, the starting point for almost all of the analyses conducted is quantitative to provide a statistically reliable starting

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<sup>5</sup> For the rationale for selecting these news outlets, see section 5.5.2.

point for the qualitative analysis. Furthermore, quantitative analysis is used to substantiate the findings of the qualitative analysis. This stage operates on the different levels of linguistic analysis, and includes the integration of relevant contextual information. This detailed textual analysis is followed by “an overall interpretation of the results of analysis and takes into account the social, historical and political context of the analyzed discursive data” (Reisigl, 2008: 101). A final stage is dedicated to “the formulation of a critique that seeks to reveal problematic discursive strategies”. This critique also aims to account for “opaque, contradictory and manipulative relations among power, language and social structures” (Reisigl, 2008: 101).

Concerning the question of researcher’s neutrality, it is doubtful whether elements of individual perspective can ever be completely absent. One way to mitigate this inevitable risk is to follow a systematic research methodology as outlined (cf. Mason, 2002: 52; Mautner, 2008: 37). However, as made clear in section 5.2, the overarching framework is that of CDA and this framework by definition involves critical judgement, which is likely to be affected by the analyst’s background and beliefs as well as by political and ethical convictions that ground critical judgements. One solution to this problem is to make such elements explicit. In fact, Fairclough (2011: 358) argues that, as a research approach, CDA is distinctive in the sense that “without compromising its social scientific objectivity and rigour, it openly and explicitly positions itself” with regard to both the problem under analysis and the subsequent critical analysis (cf. Richardson, 2007: 2).

## **5.4. Analytical tools**

This section aims to introduce the main linguistic structures considered in the syntactic-semantic analysis of representation conducted in the present study. In particular, it aims to demonstrate the ways in which an analysis of transitivity choices, both grammatical and lexical, combined with an analysis of the logical relations between clauses can provide a robust methodology for revealing differential representations between text producers.

### **5.4.1. The system of transitivity**

Transitivity, which is “a fundamental and powerful semantic concept” in Halliday’s ideational function, is “an essential tool in the analysis of the representation” of some aspects of reality such as the structure of events and their attendant participants (cf. Fowler, 1991: 71). The ideational function is realised through a variety of structures but the most important is probably the clause, one of whose functions is to express a representation of the world. More specifically, the clause can be realized in various structures that SFL classifies in the system of transitivity (cf. Halliday, 1994: 106). The primary principle of transitivity analysis is to explore who or what (agent) did what (process type) to whom or what (affected participant), and how/why (under what circumstantial or expansion elements) (cf. Simpson, 1993: 106; Simpson and Mayr, 2010: 65; Bazzi, 2009: 137). In other words, the critical analysis of patterns of transitivity can be seen as one way of exploring “how blame or credit are attributed” (Beard, 2000: 30).

The analysis of the representation in the light of the system of transitivity involves identifying three basic elements in the clause. These elements include 1) the type of

process, which is expressed by the verb phrase in the clause (called a predicate following case grammar), 2) the roles assigned to the participants and entities – who are normally realized by nouns or noun phrases in the clause – ascribed the actions, processes or states in the clause, i.e. how they are represented or constructed, and optionally 3) the circumstances associated with the process, which are typically expressed by adverbial phrases or PPs (Fowler, 1991: 73; Halliday, 1985: 101-102; Beard, 2000: 30; Simpson, 1993: 88; Simpson and Mayr, 2010: 66). In doing so the analysis can account for the content meanings of “who did what to whom (and how/why)?” as represented by text producers.

Transitivity helps capture the different constructions of reality, according to Mautner (2008: 41), in that it enables the text producer to represent the same event in alternative ways and from different perspectives, which are often based on, and largely shaped by, her/his purposes. This is manifest in the different roles he/she assigns to the participants and the types of actions he/she ascribes to these participants. While the text producer can explicitly assign roles or ascribe actions to participants, he/she can equally choose not to explicitly specify or assign roles to any of the participants or to associate them with any action. Similarly, the agency of a particular participant or the affliction of another can be foregrounded, delayed, blurred, weakened or hidden to serve different purposes. A number of studies such as Clark (1992), Fowler (1991), Montgomery (1995) and Trew (1979b), among other studies, have focused on how role assignment can reflect issues of responsibility and blame in such news stories covering a wide range of topics, such as victim/attacker in rape incidents and workers/police in union strikes (cf. Allan, 2010: 102).

It is in this sense that transitivity can be said to be “the foundation of representation” of reality (Fowler 1991: 71). A text producer’s selection of one grammatical pattern from among alternative ways “has the effect of foregrounding certain meanings [processes, participants] while suppressing or concealing others” (Simpson and Mayr, 2010: 65), and hence the grammar of the language can reflect the way people view the world. Thompson (2004: 86-87) points out that “there are ‘goings-on’ (verbs) which involve things (nouns) which may have attributes (adjectives) and which go on against background details of place, time, manner, etc. (adverbials)”. In such circumstances where language use can be said to be ideological, transitivity could be indicative of different ideological viewpoints (Fowler, 1991: 71). Transitivity choices made by journalists can be ideologically significant, as can be seen in distributing blame and responsibility among different participants in an event (Allan, 2010: 102). For this reason, Richardson (2007: 57) argues that “transitive choice cannot be overlooked in any linguistic analysis of journalism”.

According to Bazzi (2009) transitivity analysis can be utilized in the analysis of news discourse to attain the following goals

to analyse the experiential or ideational function in the text, the cognitive meanings, the commonsensical beliefs about a particular struggle, the preferred readership of a political event, how political reality is variously represented. . . . [Transitivity analysis also helps] analyze who is considered to be causing what to whom; what agents are consistently and actively incriminated; who are the affected participants. . . . [It can also help] observe what conditional relations exist between clauses (i.e. what causes are deleted or emphasized and what facts are conditionally related in the circumstantial element to reflect firm beliefs, cognitive bias or to incriminate the ideological enemy). . . . (Bazzi, 2009: 82)

Transitivity as the basis of representation, i.e. as a grammatical resource upon which writers draw in order to represent a certain view of reality, will be analyzed in headlines and lead sentences of the selected news texts representing the selected news outlets: Al-Jazeera and the BBC. The main goal of analyzing the data in the light of transitivity, as well as other syntactic transformations, is to find out how the selected news outlets represent the 2006 war, its events and participants as well as the way such representations can be indicative of those news outlets' attitudes and ideologies.

Below I present a structured list of the relevant linguistic structures and functional-semantic categories within the system of transitivity, particularly of participant roles, process types and circumstances, that I utilize in the present research as tools for analysis.

**(i) Participant roles**

The roles taken by the different participants in a process are closely connected to the nature of that process and are central to the analysis of representation in the light of the system of transitivity. Participant roles that are most relevant to the analysis conducted in chapters 6, 7 and 8 include the following:

**a. Actor**

The *Actor* is defined as “the logical subject” or “the one that does the deeds” (Halliday, 1994: 109). Agentivity which characterizes the performer of action typically involves responsibility (cf. Cruse, as cited in Iwamoto, 1995: 61), e.g. “Hezbollah rocket attacks kill 2 Israeli soldiers”.

**b. Beneficiary**

The *Beneficiary* is the participant “to whom or for whom the process is said to take place” or the participant “that is benefitting from the performance of the process” (Halliday, 1994: 114, 2004: 191). However, it is not necessarily that the participant who is assigned this role benefits from the process in the usual sense of the word, i.e. the *benefit* should not be necessarily *beneficial* (cf. Halliday, 1994: 145; Thompson, 2004: 106).

**c. Goal**

The *Goal* is an optional participant “to which the process is extended” or who is affected by the action and implies being “directed at” (Halliday, 1985: 103; 1994: 109-110). For example, the entity “two Israeli soldiers” is the goal in “Hezbollah captures two Israeli soldiers”.

**d. Range**

*Range* is “the element that specifies the range or scope of the process” (Halliday, 1985: 134-137; 1994: 146; 2004: 293). In a *material process*, the relationship between the *Actor* and *Range* is not one of doing, a *Range* is a thing to which nothing is being done, rather the *Range* indicates either “the domain over which the process takes place” or “the process itself” (Halliday, 1985: 136; 1994: 148, 164). An example can be seen in “Israeli troops have entered the border town of Bint Jbeil”, where the NP “the border town of Bint Jbeil” is assigned the role of *Range*. Iwamoto (1995: 62) argues that the most notable thing about the entities assigned the role of *Range* is that semantically “they do not refer to participants at all”. However, the fact that *Range* NPs often occur in the grammatical object position, which is typically occupied by the

*Goal*, means that such elements might be perceived as *Goal*, i.e. as a participant in the process (Iwamoto, 1995: 62).

**e. Receiver and Target in verbal processes**

The role of *Receiver* in *verbal processes* is assigned to the participant to whom the verbalization is addressed or directed. The *Target*, on the other hand, is the role assigned to the participant or entity targeted by the *verbal process* (as in “condemn/criticize/praise him”). The *Sayer* is as if “it were acting verbally on” the *Target* (Halliday, 1994: 141; Thompson, 2004: 101).

**f. Sayer**

The *Sayer* is the main participant involved in a *verbal process*. Though the *Sayer* is typically human, any entity that communicates a message can be assigned this role (Halliday, 1994: 140), e.g. “Hezbollah declares war”.

**g. Senser**

With *mental processes* the person or entity assigned the role of *Senser*, who has the mind in which the *mental process* occurs, is not really acting, nor affected by the *mental action*. In addition, the participant who senses should be “endowed with consciousness”, i.e. human-like. Therefore, the entity which would be assigned this role will be perceived as being conscious (Halliday, 1994: 114).

**h. Direct and indirect participants in processes**

Halliday (1994: 150, 212-213) differentiates between direct and indirect participants, using the label “indirect participant” to describe the role of a participant inside a

prepositional phrase.<sup>6</sup> In such cases where the participant occurs inside a PP, it becomes associated with the process only indirectly through the intermediary of a preposition. In this way, Halliday draws a grammatical as well as semantic line between direct participant and indirect participant. For example, compare direct role assignment in “an Israeli airstrike killed 2 civilians” with “two civilian were killed in an Israeli airstrike”, where the *Actor* “airstrike” is introduced into the clause indirectly, via a preposition.

### i. Agency

A large body of research has focused on exploring the notion of agency and the ways in which the syntactic structure of the English clause can be manipulated or transformed to serve different purposes such as blurring or hiding agency. The work of Roger Fowler, Gunther Kress, Bob Hodge and Tony Trew, who developed Critical Linguistics as an approach, building mainly on the functional model developed by Halliday, investigated syntactic transformations of the sentence and their effects and critical relevance in different types of texts.

For example, Fowler and Kress (1979), in their study of the way language can be used to control people’s behaviour, explore syntactic transformations such as passivization and nominalization in two “regulatory” texts (swimming club rules and general regulations for university students). The analysis shows the ways in which the passive transformation and nominalization can be employed to achieve certain effects and serve certain functions in respect to the analyzed texts (Fowler and Kress, 1979: 32-33). For example, the study reveals the potential of passivized and nominalized

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<sup>6</sup> Henceforth the abbreviation PP will be used for prepositional phrase.

structures to “supress”, i.e. background, the agent in such texts with a formal impersonal style, which serves the purpose of clouding relationships of responsibility (Fowler and Kress, 1979: 39-41). The study demonstrates ways language can be manipulated to exercise power and control over people in directive/instructive texts. Attention is given to the potential of such syntactic transformations to achieve thematic prominence (thematization) and their potential for suppression of other roles through agent deletion and further reduction of passives to noun phrases (Fowler and Kress, 1979: 41).

Similarly, Trew (1979b), focusing on the coverage by English newspapers of the riots that followed the London Notting Hill carnival in 1977, examined the ways in which texts were syntactically manipulated to represent the actions of the police and the rioting mob. In his analysis of the ways in which agency is conveyed, Trew draws a distinction between “transactive” and “non-transactive” clauses, where the former involves a causer (actor) and an affected participant, whereas the latter involves only one participant. The absence of causation in the case of non-transactive clauses has the potential to blur responsibility (Trew, 1979b: 124). By focusing on which participants are represented as actors, which as affected participants and the type of actions ascribed to the different sides, Trew explores how agency and affliction are conveyed and how responsibility is distributed by the different newspapers covering the event. These explorations of participant roles and process types, Trew (1979b: 154) argues, are important in any analysis of underlying ideologies that shape reporting. The analysis in this study by Trew reveals the ways in which role assignment and variations in process types can affect the ways in which agency is conveyed.

In their study focusing on the coverage by an editorial in the Guardian of a ban on miner's overtime by the British government in 1973, Hodge and Kress (1993) analyze the text in the light of a number of syntactic transformations, such as passivization and nominalization, in order to reveal the ideologies underlying these transformations. Hodge and Kress (1993: 19-20) explore the ways variations in syntactic structure of the clause can express causality. Hodge and Kress give particular attention to the ways in which the passive and nominalization can be used to serve different effects based on what information is concealed (Hodge and Kress, 1993: 26-27). For example, they highlight the potential of inverting the actor and affected participant positions to relocate responsibility and the way introducing the actor through "by" can weaken the causal link. Hodge and Kress provide an outline of a number of syntactic transformations, in particular passivization and nominalization, and their possible effects, including the backgrounding and foregrounding of agency.

In another study, Fairclough (1995a) tackles the ways in which processes of news selection can lead to presences and absences in news texts, through inclusion of certain aspects of events and exclusion of others. An example of absences is the lack of historical context when reporting on events, which as Fairclough (1995a) points out is characteristic of most news stories. Fairclough (1995: 106) proposes four levels to describe absences and presences in a news story. He differentiates between information which are "absent", "presupposed", "backgrounded" and "foregrounded" (Fairclough, 1995: 106). Fairclough associates textual presences and absences with the ways in which meanings are expressed, i.e. explicit and implicit meanings. He argues that a text is a combination of both types of meaning. Fairclough's (1995a: 107) discussion of presupposition highlights a number of its pragmatic effects in certain

texts, but it does not focus on the different textual realizations and linguistic structures that have the potential of triggering presupposition. There are also other expressions of implicit meanings that Fairclough's discussion does not highlight such as what is implicated (implicature) and what is entailed (entailment), in addition to what is presupposed. Fairclough's (1995a: 119) discussion of the semantic phenomena of backgrounding and foregrounding focuses on the level of clause complex. He relates the system of independency and the ordering of clauses to achieving an effect of backgrounding and foregrounding. Information in primary/main clauses is more likely to be foregrounded compared to the information provided in secondary/subordinate clauses. The way information is introduced, i.e. informational structure of clauses, Fairclough (1995a: 120-201) points out, can be related to effects of foregrounding and backgrounding. The *Theme*, which is "the topic of the clause" (Fairclough, 1995: 120) or the element "with which the clause is concerned" (Halliday, 1994: 37), is informationally prominent. This informational prominence is linked to certain sentential positions including sentence-initial and sentence-final positions, which can be said to be positions of thematic focus (Fairclough, 1995: 120-121). Although Fairclough's discussion highlights the important semantic phenomena of backgrounding and foregrounding, it does not seem to relate these phenomena to specific linguistic realizations that can convey different degrees of agency.

The studies reviewed above demonstrate the ways in which the grammar of the clause can be manipulated through certain syntactic transformations, particularly passivization and nominalization, in order to serve different purposes. However, many of the ways in which such transformations, among many other ways of expressing agency, can be linked or related to each other and to other ways of expressing agency

in such a way to express varying degrees of agency are not spelled out. Agency can be conveyed in different ways including variations in process types, the use of certain syntactic transformations, the use of different prepositions to introduce participants into clauses and utilizing the grammar of clause complex to balance agency.

Similarly, a large body of research has adopted Halliday's (1985, 1994, 2004) SFL as an approach to the textual analysis, in particular his notion of transitivity. The analysis of transitivity essentially involves an analysis of how agency is being conveyed through analyzing participant roles and process types. A large number of studies such as Bloor and Bloor (2004), Eggins (2004), Simpson (1993), Simpson and Mayr (2010) and Thompson (2004) approach Halliday's SFL in different ways with the purpose of elaborating on his theory and offering insights into certain aspects in the ways it could be applied. Similarly, a large body of studies, such as Bazzi (2009), Fairclough (1995a), Iwamoto (1995), Richardson (2007) and van Leeuwen (1996, 2008), have utilized Halliday's system of transitivity in the analysis of representation of different aspects of the world. However, the focus on relating the many different ways in which syntactic transformations can reflect different degrees of agency weakening as part of the analysis of transitivity is still missing. These studies do not elaborate on the ways in which the different representations of participants and the different types of actions ascribed to those participants can be related to the different ways they can be linguistically realized to achieve varying degrees of agency weakening. The present study suggests a theory that would systematically relate the different ways of expressing agency on a scale of agency *strength* and *weakness*. An outline of how such a theory might be established is discussed in section 9.3.2.

## **(ii) Process types**

The following process types are the most relevant to the analysis of representation conducted in this thesis.

### **a. Material processes**

A *material process* is mainly a one of *doing*; however, some *material processes*, mostly abstract but also concrete or physical, are of *happening* rather than doing, e.g. “Israeli raids reach north Lebanon”. In such cases the *Actor* is in some respects like a *Goal*, particularly when the action is not under the control of the *Actor*, i.e. “involuntary”, and such processes have only one participant. The question probing the process in this case would be “what happened to the *Actor*?” rather than “what did the *Actor* do?” (Halliday, 1994: 111).

### **b. Projected clauses in verbal processes**

With *verbal process* it is frequent that the message is expressed in a separate reported clause which, according to Functional Grammar, is labelled a “projected clause” and which is normally analyzed separately from the main clause, i.e. the projecting clause (Halliday, 1994: 140-142; Thompson, 2004: 102). While “the primary clause is a verbal process”, the projected clause functions as “the secondary clause in a ‘clause complex’”, and could be of any type (Halliday, 1994: 140). In the analysis of representation, it is significant to figure out the type of process expressed in the projected clause. Although one might argue that projected clauses are representations of what is in the mind of the *Sayer*, rather than the text producer, two reasons can explain conducting an analysis of projected clauses as part of the analysis of representation. First, the projected clause is often reported in the text producer’s own

words, i.e. reported speech, which shapes the reported content through the writer's linguistic system and hence ideological system (Mautner, 2008: 42). Second, the text producer's selection of certain sources as well as their valuation in her/his ideological system can also reflect the text producer's attitude and opinion (cf. Kress, 1983: 136). It is important to understand why the text producer is attributing to some *Sayer* that some participant is performing a certain type of process affecting another participant. Thus, if such projected clauses include reference to either Israel or Hezbollah, the accompanying processes will be integrated in the analysis in this thesis.

**c. Relational processes: attributive and identifying**

With *relational processes* the predicate does not signal a process in the normal sense of something happening; rather it sets a relationship between two concepts. With *attributive relational processes* there is only one participant in the real world which is the *Carrier*, the entity that carries the attribute, whereas the *Attribute* is hardly a participant (Thompson, 2004: 96). *Attributive intensive clauses*, according to Halliday (2004: 219), represent a central grammatical strategy and a resource for assessing and categorizing entities serving as the *Carrier* by assigning an evaluative *Attribute* to these entities. An *identifying relational process* establishes a relation between two concepts, a specific realization and a more generalizable category, where both concepts refer to the same real-world entity (Thompson, 2004: 96-97). The more general category is called the *Value*, while the specific embodiment is the *Token* (Thompson, 2004: 98). *Value* and *Token* analysis can be indicative of the broader concerns and values of the writer as well as her/his own view of the world.

**d. Verbal processes**

*Verbal processes* are “processes of saying”; however, they can cover “any kind of symbolic exchange of meaning”. The transfer of meaning need not literally be verbal; rather the *verbal action* could imply a communicative signal of some kind (Halliday, 1994: 140).

**e. Blended processes**

Halliday’s classification of processes should not be seen as forced distinct semantic classification. Whereas most verbs can be easily assigned to one of the main process types, certain verbs seem to show a blend of two categories where the dominant meaning can represent one process type but the wording encodes or brings in a different process type “colouring” (Thompson, 2004: 116). Though blended processes can be assigned to one process type as the dominant meaning, Thompson (2004: 117) suggests that if a number of the same blended process represent a recurrent pattern in a certain text, it may be analytically better to examine such occurrences separately as a “text-specific sub-category”.

**(iii) Circumstantial elements**

A *circumstantial element* is mainly expressed as a prepositional phrase (Halliday, 1994: 150). This PP itself functions as a “minor process” where the preposition can be interpreted as a “mini-verb” (Halliday, 1994: 213). The *circumstantial element of cause*, which offers the reason or purpose for which the process takes place (Halliday, 1994: 155), is particularly important in the analysis of news as it “usually reflects the cognitive aspect of context that renders a politically sensitive event common-sensical and credible to the targeted audience” (Bazzi, 2009: 81).

#### 5.4.2. The logico-semantic system of expansion and projection

The “logical component” of meaning concerns “the functional-semantic relations that make up the logic of natural language” (Halliday, 1994: 216). One dimension of the logical component of meaning is the “logico-semantic system of expansion and projection”, which, as Halliday (2004: 373) points out, closely relates to the analysis of representation as it specifies the type of relation between processes as “expressed in the grammar as a complex of clauses”. A “clause complex” is the only recognized grammatical unit above the clause in Halliday’s Functional Grammar which makes it possible to account for “the functional organization of sentences” (Halliday, 1994: 216; Halliday, 2004: 371).

In addition to analyzing the selected news reports headlines and leads in the light of the system of transitivity, the present study will also conduct an analysis, whenever applicable, of the selected leads and headlines in the light of the logico-semantic system of expansion and projection. The logico-semantic system concerns the type of relation established between clauses – hence processes integrated in these clauses – to form clause complexes. With the logico-semantic relation of *expansion*, the relationship between the secondary and primary clauses is one of *elaboration*, *extension* or *enhancement*. With the logico-semantic relation of *projection*, on the other hand, the primary clause “projects” the secondary clause (Halliday, 1994: 219-220). A lead or a headline could be interpreted as a clause complex; however, due to the structural complexity of leads, compared to headlines, which are often structurally simple, this type of analysis, one might argue, would be more significant in the case of leads.

### 5.4.3. Other analytic tools and concepts

In addition to the analysis of processes, participants and circumstances within the scope of transitivity as well as the analysis of the logical relations between clauses, the analysis will also account for significant cases of syntactic transformation, such as passivization, nominalization and agency foregrounding and backgrounding. Here “transformation” refers to the syntactic variation of the clause as “a basic syntactic unit [and] a patterned ordering of words and phrases” (Fowler, 1991: 77). The work of critical linguists, such as Fowler (1991) and Kress (1983), has revealed the importance of transformations of “syntactic structures in the ideological (re)construction of social reality” (Richardson, 2007: 20). Different syntactic choices may evoke different responses from the text recipient, as to questions of blame or credit, truth, reliability, etc. (Kress, 1983: 132-136). The importance of syntactic transformations lies in textual absence, particularly when such absences represent systematically under-used alternatives. This section introduces some types of syntactic transformations that will be covered in the analysis. The section also introduces relevant analytic tools that will be utilized for the purpose of analysis.

#### (i) Modality

There is a very large theoretical literature on modality but here it is justifiable to mention how modality has been understood and analysed in texts by (critical) discourse analysts. The use of modality is one aspect of the realization of the interpersonal function of language, i.e. meaning as exchange (Gruber, 2008: 68; Simpson, 1993: 47).<sup>7</sup> Modality represents an indication of the attitudes, judgements or beliefs of text producers, “explicit or implicit in the linguistic stance taken by the

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<sup>7</sup> Other aspects of the realization of the interpersonal function of language include the expression of personal beliefs and of explicit evaluations.

speaker/writer” towards events and participants in the text, aiming to position readers to receive the communicated message and structure their interpretation of the reported events in certain ways (Fowler, 1991: 85; Kress, 1993: 134-135; Richardson, 2007: 62; Simpson, 1993: 47). It is in this sense that news reporting could be said to have an interpersonal effect or function. The absence of modal expressions, such as modal auxiliaries, modal verbs and their negations (Richardson, 2007: 59), verbs which express *mental process*, such as *think*, and quantifiers such as *most*, *some* and *scores of*, can also convey modality (Fairclough, 1995a: 131; Kress, 1983: 135; Simpson, 1993: 49). Mautner (2008: 42) points out that “patterns of modality usage may correlate with certain . . . [genres]”. Editorials and commentary, unlike the hard news reports, are more likely to show more instances of modality; however, producers of factual news genres, such as news reports, can exploit modality to present their own opinions that might be interpreted by the readers as actual facts (Reah, 1998: 95).

## **(ii) Naming and reference**

The ways participants and events (processes) are categorized, i.e. referred to or specified, can have significant impact on the way they are viewed, reflecting text producers’ representation of events and their participants, and “bear the imprint of value judgements” (Richardson, 2007: 52). The different linguistic forms used in this process of categorization are labelled “categorization devices” (Sacks, 1986: 328, 332), “referential strategies” or “predicational strategies” (cf. Reisigl and Wodak, 2001: 54; Richardson, 2007: 50). This categorization process often involves choices being made, where different selections promote different interpretations in ways that affect and shape readers’ perception (Jalbert, 1983: 282, 288). Reisigl and Wodak (2001: 47) argue that such choices can be used strategically to “serve many

psychological, social or political purposes”. “Categorization by lexical structure”, according to Fowler (1991: 84), “is an integral part of the reproduction of ideology in the newspapers”.

### **(iii) Nominalization**

Nominalizations are noun phrases morphologically derived from verbs.<sup>8</sup> Compared with a full clause, the following information is deleted in a derived nominal: the participants, any indication of time and any marker of modality (cf. Kress, 1983: 129). Despite its significance, in the present study not all cases of nominalization are analyzed. First, analytically speaking, any claims concerning the semantic effects of nominalization are difficult to make. Sometimes the content of a derived nominal can be paraphrased as a full clause, and sometimes not. In any case, nominalization seems to imply special semantic effects, e.g. reification of processes. At other times nominalization makes it possible to avoid mentioning the agent of an action (Billig, 2008: 783, 791; cf. Halliday, 1998: 207; Stenvall, 2011). Putting this slightly differently, nominalization, by allowing the use of a noun for an action, can obscure or mystify a possible causal link by concealing agency and/or affliction (Bazzi, 2009: 81; Fairclough, 1992: 182; Fowler, 1991: 80; Thompson, 1984: 121). However, nominalization becomes less significant when the effect of concealment is not evident, as when it is understood from the context who are the participants and their relations or when both the nominalised form and its verbal rewording are equally mystifying (cf. Stenvall, 2011). A similar point applies to claims often made about the passive construction, as discussed below.

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<sup>8</sup> Henceforth the abbreviation NP will be used for noun phrase.

#### (iv) **Passive transformation**

Transitivity analysis is closely linked to *voice*. The passive transformation, compared with the active equivalent, has the main effect of switching “the positions of the left-hand [subject] and right-hand [object] noun phrases, so that the patient [*Goal*] occupies the syntactic subject . . . position, which is usually associated with an agent [*Actor*]”, while the agent is delayed to come later in the clause (Fowler, 1991: 77). It also allows parts of the clause to be totally deleted.

The active “is chosen when the focus is to be on the agent”, i.e. the performer of the action, “implying clear responsibility” for the action performed (Fowler, 1991: 78). The passive, on the other hand, allows for the foregrounding or backgrounding of participants’ roles which may be emphasized, minimized or omitted entirely (Beard, 2000: 30). In their grammar book, Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1983: 225) list a number of contexts for using the passive. Amongst these contexts, the most relevant to news reporting include cases where the passive construction is employed to give the news story a new orientation by shifting the focus towards the patient, i.e. bringing to theme position the person or thing affected by the action, rather than the agent.<sup>9</sup> Halliday (1994: 37) defines the *Theme* as the element “with which the clause is concerned” while “the remainder of the message, the part in which the Theme is developed” is labelled the *Rheme*. The passive construction may also serve other strategic purposes which function depending on backgrounding the agent or not mentioning an agent at all (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 274). In cases where the agent is shifted to sentence end position, rather than entirely deleted, it could be suggested that the agent, resembling the patient, is highlighted as end position is also a position

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<sup>9</sup> This purpose is in complete agreement with R. Lakoff’s (as cited in Brown and Levinson, 1987: 273) view that one function of passivization might be “an especially emphatic marking of the topicalization”.

of thematic focus. Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1983: 225) point out that the agentless passive, though being the unmarked type of the passive that occur in speech and writing (R. Lakoff, as cited in Brown and Levinson, 1987: 273-274), is used when the speaker wants to be “tactful or evasive” by not mentioning the agent, or when he/she cannot identify the agent (i.e. agency is unknown). The agentless passive is also used when the agent is easy to supply or understood. In news reporting, Fowler (1991: 78) argues that “passive is a common structure in headlines” where “it saves space, as well as immediately establishing the topic”.

#### (v) **Quoted speech and the use of quotation marks**

The stylistic requirements of objectivity and impartiality in news reports necessitate that text producers absolve themselves from the reported content by removing, or at least backgrounding, their voices from the news story. A primary means to achieve this stylistic convention is the use of direct and indirect speech (cf. Sigal, 1986: 15; Tuchman, 1978: 83, Stenvall, 2011). By using quotation marks text producers can distance themselves from the content of what is being quoted by representing the quoted content as belonging to a “foreign ideological system”. Based on this shared assumption, the text producer’s choice of this device can coerce readers into accepting the quoted content as *foreign*, implying that this is not the writer’s own phrasing and thus conveying a neutral attitude (cf. Kress, 1983: 135-136). Alternatively, the text producer can use indirect speech, also known as reported speech, which is attributed to some other source but mediated through the text producer’s own phrasing or restatement.

**(vi) Source attribution**

Source attribution, as pointed by Scollon (1998: 217), allows text producers the ability to assign responsibility for what is being reported to a particular source while simultaneously retaining the privilege of wording the attributed text using their own language. Sourcing could be seen as an indication of the news outlet's reliability in attributing statements to their original sources. It could also be seen as a strategy to absolve the text producer from the reported message by attributing it to its source, which in turn would affect readers' evaluation of what is being reported. However, speech attributed to *foreign* sources should be analyzed in the light of the ideological "valuation" of the source in the text producer's own ideology, e.g. the representation of the source as credible would lessen the overall degree of distancing (Kress, 1983: 136). The fact that certain voices are allowed access to news stories while other sources are underrepresented could be useful in detecting the ideology adopted by different news media. Identifying the political perspectives and affiliations of such preferred sources can help detect the ideological stance of text producers (Mautner, 2008: 42). On the other hand, in attributing particular news to sources, news reporters' voice is not often neutrally given. The reporting process, e.g. through the use of reporting verbs, often directs readers towards particular ways of reading news. Source attribution is thus a significant indicator of the reporter's stance and position towards the source and the reader (Scollon, 1998: 223).

**(vii) Overlexicalization**

Overlexicalization is a lexical phenomenon that refers to the proliferation of synonymous or quasi-synonymous terms designating particular entities or ideas. In

other words, one semantic area is referred to using a (large) number of near synonyms (Fowler, 1991: 84-85).

### **5.5. Data selection criteria, collection and preparation method**

This section provides a detailed account of data selection criteria as well as data collection and preparation procedures which are being followed in the present study. Identifying the material that potentially constitutes data for this study is an initial step before building the corpus. Bell (1991: 9) highlights the decisions required to gather an actual corpus of data when conducting research on media language. Two to-and-fro steps, are involved: “making a clear and consistent delineation of exactly what is to be collected”, i.e. defining the “universe of discourse” (Bell, 1991: 10) or “universe of possible texts” (Titscher et al., 2000: 33), and “limiting the amount of data to be gathered to manageable [size]” while still keeping it representative.

The present study follows a step-by-step reasoned and justified data collection and sampling procedure. Bell (1991: 3) argues that within media research the problem is in deciding how to restrict the analysis to a manageable amount of data. Instead of random sampling, for the goal of systematic data-gathering, I followed the steps described below in the process of data selection.

- (i) A sample representative of the whole web-based news texts representing the coverage of the selected event, the 2006 war between Israel and Hezbollah/Lebanon, is acquired, including news reports, feature articles, opinion, etc.
- (ii) Samples with similar characteristics were obtained from the news coverage of the BBC and Al-Jazeera news websites of the selected event.

(iii) The whole news coverage within the specified period of the war, extending from 12 July 2006 to 13 August 2006, and its aftermaths was downloaded from the selected news outlets websites.

(iv) The data were collected from the news outlets archives and from the web using search words or phrases, e.g. 2006 war, Hezbollah. This initial corpus of news coverage was thinned down following identifying the selection criteria, which are outlined below.

### 5.5.1. Data selection criteria

The following governing criteria ruled the choice of the texts to be analyzed in the present study:

- (i) Only news *reports* are used to provide material for the present study.
- (ii) Only news reports during the *specified coverage period* are to be included.
- (iii) All the selected news reports are in *English*.
- (iv) The reports are downloaded from *internationally-acknowledged* news outlets *websites* which *do not belong to any of the directly-involved parties in the covered conflict*.
- (v) The content of the selected reports has to be a *direct reporting* of the 2006 war (including verbal reactions of the different involved sides to war events).

The same criteria were applied as meticulously as possible for the two selected news outlets, the BBC and Al-Jazeera. The criteria of data selection do not necessitate the use of sampling techniques, as *all* the headlines and leads of reports constituting the selected news outlets coverage of the selected event are analyzed so that claims of subjective selection – for example, to skew the findings – would not be valid. It

should be noted that the samples obtained from the websites of the selected news outlets are not of equal size because the main concern is to include all of the reports fulfilling the selection criteria.

### **5.5.2. Rationale for the use of these data selection criteria**

This section provides an account for each of the criterion of selection listed above. First, only *news reports* are used to provide material for the present study. All other types of news coverage, such as (feature) articles, editorials, commentaries, opinions, etc., claiming to speak the news outlet's own point of view (Fowler, 1991: 208), are excluded. This criterion ensures that difference and similarities in reporting the selected event are not due to the stylistic/ linguistic properties of different types of news coverage. Related to this criterion is that the present study does not attempt to conduct any sort of genre analysis or stylistic analysis or any analysis of extra-textual features of the selected news reports. Semiotic forms including photographs, charts, captions, boxed inserts, font style and size and the like are not analyzed in the present study. Focusing on all of these aspects of news text will inevitably render the research excessively and unreasonably long and methodologically over-complex.

Second, only reports during the *specified coverage period* are to be included. Mautner (2008: 37) and Bell (1991: 12-13) refer to *time* as an important criterion for data gathering, particularly when investigating data related to a particular event. The selection of news reports covering the war period extending from 12 July 2006 to 13 August 2006 and its aftermaths presents an important decision in data selection. The main rationale behind this selection is to ensure the representativeness of the acquired samples of the covered event. Since in wartime there are often periods of intense

fighting and other periods of lull in war actions and still other periods of diplomacy, including the whole coverage by each of the selected news outlets becomes essential to reach reliable findings. On the linguistic level, this means that any claims concerning the discerned overall patterns of representation are based on a thorough linguistic analysis of all the news reports – that fit with the specified selection criteria – covering the whole war period in order to ensure that these patterns are recurrent. In addition, including all of the reports covering the war period can help observe the presence of varying degrees of coverage along the period of the war, which if not taken into consideration might lead to invalid conclusions. In the analysis of representation, such variation in the quantity of coverage, if related to the intensity and nature of action, might be seen as a possible indicator of text producers' stances and ideologies (for indicative examples see section 8.3). In addition, looking at distributions of certain discerned patterns of representation in various texts along the period of the war can explain the findings of the qualitative analysis.

Third, to neutralize the variable of language, all the selected news reports are in *English*. This is to ensure that the differences and similarities in reporting (based on analyzing the selected linguistic structures) are not language-specific choices and to ensure that this study analyzes reports directed at international audience. It should be noted here that the selected news texts from Al-Jazeera English are not direct translations of their counterparts on the Arabic version of the news outlet based on comparing random samples of the news texts from both versions.

Fourth, the reports are downloaded from different *internationally-acknowledged news outlets websites*. In selecting the outlets to provide the material, knowledge of the

media and their community is essential to making the decision (Bell, 1991: 20). Although Volkmer (2005: 357-358) argues that the BBC targets audience generally “interested in Western viewpoints” and Al-Jazeera targets audience generally “interested in Arab viewpoints”, he stresses that both the BBC and Al-Jazeera deliver their news services worldwide and have already gained “substantial” international audiences. Second, since the medium selected, the internet, is by definition an international medium, the selected outlets possess multinational readership.<sup>10</sup>

The selected news outlets represent two different news media models. While the BBC is a public service/commercial type of broadcaster, Al-Jazeera is a state-funded/commercial network (see sections 2.3.1.2, 2.3.2 and 3.4.1). The selected news outlets are also based in distinct geographical and cultural areas: Al-Jazeera is Middle East-based and the BBC is West-based. While the BBC acts as a model of Western media style, Al-Jazeera, a leading Arab news network, represents Middle-East media style.

It should be pointed out here that the selected news outlets belong to non-combatant countries, i.e. they do not officially belong to or represent any of the countries or sides directly involved in the conflict; they are supposedly representing external points of view. On the other hand, news outlets which officially belong, sponsored or represent any of the directly involved sides in the 2006 war are avoided as such news outlets, one might argue, would be clearly positioned promoting the involved parties’ own interests, i.e. the coverage by such news outlets would be expected to reflect and to be motivated by their self-representations. So, no news outlets representing Israeli media,

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<sup>10</sup> The presumed readership is of an international rather than local or national type (see section 3.3.2).

such as Yedioth Ahronoth (ynetnews.com), or belonging to Lebanon or Hezbollah, such as Al-Manar or moqawama.org, Hezbollah's official website, are selected.

Fifth, the content of the selected reports has to be a *direct reporting of the war being reported*. Other types of war coverage such as interviews, statistical accounts and history or background of the different sides involved in the conflict are excluded. News reports which report on topics which are peripheral to the coverage of the war are excluded. For example, news reports which offer transcripts of speeches or documents, even though related to the war, are excluded. Similarly, news reports which examine, evaluate or assess a specific issue related to the war, rather than directly reporting on the war incidents, are also excluded. Finally, all and any news the selected outlets carry is counted regardless of where it is produced "production-based criterion" or the audience receiving it "reception-based criterion" (Bell, 1991: 20-21).

### **5.5.3. Preparation and presentation of data**

This section identifies in detail the steps used in filtering and downsizing the news reports initially obtained to reach the corpus to be analyzed. The process of downsizing the initial corpus of news reports is governed by the scope of analysis of the present study.

For Al-Jazeera coverage, a corpus of 87 news reports – that fit the specified selection criteria – totalling 45,200 words was obtained from the news outlet's website. These 87 news reports were thinned down to 42,179 words after excluding all extra-textual aspects which are not within the scope of analysis. Concerning the 87 selected news

reports constituting the body of Al-Jazeera (sub-) corpus the following features have been excluded: the dateline (e.g. “Wednesday 12 July 2006, 17:27 Makka Time, 14:27 GMT”), photos and their captions, attribution at the bottom of each news report (e.g. Aljazeera + Agencies), boxed inserts such as quoted speech marked by being enclosed within quotation marks in a shaded box (restates part of the news report attributed to some source aiming to capture the readers’ attention). These extra-textual features have been excluded as the present study does not aim to undertake a genre or stylistic analysis.<sup>11</sup>

For the BBC, a corpus of 141 news reports totalling 89,751 words was obtained from the BBC News website, again following the selection criteria stated above. These 141 reports constituting the corpus for the BBC were thinned down to 81,405 after excluding extra-textual aspects. In each of the selected 141 BBC news reports the following features have been excluded: the dateline (e.g. “Last Updated: Wednesday, 12 July 2006, 11:53 GMT 12:53 UK”), photos and accompanying captions, a shaded box entitled “HAVE YOUR SAY” (mainly a BBC programme) marked by quotation marks and features the opinion of some person or body, maps and charts, hyperlinks leading to related web pages (e.g. “See map of crisis in Lebanon”), and shaded boxes marked as insertions rather than part of the text offering background information on the action and/or different participants or statistics regarding the current event (e.g. “ISRAEL IN LEBANON” offering a historical account of Israel’s presence in Lebanon).

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<sup>11</sup> It is worth mentioning that Al-Jazeera’s search engine is not as efficient as that of the BBC, which could potentially affect the number of news reports obtained from Al-Jazeera’s website and could explain the difference in size between the two sub-corpora collected from each news outlet’s website.

Following filtering and downsizing the initial corpora obtained from the two selected news outlets, Al-Jazeera and the BBC, a final corpus of 228 news reports totalling 98,355 words is used to present the material of the present study. Table 2 illustrates the size of each of the two corpora as well as the sizes of headlines and leads:<sup>12</sup>

		Al-Jazeera	BBC	Total
<b>All News</b>	Number of texts	87	141	228
	Size (number of words)	42,179	81,405	123,584
<b>Headlines</b>	Number of texts	87	141	228
	Size (number of words)	457	714	1,171
<b>Leads</b>	Number of texts	87	141	228
	Size (number of words)	2,224	3,574	5,798

## 2. The size of Al-Jazeera and the BBC corpora

As illustrated above, the 228 headlines of the news reports constituting the two selected news outlets coverage of the 2006 War, totalling 1,171 words, together with the 228 leads of the same news reports, totalling 5,798 words, constitute a corpus totalling 6,969 words that will present the material for the qualitative as well as quantitative analyses conducted in this study. There is a noticeable difference in size between the two sub-corpora. This may reflect the depth and breadth of coverage, though it is difficult to be sure of the exact reasons. This size difference is not problematic, since *all* the news reports covering the selected event – matching the selection criteria listed above – have been included and percentages rather than absolute number of words are used for the comparison.

<sup>12</sup> See sections 3.2.1.1 and 3.2.1.2 for the rationale for the selection of headlines and leads.

## 5.6. Method of analysis

Building on the theoretical framework outlined in section 5.2 above, this section introduces the suggested method of analysis and defines the unit of analysis. Fowler (1991: 90) makes it clear that “there is no constant relationship between linguistic structure and its semiotic significance”. He adds “the significance of discourse derives only from an interaction between language structure and the context in which it is used” (Fowler, 1991: 90). Knowledge of the historical and social context of a particular text is a prerequisite for a critical interpretation of the different linguistic features in this text. In the light of these insights from Fowler, chapter two of the present study first conducts an investigation of the historical, social, political, and other relevant, contexts of the 2006 war between Israel and Hezbollah/Lebanon, and the main participants, Israel, Hezbollah, Lebanon as well as other involved social actors such as the USA, Iran and Syria. The research also investigates the background of the selected news outlets. The history, ownership, institutional structure, ideological orientation, political relations, codes of ethics, reach and viewership, and media representation of Al-Jazeera and the BBC are also investigated. Chapter three expands the contextualization of this study by situating it within the larger context of media and journalism by integrating multiple dimensions of news media.

Chapters 6 and 7 move to the level of micro-analysis of the selected news texts. Each of the two chapters examines the connection between linguistic structures, on the ideational (experiential and logical) and, occasionally, interpersonal planes of language, and the functions they serve, as well as the social values and ideologies they represent. Given that the focus of the present study is to explore representation in the reporting of the 2006 war in the selected news outlets, one has to provide sufficient

evidence that the discerned grammatical and lexical choices realize recurrent and concrete patterns of representation that are characteristic of each of the selected news outlets as relevant to certain discursal functions.<sup>13</sup> To reduce the possibility of these patterns being a mere chance the present study pairs the analysis of headlines with the analysis of leads.

Textual analysis of news language should seek to “identify meaning-making resources on various linguistic levels” and to assign meaning to various linguistic forms, “focusing in particular on devices used to position readers into adopting a certain point of view” (Mautner, 2008: 49).<sup>14</sup> The present study delimits its scope to the analysis of certain linguistic features since it is not quite possible for a single study to cover all the linguistic features (i.e. syntactic, lexical, semantic, discursal, and so on). Through thorough reading of the study material and governed by the orientation of the present study towards the investigation of media representation and evaluation in the discourse of war reports, certain linguistic structures will be examined. When deciding on these linguistic structures, I followed both deductive and inductive approaches, relying on both reviewing related literature as well as thorough reading of the study material. Linguistic structures referred to or analyzed in previous related work, such as transitivity and labelling or categorization devices, are utilized as tools to serve the purpose of analysis. Other linguistic tools, such as source attribution and logical relations, have been added after thorough observation of the study material.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> These patterns of representations can be seen as “discursive strategies” (Wodak and Meyer, 2009: 94), where a strategy is defined as “a more or less intentional plan of practices (including discursive practices) adopted to achieve a particular social, political, psychological or linguistic goal”.

<sup>14</sup> Textual analysis should relate textual form (“textual organization” and “texture” in Fairclough’s and Halliday’s terminology) to textual content.

<sup>15</sup> For a detailed discussion of the analytic tools utilized, see section 5.4.

The focus of the analysis conducted in this study is transitivity choices, logical-relations between clauses, lexical choices and syntactic transformations such as nominalization and passivization. The analysis of transitivity involves analyzing participant roles, e.g. *Actor*, *Goal*, *Sayer*, and associated process types, e.g. *material*, *verbal*, *relational*, and whenever applicable circumstantial elements. The classification of participant roles within the system of transitivity is semantic and functional, as well as grammatical. Such roles are syntactically realized but simultaneously they have semantic and functional dimensions. As for the analysis of circumstantial elements, significant instances of circumstances are analyzed in the headlines and leads of the BBC and Al-Jazeera. Additionally, separate sections are devoted to the analysis of *circumstances of location* (see sections 6.3.3.7, 7.2.3.4). Other sections are devoted to the analysis of the role of *Indirect Actor*, *Indirect Goal* and *Phenomenon* occurring as part of PPs functioning as a circumstantial element (see sections 6.2.3.2, 6.2.3.7, 6.3.1.2, 6.3.1.6, 6.3.3.2, 6.3.3.8, 7.2.3.1, 7.3.1.2, 7.3.1.5, 7.3.3.2, 7.3.3.4, 7.3.3.9). These circumstantial elements are analyzed on both grammatical as well as functional grounds. Whereas the analysis of circumstances focuses on the level of the clause, the analysis of logical relations focuses on the logical relations on the higher level of clause complex. Due to the structural complexity of leads, compared to headlines, which are often structurally simple, logico-semantic analysis is more significant in the case of leads in this thesis.

On the lexical level, the analyses conducted in chapters 6 and 7 will investigate patterns in word choice. Particular attention is given to the labelling of news actors and the use of certain referential strategies such as using numbers, human referring terms, quantifiers, nationality attributes and the like. Richardson (2007) argues that the

choices text producers make from among the available lexical alternatives, when describing people, events, or any of the other aspects of news texts, unavoidably frame the story and direct readers' opinion towards certain reading(s) of the communicated message (Richardson, 2007: 47-48; cf. Carter, 1987: 92-96). The analysis in sections 6.2.5, 6.3.5, 7.2.5, 7.3.5 focuses on patterns, as well as significant cases, in word choice, particularly the way text producers label and refer to participants and processes in the headlines and the leads of Al-Jazeera and the BBC.

This study relies on manual qualitative analysis as an approach to textual analysis. A computerized automated corpus linguistic approach is not used in this thesis for considerations related to the small size of the analyzed data which does not necessitate the use of such an approach. But more importantly is that there is no computer software that can automatically detect participant roles and process types. In the present thesis I marked the clause elements, specifically noun phrases (realizing participants) and predicates (realizing processes), by hand in a Word file. Manual marking has the potential to identify cases of elliptical reference, where reference to participants is omitted, as in the case of the agentless passive. Available corpus tools do not have this potential to identify cases of elliptical reference. In addition, no computer software has the potential to categorize certain types of processes. For example, certain verbs when used metaphorically are classified as certain types of processes that differ from their literal usage, which could not be reached without manually examining the data and marking it accordingly. Tables of frequencies and percentages of occurrence were then drawn up in Microsoft Office Excel.

This thesis utilizes frequencies and percentages of reference to each of Hezbollah and Israel in the headlines and leads of Al-Jazeera and the BBC both as a starting point for the analysis and to substantiate the findings of the qualitative analysis. These frequencies are also utilized to make quantitative comparisons between the representations of Hezbollah and Israel within each news outlet and between the two news outlets. These comparisons are based on the analyst's contextualised understanding of the English language text under analysis – which computerized software cannot have. The comparisons held in chapters 6, 7 and 8 systematically substantiate the findings of the detailed qualitative analyses in the light of/ against the results of the quantitative comparison, pointing out any significant discrepancy or correlation between them (see sections 8.2.1, 8.2.2, 8.2.3 and 8.2.4). This integration of qualitative analysis with frequencies and percentages has the potential to reduce the possibility of reaching unreliable or misleading conclusions.

The particular focus of the main analysis part of this research will be on the analysis of the leads and headlines of the selected news reports in the light of the selected linguistic structures. Analyses refer to the news text body only when this relevantly illuminates the analysis of the leads and headlines. This step will be followed by comparing the results of analyzing the leads and the headlines within each news outlet to spot and account for any contradictions. The rationale beyond the selection of headlines and leads is that these are the parts of a news report where representations of the actions and their participants, as well as evaluation of such representations, are more focused. In addition, direct reporting of the event made by the text producer, as particularly evident in the headlines and leads, is more likely to be shaped by the text producer's own perception of the reported event and a reflection of her/his own

attitude and ideology, and thus might be a significant indicator in the study of representation and underlying ideologies.<sup>16</sup>

With discourse analysis the unit of textual analysis should be the text as a whole. The analysis should account for presences as well as absences in the text as a whole, i.e. it should investigate a clause or sentence in relation to its immediate linguistic context (the context of its surrounding clauses/sentences) (Richardson, 2007: 58). Having said that, the present study considers the headlines and lead sentences of the selected news reports as independent textual units, i.e. both the headline and the lead sentence of each report can be analysed independently of the main body of the news text. In analyzing the headlines of the selected news texts the unit of analysis will be the single headline regardless of its grammatical complexity, i.e. whether it is a single word or a clause or consists of more than one sentence. The same can be said of the leads of the selected news reports where the unit of analysis will be the lead sentence/paragraph.

This will produce the following organization of the analysis. Chapter 6 will analyze the leads and headlines of Al-Jazeera for its representation of the covered war along the system of transitivity and relevant analytic tools. Chapter 7 will analyze the leads and headlines of the BBC for its representation of the covered war along the system of transitivity and relevant analytic tools. The integration of relevant contextual knowledge, i.e. contextualization, to the process of interpretation is the difficult part of the practice of CDA. In the process of interpreting the findings of the textual analysis, i.e. the macro-analysis, which is conducted in chapter 8, the present study relies

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<sup>16</sup> The body of a news report consists mainly of extracts of direct and indirect quotes attributed to foreign sources and not to the news outlet text producer (cf. Stenvall, 2011). See 3.2.1.1 and 3.2.1.2 for the rationale beyond the selection of headlines and leads.

mainly on van Dijk's (1998, 2011) approach to the analysis of opinions and ideologies in the press.

## **5.7. Conclusion**

Based on Fairclough's approach to CDA (section 5.2.1), which is adopted as a general theoretical framework for the analysis of representation in war news reporting, chapters 6 and 7 conduct an analysis of certain linguistic structures as realizations of text producer's beliefs, opinions and ideologies. Halliday's functional-systemic model (section 5.2.2) offers tools of analysis that are designed to answer the overarching research question: Do the selected news outlets, Al-Jazeera and the BBC, offer different or similar representations of the 2006 war and hence position their readers into adopting certain points of view? Sections 5.4.1 and 5.4.2 demonstrate the relevance of Halliday's system of transitivity and the logico-semantic system of expansion and projection in the analysis of representation of events and in signifying underlying ideologies. An analysis of transitivity choices, both grammatical and lexical, combined with an analysis of the logical relations between clauses can provide a robust methodology for revealing differential representations between text producers. Following Fairclough's general theoretical framework, these analyses of textual features are conducted in the light of relevant historical and socio-cultural backgrounds as well as contexts of news production and consumption. Chapter 8 provides detailed comparisons of the findings and simultaneously conducts an analysis of headlines and leads reporting on the same event as an integrated and complementary approach to the analysis conducted in chapters 6 and 7.

## CHAPTER 6

### Representation of the 2006 War in Al-Jazeera News Reports

#### 6.1. Introduction

In an attempt to answer the overarching question of whether the selected news outlets, Al-Jazeera and the BBC, offer similar or different representations in the reporting of the 2006 war between Israel and Hezbollah and hence position their readers into adopting certain points of view, the present chapter investigates the representation of the two sides in the 2006 war, Israel and Hezbollah, in the 87 headlines and accompanying leads of Al-Jazeera news reports coverage of the war. This chapter is the first among two investigating the representation of the two sides in the war by the selected news outlets following the same analytic grid that builds on Halliday's SFG. The analysis conducted in the present chapter utilizes transitivity, which involves identifying the roles the text producer assigns to the different participants and entities, the types of processes associated with these participants and circumstantial elements. The chapter also analyzes the logical relations between clauses, which is the focus of the logico-semantic system of projection and expansion. In addition, the chapter analyzes lexical choices made by text producers in the headlines and the leads of Al-Jazeera news reports in reference to the war events, its actions and participants. This

chapter, as well as the following one, seeks to examine the connection between linguistic structures, on the ideational plane of language, i.e. clause as representation, and, occasionally, the interpersonal plane of language, and the social values and ideologies they represent (Halliday, 1994). The experiential meanings (meaning as organization of experience) and the logical meanings (meaning as the expression of certain logical relations) combine to form the ideational metafunction (clause as representation) (cf. Halliday, 1994: 179), which is the focus of analysis.

## **6.2. Analysis of Al-Jazeera news reports headlines**

The covered event, the 2006 war between Israel and Hezbollah, involves the two sides in the war, Israel and Hezbollah, as well as other participants such as Lebanon, Iran, Syria, US and UN. Each of the two main participants is referred to in different ways, a factor which is taken into consideration when analyzing representation in the light of the system of transitivity. The analysis of representation explores not only reference to participants by (proper) name, i.e. “Israel” and “Hezbollah”, but it also extends to include other referential strategies. Such referring expressions include occurrences of “Hezbollah” as a noun used as an adjective (used in a noun group as an attribute of some other entity meaning affiliation to the group), the attribute “Israeli” used as adjectival modifier in a noun group, and descriptions such as “the militant group” and “the radical Islamic guerrilla group”. However, a well-based analysis of representation should also take into consideration other possible ways of reference, such as cases of synecdoche (such as “Tel Aviv” for Israel), spokespersons who represent Israel or Hezbollah, co-referring pronouns, as well as cases of elliptical reference or zero-reference, where no explicit reference to participants is made and the referent is supplied based on context, linguistic or situational, or common shared knowledge.

Consideration of these varied ways of referring to the same participant will help give a more comprehensive view of the way involved participants are being represented.

### 6.2.1. Representation of Hezbollah in Al-Jazeera news reports headlines

The total number of references to Hezbollah is 22 times in the 87 headlines of Al-Jazeera. The following sections will give some indicative examples of the different patterns of representation of Hezbollah discerned when analyzing the headlines of Al-Jazeera news reports. Table 3 illustrates the frequencies of reference to Hezbollah in Al-Jazeera headlines in terms of participant roles and process types:

Participant role	Process	Frequency <sup>1</sup>	
		HEZBOLLAH	other ref.
<i>Actor</i>	<i>material</i>	2	1
<i>Carrier</i>	<i>attributive relational</i>	1	0
<i>Sayer</i>	<i>verbal</i>	2	2
<i>Senser</i>	<i>mental</i>	2	0
<i>Target</i>	<i>verbal</i>	3	0
<i>Goal</i>	<i>material</i>	8	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>18</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Total frequency</b>		<b>22</b>	

#### 3. Representation of Hezbollah in Al-Jazeera headlines

##### 6.2.1.1. Hezbollah as *Actor* ascribed *material actions*

In the following headline the predicate “to continue fight” is of the type *material action* and is ascribed to Nasrallah or Hezbollah:

Nasrallah vows to continue fight

The predicate “to continue” together with the entity “fight” constitute the *material process*, where the verb expresses a temporal dimension. What is significant for the analysis is the absence of any reference, direct or indirect, to affected participants. By

<sup>1</sup> Throughout the analysis chapters the word *frequency* is used to mean “raw frequencies” which is the “absolute” numbers of occurrences, unless otherwise stated (cf. Hoffmann et al., 2008: 70).

contrast, Hezbollah is ascribed *active material actions* (“captures” and “downs”) that extend to an affected entity 2 times (9%) out of the 22 references to the group:

**Hezbollah** captures Israeli soldiers

**Hezbollah** downs Israeli helicopter

Assigning the role of *Goal* to military entities (“soldiers” and “helicopter”) belonging to Israel may have the effect of softening the impact of the *material action*, as these would be expected targets within a war context.

#### 6.2.1.2. Hezbollah as *Carrier in relational processes*

Rather than signalling a process in the normal sense of something happening, *relational processes* establish a relationship between two participants or concepts (Thompson, 2004: 96). In the following headline Hezbollah is represented as the *Carrier* in a *relational process* of the type *attributive circumstantial* where the PP “in deadly rocket attack” is the *Attribute*:

**Hezbollah** in deadly rocket attack

Although the implied action is *material*, which can be made clear in a rewording such as “Hezbollah is involved in a deadly rocket attack”, the text producer’s choice to represent the action in terms of a *relational process* serves a number of purposes. The use of a *nominalized material process* (“attack”) results on the level of sentence syntax in concealing the affected participants, which serves the strategic purpose of weakening the impact of the violent *material action* by way of removing important sentential elements. Moreover, the PP results in a sense of semantic ambiguity as it might not be clear, without reading the accompanying lead, whether the group is the performer or affected by action.

### 6.2.1.3. Hezbollah as *Sayer* attributed *verbal actions*

The text producer acknowledges the active role of Hezbollah rather than camouflaging it in the following two headlines:

**Hezbollah** declares war on Israel

**Hezbollah** warns of Tel Aviv strike

Although attributed *verbal actions*, even though threatening ones (“declares war” and “warns”), Hezbollah is still represented as inactive in material terms, i.e. involved in saying rather than doing. However, the two headlines communicate a representation of Hezbollah as constituting a real threat to Israel.

Related to the pattern of representation observed above that attributes to Hezbollah *verbal actions* is assigning to Nasrallah, the leader of Hezbollah, the role of *Sayer*, attributed the *verbal action* “vows”:

**Nasrallah** vows more strikes

**Nasrallah** vows to continue fight

The predicate used, being of *verbal* rather than *material* type, adds to the pattern of *inactivity*, in material terms, associated with the group. This lack of “activation”, in material terms, could possibly strengthen the affliction of the group in cases where the group is represented as being on the receiving end (cf. van Leeuwen, 1996: 43-44).

### 6.2.1.4. Hezbollah as *Senser* in *mental processes*

In the following headline, Hezbollah is still depicted as an inactive participant, i.e. it has no active role on the battle field. Here, the group is assigned the role of *Senser* undergoing the *emotional mental action* “surprised” where the role of *Phenomenon* is assigned to the entity “onslaught”.

### **Hezbollah** surprised by onslaught

Though occupying the syntactic subject position, Hezbollah is not a participant in a process in the normal sense of “acting” and the process is not a one of “doing” (cf. Thompson, 2004: 92-93); rather Hezbollah, as a *Senser*, is undergoing the *mental process*, which fosters the image of Hezbollah as an inactive participant in the battle.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, Hezbollah, together with Israel, is assigned the role of *Senser* undergoing the *mental action* “hesitate” in the following headline:

#### Israel, **Hezbollah** hesitate on deal

The *mental action* “hesitate” fits into the overall pattern of *passivity*, as it depicts the group as incapable of taking critical decisions. “Passivation”, as opposed to “activation”, involves representing the participant as undergoing or affected by the action (van Leeuwen, 1996: 43-44). This “passivation” of Hezbollah may have the effect of further bringing the imbalance of power between the two sides in the war into focus. One can equally argue that the text producer depicts Hezbollah as having equal saying with Israel in accepting the ceasefire deal, which may have the effect of polishing Hezbollah’s image in the war.

#### **6.2.1.5. Hezbollah as Target of verbal actions**

As opposed to the *Receiver*, the role given to the entity to whom the *verbal process* is directed or addressed, the *Target* is the entity that is targeted by the process, as in *condemn/criticize/praise him*. The *Sayer* is as if “it were acting verbally on” the *Target* (Halliday, 1994: 141; Thompson, 2004: 101). The pattern of inactivity noted above is further reinforced by depicting the group as a *Target* of negatively connoted *verbal actions* (“blamed” and “sideswipe”). Examples are the following:

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<sup>2</sup> For further discussion of *mental processes*, see section 5.4.1.

**Hezbollah** blamed for civilian deaths

Saudi sideswipe at **Hezbollah**<sup>3</sup>

In the former headline, the group is represented as the *Target* of a *verbal action* (“blamed”), which is not assigned to an explicit *Sayer* in the clause, through the use of the agentless passive, which may reduce the credibility of the reported content. The *Sayer* can be expanded as the UN humanitarian chief from the immediate linguistic context in the lead. Being a position of thematic focus, shifting Hezbollah to sentence-initial position could be interpreted as a means of foregrounding the group’s agency. A possible explanation of this foregrounding might be that Hezbollah is the *topic* – what the text producer wants the reader to *have in mind* for what the report is about, i.e. it is about Hezbollah. However, read in the light of its accompanying lead, we will know that the group is not evidently involved in any killing, rather it is accused of causing the deaths of hundreds by blending among Lebanese civilians. The text producer’s choice to depict the group as the *Target* of blame rather than ascribing to it a *material action* (e.g. “kill”) casts some doubt on Hezbollah’s direct involvement in any *material process*. So, even when the group comes in sentence-initial position, the syntax still fits into the overall pattern of inactivity ascribed to Hezbollah.

In the following headline, the group is depicted as the *Target* of Israel’s praise, which is a positively connoted *verbal action*:

Israeli troops praise **Hezbollah** tactics

Depicting Hezbollah as a rival for Israel through reference to its tactics gives credit to Hezbollah, particularly when such representation is attributed to Israel itself.

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<sup>3</sup> I comment on the Saudi-Hezbollah’s relations in section 6.3.2.

### 6.2.1.6. Hezbollah as *Goal* in *material processes*

Hezbollah is depicted as the receiver of action – mostly a violent or negatively connoted one – 12 times (54.5%) including 9 times assigned the role of *Goal* and 3 times assigned the role of *Target*. Hezbollah is represented as the *Goal* in the following example:

Israel kills **Hezbollah** leaders in Tyre

In this headline Israel's *material action* "kill" affects human victims. The same can be seen in the following headlines:

Israel captures two **Hezbollah** men

Israel raid 'captures **Hezbollah** fighters'

The human participants "Hezbollah men" and "Hezbollah fighters" are assigned the role of *Goal* affected by a *material action* ("captures"), ascribed to the *Actor* Israel.

This way of representing Hezbollah as an affected participant by *material actions*, predominantly ascribed to the *Actor* Israel, could be said to form a recurrent pattern in Al-Jazeera headlines. Examples are the following:

Israel bombs '**Hezbollah** bunker'

Israel enters **Hezbollah** stronghold

Israeli 'hackers' target **Hezbollah** TV

As opposed to the above headlines, in these headlines the entities ("bunker", "stronghold" and "TV") affected by Israel's *material actions* are inanimate. The entity "Hezbollah stronghold" could be as well assigned the role of *Range*, as it specifies the domain over which the process takes place. In presenting Hezbollah as affected by *material actions* ascribed to Israel, Israel is "activated", whereas Hezbollah is "passivated" (cf. van Leeuwen, 1996: 44). Passivation here may have the potential

effect of drawing attention to Hezbollah's affliction and the imbalance of power between the two fighting sides, which may have the effect of casting more blame on Israel.

While still the *Goal*, in the following two headlines, Hezbollah, rather than being affected in a negative manner by the specified *material action*, is more of a receiver of positively connoted *material actions* ("backs" and "arm"):

Speaker of parliament backs **Hezbollah**

Senior Iran cleric says arm **Hezbollah**

This pattern of representation depicts Hezbollah's actions in the war as having state and official support as well as Iran's support. Hezbollah is assigned the role of *Goal* without explicit reference to the group in the following headline:

Iran denies supplying rocket that hit ship

The participant to whom the *material process* ("supplying") extends is omitted and can be contextually inferred as Hezbollah, as in "Iran denies supplying [Hezbollah with] rocket that hit ship".<sup>4</sup> The *material action* "supplying" still does not affect Hezbollah in a negative way.<sup>5</sup>

### 6.2.2. Hezbollah in Al-Jazeera headlines: summary

The total number of references to Hezbollah is 22 times in the 87 headlines of Al-Jazeera. Table 4 illustrates the participant roles assigned to Hezbollah grouped under a number of distinct categories based on the way Hezbollah is introduced into the clause from a transitivity view point:

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<sup>4</sup> There are two constructions for English *supply*: "supply x to y" and "supply y with x".

<sup>5</sup> Lexical choices and referential strategies are analyzed in section 6.2.5.

Overall category	Participant roles	Frequency	%
performer of action	3 times <i>Actor</i>	7	31.8
	4 times <i>Sayer</i>		
part of a relation	<i>Carrier</i> in a <i>relational process</i>	1	4.5
undergoes action	<i>Senser</i> undergoing <i>mental actions</i>	2	9.1
affected by action	3 times <i>Target</i>	12	54.6
	9 times <i>Goal</i>		

#### 4. Representation of Hezbollah in Al-Jazeera headlines: performer or affected by action

The representation of Hezbollah as the performer of actions constitutes 31.8% of the total references to the group. When Hezbollah is assigned the role of *Actor* ascribed *material actions*, the affected entities are either of military nature, which would be expected within a war context, or are totally absent. One of the three references to Hezbollah as the *Actor* belongs to the first news report of Al-Jazeera coverage of the war on 12 July 2006 reporting on the action that triggers the war, whereas another headline belongs to a news report on 13 August 2006 which is the last day of the war, a period when readership would be expected to drop significantly. Similarly, the text producer's choice to represent a *material action* in terms of a *relational process*, when Hezbollah is represented as the *Carrier*, results on the level of sentence syntax in leaving out the participants affected by Hezbollah's action.

When represented as the *Sayer*, the text producer attributes to Hezbollah and its leader *verbal actions* with a threatening tone, such as "warns" and "vows". While Hezbollah is still represented as inactive in material terms, i.e. involved in saying rather than doing, attributing such threatening *verbal actions* to Hezbollah may communicate a representation of the group as not deterred by Israel's military force. The group is rather represented as having a high estimate of its fighting capabilities, which can be said to balance the group's material inactivity.

The representation of Hezbollah as on the receiving end forms 54.6% of the total frequency of reference to the group. One pattern of representation involves depicting Hezbollah as the *Target of verbal actions*. Although from a transitivity view point the participant assigned the role of *Target* is seen as the receiver of action, depicting a certain participant as the *Target of verbal actions* is likely to communicate a negative representation of this participant, except in such cases where the *verbal action* is positively connoted, e.g. praise. On one occasion Hezbollah is represented as the *Target* of the positively connoted *verbal action* “praise”, attributed to Israel. Although Hezbollah, in terms of power and arms, is the inferior side in the war, the text producer gives credit to the group’s performance and tactics, which comes this time from Israel, Hezbollah’s enemy. On another occasion, the *verbal action* (“blamed”) is not attributed to any explicit *Sayer*, which reduces the credibility of the reported content, and the accompanying lead reveals that Hezbollah is not the actual performer of the *material action* that caused Hezbollah to be the *Target* of blame. The text producer develops Hezbollah’s representation as an inactive affected participant by assigning the group the role of *Senser* undergoing *mental actions* of the type “surprised” and “hesitate”.

The analysis reveals that when the action is *material*, two sub-patterns of representation are simultaneously developed. The first involves human as well as inanimate entities belonging to Hezbollah depicted as affected by some negatively connoted *material action* ascribed to Israel, which may have the effect of depicting the group as an inactive participant while casting some blame on Israel. The second sub-pattern involves Hezbollah represented as the *Goal* benefiting from, rather than

affected by, positively connoted *material actions*, that communicate a representation of Hezbollah as having support from both inside Lebanon and other countries.

### 6.2.3. Representation of Israel in Al-Jazeera news reports headlines

When analyzing the representation of Israel, the other main participant in the 2006 war, the present research includes, in addition to the mentions of the word Israel, whether referring to the state, the territories or some other entity that belongs to Israel, occurrences of the word “Israeli” as adjectival modifier in a noun group, as well as any other referential strategies, such as elliptic reference and mentions of Israeli official spokespersons. Israel is referred to 51 times in the 87 headlines of Al-Jazeera. Though frequency of occurrence might not be significant in itself, compared to the 22 references to Hezbollah, we can have a statistical evidence of what Al-Jazeera wants its readership to have in mind about the events of the war; Israel is the active force which has control over the war and its events and hence the side which is more likely to be blamed for war calamities. This initial observation can be supported through thorough linguistic analysis of the headlines in the light of the system of transitivity. Table 5 illustrates frequencies of reference to Israel in Al-Jazeera headlines in terms of participant roles and process types:

Participant role	Process type	Frequency		
		ISRAEL	ISRAELI	other ref.
<i>Actor</i>	<i>material</i>	16	8	2
<i>indirect Actor</i>	<i>material</i>	0	1	2
<i>Beneficiary</i>	<i>material</i>	1	0	0
<i>Sayer</i>	<i>verbal</i>	4	1	3
<i>Senser</i>	<i>mental</i>	3	0	0
<i>Carrier</i>	<i>attributive relational</i>	1	1	0
<i>in a circumstance of cause</i>	-	1	0	0
<i>Receiver</i>	<i>verbal</i>	1	0	0
<i>Target</i>	<i>verbal</i>	0	1	0
<i>indirect Goal</i>	<i>material</i>	1	1	0
<i>Goal</i>	<i>material</i>	0	2	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>28</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Total frequency</b>			<b>51</b>	

5. Frequencies of reference to Israel in Al-Jazeera headlines

The following sections will give some indicative examples of the different patterns of representation of Israel discerned in the headlines of Al-Jazeera news reports.

### **6.2.3.1. Israel as *Actor* ascribed *material actions***

Israel is assigned the role of *Actor* ascribed *material actions* 26 times in headlines. The following sub-patterns of representation are discerned when Israel is depicted as the *Actor*.

#### **a. Israel's *material actions* affect animate civilian participants**

Within this sub-pattern the entities affected by Israel's *material actions* are civilian human victims. Examples are the following:

**Israeli strikes kill scores in Lebanon**

**Israeli strikes kill 40 in Lebanon**

The predicate (“kill”) is of the type negatively connoted *material action* to intensify Israel's agency and violence, whereas the system of voice is active to emphasize the causal link. The use of “scores” implies a high number of victims while absolves the text producer of responsibility for inaccuracy.

#### **b. Israel's *material actions* affect animate military participants**

Alternatively, Israel's *material actions* extend to human participants who belong to Hezbollah, as evident in the following:

**Israel kills Hezbollah leaders in Tyre**

**Israel captures two Hezbollah men**

**Israel raid ‘captures Hezbollah fighters’**

Assigning the role of *Goal* to Hezbollah, being the other side of the war, might be said to lessen potential incrimination of Israel; however, given the ideological orientation of Al-Jazeera, one might claim that depicting Israel as the side which is capable of *doing* and not just *saying* is a more plausible view. In the following, the affected participants, though still military and human, do not belong to Hezbollah:

**Israeli strike kills four UN soldiers**

Ascribing Israel a negatively connoted *material action* that extends to soldiers of a peace keeping force belonging to the UN – which is an international organization – could further incriminate Israel by implication. This headline and its accompanying lead are analyzed in detail in section 8.3.2.

**c. Israel's *material actions* extend to inanimate entities**

While in the above two patterns Israel's *material actions* affect human victims, in this pattern Israel is ascribed *material actions* (“bombs”, “strikes”, “seize”, “enter”, “target”) that affect inanimate entities, which are either civilian (“factories”, “village”, “Lebanon”) or military (“bunker”, “stronghold”, “Hezbollah TV”). Indicative examples are the following:

**Israel** bombs Lebanese factories

**Israeli** troops seize Lebanese village

Scores killed as **Israel** strikes Lebanon

**Israel** bombs 'Hezbollah bunker'

The *material actions* are violent negatively connoted actions that directly affect the entities assigned the role of *Goal*. In “New **Israeli** air strikes on Lebanon”, although the text producer prefers to use a *material process*, realized as a nominal form, the causal link is still made clear through the use of the nationality attribute “Israeli”,

which specifies the *Actor*, and the explicit reference to the *Goal*, even though indirectly (“on Lebanon”). Although the sense of affliction is weakened when the role of *Goal* is assigned to inanimate entities which belong to Hezbollah, the other side of the war, as in the last headline above, negatively connoted *material actions* (“bombs”, “target”, “enters”) communicate a representation of Israel as a violent force. This representation could also potentially bring the imbalance of power between the fighting sides into focus.

**d. Israel’s *material actions* do not materially affect the *Goal***

Another sub-pattern involves ascribing Israel *material actions* (“resume”, “expand”, “extends”, “continue”, “control”, “send”) that do not affect the entities (“troops”, “onslaught”, “offensive”, “attacks”, “security zone”) assigned the role of *Goal* (or *Range* in some cases) in any material sense. Indicative examples are the following:

**Israel** to resume full air onslaught

**Israel** extends Lebanese offensive

**Israel** may send troops into Lebanon

**Israel** ‘to control security zone’

Occasionally, the entities (“offensive”, “onslaught”, “attacks”) assigned the role of *Goal* represent *material processes* structurally nominalised, whereas the *material actions* signal the spatial (“expands”, “continues”) or temporal (“continue”, “resume”) dimensions of the process. These headlines communicate a representation of Israel as expansionist. Moreover, analyzing these headlines in the light of their accompanying leads shows that the text producer occasionally employs a strategic manoeuvre whereby *verbal actions* attributed to Israel in the accompanying leads are turned into *material actions* ascribed to Israel *the state*, a strategy which rather fosters the image

of Israel as a *performer* of military *material actions*. For example, in the headline “Israel to fight on in Lebanon”, the reported content is originally attributed to the Israeli prime minister.

The first and last headlines above are worth particular attention because of their distinct – though quite common in English headlines – syntactic construction, which can be seen elsewhere in the headlines of Al-Jazeera. Israel comes in sentence-initial position functioning as the subject and followed by an infinitive phrase (a non-finite form *to*) without any indication of tense.<sup>6</sup> This reduced telegraphic structure can be reworded in a number of ways such as “is to”, “is going to”, “is intending to” or “will”, though none of these forms can accurately equate the used form. Although brevity is a characteristic feature of headlines, the non-finite form *to* in these constructions could imply both intention and futurity of action. This reduced structure can serve the strategic purpose of depicting Israel as the side which is in full control of the war; it decides what to happen, when and where.

In the following headline, Israel is the *Actor* ascribed the *material action* “facing”, where the role of *Range* is given to the entity “moment of truth”:

Olmert: **Israel** facing ‘moment of truth’

The reported content is part of a statement attributed to Ehud Olmert, Israel’s prime minister, in which he vows to continue his country’s offensive against Hezbollah as becomes evident in the accompanying lead.<sup>7</sup> Though the clause “Israel faced a

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<sup>6</sup> Halliday (1994: 392-393) classifies headlines as a type of what he calls “little texts”. The omission of the primary “deictic tense”, resulting in a non-finite verbal group, is a feature of headlines as one type of “little texts”.

<sup>7</sup> The text producer occasionally uses the colon to replace the *verbal action* or the reporting verb. The colon here signal that what is being reported is not the text producer’s own words (cf. Kress, 1983: 135).

moment of truth” clearly expresses a *cognitive mental process*, the choice of a verb (“face”) that normally encodes *material action*, ascribed to Israel’s prime minister, can help depict how hazardous the situation is for Israel.

**e. Israel’s *material actions* do not extend to another entity**

Another sub-pattern of representation involves assigning to Israel the role of *Actor* ascribed *material actions* (“pushes deeper”, “fight on”), occasionally nominalised (“bombing”, “offensive”), that do not extend to any affected entity in the *material process* clause. Indicative examples are the following:

**Israel** pushes deeper into Lebanon

**Israel** to fight on in Lebanon

Israel halts **bombing** for 48 hours

However, these *material actions* convey an offensive attitude on the part of Israel, depicting it as not willing to stop the war. The *material action* “pushes deeper” depicts Israel’s military expansion on the spatial dimension. The analysis reveals that when agency is ascribed to Israel, the use of *nominalised material processes* is kept to a minimum in the headlines of Al-Jazeera. The use of nominalization might result in weakening the causal link by leaving out certain participant roles; however, not all instances of nominalizations can have the potential of concealment. In the last headline above, the use of the nominalised action “bombing” results in concealing the affected entity; however, agency is made clear through explicit reference to the *Actor* Israel. The *material action* “halts” together with the entity assigned the role of *Goal* “bombing”, which itself is a *nominalised material process*, trigger the presupposition that Israel has been bombing and that the halt is just temporary, which may have the effect of casting more blame on Israel.

### 6.2.3.2. Israel as *indirect Actor*

One pattern of representation involves introducing Israel to *material action* clauses indirectly within PPs where reference to Israel is made explicit or it is represented as an underlying *indirect Actor*, as evident in the following headlines:

Dozens killed in **Israeli** air raids

Scores killed as Israel strikes Lebanon

Cluster grenades 'used on civilians'

In these headlines, though the form of passive used is the agentless, the text producer apparently does not try to hide agency or to leave the responsibility unspecified. Whereas in the first headline a *circumstantial element* (“in Israeli air raids”) indirectly introduces the performer of the *passive material action* into the clause, through its inclusion within a PP, in the second and third headlines, the performer of the action is either instantly supplied in an expanding clause (“as Israeli strikes Lebanon”) or could be supplied by readers as Israel, based on the accompanying lead. It could be argued that the passive construction might result in blurring the causal link between the responsible *agent*, the specified action and the affected entity. However, the text producer’s choice of the passive in these headlines results in shifting thematic focus to the more important information, that is, the affected participants, their big numbers, and the use of cluster grenades, while keeping agency clear.<sup>8</sup> In the third headline, the entity “cluster grenades” and the *indirect Goal* “civilians” both occur in positions of thematic focus. The choice of “dozens” and “scores”, while absolving the text producer of responsibility for inaccuracy, implies a high number of victims. The choice of the negatively connoted *material action* “killed”, the quantifiers “dozens”

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<sup>8</sup> Although the passive construction is rarely employed when the *Actor* is meant to be criminalized as it may blur the causal link, the passive can serve a different strategic purpose, one which functions by way of the promotion of the *patient* rather than the delay or deletion of the *agent*. Explicit identification of the *agent* becomes unnecessary when agency is predictable from the context (Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman, 1983: 225).

and “scores”, and the entity “civilians” as the target of the internationally-prohibited cluster grenades can emphasize potential incrimination of Israel.

Whereas in the above two patterns Israel is represented as the performer of *material actions*, whether introduced directly or indirectly into the clause, in the following headline Israel is assigned the role of *Beneficiary* or the entity which benefits from the action:

**Bush ‘rushes bombs to Israel’**

It is noteworthy that Israel could also be seen as a mere place within the PP “to Israel” that functions as a *circumstance of location*. This headline relates to the following one where Israel occurs as part of a PP that functions as a *circumstance of cause*:

**US Muslims criticise Bush over Israel**

In this headline Israel is not the receiver of any action; rather Israel is represented as the reason – the preposition “over” can mean something like “because of” – why US Muslims criticize US president. It could be said that the text producer structures the headline in a way that leaves in her/his reader’s minds a representation of Israel as the cause of troubles. Both headlines provide the potential for inferring the alleged close connections between US and Israel where the former is the main ally and weapons provider for Israel.

### **6.2.3.3. Israel as *Sayer* attributed *verbal actions***

Israel is assigned the role of *Sayer* in *verbal process* clauses 8 times in headlines. For example, in the following headlines Israel is assigned the role of *Sayer* attributed the *verbal actions* “asks”, “calls up” and “okays”:

**Israel asks US for new missiles**

**Israel** calls up thousands of reservists

**Israel** okays wider ground offensive

In the first headline Israel is attributed a *verbal action* “asks” with US acting as the *Receiver* of the *verbal action*. Again, the reported content may draw attention to the alleged close connections between Israel and US. In addition, the reported content provides the potential for inferring Israel’s readiness to continue its offensive. The other headlines assign to Israel the two speech act verbs “call up” and “okay”, as they both involve an action, *material* in its nature, being performed. On another occasion “**Israel**: the fight continues”, the text producer made two syntactic transformations: omitting the *verbal action* (“vows”) – the headline reads “Israel vows to continue fight” – and formulating the projected clause as a categorical assertion. These transformations might be said to emphasize Israel’s intention to continue its offensive on Lebanon.

In the following headline the text producer assigns the entity “Israeli troops” the role of *Sayer* attributed the *verbal action* “praise”, whereas the entity “Hezbollah tactics” is assigned the role of *Target*:

**Israeli** troops praise Hezbollah tactics

Although Hezbollah, in terms of power and armaments, is the inferior side in the war, the text producer gives credit to the group’s performance, which comes this time from Israel, Hezbollah’s enemy. A similar effect is achieved in the following headline where the role of *Sayer* is assigned to the Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert:

**Olmert**: Israel facing ‘moment of truth’

The predicate is omitted and could be supplied by readers as “admits” or “says”, while the colon marks the projected clause consisting of the message itself.<sup>9</sup> The text producer explicitly attributes the content of the headline to Olmert, while simultaneously using the quotes, to signal that this view of the ongoing war, as being hazardous for Israel, is on the part of Israel itself.

#### 6.2.3.4. Israel as *Senser* in *mental processes*

Israel is assigned the role of *Senser* undergoing *mental actions* (“hesitate”, “ignored”) three times in headlines. Indicative examples are the following:

**Israel**, Hezbollah hesitate on deal

**Israel** ‘ignored UN bomb warnings’

In the former headline, because of the sense of indecisiveness implied by the *mental action* “hesitate”, Israel is accompanied by Hezbollah as undergoing this *mental action*. The text producer makes it clear in the minds of her/his readers that when it is the case that Israel is hesitant to take a decision, Hezbollah is in the same boat. In the latter headline, though the process is essentially *mental*, the implied action is *material*, i.e. ignoring the warnings implies that Israel continues bombing.

#### 6.2.3.5. Israel as *Carrier* in *relational processes*

The following headlines represent Israel as the *Carrier* in *attributive relational processes*:

**Israel** ready to call up reservists

**Israeli** reservists caught ‘unprepared’

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<sup>9</sup> See section 6.2.3.1 above for an analysis of the content of the projected clause.

In the former headline, Israel is depicted as in a state of readiness to call up reservists, which emphasises Israel's intention to expand and continue its offensive. Israel is systematically "activated" in the headlines of Al-Jazeera by depicting it as performing different types of actions (cf. van Leeuwen, 1996). Read in the light of its accompanying lead, we will know that the omitted *agent*, in the latter headline, is "an Israeli daily". Although apparently the predicate "caught" encodes a *material action*, the headline underlies a process of the type *attributive relational*, such as "Israeli reservists are unprepared", where the entity "Israeli reservists" will be the *Carrier* having the *Attribute* "unprepared". It could be suggested that the text producer's choice to foreground the *Carrier* ("Israeli reservists") through the use of the passive, is because the *Attribute* ("unprepared") is negatively connoted. In other words, the text producer, in employing the passive while omitting the agent, shifts both the *Carrier* and the *Attribute* to positions of thematic focus.

#### 6.2.3.6. Israel as *Receiver* or *Target* of verbal actions

In the following headline Israel is assigned the role of *Receiver* in a *verbal process* clause. Although Israel occurs in sentence-initial position, which is the syntactic subject position typically associated with the performer of action, the passive is used to shift Israel the *Receiver* of the *verbal action* to come earlier in the clause:

**Israel** 'authorised' to continue attacks

Analyzing this example against its accompanying lead reveals that the omitted *Sayer* is the entity "international powers", which, according to an Israeli accessed voice, "authorised" Israel to continue fighting. Although it is a common tradition within news stories to begin with the main news actor, the passive in this example allows for the foregrounding of Israel's role, which is emphasized rather than minimized or

omitted. The text producer's choice to use scare quotes ("authorized") absolves her/him from being read as asserting the claim made. This distancing could be because the *Sayer* ("international powers") is not specified on the part of the Israeli cited source. It could also be the case that the news outlet does not accept the "authorization"; hence marking it as belonging to a foreign ideology.

In the following headline the predicate ("questions") is of the type *verbal action*, with the role of *Target*, rather than *Receiver*, assigned to the entity "Israeli intentions":<sup>10</sup>

Chirac questions **Israeli** intentions

The text producer still adopts the same strategy that aims to focus attention on certain aspects of Israel that may communicate a negative representation of Israel, adding its ill intentions to its unpreparedness, willingness to continue war and negligence of ceasefire warnings. Depicting Israel as the *Target* of *verbal action* would not affect the overall pattern of control and dominance characterizing Israel's representation.

#### 6.2.3.7. Israel as *Indirect Goal*

In the following two headlines Israel is assigned the role of *indirect Goal* through its inclusion within a PP:

Hezbollah declares war on **Israel**

Arabs rally against **Israeli** attacks

Israel is depicted as an affected participant, albeit indirectly, as part of a PP that functions as a qualifier for the preceding noun, in the former headline, and as a *circumstantial element*, in the latter headline. In the former headline, the declaration, being essentially verbal, lessens the sense of affliction assigned to Israel. In the latter

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<sup>10</sup> For definitions of the roles of *Receiver* and *Target*, see section 5.4.1.

headline, although the action (“rally”) is of *material* type, Israel is not materially affected by the specified action. The *material action* “rally against” helps develop a negative representation of Israeli attacks, as being a target of criticism from Arabs. This negative representation is noted on another occasion on the part of Chirac.

#### 6.2.3.8. Israel as *Goal* in *material processes*

Israel is depicted as the *Goal* affected by *material actions* three times (5.9%) in the headlines of Al-Jazeera, out of 51 references to Israel:

Hezbollah captures **Israeli** soldiers

Hezbollah downs **Israeli** helicopter

Hezbollah warns of **Tel Aviv** strike

In the first two headlines agency is assigned to the *Actor* Hezbollah ascribed the *material actions* “captures” and “downs” affecting the Israeli military entities “soldiers” and “helicopter”. Representing Israel’s affected entities as of a military, rather than civilian, nature may have the effect of weakening Hezbollah’s agency as well as Israel’s affliction because military entities would be expected targets within the context of a war. In the third headline, Tel Aviv, Israel’s capital, is assigned the role of *Goal*, affected by the *nominalised material action* “strike”. The headline’s wording seems rather awkward and might result in ambiguity. The reason is that the PP “of Tel Aviv strike” can be interpreted in two, seemingly opposing, ways: it could mean that Israel (Tel Aviv) will strike some entity or that some other entity will strike Tel Aviv. The headline can only be disambiguated based on the following lead which states that Hezbollah warns Israel that the group will strike Tel Aviv.

#### 6.2.4. Israel in Al-Jazeera headlines: summary

Israel is mentioned 51 times in the headlines of Al-Jazeera news reports covering the 2006 war. Table 6 introduces the participant roles assigned to Israel grouped under a number of distinct categories from a transitivity perspective:

Overall category	Participant roles	Frequency	%
performer of action	26 times <i>Actor</i>	37	72.5
	3 times <i>indirect Actor</i>		
	8 times <i>Sayer</i>		
part of a relation	<i>Carrier in a relational process</i>	2	3.9
benefits from action	benefiting from a <i>material process</i>	1	2.0
part of a <i>circumstance of cause</i>	providing reason	1	2.0
undergoes action	<i>Senser</i>	3	5.9
receiver of <i>verbal action</i>	<i>Receiver of verbal action</i>	1	2.0
affected by action	3 times <i>Goal</i>	6	11.8
	2 times <i>indirect Goal</i>		
	1 time <i>Target</i>		

#### 6. Representation of Israel in Al-Jazeera headlines: performer or affected by action

The representation of Israel as the performer of action constitutes 72.5% of the total frequency of reference to Israel in Al-Jazeera headlines. When represented as the *Actor*, one pattern of representation discerned involves ascribing to Israel negatively connoted *material actions* that extend to human participants, both civilian and military. When represented as the performer of *material actions*, Israel is predominantly introduced as a direct participant; the negatively connoted *material action* “kill” is used on six occasions extending to human victims; whereas the system of voice is predominantly active to emphasize the causal link. In those cases where Israel is assigned the role of *indirect Actor* in a passive construction, the text producer apparently does not try to hide or omit agency, as Israel is instantly supplied. The passive on these occasions serves to shift the victims to clause-initial position which is a position of thematic focus, while retain reference to the responsible agent. It might

be the case that the text producer is concerned with the victims of violence as what he/she wants the readers to have in mind. Alternatively, Israel is ascribed negatively connoted *material actions* that extend to inanimate entities both civilian and military. These two patterns combined communicate a representation of Israel as a blind military power whose actions affect inanimate entities as well as human victims, both civilian and military.

Alternatively, Israel's *material actions* describe its tactical moves along either the spatial or temporal dimensions. The verb together with the *Goal* signal *material processes* that may communicate, for some readers, a representation of Israel as planning to expand and continue its offensive. The actual affected entities are occasionally introduced indirectly within PPs. One significant finding is that on some occasions *verbal actions* attributed to Israel in the accompanying leads are turned into *material actions* ascribed to Israel *the state* in the headlines, which may intensify Israel's agency. The text producer still emphasizes Israel's agency and dominance by representing it as the *Sayer* attributed *verbal actions*. The *verbal actions* attributed to Israel as well as the associated projected clauses convey a representation of Israel as planning to widen and continue its offensive, emphasizing its aggressive attitude.

The text producer is still drawing attention to Israel's willingness to expand and continue the war, even in those references where it is not represented as the performer of action, as, for example, when Israel is assigned the roles of *Senser* undergoing *mental actions* or *Carrier* in *relational processes*. This can be seen in "ignoring" UN bomb warnings, where the *mental process* implies a *material action* being performed, and in Israel's readiness to call up reservists, where the *relational process* emphasises

Israel's offensive attitude. This overall negative representation of Israel is emphasized when Israel is assigned the role of *Target* of a *verbal action*, where Chirac questions Israel's ill intentions.

The text producer emphasizes the US-Israel alleged relations by reporting on Israel's demand of missiles, the States' shipping of bombs to Israel, where Israel is represented as *Beneficiary*, and the Muslims' criticism of the US because of supporting Israel, where Israel comes as part of a *circumstance of cause*.

Compared to a total frequency of 72.5% of reference to Israel as the performer of action, Israel is represented as affected by *material action* on only five occasions constituting 9.8% of the total frequency of reference to Israel. On two occasions, military, rather than civilian, entities belonging to Israel are directly affected by *material actions* ascribed to Hezbollah. Whereas one of these headlines belongs to the first news report covering the action which triggers the war, the other belongs to the last day of the war and covers an important incident where Hezbollah manages to down a helicopter belonging to Israel. As for the other references to Israel as affected entity, one can notice a number of textual features that may have the effect of blurring or weakening Israel's affliction such as introducing Israel as an *indirect Goal* where it is peripherally linked to the process, the use of *verbal*, rather than *material, process* in the main clause, the use of a *material action* that does not affect the *Goal* in the normal physical sense, and structurally blurring role assignment.

### **6.2.5. Analysis of lexical choices in Al-Jazeera headlines**

The analysis of representation of the 2006 war in Al-Jazeera and the BBC news reports is conducted in this thesis in the light of the systems of transitivity, focusing on analyzing participant roles, process types and circumstances and the logico-semantic system of projection and expansion, focusing on the logical relations between clauses. Headlines and leads are also analyzed in the light of syntactic transformations of the clause such as passivization and nominalization. The analysis of representation in this thesis also involves analyzing lexical choices. This section, as well as corresponding sections in the present and the following chapters, offers a detailed analysis of patterns on the level of word choice as well as different referential strategies used by text producers. A thorough and well-based analysis of representation should take into consideration the different lexical choices made by text producers, particularly those used to refer to different participants and associated processes. Consideration of significant cases of synecdoche, references to official spokespersons representing Israel, Hezbollah as well as other involved parties such as the US, UK, Syria and Iran, of which concepts are over-lexicalized and of which are under-lexicalized will help give a more comprehensive view of the way the war is being represented.

Starting with the representation of Israel in the headlines of Al-Jazeera, it is worth mentioning that in the analysis of the representation of Israel in the selected news outlets headlines and leads, the present research includes, in addition to the mentions of the word "Israel", whether referring to the state, the territories or some other entity that belongs to Israel, occurrences of the word "Israeli" as adjectival modifier in a noun group, as well as any other referential strategies, such as mentions of Israeli official spokespersons. In reference to Israel the text producers most frequently use

the words “Israel” and the attribute “Israeli” used as adjectival modifier in a noun group. The text producer refers to “Tel Aviv”, the capital of Israel, on one occasion (“Hezbollah warns of **Tel Aviv** strike”).<sup>11</sup> The potential of Hezbollah to strike as deep inside Israel as Tel Aviv, the capital of Israel, could be said to emphasize the group’s military capabilities. Reference is also made to Olmert, the then Israel’s Prime Minister, on two occasions (“**Olmert** to Europe: Stop ‘preaching’ ”, “**Olmert**: Israel facing ‘moment of truth’ ”). The second of these references is of particular importance as attributing such a statement to the Israeli Prime Minister represents the situation as extremely hazardous for Israel.

In reference to the Israeli army and its members, text producers use different referential strategies. While the word “troops” is used in connection with the Israeli army on four occasions (“Israeli **troops** enter Lebanon”, “Israeli **troops** seize Lebanese village”), it is also used in relation to the Lebanese army on one occasion. In reference to members of the Israeli army, the terms “soldiers” (“Hezbollah captures Israeli **soldiers**”) and “reservists” (“Israel calls up thousands of **reservists**”) are used by the text producer. These two nouns categorize participants by reference to their role or occupation, a category labelled “functionalization” by van Leeuwen (1996: 54, cf. Fairclough, 1995a: 116). While these two labels are used exclusively in connection with the Israeli army, the only time in which the word “army” is used is in connection with Syria (“Syrian **army** put on high alert”). The fact that the text producer uses the label “troops” in reference to both the Israeli and the Lebanese armies while the word “army” is used in connection with the Syrian army means that the status of organized official military body is not only restricted to the Israeli army.

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<sup>11</sup> It is worth noticing that this reference does not constitute an example of *synecdoche*; a figure of speech that involves using part to refer to the whole, as the text producer literally refers Tel Aviv as the target of Hezbollah’s strike.

Another lexical feature which worth commenting on is the proliferation of lexical items used to describe Israel's offensive against Lebanon and the ongoing fighting ("Lebanese offensive", "ground offensive", "onslaught", "Lebanon fighting", "Lebanon violence", "fight", "fighting", "battle") as well as Israel's military operations ("(Israeli) attack(s)", "full air onslaught", "(Israeli) (air) raid(s)", "(Israeli) (air) strike(s)"). Examples are the following:

Hezbollah surprised by **onslaught**

Israel extends **Lebanese offensive**

Israeli **strikes** kill scores in Lebanon

**Fighting** rages in Lebanon

**Battle** rages for Lebanese town

By contrast, in reference to Hezbollah's military operations, text producers use a limited range of referring terms, including "strike", which is used on two occasions, and "fight" and "war" which are used only one time ("Hezbollah warns of Tel Aviv **strike**", "Nasrallah vows to continue **fight**", "Hezbollah declares **war** on Israel")

In reference to Israel's *material actions*, the negatively connoted material action "kill" is used six times whereas the *material action* "bomb" is used three times, where the system of voice is predominantly active ("Israeli strikes **kill** 40 in Lebanon", "Dozens **killed** in Israeli air raids"). Other verbs used to present Israel's *material actions* are "strike", "fight" and "enter" ("Israeli troops **enter** Lebanon", "Scores killed as Israel **strikes** Lebanon"). The entities affected by Israel's *material actions* extend to include Lebanese civilians, Hezbollah members, UN soldiers, as well as inanimate entities, of both civilian and military nature. In reference to the civilians affected by Israel's military operations, text producers use different labelling devices such as "civilians",

“dozens”, “scores” (“Cluster grenades ‘used on **civilians**’ ”, “Israeli strikes kill **scores** in Lebanon”). When the affected entities are inanimate similar labels that indicate the civilian status of the targets are used such as “factories” and “village” (“Israel bombs Lebanese **factories**”). The use of the indefinite nouns “scores” and “dozens” absolves the text producer of responsibility for inaccuracy, while implying high numbers of victims, which may have the effect of casting more blame on Israel and enhancing the pattern of violence attached to Israel. The affected entities are presented as military belonging to Hezbollah on only two occasions where the text producer uses the military terms “bunker” and “stronghold” (“Israel bombs ‘Hezbollah **bunker**’ ”, “Israel enters Hezbollah **stronghold**”).

In reference to Hezbollah, text producers use the label “Hezbollah”, including those occurrences of “Hezbollah” as a noun used as an adjective (used in a noun group as an attribute of some other entity meaning affiliation to the group), whereas the text producer makes reference to the group’s leader Hassan Nasrallah on two occasions (“**Nasrallah** vows more strikes”, “**Nasrallah** vows to continue fight”). The use of “Nasrallah” represents what van Leeuwen (1996: 52-53) labels “nomination”. The text producer uses the group’s leader surname, which is a formal way of reference. In reference to the group’s members, the label “fighters” and men are used (“Israel raid ‘captures Hezbollah **fighters**’ ”, “Israel captures two Hezbollah **men**”). Whereas the label “fighters” represents an example of “functionalization”, using van Leeuwen’s classification, the use of “men” is an example of “identification” of participants by classifying them in terms of their gender (van Leeuwen, 1996: 54). What is of interest here is that referring expressions such as “radical”, “Islamic”, “militia”, “militants”, “insurgents”, “guerrilla” and “fundamental” are not used to refer to or qualify

Hezbollah in Al-Jazeera headlines. Unlike the terms “fighters” and “men”, such referring expressions as “militia”, “radical”, “guerrilla” often carry a negative semantic load and add unnecessarily a political, ideological or religious dimension to the referent.

The use of lexical items with evaluative meaning such as generic nouns, e.g. “terrorists”, or modal adjectives and adverbs is generally kept to a minimum in Al-Jazeera news reports headlines, which is a feature of the genre itself, i.e. news reports being a factual account of reality. However, it is important to consider those cases where such use is significant for the analysis of representation. For example, the only time in which the word “terror” is used is in reference to Israel’s bombing of Qana; however, no explicit reference is made to Israel in the headline and the text producer absolves him/herself by the use of scare quotes (“ **Hamas condemns ‘state terror’ ”**). It is significant for the analysis of representation to analyze the way the NP “state terror” could be interpreted. The choice of the word “terror” in connection with Israel contrasts with the way Hamas itself is being categorized by Israel as a “terrorist organization”. The implied communicated meaning could be that Israel’s actions, as viewed by Hamas, should be seen as “state” rather than “organization” terror. The text producer’s use of adjectives and adverbs which involve an element of evaluation is kept to a minimum, as is evident in the following example:

#### Hezbollah in **deadly** rocket attack

The text producer’s choice of the evaluative adjective “deadly” may communicate a representation of Hezbollah as constituting a real threat and challenge to Israel with its strikes and rocket attacks. Notice text producers’ choice of the adjectives “wider” and “full” in describing Israel’s military operations in the following headlines:

Israel okays **wider** ground offensive

Israel to resume **full** air onslaught

This choice represents Israel's offensive against Hezbollah/Lebanon as escalating and as being comprehensive.

The use of rhetorical figures such as similes and metaphors in Al-Jazeera headlines is noted sporadically in the war coverage. Some of these occurrences are worth particular attention, as evident in the following headlines:

Lebanon 'torn to shreds'

Rice sees bombs as birth pangs

EU waters down ceasefire call

Truce calls fall on deaf ears

The metaphor employed in the first headline, which is marked as attributed to a source other than the text producer by the use of the scare quotes, depicts how the situation is critical and tragic in Lebanon because of Israel's continuing bombardment of the country. The text producer's choice to foreground this statement made by the Lebanese Prime Minister Fuad Siniora should be seen as part of the text producer's representation of the event. Communicating a completely different view of the situation, Rice's description of bombing Lebanon as "birth pangs" depicts these bombings as necessary and inevitable to reach the set objectives. It also represents the Israeli offensive as a creative and natural event that is the very opposite of causing death. The simile which is directly attributed to Rice is reported on by the text producer with the potential effect of communicating a representation of the US as potentially biased to Israel and inconsiderate of the destruction in Lebanon. In a similar manner, the rhetorical figures used in the latter two headlines could

communicate a representation of both the EU and other Western countries as not caring to or seeking to bring the conflict to an end.

In addition to references made to the two main sides of the war, Israel and Hezbollah, references to the UN is also found in headlines. In some cases, the text producer acknowledges the active role played by the international organization in solving the conflict (“UN seeks international force for Lebanon”, “UN urges immediate ceasefire”, “UN agrees on Lebanon draft”, “Bush, Blair back UN force for Lebanon”). However, on other occasions the reported content may invite a representation of the UN as being the target of criticism (“Lebanon blames US for UN silence”, “OIC anger at UN over Lebanon”, “Beirut dismisses UN draft resolution”) mostly on the part of Lebanon and the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC).

Similarly, references to the US and affiliated officials (“US”, “Bush”, “Rice”) are noted in headlines. Notice the way Bush and Rice are being nominated using their surnames, something also noted above in reference to Nasrallah. In some of these headlines the US is represented as the target of criticism from many sides (“Lebanon blames US for UN silence”, “US Muslims criticise **Bush** over Israel”). Alternatively, the text producer emphasizes the representation of the US as an arms supplier for Israel (“Israel asks US for new missiles”, “**Bush** ‘rushes bombs to Israel’ ”, “UK anger over US bomb flights”), which contradicts and undermines the alleged attempts by the US to end the conflict (“**Bush, Blair back UN force for Lebanon**”). Rather, the US is occasionally represented as supporting the continuation of the offensive (“**Rice** sees bombs as birth pangs”, “**Rice** sets tough terms for truce”).

The text producer makes occasional reference to the UK (“UK”, “Blair”, “Britain”), where UK is mostly positively represented as rejecting the US supply of weapons to Israel and as seeking an international force in Lebanon (“**UK** anger over US bomb flights”, “Bush, **Blair** back UN force for Lebanon”). The text producer, on the other hand, makes occasional reference to Arabs (“**Arabs** rally against Israeli attacks”) and Muslims (“US **Muslims** criticise Bush over Israel”) in headlines. It is worth noticing that the referring expressions “Arabs” and “Muslims” are examples of categorization by means of classification by ethnicity and religion respectively (van Leeuwen, 1996: 54, 58). But more important is the way text producers refer to both Muslims and Arabs as groups, labelled “assimilation”, to again use van Leeuwen’s term (van Leeuwen, 1996: 48). Arab people of different countries are assimilated and collectivized in one group using the collective noun “Arabs”, with the effect of exaggerating the meaning. In a similar manner, all the Muslim groups in the US are assimilated and represented collectively as one group. The headline stresses that criticism this time is coming from within the US. This way of categorization represents the opposition against Israel as being from all the Arabs and all the American Muslims.

References to Iran and Syria, as the main allies of Hezbollah, are also found in the headlines of Al-Jazeera (“**Syrian** army put on high alert”, “**Iran** denies supplying rocket that hit ship”, “**Senior Iran cleric** says arm Hezbollah”). Reference to the Syrian army is made after 20 days of the conflict and is attributed to the Syrian President; however, the text producer’s choice to word the headline in this way represents the situation as hazardous and creates a sense of suspense that may have the effect of attracting readers’ attention. References to Iran potentially emphasize its

alleged close connections with Hezbollah, as its main weapon supplier. Notice the way in which the referent is functionalized in “senior Iran cleric”, by the use of the noun “clerk”, which is combined by the use of the nationality attribute “Iran”, instead of nominating the participant by the use, for example, of his name (cf. van Leeuwen, 1996: 54). This way of categorization implies the religious identification between Iran and Hezbollah (both Hezbollah and the Iranians are predominantly Shia Muslims).

### **6.3. Analysis of Al-Jazeera news reports leads**

The lead of a news story is its first sentence/paragraph that immediately follows the headline. Its functions are to establish the main point of the news story and to summarize its central action(s), which correspond to the common journalistic practice of writing with the most important pieces of information concentrated in the opening sentence(s), a structure commonly labelled as inverted pyramid style (Bell, 1991: 152). Integrating the analysis of headlines with an analysis of the accompanying leads can substantiate the findings of the analysis of headlines – if similar representational patterns are discerned – or, otherwise, reveal significant discrepancies.<sup>12</sup>

#### **6.3.1. Representation of Hezbollah in Al-Jazeera leads**

Analyzing Al-Jazeera reporting reveals that Hezbollah is referred to 68 times in the 87 leads of Al-Jazeera. Table 7 illustrates frequencies of reference to Hezbollah in Al-Jazeera leads from the experiential perspective, i.e. in terms of participant roles and process types:

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<sup>12</sup> See section 3.2.1.1 for a further discussion of the points highlighted in this paragraph.

Participant role	Process	Frequency	
		HEZBOLLAH	other ref. <sup>13</sup>
<i>Actor</i>	<i>material</i>	9	16
<i>indirect Actor</i>	<i>material</i>	4	2
<i>co-Actor</i>	<i>material</i>	3	1
<i>Sayer</i>	<i>verbal</i>	8	2
<i>Carrier</i>	<i>attributive relational</i>	0	1
<i>Senser</i>	<i>mental</i>	0	2
<i>Target</i>	<i>verbal</i>	4	2
<i>indirect Goal</i>	<i>material</i>	6	0
<i>Goal</i>	<i>material</i>	7	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>41</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Total frequency</b>			<b>68</b>

#### 7. Frequencies of reference to Hezbollah in Al-Jazeera leads

##### 6.3.1.1. Hezbollah as *Actor* ascribed *material actions*

Hezbollah is assigned the role of *Actor* ascribed *material actions* 25 times out of the total 68 references to the group. The following patterns characterize the representation of Hezbollah as *Actor*.

##### a. Hezbollah's *material actions* do not extend to another entity

Within this pattern of representation Hezbollah is assigned the role of *Actor*; however, the process, rather than extending to or being directed at another entity or participant, is confined to the *Actor* (Halliday, 1994: 109-110). The *intransitive material actions* “blending”, “sheltering”, as well as the nominalised “attacks”, in the following leads do not extend to any affected entity in the clause:

Jan Egeland, the UN humanitarian chief, has accused Hezbollah of “cowardly blending” among Lebanese civilians and causing the deaths of hundreds. . . .

<sup>13</sup> See section 6.2 above.

Israeli jets have dropped bombs on an area of southern Beirut where senior **Hezbollah** leaders were thought to be sheltering.

Israel has ordered an expansion of its ground offensive in Lebanon aiming to strike harder at Hezbollah and curb **its** cross-border rocket attacks.

Apart from this transitivity choice, a number of comments which are significant for the analysis need to be made. In the first lead the *material actions* “blending” and “causing” appear as part of the *Matter*, i.e. message, attributed to the *Sayer* “Jan Egeland”.<sup>14</sup> The use of source attribution, together with the quotes, as textual strategies, marks the content of the lead as being part of a foreign ideology and allows the text producer the chance to absolve himself from what is being reported. In the last lead, within the NP “its cross-border rocket attacks”, the *nominalised material action* “attacks” is ascribed to Hezbollah; however, no explicit reference to affected participants is made in the clause. Moreover, Hezbollah’s *material action* is preceded by more *material actions* ascribed to Israel, which has the effect of balancing or weakening Hezbollah’s agency.

Another textual strategy is used in the second lead above where the entity “senior Hezbollah leaders”, assigned the role of *Actor* ascribed the *material action* “sheltering”, occurs as part of the defining relative clause “where senior Hezbollah leaders were thought to be sheltering”. This relative clause expands the process introduced in the main clause by means of *enhancement*, via reference to one side of its circumstances of occurrence. However, rather than directly assigning Hezbollah this role, the text producer introduces Hezbollah as part of a projected clause

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<sup>14</sup> *Matter* is a label given to “summary of the message” in *verbal processes* (Thompson, 2004:102). A similar pattern is discussed later where Hezbollah’s agency is presented as part of a reported clause attributed to some other source.

associated with the *passive mental process* “thought”, where the *Senser*, left out in the passive clause, presumably belongs to Israel. A number of comments need to be made here. First, although the *enhancement* in this lead is apparently meant to give the cause of the military *material action* (“dropped bombs”), ascribed to Israel in the main clause, this explanation is not given directly or congruently, to use Halliday’s term, but rather in an indirect manner. Second, particular attention needs to be given to the text producer’s choice to represent the reported content as a *thought* which can be doubted rather than a *fact*. *Mental* processes of the sub-category *cognitive* such as *think*, rather than presenting the content of the clause as already existing, i.e. a fact, ascribe thoughts to a source and imply they are not the text producer’s own thoughts (cf. Thompson, 2004: 118). Read in relation to the main clause, it might be suggested that the text producer’s choice to represent Israel’s military actions as a consequence of an uncertain thought may have the effect of criticizing, rather than legitimating, Israel’s actions. Third, the choice of the passive voice results in omitting the *Senser*, i.e. the *thinker* is not named. So, despite the fact that the entity “senior Hezbollah leaders” is assigned the role of *Actor* ascribed the *material action* “sheltering”, this was never expressed as such in the lead; rather it is represented as undoubted projected thought, embedded within a *mental process*, which itself is rather weakened and doubted through the absence of the *Senser* in the *mental process*. This formulation also absolves the writer from making her/his own truth claim or asserting any facts.

#### **b. Hezbollah’s *material actions* do not materially affect the *Goal***

Another sub-pattern involves assigning Hezbollah the role of *Actor* ascribed *material actions* (“has given”, “would join”, “backs”, “prompting”) which do not affect the

*Goal* (“a fight”, “forces”, “deployment”, “Israel”) in the normal physical sense, i.e. having something physical done to it. Examples are the following:

Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, the leader of Hezbollah, says **his movement** backs the Lebanese army’s deployment to the south but that Washington is trying to impose Israeli demands on Lebanon through a draft UN resolution.

Israeli soldiers . . . say that **Hezbollah** has given them more of a fight. . . .

Nabih Berri . . . says his Shia Amal movement and **Hezbollah** would join forces against Israel’s offensive in Lebanon.

Unlike *material actions* of the type “kill” and “bomb”, these *material actions* are not negatively connoted and are abstract rather than physical. The analysis reveals that this pattern is recurrent in the leads of Al-Jazeera. On some occasions, while the role of *Goal* is given to inanimate entities (“a fight”, “forces” and “rockets”) which are not affected by the *material actions* in the normal physical sense, the entities materially affected by the actions are introduced into the clause indirectly, as part of a PP (“against Israel’s offensive”, “at Tel Aviv” and “rockets on Israel”) or as an indirect object (“has given *them* more of a fight”). It is worth noticing that within this sub-pattern, Hezbollah is introduced as part of the message which is expressed in a separate projected clause. The choice to attribute the message to an explicitly stated source may have the effect of absolving the text producer from the claims made, which could be seen as part of a *foreign*, i.e. external, ideological system rather than as being representative of the text producer’s own views or reporting or as reflecting her/his ideology.

### c. Juxtaposing Hezbollah's *material actions* with Israel's *material actions*

Another textual strategy involves juxtaposing Hezbollah's *material actions* with Israel's *material actions* within the same lead, while giving priority to Israel's actions to initiate the lead. Indicative examples are the following:

Israeli air strikes in Lebanon have killed 53 civilians as **Hezbollah** fighters fired rockets at towns across northern Israel.

Israeli air raids have killed more than 40 people in Lebanon while two **Hezbollah** rockets have struck 80km into Israeli territory, the deepest attacks since fighting began.

Fighting has continued in Lebanon, with Israeli warplanes bombing the north and south of the country and **Hezbollah** rockets continuing to fall on northern Israel.

While Hezbollah occurs in the secondary clause or continuing clause, Israel occurs in the primary clause or the initiating clause (cf. Halliday, 1994: 218). The text producer's choice to report Hezbollah's *material actions* preceded by Israel's *material actions* can serve a number of strategic purposes. It structurally foregrounds Israel's agency while delaying Hezbollah's agency. One might also suggest that pairing Hezbollah's agency with that of Israel may have the effect of weakening the impact of Hezbollah's *material actions* by juxtaposing them with the already mentioned military actions by Israel.

It is significant for the analysis of representation to point out the type of relation the text producer establishes between the two clauses in this pattern. For example, while in the first two leads the second clause expands the first by qualifying it with some

circumstantial feature of time – the temporal relation signalled by “as” and “while” is that of “happening same time”, in the third lead the second clause expands the first by extending its meaning by means of addition (cf. Halliday, 1994: 223-234).<sup>15</sup> However, one can argue that the use of the conjunctions “and”, “as” and “while”, which do not signal sequencing as part of their intrinsic meaning in these examples, means that the actions that are introduced first can be perceived as instigating the actions presented later. To put it more simply, Hezbollah’s actions can be seen as a response to Israel’s actions based on the order in which they are reported within each lead. In another example “Israeli troops have taken control of a village in southern Lebanon that it claims is used by Hezbollah to launch rockets into northern Israel”, the *circumstance of cause* “to launch rockets into northern Israel” occurs as part of a defining relative clause which elaborates on the meaning by means of *clarification*. However, the use of the reporting verb “claim” represents the reported content as less credible.

While both Israel and Hezbollah are assigned the role of *Actor* ascribed *material actions* in this representational pattern, the types of *material actions* ascribed as well as the entities assigned the role of *Goal* need further comment. The text producer ascribes *intransitive material actions* to Hezbollah (“have struck 80km” and “continuing to fall”) that affect no entity in the clause. Alternatively, Hezbollah’s *material actions* (“fired”, “continue to hit”, “has repulsed” and “launch”) extend to inanimate entities (“a barrage of rockets” and “rockets”), which form part of the *material process* itself. The entities physically affected by Hezbollah’s *material actions* are introduced indirectly to the clause as mere places, within PPs (“at its northern towns”, “at towns across northern Israel”, “into Israeli territory”, “on

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<sup>15</sup> Using devices such as *while* and *as* is common in journalistic style.

northern Israel” and “into northern Israel”) functioning as a *circumstance of location*. This formulation has the effect of weakening the causal link between the *Actor* and its *material actions* on one hand and the affected entities on the other hand. Hezbollah’s *material actions* extend to entities which are physically affected by the process on only two occasions (“has repulsed some of the operations” and “hit northern Israel”), where the affected entities are inanimate.

In contrast, Israel’s *material actions* (“is pressing on”, “have killed”, “bombing” and “have taken control of”) affect human victims (“53 civilians”, “40 people”) as well as inanimate entities (“the north and south of the country” and “villages”), assigned the role of *Goal*, which are introduced directly to the *material process* clauses as affected by Israel’s actions. Israel’s *material actions* extend to an entity which is not physically affected in one example (“has continued its offensive”), where the noun “offensive” itself signals a *nominalized material process* (see section 6.3.3.1). An *intransitive material action* is ascribed to Israel once (“has pushed deeper”), where the lead may communicate a representation of Israel as planning to expand its offensive.

#### **d. Hezbollah’s *material actions* extend to inanimate and animate military entities**

In all of the patterns of representation analyzed above Hezbollah’s *material actions* do not extend to animate or inanimate entities introduced into the clause as direct, or even indirect, participants. Additionally, the text producer employs different textual strategies that aim to weaken, blur or hide Hezbollah’s agency. Another sub-pattern, involves assigning to Hezbollah (“the guided missile”, “Hezbollah fighters”, “the group”) the role of *Actor* ascribed *material actions* (“hit”, “have shot down”, “killed”, “has captured”), occasionally nominalised (“struggle against”, “capture of”), that

affect inanimate (“one of their naval warships”, “an Israeli helicopter”, “Israel”) as well as animate military participants (“at least one sailor”, “at least 19 Israeli soldiers”, “two Israeli soldiers”). Indicative examples are the following:

Israel claims that **the guided missile that hit** one of their naval warships, **killing** at least one sailor, was Iranian-made.

**Hezbollah** has captured two Israeli soldiers during cross-border clashes, prompting Israel to carry out a ground and air assault that has killed at least two Lebanese civilians.

**Hezbollah** fighters have shot down an Israeli helicopter in south Lebanon and killed at least 19 Israeli soldiers, as fighting continues ahead of a ceasefire.

In the first lead, the *material actions* ascribed to Hezbollah appear as part of the message associated with the *verbal action* “claims” attributed to the *Sayer* “Israel”, rather than being attributed directly to the text producer. Moreover, the text producer’s choice of the reporting verb “claims” rather than “said”, for example, lessens the overall effect of certainty of the reported content. It is worth noticing that based on the information presented in the lead one cannot associate the *Actor* “the guided missile” with Hezbollah. The reader would have to read the news text body or, at least, possess a prior knowledge of the wider situational context, in order to associate the entity “missile” with Hezbollah. Notice also the way the text producer ascribes to Israel in the second lead above the *material actions* “to carry out” and “has killed” which may have the effect of balancing Hezbollah’s agency.<sup>16</sup> It is noteworthy that the second lead belongs to Al-Jazeera’s first news report covering the action that triggers the war, whereas the third comes in the last day of the war just after ceasefire is declared.

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<sup>16</sup> This lead is analyzed in more detail in sections 8.3.1.

Within the third lead, Hezbollah (“Hezbollah fighters”) is assigned the role of *Actor* ascribed the negatively connoted *material actions* (“have shot down” and “killed”) that affect inanimate (“an Israeli helicopter”) as well as animate military participants (“at least 19 Israeli soldiers”). The text producer employs an *expansion* (“and killed at least 19 Israeli soldiers”) that extends the meaning of the first clause by means of addition. It could be argued that the third lead belongs to a news report that does not cover any of the periods of intense fighting when readership is likely to soar; rather, it covers the period following the ceasefire that practically puts an end to the war and thus readership would usually drop significantly.

It is worth mentioning here that ascribing to Hezbollah the negatively connoted *material action* “kill” affecting human participants belonging to Israel occurs only three times in the entire corpus of Al-Jazeera leads, where on the three occasions those entities belong to the military (“Thirteen Israeli soldiers have been killed”, “killing at least one sailor”, “killed at least 19 Israeli soldiers”). Apart from this very low frequency of occurrence, which might be significant per se, one might argue that assigning the role of *Goal* to military, rather than civilian, Israeli entities may have the effect of weakening the *Goal*’s affliction as well as potential incrimination of Hezbollah, as military entities represent typical targets within a war context. That said, one might argue that this particular incident may communicate a positive representation of Hezbollah as possessing the military capabilities and tactics that enable it to challenge a military power such as Israel. This view can be supported by the fact that the text producer employs an *expansion* (“as fighting continues ahead of a ceasefire”) that can be seen as offering an explanation for Hezbollah’s military action as being part of the ongoing fighting that followed the ceasefire.

### 6.3.1.2. Hezbollah as *indirect Actor/co-Actor*

While the above section accounts for those cases where Hezbollah is introduced directly into the clause as an *Actor*, another pattern of representation involves introducing Hezbollah (“Hezbollah”, “Hezbollah fighters”) into *passive material process clauses* (“have been killed”, “wounded”, “captured by”, “injured”, “were freed”), as an *indirect Actor*, via its inclusion within a PP, which is occasionally omitted. Indicative examples are the following:

Thirteen Israeli soldiers have been killed and 12 wounded in fighting with **Hezbollah** in a southern Lebanese town. . . .

Israeli troops have entered Lebanon to search for two soldiers captured by **Hezbollah** fighters during a cross-border raid.

At least five people have been killed and eight Israeli commandos injured in a raid near the Lebanese port city of Tyre.

The entities assigned the role of *Goal*, such as “Thirteen Israeli soldiers”, “12”, “eight Israeli commandos”, “two kidnapped Israeli soldiers”, are human, military participants who belong to Israel, the other side of the war. The *material actions* are ascribed to Hezbollah indirectly, via the intermediary of a preposition (“in fighting with Hezbollah”, “by Hezbollah”) or are not ascribed to an explicit *Actor* (“injured”, “were freed”) through the use of the agentless passive. So, rather than presented as a delayed *agent* in the passive clause, the text producer occasionally shifts Hezbollah further back to appear in the *circumstantial element* (“in fighting with Hezbollah in a southern Lebanese town”). This textual strategy may lead to blurring the causal link and weakening the group’s agency and direct responsibility for the specified *material actions*.

It is worth noticing that in the third lead above, the two *passive material actions* “have been killed” and “injured” are not ascribed to the same *Actor*. The former is ascribed to Israel, whereas the latter is ascribed to Hezbollah. Reading the news text body is possibly necessary to disambiguate this role assignment. The text producer’s choice to omit the *Actor* responsible for these actions – replacing it with the PP “in a raid” – results in some sort of ambiguity. To put this in slightly different terms, based on the immediate linguistic context, it is quite difficult for the readers to figure out whether Hezbollah is actively involved as an *Actor* in the *material process* “injured”. By contrast, read in the light of its accompanying headline (“Israel kills Hezbollah leaders in Tyre”) and based on the *circumstantial element* in the lead (“in a raid near the Lebanese port city of Tyre”), Israel can be easily perceived as the *Actor* responsible for the killing of the civilians. The use of the agentless passive enables the text producer to hide Hezbollah’s agency and weaken the causal link. On one occasion (“Israeli troops have taken control of a village . . . that it claims is used by **Hezbollah** to launch rockets into northern Israel”), the *material action* appears as part of the message associated with the *verbal action* “claims” attributed to the *Sayer* “Israeli troops”, rather than being attributed directly to the text producer. The choice of the reporting verb “claims” lessens the overall effect of certainty of the reported content.

Another pattern of representation involves introducing Hezbollah, together with Israel, into *material process* clauses either directly or indirectly, where each of them can be assigned the role of *co-Actor*. Indicative examples are the following:

Israeli aircraft have bombed bridges and other targets across Lebanon amid reports of heavy fighting between the Israel army and **Hezbollah** fighters. . . .

Israeli forces and **Hezbollah** fighters are fighting pitched battles in southern Lebanon. . . .

In the first lead the entities “Israel army” and “Hezbollah fighters” are assigned the role of *co-Actor*, through their inclusion in the PP “between the Israel army and Hezbollah fighters” that functions as a qualifier for the preceding noun “fighting”. This qualified noun can be seen as a *nominalised material process* ascribed to the two sides, as can be seen in a rewording such as “Israel army and Hezbollah fighters are fighting”. In the latter lead the *material action* (“are fighting”) is ascribed to the participants “Israeli forces” and “Hezbollah fighters” simultaneously. Agency is thus shared and responsibility is distributed between the two participants.<sup>17</sup> Whether introduced directly or indirectly, assigning to Hezbollah, together with Israel, the role of *co-Actor* distributes agency and responsibility between both Hezbollah and Israel.

One significant point in this analysis of representation concerns the ordering of Israel and Hezbollah in the above leads. A functional view of grammatical ordering would assume that the first slot of a sentence is often occupied by the grammatical subject, who/which is typically assigned the role of *Actor*, i.e. the bearer of responsibility. Although both “Israeli forces” and “Hezbollah fighters” belong to the same NP, functioning as *co-Actor*, Israel is more likely to capture more of the readers’ attention as the *Actor* responsible for the specified *material processes*, because of its leading position in the sentence/clause.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> The entity “pitched battles”, assigned the role of *Range* rather than *Goal*, signals the process itself, i.e. there is no such thing as “battle” other than the act of fighting.

<sup>18</sup> This theoretical assumption that the ordering of sentence constituents corresponds to a foregrounding effect is based on “permutation” and “initialization”, which can be seen as methods of syntactic manipulation. **Permutation** relates to the assumption that “the first word of a sentence often captures the reader’s attention and, therefore, is decisive of how the reader will interpret the rest of the sentence” (Nordlund, 2003: 11). **Initialization** is “a process involving the foregrounding of certain parts of the sentence” (Nordlund, 2003: 11). According to Fowler (1991: 78) “there seems to be a schema for English which assumes that the left-hand noun phrase refers to an agent unless or until there is evidence

In all of the patterns analyzed above, which include 35 references to Hezbollah out of the total 68 references to the group, the text producer depicts Hezbollah as the performer of *material actions*, whether as *Actor*, *indirect Actor* or *co-Actor*.

### 6.3.1.3. Hezbollah as *Sayer* attributed *verbal actions*

Another pattern of representation, found 10 times, involves Hezbollah or an entity with the attribute “Hezbollah” (“a senior Hezbollah official”, “Hezbollah's leader, Hassan Nasrallah”, “Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, the chief of Hezbollah group”) assigned the role of *Sayer* attributed *verbal actions*. Whereas on some occasions the *verbal action* used is the reporting verb “say”, in other cases the *verbal actions* used are of the type “vow”, “warn” and “pledge”. Indicative examples are the following:

Israel has continued its offensive in Lebanon with attacks in the south, north and east of the country, while **Hezbollah** said it has repulsed some of the operations.

**Hezbollah**'s leader, Hassan Nasrallah, has vowed to rain down more rockets on Israel and said that Condoleezza Rice's visit to the region aimed to “impose conditions that serve Israel”.

Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, the chief of **Hezbollah** group, has pledged open war on Israel after it bombed his Beirut home on Friday. . . .

The leader of **Hezbollah** has warned that the group will launch rockets at Tel Aviv if Israel attacks central Beirut.

The text producer's choice to attribute Hezbollah *verbal* rather than *material actions* may have the effect of developing an image of the group as *inactive* (in material

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to the contrary”. Building on this assumption, a text producer can use different constructions to communicate different representations of events aiming at different reactions from her/his readers.

terms), i.e. attributed *verbal actions* (sayings) rather than *material* ones (doings), a pattern which is also noted in the analysis of the headlines of the same news outlet and which fits well into the overall pattern of inactivity or lack of action, i.e. “passivation”, ascribed to the group (cf. van Leeuwen, 1996: 43). Analyzing the content of the reported clauses could further support, or undermine, the above interpretation.<sup>19</sup> For example, the projected clause in “Hezbollah says it will abide by a UN-backed ceasefire” represents Hezbollah as intending to stop the war. Similarly, Hezbollah’s *verbal actions* that communicate material threats (“has pledged open war on Israel”, “has warned that the group will launch rockets at Tel Aviv”) are occasionally represented as a response to *material actions* ascribed to Israel (“after it bombed his Beirut home”) or as conditioned (“if Israel attacks central Beirut”). The same also applies to Hezbollah’s *material action* “has repulsed” which is represented as a defensive reaction to Israel’s offensive (“some of the operations”). Notice also the way the text producer delays Hezbollah’s actions while foregrounding Israel’s agency in the first lead – a pattern of representation that is analyzed later.

#### **6.3.1.4. Hezbollah as *Senser* in *mental processes***

Another pattern of representation, found two times, involves assigning to Hezbollah the role of *Senser* undergoing *mental processes*, where the group is not affected by action, neither is it the performer of action (in material terms). In the following two leads, Hezbollah together with Israel are assigned the role of *Senser* undergoing the *nominalised mental process* “acceptance” and the *passive mental action* “agreed”:

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<sup>19</sup> A transitivity analysis that would investigate the message conveyed by the *verbal process*, whether it is a projected clause or *Verbiage*, is not necessary since the content of this message is attributed to the source, i.e. the *Sayer*, rather than to the text producer. However, if the message includes references to the main participants, Hezbollah or Israel, even if implicitly, these references together with the accompanying processes will be integrated in the analysis in the present study. For further discussion of projected clauses in *verbal processes*, see section 5.4.1.

Hezbollah says it will abide by a UN-backed ceasefire and Israel says it plans to halt offensive operations on Monday, but both sides issued caveats to **their acceptance** of a UN resolution to end the fighting.

Israeli forces have continued to strike deep into southern Lebanon, less than 24 hours before a ceasefire agreed by both sides is due to take effect.

The entities “a UN resolution” and “a ceasefire” are assigned the role of *Phenomenon* that triggers these *mental processes*. The two leads may communicate a representation of Hezbollah as intending to stop fighting. Simultaneously, representing Hezbollah together with Israel as “agreeing to” a ceasefire while “issuing caveats to their acceptance” may have the effect of polishing Hezbollah’s image in the war by representing the group as having equal saying and being on an equal footing with Israel.

One overall pattern of representation, found 20 times when analyzing Al-Jazeera leads, involves depicting Hezbollah as on the receiving end, whether as *Goal* or *indirect Goal* affected by *material actions* or as the *Target* of *verbal actions*. The following sections will give some indicative examples of these three patterns of representation.

#### **6.3.1.5. Hezbollah as *Target of verbal actions***

One pattern of representation involves introducing Hezbollah (“Hezbollah”, “elements”, “the group’s leader, Hassan Nasrallah”) as the *Target* of negatively connoted *verbal actions* (“has blamed”, “has accused”, “has chastised”) attributed to different sources (“Condoleezza Rice”, “Jan Egeland, the UN humanitarian chief”, “Saudi Arabia”, “Israeli-backed hackers”). Indicative examples are the following:

Condoleezza Rice has blamed **Hezbollah** for the war with Israel and said a ceasefire would be possible only if two kidnapped Israeli soldiers were freed.

Jan Egeland, the UN humanitarian chief, has accused **Hezbollah** of "cowardly blending" among Lebanese civilians and causing the deaths of hundreds. . . .

Saudi Arabia has blamed “**elements**” inside Lebanon for the violence with Israel, in unusually frank language directed at **Hezbollah** and its Iranian backers.

In the third lead the indirectly introduced entities “elements” and “Hezbollah” are assigned the role of *Target* of the *verbal actions* “has blamed” and the structurally nominalised “frank language”, attributed to Saudi Arabia. Based on the immediate linguistic context, the referent of the entity “elements” can be supplied as “Hezbollah”. Source attribution here serves to absolve the text producer from being read as asserting the claims made, as Hezbollah in almost all of these examples is criticized for causing the ongoing war.<sup>20</sup>

#### **6.3.1.6. Hezbollah as *indirect Goal***

Another pattern of representation involves introducing Hezbollah into *material process* clauses as an *indirect Goal* through its inclusion within PPs that function either as a qualifier for a preceding noun (“assault/offensive/campaign against Hezbollah”, “offensive against Hezbollah fighters”) or as a *circumstantial element*.

Indicative examples are the following:

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<sup>20</sup> These leads are analyzed in more detail in sections 6.3.2 and 6.3.5.

A US-based human rights group has accused Israel of using artillery-fired cluster grenades against a Lebanese village last week during its assault against **Hezbollah**.

Israel's security cabinet has given a green light to the army to widen a ground offensive against **Hezbollah** fighters in Lebanon.

The nominal forms “assault”, “offensive” and “campaign” can be seen as *material processes* structurally nominalised ascribed to Israel and extend to Hezbollah. In another example (“Israel . . . aiming to strike harder at Hezbollah”), Hezbollah is introduced as an *indirect Goal* as part of the PP “at Hezbollah”, which functions as a *circumstance of extent*.

Hezbollah is also introduced indirectly to the clause in the following lead where it occurs as part of an appositional phrase:

Israeli troops have entered the border town of Bint Jbeil, a **Hezbollah** military stronghold, for the first time . . . a UN spokesman said.

Within the main clause the entity “the border town of Bint Jbeil” is the *Range* specifying the domain of the *material action* (“have entered”) ascribed to the *Actor* “Israeli troops”. Bearing in mind that both “the border town of bint Jbeil” and “a Hezbollah stronghold” refer to the same physical entity in the real world, i.e. they are in appositive relation, one can claim that the entity “a Hezbollah military stronghold” is also assigned the role of *Range*, albeit indirectly through its inclusion within an appositional phrase. A *Range* is a thing to which nothing is being done. However, the fact that *Range* elements often occur in the grammatical object position which is typically occupied by the *Goal* means that such elements might be mistakenly perceived as *Goal*, i.e. affected entity, by readers. This textual strategy can be

employed to enhance the element of affliction in clauses where the *Actor* is meant to be incriminated, as is the case with Israel in this lead. What is of interest here is that in almost all of the leads under this pattern, Israel is represented as planning to expand and continue its offensive in Lebanon.

### 6.3.1.7. Hezbollah as *Goal* in *material processes*

One pattern of representation involves assigning to human military participants belonging to Hezbollah (“five Hezbollah fighters”, “two Hezbollah fighters”) the role of *Goal* affected by *material actions* (“has captured”, “search for”) mainly ascribed to Israel, assigned the role of *Actor*. An indicative example is the following:

Israel says it has captured at least five **Hezbollah** fighters in a commando operation in the Lebanese town of Baalbek while 19 civilians were killed in airstrikes on nearby areas.

Alternatively, inanimate entities belonging to Hezbollah are depicted as the *Goal* affected by violent *material actions* (“fight”, “strike”, “attack” and “curb”) ascribed to Israel. Examples are the following:

Israel has asked the US government to speed delivery of short-range anti-personnel rockets armed with cluster munitions, which it could use to strike **Hezbollah** missile sites in Lebanon.

Israel has ordered an expansion of its ground offensive in Lebanon aiming to strike harder at Hezbollah and curb **its** cross-border rocket attacks.

In the former lead the negatively connoted *material action* (“strike”) affects the inanimate entity “Hezbollah missile sites” assigned the role of *Goal*. In the latter lead, the NP “its cross-border rocket attacks” is assigned the role of *Goal* affected by a *material action* (“curb”) ascribed to the *Actor* Israel. The same pattern is evident in

“Israel will continue to fight Hezbollah” and “Israel said it would keep attacking Hezbollah”.

Hezbollah is depicted as the *Goal* affected by a positively, rather than negatively, connoted *material action* in the following lead:

A senior Iranian cleric has called on Muslim countries to arm **Hezbollah** in its struggle against Israel. . . .

The positive *material action* (“to arm”) is ascribed to the *Actor* “Muslim countries” rather than to Israel, which is often ascribed negatively connoted actions directed at Hezbollah in Al-Jazeera.

### 6.3.2. Hezbollah in Al-Jazeera leads: summary

Analyzing Al-Jazeera reporting of the 2006 war reveals that Hezbollah is referred to 68 times in 87 leads. Table 8 illustrates the participant roles assigned to Hezbollah grouped under a number of distinct categories based on the way Hezbollah is introduced into the clause from a transitivity view point:

Overall category	Participant roles	Frequency	%
performer of action	10 times <i>Sayer</i>	45	66.2
	4 times <i>co-Actor</i>		
	6 times <i>indirect Actor</i>		
	25 times <i>Actor</i>		
part of a relation	<i>Carrier in attributive relational process</i>	1	1.5
undergoes action	<i>Senser</i>	2	2.9
affected by action	8 times <i>Goal</i>	20	29.4
	6 times <i>indirect Goal</i>		
	6 times <i>Target</i>		

8. Representation of Hezbollah in Al-Jazeera leads: performer of action or affected by action

One overall pattern which constitutes 66.2% involves representing Hezbollah as the performer of action. Hezbollah is ascribed agency associated with *material action* 35 times constituting 51.5% out of the total frequency of reference to Hezbollah. Despite this high frequency of reference to Hezbollah as the performer of *material actions*, the analysis reveals a number of textual strategies that aim to weaken, blur or hide Hezbollah's agency and responsibility or absolve the text producer from what is being reported. These textual strategies are summarized in table 9:

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**Textual strategy**

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- 1 Hezbollah is introduced into *material process* clauses, predominantly passive in voice, as an *indirect Actor* via the intermediary of a preposition. In some cases, Hezbollah is shifted further back to appear as part of a *circumstantial element* leading to further blurring the causal link.
  - 2 The *Actor* Hezbollah is not explicitly referred to through the use of the agentless passive. In such cases, further reading of the news text body or a prior knowledge of the wider context, might be essential to assign the role of *Actor* to Hezbollah. Absence of reference to Hezbollah may have the effect of hiding the group's direct responsibility and weakening the causal link.
  - 3 Hezbollah is introduced into the *material process* clause, together with Israel, as co-*Actor*. In these cases responsibility and agency are shared between the group and Israel, which might lead to blurring the causal link and/or distributing blame.
  - 4 The *material action* is confined to the *Actor*, i.e. no participant is introduced as *Goal*.
  - 5 The *material action* does not affect the *Goal* in the normal sense of having something physical done to it. Occasionally the entities materially affected are introduced indirectly within PPs.
  - 6 The *material action* is juxtaposed with Israel's *material actions* giving priority to Israel's actions to initiate the lead. In this way, Israel's agency is structurally foregrounded while Hezbollah's agency and responsibility are overshadowed and weakened.
  - 7 *Expansions* are employed with the effect of representing Hezbollah's *material actions* as a response to, instigated by or following in temporal order *material actions* ascribed to Israel.
  - 8 The *material action* affects military, rather than civilian, Israeli animate and inanimate entities.
  - 9 The *material actions* ascribed to Hezbollah are not negatively connoted. The *material action* "kill" is found on just three occasions, affecting Israeli military entities.
  - 10 The *material action* occurs as part of the message in a reported clause rather than the main clause or is enclosed between quotes marking the reported content as being part of a foreign ideology. Source attribution can absolve the text producer from the claims made.
  - 11 The *material action* is represented as a doubted, uncertain fact through the use of reporting verbs such as "claim" or *mental cognitive processes* such as "thought", which might lessen the overall effect of certainty of the reported content.
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9. Features of the representation of Hezbollah when ascribed agency in Al-Jazeera leads

Another main pattern of representation involves assigning Hezbollah the role of *Sayer* attributed *verbal actions*. Although the accompanying projected clauses ascribe to Hezbollah *material actions*, the actions which are performed are *verbal*, i.e. the *material actions* are represented as part of threats or warnings attributed to Hezbollah, rather than being actually performed. The text producer's choice to attribute Hezbollah *verbal*, rather than *material*, *actions* may have the effect of conveying a representation of Hezbollah as *inactive* (in material terms). Moreover, most of the *verbal actions* attributed to Hezbollah, as well as the associated *material actions* are represented as either defensive ones, a consequence of similar *material actions* ascribed to Israel, or conditional, i.e. only performed if Israel does something. A complementary view suggests that attributing Hezbollah such threatening language directed at Israel could be seen as a textual strategy that aims to balance Israel's superiority in the war without possibly incriminating Hezbollah for any *material actions*.

Whereas reference to Hezbollah as the *performer* of action constitutes 66.2% of the total frequency of reference to Hezbollah in Al-Jazeera leads, representations of Hezbollah as *affected* by some sort of action constitute less than half that, 29.4%.

There are several different patterns that depict Hezbollah as on the receiving end. One pattern of representation involves depicting Hezbollah as the *Target* of *verbal actions* of the type "blame" and "accuse". Interpreting the reported content should be done in the light of the valuation of these sources within the text producer's own ideological system as well as available contextual clues. For example, attributing the content of one of these leads to Condoleezza Rice – US Secretary of State – should be

interpreted in the light of the well-established relations between US and Israel as well as the declared animosity between US and Hezbollah. Similarly, Saudi Arabia is attributed one of these negatively connoted *verbal actions* targeting Hezbollah. Knowledge of the wider political and social context reveals that Saudi Arabia is often at odds with Hezbollah because of discrepancies in their political as well as religious views and stand. Hezbollah is known to have close connections with Iran which is in continuing conflict with Saudi and the Saudis are predominantly Sunni Muslims while Hezbollah and the Iranians are predominantly Shia Muslims. So, depicting Hezbollah as the *Target of verbal actions* attributed to such sources could potentially be viewed as less credible based on knowledge of the contextual factors highlighted above.

When Hezbollah is introduced as affected by *material actions*, the analysis reveals a number of features of representation. Human as well as inanimate entities belonging to Hezbollah are assigned the role of *Goal* directly affected by negatively connoted *material actions* ascribed to Israel. Human and inanimate entities belonging to Hezbollah are introduced as *indirect Goal* affected by structurally nominalised *material actions* ascribed to Israel. Within these patterns of representation Hezbollah is “passivated” (cf. van Leeuwen, 1996: 43-44), i.e. the group is represented at the receiving end.

### **6.3.3. Representation of Israel in Al-Jazeera leads**

Table 10 presents the frequencies of reference to Israel in the leads of Al-Jazeera coverage of the war in terms of participant roles and process types:

Participant role	Process	Frequency		
		ISRAEL	ISRAELI	other ref.
<i>Actor</i>	<i>material</i>	14	17	45
<i>indirect Actor</i>	<i>material</i>	1	4	2
<i>co-Actor</i>	<i>material</i>	2	2	1
<i>Senser</i>	<i>mental</i>	2	2	5
<i>Sayer</i>	<i>verbal</i>	14	6	5
<i>Value/ Token/ Carrier</i>	<i>relational</i>	1	0	2
<i>Beneficiary/ Range</i>	<i>material</i>	0	1	2
<i>Receiver</i>	<i>verbal</i>	0	0	2
<i>Target</i>	<i>verbal</i>	3	1	3
<i>in a circumstance of location</i>	-	8	1	2
<i>indirect Goal</i>	<i>material</i>	8	1	0
<i>Goal</i>	<i>material</i>	4	7	13
<b>Total</b>		<b>57</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>82</b>
<b>Total frequency</b>		<b>181 (in 87 leads)</b>		

10. Frequencies of reference to Israel in Al-Jazeera leads

The following sections will give some indicative examples of the different patterns of representation of Israel discerned when analyzing the leads of Al-Jazeera news reports. Israel is represented as the performer of *material actions*, assigned the roles of *Actor*, *indirect Actor* and *co-Actor* 98 times out of the 181 references to Israel in Al-Jazeera leads, as table 11 illustrates:

	Reference with ISRAEL	References with ISRAELI	Other referential strategies	Total
<i>Actor</i>	14	17	45	76
<i>indirect Actor</i>	1	4	2	7
<i>co-Actor</i>	2	2	1	5

11. Frequencies of reference to Israel as the performer of *material actions* in Al-Jazeera leads

### 6.3.3.1. Israel as *Actor* ascribed *material actions*

This section will illustrate the sub-patterns of representation discerned when Israel is assigned the role of *Actor* in the leads of Al-Jazeera.

### a. Israel's *material actions* affect animate civilian participants

One sub-pattern of representation involves ascribing to Israel (“Israeli air strikes”, “an Israeli bomb”, “Israeli air raids”, “Israeli attacks”) the negatively connoted *active transitive material action* “kill” while assigning the role of *Goal* to human civilian victims, who are explicitly mentioned. Indicative examples are the following:

**Israeli** air strikes in Lebanon have killed 53 civilians as Hezbollah fighters fired rockets at towns across northern Israel.

A series of **Israeli** air strikes have killed at least 40 civilians across Lebanon and forced the closure of Beirut’s international airport.

The text producer assigns the role of *Goal* to participants who are human and civilian, as in “53 civilians”, “two Lebanese civilians”, “more than 40 people” and “about 60 lives”, as well as neutral non-combatants, as in “United Nations observers”, which may have the effect of enhancing the sense of affliction and further incriminating Israel’s actions by implication.

### b. Israel's *material actions* affect animate military participants

Alternatively, Israel’s *material actions* (“has captured”, “search for”) affect military human participant. An indicative example is the following:<sup>21</sup>

**Israel** has captured two Hezbollah fighters as it kept up its air and ground blitz on Lebanon despite accusations from the UN relief chief that it is “violating humanitarian law”.

Within this pattern of representation Israel is assigned the role of *Actor* ascribed *material actions* which affect human participants who belong to Hezbollah (“at least five Hezbollah fighters”, “Hezbollah fighters”).

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<sup>21</sup> This lead is analyzed in more detail in section 6.3.3.1(d).

### c. Israel's *material actions* extend to inanimate entities

While in the above sub-patterns of representation Israel's *material actions* affect human participants, another sub-pattern involves ascribing to different Israeli entities ("Israeli airstrikes", "Israeli aircraft", "Israeli troops", "Israeli warplanes") *negatively connoted transitive material actions* ("hit", "bomb", "take control of", "pound", "attack") which are occasionally *nominalised* or realized nominally ("its attacks", "its air and ground blitz", "a mass invasion"). These *material actions* affect inanimate entities ("three factories", "bridges and other targets", "the last crossing over the watercourse", "the Lebanese village of Qana", "home", "central Beirut", and the like), which are explicitly mentioned. Indicative examples are the following:

**Israeli** airstrikes have hit three factories in southern Lebanon's port city of Sidon, Aljazeera television has reported.

**Israeli** aircraft have bombed bridges and other targets across Lebanon amid reports of heavy fighting between the Israel army and Hezbollah fighters. . . .

Medecins Sans Frontieres has said it may have to shift aid supplies by hand across Lebanon's Litani river after an **Israeli** strike hit the last crossing over the watercourse.

Thousands of foreigners were fleeing Lebanon on Monday to escape Israeli air strikes **which** have pounded the country for six days. . . .

Analytically, one significant feature which is common to the entities affected by Israel's military operations is that they are of a civilian, rather than a military, nature, as the words "factories", "bridges", "crossing", "village" and "home" indicate. This representation of Israel as directing its attacks at civilian entities incriminates Israel by implication and depicts it as a blind force. In cases where the *material actions*

ascribed to Israel are *nominalised*, the affected entities are mostly introduced into the clause indirectly within PPs (e.g. “its air and ground blitz on Lebanon”). Notice the type of logical relation the text producer establishes between the initiating clause and the *enhancement* in the third lead above, where the expansion enhances the meaning of the initiating clause in qualifying it by signalling temporal sequencing. The text producer depicts the difficulties facing the delivery of aids to Lebanon as a consequence of Israel’s bombing of the crossing in the *enhancement*, as signalled by the temporal marker “after”. In the last lead above, the entity “Israeli air strikes” is assigned the role of *Range*. It might be quite possible to interpret the NP “Israeli air strikes” as a reduced PP of the type “from Israeli air strikes” that functions as a *circumstance of cause* providing the reason for which the action took place, i.e. the foreigners flee because they wish to escape Israeli air strikes. This representation implicitly incriminates Israel’s military offensive by depicting it as targeting civilian areas and threatening the lives of both Lebanese civilians and foreigners. The *circumstantial element of extent* (“for six days”) that defines the duration along which the bounding of Lebanon continued casts more blame on Israel as it reflects the intensity and severity of Israel’s strikes.

Alternatively, the text producer assigns the role of *Goal* to Hezbollah or inanimate entity belonging to the group when Israel is assigned the role of *Actor*. Indicative examples are the following:

Israel has asked the US government to speed delivery of short-range anti-personnel rockets armed with cluster munitions, which it could use to strike Hezbollah missile sites in Lebanon.

Israel has ordered an expansion of its ground offensive in Lebanon aiming to strike harder at Hezbollah and curb its cross-border rocket attacks.

A US-based human rights group has accused Israel of using artillery-fired cluster grenades against a Lebanese village last week during **its** assault against Hezbollah.

Within this pattern of representation the text producer ascribes Israel *material actions* (“will continue to fight”, “would keep attacking”, “aiming to strike” and “curb”), occasionally nominalised or realized nominally (“offensive”, “campaign”, “assault”), which affect Hezbollah, who is assigned the role of *Goal* and introduced into the *material process* clause either directly or indirectly via inclusion within PPs (“at Hezbollah”, “against Hezbollah”). The relative clause in the first lead and the non-finite elaborating clause in the second convey a representation of Israel as planning to expand and continue its offensive, a recurrent pattern which was also noted upon analyzing the headlines of Al-Jazeera.

#### **d. Israel’s *material actions* do not materially affect the *Goal***

Another pattern of representation involves Israel assigned the role of *Actor* where the role of *Goal* is assigned to entities which are not affected by the *material action* in the normal physical sense. Within this pattern of representation Israel is ascribed agency associated with *transitive material actions* (“keep up”, “continue”, “resume”, “suspend”, “halt”, “widen” and “expand”), which has a temporal or spatial dimension.

Indicative examples are the following:

Israel has captured two Hezbollah fighters as **it** kept up its air and ground blitz on Lebanon despite accusations from the UN relief chief that **it** is “violating humanitarian law”.

Israel's security cabinet has given a green light to the army to widen a ground offensive against Hezbollah fighters in Lebanon.

The Israeli government is ready to call up 30,000 reservists to support its offensive in Lebanon. . . .

Israel has said **it** may send ground forces into Lebanon, raising doubts about the chances of growing international efforts to negotiate an immediate ceasefire.

The role of *Goal* is assigned to entities (“air strikes”, “its air and ground blitz”, “its military offensive”, “its attacks”, “full air raids”, “its campaign”, “offensive operations” and “ground forces”) which are not affected by the specified *material actions* in the normal physical sense. One might suggest that such entities function together with the verb to form the *material process*, where these entities express the *material action*, while the verb conveys a temporal or spatial dimension of the action. What is significant is that this representational choice does not result in omitting the actual affected participants, who are introduced indirectly into the process within PPs (e.g. “against its neighbour”, “on Lebanon”, “against Hezbollah and Hamas” and “against Hezbollah fighters”). Additionally, within this pattern of representation the text producer communicates a representation of Israel as intending to expand and continue its war against Hezbollah. Notice the way the text producer employs *enhancement* in the first lead to cast more blame on Israel. The *temporal enhancement* “as it kept up its air and ground blitz on Lebanon” expands the *material actions* ascribed to Israel. The other *enhancement* “despite accusations from the UN relief chief that it is ‘violating humanitarian law’ ” is of the type *consequence-concession* (cf. Halliday, 1994: 235). The consequence introduced in the initial clause is followed

by a concession that fosters the representation of Israel as negligent to international laws. This pattern was also noted upon analyzing the headlines of the same news outlet. Elsewhere (“A series of Israeli air strikes have killed at least 40 civilians across Lebanon and forced the closure of Beirut's international airport”, “Israel has said it plans to enforce a ‘security zone’ in southern Lebanon”), the *material actions* as well as the accompanying clauses construct a representation of Israel as an offensive power which is willing to continue and expand the war.<sup>22</sup>

In all of the above analyzed patterns, the text producer represents Israel as an active direct participant, namely *Actor*, who bears responsibility for varying *material actions* which extend to include another participant, normally an affected participant, either human or inanimate, belonging to different parties, and introduced directly – and occasionally indirectly – into the process.

Alternatively, rather than including the role of *Goal* that specifies the participant or entity affected by the process when Israel is depicted as the *Actor*, the text producer introduces into the clause another participant-like element, *Range*. Within this sub-pattern of representation Israel is still represented as the *Actor* ascribed *material actions* (“has given”, “have dropped”, “have entered”), where the role assigned to the other participant in the process (“a green light”, “bombs”) is that of *Range*, rather than *Goal*.<sup>23</sup> Occasionally, the entities assigned the role of *Range* (“the border town of Bint Jbeil” and “Lebanon”) are more like *circumstantial elements*, specifying one aspect of

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<sup>22</sup> Verbs such as *force* present *material processes* which “bring about” a new state of affairs or entity. Such *material processes* are of the type “creative” rather than “dispositive” which is a process of “doing” (Halliday, 1994: 111). Such processes often occur together with a nominalised direct object or complement (Biber et al., 1999: 363).

<sup>23</sup> The expression *has given a green light to* which is metaphorical in origin, meaning permitted or allowed, could be interpreted – idiomatically – as a whole unit, in which case the process might be perceived as a *verbal* one expressed in material terms. The entity “army” would be assigned the role of *Receiver* of the *verbal action* while Israel would be the *Sayer*.

the process, in this case “the domain over which the process takes place” (Halliday, 1994: 146), rather than being participants in the clause. Indicative examples are the following:

**Israel’s** security cabinet has given a green light to the army to widen a ground offensive against Hezbollah fighters in Lebanon.

**Israeli** jets have dropped bombs on an area of southern Beirut where senior Hezbollah leaders were thought to be sheltering.

**Israeli** troops have entered the border town of Bint Jbeil, a Hezbollah military stronghold, for the first time as they pushed deeper into Lebanese territory. . . .

Apart from assigning the role of *Range* to the other participant in the main clause, what is of interest here is that the *material actions*, ascribed to Israel, together with the entities assigned the role of *Range*, may communicate, for some readers, a representation of Israel as expansionist and in a continuous state of war. In the first lead the entity “the army” can be assigned the role of *Beneficiary*, i.e. it benefits from the specified *material action*, which is also ascribed to Israel, rather than being negatively affected by it. In the second lead, the predicate (“have dropped”) and the *Range* (“bombs”) can be collapsed into one single process (“have bombed”), a feature of processes with *Range* as a second participant (cf. Eggins, 2004: 218). When comparing a *material process* with a *Range* element (“Israeli jets have dropped bombs on an area of southern Beirut”) with a *material process* with a *Goal* (“Israeli warplanes bombing the north and south of the country”) we notice that the entities materially affected by the action are assigned the role of *indirect Goal* and *Goal* respectively.

Similarly, in the following two leads Israel is represented as the *Actor* ascribed the *material action* “face” while the role of *Range* is given to the entities “the tough fight” and “moment of truth”, specifying the scope of the process:

The tough fight **Israel** is facing in its campaign against Hezbollah comes in part from the lack of preparedness and poor equipment of its reservists. . . .

Ehud Olmert, Israel’s prime minister, has vowed to continue his country’s offensive against Hezbollah and Hamas, saying **Israel** faced a “moment of truth.”

The opening NP of the former lead includes a reduced relative clause “[which] Israel is facing in its campaign against Hezbollah”. Relative clauses trigger presuppositions. The presupposed assertion can be paraphrased as follows: “Israel is facing a tough fight from Hezbollah”, which possibly further presupposes something like: “Hezbollah is giving Israel a tough fight”. It is important to note that the emergent representation of Israel, resulting from the text producer’s choice from the available system of meanings and structures and of one textual realization among a number of available options, places Israel in this lead in the *Actor* role. Although the “tough fight” is inflicted on Israel by Hezbollah, which means that Hezbollah is the performer of action, the text producer prefers to represent Israel as the *Actor* who is targeting Hezbollah (“in its campaign against Hezbollah”). Additionally, one might suggest that in shifting the NP “the tough fight” to sentence-initial position the text producer brings into focus Hezbollah’s resistance without depicting the group as directly responsible for any action.

According to Thompson (2004: 117) “many cognitive mental processes are expressed in material terms”. Verbs such as *face*, while signalling *mental processes*, still retain

some of their original *material force*; hence they offer the text producer the option to add drama to *mental cognitive actions*. In the latter lead, though the clause “Israel faced a moment of truth” clearly expresses a *mental process*, the choice of a verb that normally encodes action (“face”) on the part of Israel’s prime minister can help depict how hazardous the situation is for Israel, which seems to be in harmony with what the text producer wants her/his readers to have in mind. In the above leads, it is the type of entity assigned the role of *Range* that determines the type of process.

**e. Israel’s *material actions* do not extend to another entity**

In this sub-pattern, Israel is still depicted as the *Actor* but this time ascribed *intransitive material actions* where the process does not extend to a direct *Goal*. Within this pattern of representation, Israel (“Israeli forces”, “Israeli army”, “Israeli troops”) is assigned the role of *Actor*, ascribed *material actions* (“was shelling”, “pushed”, “react”, “press ahead”, “have continued to strike deep”, and “continues”), occasionally *nominalised* (“attacks”, “offensive”, “campaign”, “bombardment and ground offensive”), which do not extend to another participant in the clause. Examples are the following:

**Israeli** forces have continued to strike deep *into southern Lebanon*. . . .

. . . **Israel’s** land, sea and air offensive *against Lebanon* continues. . . .

Israel ignored repeated warnings **it** was shelling *close to United Nations observers* in southern Lebanon before an Israeli bomb killed four for them, the Irish foreign ministry has said.

**Israel** is pressing on with **its** bombardment and ground offensive *in Lebanon* as Hezbollah fired a barrage of rockets at its northern towns.

The **Israeli** army has pushed deeper *into Lebanon* towards the town of Bint Jbail to search for Hezbollah fighters. . . .

The text producer's choice to use a complex noun group in "Israel's land, sea and air offensive" makes it possible to create a presupposition, which could be paraphrased as: "Israel is making land, sea and air offensives against Lebanon". Despite the absence of the entities assigned the role of *Goal* in the above-analyzed leads, the *material actions* used evoke an offensive military attitude on the part of Israel. In addition, a dominant feature of those leads where the text producer assigns to Israel the role of *Actor* without specifying a direct *Goal* is the use of PPs ("into southern Lebanon", "into Lebanese territory", "in the south, north and east of the country", "in the country") that function as a *circumstance of location* specifying the process setting. The entities introduced into the clause within these circumstances could be assigned the role of *Range*. One might argue that the spatial meanings in Al-Jazeera representation are important with Israel represented as the *Actor* that moves while Lebanon is represented as a static container.

### 6.3.3.2. Israel as *indirect Actor* or *co-Actor*

Whereas in the above pattern of representation Israel is assigned the role of *Actor* as a direct participant ascribed *material actions*, in the following two sub-patterns Israel is introduced into the clause as an *indirect Actor*, via inclusion within a PP (found seven times), or as a *co-Actor* sharing agency with Israel (found five times).

Within the first pattern Israel is assigned the role of *indirect Actor*, through its inclusion in PPs ("in airstrikes", "in a raid", "by an Israeli strike", "by Israel"), where it is ascribed *transitive material actions*, most frequently the negatively connoted

violent action “kill”, which are passive in voice. Indicative examples are the following:

Israel says it has captured at least five Hezbollah fighters in a commando operation in the Lebanese town of Baalbek while 19 civilians were killed in **airstrikes** on nearby areas.

At least five people have been killed and eight Israeli commandos injured in a **raid** near the Lebanese port city of Tyre.

Four soldiers from the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon in south Lebanon have been killed by an **Israeli** strike.

The entities (“19 civilians”, “At least five people” and “four soldiers from the United Nations Interim Force”) assigned the role of *Goal* are human victims, who are both civilian and military, which fits into the pattern of representation analyzed above. This explicit reference to the victims when Israel is ascribed agency can be contrasted to the way the text producer represents the same types of actions by Hezbollah in the same leads, with no reference to affected participants, as in “as Hezbollah fighters fired rockets at towns across northern Israel”, “while two Hezbollah rockets have struck 80km into Israeli territory” and “who continue to hit northern Israel with rocket attacks”. In using the passive construction the text producer might be attempting to foreground the *Goal* of Israel’s military *material actions* by shifting the affected participants to clause/sentence-initial position, which is a position of thematic focus. The text producer does not omit the *Actor* responsible for the action, rather the perpetrator (“airstrikes”, “a raid” and “an Israeli strike”) is retained and delayed to come in sentence-end position – which is also a position of thematic focus – in favour of the more important information concerning the victims. The *Actor* in “airstrikes”

and “a raid” can be easily supplied as Israel based on knowledge of the wider context as well as common knowledge (Hezbollah does not possess air force). In the last lead above, the news that the four dead soldiers belong to an international peace keeping force may be read as incriminating Israel by implication.<sup>24</sup>

In a similar manner, in the following lead Israel is introduced into the clause as an *indirect Actor*, ascribed *material action*, which is passive in voice:

Lebanon’s prime minister has pleaded for help to stop the “callous retribution” being inflicted by **Israel**.

Rather than serving the strategic purpose of agent demotion, contradicted by the mention of the agent (“by Israel”), the passive in this lead could be said to serve another strategic purpose that functions by way of the promotion of the object. The Lebanese prime minister’s description of Israel’s actions as “callous retribution” takes precedence, in the text producer’s presentation, over both the *Actor* Israel and the affected participant, possibly “on the Lebanese”, which is left out in the clause. While other possible rewordings such as “to stop Israel’s callous retribution inflicted [on the Lebanese]” or “to stop Israel from inflicting its callous retribution [on the Lebanese]” could have created different textual effects, the text producer’s choice to shift the *Actor* Israel to sentence-final (end-focus) position places the most prominence on the last word, “Israel”. In using the NP “the callous retribution being inflicted by Israel”, the text producer makes the presuppositions that “Israel is inflicting callous retribution” and that “the retribution is callous”.

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<sup>24</sup> I analyze representation in the last lead in more detail in section 8.3.2.

One pattern of representation involves introducing Israel, together with Hezbollah, into *material process* clauses either directly or indirectly via a preposition, where each of the two sides can be equally assigned the role of *co-Actor*.<sup>25</sup> Within this pattern of representation Israel (“Israel”, “the Israel army”, “Ehud Olmert, the Israeli prime minister”, “Israeli forces”) is assigned, together with Hezbollah (“Hezbollah fighters”), and occasionally with some other entities (Condoleezza Rice, the US secretary of state), the role of *co-Actor* in *material process* clauses. Whereas on some occasions Israel and Hezbollah are introduced indirectly through the intermediary of the preposition “between”, on other occasions agency is ascribed directly to Israel and Hezbollah (“Israeli forces and Hezbollah fighters are fighting pitched battles”. In the case of indirect role assignment, the qualified nouns (“fighting”, “ceasefire” and “meetings”) can be interpreted, though sometimes awkwardly, as *nominalised material processes*. What is of interest here is that in assigning the role of *co-Actor* to Israel together with Hezbollah, where both are ascribed the same *material action*, agency could be blurred and responsibility and blame could be equally distributed.

### 6.3.3.3. Israel as *Senser* in *mental processes*

Israel is represented as the *Senser* undergoing *mental actions* nine times. One pattern of representation involves assigning to Israel the role of *Senser* associated with the *mental cognitive process* “ignore” (“ignored repeated warnings it was shelling”, “ignore calls for a ceasefire”). Indicative examples are the following:

**Israel** ignored repeated warnings it was shelling close to United Nations observers in southern Lebanon before an Israeli bomb killed four for them. . . .

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<sup>25</sup> For indicative examples, see section 6.3.1.2.

Israel has vowed to press ahead with its offensive on Lebanon and has launched another incursion, ignoring mounting international pressure for a ceasefire.

Though the wording brings in a *mental process* colouring, one might suggest that a *material* meaning is dominant. The predicate (“ignore”) could be said to signal *material action* ascribed to Israel, though not explicitly stated, i.e. the fact that Israel ignored repeated warnings/calls/pressure that it was doing something implies that it continues doing it. Moreover, one might suggest that the text producer’s choice to ascribe to Israel the *mental action* “ignore” depicts Israel as unwilling to stop the ongoing war or to abide by international laws. Assigning to Israel the role of *Senser*, typically a human participant, bestows a degree of humanness on Israel by its involvement in the *mental process* (cf. Thompson, 2004: 93); only participants who are human can ignore, which may have the effect of further enhancing both the causal link which associates Israel with the specified actions as well as the sense of responsibility attached to Israel for the specified actions. The expansion in the latter lead extends the *verbal* and *material processes* that precede it by means of adding a *mental process*; the three processes together foster a depiction of Israel as an aggressive power that does not seek peace.

Apart from the above observed pattern, where *mental processes* encode *material* ones, the text producer assigns to Israel (“his government”, “an Israeli military source”) and occasionally to Israel together with Hezbollah/Lebanon (“their acceptance”, “the Lebanese and Israeli governments”) the role of *Senser* undergoing *mental processes*

(“would accept”, “has ruled out”, “acceptance of”, “approve”).<sup>26</sup> Indicative examples are the following:

Israel has called up army reservists but an **Israeli** military source has ruled out a mass invasion of Lebanon.

Israeli forces have continued to strike deep into southern Lebanon, less than 24 hours before a ceasefire agreed by both sides is due to take effect.

Israeli soldiers returning from the front in Lebanon say that Hezbollah has given them more of a fight than **they** expected.

It is worth noticing that in “has ruled out a mass invasion of Lebanon”, although the verb “rule out” implies that the *nominalised material process* (“a mass invasion of Lebanon”) might not be performed, the initiating clause “Israel has called up army reservists” suggests a military action being taken by Israel. Notice also that in the second lead the text producer ascribes to Israel a *material action* (“Israeli forces have continued to strike deep”) that depicts Israel as negligent to the resolution to be issued. In the last lead, the fact that the “Israeli soldiers” could not “expect” or calculate Hezbollah’s military power creates a negative image of Israel while conveying a positive one of Hezbollah.

#### **6.3.3.4. Israel as Sayer attributed verbal actions**

Another pattern of representation, found 25 times, involves Israel depicted as the *Sayer attributed verbal actions* (“has said”, “has asked”, “has told” and “has vowed”),

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<sup>26</sup> One might argue that verbs such as *accept*, *agree*, *approve* and *rule out* can be classified as *verbal action* verbs based on the assumption that they involve some sort of symbolic exchange of meaning (cf. Halliday, 1994: 140). However, the present study adopts a classification of these verbs based on their context of usage as well as their core meanings (Biber et al., 1999: 361, 370). Hence, in the present context of usage they are classified as *mental*, rather than *verbal*, actions.

where the message is represented as a projected clause. Indicative examples are the following:

**Israel** says *it has captured at least five Hezbollah fighters* in a commando operation in the Lebanese town of Baalbek while 19 civilians were killed in airstrikes on nearby areas.

The **Israeli** prime minister has said that *Israel will continue to fight Hezbollah* in Lebanon. . . .

Ehud Olmert, **Israel's** prime minister, has vowed *to continue his country's offensive against Hezbollah and Hamas*

One characteristic feature of this pattern of representation is that while the text producer assigns to Israel *verbal actions* in the main clause, a closer look at the projected clauses, indicated by italics above, shows that the predicates are predominantly of the type *material action*. For example, a number of projected clauses attributed to the Israeli prime minister depict Israel as determined to continue its war (“Israel will continue to fight Hezbollah in Lebanon” and “it would keep attacking Hezbollah”). In another example (“Israel has vowed to press ahead with its offensive on Lebanon and has launched another incursion, ignoring mounting international pressure for a ceasefire”), the text producer adds her/his own evaluation of the meaning introduced in the first clause, and extended in the second, through the use of *elaboration*, as evident in the non-finite clause “ignoring mounting international pressure for a ceasefire” where the *mental process* is assigned to Israel.<sup>27</sup> The text producer’s comment could possibly represent Israel as disregarding international law.

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<sup>27</sup> cf. Halliday (1994: 225-229).

The projected clauses in the above leads ascribe to Israel *material actions* that are mostly negatively connoted military ones. Alternatively, the text producer assigns to Israel the role of *Sayer* attributed *verbal actions*, where the projected clauses (“it plans to halt offensive operations”, “to accept a UN resolution aimed at ending the conflict”, “his government would accept a peacekeeping force in Lebanon”) communicate a different representation of Israel. An example is the following:

The Israeli government is ready to call up 30,000 reservists to support its offensive in Lebanon, but has said *it would not expand its campaign for now*.

The projected clauses explicitly attributed to Israeli sources depict Israel as ready to stop its offensive and accept ceasefire. However, in almost all of these leads, the text producer ascribes negatively connoted *material or verbal actions* to Israel – which sharply contradicts the reported content of the projected clauses, as in “The Israeli government is ready to call up 30,000 reservists to support its offensive in Lebanon” and “The Israeli army will continue to push into Lebanon”. This choice may have the effect of communicating a degree of discrepancy between what Israel announces and the actual course of action.

The following lead features an interesting sub-pattern where entities that belong to Israel (“an Israeli daily”, “Israeli soldiers”) are attributed *verbal actions* where the reported clauses (“Hezbollah has given them more of a fight than they expected” and “The tough fight Israel is facing in its campaign against Hezbollah”) may communicate, for some readers, a representation of Israel as facing strong resistance from Hezbollah:

**Israeli soldiers** returning from the front in Lebanon say that *Hezbollah has given them more of a fight* than they expected.

The effect might be reinforcing the news outlet's objectivity, while attributing this depiction to Israeli sources gives credit to the account of Hezbollah's tough resistance by attributing it to Israel. Within the projected clause, the *material action* "has given", ascribed to Hezbollah, together with the entity "a fight", assigned the role of *Range*, can be collapsed into one single unit as indicated in a rewording such as "Hezbollah has fought them". Though *Beneficiary* is the role that best matches the entity "them", referring to the Israeli soldiers, the entity is more affected by the *material action* rather than benefits from it; the technical sense of the term *benefit* here should not be understood as necessarily *beneficial* (Halliday, 1994: 145). The fact that the *material action* is metaphorically expressed,<sup>28</sup> i.e. nothing physical has been given to the *Recipient*, has the effect of weakening the impact of the *material action*.

In the following two leads, Israel is the *Sayer* attributed the *verbal action* "claims", where the message expressed in the projected clauses ascribes *material actions* to Hezbollah:

**Israel** claims that the guided missile that hit one of their naval warships, killing at least one sailor, was Iranian-made.

Israeli troops have taken control of a village in southern Lebanon that **it** claims is used by Hezbollah to launch rockets into northern Israel.

The use of the reporting verb "claims", rather than "says", has the effect of representing the reported message as less credible while it relieves the text producer of explicitly assessing the truth of the projected clause.

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<sup>28</sup> In the analysis of representation, Halliday (1994: 175) argues that in cases where transitivity structures involve a (grammatical) metaphor, it is possible to analyse the process in non-metaphorical terms.

Whereas in the above sub-patterns the message is expressed as a projected clause, in the following sub-pattern Israel is the *Sayer* attributed *verbal actions* (“has called up”, “has ordered” and “issued”), where the other participant roles are either the *Target* (“army reservists”, “30,000 reservists”) or the *Verbiage* (“an expansion of its ground offensive”, “caveats”).<sup>29</sup> Indicative examples are the following:

**Israel** has called up army reservists but an Israeli military source has ruled out a mass invasion of Lebanon.

**Israel** has ordered an expansion of its ground offensive in Lebanon aiming to strike harder at Hezbollah and curb its cross-border rocket attacks.

Although the actions ascribed to Israel in this pattern are introduced as *verbal actions*, the implied actions are offensive *material actions*.<sup>30</sup> For example, although the verb “call up” conveys a process verbally worded, it might be suggested that the action involves a material aspect – in this case “reservists moved and deployed in positions inside Lebanon”, which suggests an offensive attitude on the part of Israel. Here we have another type of *blended processes* where *verbal processes* encode *material ones*. The fact that the involved participants, i.e. the *Sayer/Actor* and the *Target/Goal*, all belong to Israel may result in weakening the impact of the *verbal action* on the *Target* or, if the material interpretation is adopted, the agency-affiliation relation.

It is analytically significant that the message contained in almost all of the projected clauses (“it may send ground forces”, “it plans to enforce a “security zone””, “it will resume full air raids”, “it would keep attacking Hezbollah”, “it has captured at least five Hezbollah fighters” and “to press ahead with its offensive”), attributed to Israel, expresses processes of the type *material actions*, ascribed to Israel. Similarly, the

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<sup>29</sup> The *Verbiage*, according to Halliday’s term, represents the content of what is said.

<sup>30</sup> The verb *call up* means *summoning reserve military personnel to active service*.

*Verbiage* “an expansion of its ground offensive” can be analyzed as a *nominalised material action*, e.g. “expand its ground offensive”. It is worth noticing that the clause “Israel says it plans to halt offensive operations” presupposes that Israel had in fact been pursuing offensive operations and still were.

### 6.3.3.5. Israel as *Value/Token/Carrier* in *relational processes*<sup>31</sup>

According to Thompson (2004: 98-9), an analysis of the experiential *Values* used in identifying clauses can help investigation of ideological values. *Value* and *Token* analysis can be indicative of the broader concerns and values of the writer; essentially, the *Value* reveals what values the writer (and the culture he/she is part of) uses to categorize the *Tokens* that he/she deals with. Israel is depicted as part of *relational processes* on only three occasions in leads.

The following lead represents “the destruction of Lebanon” as “Israel’s ultimate goal” while attributing it to Jacques Chirac, the French president:

Jacques Chirac, the French president, has questioned whether the destruction of Lebanon is **Israel’s** ultimate goal.

In this lead the general category *Value* (“Israel’s ultimate goal”) is represented in terms of the more specific *Token* (“the destruction of Lebanon”). Attributing the reported content of the lead to Jacques Chirac, the French president, contributes to a general pattern that could potentially communicate a representation of Israel as arousing international opposition and criticism, while one might suggest that it is still representative of the text producer’s stance in selecting it to lead the report.

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<sup>31</sup> For a definition of *relational process*, see section 5.4.1.

Alternatively, Israel occurs as part of a *possessive identifying relational process* with the entity “its reservists” (referring to “Israel’s reservists”) assigned the role of *possessor/Token* and “the lack of preparedness and poor equipment” as the *possessed/Value* (cf. Halliday, 1994: 134):

The tough fight Israel is facing in its campaign against Hezbollah comes in part from the lack of preparedness and poor equipment of **its reservists**, an Israeli daily has reported.

The type of relation established presents the *Token* Israel’s reservists as lacking the *Values* “preparedness” and “equipment”, i.e. this is the way the *Token* is identified. This is particularly significant when the reader realizes that this identification is attributed to an Israeli newspaper. This relationship could be shown by a rewording such as “its reservists lack (does not possess) preparedness and equipment” where the NP “the lack of” represents a *nominalised process* encoding the relationship of possession.

Similarly, in the following lead, the type of process is *possessive attributive relational process*, with the entity “Tel Aviv” depicted as the *Carrier/possessor* and the NP “the right” assigned the role of *Attribute/possessed* (cf. Halliday, 1994: 133):

The US has reacted to Israel’s attacks on Lebanon by saying **Tel Aviv** has the right to defend itself, but the action has drawn criticism from Europe and the Arab world.

Here the *Carrier* “Tel Aviv” is represented as possessing the *Attribute* “right to defend itself” where the relationship of possession is encoded in the process. The coordinate clause expands the meaning in the preceding clause by means of *adversatively extending* it. The US explanation of Israel’s offensive attitude, as is evident in “Tel

Aviv has the right to defend itself”, which clearly implies a supportive stance, is met with criticism from Europe and the Arab world. This lead provides the potential for inferring the US’s supportive stance towards Israel in the war.

#### **6.3.3.6. Israel as *Receiver* or *Target* of verbal actions**

Other patterns of representation noted in leads involve Israel assigned the roles of *Receiver* or *Target* of verbal actions. The two references to Israel as the *Receiver* of verbal actions occur as part of projected clauses associated with verbal actions attributed to Israeli sources. On one occasion, the entity “him”, referring to the Israeli prime minister, is depicted as the *Receiver* of the verbal action “preaching” attributed to the entity “European Leaders”, assigned the role of *Sayer*:

Ehud Olmert, the Israeli prime minister, has told European leaders to stop preaching to **him** about civilian war casualties. . . .

It is worth noticing that the type of verbal action (“preaching”) and the related *Matter* “about civilian war casualties” trigger a number of presuppositions. They presuppose the existence of civilian casualties, that Israel is negligent to these civilian casualties, and also the presence of international opposition and criticism – a predominant pattern that characterizes the representation of Israel in Al-Jazeera. In a similar manner, the content of the projected clause in the following lead assigns to Israel the role of *Receiver* of verbal action attributed to the entity “international powers” assigned the role of *Sayer*, where the whole content of the projected clause is attributed to Israel itself:

Israel has said **it** has received implicit "authorisation" from international powers to continue its attacks in Lebanon.

Though being the receiver of action, the fact that Israel occurs in the syntactic subject position which is typically associated with the *Actor*, together with the use of a verb that can encode a *material action* such as “receive”, may convey a representation of Israel as a performer of action.<sup>32</sup>

Another pattern of representation, found seven times, involves representing Israel as the *Target* of *verbal actions* of the type “accuse”, “chastise” and “condemn”. These *verbal actions* are attributed to participants belonging to various groups and organizations (“American Muslims/the US government”, “A US-based human rights group”, “Thousands of protesters”, “UN humanitarian relief coordinator Jan Egeland”). Indicative examples are the following:

Thousands of protesters across the Arab world have taken to the streets to condemn **Israeli** offensives in Lebanon and the Gaza Strip.

A US-based human rights group has accused **Israel** of using artillery-fired cluster grenades against a Lebanese village. . . .

Israel has captured two Hezbollah fighters as it kept up its air and ground blitz on Lebanon despite accusations from the UN relief chief that it is “violating humanitarian law”.

Attributing *verbal actions* such as “condemn” and “accuse”, targeted at Israel, to such sources, including acknowledged international organizations, creates an implication of international condemnation of Israel’s military actions as expressed, for example, in the *Matter* in “of using artillery-fired cluster grenades against a Lebanese village” and “that it is ‘violating humanitarian law’ ”. In the last lead the nominal form

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<sup>32</sup> One might assign to Israel the role of *Actor* ascribed the *material action* “has received”; however, the fact that the *nominalised process* “authorization” is of a *verbal*, rather than physical, nature suggests the role of *Receiver*. For a detailed discussion of *blended processes*, see section 5.4.1

“accusations” can be interpreted as a *nominalised verbal action* attributed to the Sayer “the UN relief chief”. The circumstantial relation here is one of *condition* of the type *consequence-concession*, i.e. what follows the conjunctive preposition is a sort of acknowledgment on the part of the text producer (cf. Halliday, 1994: 236-238).

### 6.3.3.7. Israel as part of a *circumstance of location*

Another pattern of representation, found 11 times, involves introducing Israel as part of a PP that functions as a *circumstance of location*, where the referent is Israel the place or territories not the state. When Israel occurs as part of a nominal group inside a PP, it is linked indirectly to the process. The fact that any nominal group can occur inside a PP as an indirect participant or can function directly as a participant in a clause highlights an important aspect of representation, namely, the choices available for a text producer (cf. Halliday, 1994: 150). For example, in the following lead one can juxtapose the way the text producer represents the participants affected by both Israel and Hezbollah military actions:

Israeli air strikes in Lebanon have killed 53 civilians as Hezbollah fighters fired rockets at towns across northern **Israel**.

While the text producer explicitly mentions the affected participants of Israel’s military action, directly assigning to them the role of *Goal*, he/she avoids any direct reference to the entities affected by Hezbollah’s military actions, only referring to Israel as a place in a *circumstance of location*.

Within this pattern of representation *circumstances of location* (“into northern Israel”, “into Israeli territory”, “on northern Israel”, “at its northern towns”) introduce Israel as a location for military operations (“launch rockets”, “rain down more rockets”, “fired

a barrage of rockets”), rather than as a direct participant affected by military operations, which are mostly ascribed to Hezbollah. Indicative examples are the following:

Israeli air raids have killed more than 40 people in Lebanon while two Hezbollah rockets have struck 80km **into Israeli** territory, the deepest attacks since fighting began.

Fighting has continued in Lebanon, with Israeli warplanes bombing the north and south of the country and Hezbollah rockets continuing to fall **on northern Israel**.

The leader of Hezbollah has warned that the group will launch rockets **at Tel Aviv** if Israel attacks central Beirut.

This way of representing Israel when it is affected by military actions may weaken Israel’s representation as an affected entity, compared to the more direct reference to Israel as a direct participant in the process. It is worth noting the direct reference to the affected participants “more than 40 people” and “the north and south of the country”, when Israel is the *Actor*. In contrast, notice the text producer’s use of *Range* “80km” and the *circumstance of locations* “into Israeli territory” and “on northern Israel”, without any reference to affected participants, when Hezbollah is the *Actor*.

A similar pattern can be noted in the following two leads where Israel still occurs as part of a PP that functions as a *circumstance of location*:

The Bush administration is rushing a delivery of precision-guided bombs **to Israel**, according to The New York Times.

Human rights activists are preparing to protest at a British airport against the refuelling of a US plane believed to be carrying bombs **to Israel**.

Besides its reference to the state or the government, “Israel” here refers to a place or destination. What is significant here is that Israel in these two leads seems to benefit from, rather than be targeted by, the *material actions* expressed in the main clause. The two leads shed light on the alleged connections between Israel and the US, where the US is known to be Israel’s main arms provider.

#### 6.3.3.8. Israel as *indirect Goal*

In cases where the participant occurs inside a PP, it becomes associated with the process only indirectly, via the preposition. One pattern of representation, found nine times, involves Israel introduced as an indirect participant, namely *indirect Goal*, as part of a nominal group inside a PP that functions as a qualifier.

Within this pattern Israel is introduced as an *indirect Goal*, as part of PPs (“on Israel”, “against Israel”, “of two Israeli soldiers”, “with Israel”), affected by *nominalised material process* (“attacks”, “capture”, “struggle”, “open war”, “violence”), commonly ascribed to the *Actor* Hezbollah. Indicative examples are the following:

A Palestinian official has said that Hamas will carry out attacks **on Israel** in response to its attack on the Lebanese village of Qana.

A senior Hezbollah official has said that he did not expect Israel to react so strongly to the group’s capture **of two Israeli** soldiers two weeks ago.

A senior Iranian cleric has called on Muslim countries to arm Hezbollah in its struggle **against Israel**. . . .

Jan Egeland, the UN humanitarian chief, has accused Hezbollah of "cowardly blending" among Lebanese civilians and causing the deaths of hundreds during two weeks of cross-border violence **with Israel**.

It is clear that the qualified nouns are mostly negatively connoted and can be said to express *material processes* which are ascribed to Hezbollah – a lexico-grammatical choice that can provide an explanation for representing Israel as an *indirect Goal*. By moving Israel to appear as an indirect participant in a PP when it is depicted as the *Goal* of some *material action* that is ascribed to Hezbollah, the effect might be that of weakening the causal link, which could otherwise be directly expressed. It could be suggested that on those occasions where the preposition “with” is used (“violence with Israel”, “war with Israel”), the role of *Goal* conflates with the role of *co-Actor*, i.e. the causal link is blurred and agency is shared. Because no clear role assignment is being made, responsibility is evenly distributed or blurred. When Israel is introduced as *indirect Goal* via the preposition “with”, one might claim that the use of “with Israel”, compared to the use of “on/against Israel”, weakens the group’s agency.<sup>33</sup>

#### **6.3.3.9. Israel as *Goal* in *material processes***

The analysis reveals that when Israel is introduced into the clause as a direct participant assigned the role of *Goal* of *material actions*, found 24 times, different textual strategies are discerned that may have the effect of hiding, blurring or weakening its affliction, as the following sections illustrate.

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<sup>33</sup> The use of prepositions to convey varying degrees of agency is part of a theory of agency weakening I put forward in the present study. See section 9.3.2.

**a. The *Goal* is not materially affected by the actions**

One textual pattern, found 12 times, involves assigning the role of *Goal* to entities (“its military offensive”, “its campaign” and “its air attacks”) which themselves represent the *material processes* but are nominal in form. Examples are the following:

Israel has continued **its** offensive in Lebanon with attacks in the south, north and east of the country, while Hezbollah said it has repulsed some of the operations.

Politicians in the Middle East are confident a UN Security Council resolution can bring an end to the Lebanon conflict, even though Israel is expanding **its** military offensive.

Israel has suspended **its** air attacks on southern Lebanon for 48 hours. . . .

The US has reacted to Israel’s attacks on Lebanon by saying Tel Aviv has the right to defend **itself**, but the action has drawn criticism from Europe and the Arab world.

The *material actions* (“continue”, “expand”, “suspend”) in this case express a temporal or spatial dimension, e.g. “to continue his country’s offensive”. Additionally, the role of *Actor* is assigned to Israel (“Israel”, “Ehud Olmert, Israel’s prime minister”, “30,000 reservists”). The reported content predominantly suggests an offensive attitude on the part of Israel as well as its determination to proceed with its offensive.

In a similar manner, the entity “Israel” in the following lead, though it could be seen as the *Goal* of the *material action* “prompting”, is not affected in any material sense:

Hezbollah has captured two Israeli soldiers during cross-border clashes, prompting Israel to carry out a ground and air assault that has killed at least two Lebanese civilians.

One might argue that the verb “prompting” encodes a causal relation where the opening clause (“Hezbollah has captured two Israeli soldiers during cross-border clashes”) could be assigned the role of *Initiator*, with Hezbollah’s capture of the Israeli soldiers causing Israel, which would be assigned the role of *agent/Actor*, to perform the *material actions* “carry out” as well as “has killed”, in the expansion.<sup>34</sup> The text producer’s choice to ascribe to Israel the negatively connoted *material action* “kill” in an expansion may have the effect of balancing or weakening the causal relation expressed earlier in the lead.

Alternatively, though it is the *Goal* in the clause as representation, Israel is occasionally depicted as served rather than has something negative done to it:

Hezbollah’s leader, Hassan Nasrallah, has vowed to rain down more rockets on Israel and said that Condoleezza Rice’s visit to the region aimed to “impose conditions that serve Israel”.

Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, the leader of Hezbollah, says his movement backs the Lebanese army’s deployment to the south but that Washington is trying to impose Israeli demands on Lebanon through a draft UN resolution.

Here, the *material actions* (“serve” and “impose”) positively extend to the *Goal* (“Israel” and “Israeli demands”). The reported content in these clauses enhances a predominant pattern of representation that emphasizes Israel’s alleged close connections with the US, which offers Israel services of the type “impose conditions

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<sup>34</sup> cf. Thompson (2004: 137) for a more detailed discussion of causative structures.

that serve Israel” and “impose Israeli demands on Lebanon”. In the latter lead, a rewording such as “impose the demands made by Israel” could possibly assign to Israel the role of *Actor*.

**b. The role of *Goal* is assigned to military animate and inanimate entities**

Another pattern of representation, found 12 times in 8 leads, involves assigning the role of *Goal* to entities belonging to the military whether inanimate (“warships”, “helicopter”) or animate (“sailor”, “soldiers”, “commandos”). Indicative examples are the following:

Israel claims that the guided missile that hit one of **their** naval warships, killing at least **one sailor**, was Iranian-made.

Hezbollah fighters have shot down an **Israeli** helicopter in south Lebanon and killed at least 19 **Israeli** soldiers, as fighting continues ahead of a ceasefire.

Hezbollah has captured two **Israeli** soldiers during cross-border clashes. . . .

At least five people have been killed and eight **Israeli** commandos injured in a raid near the Lebanese port city of Tyre.

Thirteen **Israeli** soldiers have been killed and 12 wounded *in fighting with Hezbollah* in a southern Lebanese town. . . .

Within this pattern negatively connoted *material actions*, both active (“hit”, “have shot down”, “killing”, “has captured”) and passive (“captured by”, “injured”, “have been killed”, “wounded”, “were freed”) as well as presupposed (“two kidnapped Israeli soldiers”), ascribed to Hezbollah, affect inanimate military entities (“naval warships” and “helicopter”) as well as human participants (“one sailor”, “19 Israeli

soldiers”, “eight Israeli commandos”, “two kidnapped Israeli soldiers”, “12”) belonging to Israel’s military. This may have the effect of weakening the impact of the *material action* as well as Hezbollah’s agency, as military entities would normally be targets within a war context. It is noteworthy that on no occasion is any civilian participant belonging to Israel represented as the *Goal* in Al-Jazeera leads.

When the *material actions* are passive in voice, such *material actions* have either no explicit participant as the *Actor* (“only if two kidnapped Israeli soldiers were freed”) or a delayed participant functioning as an *indirect Actor* (“in fighting with Hezbollah”). On two out of the three occasions where *passive material actions* are used, the immediate linguistic context does not provide any clue to the *Actor* who is responsible for the *material actions* (“kidnapping”, “injuring” and “freeing”) which are directed at Israeli participants. Notice also the representation of the predicate as a state “kidnapped” rather than a dynamic process. Introducing the *Actor* Hezbollah as part of a *circumstantial element* (“in fighting with Hezbollah”), in the last lead, may have the effect of hiding responsibility as it does not specify one responsible participant; rather responsibility and blame are shared.

Another significant point to be made here is that six of the leads representing this pattern of representation, resembling in this respect their accompanying headlines, report on three main incidents in the war. These incidents are the capture of the two Israeli soldiers that triggers the war, the destruction of an Israeli warship by a Hezbollah guided missile, and the shooting down of an Israeli Helicopter. A closer look at the distribution of these six leads reveals that two of them belong to the first two news reports covering the action that triggers the war in 12<sup>th</sup> of July 2006 (the

first day of war coverage); one of them belong to the 13<sup>th</sup> of August, the last day of news coverage of the war; and the other three reports have the dates July the 15<sup>th</sup>, the 24<sup>th</sup> and the 25<sup>th</sup>.

Analyzing the accompanying headlines reveals a process of news selection whereby the text producer picks on certain aspects of the lead such as Israel's inanimate losses or Hezbollah's casualties while avoiding reference to Israel's casualties, as evident in:

Iran denies supplying rocket that hit ship

(Al-Jazeera, July, 15, 2006, accompanying the first lead above)

Hezbollah downs Israeli helicopter

(Al-Jazeera, August, 13, 2006, accompanying the second lead)

Israel kills Hezbollah leaders in Tyre

(Al-Jazeera, August, 5, 2006, accompanying the fourth lead)

Battle rages for Lebanese town

(Al-Jazeera, July, 26, 2006, accompanying the last lead)

This of course can be seen as an indication of what aspects of the representation of the war Al-Jazeera is attempting to hide or blur, which itself could be indicative of the news outlet's ideology and attitude.

#### **6.3.4. Israel in Al-Jazeera leads: summary**

Israel is referred to in the leads of Al-Jazeera 181 times compared to 68 references to Hezbollah. Statistically speaking, while the frequency of reference to Israel appears to be higher, any claims about the linguistic significance of such references should be based on thorough qualitative analysis. Table 12 illustrates the participant roles

assigned to Israel grouped under a number of distinct categories based on the way Israel is introduced into the clause from a transitivity view point:

Overall Category	Participant roles	Frequency	%
performer of action	25 times <i>Sayer</i>	113	62.4
	5 times <i>co-Actor</i>		
	7 times <i>indirect Actor</i>		
	76 times <i>Actor</i>		
benefits from action	<i>Beneficiary/ Range</i>	3	1.7
part of a relation	<i>Carrier in attributive relational process</i>	3	1.7
undergoes action	<i>Senser</i>	9	5.0
receiver of <i>verbal action</i>	<i>Receiver</i>	2	1.1
affected by action	24 times <i>Goal</i>	51	28.2
	9 times <i>indirect Goal</i>		
	7 times <i>Target</i>		
	11 times part of a <i>circumstance of location</i> ( <i>material action in the main clause</i> )		

12. Representation of Israel in Al-Jazeera leads: performer of action or affected by action

The analysis reveals that Israel is represented as the performer of action 113 times, constituting 62.4% of the total frequency of reference to Israel in the leads of Al-Jazeera. The frequency of reference to Hezbollah as the performer of action within the leads of the same news outlet is 66.2%. This statistical difference (only 3.8%) is not large and may not be mathematically significant. The interest of this result is that an intuitive look would suggest that this very small difference means that the representations of Israel and Hezbollah by Al-Jazeera are very much the same. However, when Israel is represented as the performer of *material actions*, the analysis reveals a number of patterns which from a functional view point can be seen as textual

strategies that generally aim to foreground Israel's agency and/or Hezbollah's affliction, as table 13 illustrates:

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**Textual strategy**

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- 1 Israel is ascribed the negatively connoted *material action* "kill" extending to explicitly-mentioned human civilian victims whose numbers are specified and who are predominantly categorized by the use of human referring terms, which could strengthen the sense of affliction and intensify potential incrimination of Israel.
  - 2 Israel is ascribed negatively connoted *material actions* that affect human military participants belonging to Hezbollah whose numbers are specified.
  - 3 Israel is ascribed negatively connoted *material actions* affecting inanimate entities both civilian and belonging to Hezbollah.
  - 4 Israel is ascribed *material actions* which signal temporal or spatial dimensions of the process. Within this representation, the verb together with the entity assigned the role of *Goal* express the *material process*. The entities which are materially affected by Israel's military actions are introduced later within PPs. This pattern represents Israel as intending to expand and continue its offensive.
  - 5 Israel is ascribed *nominalised material actions*; however, the affected entities, rather than omitted, are introduced into the process as *indirect Goal* via inclusion within PPs.
  - 6 Expansions are frequently employed to ascribe further *material actions* to Israel resulting in further incriminating Israel.
  - 7 Israel is ascribed intransitive *material actions* which do not extend to any affected entity in the clause; however, the text producer often embeds *circumstances of location* that specifies the place of the process which could be seen as indirectly affected by the process.
  - 8 Israel is introduced into *material process* clauses, predominantly passive in voice, as an *indirect Actor*, ascribed negatively connoted *material actions*, particularly "kill". In such cases, the affected entities, mostly human, are shifted to clause-initial position, whereas reference to Israel is retained in sentence-final position, where both positions are positions of thematic focus.
  - 9 Israel and Hezbollah are assigned the role of *co-Actor* sharing agency and responsibility.
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13. Features of the representation of Israel as the performer of material actions in Al-Jazeera leads

It is important to take cognizance of the text producer's choice of verbs encoding *material actions* to express *mental* and *verbal processes* or, looked at from a different perspective, the text producer's choice to represent *verbal* and *mental actions* in material terms. According to Halliday (1994: 110) *material processes* are processes of *doing* which necessarily involve one entity or participant doing something to some

other entity or participant. Having said that, one might claim that the text producer's choice to express some *mental* and *verbal processes*, ascribed to a specific participant, in material terms can be seen as an attempt to enhance the representation of this specific participant as the performer of actions and consequently the one who is responsible for, hence to be blamed for, what is happening. The analysis reveals that *verbal* and *mental actions* attributed to Israel are represented in material terms through the choice of verbs that normally encode *material action*. This representation might result in developing an image of Israel in the minds of readers as one who is doing rather than saying or thinking, i.e. Israel is activated (cf. van Leeuwen, 1996: 44).

The analysis reveals that even when Israel is assigned the role of *Senser* in *mental processes*, a material (action) meaning is dominant but the wording brings in a *mental (cognitive) process* colouring. In a similar manner, when Israel is assigned the role of *Sayer* attributed *verbal actions*, the process included as part of the message is mainly a *material* one ascribed to Israel; this pattern of representation depicts Israel as not only doing *material actions*, but also sending and conveying messages that promise more *material actions*, bearing in mind that most of these actions are to happen, as both tense and modulation indicate. Occasionally, the *verbal processes* per se convey *material actions* being performed. It is equally important to understand what type of speech acts the *Sayer* is engaging in. On the basis of the roles assigned to Israel in the projected clauses as well as the accompanying contextual clues one might argue that the text producer is representing Israel as performing Threats or Warnings. The projected *material actions* are part of the co-text that suggests threat or warning, i.e. they are actions which the receiver of the message would not want. So, it could be

suggested that the text producer is representing Israel as engaging in aggressive speech acts as well as aggressive *material actions*.

When Israel is represented as part of a *relational process*, *Beneficiary* or *Range* in *material processes* or *Receiver* in *verbal processes*, it is never introduced into the clause as a receiver of any sort of negatively connoted action or as an affected entity; rather it either benefits from the action or is the source of a *material action*.

Israel is represented as on the receiving end or affected by action, rather than the performer of action, 51 times constituting 28.2% of the reference to Israel in the leads of Al-Jazeera. One main pattern of representation which could be said to communicate, to some readers, a negative representation of Israel involves introducing Israel as the *Target* of *verbal actions*, predominantly negatively connoted and attributed to many participants and sources belonging to various groups and organizations, which may have the effect of creating an implication of international condemnation of Israel's military actions.

When Israel is introduced into *material process* clauses as an affected entity, the analysis reveals that the text producer employs various textual strategies that may lead to hiding, hedging or weakening Israel's affliction, as table 14 illustrates:

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**Textual strategy**

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- 1 Israel is introduced into *material process* clauses as part of a *circumstance of location* that defines the setting or location of military operations, rather than a *Goal* directly affected by military operations. Representing Israel as a location or destination may have the effect of blurring the causal link and weaken Israel's affliction.
  - 2 Israel, though being the *Goal* in the clause as representation, benefits – or is served by –, rather than affected by, the *material actions*, which are predominantly ascribed to the US.
  - 3 Israel is introduced into *material process* clauses as an *indirect Goal*, via the intermediary of a
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preposition, when it is depicted as affected by some *material action* ascribed to Hezbollah. In this way, the causal link, which could otherwise be directly expressed, could be blurred.

- 4 Israel is introduced into *material process* clauses as the *Goal*, where the nature of the verb and the entities assigned the role of *Goal* – which themselves represent *nominalised material processes* ascribed to Israel – depicts Israel as a performer of offensive actions.
  - 5 Israel is simultaneously assigned the roles of *Goal* and *Actor* in *material process* clauses where Israel is not affected in any material sense.
  - 6 Military entities, both human and inanimate, belonging to Israel are assigned the role of *Goal*, which may have the effect of weakening Hezbollah's agency as well as Israel's affliction for military entities are expected targets within a war context.
  - 7 Israel is introduced into *passive material process* clauses as the *Goal* where no explicit reference is made to the *Actor*, who is occasionally introduced indirectly within a PP.
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14. Features of the representation of Israel as an affected participant in Al-Jazeera leads

### 6.3.5. Analysis of lexical choices in Al-Jazeera leads

In reference to Israel in the leads of Al-Jazeera, the text producer uses a number of referring terms including the word “Israel” used as a noun referring to the state, as part of a noun group referring to the territories or geographical areas (“northern Israel”) or very rarely as an adjectival modifier in a noun group (“Israel army”). The text producer also uses the word “Israeli” to characterize different entities and participants as belonging to Israel (“Israeli soldiers”, “Israeli air strikes”, “Israeli jets”). In addition, the text producer uses referential strategies such as the word “country” (“Ehud Olmert . . . has vowed to continue his **country**'s offensive”) and “Tel Aviv” (“The US has reacted to Israel's attacks on Lebanon by saying **Tel Aviv** has the right to defend itself”). The use of “Tel Aviv”, the capital of Israel, is an example of synecdoche; a figure of speech that involves using part to refer to the whole. In addition reference is also made to the Israeli Prime Minister, Ehud Olmert on six occasions, where reference is generally made using his first name and surname as well as his position and occasionally only his position. Examples are the following:

**Ehud Olmert, Israel's prime minister**, has vowed to continue his country's offensive against Hezbollah and Hamas. . . .

**Ehud Olmert, the Israeli prime minister**, said on Sunday that his government would accept a peacekeeping force in Lebanon. . . .

**The Israeli prime minister** has said that Israel will continue to fight Hezbollah in Lebanon until a strong international force is in place along the border.

In reference to the Israeli army, text producers use the words “army”, “forces” and “troops” (“army reservists”, “Israeli army”, “ground forces”, “Israeli forces”, “Israeli troops”). What is of interest here is that none of these lexical items are restricted in its usage to Israel. The word “troops” is used in connection with the Lebanese army (“The Lebanese government has said it will send 15,000 **troops** to the south”); the word “army” is used in reference to the Lebanese army and the Syrian army (“the **Lebanese army**'s deployment”), while the term “forces” is simultaneously used in reference to Amal and Hezbollah (“his Shia Amal movement and Hezbollah would join **forces**”). These words which normally denote an official organized state military body are not restricted to Israel, but are used also in connection with its opponents in the war. This feature of representation could be interpreted as reflecting Al-Jazeera's balanced reporting.

Moving to Hezbollah, Hezbollah is generally referred to by the use of the group's name “Hezbollah”, used either as a noun or an adjectival modifier in a noun group such as “**Hezbollah** fighters”, “**Hezbollah** group” and so forth. In reference to Hezbollah, the text producer also uses the word “group” (“Hezbollah group”, “the

group”) on four occasions and the word “movement” in one case (“the **group**’s capture of two Israeli soldiers two weeks ago”, “the **group** will launch rockets at Tel Aviv if Israel attacks central Beirut”, “labelling the **group**’s leader, Hassan Nasrallah, as a liar”). The text producer also makes reference to the group’s leader Hassan Nasrallah (“Sayyed **Hassan Nasrallah, the chief** of Hezbollah group”, “Hezbollah’s **leader, Hassan Nasrallah**”, “**the leader** of Hezbollah”), which can be found five times in the leads of Al-Jazeera. While a combination of title, first name, surname, and position are used in reference to Hezbollah leader, the use of the Arabic honorific term of address “Sayyed”, meaning “Mr”, to label the group’s leader is worth particular attention. Whereas one might argue that such use is formulaic, being part of the way the group’s leader is often labelled, particularly in Arabic media, the term also appeals to Arab viewers who understand its connotations and it simultaneously implies the superior status of the referent (cf. Brown and Levinson, 1987). Notice the way the leader of Hezbollah is both nominated and functionalized, i.e. referred to by his role or position, in “Hezbollah’s leader, Hassan Nasrallah” (cf. van Leeuwen, 1996: 54). Though van Leeuwen (1996: 53) states that the use of surname is more formal compared to the use of both the first name and the surname, in most Arab countries the use of first name and surname seems to be more formal.

The text producer uses the words “soldiers” and “commandos” exclusively in relation to Israel (“Israeli soldiers”, “two soldiers”, “Thirteen Israeli soldiers”, “19 Israeli soldiers”, “eight Israeli commandos”), except for one time where the word “soldiers” is associated with the UN (“Four **soldiers** from the United Nations Interim Force”).

By contrast, when referring to Hezbollah members the text producer uses the word “fighters” (nine times), as in “Hezbollah **fighters**”. Words with a distinctive evaluative meaning such as “Islamic”, “radical”, “fundamental” and “militant” or “militia” is not found in connection with Hezbollah. The word “elements” is used one time in reference to Hezbollah members, though explicitly attributed to an external source (“Saudi Arabia has blamed ‘**elements**’ inside Lebanon for the violence with Israel”). Notice the way the referent is collectivized and represented as anonymous in “elements”, which has the effect of not attributing responsibility directly to the referent, which is Hezbollah in this case (van Leeuwen, 1996: 49, 51).

In reference to the Israeli military, the text producer uses various words including “aircraft”, “jets”, “warplanes” and “naval warships”. Similar terms are also used to describe Israel’s weaponry or arsenal such as “bomb”, “precision-guided bombs”, “artillery-fired cluster grenades” and “short-range anti-personnel rockets armed with cluster munitions”. This proliferation of technical terms used in reference to Israel’s armament could be said to emphasize Israel’s superior military capabilities and the imbalance of power between the two fighting sides, which may have the effect of casting more blame on Israel.

The same proliferation of lexical items is noted in reference to Israel’s military operations in Lebanon in leads. The text producer uses such referring expressions as “(air) attack(s)”, “raid”, “(full) air raids”, “strike”, “airstrikes”, “a commando operation” as well as more general terms such as “offensive”, “military offensive”, “ground offensive”, “land, sea and air offensive”, “air and ground blitz”, “campaign”, “hostilities”, “destruction”, “(offensive) operations”, “ground and air assault”,

“bombardment”, “mass invasion”, “fighting”, “incursion” and “callous retribution” (“Israel says it will resume **full air raids** in Lebanon”, “Israeli **airstrikes** have hit three factories”, “in a dramatic expansion of the latest Israeli **assault**”, “as it kept up its **air and ground blitz** on Lebanon”, “its **campaign** against Hezbollah”, “an immediate end to **hostilities** in Lebanon”, “to stop the ‘**callous retribution**’ being inflicted by Israel”). It is worth noticing that most of these referring forms constitute *material actions* which are structurally nominalised and simultaneously establish a causal relation in which Israel is clearly represented as the perpetrator. This proliferation could further the representation of Israel as an active aggressor. On other occasions, text producers employ varying referring expressions to describe the war that do not establish a clear causal relation (i.e. perpetrator-afflicted relation) such as “the conflict”, “the Lebanon conflict”, “the crisis”, “the plight of Lebanon”, “cross-border violence”, “the violence”, “the war” and “the fighting”.

Hezbollah fighting in Lebanon is not represented in the same way but is, rather, given such labels as “cross-border clashes”, “violence with Israel”, “cross-border violence with Israel” and “struggle”. The text producer avoids presenting Hezbollah as a perpetrator by means of distributing responsibility through the use of the preposition “with”, which blurs role assignment, and such terms as “clashes”, which typically involve two active participants. The referring term “struggle” may communicate a positive representation of Hezbollah as resisting the Israeli “invasion”. In describing Hezbollah military actions, the text producer uses terms such as “rocket attacks”, “attacks”, “a barrage of rockets” and “cross-border rocket attacks” (“as Hezbollah fired a **barrage of rockets** at its northern towns”, “hit northern Israel with **rocket attacks**”, “curb its **cross-border rocket attacks**”). The text producer almost limits

Hezbollah's military operations to reference to its "rocket attacks". Restricting Hezbollah's military operations to its use of rockets, which rather seem a primitive weapon compared to Israel's advanced arsenal, emphasizes the imbalance of power between the two sides of the war.

One significant finding in this analysis of representation is the text producer's choice of quasi-synonymous lexical items, such as "kill", "capture", "hit", "bomb", "shell", "take control of", "pound", "strike", "fight", "curb" and "attack", to describe Israel's military *material actions* targeting Hezbollah/Lebanon. These lexical items are generally negatively connoted ("a ground and air assault that has **killed** at least two Lebanese civilians", "Israeli aircraft have **bombed** bridges", "Israeli airstrikes have **hit** three factories", "Israeli air strikes which have **pounded** the country", "Israel . . . was **shelling**"). According to Fowler (1991: 84-85), this is labelled *overlexicalization*. The use of the term lexical density is preferred as it is descriptive rather than judgmental (see section 5.4.3). These lexical items are occasionally *nominalised* or passive in voice, which means that the *Actor* is not explicitly mentioned, though in most cases it can be easily recovered based on the immediate linguistic context. This proliferation may have the effect of emphasizing Hezbollah/Lebanon's affliction as well as potential incrimination of Israel. Another set of verbs signal a temporal or spatial dimension of Israel's military actions, such as "keep up", "continue", "resume", "suspend", "halt", "widen" and "expand". The text producer's choice of this latter type of verbs can be said to communicate, for some readers, a representation of Israel as expansionist and in a continuous state of war against Hezbollah. Hezbollah's *material actions* are given such labels as "fire", "hit", "strike", and "shoot

down”, where text producers use a very limited range of lexical items as opposed to the proliferation in *material actions* attributed to Israel.

The verb “kill”, which signals a negatively connoted *material action*, occurs 11 times in Al-Jazeera leads. Israel is ascribed the *material action* “kill” 8 times out of 181 references to Israel, constituting 4.4% of the total frequency of reference to Israel in leads, whereas Hezbollah is ascribed the *material action* “kill” 3 times out of 68 references to Hezbollah, constituting 4.4% of the total frequency of reference to Hezbollah in leads. Although the percentages of ascribing the *material action* “kill” to Israel and Hezbollah are quite the same in leads, when Israel is the responsible *Actor*, the affected entities are predominantly characterized as being civilian (in 6 cases out of 8), but also neutral non-combatants belonging to the UN peace keeping force. By contrast, when Hezbollah is ascribed the *material action* “kill”, the affected entities belong to the Israeli army.

In reference to the entities affected by Israel’s *material actions*, the text producer uses various human referring terms such as “war casualties”, “civilian”, “civilians”, “lives” “people”, denoting human civilian victims, as well as other referential forms such as “home”, “bridges”, “factories”, denoting inanimate civilian entities, and “missile sites”, “stronghold”, denoting inanimate military entities (“that has killed at least two Lebanese **civilians**”, “Israeli air strikes in Lebanon have killed 53 **civilians**”, “have claimed about 60 **lives**”, “Israeli aircraft have bombed **bridges**”, “Israeli airstrikes have hit three **factories**”, “Israeli attacks against **villages**”, “it could use to strike Hezbollah **missile sites**”). Particularly significant is the text producer’s choice of human referring terms such as “people”, “lives” and “civilians”, which stresses both

the humanness of the affected participants and adds sentiment to the reporting while it simultaneously implies criticism of Israel. This reference to human victims also depicts Israel as a blind force that does not differentiate between military targets and civilians.

Another referential strategy worth commenting on is the text producer's explicit reference to the number of victims ("53 civilians", "two Lebanese civilians", "40 civilians", "40 people", "60 lives", "19 civilians", "five people", "Four soldiers from the United Nations Interim Force") which, together with the use of various human referring terms to categorize the victims, may have the effect of making salient the scale of affliction suffered by the Lebanese and at the same time implying that Israel's actions are disproportionate. This negative representation is further emphasized through the text producer's choice of the quantifying adverbial "at least" when referring to the human victims of Israel's military actions ("has killed **at least** two Lebanese civilians", "have killed **at least** 40 civilians", "**At least** five people have been killed"), which has the effect of implying an even higher number of victims. The use of the quantifying adverb "at least" and reference to victims numbers can occasionally be found in connection with victims of Hezbollah's military actions ("killing **at least** one sailor", "killed **at least** 19 Israeli soldiers"); however, the victims belong to the military rather than being civilian.

In reference to the entities affected by Hezbollah's *material actions*, the text producer makes reference to geographical areas such as "Israeli territory", "northern Israel", "Tel Aviv", "northern towns" and "towns across northern Israel". Alternatively, the text producer uses lexical items that denote the military state of the affected entities,

whether human, as in “**Thirteen** Israeli **soldiers**”, “**12** wounded”, “at least **one** **sailor**”, “at least **19** Israeli **soldiers**” and “**eight** Israeli **commandos**” or inanimate, as in “naval **warships**” and “an Israeli **helicopter**”. Categorization using words such as “soldiers”, “commandos” and “sailor” represents an instance of what van Leeuwen (1996: 54) labels “functionalization, which involves reference to participants’ role or occupation. The use of referring expressions that have a military dimension in reference to the entities affected by Hezbollah military actions can be said to weaken the sense of affliction, as military entities are expected targets within a war context. While the text producer makes reference to the human victim numbers and occasionally uses the quantifying adverb “at least”, such choices should be interpreted in the light of the text producer’s ideological orientation. It is possible that, while indicating the news outlet’s accuracy in reporting on war casualties, such emphasis laid on the numbers of military casualties could simultaneously add credit to Hezbollah as possessing the military capabilities to inflict such losses on the Israeli military.

Reference to the United Nations (“UN”, “United Nations”, “a UN multinational force”, “a UN resolution”) is also found in leads. Reference to affiliated bodies and members is also noted, as in “blocking a **Security Council** statement”, “**Jan Egeland**, the UN humanitarian chief” and “United Nations secretary general **Kofi Annan**”. Reference to the UN could be seen as recognition of the active role of this international body in solving the problem and putting an end to the war through a UN-backed ceasefire. This is seen in, for example, “The **United Nations** says it expects an immediate ceasefire once the Lebanese and Israeli governments approve a **UN** resolution calling for a halt to fighting” and “Politicians in the Middle East are

confident a **UN Security Council** resolution can bring an end to the Lebanon conflict”. However, examining the reported content of other occurrences reveals a representation of the UN as facing much criticism from different sources, as evident in “Lebanon . . . said the impotence of the UN’s most powerful body sent wrong signals to small countries” and “Islamic leaders . . . expressed anger at the UN over what they say are international double standards on Israel’s offensive in the country”.

The text producer also makes reference to an international peacekeeping force (“international force”, “a peace keeping force”, “UN multinational force”) by the use of the word “force”, in its singular form in leads, exclusively for this reference purpose. Exploring the immediate linguistic context shows that reference to “international” or “multinational” force has often been associated with calls for the deployment of such forces from many sides, including the UN and world powers (“United Nations secretary general Kofi Annan has called for the formation of a strong international **force** to stabilise southern Lebanon”, “The US president and British prime minister have agreed to send a UN multinational **force** to support the Lebanese government”). Alternatively, the deployment of international force is sometimes represented as a condition imposed by Israel to stop fighting (“The Israeli prime minister has said that Israel will continue to fight Hezbollah in Lebanon until a strong international **force** is in place along the border”, “Israel said it would keep attacking Hezbollah until an international **force** arrives to take over in southern Lebanon”). Reporting on this conditioned ceasefire may pragmatically communicate, for some readers, a representation of Israel as finding excuses not to stop its military operations in Lebanon.

Reference to the US (“US”, “the United States”, “the US government”) also occurs in leads. In addition, reference is made to US officials, for example, Condoleezza Rice, the US secretary of state. The text producer occasionally acknowledges the US role in stopping the fighting and ending the war. Indicative examples are the following:

Israel has suspended its air attacks on southern Lebanon for 48 hours following meetings between **Condoleezza Rice, the US secretary of state**, and Ehud Olmert, the Israeli prime minister.

**The US president** and British prime minister have agreed to send a UN multinational force to support the Lebanese government.

However, the representation of the US in Al-Jazeera is generally characterized by depicting the US as adopting a stance towards the war that could be said to favour Israel or as being the target of criticism. This is emphasized in different ways, as evident in the following leads:

**Condoleezza Rice** has described the plight of Lebanon as a part of the "birth pangs of a new Middle East" and said that Israel should ignore calls for a ceasefire.

The US has reacted to Israel's attacks on Lebanon by saying Tel Aviv has the right to defend itself. . . .

**Condoleezza Rice** has blamed Hezbollah for the war with Israel. . . .

Human rights activists are preparing to protest at a British airport against the refuelling of a US plane believed to be carrying bombs to Israel.

Lebanon has accused **the United States** of blocking a Security Council statement calling for a ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah. . . .

American Muslims have criticised **the US government** for its reluctance to condemn Israel. . . .

Whereas the first lead may communicate a representation of the US as being inconsiderate towards the destruction of Lebanon, the second lead represents the US as explicitly supporting Israel's offensive. The third lead represents the US as throwing the blame on Hezbollah. Whereas the fourth lead reports on the issue that the US allegedly supplies Israel with bombs, the US "reluctance to condemn Israel" and to impose a ceasefire on it are brought into focus in the last two leads above.

Reference to Britain ("British prime minister" and "Britain") is also found in the leads of Al-Jazeera. Whereas reference is made to places in "at a **British** airport" and "people demonstrated in **Britain**", the following two references are worth noting:

The US president and **British prime minister** have agreed to send a UN multinational force to support the Lebanese government.

The European Union has called for an immediate end to hostilities in Lebanon, watering down demands for an immediate ceasefire at the insistence of **Britain** and other US allies.

Whereas the first of these leads depicts the UK as attempting to stop the fighting in Lebanon, the second lead represents Britain as blocking an immediate ceasefire.

It is worth commenting on the text producer's choice of lexical items that may be said to carry at least an implied evaluative meaning. Examples are the following:

Israeli air raids have killed more than 40 people in Lebanon while two Hezbollah rockets have struck 80km into Israeli territory, the deepest attacks since fighting began.

Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, the chief of Hezbollah group, has pledged open war on Israel after it bombed his Beirut home on Friday in a dramatic expansion of the latest Israeli assault.

The choice of the indefinite quantifying adverb “more than” in the former lead, one might suggest, has the effect of implying an even higher number of victims, hence exaggerating the Lebanese’ affliction and intensifying potential incrimination of Israel. Within the same lead the use of the superlative form of the adjective *deep* may be read as implying the military potential of Hezbollah and how far the extent to which the situation is hazardous for Israel. The adjective “dramatic”, in the latter lead, more explicitly expresses the writer’s attitude and may have the effect of implying an unexpectedly large expansion in Israel’s offensive.

In reference to the Arab and Muslim world, the text producer uses a number of referring expressions including “Muslims”, “Muslim countries”, “Islamic Leaders” and “Arab world” (“American **Muslims** have criticised the US government for its reluctance to condemn Israel”, “**Islamic** leaders have called for an immediate ceasefire in Lebanon and expressed anger at the UN over what they say are international double standards on Israel’s offensive in the country”, “The US has reacted to Israel’s attacks on Lebanon by saying Tel Aviv has the right to defend itself, but the action has drawn criticism from Europe and the **Arab** world”). While “American Muslims” and “the Arab world” are represented as opposing what they see

as the US supportive stance towards Israel, reference to “Islamic Leaders” represents them as being critical of the UN and as seeking to bring the conflict to an end.

Equally important is the way Al-Jazeera represents Iran and Syria, who are thought to be Hezbollah’s main allies in the region. In reference to Iran, the text producer uses referring expressions such as “Iranian backers”, “Iranian-made”, “a senior Iranian cleric” and “Iran’s foreign minister” (“Saudi Arabia has blamed ‘elements’ inside Lebanon for the violence with Israel, in unusually frank language directed at Hezbollah and its **Iranian** backers”, “Israel claims that the guided missile that hit one of their naval warships, killing at least one sailor, was **Iranian**-made”). The choice of the lexical items “Iranian backers” and “Iranian-made” where Iran is explicitly represented as backing Hezbollah and implicitly as supplying it with missiles rather emphasizes Hezbollah’s alleged close connections with Iran. Reference to the Syrian President (“The **Syrian** president has called on his army to increase its readiness to cope with ‘regional challenges’ ”) is also found in leads. The lead draws attention to Syria’s preparedness for any potential intervention in the war.

#### **6.4. Comparing the representations of Hezbollah and Israel in Al-Jazeera**

Interpreting any pattern of representation should be done in the light of its co-occurring patterns, taking into consideration the text producer’s ideological system as well as the socio-political and cultural contexts. This means that the same pattern of representation can be interpreted in different, sometimes opposing, ways, reflecting the factors already mentioned, without suggestions of self-contradiction or subjectivity on the part of the analyst. Van Dijk (2011: 399) argues that linguistic structures – whether semantic or formal – are “ideologically neutral”, i.e. they can be equally used

for the purposes of positive self-representation and other negative-representation by any (ideological) social group. Analyzing the representation of the 2006 war between Israel and Hezbollah in Al-Jazeera headlines and leads reveals certain patterns of representation that reflect varying textual features and strategies serving different discourse functions. The following sections compare the representations of the two sides in the war within the coverage by Al-Jazeera.

#### 6.4.1. Hezbollah and Israel in Al-Jazeera headlines

Table 15 illustrates frequencies and percentages of reference to Hezbollah and Israel in the headlines of Al-Jazeera reports in terms of their participant roles and associated process types, as related to the total number of mentions of Israel and Hezbollah in Al-Jazeera headlines:

Participant role	Process	Israel		Hezbollah	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%
<i>Actor</i>	<i>material</i>	29	51.0	3	13.6
<i>indirect Actor</i>	<i>material</i>	3	5.9	0	0.0
<i>Sayer</i>	<i>verbal</i>	8	15.7	4	18.2
<i>Senser</i>	<i>mental</i>	3	5.9	2	9.1
<i>Carrier</i>	<i>attributive relational</i>	2	3.9	1	4.5
<i>Beneficiary</i>	<i>material</i>	1	2.0	0	0.0
<i>In a circumstance of cause</i>	-	1	2.0	0	0.0
<i>Receiver</i>	<i>verbal</i>	1	2.0	0	0.0
<i>Target</i>	<i>verbal</i>	1	2.0	3	13.6
<i>indirect Goal</i>	<i>material</i>	2	3.9	0	0.0
<i>Goal</i>	<i>material</i>	3	5.9	9	40.9
<b>Total</b>		<b>51</b>		<b>22</b>	

15. Frequencies of reference to Hezbollah and Israel in the headlines of Al-Jazeera

The first feature worth commenting on is a statistical one: though frequency of reference might not be significant in itself, comparing the 22 references to Hezbollah to the 51 references to Israel within the headlines of Al-Jazeera provides us with a

statistically-supported intuitive view of what Al-Jazeera wants its readership to have in mind about the events of the war: Israel is the active force which has control over the war and its events and hence the side which should be blamed for war calamities. This is further supported by the detailed analysis of the representation of Israel and Hezbollah conducted in chapter 5 and summarized above.

Another related point concerns the distribution of these references along the different sentential positions. Hezbollah is referred to in sentence-initial position 10 times only (45.5%), whereas Israel is referred to in the same position 35 times (68.6%). Apart from being statistically significant or not, from a functional view point the first slot of a sentence is often occupied by the subject who/which typically conflates with the role of *Actor*, the bearer of responsibility, and is often the slot which captures the reader's attention affecting the way readers will interpret the rest of the sentence. Building on this assumption, one can argue that by occupying the first slot in the headlines, Israel is more likely to be perceived on the part of the readers as the bearer of responsibility, i.e. the side to be blamed for the events and actions of the war. This is further supported through the detailed analysis of representation conducted in the present chapter. Although sentence-initial position is typically associated with the performer of action, Hezbollah is ascribed agency two times only, constituting 20%, out of the 10 references to the group in sentence-initial position, whereas Israel is represented as the *Actor* ascribed agency 22 times, constituting 62.9%, out of the 35 references to Israel in the same position. The above comparisons of the representation of Hezbollah and Israel could reflect the way the text producer represents the two sides in the war; Israel is to be viewed as the responsible *Actor* while Hezbollah is depicted as an inactive affected participant.

Table 16 summarizes the representation of both Israel and Hezbollah in Al-Jazeera headlines in terms of the different participant roles assigned to both grouped under distinct categories:

Participant role	Israel		Hezbollah	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
affected by action (Goal/ indirect Goal/ Target)	6	11.8	12	54.6
receiver of <i>verbal</i> action	1	2.0	0	0.0
undergoes action	3	5.9	2	9.1
part of a circumstance of cause	1	2.0	0	0.0
benefits from action	1	2.0	0	0.0
part of a relation	2	3.9	1	4.5
performer of action (Sayer/ indirect Actor/ Actor)	37	72.5	7	31.8

#### 16. Representation of Israel and Hezbollah in Al-Jazeera headlines: performer or affected by action

Intuitively reading the frequencies of reference in the above table, one would notice the presence of opposing representations of Hezbollah and Israel in the headlines of Al-Jazeera news reports, which is further supported through the detailed textual analysis conducted in this chapter. The representation of Israel is characterized by the predominance of agency as well as its construction as the performer of action, both *material* and *verbal*, which constitutes 72.5% of the total frequency of reference to Israel, compared to a frequency of 31.8% of reference to Hezbollah as the performer of action. By contrast, the representation of Hezbollah is characterized by the predominance of affliction and the construction of the group as an inactive receiver of action, predominantly *material*, which constitutes 54.6% of the total frequency of reference to Hezbollah, compared to a frequency of 11.8% of reference to Israel as an affected entity. These opposing representations of Israel and Hezbollah may influence readers' views and their perception of the two sides in the war. Israel is the perpetrator who has full control of actions; hence the side to be attributed blame and who bears

the responsibility for what is happening. Hezbollah is the afflicted and inactive receiver of actions. The overall effect could be emphasizing the affliction of Hezbollah while incriminating Israel.

The detailed qualitative syntactic-semantic analysis conducted in the present chapter reveals a number of patterns of representation and lexico-grammatical features that may result in intensifying Israel's agency and potential incrimination in varying ways. For example, when Israel is ascribed agency the affected participants belong to many sides, e.g. Hezbollah, Lebanon and UN; are civilian, non-combatant and military; in many cases human, but also inanimate. In doing so, the text producer wants to communicate to readers a representation of Israel as a blind force which targets everything, no matter civilian or military; inanimate or human; belonging to the other side of the war or the neutral UN soldiers. In addition, Israel is predominantly ascribed negatively connoted violent *material actions* – the negatively connoted *material action* “kill” is ascribed six times to Israel – which can also be noticed in the type of *verbal actions* attributed to Israel, denoting or signalling *material* processes, with the potential effect of conveying, for some readers, a negative representation of Israel. Compared to Israel, Hezbollah is predominately attributed *verbal* and *mental actions* and *states*, which enhances the pattern of inactivity attributed to Hezbollah. Hezbollah's *material actions*, besides being very rare, extend to military entities belonging to Israel, the other side of the war, without a single occurrence of the negatively connoted *material action* “kill”, which may have the effect of softening the impact of Hezbollah's actions as military entities would normally be targets within the context of war.

### 6.4.2. Hezbollah and Israel in Al-Jazeera leads

Table 17 illustrates frequencies and percentages of reference to Hezbollah and Israel in the leads of Al-Jazeera reports in terms of their participant roles and associated process types:

Participant role	Process	Israel		Hezbollah	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%
<i>Actor</i>	<i>material</i>	76	42.0	25	36.8
<i>indirect Actor</i>	<i>material</i>	7	3.9	6	8.8
<i>co-Actor</i>	<i>material</i>	5	2.8	4	5.9
<i>Sayer</i>	<i>verbal</i>	25	13.8	10	14.7
<i>Senser</i>	<i>mental</i>	9	5.0	2	2.9
<i>Carrier/Value/Token</i>	<i>relational</i>	3	1.7	1	1.5
<i>Beneficiary/ Range</i>	<i>material</i>	3	1.7	0	0.0
<i>Receiver</i>	<i>verbal</i>	2	1.1	0	0.0
<i>Target</i>	<i>verbal</i>	7	3.9	6	8.8
<i>part of a circumstance of location</i>	<i>material</i>	11	6.1	0	0.0
<i>indirect Goal</i>	<i>material</i>	9	5.0	6	8.8
<i>Goal</i>	<i>material</i>	24	13.3	8	11.8
<b>Total</b>		<b>181</b>		<b>68</b>	

17. Frequencies of reference to Hezbollah and Israel in the leads of Al-Jazeera

Table 18 groups the participant roles assigned to both Israel and Hezbollah under a number of distinct categories based on the way they are introduced into the clause from a transitivity view point:

Participant role	Israel		Hezbollah	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
<i>affected by action</i> ( <i>Goal/ indirect Goal/ Target/ part of a circumstance of location</i> )	51	28.2	20	29.4
<i>receiver of verbal action</i>	2	1.1	0	0.0
<i>undergoes action</i>	9	5.0	2	2.9
<i>benefits from action</i>	3	1.7	0	0.0
<i>part of a relation</i>	3	1.7	0	1.5
<i>performer of action</i> ( <i>Sayer/ co-Actor/ indirect Actor/ Actor</i> )	113	62.4	45	66.2

18. Representation of Israel and Hezbollah in Al-Jazeera leads: performer or affected by action

An initial intuitive look at the frequencies of reference to Hezbollah as an affected participant (29.4%) and as a performer of action (66.2%) communicates a representation of Hezbollah that contradicts the evaluation of Hezbollah, which would be expected to be positive, within the ideological system of Al-Jazeera at least in this particular war where the other side Israel has a highly negative evaluation within Al-Jazeera ideology. The same also applies to the very close frequencies of reference to Israel and Hezbollah in the different participant roles, which equally contradicts both the opposing representations discerned in the headlines of the same news outlet of Hezbollah and Israel as well as the evaluation of the two sides within the ideological system of Al-Jazeera.

A thorough textual analysis of the leads of Al-Jazeera is conducted in the present chapter to support, or otherwise undermine, these statistical findings. The analysis of the representation of Hezbollah and Israel in the leads of Al-Jazeera reveals one characteristic feature which is highly significant for the analysis. Of the references to Hezbollah as the performer of *material actions*, whether assigned the roles of *Actor*, *indirect Actor* or *co-Actor*, and more generally in the entire corpus of Al-Jazeera leads, on no single occasion are the affected participants civilian belonging to Israel or any other side. By contrast, the text producer frequently ascribes to Israel a number of negatively connoted *material actions*, including “kill”, affecting civilian participants. The effect could be that of further incriminating Israel while simultaneously intensifying Hezbollah and Lebanon’s affliction.

It is worth noticing that while the negatively connoted *material action* “kill” is ascribed to Israel 8 times (4.4%) in leads, the *material action* “kill” is ascribed to

Israel 6 times (out of 51 references to Israel) in headlines, constituting 11.8% of the total frequency of reference to Israel in headlines. By contrast, while the *material action* “kill” is ascribed to Hezbollah three times (4.4%) in leads, the analysis shows that on no occasion Hezbollah is ascribed “kill” in Al-Jazeera headlines. So, while the percentage of ascribing the *material action* “kill” to Israel in Al-Jazeera headlines is much higher than in the accompanying leads, Hezbollah is never ascribed the *material action* “kill” in headlines compared to a percentage of 4.4% in leads. This discrepancy in using the *material action* “kill” and, in turn, in reference to casualties in Al-Jazeera could demonstrate the influence of editorial work. Whereas the leads are written by a reporter or journalist, headlines are subject to further editing by a sub-editor or copy editor. It could be argued that the potential effects of this process of news selection could potentially be communicating, to some readers, a negative representation of Israel and a positive representation of Hezbollah in the headlines of Al-Jazeera by focusing attention on Israel’s agency while backgrounding Hezbollah’s agency.

The frequency of reference to Israel as an affected participant in *material process* clauses is found to be close to that of Hezbollah, which contradicts the overall representations of Israel as the active *Actor* responsible for what is going on and of Hezbollah as the inactive affected participant in the war the text producer develops. However, the detailed analysis conducted reveals a number of textual strategies that are used with the effect of weakening Israel’s affliction and blurring the causal link.

When the text producer represents Hezbollah and Israel as sharing agency in *material process* clauses where both are assigned the role of *co-Actor*, a number of effects could be achieved including, among others, blurring agency, distributing blame, and

avoiding attributing responsibility to one side. However, in deciding which of the two sides in the war benefits from this role assignment, one needs to consider a number of factors including the relative valuation of the two sides in the news outlet's ideological system; which of the two sides is more likely to be attributed responsibility in a specific incident; and the overall pattern of representation discerned in the news outlet. Saying that, one might claim, it is more plausible to adopt the view that this representation serves Hezbollah, rather than Israel, given the positive evaluation of Hezbollah as opposed to the negative evaluation of Israel in Al-Jazeera. This assigning of participant roles could be used to blur the causal link if Hezbollah is ascribed a negatively connoted action by distributing responsibility between Israel and Hezbollah. On the other hand, Hezbollah could be credited power and competence in those cases where the text producer aims to represent the group as on equal footing with Israel in terms of agency.

Another textual feature noted upon analyzing the leads of Al-Jazeera that could equally undermine any conclusion based solely on the frequencies listed above is the text producer's choice of quasi-synonymous lexical items to describe Israel's military *material actions* directed at Hezbollah. This proliferation, discussed earlier in the chapter in more detail, can serve to intensify Israel's agency and cast more blame on Israel.

Given the ideological evaluation of Israel within Al-Jazeera which, one might claim, is a negative one based on contextual factors, allowing Israeli voices access to news reports should not be judged apart from the type of representation communicated through the accompanying projected clauses. Israeli sources are attributed *verbal*

*actions* where the reported content conveys a representation of Israel as facing strong resistance from Hezbollah. The effect might be that of building a positive image of Hezbollah's fighting, while attributing this depiction to Israeli sources in order to reinforce the news outlet's objectivity.

This chapter analyzes the representation of the two sides in the war, Israel and Hezbollah, by Al-Jazeera. In doing so, the analysis conducted in this chapter attempts to find out how Al-Jazeera represents war events and their attendant participants. The comparisons held in this chapter between the representations of the two sides in the war by Al-Jazeera are utilized in the discussion chapter when comparing the representation of the war by the two selected news outlets. The findings drawn from the analysis conducted in this chapter are juxtaposed with the findings of the following chapter, which is the focus of chapter 8, in an attempt to answer the overarching question of how the selected news outlets, Al-Jazeera and the BBC, offer different or similar constructions of reality and hence position their readers into adopting certain points of view? In the next chapter we go on to the analysis of the representation of Israel and Hezbollah by the BBC, in an attempt to find out the characteristic features of the representation of the two sides in the war.

## CHAPTER 7

### Representation of the 2006 War in the BBC News Reports

#### 7.1. Introduction

This chapter attempts a lexico-grammatical analysis of the 141 headlines and accompanying leads of the BBC news reports coverage of the 2006 war to investigate the representation of the two sides in the war, Israel and Hezbollah, by the BBC. This is done as a means to unravel and understand the stance, both authorial and ideological, of the BBC which shapes and directs the representation of the involved participants in ways that reflect this stance, e.g. incriminates, justifies or presents a balanced view of the actions and their attendant participants (cf. Bazzi, 2009: 137). In analyzing the representation of the war by the BBC, this chapter applies the same analytic grid applied in the last chapter investigating Al-Jazeera representation of the war which involves identifying the roles the text producer assigns to the different participants and entities, the types of processes associated with these participants, circumstantial elements and the logical relations between clauses. In addition, the chapter offers two separate sections focusing on the analysis of the different lexical choices the text producer made in the headlines and the leads of the BBC news reports in reference to the war events, its actions and participants. The analyses conducted in

the two chapters combined will help answering the overarching question of whether the selected news outlets, Al-Jazeera and the BBC, offer similar or different representations in the reporting of the 2006 war between Israel and Hezbollah and hence position their readers into adopting certain points of view.

## 7.2. Analysis of BBC news reports headlines

This section covers the headlines of the 141 news reports constituting the total body of the selected BBC news reports covering the 2006 war between Israel and Hezbollah.

### 7.2.1. Representation of Hezbollah in BBC news reports headlines

Analyzing the system of transitivity in the headlines of the BBC reports shows that Hezbollah is referred to 23 times. Table 19 illustrates frequencies of reference to Hezbollah in the BBC headlines in terms of participant roles and process types:

Participant role	Process	Frequency	
		HEZBOLLAH	other ref.
<i>Actor</i>	<i>material</i>	2	2
<i>indirect Actor</i>	<i>material</i>	1	1
<i>Beneficiary</i>	<i>material</i>	0	1
<i>Sayer</i>	<i>verbal</i>	3	1
<i>Senser</i>	<i>mental</i>	1	0
<i>Target</i>	<i>verbal</i>	0	1
<i>Goal</i>	<i>material</i>	9	0
no role assigned	no process specified	1	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>17</b>	<b>6</b>

19. Representation of Hezbollah in the BBC headlines: participant roles and process types

Hezbollah occupies sentence-initial position, which is typically occupied by the *Actor* in active construction, in 8 headlines out of the 23 references to the group. In one case, though Hezbollah occurs initially, it might be argued that it is *emptied* from, i.e. not assigned, any specific role as a participant in a process, as there is no apparent

predicate or process; rather the text producer uses a nominal group that announces some underlying clause with “here is” or “this is”:<sup>1</sup>

**Hezbollah’s rocket force**

Read in the light of its accompanying lead and the rest of the news text, this headline seems to present a statement of the rocket force the group possesses. Within the lead the NP “The mainstay of Hezbollah’s rocket force” is assigned the role of *Identified* in an *identifying relational process* where the role of *Identifier* is assigned to the NP “small 122mm artillery rockets known by the generic term ‘Katyusha’ ”:

The mainstay of Hezbollah’s rocket force are small 122mm artillery rockets known by the generic term "Katyusha". . . .

One might equally argue that within this headline Hezbollah can be assigned the role of *Carrier* in an underlying *possessive attributive relational process*, where ownership of the entity “rocket force” is represented as an *Attribute* of Hezbollah.<sup>2</sup> The headline triggers a presupposition such as “Hezbollah possesses rocket force”, depicting the group as a rival to Israel.

In the following three headlines, Hezbollah is represented as the performer of *material actions* that extend to inanimate entities (“Haifa”, “Israel”) belonging to Israel:

**Rockets** hit Israeli city of Haifa

Deadly **Hezbollah** attack on Haifa

Israel hit by **Hezbollah** barrage

The entity “rockets” in the first headline is assigned the role of *Actor* ascribed the *material action* “hit”, which extends to the entity “Israeli city of Haifa”, assigned the role of *Goal*. Though reference to the *Actor* Hezbollah is not made explicit in the

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<sup>1</sup> Halliday (1994: 395) observes the use of “unattached nominal” in a nominal group as a feature of what he calls “little texts” including news reports headlines.

<sup>2</sup> The *possessor* is the *Carrier* and the *possessed* is the *Attribute* (cf. Halliday, 1994: 132-133).

headline, readers can easily recover the referent based on prior knowledge of the wider context. In fact, reference to rockets often collocates with reference to Hezbollah in the BBC coverage of the war. In the second headline, the *nominalized material process* “attack” is ascribed to the *Actor* Hezbollah within the NP “deadly Hezbollah attack”. The entity affected by Hezbollah’s *material action* is introduced indirectly into the clause via a PP (“on Haifa”). The use of the evaluative adjective “deadly” in connection with the attack may have the effect of intensifying the impact of Hezbollah’s *material action* and more generally the group’s potential military capabilities. This representation may simultaneously communicate Hezbollah’s potential incrimination. In the third headline, the entity “Hezbollah barrage” is indirectly introduced into the process via the intermediary of a PP, as the performer of the passive *material action* “hit”. The affected entity (“Israel”) is shifted to sentence-initial position, whereas reference to Hezbollah is retained in sentence-final position, where both positions are of thematic focus.

Whereas the entities affected by Hezbollah’s *material actions* are inanimate in the above headlines, in the following headlines the entities affected by Hezbollah’s *material actions* are human and military:

**Hezbollah** seizes Israel soldiers

Israelis missing after naval **raid**

Nine Israelis killed in Lebanon

In the first headline, which belongs to the first news report in the BBC coverage of the war, Hezbollah occupies sentence-initial position and functions as the *Actor* ascribed agency associated with the *material action* “seize” that extends to the *Goal* “Israel

soldiers”.<sup>3</sup> While reference to the performer of the action is made explicit in the first headline, the responsible *Actor* is not explicitly referred to in the second and third headlines above. Read in the light of their accompanying leads, we will know that Hezbollah is the omitted *Actor*. Within the NP “naval raid” in the second headline, Hezbollah could be assigned the role of *Actor* ascribed the *nominalized material process* “raid”. What is significant to the analysis of representation is the type of relation signalled by the temporal marker “after” which introduces the action in the initiating clause as a consequence of the action in the *enhancing expansion* “after naval raid”. It could be argued that the text producer highlights the more important information by shifting the affected participants to sentence-initial position. Similarly, in the third headline above, the entity “nine Israelis” is introduced in sentence-initial position, and is the affected participant in the *negatively connoted material process* “killed”, where reference to the responsible *Actor* is omitted and could be supplied by readers as Hezbollah, based on the immediate linguistic context in the accompanying lead. Though the affected entities in the above headlines belong to the military, the text producer in the last two headlines does not signal this relation. Instead of using lexical items that indicate military status such as “soldiers”, reference is made to affected participants’ nationality “Israelis”, a term that could equally be used in reference to civilian affected participants.

Whereas Hezbollah is represented as the performer (explicitly or implicitly) of *material actions* in the above six headlines, in the following three headlines, Hezbollah is represented as the *Sayer* attributed *verbal actions*:

**Hezbollah** warns Israel over raids

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<sup>3</sup> This headline is analyzed in detail in section 8.3.1.

**Hezbollah** defies Israeli pressure

**Hezbollah** leader vows ‘open war’

The text producer’s representation of Hezbollah and its leader as warning Israel, defying its pressure to return the captured soldiers and vowing “open war” against Israel could communicate a view of Hezbollah as constituting a real threat to Israel, as a rival to Israel and as being determined to continue the war. In the following headline, Hezbollah is also indirectly assigned the role of *Sayer* attributed the *nominalised verbal process* “confession”:

Tape shows **Hezbollah** ‘confession’

Analyzed in the light of its accompanying lead, it would become clear that this tape is released on the part of Israel:

The Israeli army has released a video apparently showing a **Hezbollah** fighter admitting to taking part in a raid on Israel and undergoing training in Iran.

Notice the way the clause complex “a Hezbollah fighter admitting to taking part in a raid on Israel and undergoing training in Iran” is transformed in the headline to the *nominalised verbal action* “confession”, attributed to the *Sayer* Hezbollah. However, nominalisation here cannot be said to conceal any information as the following linguistic context in the lead provides the reader with all of the missing information. More significant is the way the text producer makes unnecessary generalization by attributing the “confession” to Hezbollah, the group, instead of “a Hezbollah fighter” who is merely a member of that group. So, while Hezbollah is individualized in the lead, it is referred to collectively in the headline (cf. van Leeuwen, 1996: 48-49). Another significant point is omitting reference to Israel the real *Actor* who reveals the tape in the headline. The use of the scare quotes in “confession” absolves the text producer from commitment to the claim made by the reported content. Notice also the

text producer's choice to allow the possibility of questioning the truth of the reported news "Hezbollah confession" by assigning it to a questionable *Actor* "tape", which can be tampered with, rather than representing it as a categorical statement, e.g. "Hezbollah confesses raiding Israel and undergoing training in Iran". Within the same headline the *material action* "shows" extends to the entity "Hezbollah confession", assigned the role of *Goal*, though not affected by the action in any material sense.

Hezbollah is assigned the role of *Senser* in a *mental process* ("will observe") in the following headline:

**Hezbollah 'will observe UN truce'**

This headline conveys a representation of Hezbollah as adhering to international law and as willing to end the war. The single quotes indicate that the content is attributed to some source other than the text producer, in this case the Hezbollah leader as the accompanying lead reveals.

Out of the 23 references to Hezbollah, the group is depicted as on the receiving end 10 times. In the following headline the predicate is of the type *verbal action* ("blames") attributed to the *Sayer* "G8" while the entity "extremists" is assigned the role of the *Target*.<sup>4</sup>

**G8 blames Mid-East 'extremists'**

In this headline the entity "extremists" is used to categorize both Hamas and Hezbollah, though the reader would have to read the news text body to recover the referent. The use of scare quotes absolves the text producer from the claims the quoted content makes.

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<sup>4</sup> This headline is analyzed in more detail in section 7.2.5.

While in the above headline Hezbollah is represented as the *Target of verbal actions*, in the following headline Hezbollah is represented as the *Goal*, though not affected by the *material action* “link” in the normal physical sense:

Bush links **Hezbollah** and ‘plot’

Read in the light of its accompanying lead, we will know that the US president makes a connection between Hezbollah and the suspects of an alleged UK terror air plot. While the text producer absolves her/himself from the claims the reported content makes through source attribution and the use of quotes, this headline may nonetheless pragmatically invite a representation of Hezbollah as being potentially connected to terrorist activities, perhaps for some readers incriminating the group by implication. A negative representation of Hezbollah is potentially communicated in the following headline where the group is depicted as affected by the *material action* “disarm”:

Australian PM: ‘Disarm **Hezbollah**’

Within the projected clause “disarm Hezbollah” Hezbollah is assigned the role of *Goal* while the *material action* “disarm” is not ascribed to an explicit *Actor*. Explicitly attributing the reported content to an international source (“Australian PM”) may have the effect of drawing attention to international condemnation of Hezbollah’s actions as manifested in asking for disarming the group. Source attribution serves one important function which is absolving the text producer from being read as asserting the claims the reported content makes, which enhances the news outlet’s reliability and impartiality. However, source attribution and quoting as textual devices have other significant implications. The effect the reported message leaves on the readers depends to a great extent on the valuation of the source in the ideological system of the text producer which the target audience often share or at least know. In other words, the message projected in the clause “disarm Hezbollah” would possibly depict

Hezbollah as a potential threat if the source, in this case the Australian PM, has a positive valuation in the ideological system of both the text producer and her/his readership. In the following headline the text producer provides the potential for inferring Hezbollah's alleged close connections with Iran and the group's potential military capabilities:

Blair accuses Iran of arms supply

While Hezbollah is indirectly assigned the role of *Beneficiary*, the *nominalised material process* "supply" within the NP "arms supply" is ascribed to the *Actor* "Iran". Though reference to the *Beneficiary* is omitted, it could be inferred to be Hezbollah on the basis of knowledge of the wider situational context.

Whereas in the above analyzed cases where Hezbollah is assigned the role of *Goal*, the *material actions* do not affect Hezbollah in the normal physical sense and are not ascribed to Israel, an entity belonging to Hezbollah ("bastion", "village", "HQ", "fighters") is assigned the role of *Goal* affected by *material actions* ("hit", "target", "seize", "clash with", "take"), ascribed to Israel on six occasions. Indicative examples are the following:

Israel 'hits **Hezbollah** bastion'

Israel targets **Hezbollah** bastion

Israel 'seizes' **Hezbollah** village

Israel hits **Hezbollah** leader's HQ

Israel takes '**Hezbollah** fighters'

The *material actions* ascribed to Israel, assigned the role of *Actor*, directly extend to the Hezbollah. While the affected entities are inanimate on five occasions, the human military participants "Hezbollah fighters" are assigned the role of *Goal* on one

occasion. The single quotes noticed in some of these headlines indicate that these pieces of news are attributed to some source other than the text producer, e.g. in the first headline the content is attributed to a Lebanese official as the accompanying lead reveals. It is worth noticing that the second headline seems to be an update of the former. The fact that the affected entities in all of these headlines are inanimate, except for the last one, and military can be said to weaken the affliction of Hezbollah, as military entities would be typical targets in a war. The entity “village”, though representing a civilian location, is given the attribute “Hezbollah” implying that it is associated with (perhaps controlled by) Hezbollah, which may have the effect of bestowing a degree of legitimation on Israel’s military action. This connection is explicitly stated in the accompanying lead, as evident in “an apparent base used by Hezbollah to fire rockets into Israel”.

### 7.2.2. Hezbollah in the BBC headlines: summary

Analyzing the system of transitivity in the 141 headlines of the BBC news reports coverage of the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah war shows that Hezbollah is referred to 23 times. In table 20 the participant roles assigned to Hezbollah are grouped under a number of distinct categories based on the ways Hezbollah is introduced into the clause from a transitivity point of view:

Overall category	Participant roles	Frequency	%
performer of action	4 times <i>Actor</i>	10	43.5
	2 times <i>indirect Actor</i>		
	4 times <i>Sayer</i>		
benefits from action	1 time <i>Beneficiary</i>	1	4.3
undergoes action	1 time <i>Senser</i>	1	4.3
affected by action	1 time <i>Target</i>	10	43.5
	9 times <i>Goal</i>		
no participant role assigned	no process specified	1	4.3

20. Representation of Hezbollah in the BBC headlines: performer of or affected by action

An intuitive look at the percentages of reference to Hezbollah would make it clear that frequencies of reference to the group as an affected participant and as the performer of action are exactly the same. However, with the exception of 6 references out of the 23 references to Hezbollah, the group is depicted either as on the receiving end or as the performer of actions which are not *material* or, occasionally, no clear participant role can be assigned to Hezbollah.

When represented as the *Goal*, military entities belonging to Hezbollah, mostly inanimate, are affected by *material actions* explicitly ascribed to Israel; otherwise, the *material actions* (“show”, “link”) are abstract, rather than concrete, and Hezbollah is not affected by the action in any sense of affliction.

Hezbollah is represented as the performer of *material actions* on six occasions. On three occasions Hezbollah is represented as the *Actor* and is ascribed negatively connoted *material actions* that extend to Israeli human military participants. One point worth commenting on is the text producer’s choice to refer to affected human military participants using their nationality (“Israelis”), without using any term that potentially indicates their military status such as “soldiers” or “commandos”. On the other three occasions where the entities affected by Hezbollah’s actions are inanimate, the reported content highlights Hezbollah’s military potential, being able to strike deep into Israel, and how far the extent to which the situation is hazardous for Israel.

One feature of representation worth commenting on is the use of textual strategies such as explicit attribution to sources other than the text producer as well as the use of scare quotes, which may have the effect of absolving the text producer from the

claims made in the reported content. However, a closer look at the headlines might offer a complementary interpretation. The Australian PM, the British PM Tony Blair, the US president Bush and the G8, the sources attributed the reported content, can be characterized as credible within the ideological system of the BBC, which adds reliability to the reported content. The reported messages communicate a negative representation of Hezbollah as a potential threat that should be neutralized, as receiving arms supplies from Iran and as having close connections with alleged terrorist suspects in UK. When Hezbollah is represented as the *Sayer*, the reported messages communicate a representation of Hezbollah as constituting a rival and a potential threat to Israel and as being ready to extend the war. On one occasion a process of news selection is noted whereby the text producer makes unnecessary generalization and omits important information resulting in creating a negative representation of the group. Even in the absence of explicit role assignment, the reported content triggers the presupposition that Hezbollah possesses a rocket force, which makes of the group a potential threat to Israel.

When assigned the role of *Senser*, the reported content communicates a positive representation of Hezbollah as willing to abide by the UN ceasefire. However, the text producer absolves her/himself from the claims the reported content makes by marking it as attributed to an external source, in this case Hassan Nasrallah, Hezbollah leader, by the use of the single quotes.

It should be made clear that because of the low frequency of reference to Hezbollah in the headlines of the BBC, this section is relatively short compared to the following

section covering the representation of Israel, for which the frequency of reference is much higher.

### 7.2.3. Representation of Israel in BBC news reports headlines

Israel is referred to 81 times in the 141 headlines constituting the BBC coverage of the 2006 war. Table 21 illustrates frequencies of reference to Israel in the BBC headlines in terms of participant roles and process types:

Participant role	Process	Frequency		
		ISRAEL	ISRAELI	other ref.
<i>Actor</i>	<i>material</i>	23	11	5
<i>indirect Actor</i>	<i>material</i>	0	0	3
<i>Beneficiary</i>	<i>material</i>	0	0	1
<i>Sayer</i>	<i>verbal</i>	4	1	3
<i>Senser</i>	<i>mental</i>	4	1	0
<i>Carrier/Value</i>	<i>relational</i>	1	1	1
<i>part of a circumstance</i>	-	0	2	1
<i>Phenomenon</i>	<i>mental</i>	0	1	0
<i>Receiver</i>	<i>verbal</i>	1	0	0
<i>Target</i>	<i>verbal</i>	2	1	1
<i>indirect Goal</i>	<i>material</i>	0	0	1
<i>Goal</i>	<i>material</i>	5	1	6
<b>Total</b>		<b>40</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Total frequency</b>			<b>81</b>	

21. Representation of Israel in the BBC headlines: participant roles and process types

The following sections will give some indicative examples of the different patterns of representation of Israel noted when analyzing the headlines of the BBC news reports.

#### 7.2.3.1. Israel as *Actor* or *indirect Actor* ascribed *material actions*

Israel is depicted as the performer of *material action*, whether as *Actor* or *indirect Actor*, 42 times out of the 81 references to Israel in the BBC news reports. In the

following headlines Israel is introduced as the *Actor* ascribed the negatively connoted *material action* “kill” on three occasions:

**Israeli** border strike ‘kills 26’

**Israel** kills Lebanese civilians

**Israeli** bomb kills UN observers

The role of *Actor* is assigned to the entities “Israeli border strike”, “Israel” and “Israeli bomb” ascribed the *active transitive material action* “kill”, which affects human participants who are, civilian (“26”, “civilians”) or neutral non-combatants (“UN observers”). The use of scare quotes in the first headline marks the reported content as belonging to a source that is not necessary endorsed by the text producer, in this case “Lebanese officials”, as becomes evident in the accompanying lead; the use of scare quotes absolves the text producer from being read as asserting the claim made. The choice of the categorization device “civilians” in the second headline explicitly represents Israel as targeting ordinary people, which may have the effect of intensifying Israel’s agency and responsibility. The choice of “civilians” also encourages readers to focus not only on Israel’s agency but on moral considerations related to humanitarian principles and international war conventions concerning the killing of civilians. Israel’s *material actions* also affect human participants who belong to the Hezbollah group in “**Israel** takes ‘Hezbollah fighters’ ”, and who are more likely to be regarded by readers as legitimate targets.

Another sub-pattern involves ascribing to Israel *material actions* (“bomb”, “control”) that extend to inanimate civilian entities. Indicative examples are the following:

**Israeli** jets bomb Lebanese cities

**Israel** ‘to control Lebanon strip’

### Israeli regret over Qana bombing

For example, in the third headline above the *nominalized material action* “bombing” extends to the civilian entity “Qana”, which is assigned the role of *Goal*. Within the NP “Qana bombing” reference to the *Actor* is omitted and could be supplied by readers as Israel, based on the immediate linguistic context, as is shown in a rewording such as “Israel’s bombing of Qana”. By ascribing to Israel negatively connoted *material actions* that affect civilian participants and inanimate civilian entities, the text producer represents Israel as the performer of dubious actions.

Israel is also ascribed *transitive material actions* (“hits”, “targets”, “seizes”) that extend to inanimate military entities belonging to Hezbollah. Examples are the following:

**Israel** ‘hits Hezbollah bastion’

**Israel** hits Hezbollah leader’s HQ

**Israel** ‘seizes’ Hezbollah village

The entities “Hezbollah bastion”, “Hezbollah leader’s HQ” and “Hezbollah village” are assigned the role of *Goal* in the *material process* clause. In the first two headlines, the representation of the entities affected by Israel’s *material actions* as military objects that belong to Hezbollah, the other side in the war, could weaken Israel’s agency. Targeting military locations can be read as legitimate in a war context. In the third headline, although the use of the word “village” might lead the reader to think of the *Goal* as civilian, giving the entity “village” the attribute “Hezbollah”, implying that it is associated with (perhaps controlled by) Hezbollah, may have the effect of implicitly adding legitimation to Israel’s *material action*.

In a number of cases, Israel is ascribed *transitive material actions* (“steps up”, “stage”, “renews”, “resumes”, “pursues”, “expands”, “to widen”, “imposes”) where the entities assigned the role of *Goal* (“ground offensive”, “raid”, “strikes”, “blockade”) are not affected by the *material actions* in the sense of having something physical done to them. Examples are the following:

**Israel** steps up ground offensive

**Israeli** commandos stage Tyre raid

**Israel** renews south Lebanon raids

**Israel** resumes Beirut air strikes

**Israel** expands strikes on Lebanon

The entities assigned the role of *Goal* are mostly nominalizations derived from verbs (*raid* and *strike*) that signal a *material process*. The main verbs (“renew”, “resume”, “expand”) are *material actions* whose function is almost aspectual – implying either a temporal or a spatial dimension of the process implicit in the object nominal. The entities materially affected by Israel’s actions are introduced into the clause within NPs, as in “south Lebanon raids”, “Tyre raid” and “Beirut air strikes”, or indirectly via a preposition (“on Lebanon”). In the following headline the *material process* “reach” is one of happening rather than doing:

**Israeli** raids reach north Lebanon

One might possibly assign to the entity “north Lebanon” the role of *Range* as it specifies the domain over which the process takes place; it functions more like a *circumstance of location* specifying a destination, rather than an affected entity in the process, though it could be assigned the role of *Goal*. In a similar manner, in “**Israeli** tanks push into Lebanon” and “**Israelis** mass on Lebanese border”, where Israel is assigned the role of *Actor* ascribed the *material action* “push” and the intransitive

“mass”, the reported content communicates a representation of Israel as expanding and as planning to extend its offensive. Within this pattern, Israel is assigned control and dominance, presented as the active participant who is capable of steering the events of the war in the desired direction, i.e. it is activated.

In the following headline the *material process* “to limit harm” presupposes that Israel is inflicting harm.

Bush urges Israel to ‘limit harm’

Here Israel is represented within a clause that expresses a desired but not actual state of affairs. However, while “limit” is in the projected desired world, “harm” still keeps the presupposition that Israel is doing harm in the actual world. Within the desired world (i.e. limiting harm, as expressed in the *to* clause) Israel’s action (“limit”) does not materially affect the *Goal* (“harm”).

In the following headline reference to the *Goal* is omitted. Israel is implicitly assigned the role of *Actor* within the nominalized structure “fresh Israeli raids”, where the omitted predicate could encode a *material process of happening*, as is shown in a rewording such as “fresh Israel raids took place after UN vote” or in the fully explicit rewording “Israel raids X again after UN vote”:

Fresh **Israel** raids after UN vote

The sequencing of actions, signalled by the temporal marker “after”, conveys a representation of Israel’s *material action* as a violation of the ceasefire decision. This representation could be communicated to the reader by means of pragmatic *invited inference*, since reader has to have background knowledge about the UN vote. There is a potential representation on the part of the reader of Israel as not abiding by

international law and this could have the effect of incriminating Israel by implication. The process in this headline can alternatively be analyzed as an *existential process* where the entity “fresh Israel raids” can be assigned the role of *Existent*. This interpretation can be seen in a rewording such as “there are/have been fresh Israel raids after UN vote”.

In the following headlines, though Israel is still depicted as the *Actor*, the entities “troop numbers”, “force”, “envoy”, “Olmert, army” and “Olmert”, assigned the role of *Goal*, belong to Israel itself and are not materially affected by the specified actions:

**Israel** to bolster troop numbers

**Israelis** ‘triple Lebanon force’

**Israel** withdraws Venezuela envoy

**Israel** press rounds on Olmert

**Israeli** papers turn on Olmert, army

These headlines, though they could be read as purely factual statements, are likely to lead readers to make inference of one kind or another. For example, the first two could lead to readers forming a representation of Israel as planning to widen its offensive, something they might judge to be either positive or negative. The last two headlines draw attention to the Israeli press’ criticism of the Israeli army and the Israeli PM.

In the following headlines Israel’s *material actions* do not affect the entities assigned the role of *Goal* in any material sense and are to some extent abstract rather than concrete:

**Israelis** back border force plan

**Israeli** cabinet backs truce deal

## Israel halts fire for Qana probe

What is significant to the analysis of representation is that these headlines, given background context, potentially communicate a positive representation of Israel. Whereas the first two headlines represent Israel as supporting the deployment of international peacekeeping force and as ready to stop fighting, the last headline reports on Israel's readiness to halt its operations to allow for an investigation into the bombing of the village of Qana.

Whereas in the above headlines Israel is introduced directly into the clause as the *Actor*, in the following headlines *circumstantial elements* ("in Lebanon air raid", "in fresh Lebanon raids") indirectly introduce the responsible *Actor* into the clause, through its inclusion within a PP:

Dozens killed in Lebanon **air raid**

Dozens die in fresh Lebanon **raids**

In both headlines, no explicit reference is made to Israel. However, the performer of the action could be supplied by readers as Israel, based on the immediate linguistic context in the accompanying lead as well as knowledge of the wider situational context. The choice of "dozens", while absolving the text producer of responsibility for inaccuracy, implies a high number of victims, which may have the effect of intensifying the pattern of violence attached to Israel. In the former headline, the choice of the negatively connoted *material action* "killed" and the entity "dozens" can imply potential incrimination of Israel.<sup>5</sup> Notice that in the latter headline the text producer chooses the *non-ergative – intransitive – material process* "die", rather than

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<sup>5</sup> It is significant to compare this way of reference to Israel to the way the text producer in Al-Jazeera refers to Israel as the performer of action in an explicit manner in "dozens killed in Israeli air raids" (see section 6.2.3.2). Whereas the BBC PP contains the place (Lebanon is not inferred to be agent), in Al-Jazeera PP, the agent is more explicitly indicated by "Israeli".

the *ergative – transitive* – “kill”, which results in representing the *material process* as happening by itself, i.e. the element of causation – the participant represented as the external cause – is not mentioned. In both cases Israel’s agency and responsibility are blurred, but the verb “kill” is perhaps more likely to lead the reader to supply the *Actor* from context (cf. Halliday, 2004: 284).<sup>6</sup>

In the following headline the *passive material action* “was bombed” affecting the *Goal* “UN Lebanon post” is not explicitly ascribed to an *Actor*:

How UN Lebanon post was bombed

The text producer employs an interrogative structure (“how”) together with an agentless passive construction (“was bombed”) that results on the level of sentence structure in omitting reference to the agent responsible for the bombing of the post, who can be retrieved from the accompanying lead as the “Israeli air force”. A possible expansion could be “how UN Lebanon post was bombed by Israeli air force” in which the entity “Israeli air force” would be assigned the role of *indirect Actor*, through its inclusion within a PP. The text producer also avoids any reference to the human casualties, i.e. the four UN soldiers, while referring only to the inanimate *Goal*. It is worth noticing that the text producer in using an interrogative structure shifting the focus to the “how”, rather than the “who” and “why”, an explanation for Israel’s action is offered to readers. In the last three headlines, it could be argued that the *agent* is implied (i.e. agency is predictable from context), and hence explicit identification of the *agent* becomes unnecessary. Moreover, the passive, including its agentless construction, enables the text producer to save space and immediately

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<sup>6</sup> Ergativity analysis is another semantic concept that offers a different perspective on *material process* and the issue of responsibility based on whether the *material action* happens by itself, i.e. self-engendered, or is caused to happen by external force (Thompson, 2004: 135). The structure of the clause varies to reflect the presence or absence of causation, which is a key factor when attributing responsibility to participants in the clause (ibid. 136). The text producer has the choice of presenting the same entity as the object of a transitive verb or the subject of an intransitive verb (cf. Definition of “ergative” in Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary). Trying to apply transitivity analysis to this lead would mistakenly assign to the entity “dozens” the role of *Actor*.

establishes the topic (Fowler, 1991: 78). Saying that, one should also emphasize an important consideration for news reporting; namely that *agent* deletion leaves the responsibility unspecified, i.e. the question of responsibility is left open with no explicit accusations. So, it might be the case that, in leaving out the *agent*, the text producer does not want to assign responsibility explicitly to Israel in the headlines.

### 7.2.3.2. Israel as *Sayer* attributed *verbal actions*

Representing Israel as an active performer of actions is not only restricted to the above 42 headlines where Israel is assigned the roles of *Actor* or *indirect Actor* ascribed *material actions*, it also includes assigning to Israel the role of *Sayer* attributed *verbal actions*, which can be found in 7 headlines. For example, in the following headlines Israel is assigned the role of *Sayer* attributed the *verbal actions* “claims”, “vows” and “says”, occasionally nominalised (“claims”):

**Israel** claims Iran link to crisis

**Israel** vows no let-up on Lebanon

**Israeli** press says fight must go on

**Israel** says world backs offensive

US ‘outrage’ over **Israeli** claims

The reported messages attribute to Israel/Israeli press the claim that Iran is involved in the ongoing conflict; the promise that Israel will keep its offensive against Lebanon; the statement that fighting must go on; and the statement that the world “backs” the “offensive” against Lebanon and Hezbollah. One might claim, particularly in the third and fourth headlines – where the neutral reporting verb “say” is used – that the reported message may fit well within the text producer’s ideological system. It is worth noticing that the *nominalised verbal process* “claims” in the last headline above

relates closely to the reported content in the third headline. Analyzed in the light of its accompanying lead, it becomes clear what claims the text producer refers to, as evident in:

The US state department has dismissed as “outrageous” a suggestion by Israel that it has been authorised by the world to continue bombing Lebanon.

The text producer encloses the word “outrage” within scare quotes to signal that it is not her/his own, though it is in a sense the text producer’s own wording, as the word originally attributed to the US source is “outrageous”. The entity “Israeli claims”, introduced indirectly to the clause through a PP in the headline, could be assigned the role of *Phenomenon* in a *mental process* of emotion “being outraged” experienced by the *Senser* “US”. Possible paraphrases could be “US feels outrage over Israeli claims” or “US is outraged by Israeli claims”.

Of particular interest is also the apparent contradiction in the reported content of “Israeli press says fight must go on” compared to “Israeli papers turn on Olmert, army” analyzed above. However, analyzed in the light of their accompanying leads and the dates they show, we get to know that while the headline “Israeli press says fight must go on” appeared when the war reached its peak, the other headline appeared a day after the cease-fire between Israel and Hezbollah came into force. Analyzing the lead accompanying the headline “Israeli press says fight must go” shows that the press was also critical to the Israeli government for its insufficient concern regarding the consequences of the war. However, the text producer is selective as for what to foreground in the headline, in this case that “fight must go on”. Saying that, one might argue that the effect could be that of developing a view that the war was welcomed by Israeli media, which is what the text producer might want the

readership to have in mind, at least at that stage of war. This supports the overall pattern of control and dominance of Israel over the war scene. Analyzing the lead accompanying “Israeli papers turn on Olmert, army” makes it clear that Israeli media “turn on” Olmert and Israeli army for failing to achieve the objectives of the war.

In the following headline the *passive verbal action* “warned” is not attributed to an explicit *Sayer*:

South Lebanese warned of strikes

The *Sayer* can be retrieved from the immediate following linguistic context in the lead as being Israel. In the light of the discussion of the passive, particularly its agentless form, a number of interpretations can be adopted. There is the possibility that the *agent* is implied and hence explicit reference is unnecessary. The agentless passive can also be used to conceal the responsibility of the *Actor*. However, more significant is the representation of Israel as a restrained power as it warns civilians before striking.<sup>7</sup> In the following headline, by contrast, Israel is assigned the role of *Sayer*, attributed the *verbal action* “call up”:

**Israel** calls up army reservists

Though the process involves a material aspect, as evident in the deployment of troops, it also essentially involves a communicative act. The headline may pragmatically invite a representation of Israel as planning to widen its offensive.

### 7.2.3.3. Israel as *Carrier/Value* in *relational processes*

In the following headline Israel is assigned the role of *Carrier* having the *Attribute* “not ready” in a *relational process* clause:

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<sup>7</sup> This headline is analyzed in more detail in section 8.3.4.

### **Israel** ‘not ready for truce yet’

Representing Israel as “not ready for truce” reflects its status as the side who is in full control, in this case in a position to accept or reject the UN truce. The use of scare quotes serves to distance the text producer from the reported content which is attributed in the accompanying lead to the Israeli Defence Minister Amir Peretz. It is significant to compare this representation to the way the text producer in Al-Jazeera depicts Hezbollah as having equal saying and being on an equal footing with Israel in accepting ceasefire deal, as evident in “**Israel**, Hezbollah hesitate on deal”.

In the following headline the Israeli bombing of the village of Qana is identified as being a “war crime”, where the NP “an Israeli war crime” is assigned the role of *Value* or *Identifier* in an *identifying relational process*:

### Qana bombs an **Israeli** ‘war crime’

The omitted predicate in the clause could be supplied as “constitute” or “are”, as shown in rewordings such as “Qana bombs constitute an Israeli ‘war crime’ ”. Identifying the bombing of Qana as a war crime could imply potential incrimination of Israel. In this context this could mount to a legal allegation, so, the text producer uses single quotation marks to signal reported content as belonging to a source other than the text producer, in this case a human rights group as becomes evident in the accompanying lead.

#### **7.2.3.4. Israel as part of a *circumstance of location***

In the following headline the entity “Israeli army” occurs as part of a *circumstance of location* where no clear participant role can be assigned to it:

In the **Israeli** army - relatives speak

This headline undergoes a syntactic transformation whereby the *circumstantial element* is shifted to come before the subject and predicate. A possible reading for such inversion of word order is that the text producer is arousing the readers' attention.<sup>8</sup> What is significant for the analysis of representation is the text producer's choice to report on the concerns and grief of relatives of the Israeli soldiers. This is evident in the accompanying lead ("Relatives of **soldiers** talk of their concerns - and grief - over the conflict") as well as the relatives' recounts of the private lives of the Israeli war casualties and victims, as is evident in the news story body. In the accompanying lead, the participants "relatives of soldiers" are assigned the role of *Behaver* ascribed a *behavioural process* ("talk") (Halliday, 1994: 139). Here the *behavioural process* "talk" is near verbal but the focus is more on the process as behaviour. The PP "of their concerns – and grief – over the conflict" functions as a *circumstance of matter* specifying, in this case, the content of what they "talk of" (cf. Halliday, 1994: 157-158).

In the following headline Israel also occurs as part of a *circumstance of location*, where no clear participant role can be assigned to it:

"Trapped near the **Israeli** border"

One can easily notice the absence of the entity affected by the *material action* "trapped" which could, however, be identified on the basis of the accompanying lead as a US woman who is trapped with her family in a Lebanese town targeted by Israel's strikes. This headline may be felt to draw attention to the difficulties facing people who are attempting to flee Lebanon because of the continuing Israeli bombing of the country, which may have the effect of incriminating Israel by implication.

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<sup>8</sup> The dash, which echoes a pause in spoken discourse, acts here as an attention-getting device to introduce the more important information.

While in the above headlines Israel is represented as either the performer of some sort of action, *material* or *verbal*, part of a relation, a *Phenomenon* in a *mental process*, or as a mere location, in the following sections Israel is represented as on the receiving end.

#### 7.2.3.5. Israel as *Target* or *Receiver* of *verbal actions*

In the following headlines Israel is assigned the role of *Target* of *verbal actions* (“warn”, “defy”, “call up”) attributed to different sides (“Hezbollah”, “Iran Leader”):

Hezbollah warns **Israel** over *raids*

Hezbollah defies **Israeli** pressure

Iran leader’s warning to **Israel**

In the first two headlines, Hezbollah is represented as the *Sayer* attributed the *verbal actions* “warns” and “defies” that target Israel. The reported content may pragmatically communicate a representation of Hezbollah as constituting a potential threat to Israel and as being a rival to Israel. In the first headline the Israeli entity “raids” occurs within a *circumstantial element of matter*. Read in the light of its accompanying lead, the nominalised *verbal action* “warning” in the third headline is attributed to Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Given context and background knowledge, this headline may lead readers to focus on Hezbollah’s alleged connections with Iran, which forms a recurrent pattern in the BBC coverage of the war. On one occasion (“Israel calls up **army reservists**”), the text producer provides the potential for inferring Israel’s readiness to continue the ongoing war as represented in summoning reserve troops.

In the following headline Israel is assigned the role of *Receiver* of the *verbal action* “urges” attributed to the *Sayer* “Bush”:

Bush urges **Israel** to ‘limit harm’

The choice of the reporting verb “urges”, rather than *threatens*, *demands* or *orders*, as well as the choice of the *material action* “limit”, rather than *stop* or *put an end to*, and the choice of “harm”, rather than *killing*, *destruction* or *aggression*, together with the reported content of the headline help give the reader the view that Israel is in full control of the actions of the war. The accompanying lead “US President George Bush has said he *will urge Israel* to avoid civilian casualties in its attacks on Lebanon” reveals that the text producer replaces the phrase “avoid civilian casualties” – constituting the actual reported content attributed to Bush – with “to limit harm”. Replacing reference to human civilian victims with reference to an abstract, rather vague, noun (“harm”) may have the effect of blurring Israel’s agency and its potential incrimination. The use of quotes may have the effect of absolving the text producer from the reported content despite the fact that this is a summary of the message rather than the source cited verbatim; hence the overall effect still might be an image of credibility and objectivity attributed to the BBC.

#### 7.2.3.6. Israel as *Goal* or *indirect Goal* in *material processes*

Israel is depicted as directly affected by *material action* on 12 occasions, whereas it is assigned the role of *indirect Goal* on one occasion. In the following two headlines human military participants belonging to Israel are assigned the role of *Goal* in *material process* clauses:

Hezbollah seizes **Israel** soldiers

Nine **Israelis** killed in Lebanon

In the former headline, the human participants “Israel soldiers” are assigned the role of *Goal* affected by the *material action* “seizes” ascribed to Hezbollah who is assigned the role of *Actor*. In the latter headline, whereas reference to the responsible *Actor* is omitted, reference to human casualties (“nine Israelis”) is retained in sentence-initial position, which is a position of thematic focus. It is worth noticing that the reader would have to read on to find out that the affected participants “nine Israelis” belong to the military, as is stated in the accompanying lead (“nine Israeli soldiers have been killed”). Hezbollah could be inferred as the performer of action based on the accompanying lead.

Whereas in the above two headlines the affected participants are human and military, in the following three headlines the affected entities are inanimate:

Rockets hit **Israeli** city of Haifa

Deadly Hezbollah attack on **Haifa**

**Israel** hit by Hezbollah barrage

The reported content in these headlines depicts the situation as hazardous for Israel and simultaneously draws attention to Hezbollah’s potential military capabilities. Since the affected entities here can be understood as primarily civilian, a negative representation of Hezbollah could be inferred by readers

In the following headline the entity “Israel deeds” is assigned the role of *Goal* affected by the *material action* “avenge”, ascribed to Al-Qaeda, a Muslim militant network, which is assigned the role of *Actor*:

Al-Qaeda ‘to avenge **Israel** deeds’

The use of scare quotes in “to avenge Israel deeds” is to signal sourcing and simultaneously to absolve the text producer from what is being reported, i.e. the content is not the text producer’s expectation but rather a statement made by the *Actor* Al-Qaeda.

Israel is depicted as the *Goal* but in a rather ambiguous manner in the following headline:

UN rights body backs **Israel** probe

Analyzed in the light of its accompanying lead, we will know that the UN approved to send a team to investigate alleged abuses ascribed to Israel:

The United Nations Human Rights Council has voted to send a team to Lebanon to investigate alleged abuses by Israel.

One might suggest that Israel could be assigned the role of *Goal* within the nominal group “Israel probe” affected by the *nominalised material process* “probe”. This interpretation could be clarified by a rewording such as “UN rights body backs probing Israel’s alleged abuses”. The structural ambiguity of the headline might cause semantic ambiguity as it can be read as “the UN backs a probe suggested by Israel” rather than “a probe of or about Israel’s human rights violations”.

In the following headlines, though Israel is assigned the role of *Goal*, it is not affected in a negative manner by the specified *material actions* (“back”, “bolster”, “triple”):

Bush backs **Israel** at divided G8

Israel to bolster **troop numbers**

Israelis ‘triple Lebanon **force**’.

In the first headline, for example, the *material action* “backs”, ascribed to the *Actor* Bush, could be said to serve Israel positively, rather than negatively affecting it. This headline may, by implication, draw attention to Israel’s alleged close connections with the US, as found elsewhere in the BBC coverage of the war. The other two headlines differ from the first in being, in a sense “reflexive”; in any case they communicate a representation of Israel as planning to continue and extend its offensive in Lebanon. The use of single quotes in the third headline above absolves the text producer from commitment to the claim the reported content makes. There is nothing obvious in the wording of the last two headlines that implies a negative judgement on Israel.

In the following headline Israel’s alleged close connections with the US is implicitly reported on, and Israel is assigned the role of *Beneficiary* within the NP “weapons flight”:

Beckett protest at weapons flight.

The context of this headline is British Foreign Secretary Margret Beckett’s opposition to the use of an airport in Scotland by the US to supply Israel with weapons, as stated in the accompanying lead. This is an instance of a text producer using a nominalization that is dependent for comprehension on context or co-text. Though reference to the *Actor* the US and the *Beneficiary* Israel is omitted from the headline, it can be supplied from material in the accompanying lead.

#### **7.2.3.7. Israel as *Senser* in *mental processes***

Israel (“Israel troops”, “Israel’s PM”) is assigned the role of *Senser* undergoing *mental processes* (“ignore”, “rule out”, “reject”, “approve”) on five occasions in headlines:

**Israel** troops ‘ignored’ UN plea

**Israel's** PM rules out ceasefire

**Israel** rejects UN aid truce call

**Israel** approves deeper offensive

All these headlines contain nominalization (presumably for economy, as generally in such cases) whose specification depends heavily on context and co-text. Notice the way these four headlines communicate a negative representation of Israel in different ways. The first headline reports on a major incident in the war where Israel bombed a UN post. The use of the quotes (“ignored”) marks the reported content as belonging to a source other than the text producer and absolves the text producer from commitment to the claims the reported content makes. The second and third headlines communicate a representation of Israel as not willing to stop the ongoing war, whereas the fourth headline represents Israel as planning to extend its offensive. It is important to note negative representations arise; however, these are not verbally explicit, but depend on readers using their background values and standpoint.

In the following headline within the NP “Israeli regret”, Israel could be assigned the role of *Senser* undergoing the *nominalized mental process* “regret” where the role of *Phenomenon* is assigned to the entity “Qana bombing”:

**Israeli** regret over Qana bombing

The reported content could possibly communicate a positive representation, for some readers, of Israel as being regretful for its bombing of a building in a Lebanese village. Note, however, that for some readers the prime focus of attention could be on the Qana bombing itself and judgements surrounding it, however regretful Israel may be reported to be. In the accompanying lead Israel’s ignorance of the presence of

civilians in the building is introduced as a justification on the part of an Israeli military source.

#### 7.2.4. Israel in the BBC headlines: summary

While Hezbollah is referred to 23 times Israel is referred to 81 times in the 141 headlines constituting the BBC news reports. Table 22 groups the participant roles assigned to Israel under a number of distinct categories based on the ways Israel is introduced into the clause from a transitivity point of view:

Overall category	Participant roles	Frequency	%
performer of action	39 times <i>Actor</i>	50	61.7
	3 times <i>indirect Actor</i>		
	8 times <i>Sayer</i>		
benefits from action	1 time <i>Beneficiary</i>	1	1.2
part of a relation	2 times <i>Carrier</i>	3	3.7
	1 time <i>Value</i>		
triggers action	<i>Phenomenon in mental process</i>	1	1.2
undergoes action	<i>Senser</i>	5	6.2
part of a <i>circumstance</i>	2 times <i>circumstance of location</i>	3	3.7
	1 time <i>circumstance of matter</i>		
receiver of <i>verbal action</i>	<i>Receiver of verbal action</i>	1	1.2
affected by action	12 times <i>Goal</i>	17	21.0
	1 time <i>indirect Goal</i>		
	4 times <i>Target</i>		

#### 22. Representation of Israel in the BBC headlines: performer of action or affected by action

The representation of Israel as the performer of action constitutes 61.7% of the total frequency of reference to Israel in the BBC headlines. When Israel is represented as the performer of *material actions*, most of these actions are not negatively connoted and do not affect the entities assigned the role of *Goal* in any material sense. Rather, these *material actions* mostly express temporal or spatial dimensions of the *material process*, communicating a representation of Israel as planning to expand and continue

its offensive. Alternatively, but less frequently, Israel is ascribed negatively connoted *material actions* that directly affect inanimate entities, both military belonging to Hezbollah and civilian. When the passive is used (on two occasions) no reference is made to the *Actor* Israel, which results in leaving responsibility unspecified with no explicit accusations. Moreover, a process of news selection results in avoiding reference to the human victims while retaining the inanimate affected object (“UN Lebanon post”, “Qana bombing”), which may have the effect of weakening Israel’s agency and its potential incrimination. Israel is ascribed the negatively connoted *material action* “kill” on 4 occasions (4.9%) out of the 81 references to Israel in headlines. Israel is introduced directly into the clauses on three occasions out of the four references. The affected entities are both civilian (“26”, “Lebanese civilians”, “dozens”) as well as neutral non-combatants (“UN observers”). The analysis shows that when Israel is represented as the performer of *material actions*, the reported content tends to draw attention to Israel’s military operations that affect civilian and military human as well as inanimate participants; Israel’s readiness to continue and widen its offensive in Lebanon until Hezbollah is neutralized; the Israeli media criticism targeting the Israeli PM and the army; but also Israel’s acceptance of the UN ceasefire plan and the deployment of international peacekeeping force.

When represented as the *Sayer* attributed *verbal actions*, the reported content may lead readers to focus on Iran’s alleged links to Hezbollah; the support Israel gains in its ongoing war against Hezbollah from the Israeli media, as well as from international powers; Israel’s determination to continue its war on Hezbollah until the captured soldiers are freed; and Israel’s restrained power reflected in warning civilians before delivering strikes. In attributing the reported content explicitly to Israeli sources, the

text producer is careful to absolve her/himself from being read as asserting the claims made. However, the valuation of the Israeli sources within the ideological system of the BBC, one might claim, if not positive then at least, is more reliable compared to that of Hezbollah which would not affect the overall effect of credibility of the reported content which mostly communicates a positive representation of Israel. When Israel is assigned the role of *Senser* the reported content may communicate a positive representation of Israel as being regretful for its actions on one occasion; however, on the other four references the reported content may draw attention to a supposed unwillingness on Israel's part to accept ceasefire; its readiness to widen its offensive; and its potential negligence in the incident of bombing the UN post.

When Israel is assigned the roles of *Carrier* in a *relational process*, the *Receiver* of *verbal actions*, *Phenomenon* in *mental process*, or as part of a *circumstance of location*, the text producer still utilizes source attribution and quotes as strategies that aim to distance the text producer from the claims made. When Israel is assigned the role of *Receiver* in a *verbal process* clause, comparing the headline to its accompanying lead reveals that the text producer presents a summary of the message in her/his own wording rather than being verbatim that results in hiding the fact that Israel's offensive results in civilian casualties.

Israel is represented as on the receiving end on 17 occasions constituting 21% of the total frequency of reference to Israel in the BBC headlines. When represented as the *Target* in *verbal processes*, the type of *verbal actions* and the reported content depict Hezbollah as a rival and a potential threat to Israel and focus attention on the group's alleged close connections with Iran.

Out of the 81 references to Israel in the headlines of the BBC, Israel is depicted as affected by *material actions* on 13 occasions. On two occasions human military participants belonging to Israel are introduced as the *Goal* affected by negatively connoted *material actions*. Whereas on one occasion the action is explicitly ascribed to Hezbollah, on the other occasion reference to the responsible *Actor* is omitted from the clause. On three occasions civilian areas in Israel are represented as affected by *material actions* ascribed to Hezbollah. This pattern highlights Hezbollah's potential military capabilities. On the other eight occasions, although Israel is apparently assigned the role of *Goal*, the textual analysis reveals that the *material actions* either do not affect Israel in a material sense; benefit Israel; are still to happen; are ascribed to different sides other than Hezbollah including Israel itself. On one occasion the *material action* is nominalised resulting in potential structural and semantic ambiguity by means of blurring the fact that the UN investigates human right violations attributed to Israel. The communicated representations in these headlines may lead readers to focus on the Israeli media opposition to the Israel Prime Minister; Israel's plans to widen its offensive; and Israel's alleged close connections with the US, which is also brought into focus when Israel is assigned the role of *Beneficiary*.

Employing source attribution and quoting as strategies that aim to enhance the credibility of the news outlet by absolving the text producer being read as asserting the claims made in the reported content seems to be a recurrent feature cutting across many patterns of representation in the BBC headlines.

### 7.2.5. Analysis of lexical choices in the BBC headlines

This section analyzes the lexical choices text producers make in the headlines of the BBC news reports coverage of the war. Starting with Israel, the text producer in reference to Israel uses the word “Israel”, whether referring to the state (“**Israel** imposes Lebanon blockade”, “**Israel** kills Lebanese civilians”), the territories or some other entity that belongs to Israel (“Hezbollah seizes **Israel** soldiers”), the word “Israeli” as adjectival modifier in a noun group (“**Israeli** raids reach north Lebanon”, “**Israeli** bomb kills UN observers”), as well as mentions of Israeli spokespersons, such as Olmert (“**Olmert** says fighting will go on”, “Israel press rounds on **Olmert**”). In reference to the Israeli army and soldiers, the text producer uses the referring nouns “army”, “force”, “troops”, “soldiers”, “reservists”, and “commandos” (“Israeli **army** clash with Hezbollah”, “Israelis ‘triple Lebanon **force**’”, “Israel **troops** ‘ignored’ UN plea”, “Israel calls up **army reservists**”, “Hezbollah seizes Israel **soldiers**”, “Israeli **commandos** stage Tyre raid”). The label “commandos” and more obviously “soldiers”, one might suggest, denote an official state member of the military. The text producer also uses the collective referring term “Israelis”, that signals nationality or citizenship, when making reference to the Israeli military (“**Israelis** ‘triple Lebanon force’”, “**Israelis** mass on Lebanese border”) as well as military personnel (“Nine **Israelis** killed in Lebanon”).

In reference to Hezbollah, the text producer uses the word “Hezbollah” used either as a noun or as an adjectival modifier in a noun group (“**Hezbollah** seizes Israel soldiers”, “Israel ‘hits **Hezbollah** bastion’”). The term “fighters” is used one time in “Israel takes ‘Hezbollah **fighters**’”. Notice the use of quotes to signal that the label belongs to a source other than the text producer. Reference to the group’s leader is

made on two occasions (“Israel hits Hezbollah **leader**’s HQ”, “Hezbollah **leader** vows ‘open war’ ”), where he is functionalized, i.e. referred to by his role or position. Referring forms such as “guerrilla”, “militants”, “group”, “militia” and adjectives which carry at least an implied evaluative meaning such as “militant”, “radical”, “Islamic”, “fundamental” are not found in connection with Hezbollah.

The word “extremists” is used only once in headlines (“G8 blames Mid-East ‘**extremists**’ ”), where reference is not made precise. In order to recover the referent of the label “extremists” readers will need to read the news text body. However, based on the situational context and shared common knowledge, one might argue that readers can include Hezbollah among the referents of the referring term “extremists”, as the group is routinely classified by the use of this term in the discourse of the United States in particular. The use of emotionally-loaded words with a distinctive evaluative meaning, such as “extremists”, may raise questions regarding the text producer’s impartiality. However, the text producer’s choice to use this more general label rather than directly naming the group (as in “Hezbollah extremists”) might render the process of recovering the referent difficult for readers; but more importantly, it absolves the text producer from directly attaching the label to Hezbollah. In addition, the use of scare quotes may imply that the content belongs to the ideology of *the other* and simultaneously absolves the text producer from the claims the quoted content makes.

In reference to the ongoing war between Israel and Hezbollah/Lebanon, the text producer uses the neutral words “Middle East crisis/turmoil”, “Lebanon crisis”, “fight”, “the conflict” and “Lebanon fighting” (“Middle East crisis dominates G8”,

“Press reflects Middle East turmoil”, “Israeli press says fight must go on”, “UN wrangle amid Lebanon fighting”, “Lebanon crisis ‘cannot continue’ ”), where no one particular side is represented as an aggressor nor another as a victim; rather such referring expressions can be said to blur responsibility. In reference to Israel’s military operations, the text producer uses the words “offensive”, “bombing”, “raid” and “strike” (“Israel says world backs **offensive**”, “Israeli regret over Qana **bombing**”, “Dozens killed in Lebanon **air raid**”, “Israeli border **strike** ‘kills 26’ ”). Whereas all of these referring expressions also occur in the headlines of Al-Jazeera in connection with Israel, a wide range of other lexical items are also used in Al-Jazeera, but not in the BBC. Some of these words, for example “onslaught”, “(Israeli) attack(s)” and “full air onslaught”, represent Israel as the active aggressor.

In reference to Israel’s *material actions* the text producer uses the negatively connoted *material action* “kill” on four occasions in the BBC headlines (“Israeli border strike ‘**kills** 26’ ”, “Israel **kills** Lebanese civilians”, “Israeli bomb **kills** UN observers”, “Dozens **killed** in Lebanon air raid”). The text producer also uses the verbs “bomb”, “hit”, “seize”, “clash with” and “target”, denoting negatively connoted *material actions* (“Israeli jets **bomb** Lebanese cities”, “Israel ‘**seizes**’ Hezbollah village”, “Israel **hits** Lebanon in new raids”, “Israel **targets** Hezbollah bastion”) affecting inanimate entities and “take” (“Israel **takes** ‘Hezbollah fighters’ ”) affecting human military participants. In such instances, it is clear that the BBC representation of Israel does not obscure the potential for negative value judgements of Israel. Others verbs used to describe Israel’s *material actions*, for example, “reach”, “step up”, “renew”, “resume”, “expand”, “widen” and “stage”, predominantly signal a temporal or spatial dimension or express a tactical move (“Israel pursues strikes on Lebanon”, “Israel

steps up ground offensive”, “Israel renews south Lebanon raids”, “Israeli commandos stage Tyre raid”), rather than a material one in the strict sense of having a material contact. These *material actions* assigned to Israel are to some extent abstract rather than concrete, and this may reduce the perceived impact of the *material action*. They are thus noticeably different from concrete actions such as *attack*, *strike* and *kill*. These lexical choices could be said to communicate a representation of Israel as dominating the war scene with its strategic moves along both the spatial and temporal dimensions, as intending to expand, as planning to continue its offensive until Hezbollah is neutralized, and as the side enjoying the upper hand in the war. In reference to Hezbollah’s *material actions*, the only verbs used are “seize” (“Hezbollah **seizes** Israel soldiers”), which belongs to the headline of the first news report covering the action that triggers the war, and “hit” (“Rockets **hit** Israeli city of Haifa”, “Israel **hit** by Hezbollah barrage”).

Whereas the negatively connoted *material action* “kill” is used in headlines four times in connection with Israel as the *Actor*, the *material action* “kill” affects Israeli participants on only one occasion (“Nine Israelis killed in Lebanon”) where Hezbollah is not explicitly mentioned as *Actor* but is inferable as *Actor*. In addition, the entities affected by Hezbollah’s *material actions* are on no occasion represented as human civilian participants, whereas they are represented as both civilian (three times) and neutral non-combatants (one time) when Israel is the responsible *Actor*. In addition, Israel is implicitly introduced as the *Actor* on one occasion where the *non-ergative – intransitive – material process* “die” is used in connection with civilian human victims.

Having said that, one needs to consider that reference to both Hezbollah and Israel as performers of the negatively connoted *material action* “kill” is quite low in the BBC headlines. Israel is ascribed the *material action* “kill” 4 times only out of 81 references to Israel, constituting 4.9% of the total frequency of reference to Israel in headlines, whereas Hezbollah is ascribed the *material action* “kill” one time only out of 23 references to Hezbollah, constituting 4.3% of the total frequency of reference to Hezbollah in headlines. Considering these quite low and roughly similar percentages of reference to both Israel and Hezbollah ascribed the *material action* “kill”, it could be argued that the BBC is providing a balanced coverage of the war and its events, by offering similar degrees of incrimination of Israel and Hezbollah and by distributing responsibility evenly between them. However, the disproportionality in casualties between the Lebanese and Israeli sides may suggest a stance which is pro-Israeli. Gaber et al. (2009: 246) point out that for every 10 Lebanese casualties there is roughly one Israeli casualty. The point here is that if one knows that there were 10 times more Lebanese casualties than there were Israeli ones, then one might judge that the BBC should give more acknowledgement of Israel’s agency and responsibility for human victims. Therefore, this low frequency of reference to human affected participants could be said to serve the purposes of hiding the Lebanese casualties and backgrounding Israel’s responsibility.

One lexical pattern of representation found in headlines involves reporting on the humanitarian aspect of the conflict in Lebanon, as is evident in reporting on difficulties facing displaced Lebanese and stranded foreigners, evacuation plans and efforts as well as obstacles and delays facing aid and relief efforts. Focusing attention on the difficulties facing displaced Lebanese and foreign nationals fleeing Lebanon as

well as their accounts can be seen in “mother and triplets flee Lebanon”, “Scots family try to flee Lebanon”, “ ‘trapped near the Israeli border’ ”, “Lebanon Britons speak of relief”, “ ‘their bodies litter the road’ ”, “thousands flee southern Lebanon” and “student describes Lebanon ordeal”. For example, in “ ‘their bodies litter the road’ ”, the text producer reports on an Israeli air raid that targeted Lebanese civilians while attempting to flee southern Lebanon. Emphasis is also laid on efforts exerted to evacuate foreign citizens from Lebanon in “at-a-glance: Lebanon evacuations”, “evacuation from Lebanon”, “Lebanon evacuation gathers pace”, “British Lebanon evacuations cease”, “Lebanon Irish relieved to be back”, “Sri Lankans to ‘stay in Lebanon’ ” and “Britons preparing to flee Lebanon”. Aid operations and the difficulties facing aid agencies in providing displaced Lebanese with humanitarian relief is found in “UN calls for aid truce in Lebanon”, “aid agencies’ fear over Lebanon”, “delays hit Lebanese relief effort” and “charity to help Lebanon refugees”. It is noteworthy that reporting on similar incidents involving Israelis or foreigners fleeing Israel or efforts to evacuate foreign nationals from Israel has not been equally found in headlines. It could be argued that this feature of representation incriminates Israel by implication as it depicts the situation in Lebanon as hazardous under the continuing Israeli bombardment and strikes, i.e. Lebanon is represented as being continually on the receiving end.

Reference to involved parties other than the two sides of the war is also worth noting. For example, when referring to the UN, the representation of the international organization is characterized by acknowledging its active role throughout the war period in trying to bring the war to an end (“**Annan** demands Lebanon ceasefire”, “UN calls for Lebanon peace force”, “UN calls for aid truce in Lebanon”, “UN hears

plea to amend resolution”, “UN vote backs Lebanon ceasefire”, “Leaders agree to UN truce timing”). On one occasion the text producer reports on a negative attitude on the part of Arabic press towards the UN (“Mid-East press sceptical on UN draft”). Whereas the text producer draws attention to Hezbollah’s positive reaction towards the UN decision (“Hezbollah ‘will observe UN truce’ ”), the text producer reports on mixed reactions on the part of Israel towards the UN decisions, as is evident in “Israel rejects UN aid truce call” and “Israel’s PM rules out **ceasefire**” as opposed to “Israeli cabinet backs **truce deal**” and “Israelis back border force plan”. The text producer does not report directly on the organization’s attitude towards Israel’s military operations in Lebanon, except for one occasion in which the text producer refers to such a reaction (“UN rights body backs Israel probe”). It is worth noticing that the lead accompanying the headline “UN warning on Mid-East war crimes” shows that the war crimes referred to are not restricted to Israel, as is evident in (“war crimes could have been committed in Lebanon, Israel and Gaza”).

Reference to the US (“US”, “Bush”, “Rice”) is also found on headlines. Whereas the text producer acknowledges the US’s attempts to send international peacekeeping force to Lebanon (“**Bush** aims for rapid Lebanon force”), the text producer also draws attention to the feelings of anger on the part of Arabic press towards the US (“Arabic press anger targets US”). The US mixed reactions towards Israel’s offensive is also brought into focus in “**Bush** backs Israel at divided G8” as opposed to “US ‘outrage’ over Israeli claims” and “**Bush** urges Israel to ‘limit harm’ ”. The US’s negative reaction towards Hezbollah is also implied in “**Bush** links Hezbollah and ‘plot’ ”. The use of scare quotes in the last examples may function to distance the text producer from the reported content.

Reference to UK (“Blair”, “Beckett”, “British Lebanon”, “Lebanon Britons”, “The Royal Navy”) is also found in headlines. Reference is made to the British Prime Minister Tony Blair and to the British Foreign Secretary Margret Beckett using their surnames. In some of these references the reported content (“**Blair** in ceasefire pressure call”, “**Blair** seeks Lebanon breakthrough”, “**Blair** confident of UN resolution”, “**Blair** urges ‘immediate ceasefire’ ”) may communicate a representation of the UK as seeking to stop the conflict. Two significant references are “**Blair** accuses Iran of arms supply” and “**Beckett** protest at weapons flight”. Whereas the former draws attention to Iran’s alleged close connections with Hezbollah, where Iran is the group’s main arms supplier, the latter provides the potential for inferring the US alleged close connections with Israel, where the US is equally Israel’s main arms supplier. Notice that in the latter headline no explicit reference is made to the US or Israel, resulting in concealing important information that might lead to potential difficulty for readers to recover the referents. It could be argued that in reporting on the British condemnation of supplying the two fighting countries with weapons, the BBC demonstrates its credibility and balanced reporting.

The text producer also brings into focus the British government’s efforts to evacuate its citizens from Lebanon (“**British** Lebanon evacuations cease”, “Lebanon **Britons** speak of relief”, “**Britons** preparing to flee Lebanon”). This preoccupation with British, and more generally UK, citizens in Lebanon on the part of the BBC could be said to reflect a commitment from the BBC towards those who fund it as well as an interest in British affairs, a preoccupation which is not equally discerned in the coverage of the war by Al-Jazeera. It could be argued that the reported content communicates a positive representation of the UK government as performing its

duties towards its citizens; but, more importantly, it depicts the situation in Lebanon as being hazardous, which may have the potential effect, for some readers, of incriminating Israel's military actions by implication.

Reference to Iran and Syria, who are known to be the main allies of Hezbollah, is also made in headlines ("Israel claims **Iran** link to crisis", "**Blair** accuses **Iran** of arms supply" "**Iran** and **Syria** applaud 'victory' ", "**Iran** leader's warning to Israel"), where the reported content provides the potential for inferring the alleged connections between Hezbollah and the two countries. Reference to Arabic countries (apart from the one made to Syria above), Arabic organizations or bodies, Arabs or any Arabic entities is rarely found in headlines. For example, in "**Arabic** press anger targets US" and "Press cool on **Arab** ministers meeting" reference is made to the Arabic press and its reaction towards Arab foreign ministers meeting. Reference to the Middle East is also made in headlines. On one occasion ("G8 blames **Mid-East** 'extremists' "), "**Mid-East**" is used in connection with the entity "extremists". On another occasion ("UN warning on **Mid-East** war crimes"), the text producer uses the general term "**Mid-East**" to indirectly refer to the more particular entities "Israel" and "Lebanon", as the accompanying lead shows, i.e. both Israel and Hezbollah are involved in committing war crimes. Emphasis is laid on regional press in "**Mid-East** press eyes Lebanon resolution", "**Mid-East** press sceptical on UN draft" and "press reflects **Middle East** turmoil". International powers' preoccupation with the conflict is reported on in "**Middle East** crisis dominates G8".

### 7.3. Analysis of BBC news reports leads

This section focuses on the analysis of representation in the leads of the BBC coverage of the 2006 war, which consists of 141 news reports.

#### 7.3.1. Representation of Hezbollah in BBC leads

Analyzing the representation of Hezbollah in the leads of the 141 news reports that constitute the BBC coverage shows that Hezbollah is referred to 89 times. Table 23 illustrates frequencies of reference to Hezbollah in the BBC leads in terms of participant roles and process types:

Participant role	Process	Frequency	
		HEZBOLLAH	other ref.
<i>Actor</i>	<i>material</i>	5	15
<i>indirect Actor</i>	<i>material</i>	9	7
<i>co-Actor</i>	<i>material</i>	14	0
<i>Sayer</i>	<i>verbal</i>	6	1
<i>Beneficiary</i>	<i>material</i>	1	0
<i>Senser</i>	<i>mental</i>	1	0
<i>Carrier</i>	<i>relational</i>	1	1
<i>Token/Identified/Identifier</i>	<i>relational</i>	2	2
<i>in a circumstance of location</i>	-	2	0
<i>Target</i>	<i>verbal</i>	1	1
<i>indirect Goal</i>	<i>material</i>	10	0
<i>Goal</i>	<i>material</i>	9	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>61</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Total number of references</b>		<b>89</b>	

23. Frequencies of reference to Hezbollah in the BBC leads: participant roles and process types

The following sections give some indicative examples of the different patterns of representation of Hezbollah noted when analyzing the BBC leads.

### 7.3.1.1. Hezbollah as *Actor* ascribed *material actions*

Analyzing the representation of Hezbollah in the BBC leads shows that the text producer assigns to Hezbollah the role of *Actor* ascribed *material actions* 20 times out of the 89 references to the group. Within this pattern of representation, Hezbollah (“a Hezbollah fighter”, “Hezbollah fighters”, “group”) is assigned the role of *Actor* ascribed *material actions* (“fire”, “launch”, “take part in”, “undergo”, “abide by”). Indicative examples are the following:

Israel continues its bombardment of Lebanon and **Hezbollah** fires rockets *into Israel* as the crisis precipitated by Hezbollah’s capture of two Israeli soldiers intensifies.

Israeli forces say they have seized the Lebanese border village of Maroun al-Ras, an apparent base used by Hezbollah to fire rockets *into Israel*.

The Israeli cabinet has approved an army plan to push deeper into Lebanon, to try to take control of areas used by Hezbollah to **launch** rockets *on Israel*.

**Hezbollah** fighters have launched more than 230 rockets from Lebanon, the biggest single-day barrage since the conflict began, Israeli officials say.

The Israeli army has released a video apparently showing a Hezbollah fighter admitting to taking part in a raid on Israel and undergoing training in Iran.

Hezbollah’s leader has said **his group** will abide by a ceasefire plan agreed at the UN to end fighting with Israel.

The inanimate entities “rockets”, “a raid” and “training” are not affected in any material sense by the *material actions*. In the first three leads the entities actually affected by Hezbollah’s *material actions* are introduced indirectly into the clause via

the intermediary of a preposition (“into Israel”, “on Israel”), functioning as a *circumstance of location*. The entity “a raid”, in the fifth lead, is best assigned the role of *Range*, as it specifies the domain of the *material process*. Within the same lead, the entity “Hezbollah fighters” seems to be (positively) affected by the *material action* “undergoing training”, rather than performing it. The entity “training” together with the *material action* “undergoing” can be collapsed into one *material action* “trained”, a feature of *material processes* with *Range* element (cf. Eggins, 2004: 218). Although the *material action* in “undergoing training” does not extend to any affected participant, it conveys, for some readers, a representation of Hezbollah as a potential threat, draws attention to the group’s relations with Iran and offers potential explanation for Israel’s military operations.

Notice the way the text producer in the first lead above represents Hezbollah’s *material action* in a participle clause (“precipitated by Hezbollah’s capture of two Israeli soldiers”) as the incident that triggers the crisis, which may have the effect of adding potential legitimation to Israel’s action in the main clause. Similarly, in the second lead the appositive clause “an apparent base used by Hezbollah to fire rockets into Israel” represents Hezbollah’s *material actions* as the reason for Israel’s action (“have seized”) in the initiating clause. In the fourth lead above Hezbollah’s *material action* in the initiating clause is represented as being “the biggest single-day barrage since the conflict began” in an *identifying relational process* where Hezbollah’s action is assigned the role of *Identified* or *Token*. This characterization of Hezbollah’s *material action* may potentially invite a representation of the group as forming a potential threat that should be neutralized. The text producer absolves her/himself

from the claims the reported content makes by attributing the content explicitly to a source (“Israeli officials”) other than the text producer.

Whereas in the above leads Hezbollah’s *material actions* do not affect the entities assigned the role of *Goal* in the strict physical sense, another pattern of representation involves ascribing to Hezbollah *material actions* (“have struck”, “could target”), occasionally nominalised (“defeat”, “rocket attacks”, “fighting”), that extend to inanimate entities belonging to Israel. Indicative examples are the following:

**Two rockets** have struck the Israeli city of Haifa. . . .

Tony Blair has accused Iran of supplying weapons to attack UK troops in Iraq, and of giving arms to Hezbollah so **it** could target Israel.

Syria and Iran have praised Hezbollah for what both describe as **the group’s** defeat of Israel in Lebanon.

Hezbollah’s leader has said his group will abide by a ceasefire plan agreed at the UN to end fighting with Israel.

In the first two leads, the entities (“the Israeli city of Haifa”, “Israel”) affected by Hezbollah’s *material actions* are introduced directly into the clause. When Hezbollah is ascribed *nominalised material actions*, the affected entities are introduced into the clause indirectly via a preposition (“the group’s defeat of Israel”, “Hezbollah’s rocket attacks on Israel”, “fighting with Israel”), assigned the role of *indirect Goal*. Notice the way the text producer draws attention to Hezbollah’s alleged close connections with Iran and Syria in the second and third leads. In the second lead above Hezbollah is also assigned the role of *Beneficiary* in “giving arms to Hezbollah”. The second

lead above reports on condemnation of Hezbollah on the part of some international powers, which can also be found in the following two leads:

US President George W Bush says **Hezbollah** and alleged UK air plot suspects share a “totalitarian ideology” they are seeking to spread.

The US president, in St Petersburg for the G8 summit, has insisted Israel is defending itself against terror and **Hezbollah** is the root of the crisis.

Whereas Hezbollah is assigned the role of *Carrier* in a *possessive attributive relational process* in the former lead, it is assigned the role of *Identified* or *Token* in an *identifying relational process* in the latter lead. The US President links Hezbollah with suspects in an alleged UK terror plot and identifies Hezbollah as being “the root of the crisis”. While source attribution is explicitly used in order to absolve the text producer from commitment to the claims made, the three leads may communicate, to some readers, a negative representation of Hezbollah.

The analysis shows that when Hezbollah is ascribed *material actions* that affect human participants, the affected entities are the two Israeli soldiers whose capture triggers the war on four occasions. Indicative examples are the following:

**Lebanese guerrillas** have captured two Israeli soldiers in a cross-border raid, triggering the first Israeli land incursion into the country since 2000.

**Hezbollah’s** capture of two Israeli soldiers last week was timed to divert attention from Tehran’s nuclear programme, the Israeli PM has claimed.

The leader of Lebanon’s Hezbollah militants has said **his group** will only give up two captured Israeli soldiers in a prisoner exchange.

The text producer in the first lead above, which belongs to the BBC first news report covering the war, represents Hezbollah's *material action* ("have captured two Israeli soldiers") in the initiating clause as the reason for Israel's reaction ("Israeli land incursion") in the expanding clause, i.e. Israel's action is represented as a consequence of Hezbollah's action.<sup>9</sup> The choice of the reporting verb "has claimed", in the second lead above, lessens the degree of certainty of the reported content and communicates the text producer's non-commitment to its truth. The reported content nonetheless may lead readers to focus on Hezbollah's connections with Iran.

Hezbollah is represented as the *Actor* ascribed the negatively connoted *material action* "kill" affecting human civilian participants on only one occasion in the BBC leads:

**Rockets** fired by Hezbollah militants in Lebanon have killed at least eight people and wounded dozens of others in the coastal Israeli city of Haifa.

Within this lead the entity "rockets" is assigned the role of *Actor* ascribed the two *material actions* "have killed" affecting the human civilian participants "eight people" and "wounded" affecting the human civilian participants "dozens of others". The choice of "dozens" and the indefinite quantifying adverb "at least", while absolving the text producer of responsibility for inaccuracy, implies a high number of victims.

### 7.3.1.2. Hezbollah as *indirect Actor* or *co-Actor*

Analyzing the representation of Hezbollah in the BBC leads reveals that Hezbollah is introduced into *material process* clauses as *indirect Actor* or as a *co-Actor* 30 times out of the 89 references to the group. One pattern of representation involves assigning to Hezbollah the role of *indirect Actor* ascribed *passive material actions* ("were

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<sup>9</sup> This lead is analyzed in section 8.3.1 in more detail.

seized”, “abducted”, “captured”, “will only be returned”, “used”, “was struck”, “fired”), occasionally *nominalized* (“the capture of”) or reduced to a *state* (“two captured”), via its inclusion within a PP. Indicative examples are the following:

Israel is imposing an air and sea blockade on Lebanon as part of a major offensive after two soldiers were seized by the militant group **Hezbollah**.

Israel is continuing an air, sea and land blockade on Lebanon as part of a major offensive to press for the release of two Israeli soldiers captured by **Hezbollah** militants. . . .

Israel has launched night air strikes on bridges and roads in southern Lebanon, as the search goes on for two soldiers seized by **Hezbollah** militants.

Israel is continuing to subject Lebanon to strikes by land, sea and air, following the capture of two Israeli soldiers by **Hezbollah** militants.

Israeli forces say they have seized the Lebanese border village of Maroun al-Ras, an apparent base used by **Hezbollah** to fire rockets into Israel.

The Israeli cabinet has approved an army plan to push deeper into Lebanon, to try to take control of areas used by **Hezbollah** to launch rockets on Israel.

Israel’s military says four servicemen are missing after one of its vessels off the Lebanese coast was struck by a **missile** fired by **Hezbollah** militants.

Rockets fired by **Hezbollah** militants in Lebanon have killed at least eight people and wounded dozens of others in the coastal Israeli city of Haifa.

In these leads the text producer foregrounds the more important pieces of information, e.g. the affected participants “two soldiers” assigned the role of *Goal*, the *nominalised*

*material processes* “the capture of two Israeli soldiers” and the appositive NP “an apparent base”, by shifting them to clause-initial position. The text producer simultaneously retains reference to the *Actor* (“the militant group Hezbollah”, “Hezbollah”, “Hezbollah militants”) responsible for the specified *material actions* in clause-final position, which is a position of thematic focus.

On nine occasions where Hezbollah is assigned the role of *indirect Actor* the role of *Goal* is assigned to the two Israeli soldiers captured by Hezbollah. In the first lead above the *enhancement* marked by the conjunction “after”, which signals temporal sequencing, represents Israel’s *material action* in the initiating clause as a consequence of Hezbollah’s *material action* in the second clause, which also applies to the use of “following” in “following the capture of two Israeli soldiers by Hezbollah militants” in the fourth lead above. Similarly, the infinitive clauses “to press for the release of two Israeli soldiers captured by Hezbollah militants” and “to try to take control of areas used by Hezbollah to launch rockets on Israel”, the *temporal enhancement* “as the search goes on for two soldiers seized by Hezbollah militants” and the appositive clause “an apparent base used by Hezbollah to fire rockets into Israel” offer the reason for Israel’s *material actions* in the initiating clauses. In the following lead reference to Hezbollah is omitted:

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert says the attacks on Lebanon will be kept up until two captured soldiers are freed.

Within the NP “two captured soldiers”, the entity “soldiers” is assigned the role of *Goal*, where the *material state* “captured” can be ascribed to the *Actor* Hezbollah. Although reference to Hezbollah is omitted from the clause, as shown in a rewording

such as “two soldiers captured by Hezbollah”, it can be retrieved on the basis of knowledge of the situational context.

The analysis shows that Hezbollah is assigned the role of *indirect Actor* ascribed a *material action* that affects human participants on only one occasion:

Nine Israeli soldiers have been killed in fierce clashes with Hezbollah militants in south Lebanon.

The performer of the negatively connoted *material action* “kill” which affects the human military participants “nine Israeli soldiers” is introduced into the clause only indirectly via a PP (“with Hezbollah militants”) within a PP (“in fierce clashes”). This structural distancing between agency and affliction could be said to have resulted in blurring the causal link.

Analyzing transitivity in the BBC leads reveals a predominant pattern of representation, found 14 times, that involves Hezbollah (“Hezbollah fighters”, “the Lebanese militant group, Hezbollah”, “Hezbollah forces”, “Hezbollah militants”, “militant group Hezbollah”) introduced, together with Israel (“Israeli troops”, “Israeli military”), indirectly into *material process* clauses via the rather formulaic PP “between Israel and Hezbollah”. Indicative examples are the following:

The UN Security Council has voted for a ceasefire plan to end the month-long *conflict* between Israel and **Hezbollah** militants in Lebanon.

Heavy *clashes* have been taking place in southern Lebanon between Israeli troops and **Hezbollah** fighters . . .

The UK has been evacuating British nationals from Lebanon amid continued *fighting* between Israel and **Hezbollah** forces in the south of the country.

*Hostilities* between Israel and **Hezbollah** militants in Lebanon must stop immediately, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan has said.

The Lebanese prime minister has called for an immediate ceasefire between Israel and **Hezbollah** militants, saying his country “has been torn to shreds”.

Some of the qualified nouns (“fighting”, “clashes”) can be easily interpreted as *nominalised material processes*, where the role of *co-Actor* can be assigned to both Israel and Hezbollah. However, role assigning is somehow more problematic and the interpretation of the qualified nouns as *nominalised material processes* is only done awkwardly in the case of other nouns (such as “ceasefire” and “truce”). If the noun “ceasefire” is to be analyzed as a process, it would encode the meaning “to stop fighting”; a *material process* within which each of Israel and Hezbollah would be assigned the role of *co-Actor*. In addition to blurring the causal link and distributing agency between Israel and Hezbollah, this textual strategy enables the text producer to shift the focus from the involved participants to the main action or event. For example, the *material process* “heavy clashes”, nominally worded, represents the more important information and is thus foregrounded by shifting it to a position of thematic focus. It is noteworthy that 9 out of these 14 references cover the ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah and related events and belong to news reports between the 6<sup>th</sup> and the 15<sup>th</sup> of August 2006, the period marking the end of the war.

In the following lead the “ongoing crisis”, assigned the role of *Identified*, is described as “involving Israel and its **Lebanese** and Palestinian **neighbours**”, assigned the role

of *Identifier* (cf. Halliday, 2004: 246), where the process “involving” is of the type *identifying possessive relational processes*:

The ongoing crisis involving Israel and its **Lebanese** and Palestinian **neighbours** continues to dominate the regional press, where there is little optimism it can be resolved speedily.

Notice that the relationship is an abstract one of *involvement*, rather than of possession, and is encoded as part of the meaning of the verb, i.e. as a process. The text producer does not represent either of the two sides of the war as aggressor or affected, similar to the role of *co-Actor* analyzed above.

### 7.3.1.3. Hezbollah as *Sayer* attributed *verbal actions*

The text producer assigns to Hezbollah the role of *Sayer* attributed *verbal action* on seven occasions. In the following lead the entity “Hezbollah’s leader” is assigned the role of *Sayer* where the reported content potentially communicates a positive representation of Hezbollah as willing to adhere to the UN ceasefire decision:

**Hezbollah’s** leader has said his group will abide by a ceasefire plan agreed at the UN to end fighting with Israel.

By contrast, the other six occurrences of Hezbollah as the *Sayer* may communicate a negative representation of Hezbollah in varying ways. Indicative examples are the following:

**Hezbollah** leader Hassan Nasrallah has promised “open war” against Israel, in an address broadcast shortly after his Beirut offices were bombed by Israel.

The leader of Lebanon’s militant **Hezbollah** has said two captured Israeli soldiers will only be returned through talks and a prisoner exchange.

The leader of Lebanon's **Hezbollah** militants has said his group will only give up two captured Israeli soldiers in a prisoner exchange.

Two rockets have struck the Israeli city of Haifa, hours after a threat by the militant Lebanese group **Hezbollah**.

The reported content draws readers' attention to the group's unwillingness to stop fighting, its rejection to return the captured soldiers except through prisoner exchange and its military operations against Israel. It is worth noticing that the promise of "open war" in the first lead above is represented as a consequence of Israel's bombing of the headquarters of the group's leader, which is also reported on in another lead "Israel has hit the Beirut offices of Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah, but the militant was unhurt in the raid, **his group** says".

In the following lead the entity "Hezbollah fighter" is assigned the role of *Sayer* attributed the *verbal action* "admitting" within the non-finite clause:

The Israeli army has released a video apparently showing a **Hezbollah** fighter admitting to taking part in a raid on Israel and undergoing training in Iran.

Assigning the reported content of the elaborating clause to some outer source ("a video" released by the Israeli army) absolves the text producer from being read as asserting the claim made. The reported content allegedly attributed to the Hezbollah fighter, as part of the Israeli video, provides the potential for inferring the alleged close connections between the group and Iran.

#### 7.3.1.4. Hezbollah as *Target of verbal actions*

Hezbollah is assigned the role of *Target* associated with *verbal action* two times. On one occasion, the text producer depicts Hezbollah as the *Target* of the *verbal action* “have praised”, attributed to the *Sayer* Syria and Iran:

Syria and Iran have praised **Hezbollah** for what both describe as the group’s defeat of Israel in Lebanon.

The text producer’s choice to embed the clause “what both describe as” within the *circumstance of cause* that gives the reason for the *verbal action* explicitly attributes the reported content to its source. The lead draws attention to Hezbollah’s alleged links to both Syria and Iran, as found elsewhere in the BBC coverage of the war.

In the following lead, the entity “extremist forces” is assigned the role of *Target of the verbal action* “have blamed” attributed to the *Sayer* “Leaders of the G8 nations”:

Leaders of the G8 nations have blamed **extremist forces** for the latest crisis in the Middle East, but called on Israel to end military operations.

It is noteworthy that the word “extremists” is used only in this lead and its accompanying headline (“G8 blames Mid-East ‘extremists’ ”) in the whole coverage of the BBC of the war. Further reading of the news report text and based on the situational context, the expression “extremist forces” can extend to include Hezbollah; however, avoiding direct reference to the group allows the possibility of not directly attaching the label to the group. Attributing the reported content to leaders of the G8 nations who, one might claim, have a high valuation in the BBC’s ideological system, together with the use of the referring expression “extremist forces”, may have the effect of further incriminating Hezbollah by implication.

### 7.3.1.5. Hezbollah as *indirect Goal*

Another pattern of representation, found 10 times, involves introducing Hezbollah or entities that belong to the group (“militants”, “strongholds”, “cites”, “fighting capacity”) into the process as an *indirect Goal* via inclusion within PPs, that mostly function as qualifiers for preceding nouns (“campaign”, “offensive”, “air strikes”, “operations”, “clashes”, “destruction”). Indicative examples are the following:

Israel has warned residents of southern Lebanon that it will escalate operations there as it continues its *campaign against Hezbollah* militants.

Many Israeli commentators remain adamant that the *offensive against Hezbollah* must continue despite the deaths of nine soldiers in Lebanon. . . .

Israel has carried out fresh *air strikes on Hezbollah* strongholds in southern Lebanon overnight.

Nine Israeli soldiers have been killed in fierce *clashes with Hezbollah* militants in south Lebanon.

Israeli warplanes have struck **at** suspected **Hezbollah** sites in Sidon and the capital Beirut.

Some of the qualified nouns such as “strikes”, “clashes” and “destruction” can be analyzed as *nominalized material processes* that extend to the entities within the PPs, which are assigned the role of *indirect Goal*. Attributing the reported content of three of these leads to sources other than the text producer (“Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert”, “many Israeli commentators” and “commentators”) again absolves the text producer from commitment to the claims made. The first lead may pragmatically invite a representation of Israel as being considerate not to cause casualties. In the

second lead, the text producer seems to be critical of the reported content of the projected clause attributed to the Israeli commentators, as evident in the concession “despite the deaths of nine soldiers in Lebanon the previous day”. Simultaneously, the text producer pairs the reference made to Israel’s offensive against Hezbollah with reference to Israel’s casualties, which may have the effect of balancing Israel’s agency.

Hezbollah occurs as part of PPs that function as *circumstances of location* that specify the place of the processes in the main clause, rather than being directly or indirectly affected by the process, in two cases. An example is the following:

A major Israeli operation is under way in the Baalbek area in the Bekaa valley  
- a **Hezbollah** stronghold in north-east Lebanon - Lebanese officials say.

An appositive noun group (“a Hezbollah stronghold in north-east Lebanon”) is used to introduce the entity “Hezbollah stronghold” as the location of military operations, rather than the direct *Goal of material actions*. Although Hezbollah is devoid of any participant role and is associated with no action, one might suggest that the *appositive expansion* may provide an explanation, implicitly expressed, of the action referred to in the main clause. Israel’s operation in Baalbek, a civilian area, is because this area is a Hezbollah stronghold.

### 7.3.1.6. Hezbollah as *Goal in material processes*

One pattern of representation, found 10 times out of the 89 references to Hezbollah, involves assigning to Hezbollah the role of *Goal* affected by *material actions* ascribed to Israel, with the exception of two occurrences. The affected entities are represented as inanimate four times:

Israel has hit the Beirut offices of **Hezbollah** leader Hassan Nasrallah, but the militant was unhurt in the raid, his group says.

Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah has promised “open war” against Israel, in an address broadcast shortly after **his Beirut offices** were bombed by Israel.

Israel is calling up thousands of reserve troops in the third week of its attempt to crush **Hezbollah** - and retrieve two captured soldiers (...)

Australian Prime Minister John Howard has said **Hezbollah** must be disarmed if the UN truce in Lebanon is to last.

The entities affected by Israel’s *material actions* (“has hit”, “were bombed”, “crush”) are inanimate and belong to Hezbollah. Notice that the *extending clause* in the first lead may have the effect of weakening Israel’s *material action* by showing that the aims of the raid were not achieved. In this lead the entity “the militant” could be assigned the role of *Carrier* having the *Attribute* “unhurt” in an *attributive relational process*. Similarly, in the third lead above the *circumstantial element* offers an explanation for Israel’s *material action* in the initiating clause, as is evident in “and retrieve two captured soldiers”. The last lead above brings into focus the issue of disarming Hezbollah, which can also be found in “crucial Lebanese cabinet talks on disarming **Hezbollah** fighters in southern Lebanon under a UN-brokered ceasefire have been put off” where the entity “Hezbollah fighters” is assigned the role of *Goal* affected by the *material action* “disarming”. The *material actions* in both leads represent future actions that have not occurred yet. The choice of the nominal form “disarming” and the passive form “must be disarmed” results on the textual level in concealing the identity of the *Actor*. While attributing the reported content to sources other than the text producer, namely the Lebanese Cabinet and the Australian PM,

potentially absolves the text producer from being read as asserting the claims made, it simultaneously conveys a representation of Hezbollah as a potential threat; hence the need to be disarmed, from both inside and outside Lebanon.

Whereas in the above leads inanimate entities are represented as the *Goal*, human military participants (“militants”, “fighters”) are represented as affected by *material actions* (“are fighting”, “battled”, “has seized”, “clashed with”, “have been killed”, “disarming”) on six occasions. Indicative examples are the following:

Israeli soldiers are fighting **Hezbollah** militants inside the Lebanese border, Israeli military officials say.

The Israeli army says it has seized a number of **Hezbollah** fighters in a raid on Baalbek, a town deep inside Lebanon.

Israeli jets have launched fresh attacks on Lebanon as troops battled **Hezbollah** fighters in the south.

Two Israeli soldiers and a **Hezbollah** militant have been killed in fierce fighting in southern Lebanon.

Notice the use of source attribution in the first two leads which may serve to absolve the text producer from being read as asserting the claims made. One might claim that the *material actions* “fighting”, “battled” and “clashed with” represent Hezbollah as being on an equal footing with Israel, particularly when compared to *material actions* such as “hit” and “strike”, where agency and affliction could be clearly assigned. It is worth noticing that the last lead above represents the only occasion in leads where the negatively connoted *material action* “kill” affects human participants belonging to Hezbollah. However, the text producer pairs Hezbollah’s affliction with Israel’s

affliction and omitted explicit reference to the performers of the *material action*. It could be contextually inferred that affliction is reciprocally inflicted. In this way responsibility could be said to be shared and blame to be equally distributed.

### 7.3.2. Hezbollah in the BBC leads: summary

Hezbollah is referred to 89 times in the leads of the 141 news reports that constitute the BBC coverage. Table 24 groups the participant roles assigned to Hezbollah under a number of distinct categories based on the ways Hezbollah is introduced into the clause from a transitivity point of view:

Overall category	Participant roles	Frequency	%
performer of action	7 times <i>Sayer</i>	57	64.0
	20 times <i>Actor</i>		
	16 times <i>indirect Actor</i>		
	14 times <i>co-Actor</i>		
benefits from action	<i>Beneficiary</i>	1	1.1
part of a relation	2 times <i>Carrier in an attributive relational process</i>	6	6.7
	3 times <i>Identified in an identifying relational process</i>		
	1 time <i>Identifier in a possessive relational process</i>		
part of a <i>circumstance of location</i>	No clear role assigned	2	2.2
undergoes action	<i>Senser</i>	1	1.1
affected by action	10 times <i>Goal</i>	22	24.7
	10 times <i>indirect Goal</i>		
	2 times <i>Target</i>		

24. Representation of Hezbollah in the BBC leads: performer of action or affected by action

Hezbollah is represented as the performer of action 57 times constituting 64.0% of the total frequency of reference to Hezbollah in leads. The analysis reveals that Hezbollah is ascribed negatively connoted *material actions* affecting human participants on 15 occasions in leads. Whereas the affected participants are military belonging to Israel

on 14 occasions, the role of *Goal* is assigned to human civilian participants on only one occasion. The analysis shows that 13 out of these 14 references designate the same entity in the real world; the two Israeli soldiers abducted by Hezbollah. The *material actions* ascribed to Hezbollah on these 13 occasions are quasi-synonymic (“capture”, “seize”, “abduct”). What is worth noticing is that the negatively connoted *material action* “kill” is ascribed to Hezbollah on only two occasions.

Alternatively, when Hezbollah is represented as the performer of *material actions*, the analysis reveals a number of sub-patterns of representation, as illustrated in table 25:

<b>Textual strategy</b>	
1	Hezbollah is introduced as an <i>indirect Actor</i> ascribed negatively connoted <i>material actions</i> , which are passive in voice, that affect military human participants belonging to Israel. The text producer shifts the Israeli affected participants to clause-initial position while retaining reference to the responsible <i>Actor</i> in clause-final position, where both are positions of thematic focus.
2	Hezbollah is introduced as an <i>indirect Actor</i> ascribed the negatively connoted <i>material action</i> “kill” affecting human military participants on one occasion (“nine Israeli soldiers have been killed”). The voice is passive and reference to Hezbollah is made indirectly in a PP within a PP which results in weakening the causal link.
3	Hezbollah, together with Israel, are introduced into the clause sharing the role of co- <i>Actor</i> where the <i>material actions</i> are structurally nominalised. The text producer’s choice to assign each of Israel and Hezbollah the role of co- <i>Actor</i> ascribed the same <i>material action</i> enables her/him to avoid attributing credit or blame to one side rather than the other.
4	Hezbollah is directly introduced as the <i>Actor</i> ascribed <i>material actions</i> that do not affect the <i>Goal</i> in the strict sense of affliction. The entities affected by the <i>material actions</i> are introduced into the process indirectly via the intermediary of a preposition.
5	Hezbollah is introduced directly as the <i>Actor</i> ascribed negatively connoted <i>material actions</i> affecting human participants only five times, where the affected participants are military belonging to Israel. On four out of these five occasions the role of <i>Goal</i> is assigned to the two Israeli soldiers captured by Hezbollah.
6	The text producer frequently utilizes the logical relations between clauses by employing expansions to represent Hezbollah’s <i>material actions</i> as the reason for <i>material actions</i> ascribed to Israel.
7	Hezbollah is ascribed the negatively connoted <i>material action</i> “kill” affecting human civilian victims on only one occasion (“have killed at least eight people and wounded dozens of others”). Reference to Hezbollah is made in an embedded imperfective clause rather than in the main clause.

25. Features of the representation of Hezbollah as a performer of action in the BBC leads

One representational feature of Hezbollah in leads which is worth commenting on is that the text producer assigns to the group the role of *Sayer* attributed *verbal action* on only seven occasions (7.9%). This frequency of occurrence is the lowest in the headlines and leads of the two selected news outlets, reflecting the fact that Hezbollah is not one of the accessed voices in the BBC. The reported content associated with these *verbal actions* represents Hezbollah as a potential threat to Israel and draws attention to the group's military capabilities. The reported content on one occasion sheds light on the alleged close connections between Hezbollah and Iran. One lead reports on Hezbollah's willingness to comply with the UN ceasefire plan, which may communicate to readers a positive representation of the group.

The analysis reveals an overall pattern involving Hezbollah represented as a receiver of actions. When Hezbollah is represented as the *Target* of *verbal actions*, the text producer attributes the content explicitly to some external source so as not to be identified with what is being reported. Whereas one of the references to Hezbollah as the *Target* focusses attention on Hezbollah's alleged close links to both Syria and Iran, the other lead reports on the way international powers are critical of "extremist forces", where this negatively connoted categorization can contextually extend to include Hezbollah. The analysis shows that Hezbollah's alleged close connections with Iran and Syria and international condemnation of the group constitute two recurrent themes cutting across most of the representational patterns found in the BBC leads.

When represented as affected by *material action* a number of sub-patterns of representation are discerned, as table 26 illustrates:

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### Textual strategy

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- 1 Hezbollah is represented as the *Goal* affected by a negatively connoted *material action* ascribed to Israel on six occasions. On the only occasion in which the negatively connoted *material action* “kill” is used, the text producer pairs Hezbollah’s affliction with Israel’s, i.e. the *material action* extends to Hezbollah and Israel simultaneously.
  - 2 Hezbollah or military participants belonging to the group are introduced into *material process* clauses, occasionally passive in voice, affected by the *material action* “disarm” which is not ascribed to any explicit *Actor* in the clause on two occasions.
  - 3 Hezbollah is also introduced into *material process* clauses as an *indirect Goal* via the intermediary of a preposition, where the group is affected by negatively connoted *material actions* which are predominantly nominal in form. Again, distancing is achieved through the use of source attribution.
  - 4 Hezbollah is reduced to the state of a place introduced within a *circumstance of location* specifying the place of military operations, rather than presented as an affected entity.
  - 5 The text producer occasionally pairs reference to Hezbollah as an affected entity with reference to Israel’s affected participants. The text producer also employs different types of *expansions* that may serve the purpose of weakening, explaining or balancing Israel’s *material actions* within the same lead.
  - 6 Most of the *material actions* affecting Hezbollah are introduced as part of expansions or projecting clauses, rather than the main clause, which might suggest that this is the way the text producer wants readers to perceive these actions; they represent secondary less important news.
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26. Features of the representation of Hezbollah as an affected participant in the BBC leads

### 7.3.3. Representation of Israel in BBC leads

The analysis of representation of Israel in the leads of the BBC shows that Israel is referred to 273 times in the 141 leads constituting the body of the selected BBC news reports coverage of the 2006 war. The analysis reveals a number of patterns used to represent Israel to the readers which frame Israel in a systematic way through assigning particular roles to Israel and associating such roles with certain process types. The following sections aim to outline those representational patterns.

Table 27 illustrates frequencies of reference to Israel in the BBC leads in terms of participant roles and process types:

Participant role	Process	Frequency		
		ISRAEL	ISRAELI	other ref.
<i>Actor</i>	<i>material</i>	22	19	64
<i>indirect Actor</i>	<i>material</i>	3	5	5
<i>co-Actor</i>	<i>material</i>	12	2	0
<i>Sayer</i>	<i>verbal</i>	11	11	7
<i>Senser</i>	<i>mental</i>	4	3	1
<i>Behaver</i>	<i>behavioural</i>	0	0	1
<i>Phenomenon</i>	<i>mental</i>	0	1	2
<i>Carrier/Attribute</i>	<i>relational</i>	1	5	2
<i>Identifier</i>	<i>relational</i>	1	0	1
<i>Beneficiary</i>	<i>material</i>	2	0	1
<i>in a circumstance</i>	-	11	3	1
<i>Receiver</i>	<i>verbal</i>	2	1	1
<i>Target</i>	<i>verbal</i>	1	3	7
<i>indirect Goal</i>	<i>material</i>	11	6	4
<i>Goal</i>	<i>material</i>	3	7	26
<b>Total</b>		<b>84</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>123</b>
<b>Total frequency</b>			<b>273</b>	

27. Representation of Israel in the BBC leads: participant roles and process types

### 7.3.3.1. Israel as *Actor* ascribed *material actions*

Israel is assigned the role of *Actor* ascribed *material actions* 105 times in leads. The following sections illustrate the main features of the representation of Israel as the *Actor* in leads.

#### a. Israel's *material actions* do not extend to another entity

One sub-pattern of representation involves ascribing to Israel (“troops and tanks”, “Israeli attacks”, “Israel’s military offensive”, “the offensive”, “the government”, “the bombardment”) the *material action* “continue”, occasionally reduced to a state (“continuing”), and occasionally the *material actions* “begin”, “gather”, which do not

extend to an affected participant in the *material process* clause, i.e. *intransitive material actions*. Illustrating examples are the following:

As **Israeli** attacks on Lebanon *continue*, anger in the Arabic press is largely focused on the United States.

Thousands of foreign nationals and Lebanese holding dual nationality have been evacuated from Lebanon as **Israel's** military offensive against Hezbollah *continues*.

Delivering humanitarian relief to south Lebanon is becoming increasingly difficult because of *continuing* **Israeli** bombardment, aid agencies have warned.

An Israeli air strike has killed at least 18 Lebanese civilians, including women and children, who were fleeing southern border areas. It is the deadliest single attack since the **bombardment** began on Wednesday. . . .

Israel has carried out air strikes and small-scale incursions into Lebanon, as **troops and tanks** gather on the border.

Israel has called up thousands of reserve troops and told civilians to quit southern Lebanon immediately, amid threats of a large-scale **incursion**.

Marianne Abbas is a US citizen whose husband is Lebanese. . . She told the BBC what life was like amid the **Israeli** bombings.

It is worth noticing that these *material actions* are often of happening rather than doing and signal a temporal dimension of the process.<sup>10</sup> The nominal forms “attacks”,

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<sup>10</sup> For further discussion on *material processes*, see section 5.4.1.

“bombardment”, “bombings”, “ground offensive”, “air campaign”, “incursion” and “the search” could be interpreted as *nominalised material processes* ascribed to Israel, where the entities affected by the specified *material actions* are predominantly concealed and occasionally introduced indirectly to the clause within PPs (“on Lebanon”, “against Hezbollah”, “for two soldiers”). In the third lead above, the complex preposition “because of” within the *circumstantial element of cause* can be interpreted as a minor process, such as “which is caused by”, where the NP “Israeli bombardment” functions as an *indirect Actor*. The lead focuses attention on the intensity of Israel’s military offensive and its potential negative effects on delivering aid supplies.

#### **b. Israel’s *material actions* do not materially affect the *Goal***

Another pattern of representation involves ascribing to Israel *material actions* that do not affect the entities assigned the role of *Goal* in the sense of having something physical done to them. In some cases the predicates ascribed to Israel signal a temporal (“continue”, “end”, “resume”, “stop”, “carry out”, “launch”, “suspension”), spatial (“extend”, “widen”, “expand”, “press on”) or some other (“escalate”, “intensify”) dimension of the *material process*. Examples are the following:

Israel has warned residents of southern Lebanon that **it** *will escalate* operations there as **it** *continues* its campaign against Hezbollah militants.

**Israel** *has extended* its air campaign to northernmost Lebanon. . . .

**Israel** *has expanded* its bombardment of Lebanon, attacking a large number of targets across the country.

The Israeli cabinet has agreed *to widen* the country's ground offensive against Hezbollah in southern Lebanon.

**Israeli** aircraft *have resumed* attacks on the Lebanese capital, Beirut. . . .

**Israel** *has intensified* its attacks on Lebanon as **jets** *launched* fresh strikes on Beirut airport, the road to the Syrian capital and a power plant.

**Israel** *has carried out* air strikes and small-scale incursions into Lebanon. . . .

Again, the entities (“campaign”, “operations”, “offensive”, “bombardment”, “strikes”, “blockade”, “attacks”) assigned the role of *Goal* can be interpreted as *material processes*, which are expressed nominally, with the verb signalling the temporal or spatial dimension of the process. Generally speaking, almost all of these leads may communicate, to some readers, a representation of Israel as planning to widen and continue its offensive and also as dominating the war scene.

Occasionally the roles of *Actor* and *Goal* are both assigned to entities belonging to Israel which has the effect of weakening the impact of the *material action*. Indicative examples are the following:

**Israel** *is withdrawing* its ambassador to Venezuela as a row grows between the two countries over the war in Lebanon.

Israeli commentators take Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert to task for suggesting that **a military victory** in Lebanon *would give a boost to* his plan to secure the country's borders. . . .

The US president, in St Petersburg for the G8 summit, has insisted **Israel** *is defending* itself against terror and Hezbollah is the root of the crisis.

Israel has approved the call-up of thousands of fresh reservists *to boost* its military campaign in Lebanon.

The *material actions*, ascribed to Israel, do not affect the entities assigned the role of *Goal* physically, as in “is withdrawing its ambassador”, “failing Israel”, “defending itself”, “boost its military campaign” and “give a boost to his plan”. The reported content in the second lead above draws attention to the criticism facing the Israeli government and army on the part of the Israeli media, which constitutes a recurrent pattern in the BBC leads. Reporting on the varying positions of the media in both Israel and the Middle East could be said to be an indication of the BBC professional journalism. Given context and background knowledge, the third lead may lead readers to focus on Israel’s alleged close connections with the US as well as the US adverse attitude towards Hezbollah.

The same lack of affliction as regards the entities assigned the role of *Goal* can also be noted elsewhere where the predicates (“impose”, “support”, “release”, “avoid”, “move towards”) express *material processes* which are not necessarily concrete or physical, but can also involve abstract doings or happenings (cf. Halliday, 1994: 111). Indicative examples are the following:

**Israel** *is imposing* an air and sea blockade on Lebanon as part of a major offensive after two soldiers were seized by the militant group Hezbollah.

Israel has said it supports the idea of a new international force in south Lebanon. . . .

Whereas the entities assigned the role of *Goal* (“an air and sea blockade”, “the idea”, “a video”, “defeat”, “civilian casualties”, “peace”) have nothing material done to

them, the entities affected by the *material actions* are occasionally introduced into the clause indirectly via PPs (“on Lebanon”).

In almost all of the sub-patterns analyzed above one can notice that the *material actions* ascribed to Israel generally express a temporal or a spatial dimension of the process. The entities assigned the role of *Goal* are mostly inanimate and are not affected by the specified *material actions* in the normal physical sense. The entities affected by the specified *material actions* are presented indirectly to the process via a PP.

### c. Israel as *Actor* in metaphorically expressed *material process* clauses

Another sub-pattern of representation involves ascribing to Israel processes which, though encoded as *material*, metaphorically signal other process types. For example, in the following lead, although the process “will find itself in limbo” is encoded as material, it is used metaphorically to denote a process of the type *circumstantial attributive relational*:

. . . And there is also criticism of Wednesday’s international conference in Rome, with one commentator expressing concern that **Israel** *will find* itself in limbo as “no-one knows what to do”.

A possible rewording could be “Israel will be in limbo”, where the denoted meaning could be close to “Israel will be in a state of uncertainty”. Although the *Carrier* Israel is attributed a *mental state* (“in limbo”), the outward material wording (“find”) might convey a process rather than a state.<sup>11</sup> The content of the *material process* clause, which is attributed to a source other than the text producer, implicitly communicates

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<sup>11</sup> In “Israel will be in limbo”, the process could be equally read as a *mental process* where the *Attribute* “in limbo” has become a metaphorical expression signalling a *mental state*.

criticism of Israel's performance and decisions in the war, which can be seen elsewhere in the BBC reporting on the war. Within the leads of the BBC, one can find similar cases where processes encoded as material ones, such as "are toying with" and "had set out", can be interpreted metaphorically as *mental processes of cognition*:

. . . while an Iranian daily says **Israel** and the US are "toying with the international rules". . . .

The outward material wording depicts Israel as the *Actor* ascribed *material actions* extending to a *Goal* ("international rules", "objectives"), whereas the implied mental meaning represents Israel as the *Senser* undergoing *mental processes*, e.g. "toying with" can imply "amusing oneself". Elsewhere ("Prime Minister Ehud Olmert failed to achieve the objectives that he had himself set out"), the process "had set out" can be better interpreted as a *cognitive mental process* based on the abstract nature of the entity "objectives" and the dominant cognitive aspect of the process. One feature common to this pattern is the distancing achieved through source attribution ("one commentator", "an Iranian daily") and the use of quotes occasionally to signal attribution. This explicit source attribution could be due to the explicit criticism targeted at Israel in these leads.<sup>12</sup>

#### **d. Israel's *material actions* extend to inanimate entities**

Another pattern of representation (found 28 times) involves Israel represented as the *Actor* ascribed *transitive active material actions* ("hit", "strike", "bomb", "seize", "attack", "continue bombing", "continuing to subject", "enter", "crush", "keep control over", "take control of") that extend to inanimate entities, both civilian ("building", "the Lebanese border village of Maroun al-Ras", "a large number of targets",

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<sup>12</sup> Source attribution functions depending on "the ideological 'valuation' " of the source in the text producer's ideology (Kress, 1983: 136).

“Lebanon”, “an area in southern Lebanon”), military (“the Beirut offices of Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah”, “suspected Hezbollah sites”, “Hezbollah”) and neutral non-combatant (“a United Nations observation post”) belonging to different sides. Indicative examples are the following:

**Israel** *has hit* the Beirut offices of Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah, but the militant was unhurt in the raid, his group says.

**Israeli** warplanes *have struck* at suspected Hezbollah sites in Sidon and the capital Beirut.

**Israel** *would not have bombed* a building in the Lebanese village of Qana on Sunday had it known civilians were inside, a military statement says.

Israeli forces say **they** *have seized* the Lebanese border village of Maroun al-Ras, an apparent base used by Hezbollah to fire rockets into Israel.

The Israeli cabinet has approved an army plan to push deeper into Lebanon, *to try to take control of* areas used by Hezbollah to launch rockets on Israel.

Israel has expanded its bombardment of Lebanon, *attacking* a large number of targets across the country.

Details of the circumstances in which the **Israeli** air force *bombed* a United Nations observation post in south Lebanon. . . .

Israel is calling up thousands of reserve troops in the third week of its attempt *to crush* Hezbollah - and retrieve two captured soldiers. . . .

Notice that in almost all of the above leads the text producer employs different types of *expansions* that may have the effect of explaining (“an apparent base used by

Hezbollah to fire rockets into Israel”), weakening (“but the militant was unhurt in the raid”) or balancing (“used by Hezbollah to launch rockets on Israel”) Israel’s *material actions* within the same leads. Occasionally, within this pattern the *material actions* ascribed to Israel are structurally *nominalised* or realized nominally (“the destruction”, “the offensive”, “it attacks”, “the bombing”, “its bombardment”, “strikes”). Examples are the following:

Israel has intensified its **attacks** on Lebanon. . . .

. . . . After **the bombing** of Beirut’s international airport. . . .

Israel has expanded its **bombardment** of Lebanon. . . .

Israeli aircraft have resumed attacks on the Lebanese capital, Beirut, after a lull of several days, with early morning **strikes** on a southern suburb.

A human rights group says the **Israeli** air strike on Qana that killed 54 civilians is a “war crime”.

In such cases the inanimate affected entities are introduced indirectly within PPs (“of Hezbollah’s fighting capacity”, “against Hezbollah”, “on Lebanon”, “of Beirut’s international airport”, “on a southern suburb”, “on an observation post”, “on Qana”).

#### **e. Israel’s *material actions* affect animate entities**

Within this sub-pattern, agency is explicitly ascribed to Israel (“Israeli commandos”, “Israeli soldiers”, “the Israeli army”, “troops”, “an Israeli air strike”, “Israeli air force”), ascribed *transitive material actions* (“have clashed with”, “are fighting”, “has seized”, “battled”, “retrieve”), occasionally expressed as a nominal form (“the release”, “its campaign”, “fierce clashes”), that physically affect human military

participants belonging to Hezbollah on six occasions. Indicative examples are the following:

**Israeli** commandos *have clashed* with Hezbollah fighters during a raid on the southern Lebanese city of Tyre.

**Israeli** soldiers *are fighting* Hezbollah militants inside the Lebanese border, Israeli military officials say.

Israeli jets have launched fresh attacks on Lebanon as **troops** *battled* Hezbollah fighters in the south.

The Israeli army says **it** *has seized* a number of Hezbollah fighters in a raid on Baalbek, a town deep inside Lebanon.

Israel has warned residents of southern Lebanon that it will escalate operations there as it continues **its campaign** against Hezbollah militants.

The participants affected by Israel's *material actions* are military belonging to Hezbollah ("Hezbollah fighters" and "Hezbollah militants"). In the first three leads, although Hezbollah fighters and militants are assigned the role of *Goal* in the clause as representation, the lexical choice of the verbs "clash with", "are fighting" and "battled" may have the effect of representing both sides, i.e. Israeli commandos and Hezbollah fighters, as equal, i.e. as two forces meeting in the battle field – thus having the effect of weakening Israel's agency. In the first lead in particular, one might argue that the role assigned to both Israeli commandos and Hezbollah fighters could be one of *co-Actor* sharing the responsibility, rather than *Actor* and *Goal*.

It is worth noticing that on five occasions Israel's *material actions* extend to participants belonging to Israel itself. Examples are the following:

Israel is calling up thousands of reserve troops in the third week of its attempt to crush Hezbollah - and *retrieve* two captured soldiers. . . .

**Israel** has massed soldiers and tanks on the border with Lebanon. . . .

Israel says **it** has tripled the number of its troops in southern Lebanon in an expanded offensive. . . .

In the first lead the reported content implicitly provides explanation for Israel's *material actions*. The three leads provide the potential for inferring Israel's readiness to continue and widen its offensive, as represented in summoning reserve troops and massing soldiers and tanks on the Israel-Lebanon borders.

The following ten leads represent the only occasions in the BBC coverage of the war where the text producer *directly* introduces Israel as the *Actor* ascribed the negatively connoted *transitive material action* "kill" affecting explicitly mentioned human victims ("at least 17 Lebanese civilians", "at least 18 Lebanese civilians", "at least 23 people", "at least 14 people, including nine soldiers", "four of them", "four UN peacekeepers", "54 civilians", "at least 54 people - including many children", "at least 26 people", "about 20", "more than 40 civilians"):

An **Israeli** air raid *has killed* at least 17 Lebanese civilians who were fleeing southern border areas.

An **Israeli** air strike *has killed* at least 18 Lebanese civilians, including women and children, who were fleeing southern border areas. . . .

**Israeli** air raids *have killed* at least 23 people in southern Lebanon hours after Israel warned that the area would come under further heavy attack.

Israel has extended its air campaign to northernmost Lebanon, *killing* at least 14 people, including nine soldiers, in the port of Abdeh near Tripoli.

Details of the circumstances in which the Israeli air force bombed a United Nations observation post in south Lebanon, *killing* four UN peacekeepers have begun to emerge.

UN peacekeepers in south Lebanon contacted Israeli troops 10 times before an **Israeli** bomb *killed* four of them, an initial UN report says.

A human rights group says the Israeli air strike on Qana **that** *killed* 54 civilians is a “war crime”.

Protests have flared across the Muslim world against Israel’s air strike on Qana, Lebanon, **which** *killed* at least 54 people - including many children.

An **Israeli** air strike near Lebanon's north-eastern border with Syria *has killed* at least 26 people and injured about 20, Lebanese officials have said.

Lebanon’s prime minister has said only one person was killed in an Israeli air strike **that** earlier he said *had killed* more than 40 civilians.

The affected participants are both civilian (“civilians”, “people”, “women”, “children”), neutral/non-combatants (“UN peacekeepers”) and military (“nine soldiers”). The choice of the categorization devices “civilians” and “people” encourages readers to focus not only on Israel’s agency and responsibility but on moral considerations and international war conventions concerning the killing of

civilians. The first two leads have the date July the 15<sup>th</sup> and report on the same incident, where the second lead seems to offer an update on the first. In the third lead, the *temporal enhancement* marked by the temporal marker “after” makes it clear that Israel’s *material action* in the initiating clause was preceded by warning people that the area would be targeted by Israel’s strikes. This representation may have the effect of weakening Israel’s responsibility for the casualties. In the fourth and fifth leads the *material actions* are part of non-finite imperfective (embedded) clauses that extend the meaning in the main clauses by means of *addition*, whereas in the sixth and seventh leads Israel’s *material actions* appear as part of relative clauses. The text producer in the fifth lead shifts thematic focus to the NP “details of the circumstances” in sentence-initial position, whereas the *material actions* ascribed to Israel occur within embedded clauses which are given less thematic focus. For example, the finite clause “the Israeli air force bombed a United Nations observation post” occurs in a subordinate clause. Introducing Israel when ascribed the negatively connoted *material action* “kill” within subordinate or embedded clauses, rather than within the main clause, may have the effect of structurally backgrounding Israel’s agency and responsibility by shifting thematic focus to other pieces of information.

Four of these leads report on two incidents, namely, the bombing of the UN post which resulted in killing four UN soldiers and the bombing of the village of Qana which claimed 54 civilian casualties. The reported content in the last two leads is attributed to a source (“Lebanese officials”, “Lebanon’s prime minister”) belonging to one of the sides of the war; hence could be argued to be less credible. Moreover, the last lead seems to offer an update on an earlier report claiming that the Israeli airstrike “*had killed* more than 40 civilians”, which turns out to be inaccurate as “only one

person was killed”. This contradiction can implicitly suggest the possibility of exaggerating the numbers of casualties on the part of the Lebanese.

### 7.3.3.2. Israel as *indirect Actor* or *co-Actor*

Halliday (1994: 150, 212-213) uses the label *indirect participant* to describe the role of a participant inside a PP where it becomes associated with the process only indirectly, via the preposition. Halliday (1994: 185) suggests that a preposition, in a PP, serves to introduce a nominal element as an indirect participant in the main process. Israel is assigned the role of *indirect Actor* introduced into *material process* clauses via a preposition 13 times, whereas it is assigned the role of *co-Actor* 14 times in the BBC coverage of the war.

One pattern of representation, found six times, involves introducing Israel (“an Israeli air strike”, “the deadliest **Israeli** strike”, “**Israeli** air strikes”, “an Israeli attack”) indirectly into *material process* clauses, which are passive in voice, as part of a PP that functions as a *circumstantial element* in the clause. The dominant *material action* in these clauses is the negatively connoted *passive material action* “kill” affecting human civilian victims (“54 civilians, at least 34 of them children”, “54 Lebanese civilians”, “55 civilians”, “one person”) as well as neutral non-combatants (“Four United Nations observers”), as evident in the following leads:

Four United Nations observers *have been killed* in an Israeli air strike on an observation post in south Lebanon.

More than 54 civilians, at least 34 of them children, *have been killed* in a town in south Lebanon in the deadliest **Israeli** strike of the conflict so far.

The UN secretary general has called on Security Council members to take urgent action after 54 Lebanese civilians *were killed* in an **Israeli** attack. . . .

The UN Security Council has expressed its "shock and distress" at an Israeli attack in **which** 54 Lebanese civilians, many of them children, *were killed*.

At least 55 civilians *have been killed* in **Israeli** air strikes in Lebanon.

Lebanon's prime minister has said only one person *was killed* in an **Israeli** air strike that earlier he said had killed more than 40 civilians.

The text producer introduces these Israeli entities, which represent the responsible *Actor*, into the *material process* clause within a *circumstance* ("in an Israeli air strike", "in the deadliest **Israeli** strike", "in an Israeli attack", "in **Israeli** air strikes" and "in which") that provides context for the *material actions*, rather than through the typical PP with "by" ("by Israel"), used to introduce the responsible agent in a passive construction. This choice may have the potential effect, for some readers, of further weakening the causal link by widening the gaps and blurring the relations between the *Actor*, *material action* and affected participants. It is noteworthy that the second, third and fourth leads above report on the same incident, the Israeli bombing of Qana.<sup>13</sup> The last lead, while reporting on the victims of Israel's military operations, it reports on a correction made by the source "Lebanon's prime minister" as regards the number of casualties and questions the credibility of this source.

Israel is introduced into the clause as an *indirect Actor* through the intermediary of the preposition "by" in the following leads:

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<sup>13</sup> These leads are analyzed in more detail in section 8.3.3.

The United Nations Human Rights Council has voted to send a team to Lebanon to investigate alleged abuses by **Israel**.

Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah has promised “open war” against Israel, in an address broadcast shortly after his Beirut offices were bombed by **Israel**.

Sri Lanka is advising its citizens trapped in Lebanon by **Israel**'s military assault to stay where they are.

Within the context in the first lead, “by”, as a preposition, introduces the source, i.e. agent, of the process, resembling in this respect the function of “by” in the passive. In the first lead, Israel can be ascribed agency for a *nominalised material process* (“abuses”) as shown in rewordings such as “Israel’s alleged abuses” or “abuses that Israel made”.<sup>14</sup> The text producer’s choice of a *nominalised material process* results in concealing the affected participants in the clause. In addition, the use of the term “alleged”, which carries at least an implied evaluative meaning, questions the certainty of the claims made, i.e. the existence of abuses that Israel made. Notice here that the NP “alleged abuses by Israel” is potentially ambiguous as it might be read “abuses alleged by Israel”; however, the immediate context disambiguates anyway. In the third lead, the *passive material action* “trapped” is ascribed to Israel, which is introduced indirectly into the process via the intermediary of a preposition where the role of *Goal* is assigned to the human participants “citizens”. The reported content provides the potential for inferring both the intensity of Israel’s military offensive and the difficulties facing foreign nationals attempting to flee Lebanon.

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<sup>14</sup> Within a rewording such as “Israel makes abuses” the verb “makes”, which is lexically empty, together with the following noun “abuses”, assigned the role of *Range*, could be collapsed into one single *material process* “abuse”; a feature of *material processes* with *Range* as a second participant. Although the noun “abuses” can denote a *verbal action*, in the present lead Israel’s “alleged abuses” refer to *material actions*; an interpretation based on knowledge of the wider situational context.

Alternatively, Israel is introduced indirectly into the process as the performer of action via other prepositions such as “for” and “under” in the following leads:

Marianne Abbas is a US citizen whose husband is Lebanese. They are stranded with their children in a hotel in Tyre, just 20km (12 miles) from Lebanon's border with Israel and a target for the **Israeli** warplanes. . . .

Israeli air raids have killed at least 23 people in southern Lebanon hours after Israel warned that the area would come under further heavy **attack**.

In the former lead the hotel, where the family referred to stays, could be assigned the role of *Goal* affected by “Israeli warplanes”, which could be assigned the role of *indirect Actor* introduced via the intermediary of the preposition “for”. In the latter lead, the predicate “come under” could mean “subjected to” or “targeted by”. The entity “further heavy attack” could be assigned the role of *indirect Actor* and is introduced into the clause via the preposition “under”, where the role of affected participant could be assigned to the entity “the area”.

One pattern of representation (found 14 times) which was noted earlier upon analyzing the representation of Hezbollah involves introducing Israel together with Hezbollah indirectly into *material process* clauses via the intermediary of the preposition “between”, where both are assigned the role of *co-Actor*. The PP (“between Israel and Hezbollah”) used to introduce Israel and Hezbollah into the clause functions as a qualifier for preceding nouns (“conflict”, “clashes”, “fighting”, “hostilities”) which could often be interpreted as *material actions* structurally realized as nominal forms and ascribed to Israel and Hezbollah, who are assigned the role of *co-Actor*.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> For indicative examples and further discussion of this representational pattern, see section 7.3.1.2.

### 7.3.3.3. Israel as *Sayer* attributed *verbal actions*

Israel is assigned the role of *Sayer* in *verbal process* clauses 29 times in leads. The following two leads are particularly significant for the analysis of the representation of Israel in the BBC:

**Israel** *says* Wednesday's decision by key world powers not to call for a halt to its Lebanon offensive has given it the green light to continue.

The US state department has dismissed as "outrageous" a suggestion by **Israel** that it has been authorised by the world to continue bombing Lebanon.

Whereas in the former lead Israel is attributed the *verbal action* "says", in the latter lead the *verbal process* is realized in the speech functional category "suggestion" together with a verb, omitted in this case, such as *make*, as is evident in a rewording such as "a suggestion made by Israel". Here, Israel is assigned the role of *Sayer* attributed the underlying *verbal process* "make a suggestion", where the entity "suggestion" is given the role of *Verbiage*.<sup>16</sup> While the content of the projected clause in the former lead claims an international approval of Israel's offensive, the latter lead reports on the US reaction to what Israel claims. The "suggestion" made by Israel, which the former lead reports on, is represented as doubted or fallacious as indicated by the fact that the US dismissed it as "outrageous".

In the following lead the text producer attributes the reported content to the Israeli PM who is assigned the role of *Sayer*:

Hezbollah's capture of two Israeli soldiers last week was timed to divert attention from Tehran's nuclear programme, the **Israeli** PM has claimed.

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<sup>16</sup> In processes such as *make a suggestion* the verb could be said to be lexically empty and the process is expressed only by the noun; alternatively, the verb could form one semantic unit with the "label of the saying" to express the process (Halliday, 1994: 147; 2004: 256). The name of the language could be either assigned the role of *Verbiage* or *Range*.

The text producer's choice of the reporting verb "claim" to report the speech of the Israeli Prime Minister raises questions regarding the validity of the reported statement. However, being related to a peripheral topic "Tehran's nuclear programme", this instance, one might argue, does not affect the BBC's overall representation of Israel in the current war.

One sub-pattern involves attributing to different Israeli sources *verbal actions* ("vow", "warn", "call up"), occasionally *nominalized* ("threats", "the call-up"), where the reported content communicates a representation of Israel as planning to expand its offensive. Indicative examples are the following:

Heavy clashes have been taking place in southern Lebanon between Israeli troops and Hezbollah fighters, after **Israel** vowed to widen its ground offensive.

**Israeli** Prime Minister Ehud Olmert says the attacks on Lebanon will be kept up until two captured soldiers are freed.

**Israel** has warned residents of southern Lebanon that it will escalate operations there as it continues its campaign against Hezbollah militants.

**Israel** is calling up thousands of **reserve troops** in the third week of its attempt to crush Hezbollah - and retrieve two captured soldiers. . . .

**Israel** has called up thousands of reserve troops and told civilians to quit southern Lebanon immediately, amid threats of a large-scale incursion.

**Israel** says it has tripled the number of its troops in southern Lebanon in an expanded offensive, despite a United Nations vote backing a ceasefire.

**Israeli** Prime Minister Ehud Olmert has said that there will be no ceasefire in Lebanon until an international force is deployed in the south of the country.

**Israeli** Defence Minister Amir Peretz has said that despite a 48-hour halt to air strikes on south Lebanon, **Israel** cannot agree to an immediate ceasefire

The type of predicates and the reported content in the projected clauses (“to widen its ground offensive”, “the attacks on Lebanon will be kept”, “that it will escalate operations there”, “has tripled the number of its troops”, “there will be no ceasefire in Lebanon”, “cannot agree to an immediate ceasefire”), as well as the material aspect of the *verbal action* “calling up”, construct Israel as a military power with potential capabilities that enable it to control and dominate the war scene. This is evident in its willingness to “widen” its offensive, keep up its attacks, “escalate” its operations, “call up” its reservists, “triple” its troops and its rejection of an immediate ceasefire. Though the process “call up” is essentially *verbal*, it encodes a material aspect, as is evident in “the deployment of reservists” which is part of the dictionary meaning of the verb “call up”. However, the verb also means “to summon”, which is in a way a *verbal action* that involves a symbolic exchange of meaning, where the entity “reserve troops” is assigned the role of *Target* of the *verbal action* (“is calling up”). The fourth lead above represents Israel as planning to expand its offensive, while simultaneously provides an explanation for Israel’s offensive in the extending clauses. In the last lead above, Israel is assigned the role of *Senser* associated with a *mental desiderative process* (“cannot agree to an immediate ceasefire”) which depicts Israel in a position of power to accept or reject the internationally-powered ceasefire and also conveys a representation of Israel as not willing to end the war. This same representation applies to the last three leads.

It is worth noticing that the third and fifth leads above may pragmatically invite a representation of Israel as considerate not to cause casualties by warning civilians before striking. Similarly, in the following lead, Israel is assigned the role of *Sayer* attributed the *verbal action* “warned”:

Israeli air raids have killed at least 23 people in southern Lebanon hours after **Israel** warned that the area would come under further heavy attack.

The temporal relation signalled by “after” represents Israel’s *verbal action* (“warned”) as temporally preceding its *material action* (“have killed”) in the initiating clause, which may have the potential effect, for some readers, of weakening its incrimination by implication.

In a similar manner, in the following two leads the reported content of the projected clauses attributed to Israeli sources may communicate a positive representation of Israel:

Israel would not have bombed a building in the Lebanese village of Qana on Sunday had **it** known civilians were inside, **a military statement** says.

**Israel** has said it supports the idea of a new international force in south Lebanon, as diplomatic attempts to end the Middle East crisis gather pace.

The former lead reports on an Israeli military statement that was issued following Israel’s bombing of a building in the village of Qana. Within the projected clause, Israel is assigned the role of *Senser* in a *mental process of cognition* (“know”). The reported content may have the potential effect, for some readers, of weakening Israel’s incrimination by implication by providing the potential for inferring Israel’s ignorance of the presence of civilians in the building. Attributing the lead explicitly to a source other than the text producer (“a military statement”) may have the effect of absolving

the text producer from the claims the reported content makes. The latter lead may lead readers to focus on Israel's willingness to end fighting and its acceptance of the deployment of peacekeeping forces in Lebanon.

Other leads report on losses and damage inflicted on Israel by Hezbollah where the reported content is attributed to Israeli official sources ("Israel's military", "Israeli officials"):

**Israel's** military says four servicemen are missing after one of its vessels off the Lebanese coast was struck by a missile fired by Hezbollah militants.

Hezbollah fighters have launched more than 230 rockets from Lebanon, the biggest single-day barrage since the conflict began, **Israeli** officials say.

Source attribution in this case absolves the text producer from being read as asserting the claims made.

#### **7.3.3.4. Israel as *Phenomenon* in mental processes**

Another pattern of representation involves assigning to entities belonging to Israel ("the raid" and "an Israeli attack") the role of *Phenomenon* that triggers *mental states of emotion* ("feelings of shame", "shock and distress") albeit indirectly, via a preposition, where the role of *Senser* is assigned to the entities "one commentator" and "the UN security council":

. . . In Israel, one commentator admits to feelings of shame at **the raid**, but others are uneasy at the suspension of air strikes for 48 hours and the possibility of a ceasefire. . . .

The UN Security Council has expressed its “shock and distress” at an **Israeli** attack in which 54 Lebanese civilians, many of them children, were killed.

In the latter lead, the expression of “shock and distress” can be analyzed as a *verbal process* where the NP “its ‘shock and distress’ ” is assigned the role of *Verbiage* summarizing the content of the *verbal process* and the “UN Security Council” assigned the role of *Sayer*. It could also be analyzed as a *nominalised attributive relational process* where the NP “shock and distress” is assigned the role of *Attribute* and the “UN Security Council” assigned the role of *Carrier*. A paraphrase such as “the UN Security Council is shocked and distressed/ in shock and distress” can clarify the latter interpretation. However, the *state* of “shock and distress” is *mental* and in such case the entity “an Israeli attack” is essentially the *Phenomenon*. The analysis of the process as *mental* is clear when compared to its reversed version “an Israeli attack shocked and distressed the UN Security Council”.<sup>17</sup>

These two leads report on the same incident which is the Israeli bombing of Qana which claimed 54 civilian casualties. Attributing the content of the above two leads to an external source absolves the text producer from the claims made. However, the text producer’s choice to report the facts that the Israeli raid arouses such feelings of shame among commentators in Israel and that the Israeli attack shocked the UN Security Council casts more blame on Israel and should be seen as part of the text producer’s representation of Israel, at least with regard to this particular incident in the war. We can see that the text producer occasionally cites international as well as Israeli sources that demonstrate dissatisfaction as regards Israel’s decisions and actions in the war.

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<sup>17</sup> Thompson (2004: 95) points to the fact that some *mental processes*, particularly of emotion, are “reversible” in that both the *Senser* and the *Phenomenon* could be equally the Subject without the need to use the passive.

### 7.3.3.5. Israel as *Carrier/Attribute/Identifier* in relational processes

Israel is assigned the role of *Carrier* associated with *attributive relational processes* seven times while it is assigned the role of *Attribute* one time in leads. Within this pattern of representation the type of relationship established is an *intensive attributive* one where the Israeli entities (“A major Israeli operation”, “An Israeli ground and air operation”, “Israeli commentators”, “any Israeli victory”, “the Israeli air strike on Qana”) assigned the role of *Carrier* are given different attributes (“underway”, “adamant”, “short-lived”, “war crime”). Examples are the following:

A major **Israeli** operation is under way in the Baalbek area. . . .

Many **Israeli** commentators **remain** adamant that the offensive against Hezbollah must continue despite the deaths of nine soldiers in Lebanon. . . .

A human rights group says the **Israeli** air strike on Qana that killed 54 civilians is a “war crime”.

. . . That the draft does not demand an immediate cease-fire is seen by one Arab paper as an **Israeli** “triumph”, while another warns that any **Israeli** “victory” will be short-lived as long as “occupation and oppression” continue.

In the former lead, although the wording brings in a process of the type *attributive relational*, the *Attribute* “under way”, meaning “in progress”, encodes a *material process of happening*. This latter point can be seen in a rewording such as “Israel commenced/ launched a major operation”. One might claim that representing *material processes* in relational terms, transforming the action to a state or attribute, may have the effect of weakening the material aspect of the process. This way, Israel is not explicitly ascribed the doing of anything. In the third lead, Israel’s bombing of the village of Qana is given the *Attribute* “a ‘war crime’ ”. Source attribution (“A human

rights group says”) and the use of quotes (“a ‘war crime’ ”) absolve the text producer from commitment to the claims made by the (unspecified) human rights group. However, the lead still focuses attention on international condemnation of Israel’s actions. In the last lead above, attributing the characterization of the *Carrier* “any Israeli victory” as being “short lived” to a source (“Arab paper”) other than the text producer, while reflecting this Arab newspaper assessment of the *Carrier*, absolves the text producer from being read as asserting the claim made in the lead. The projected clause “that the draft does not demand an immediate cease-fire” is represented as the *Carrier*, which is assessed on the part of an Arab newspaper by assigning to it the evaluative *Attribute* “an Israeli ‘triumph’ ” in an *attributive relational process*.<sup>18</sup> Of course, the categorization of the *Carrier* as “an Israeli ‘triumph’ ” should not be seen as necessarily the text producer’s evaluation as it is attributed to an Arab paper; however, its mere inclusion in the coverage might be indicative of the text producer’s own view, i.e. that it is a triumph.

In the following lead, the military human participants “four servicemen” are assigned the role of *Carrier* having the *Attribute* “missing” in an *attributive relational process*:

Israel’s military says **four servicemen** are missing after one of its vessels off the Lebanese coast was struck by a missile fired by Hezbollah militants.

The text producer shifts the affected human participants to come in the initiating clause, whereas the *enhancement* provides context for the reported content in the initiating clause. Shifting the affected participants to come in clause-initial position, which is a position of thematic focus, may have the potential effect of foregrounding their affliction.

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<sup>18</sup> *Attributive intensive* clauses, according to Halliday (2004: 219) represent “a resource for characterizing entities serving as the *Carrier*” and they also represent “a central grammatical strategy for assessing by assigning an evaluative *Attribute* to the *Carrier*”.

Israel is assigned the role of *Identifier* in an *identifying relational process* two times in leads. An example is the following:

An Israeli air strike has killed at least 18 Lebanese civilians, including women and children, who were fleeing southern border areas. It is **the deadliest single attack** since the bombardment began on Wednesday.

Within this lead, the text producer identifies the killing of 18 civilians in an Israeli air strike as being “the deadliest single attack” since the beginning of the offensive. This sort of representation, together with the use of the evaluative superlative form “the deadliest” to characterize Israel’s attack, may have the potential effect of implicitly intensifying the incrimination of Israel. The other reference to Israel as *Identifier* is discussed under 7.3.1.2.

#### **7.3.3.6. Israel as *Beneficiary* in material processes**

Israel is represented as the *Beneficiary* three times where in the three occurrences the *Beneficiary* is a *Recipient*, the “one that goods are given to” (Halliday, 1994: 145):

Israel says Wednesday’s *decision* by key world powers not to call for a halt to its Lebanon offensive has given **it** the green light to continue.

. . . one editorial in the Jerusalem Post describes Lebanon as “foolhardy” for rejecting the original draft of the resolution, handing **Israel** “a second chance to avoid defeat”.

British Foreign Secretary Margaret Beckett has protested to the US about its use of Prestwick Airport in western Scotland to transport bombs to **Israel**.

The entities “green light” and “a second chance to avoid defeat” are assigned the role of *Range* specifying the scope/range of the *material actions* “has given” and

“handing”, ascribed to the *Actor* “*decision* by key world powers” and “Lebanon”, where Israel benefits from the specified *material actions*.<sup>19</sup> While the first lead provides the potential for inferring the support Israel gains in its war against Hezbollah from “key world powers”, the second lead reports on the criticism Israel faced on the part of the Israeli press and commentators. The third lead draws attention to Israel’s alleged close connections with the US. Source attribution has the effect of absolving the text producer from commitment to the claims the reported content makes.

#### 7.3.3.7. Israel as *Receiver* of *verbal actions*

Israel is assigned the role of *Receiver* of *verbal actions* (“will urge”, “called on”, “has been authorized”) four times in leads, as evident in the following leads:

US President George Bush has said he *will urge Israel* to avoid civilian casualties in its attacks on Lebanon.

Leaders of the G8 nations have blamed extremist forces for the latest crisis in the Middle East, but *called on Israel* to end military operations.

The US state department has dismissed as "outrageous" a suggestion by Israel that *it* has been authorised by the world to continue bombing Lebanon.

Notice the discrepancy in the second lead in the type of *verbal actions* “blamed”, targeting Hezbollah, and “called on” addressed to Israel, and the negatively connoted referring expression “extremist forces”, used when referring to Hezbollah, compared to the reference by name “Israel”. It is worth noticing that the reported messages in the perfective non-finite clauses (“to avoid civilian casualties”, “to end military

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<sup>19</sup> Though expressed in material terms, as evident in the verb “has given”, the predicate “has given the green light” can be used idiomatically to mean something like “to permit”, encoding a *verbal action*, where “it” would be assigned the role of *Receiver* of the *verbal action*.

operations” and “to continue bombing Lebanon”) construct Israel as the *Actor* in *material processes*. What is significant here is that the representation of Israel in this set of leads as the *Receiver* of *verbal actions* of the type “urge”, “call on” and “authorize” attributed to such powers as “US President” and “Leaders of the G8”, one might claim, constructs Israel as a superior power in full control of the war, particularly when compared to such *verbal actions* as *order*, *demand* and *ask*.

In the following lead the entity “Israeli troops” is assigned the role of *Receiver* of the *verbal action* “contacted” where the role of *Sayer* is attributed to the entity “UN peacekeepers”:

UN peacekeepers in south Lebanon contacted **Israeli** troops 10 times before an Israeli bomb killed four of them, an initial UN report says.

The reported content may invite a representation of Israel as being well-informed of the presence of the UN officers in the post before it is being bombed, which may have the potential effect of incriminating Israel by implication.

#### **7.3.3.8. Israel as *Target* of *verbal actions***

Another pattern of representation, found 11 times, involves representing Israel as the *Target* of *verbal actions*. Within this pattern of representation entities belonging to Israel (“Israeli bombing of Qana”, “the government”, “Chief-of-Staff Dan Halutz”, “Israeli government”, “Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert”) are represented as the *Target* of *verbal actions* attributed to different sources. The specified *verbal actions* are either explicitly stated (“accusing”, “warned”), *nominalised* (“condemnation”), reduced to a state (“critical of”), expressed in the passive voice (“is accused of”), or

metaphorically expresses (“An onslaught of criticism greets”, take... to task”).

Indicative examples are the following:

. . . But others are critical of **the government**, accusing **it** of acting recklessly and with insufficient regard to the consequences of entering Lebanon. . . .

An onslaught of criticism greets the **Israeli** government in the country’s press.

. . . Some papers focus their attack on the Israel Defence Forces and, in particular, **Chief-of-Staff Dan Halutz**, who is accused of overconfidence and of failing Israel.

Israeli commentators take **Israeli** Prime Minister Ehud Olmert to task for suggesting that a military victory in Lebanon would give a boost to his plan to secure the country’s borders. . . .

One common feature to this pattern is that the specified *verbal actions* are attributed to Israeli sources (“Israeli commentators”, “some papers” and “the country’s press”). The reasons/sources of the specified *verbal actions* are occasionally constructed as *enhancing hypotactic clauses*, as in “of acting recklessly...”, “of overconfidence and of failing Israel” and “for suggesting that a military victory in Lebanon would give a boost to his plan to secure the country’s borders” (cf. Halliday, 2004: 256). It is worth noticing that in the *verbal process* clause “an onslaught of criticism greets the Israeli government” the verbal aspect of the process is conveyed in two ways; first, through the use of the nominal form “criticism” which denotes a *verbal action* “criticise”, and, second, the predicate “greets” itself might denote a verbal activity. These leads belong to news reports that report on the Israeli media criticism of the Israeli government and military for such things as the war decision, overconfidence, and accepting ceasefire.

In another example, “Israeli bombing of Qana” is depicted as being the *Target* of the *verbal action* “condemnation” attributed to the *Sayer* “worldwide press”:

There is worldwide press *condemnation* of the **Israeli** bombing of Qana, with one Lebanese daily writing that the village witnessed the opening of the gates of hell. . . .

Rather than making role assignment in a direct manner (as in “worldwide press condemns the Israeli bombing of Qana”), the text producer’s choice to use an *existential process* (“there is”) in the main clause results in introducing the *Target* (“Israeli bombing of Qana”) indirectly as part of a *circumstantial element*. Attributing the reported content to the source “worldwide press”, apart from absolving the text producer from the claims made, may have the effect of depicting this particular incident (“the bombing of Qana”) in a way that reflects its inhumanness.

The text producer provides the potential for inferring the role of Iran in the ongoing war in the following lead where Israel is assigned the role of *Target* of the *verbal action* “warned” attributed to the Iranian president:

Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has warned **Israel** that it has “pushed the button of its own destruction” *because of its actions in Lebanon*.

The lead implicitly constructs Iran as a potential threat to Israel’s security and simultaneously fits into a recurrent pattern in the BBC leads that highlights Hezbollah’s alleged connections to Iran. Within the same lead Israel occurs as part of a *circumstance of cause* (“because of its actions in Lebanon”).

The text producer reports on Israel’s summoning of reserve troops on four occasions where the entities “reserve troops”, “thousands of reserve troops” and “thousands of

fresh reservists” are assigned the role of *Target* of the *verbal action* “call up” attributed to Israeli sources. Examples are the following:

Israel is calling up thousands of **reserve troops** in the third week of its attempt to crush Hezbollah - and retrieve two captured soldiers. . . .

Israel has called up **thousands of reserve troops** and told civilians to quit southern Lebanon immediately, amid threats of a large-scale incursion.

The *extending clause* (“and retrieve two captured soldiers”) in the former lead potentially explains Israel’s actions in the initiating clause. Similarly the *extending clause* (“and told civilians to quit southern Lebanon immediately”) in the second lead may invite a representation of Israel as concerned not to cause casualties by warning civilians before striking.

#### 7.3.3.9. Israel as *indirect Goal*

Within the BBC coverage of the war events, another main pattern of representation, found 21 times, involves Israel introduced into the clause as an *indirect Goal* as part of a nominal group inside a PP. Within this pattern, Israel (“Israel and its perceived allies”, “two Israeli soldiers”, “Israel’s air strike on Qana”) is introduced into *material process* clauses as *indirect Goal* within PPs, where the role of *Actor* is assigned to Hezbollah (“a raid”, “the group”, “Hezbollah militants”, “Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah”) or other participants (“Muslims”, “Protests”). Indicative examples are the following:

Hezbollah’s capture of two **Israeli** soldiers last week was timed to divert attention from Tehran’s nuclear programme, the Israeli PM has claimed.

Israel is continuing to subject Lebanon to strikes by land, sea and air, following the capture of two **Israeli** soldiers by Hezbollah militants.

The Israeli army has released a video apparently showing a Hezbollah fighter admitting to taking part in a raid on **Israel** and undergoing training in Iran.

US President George W Bush has been caught on microphone using an expletive as he discussed Hezbollah's rocket attacks on **Israel**.

. . . Papers in Iran and Iraq appeal to Muslims to go to Lebanon and *wage* jihad against **Israel** and its perceived allies, the US and the UK.

Israel continues its bombardment of Lebanon and Hezbollah fires rockets into **Israel** as the crisis precipitated by Hezbollah's capture of two **Israeli** soldiers intensifies.

Israeli forces say they have seized the Lebanese border village of Maroun al-Ras, an apparent base used by Hezbollah to fire rockets into **Israel**.

The Israeli cabinet has approved an army plan to push deeper into Lebanon, to try to take control of areas used by Hezbollah to launch rockets on **Israel**

Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah has promised "open war" against **Israel**. . . Some of the *material actions*, which are generally *nominalised* ("wage jihad against",<sup>20</sup> "a raid on", "capture of", "rocket attacks on", "defeat of", "fighting with"), could be possibly reworded as verbal structures, such as "to raid Israel", "Hezbollah captures two Israeli soldiers" and "Hezbollah attacks Israel with rockets". What is of

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<sup>20</sup> The entity "jihad" can be assigned the role of *Range* that specifies the range of the process rather than *Goal* affected by the process, where the *Goal* is introduced indirectly via the PP. It is worth mentioning that the word *jihad* in Arabic is a *nominalised material process*.

interest here is that some of these leads focus attention on Hezbollah's alleged close connections with Iran, which seems to constitute a recurrent pattern in the BBC coverage of the war. It is worth mentioning that on five occasions the affected participants are the two Israeli soldiers whose capture triggers the war. By limiting the range of the Israeli human participants affected by Hezbollah's *material actions* to the same entity in the real world, the effect could potentially be weakening the overall affliction of Israel. However, repeatedly reporting on the incident that triggers the war may potentially add, for some readers, legitimation to Israel's actions in the war.

Alternatively, the entities assigned the role of *indirect Goal* are not negatively affected by the specified *material actions* ("the release of two **Israeli** soldiers captured by Hezbollah militants", "despite a 48-hour halt to **air strikes** on south Lebanon", "others are uneasy at the suspension of **air strikes** for 48 hours"), which are *nominalized* ("release of", "halt to", "suspension of"). These *material actions* are ascribed to an underlying *Actor*, possibly Israel itself. On one occasion ("the domestic politics behind the **Israeli** military operation") the *material action* is expressed in the preposition "behind" interpreted as a minor process meaning "underlie" or "support/back" (cf. Halliday, 1994: 203). It is worth mentioning that almost all the leads under this sub-pattern of representation belong to the last days of the war between August the 3<sup>rd</sup> and the 15<sup>th</sup> and report on the Israeli media critical reaction towards Israel's performance in the war, which might explain why the text producer explicitly attributes the reported content to its original sources.

One common feature of representation relating to this pattern is that the content of these leads is attributed to sources predominantly belonging to Israel ("some papers",

“commentators in Israel”, “Israeli Defence Minister Amir Peretz”, “the Israeli PM”, “Israeli forces”). Other sources (“Hezbollah’s leader”, “papers in Iran and Iraq”, “Syria and Iran”) are occasionally cited. Allowing Israeli sources more access to the war news coverage might be indicative of the relative valuation of such sources in the text producer’s own ideological system. Source attribution is also indicative of the BBC’s attempt to build credibility as being one of the journalistic ethics news outlets strive for.

Another feature of representation relating to this pattern is that references to Israel as *indirect Goal* often occurs as part of *expanding clauses* that extend, elaborate on or enhance the meanings expressed in initiating clauses in which Israel is ascribed *material actions*. Examples can be seen in “following the capture of two Israeli soldiers by Hezbollah militants”, “and Hezbollah fires rockets into Israel as the crisis precipitated by Hezbollah’s capture of two Israeli soldiers intensifies”, “an apparent base used by Hezbollah to fire rockets into Israel”, “to try to take control of areas used by Hezbollah to launch rockets on Israel” and “to press for the release of two Israeli soldiers captured by Hezbollah militants”. Some of these *expansions* enhance the meaning by offering a temporal sequence (“following”) that introduces Israel’s *material actions* as a consequence of Hezbollah’s actions. Other *expansions* extend the meaning in the initiating clause by means of *addition* (“and”), within which Hezbollah is ascribed *material actions* that potentially balance Israel’s actions in the initiating clauses. Ascribing *material actions* to Hezbollah in *expanding clauses* may have the effect of balancing Israel’s *material actions* and blurring responsibility. Alternatively, the text producer employs *expansions* that provide the reason for Israel’s *material actions* in the initiating clause or highlight the wider context of the

action referred to. These *expansions* may have the effect of adding a sense of potential legitimation to Israel's military operations.

*Circumstances*, which are realized by circumstantial adjuncts, “essentially encode the background against which the process takes place” (Thompson, 2004:109). Israel occurs within a *circumstance of location* (“in Israel”, “north of the Israeli border”, “in the coastal Israeli city of Haifa”, “in Lebanon, Israel and Gaza”, “in Lebanon, Israel and the occupied territories”, “from Lebanon’s border with Israel”, “of the Israeli-Lebanese border”) defining the place associated with the process on 14 occasions. Examples are the following:

. . . . In **Israel**, one commentator admits to feelings of shame at the raid. . . .

War crimes could have been committed in Lebanon, **Israel** and Gaza, a senior UN official has said.

Ordinary people in Lebanon, **Israel** and the occupied territories are increasingly affected by the conflict.

A UN-brokered ceasefire has come into force between Israel and the Lebanese militant group, Hezbollah. Our correspondents describe the atmosphere on either side of the **Israeli-Lebanese** border.

Analyzing the clause as representation would not give much weight to these specific occurrences because it could be argued that Israel, in this context, is not assigned any role in the process; rather it defines the context of the process. Having said that, the last two leads represent a recurrent pattern where the text producer describes the general atmosphere and reports on reactions of people who are directly affected by the

ongoing war on both sides of the conflict. This pattern of representation could be seen as an indication of the BBC balanced reporting.

### 7.3.3.10. Israel as *Goal* in *material processes*

Israel is assigned the role of *Goal* in a *material process* clause 36 times in leads. When assigned the role of *Goal* in *material action* clauses, the analysis reveals that on ten occasions this role is assigned to human participants (“two Israeli soldiers”, “two soldiers”, “two captured soldiers”, “two captured Israeli soldiers”), who belong to the military, affected by *material actions* (“have captured”, “will only give up”), occasionally in the passive voice (“were seized”, “captured by”, “will only be returned”) or reduced to a state (“captured”). These ten references designate the same entity in the real world, i.e. the two Israeli soldiers abducted by Hezbollah. The *material actions* are ascribed to Hezbollah who is either explicitly mentioned (“Lebanese guerrillas”, “Hezbollah militants”, “his group”), assigned the role of *indirect Actor* (“by the militant group Hezbollah”, “by Hezbollah militants”) in a passive construction or omitted and supplied on the basis of knowledge of the wider context. Indicative examples are the following:

Lebanese guerrillas have captured two **Israeli** soldiers in a cross-border raid, triggering the first Israeli land incursion into the country since 2000.

Israel is continuing an air, sea and land blockade on Lebanon as part of a major offensive to press for the release of two Israeli soldiers captured by Hezbollah militants. . . .

Israel is imposing an air and sea blockade on Lebanon as part of a major offensive after **two soldiers** were seized by the militant group Hezbollah.

Israel is calling up thousands of reserve troops in the third week of its attempt to crush Hezbollah - and retrieve **two captured soldiers**. . . .

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert says the attacks on Lebanon will be kept up until **two captured soldiers** are freed.

Israel has launched night air strikes on bridges and roads in southern Lebanon, as the search goes on for two soldiers seized by Hezbollah militants.

One representational feature common to this pattern is the type of relation the text producer establishes between clauses in each lead. In the five leads, those clauses which represent Israel as the *Goal* of *material actions* ascribed to Hezbollah simultaneously explain *material actions* ascribed to Israel in the other clauses. For example, in the first lead the relationship between the two clauses is one of *cause-effect*, i.e. the *material action* in the initiating clause provides the reason for the *material action* in the non-finite dependent clause that expands the meaning of the first clause through *enhancement* (cf. Halliday; 1994: 232-239). In doing so, the text producer represents Israel's incursion as a consequence of Hezbollah's military operations. In the third lead, the sequencing of actions, indicated by the temporal marker "after", represents the *material action* ascribed to Israel in the initiating clause as a consequence of Hezbollah's *material action* in the second clause. In the fourth lead, the *circumstantial element of time* ("in the third week of") sets the context for the *material action* ascribed to Israel in the initiating clause providing the reason in the extending clause ("and retrieve two captured soldiers").

In addition to the above ten references designating the two Israeli soldiers whose capture triggered the war, human military participants are also introduced as the *Goal* in two incidents during the war in the following two leads:

Two **Israeli** soldiers and a Hezbollah militant have been killed in fierce fighting in southern Lebanon.

Nine **Israeli** soldiers have been killed in fierce clashes with Hezbollah militants in south Lebanon.

The military participants “two Israeli soldiers” and “nine Israeli soldiers” are assigned the role of *Goal* affected by the negatively connoted *material action* “have been killed”. Notice that Hezbollah the *Actor* responsible for these *material actions* is contextually inferred in the former lead, whereas it is indirectly introduced via the intermediary of a preposition in the latter lead.

Human civilian participants are represented as affected by the negatively connoted *material action* “kill” ascribed to Hezbollah on only one occasion in leads:

Rockets fired by Hezbollah militants in Lebanon have killed at least **eight people** and wounded **dozens of others** in the coastal Israeli city of Haifa.

Within this lead the human affected participants “eight people” and “dozens of others” are directly assigned the role of *Goal* affected by material actions “have killed” and “wounded” directly ascribed to the *Actor* “rockets” (this lead is analyzed in more detail under section 7.3.1.1).

Whereas in the above sub-patterns human military participants belonging to Israel are assigned the role of *Goal*, another sub-pattern (found three times) involves assigning the role of *Goal* to inanimate entities (“the **Israeli** city of Haifa”, “**one of its vessels**”)

belonging to Israel affected by the *material actions* (“have struck”, “was struck”, “could target”):

Two rockets have struck the **Israeli** city of Haifa, hours after a threat by the militant Lebanese group Hezbollah.

Israel’s military says four servicemen are missing after **one of its vessels** off the Lebanese coast was struck by a missile fired by Hezbollah militants.

Tony Blair has accused Iran of supplying weapons to attack UK troops in Iraq, and of giving arms to Hezbollah so it could target **Israel**.

Reference to the responsible *Actor* Hezbollah (“Two rockets”, “a missile”, “it” referring to Hezbollah) is explicitly made in the three leads.

Alternatively, Israel is assigned the role of *Goal* in *material process clauses*, where the role of *Actor* is also assigned to Israel (“Israel”, “Chief-of-Staff Dan Halutz”) and the *material actions* do not affect the *Goal* in any material sense. The entities (“campaign”, “attacks”, “bombardment”, “air campaign” and “offensive”), assigned the role of *Goal*, together with the accompanying predicates (“continue”, “intensify”, “expand”, “extend”, “widen”, “boost”, “stop”), signal the *material process*, where the specified *material actions* imply either a temporal or a spatial dimension. Indicative examples are the following:

Israel has warned residents of southern Lebanon that it will escalate operations there as it continues **its campaign** against Hezbollah militants.

Heavy clashes have been taking place in southern Lebanon between Israeli troops and Hezbollah fighters, after Israel vowed to widen **its ground offensive**.

Israel has intensified *its attacks on Lebanon* as jets launched fresh strikes on Beirut airport, the road to the Syrian capital and a power plant.

Occasionally, the affected participants are introduced within PPs as *indirect Goal*, as in “against Hezbollah militants”, “of Lebanon” and “on Lebanon”. This sub-pattern communicates a representation of Israel as planning to expand and continue its military operations.

Similarly, in the following leads the roles of *Actor* and *Goal* are both assigned to Israel where *material actions* (“has tripled”, “has massed”, “defending”, “secure”, “failing”) do not affect the *Goal* (“the number of its troops”, “soldiers and tanks”, “itself”, “the country’s borders”) in any negative material sense:

Israel says it has tripled the number of **its** troops in southern Lebanon in an expanded offensive, despite a United Nations vote backing a ceasefire.

Israel has massed **soldiers and tanks** on the border with Lebanon and called up thousands of reserve troops, in a possible prelude to a ground offensive.

The US president, in St Petersburg for the G8 summit, has insisted Israel is defending **itself** against terror and Hezbollah is the root of the crisis.

Israeli commentators take Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert to task for suggesting that a military victory in Lebanon would give a boost to his plan to secure **the country’s borders**. . . .

Some papers focus their attack on the Israel Defence Forces and, in particular, Chief-of-Staff Dan Halutz, who is accused of overconfidence and of failing **Israel**.

It is true that Israel is the *Goal*; however, it is by no means depicted as lacking control. For example, in the last lead above, the text producer provides the potential for inferring Israel's inefficiency in the war as an outcome of its own overconfidence and the failure of its own defence forces. The text producer's choice on the last two leads above to explicitly attribute the reported content to the Israeli media ("some papers", "Israeli commentators") and to include their reports as part of the BBC coverage, i.e. allowing them access to the news report, suggests that the reported content might be indicative of the text producer's view point, i.e. the Israeli military potentially failed Israel because of its overconfidence. The first two leads focus attention on Israel's readiness to widen and continue its offensive.

#### 7.3.3.11. Israel as *Senser* in *mental processes*

Israel ("the Israeli cabinet") is assigned the role of *Senser* in *mental process* clauses ("has agreed", "has approved", "has rejected", "has endorsed") on eight occasions in leads. Indicative examples are the following:

The **Israeli** cabinet has agreed to widen the country's ground offensive against Hezbollah in southern Lebanon.

The **Israeli** cabinet has approved an army plan to push deeper into Lebanon, to try to take control of areas used by Hezbollah to launch rockets on Israel

**Israel** has rejected a United Nations call for a three-day truce in southern Lebanon, as US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice arrives in Israel.

**Israel** has agreed an immediate 48-hour suspension of air strikes over southern Lebanon to allow an investigation into the death of more than 50 civilians.

Five out of these eight references may (pragmatically) invite a representation of Israel as planning to widen and continue its offensive against Hezbollah and as not ready to stop fighting or accept a ceasefire plan. On the other three occasions, the text producer draws attention to Israel's willingness to put an end to fighting and to cooperate with the UN by temporarily halting its strikes. Reporting on these opposing pieces of news could be said to show the BBC credibility and balanced reporting as the news outlet reports on war incidents regardless of any other considerations. Notice that the text producer's choice of the *non-ergative nominalised process* "death" in the last lead above results in representing the process as self-engendered, i.e. happening by itself, omitting any reference to external causation, i.e. the agent. This choice may have the potential effect of blurring the causal link through hiding Israel's agency as being responsible for these "deaths".

#### **7.3.4. Israel in the BBC leads: summary**

The analysis of representation of Israel in the leads of the BBC shows that Israel is referred to 273 times in the total corpus of leads of the BBC coverage of the 2006 war. Table 28 groups the participant roles assigned to Israel in the BBC leads under a number of distinct categories based on the ways Israel is introduced into the clause from a transitivity point of view:

Overall category	Participant roles	Frequency	%
performer of action	1 time <i>Behaver</i>	162	59.3
	29 times <i>Sayer</i>		
	13 times <i>indirect Actor</i>		
	14 times <i>co-Actor</i>		
	105 times <i>Actor</i>		
part of a relation	7 times <i>Carrier</i>	10	3.7
	1 time <i>Attribute</i>		
	2 time <i>Identifier</i>		
benefits from action	<i>Beneficiary in a material process</i>	3	1.1
triggers action	<i>Phenomenon in mental process</i>	3	1.1
part of a <i>circumstance</i>	1 time in a <i>circumstance of cause</i>	15	5.5
	14 times part of a <i>circumstance of location</i>		
undergoes action	<i>Senser</i>	8	2.9
receiver of <i>verbal action</i>	<i>Receiver of verbal action</i>	4	1.5
affected by action	36 times <i>Goal</i>	68	25.0
	21 times <i>indirect Goal</i>		
	11 times <i>Target</i>		

#### 28. Representation of Israel in the BBC leads: performer of action or affected by action

One main pattern of representation involves representing Israel as the performer of action. This overall representational pattern constitutes 59.3% of the total frequency of reference to Israel in the BBC leads. Israel is represented as the performer of *material actions* 132 times in the leads of the BBC constituting 48.4% of the total frequency of reference to Israel, compared to 56.2% frequency of reference to Hezbollah as the performer of *material actions*. Despite this high frequency of reference to Israel as the performer of *material actions*, though still lower than that of Hezbollah, the analysis reveals a number of textual strategies that aim to weaken, blur or hide Israel's agency and responsibility. Table 29 illustrates the main patterns of representation of reference to Israel as the performer of *material actions*:

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### Textual strategy

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- 1 When Israel is assigned the role of *Carrier* in *relational processes*, occasionally the meaning is *material* but the wording suggests a *relational process*. One might claim that representing *material processes* in relational terms, transforming the action to a state or attribute, may have the effect of weakening the material aspect of the process.
  - 2 Israel is represented as an *indirect Actor* within a PP, ascribed the negatively connoted *material action* “kill” which affects human civilian and military victims on six occasions. Introducing the responsible *Actor* as part of a *circumstance*, rather than through the typical PP with “by”, results in further weakening the affliction of the victims by widening the gaps and blurring the causal relation. It is noteworthy that three out of these six references report on the same war incident.
  - 3 Israel is introduced together with Hezbollah indirectly into *material process* clauses where both are assigned the role of *co-Actor*, which may have the effect of equally distributing blame between Israel and Hezbollah.
  - 4 Israel is represented as the *Actor* ascribed *material actions* which do not extend to a direct participant in the clause, i.e. are confined to the *Actor*. The entities affected by the specified *material actions* are occasionally introduced indirectly to the clause within PPs.
  - 5 Israel is represented as the *Actor* ascribed *material actions* that convey a temporal or spatial dimension. In such cases, the verb represents, together with the entity assigned the role of *Goal* which itself signals a *nominalised material action*, a *material process* ascribed to Israel. The entities affected by these *nominalised material processes* are occasionally introduced into the clause indirectly via PPs. This way of representing Israel’s *material actions* conveys a representation of Israel as being in full control of the war setting.
  - 6 Israel is frequently ascribed *material actions* that involve abstract, rather than concrete or physical, doings or happenings, which may weaken the impact of the *material action*.
  - 7 Israel is represented as the *Actor* ascribed processes which, though encoded as material, are used metaphorically. Here, *relational* and *mental processes* are encoded in material wording. This pattern highlights the distancing achieved through source attribution, which itself might be due to the potential criticism directed at Israel’s performance and decisions in the war.
  - 8 Israel is represented as the *Actor* ascribed negatively connoted *material actions* affecting inanimate entities belonging to many sides, including Hezbollah. When occasionally *nominalised material actions* are used, nominalization does not result in concealing any important information. Even in cases where no explicit reference is made to the *Actor*, the context provides enough clues to recover the identity of the *Actor*. Within this sub-pattern, the analysis shows that the text producer employs different types of *expansions* with the effect of weakening, balancing or explaining Israel’s *material actions* in the main clauses.
  - 9 Israel is directly introduced as the *Actor* ascribed *material actions* that affect human military participants belonging to Hezbollah on only six occasions, where the affected participants are occasionally introduced indirectly into the clause. The choice of verbs of the type “clash with”, “battle”, “fight” and the *nominalized* “clashes” represents the *Actor* and *Goal* as equal sides, compared to *material processes* of the type *crush* and *kill* which clearly signal a perpetrator and
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a victim. In other cases, Israel's *material actions* extend to military participants belonging to Israel itself, rather than to Hezbollah, resulting in weakening the material effect of the Israel's actions.

- 10 Israel is directly introduced as the *Actor* ascribed the negatively connoted *transitive material action* "kill" where the role of *Goal* is assigned to human civilian victims on only nine occasions, besides two occasions where the affected participants belong to the military. Two of these references report on the same war incident, where one lead offers an update on the other. Whereas two leads report on the bombing of the UN post and the killing of four UN soldiers, another two leads report on the bombing of the village of Qana and the killing of 54 civilians. On two occasions, the reported content is attributed to a source belonging to the other side of the war; hence could be argued to be less credible. On one occasion, the *material action* as specified has not been done. In five cases, the *material action* is introduced as part of an expansion, rather than being the focus of the main clause, which may reflect how they are viewed by the text producer.
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29. Features of the representation of Israel as a performer of *material actions* in the BBC leads

When Israel is represented as the *Sayer* attributed *verbal actions*, the type of *verbal actions* as well as the associated reported content, which in most cases ascribes further *material actions* to Israel, communicate a representation of Israel as planning to continue and widen its offensive and depict Israel as a major military power. One point worth commenting on is the text producer's choice to report on a statement attributed to Israel in one lead and a rejection of this statement attributed to the US in another lead. While the reported content of the projected clause in one lead claims an international approval of Israel's bombing of Lebanon, another lead reports on the US rejection of what Israel claims. The text producer's choice to include the content of both leads within the war coverage, while attributing it to the original sources, adds to the text producer's credibility. The reported content on three occasions may invite a representation of Israel as considerate not to cause casualties by warning people before striking and by focussing attention on its ignorance of the presence of civilians in bombed areas, which in turn may have the effect, for some readers, of weakening Israel's responsibility and incrimination by implication.

Whereas in all of the above summarized patterns of representation Israel is represented as the performer of action, other patterns of representation involve representing Israel as the receiver of action, whether *material* or *verbal*, undergoing *mental actions*, triggering *mental states* and emotions, or part of relations.

When represented as the *Senser* in *mental process* clauses Israel is represented in two opposing ways. Whereas some of the leads provide the potential for inferring Israel's willingness to expand and continue its assault and its rejection of a temporary halt to fighting and of a ceasefire plan, other leads report on Israel's willingness to accept ceasefire and to cooperate with the UN. The text producer's choice to include these seemingly opposing pieces of news could be seen as an indication of the BBC credibility and balanced reporting.

One main pattern of representation involves representing Israel as the *Target* of negatively connoted *verbal actions*, mainly attributed to Israeli sources. Some of these *verbal process* clauses report on the Israeli media criticism of the Israeli government and military for such things as the war decision, overconfidence and accepting ceasefire. The fact that most of this criticism is attributed to Israeli sources, specifically the Israeli media, while absolving the text producer from being read as asserting the claims made, can enhance the reliability of the reported content and can equally foster the image of the BBC as a credible and impartial news outlet. Simultaneously, such representation could reflect the text producer's own opinions and stance. One lead reports on Iran's role in the war and the way it threatens Israel's national security, which represents a recurrent theme in the BBC coverage. On four occasions, the reported content potentially represents Israel as planning to widen and

escalate its offensive by summoning reservists. The BBC credibility is also demonstrated in its reporting on the world wide “condemnation” of Israeli bombing of Qana. This same Israeli attack is represented elsewhere as the *Phenomenon* that arouses feelings of shame among commentators in Israel and shocked the UN Security Council, which may have the effect of casting more blame on Israel and should be seen as part of the text producer’s representation of Israel, at least with regard to this particular incident. Israel’s bombing of Qana is also repressed as a “war crime” in an *attributive relational process*, though the content is explicitly attributed to a source other than the text producer, with the effect of absolving the text producer from commitment to the claims made.

When Israel is represented as the *Receiver of verbal actions*, one might claim that the type of *verbal actions* as well as the type of sources, being powerful world powers, might communicate a representation of Israel as a superior power. However, this representation also draws attention to the worldwide pressure on Israel to put an end to the war, which, together with the representation of Israel as the *Target* of criticism and accusations on the part of the Israeli media, may communicate to the readers an image of Israel’s war on Lebanon as being opposed both, from within Israel, as well as internationally. This same representation is also noted when Israel is assigned other roles as the *Beneficiary* in *material process* clauses. Generally speaking, it is true that Israel is represented as an affected entity in the above patterns; however, it is by no means depicted as lacking control.

One main pattern of representation involves representing Israel as on the receiving end. When Israel is represented as an affected participant in *material process* clauses,

the analysis reveals the following patterns as characteristic features of the representation of Israel, as table 30 illustrates:

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Textual strategy	
1	Human military participants belonging to Israel are introduced into <i>material process</i> clauses as the <i>Goal</i> affected by negatively connoted <i>material actions</i> , occasionally passive or nominalised, ascribed to Hezbollah. The affected participants within this sub-pattern are predominantly the two abducted Israeli soldiers, whose capture triggers the war.
2	Human military victims belonging to Israel are affected by the negatively connoted <i>material action</i> “kill” on two occasions where the passive voice results in shifting the affected participants to sentence-initial position, which is a position of thematic focus. In one of these two references, Israel’s affliction is paired with Hezbollah’s affliction which may have the effect of blurring the causal link and distributing blame.
3	Human civilian participants belonging to Israel are directly introduced into <i>material process</i> clause affected by the negatively connoted <i>material action</i> “kill” and the <i>material action</i> “wound” on only one occasion, where the role of <i>Actor</i> is ascribed to Hezbollah.
4	Those clauses which represent Israel as the <i>Goal of material actions</i> ascribed to Hezbollah are simultaneously used to explain <i>material actions</i> ascribed to Israel in neighbouring clauses.
5	Alternatively, the Israeli entities assigned the role of <i>Goal</i> , which are abstractions, represent, together with the verb, which itself signals a temporal or spatial dimension, the <i>material process</i> . The communicated representation is that Israel, which is the performer of action in these leads, is planning to expand and continue its offensive.
6	Israel is assigned both the roles of <i>Goal</i> and <i>Actor</i> , which may have the effect of weakening Israel’s affliction.
7	Israel or human military participants belonging to Israel are introduced as <i>indirect Goal</i> , affected by negatively connoted <i>material actions</i> , occasionally nominalised, mostly ascribed to Hezbollah. Occasionally, the <i>material actions</i> do not affect the <i>Goal</i> in any negative sense.
8	Reference to Israel as an <i>indirect Goal</i> often occurs as part of an expanding clause, accompanying reference to Israel as the performer of <i>material actions</i> in the main clause. Alternatively, the text producer employs <i>expansions</i> that provide the reason for Israel’s <i>material actions</i> in the initiating clause or highlight the wider context of the action referred to.

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30. Features of the representation of Israel as an affected participant in the BBC leads

One feature of the representation of Israel as an affected participant in *material processes* involves attributing the reported content to sources predominantly belonging to Israel. This feature of representation is also noted when Israel is assigned the roles of *Beneficiary*, *Carrier* and *Phenomenon*.

### 7.3.5. Analysis of lexical choices in the BBC leads

In reference to Israel, the BBC most frequently uses the words “Israel” and “Israeli”; however, other referring expressions are also noted including “the government”, “the Israeli cabinet”, “Chief-of-Staff Dan Halutz”, “Prime Minister Ehud Olmert”, “Israeli Defence Minister Amir Peretz” and “the country” (“But others are critical of **the government**”, “Commentators note that **Prime Minister Ehud Olmert** failed to achieve the objectives”, “Some papers focus their attack on. . . **Chief-of-Staff Dan Halutz**”, “to widen **the country**’s ground offensive against Hezbollah”). In reference to the Israeli army and armament, the text producer uses such referring expressions as “troops”, “reserve troops”, “army”, “military”, “forces”, “Defence Forces”, “force”, “armoured columns”, “tanks”, “vessels”, “jets”, “warplanes” and “aircraft” (“between Israeli **troops** and Hezbollah fighters”, “between Hezbollah and the Israeli **military**”, “Some papers focus their attack on the Israel **Defence Forces**”, “the Israeli **air force**”, “Israeli armoured **columns** have pushed into Lebanese territory”, “Israel has massed soldiers and **tanks**”, “**jets** launched fresh strikes on Beirut airport”, “Israeli **warplanes** have struck at suspected Hezbollah sites”, “Israeli **aircraft** have resumed attacks on the Lebanese capital”).<sup>21</sup> Words which are found in Al-Jazeera in reference to Israel’s armament are similar to those used in connection with Israel in the BBC.

In reference to Israel’s military personnel the text producer uses such lexical items as “soldiers”, “commandos”, “servicemen” and “reservists” (“Israeli **commandos** have clashed with Hezbollah fighters”, “Lebanese guerrillas have captured two Israeli **soldiers**”, “four **servicemen** are missing after one of its vessels off the Lebanese coast was struck by a missile”, “Israel has approved the call-up of thousands of fresh

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<sup>21</sup> The word “force” refers to an organized body of armed and especially trained people.

**reservists**") which denote an official state member of the military. What is of interest here is that the word "force" is never used by the BBC in connection with the Lebanese or Syrian army, and used on only one occasion in reference to Hezbollah, unlike the case in Al-Jazeera. This exclusive use of lexical items that bestow status and professionalism on a specific side in the war has also been noted by Richardson (2007) in his analysis of the 2003 invasion of Iraq.

In reference to Hezbollah, the text producer uses the referring expressions "group", "militant group", "the Lebanese militant group", "Lebanon's militant Hezbollah", "the militant Lebanese group" and "extremist forces". Examples can be seen in "two soldiers were seized by the **militant group** Hezbollah", "after a threat by the militant Lebanese group Hezbollah", "Leaders of the G8 nations have blamed **extremist forces**" and "**the group**'s defeat of Israel in Lebanon". In reference to the leader of Hezbollah, the text producer uses referring terms such as "Hezbollah's leader", "the leader of Lebanon's militant Hezbollah", "the leader of Lebanon's Hezbollah militants" "Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah", "the militant" ("**Hezbollah's leader** has said", "but **the militant** was unhurt in the raid"). In reference to the group's members, the text producer uses the referring expressions "militants", "Lebanese guerrillas", "fighters", which denote members of unofficial unorganized group, and, on one occasion, "forces". Examples can be seen in "the capture of two Israeli soldiers by Hezbollah **militants**", "Lebanese **guerrillas** have captured two Israeli soldiers", "clashed with Hezbollah **fighters**" and "fighting between Israel and Hezbollah **forces**"). The choice of the words "guerrillas", "militants" and "group" may have the effect of depicting Hezbollah members as an irregular paramilitary force rather than official army soldiers. Compare this lexical choice to the text producer's use of words

such as “troops” and “soldiers” which collocate with Israel. Such collocation might be read as conferring a sense of legitimization on the referent. It is worth noticing that the referring expression “extremist forces”, which extends to include Hezbollah and Hamas in the news text body, reflects the way Hezbollah is classified in the West and the States (this reference is discussed in more detail under section 7.2.5). The use of words such as “militants”, “militant group” and “guerrilla”, which are used in the BBC in reference to Hezbollah, is not discerned in connection with Hezbollah in both leads and headlines in Al-Jazeera. It is worth noticing that reference to the group members using the expressions “militants” and “guerrilla” which is found in the BBC leads is not discerned in the BBC headlines. The absence of such referring expressions from headlines could be seen as an indication of the influence of editorial work by which headlines, which are often formulated after the story is written, are subject to further editing by a sub-editor or copy editor. This difference in authorship has been highlighted in chapter three (see section 3.2.1.2) as one of the reasons for accompanying the analysis of headlines with an analysis of leads in the present study.

The text producer uses a number of expressions to refer to Israel’s military operations in Lebanon, as in “54 Lebanese civilians were killed in an Israeli **attack**”, “because of continuing Israeli **bombardment**”, “after **the bombing** of Beirut’s international airport”, “a major Israeli **operation** is under way”, “Israel has carried out air strikes and small-scale **incursions**”, “an Israeli **air raid** has killed at least 17 Lebanese civilians”, “during a **raid** on the southern Lebanese city of Tyre”, “Israel continues air strikes and **ground raids**” and “only one person was killed in an Israeli **air strike**”. Generally speaking, compared to the range of lexical items employed in the leads of Al-Jazeera in reference to Israel’s military operations, the BBC seems to use a

narrower array of lexical items. Hezbollah's military operations are given such labels as "rocket attacks", "a cross-border raid", "a raid" ("Hezbollah's **rocket attacks** on Israel", "a **raid** on Israel").

In reference to Israel's military offensive, the text producer uses a wide range of lexical items. While some of the referring expressions used signal the status of Israel as being on the offensive, for example, "(military) campaign", "incursion", "bombardment", "military assault", "offensive", "ground offensive" and "blockade" ("as it continues its **campaign** against Hezbollah militants", "the first Israeli land **incursion** into the country since 2000", "since **the bombardment** began on Wednesday", "citizens trapped in Lebanon by Israel's **military assault**", "the **offensive** against Hezbollah", "Israel is continuing an air, sea and land **blockade** on Lebanon"), other lexical items can be seen as more neutral in the sense that they do not signal a relation of perpetrator-afflicted, as in "to end **the month-long conflict**", "**the latest crisis** in the Middle East", "a UN resolution to end **the fighting** in the Middle East" and "over **the war** in Lebanon".

When referring to Israel's *material actions*, the text producer uses a number of lexical items such as "strike", "hit", "bomb", "crush", "destroy" and "seize" that directly and materially affect inanimate entities, as in "Israeli warplanes **have struck** at suspected Hezbollah sites", "Israel **has hit** the Beirut offices of Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah", "after his Beirut offices **were bombed** by Israel", "the Israeli air force **bombed** a United Nations observation post", "its attempt to **crush** Hezbollah", "scores of houses have been **destroyed**" and "Israeli forces say they have **seized** the Lebanese border village of Maroun al-Ras". Other *material action* verbs such as

“fight”, “battle”, “clash with”, “seize” and “kill” are ascribed to Israel affecting human participants (“Israeli soldiers **are fighting** Hezbollah militants”, “as troops **battled** Hezbollah fighters”, “it **has seized** a number of Hezbollah fighters”, “an Israeli air raid has **killed** at least 17 Lebanese civilians”, “54 Lebanese civilians were **killed**” and “**killing** at least 14 people, including nine soldiers”). The negatively connoted *material action* “kill” is ascribed 16 times to Israel where on six occasions Israel is indirectly introduced to the process. The range of verbs used to refer to Israel’s *material actions* in the BBC leads seems to be narrower than the range of verbs used in Al-Jazeera (see section 6.3.5). By contrast, in reference to Hezbollah’s *material actions*, the text producer uses a range of quasi-synonymous verbs such as “capture”, “seize” and “abduct” (“Lebanese guerrillas have **captured** two Israeli soldiers”, “two soldiers were **seized** by the militant group Hezbollah”, “the release of the two Israeli soldiers **abducted** by Hezbollah”). Other *material actions* such as “strike”, “target”, “fire” (“Two rockets **have struck** the Israeli city of Haifa”, “so it **could target** Israel”, “Hezbollah **fires** rockets into Israel”) and “kill” – used two times only in leads (“have **killed** at least eight people and **wounded** dozens of others in the coastal Israeli city of Haifa”, “Nine Israeli soldiers **have been killed** in fierce clashes with Hezbollah militants”) – are also found.

The entities affected by Israel’s *material actions* extend to include both civilian and military participants, as in “an Israeli air strike has killed at least 18 Lebanese **civilians**, including **women and children**”, “Israeli air raids have killed at least 23 **people**”, “at least 55 **civilians** have been killed in Israeli air strikes in Lebanon”, “more than 54 **civilians**, at least 34 of them **children**, have been killed”, “Israel’s air strike on Qana, Lebanon, which killed at least 54 **people** - including many **children**”,

“only one **person** was killed in an Israeli air strike”, “killing at least 14 **people**, including nine **soldiers**”, “Four **United Nations observers** have been killed”, “killing four **UN peacekeepers**” and “two Israeli soldiers and a Hezbollah **militant** have been killed”. The indefinite quantifying adverb “at least” is used nine times in connection with human victims. While the affected participants are identified by reference to age (“children”) and gender (“women”), on other occasions they are collectivized (“people”) and functionalized (“soldiers”, “peacekeepers”, “observers”) (van Leeuwen, 1996: 49, 51; cf. Fairclough, 1995a: 116). It should be noted that half of these references (8 out of 16 times where Israel is ascribed the *material action* “kill”) cover two major incidents in the war, including the bombing of the village of Qana and the bombing of the UN post. Limiting the range of the victims of Israel’s military operations in half of the references to the same entities in the real world may have the potential effect of weakening Israel’s potential incrimination by narrowing the range of casualties. Inanimate entities, both civilian and military, are also presented as directly affected by Israel’s military actions, as, for example, in “Israel would not have bombed a **building** in the Lebanese village of Qana”, “from the ruins of a **civilian building**”, “scores of **houses** have been destroyed”, “after the bombing of Beirut’s **international airport**”, “Israel has hit the Beirut **offices** of Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah”, “his Beirut offices were bombed by Israel”, “Israeli warplanes have struck at suspected Hezbollah **sites**” and “Israeli air force bombed a **United Nations observation post** in south Lebanon”. This explicit reference to the human participants and inanimate entities affected by Israel’s military actions can be seen as an indicator of the BBC’s accuracy and fairness in its coverage of the war. It is worth noticing that while the negatively connoted *material action* “kill” is ascribed 16 times in the BBC leads to Israel, including 10 times where the active voice is dominant, the *material*

*action* “kill” is ascribed 4 times only to Israel in headlines. To this one could add two times in which the non-ergative intransitive *material state* “dead” (“with dozens of air strikes leaving at least five people dead”) and the *nominalized material process* “death” (“the death of more than 50 civilians”) are used in leads. This discrepancy in using the *material action* “kill” and, in turn, in reference to casualties in the BBC could demonstrate the influence of editorial work. Whereas the leads are written by a reporter or journalist, headlines are subject to further editing by a sub-editor or copy editor.

Reference to the entities affected by Hezbollah’s military actions in leads is limited to the referring expressions “two soldiers”, occasionally modified by adjectives such as “captured”, “seized” and “abducted”, “nine Israeli soldiers” and “Israel”. On one occasion the affected participants are civilian (“have killed at least eight people and wounded dozens of others”). The referent of “two soldiers” is the Israeli soldiers who were captured during the episode that triggered the war. The entities affected by Hezbollah’s *material actions* are occasionally inanimate entities (“the Israeli city of Haifa”, “one of its vessels”). This near total absence of reference to affected entities, inanimate or human, military or civilian, except for the above references, is worth particular attention. By reference to Hezbollah’s military operations and *material actions* without specifying the affected entities or by limiting their range on the Israeli side, the text producer, one might suggest, manages to cast Hezbollah in a bad light without threatening Israel’s positive representation as dominating the war scene. This is further emphasized by the fact that Hezbollah is ascribed the *material action* “kill” on only two occasions in the leads of the BBC.

The use of adjective and adverbs that carry at least an implied evaluative meaning is kept to a minimum in the BBC coverage, demonstrating the BBC respect of the convention of “factuality” of the hard news report. The word “scores” is used on one occasion (“where **scores** of houses have been destroyed”) in reference to a Lebanese town that came under Israel’s bombardment.

The analysis reveals one dominant lexical pattern of representation that involves highlighting the difficulties facing displaced Lebanese and foreign nationals fleeing war zones, evacuation plans of foreign citizens by their governments and the difficulties facing aid and relief efforts. Examples of reference to evacuation of stranded civilians can be seen in “foreign governments are stepping up the **evacuation** of their citizens from Lebanon”, “the operation to **evacuate** more Irish citizens from Lebanon is set to continue”, “the first Britons to be **evacuated** from Lebanon by sea”, “the UK has been **evacuating** British nationals from Lebanon”, “more than 2,000 UK citizens have left Lebanon and no more **evacuations** are planned, the Foreign Office has said”, “thousands of foreign nationals and Lebanese holding dual nationality have been **evacuated** from Lebanon” and “Sri Lanka is advising its citizens **trapped** in Lebanon by Israel’s military assault to stay where they are”. Reference to the suffering of civilians stranded by the continuing Israeli bombing and their suffering in fleeing Lebanon represents a related recurrent pattern, as is evident in “Marianne Abbas is a US citizen whose husband is Lebanese. They are **stranded** with their children in a hotel in Tyre”, “a Cardiff student has spoken about the ordeal faced by him and thousands **stranded** in Beirut”, “an Israeli air strike has killed at least 18 Lebanese civilians, including women and children, who were **fleeing** southern border areas”, “a family from Scotland is caught up with tens of thousands of people trying to **flee** the

fighting in Lebanon” and “thousands of people are struggling to **leave** southern Lebanon, as Israel continues air strikes and ground raids”. Reporting on aid and relief efforts can also be seen in “convoys carrying humanitarian **aid** for south Lebanon have been stranded in the capital Beirut and other towns, in the absence of safe passage guarantees”, “delivering humanitarian **relief** to south Lebanon is becoming increasingly difficult because of continuing Israeli bombardment, **aid** agencies have warned” and “the UN has called for a three-day truce between Israel and Hezbollah to allow for **aid** to enter southern Lebanon and for casualties to be removed”. The analysis reveals the absence of similar cases of reporting on evacuation of foreign nationals from Israel, the suffering of displaced Israelis and stranded foreigners trying to flee Israel because of Hezbollah rocket attacks or the difficulties facing aid and relief efforts in Israel in the BBC leads. These discrepant representations may depict the situation in Lebanon as hazardous because of the continuing Israeli attacks, which is evident in reference to displaced Lebanese, fleeing and stranded foreigners, evacuation efforts of foreign nationals and relief efforts and the difficulties facing supplying aids. The emphasis on these lexical patterns in relation to Lebanon and foreign nationals in Lebanon, together with the absence of equal emphasis on similar incidents or news in relation to displaced Israelis and fleeing foreigners in Israel, may have the potential effect, for some readers, of incriminating Israel by implication.

Reference to the United Nations and its affiliated bodies and members is also noticeable in the leads of the BBC, in the use of expressions such as “the UN”, “a UN-brokered ceasefire”, “the United Nations”, “The UN Security Council”, “The United Nations Human Rights Council”, “UN chief Kofi Annan”, “UN Secretary General Kofi Annan”, “a senior UN official”, “four United Nations observers” and “UN

peacekeepers”. In almost all the references made to the international body, the text producer acknowledges the UN active role in ending the conflict through a ceasefire resolution (“Hostilities between Israel and Hezbollah militants in Lebanon must stop immediately, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan has said”, “**UN chief Kofi Annan** and UK PM Tony Blair have called for an international force to be sent to Lebanon”, “**The UN Security Council** has unanimously approved a new resolution calling for a ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah”, “**The UN Security Council** has voted for a ceasefire plan”, “a UN-brokered ceasefire has come into force between Israel and the Lebanese militant group, Hezbollah”, “The Israeli cabinet has endorsed a UN Security Council resolution calling for an end to fighting in southern Lebanon”). The BBC does not generally report on the UN reactions to any of the two sides of the war, except in the incident of the bombing of the village of Qana:

The UN secretary general has called on Security Council members to take urgent action after 54 Lebanese civilians were killed in an Israeli attack on Sunday.

The **United Nations** Human Rights Council has voted to send a team to Lebanon to investigate alleged abuses by Israel.

In the latter lead above, the choice of the modal adjective “alleged” (“alleged abuses”) when representing Israel’s actions is conventionally used to avoid accusations of bias (i.e. to maintain conventional neutrality and objectivity) but may also be read as questioning the truth of the reported content. Notice that on one occasion (“war crimes could have been committed in Lebanon, Israel and Gaza, a **senior UN official** has said”), accusations are not restricted to one side, i.e. blame is evenly distributed between the two sides of the war.

Reference to the United States and affiliated officials or organizations is similarly found in the BBC leads where the text producer uses referential expressions such as “the United States”, “the US”, “American diplomats”, “the US president”, “US President George Bush”, “US President George W Bush”, “the US state department” and “US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice”. Most of these references communicate a representation of the US as attempting to solve Lebanon’s conflict. Indicative examples are the following:

French and **American diplomats** at the UN are starting work on re-drafting their plan to end the Middle East crisis.

An international force must be quickly despatched to Lebanon, **US President George W Bush** has said.

Newspapers across the world examine the visit by **US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice** to Lebanon and Israel and look at its chances of bringing peace.

Occasionally, the reported content may pragmatically invite a representation of the US as exerting efforts to control Israel and as critical of its actions (“**US President George Bush** has said he will urge Israel to avoid civilian casualties”, “**The US state department** has dismissed as “outrageous” a suggestion by Israel that it has been authorised by the world to continue bombing Lebanon”). By contrast, the text producer provides the potential for inferring the US adverse attitude towards Hezbollah in the following two leads:

The **US president**, in St Petersburg for the G8 summit, has insisted Israel is defending itself against terror and Hezbollah is the root of the crisis.

**US President George W Bush** says Hezbollah and alleged UK air plot suspects share a "totalitarian ideology" they are seeking to spread.

Whereas the first lead provides a clear view of the US attitude towards the two sides in the ongoing war, it implicitly equates Hezbollah with "terror". The latter lead implicitly links Hezbollah with suspects in an alleged terror plot in UK.

When the US is represented as the focus of criticism, a closer look reveals that the sources attributed this critical attitude belong to the Arab media, Lebanon or Iran. Examples can be seen in "one Lebanese commentator accuses the **US** of displaying double standards in its treatment of Lebanon", "papers in Iran and Iraq appeal to Muslims to go to Lebanon and wage jihad against Israel and its perceived allies, the **US** and the **UK**" and "as Israeli attacks on Lebanon continue, anger in the Arabic press is largely focused on the **United States**". In attributing criticism targeting the US to entities such as "papers in Iran and Iraq", "one Lebanese commentator", "an Iranian daily" and "the Arabic press", one might suggest, the effect could be that of normalizing this criticism. The US is generally perceived as an ally of Israel, adopting pro-Israeli policy and an arms supplier for Israel. While Lebanon is a directly involved side in the war against Israel, Iran is a major ally of Hezbollah and has been in political disputes with the US for a long time. The Arabic press generally views the US as an ally of Israel which itself seen as an occupier of Palestine. Considering these factors, criticism on the part of these sides, which as can be seen are not neutral ones, could be viewed as expected and normal and could thus lose much of its impact for some readers. On one occasion, such criticism targeting the US came from the British Foreign Secretary in "British Foreign Secretary Margaret Beckett has protested to the **US** about its use of Prestwick Airport in western Scotland to transport bombs to

Israel". Apart from the high valuation of the source in the BBC ideological system, this lead draws attention to the alleged close connections between Israel and the US.

Reference to the UK is also noted in leads, as is evident in referring expressions such as "UK", "UK PM Tony Blair", "the UK PM", "Tony Blair", "Prime Minister Tony Blair", "British Foreign Secretary Margaret Beckett", "Foreign Office", "Royal Navy", "UK citizens", "British nationals", "The Birmingham-based charity Islamic Relief", "Britons", "Scotland", "Irish citizens" and "Cardiff student". Examining these references reveals that the text producer is (over)emphasizing UK role as seeking to bring the war to an end. Indicative examples are the following:

UN chief Kofi Annan and **UK PM Tony Blair** have called for an international force to be sent to Lebanon.

World leaders must apply "maximum pressure" to bring about a UN resolution for a sustainable ceasefire in the Middle East, **the UK PM** has said.

**Prime Minister Tony Blair** has said the G8 summit must come up with a plan to de-escalate the Middle East crisis.

**Tony Blair** is still trying to secure international support for a ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah.

**Tony Blair** has called for an immediate ceasefire after the UN Security Council unanimously passed a resolution aimed at ending the Middle East crisis.

This positive representation of the UK could be interpreted in different ways. The fact that the BBC is a British corporation could be an explanation, though it is still

arguable whether this positive representation derives from a nationalistic stance, is a mere statement of facts, or is a result of indirect control exerted over the corporation. Among all references to the UK, the UK is rarely represented as the target of criticism, as is evident in “papers in Iran and Iraq appeal to Muslims to go to Lebanon and wage jihad against Israel and its perceived allies, the US and the **UK**”. The implied accusations of favouring Israel in this instance are attributed to a foreign source (“Papers in Iran and Iraq”) and represented as questioned (“its perceived allies”). Hezbollah’s alleged close connections with Iran is brought into focus in “**Tony Blair** has accused Iran of supplying weapons to attack UK troops in Iraq, and of giving arms to Hezbollah so it could target Israel”.

Another main feature of the representation of UK in the leads of the BBC involves reporting on the efforts exerted by the UK to evacuate British, Irish, Welsh and Scottish citizens from Lebanon, as well as drawing attention to the difficulties they face in fleeing Lebanon. Indicative examples are the following:

Six **Royal Navy** vessels have been dispatched to Lebanon, where they may be called into action to rescue stranded **Britons**. . . .

The operation to evacuate more **Irish citizens** from Lebanon is set to continue.

A family from **Scotland** is caught up with tens of thousands of people trying to flee the fighting in Lebanon.

The first **Britons** to be evacuated from Lebanon by sea have told of their relief on leaving the conflict zone.

The **UK** has been evacuating **British nationals** from Lebanon amid continued fighting between Israel and Hezbollah forces in the south of the country.

More than 2,000 **UK citizens** have left Lebanon and no more evacuations are planned, the **Foreign Office** has said.

While these leads may communicate a positive representation of the UK, as evident in performing its duties and exerting a lot of efforts in evacuating its stranded citizens in Lebanon, these leads may simultaneously represent the situation in Lebanon as potentially hazardous because of the continuing Israeli bombardment of the country. The analysis shows that this representational feature is restricted to UK citizens in Lebanon, without similar cases of reference to evacuations of UK citizens from Israel, which may have the effect of incriminating Israel by implication.

The text producer simultaneously makes occasional reference to the Arab and Muslim world, as in “papers in *Iran* and Iraq appeal to **Muslims** to go to Lebanon and wage  *jihad*  against Israel and its perceived allies, the US and the UK”, “*Al-Qaeda’s deputy leader, Ayman al-Zawahiri*, has said in a video the militant network will respond to attacks on **Muslims** in Lebanon and Gaza”, “protests have flared across the Muslim world against Israel’s air strike on Qana, Lebanon, which killed at least 54 people - including many children”, “as Israeli attacks on Lebanon continue, anger in the **Arabic** press is largely focused on the United States”, “**Arabic** newspapers put the Beirut meeting of **Arab** foreign ministers on Lebanon under the spotlight, with several angry that it took almost four weeks for the gathering to happen” and “that the draft does not demand an immediate cease-fire is seen by one **Arab** paper as an Israeli ‘triumph’ ”. The word “Muslims” is an example of categorization by religion, but it is simultaneously an example of “assimilation”, i.e. they are referred to as a group rather than being individualized (cf. van Leeuwen, 1996: 48-49). One point worth commenting on is that when reference is made to “Muslims”, the text producer makes

reference to Iran and uses the word “Jihad”, and makes reference to “Al-Qaeda’s deputy leader, Ayman al-Zawahiri”. While source attribution absolves the text producer from the truth of the claims that the reported content makes, these lexical collocations, which can be seen as part of a Western view of the entities referred to, implicitly signal Hezbollah’s links to these referents. By contrast, reference made to the Arab world brings into focus the Arabic press dissatisfaction and rejection of the US stance, the UN ceasefire draft resolution as well as Arab countries’ reaction towards the conflict in Lebanon.

Reference to Iran and Syria, who are perceived to be the main allies of Hezbollah, is noted seven times in leads through the use of such referential strategies as “Iran”, “Tehran”, “Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad”, “Syria and Iran”, “the Syrian capital”, “Papers in Iran” and “an Iranian daily” (“Hezbollah’s capture of two Israeli soldiers last week was timed to divert attention from **Tehran**’s nuclear programme, the Israeli PM has claimed”, “**Iranian** president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has warned Israel that it has ‘pushed the button of its own destruction’ because of its actions in Lebanon”, “The Israeli army has released a video apparently showing a Hezbollah fighter admitting to taking part in a raid on Israel and undergoing training in **Iran**”, “**Syria** and **Iran** have praised Hezbollah for what both describe as the group’s defeat of Israel in Lebanon”, “Israel has intensified its attacks on Lebanon as jets launched fresh strikes on Beirut airport, the road to the **Syrian** capital and a power plant”). These references represent Iran and Hezbollah as being closely connected. The reference made to Tehran’s nuclear programme could be seen as an example of *intertextuality*, since the text producer reports the connection made by the Israeli PM between Hezbollah’s cross-border military operation and Iran’s nuclear programme,

which at the time was a heated topic and have been occupying news titles and headlines for a long time. This connection, Mandelzis, L. and Peleg, S. (2008: 62-73) argue, was employed as a strategy by Israeli and pro-Israeli media to shift the public attention from the Israeli military interference in Lebanon and its casualties to feelings of insecurity and threats to Israel caused by Iran's nuclear programme. The Israeli bombing of the road to the Syrian capital should also be interpreted in the light of the alleged close connections between Syria and Hezbollah.

#### 7.4. Comparing the representation of Hezbollah and Israel in the BBC

Analyzing representation in the reporting of the 2006 war between Israel and Hezbollah in the BBC headlines and leads reveals a number of patterns characterizing the representation of both sides. These patterns can be seen as an indication of the news outlet's ideological and political orientation. The following sections compare the representations of the two sides in the war within the coverage by the BBC.

##### 7.4.1. Hezbollah and Israel in the BBC headlines

Table 31 illustrates frequencies and percentages of reference to Hezbollah and Israel in the headlines of the BBC reports in terms of their participant roles and associated process types as related to the total number of mentions of Israel and Hezbollah:

Participant role	Process	Israel		Hezbollah	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%
<i>Actor</i>	<i>material</i>	39	48.1	4	17.4
<i>indirect Actor</i>	<i>material</i>	3	3.7	2	8.7
<i>Sayer</i>	<i>verbal</i>	8	9.9	4	17.4
<i>Beneficiary</i>	<i>material</i>	1	1.2	1	4.3
<i>Senser</i>	<i>mental</i>	5	6.2	1	4.3
<i>Carrier/Value</i>	<i>relational</i>	3	3.7	0	0.0
<i>part of a circumstance</i>	-	3	3.7	0	0.0
<i>Phenomenon</i>	<i>mental</i>	1	1.2	0	0.0

<i>Receiver</i>	<i>verbal</i>	1	1.2	0	0.0
<i>Target</i>	<i>verbal</i>	4	4.9	1	4.3
<i>indirect Goal</i>	<i>material</i>	1	1.2	0	0.0
<i>Goal</i>	<i>material</i>	12	14.8	9	39.1
no role	-	0	0.0	1	4.3
<b>Total</b>		<b>81</b>		<b>23</b>	

31. Frequencies of reference to Hezbollah and Israel in the BBC headlines

Table 32 groups participant roles assigned to both Israel and Hezbollah in the BBC headlines under a number of distinct categories based on the way they are introduced into the clause from a transitivity view point:

<b>Participant role</b>	<b>Israel</b>		<b>Hezbollah</b>	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
performer of action ( <i>Actor/indirect Actor/Sayer</i> )	50	61.7	10	43.5
benefits from action	1	1.2	1	4.3
part of a relation	3	3.7	0	0.0
triggers action	1	1.2	0	0.0
part of a circumstance	3	3.7	0	0.0
undergoes action	5	6.2	1	4.3
no participant role assigned	0	0.0	1	4.3
receiver of <i>verbal action</i>	1	1.2	0	0.0
affected by action ( <i>Goal/indirect Goal/Target</i> )	17	21.0	10	43.5

32. Representation of Israel and Hezbollah in the BBC headlines: performer or affected by action

One can easily notice a discrepancy in the frequency of reference to Israel and Hezbollah as performers of actions – a frequency of 61.7% of reference to Israel compared to 43.5% of reference to Hezbollah – as well as in their representation as receivers of actions – a frequency of 21.0% of reference to Israel compared to 43.5% of reference to Hezbollah. While Hezbollah is never ascribed a *material action* that extends to a human civilian participant, the group is ascribed the *material action* “seize” on one occasion where the affected participants are military and belong to

Israel (“Israel soldiers”). The only occasion in which the negatively connoted *material action* “kill” is used, no reference is made to Hezbollah in the headline and the affected participants are military. By contrast, the analysis reveals that Israel is ascribed the negatively connoted *material action* “kill” on four occasions. While the affected human participants are neutral non-combatants (“UN observers”) on one occasion, civilian participants (“26”, “Lebanese civilians”, “dozens”) are represented as affected by Israel’s *material actions* on three occasions. However, a detailed qualitative analysis of references to both Israel and Hezbollah reveals a number of significant points. First, the four references to human victims when Israel is represented as the performer of *material action* constitute only 4.9 % of the total frequency of reference to Israel in headlines. Second, the analysis shows that on one occasion the *non-ergative – intransitive – material process* “die”, rather than the *ergative – transitive – “kill”*, is used, which may have the effect of blurring Israel’s agency and responsibility. Third, the analysis also shows that the majority of references to Israel as the performer of *material actions* describe Israel’s tactical moves along either the spatial or temporal dimensions where reference to casualties is absent. In addition, the text producer occasionally makes use of quotes to signal that the reported content belongs to an external source and to absolve her/himself from the claims made. The low frequency of reference to human victims and the occasional blurring of affliction and agency, considering the imbalance of military power between the two fighting sides as well as the disparity in casualties, can be said to be in favour of Israel. Section 7.2.5 offers a detailed discussion on this point.

The BBC’s credibility and balanced coverage can be noticed in the text producer’s choice to focus attention on both the Israeli media opposition to the war which is due

to Israel's apparent failure to achieve the war goals and, simultaneously, to report on the support Israel gains in its war against Hezbollah from the Israeli media. Similarly, the text producer reports on Israel's claims that international powers back its offensive, but also reports on the US rejection of the claims that the world authorizes Israel to continue bombing Lebanon. The text producer also reports on the Israeli bombing of Qana and world reaction, but also focuses attention on Israel's feelings of regret towards the incident. The BBC also reports on Hezbollah's alleged close connections with Iran and Israel's alleged close connections with the US, where both Iran and the US are known to be main allies and arms suppliers for Hezbollah and Israel respectively. Reporting on these rather opposing pieces of news, which can be found elsewhere in the coverage of the BBC, could be seen as demonstrating the BBC credibility in its coverage; the news outlet is depicted as reporting on the state of affairs regardless of the sides involved and how they are represented. Another feature of representation that could be said to demonstrate the BBC credibility involves reporting on the suffering of ordinary people who are affected by the ongoing crisis in both Israel and Lebanon. A number of news reports with the headline "voices from the conflict" cover stories of civilians on both sides of the Israel-Lebanon borders.

Evacuation of stranded foreign nationals and stories of displaced Lebanese and foreigners trying to flee the war zone represent a recurrent pattern in the representation of the war. It is worth noticing that the majority of these headlines report mainly on evacuation of UK nationals as well as their stories, which one might suggest is expected from the BBC, being a British news outlet. It is worth noticing that this pattern is restricted to civilians fleeing Lebanon, while there is no similar mention of people fleeing Israel or evacuation plans of foreigners from Israel. In this

way the situation in Lebanon is depicted as potentially hazardous, with the continuing Israeli bombardment and raids forcing people to flee Lebanon and governments to evacuate their nationals. This representation does not equally apply to Israel despite Hezbollah's rocket attacks. This feature of representation may have the effect, for some readers, of incriminating Israel by implication.

Heavy reliance on explicit source attribution and the use of quotes which characterize the BBC reporting on the war could be viewed as an indication that the news outlet is careful to absolve itself from commitment to the claims made, building an effect of credibility and balanced coverage – something international news outlets, such as the BBC, strive to establish in the minds of their readers. Identifying the political perspectives and affiliations of the sources used in news stories can help detect the ideological stance of producers of news texts. Whereas Hezbollah is assigned the role of *Sayer* attributed *verbal action* on four occasions (17.4%), Israel is assigned the same role on eight occasions (9.9%). The text producer's choice to include these specific sources and their reports as part of the BBC coverage can have different implications. However, no claims could be made without analyzing the associated projected clauses. While source attribution in this case would still serve to absolve the text producer from commitment to the claims made, the type of processes and roles assigned to Israel within the projected clauses predominantly communicates a positive representation of Israel while representing Hezbollah as a potential threat. Whereas Hezbollah is attributed a threatening tone targeted at Israel, Israel is represented as warning civilians before striking, having support from both the Israeli media and international powers and as planning to continue its war until Hezbollah is neutralized. Occasionally, the reported content attributed to Israel provides the potential for

inferring Iran's connections with Hezbollah. Knowledge of the valuation of the Israeli sources as credible within the ideological system of the BBC as well as knowledge of the relative valuation of Israel within the BBC's ideological system, which one might claim, if not positive then at least, is higher than that of Hezbollah, suggest that the reported content might be in line with text producer's view point and overall stance.

The analysis reveals certain aspects that might question the BBC credibility and impartiality. Signs of subjective representation can be found in the text producer's choice to report on the concerns and sorrows of the Israeli soldiers' relatives. This choice may have the effect of arousing feelings of sympathy towards the Israeli soldiers and their casualties by reporting their relatives' feelings. Given the limited damage inflicted on Israel in the war compared to the big numbers of casualties among the Lebanese and Hezbollah, this choice might also be seen as a sign of subjective reporting. Another feature of representation that could be said to reflect signs of subjective representation involves the presence of processes of news selection and transformation discerned, though occasionally, when comparing the headlines with their accompanying leads. These processes involve the inclusion of certain information while leaving out others, or rephrasing other news with the potential of blurring or hiding Israel's agency while bringing into focus Hezbollah's.

#### **7.4.2. Hezbollah and Israel in the BBC leads**

Table 33 illustrates frequencies and percentages of reference to Hezbollah and Israel in the BBC leads in terms of their participant roles and associated process types:

Participant role	Process	Israel		Hezbollah	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%
<i>Actor</i>	<i>material</i>	105	38.5	20	22.5
<i>indirect Actor</i>	<i>material</i>	13	4.8	16	18.0
<i>co-Actor</i>	<i>material</i>	14	5.1	14	15.7
<i>Sayer</i>	<i>verbal</i>	29	10.6	7	7.9
<i>Senser</i>	<i>mental</i>	8	2.9	1	1.1
<i>Behaver</i>	<i>behavioural</i>	1	0.4	0	0.0
<i>Phenomenon</i>	<i>mental</i>	3	1.1	0	0.0
<i>Carrier/Attribute</i>	<i>relational</i>	8	2.9	2	2.2
<i>Identified/Identifier</i>	<i>relational</i>	2	0.7	4	4.5
<i>Beneficiary</i>	<i>material</i>	3	1.1	1	1.1
<i>Receiver</i>	<i>verbal</i>	4	1.5	0	0.0
<i>Target</i>	<i>verbal</i>	11	4.0	2	2.2
<i>part of a circumstance of location</i>	<i>material</i>	15	5.5	2	2.2
<i>indirect Goal</i>	<i>material</i>	21	7.7	10	11.2
<i>Goal</i>	<i>material</i>	36	13.2	10	11.2
<b>Total</b>		<b>273</b>		<b>89</b>	

### 33. Frequencies of reference to Hezbollah and Israel in the BBC leads

Table 34 groups the participant roles assigned to both Israel and Hezbollah in the BBC leads under a number of distinct categories based on the ways they are introduced into the clause from a transitivity point of view:

Participant role	Israel		Hezbollah	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
performer of action ( <i>Sayer/co-Actor/indirect Actor/Actor/Behaver</i> )	162	59.3	57	64.0
part of a relation	10	3.7	6	6.7
benefits from action	3	1.1	1	1.1
triggers action	3	1.1	0	0.0
part of a <i>circumstance of location</i>	15	5.5	2	2.2
undergoes action	8	2.9	1	1.1
receiver of <i>verbal action</i>	4	1.5	0	0.0
affected by action ( <i>Goal/ indirect Goal/ Target</i> )	68	25.0	22	24.7

### 34. Representation of Israel and Hezbollah in the BBC leads: performer or affected by action

The table above shows that the frequencies of reference to both Israel and Hezbollah as performers of action as well as affected by action are, more or less, close. The detailed textual analysis conducted in the present chapter reveals a number of textual features and patterns of representation characterizing the representations of both Hezbollah and Israel which are indicative of the BBC's attempt to build credibility as being one of the journalistic ethics news outlets apparently endeavour to adhere to. For example, similar textual strategies are used in the representation of both sides which result in blurring, weakening, hiding or sharing responsibility. One significant feature is that the text producer resorts to attributing the reported content to explicitly stated sources and uses scare quotes as strategies that aim to absolve him/her from being read as asserting the claims made, particularly in those cases where blame and responsibility are to be attributed directly to one of the two sides, specifically Israel.

Having said that, particular attention should be given to those cases where the text producer allows Israeli sources access to the news reports, which can be noted on many occasions compared to only seven cases of citing Hezbollah. An analysis of the reported content shows that Hezbollah is predominantly negatively represented, as is evident in bringing into focus the group's unwillingness to stop fighting, its insistence on a prisoner exchange to return the captured soldiers and its involvement in military operations against Israel. By contrast, the reported content focuses attention on Israel's readiness to end fighting, its acceptance of a peacekeeping force in Lebanon, the approval of Israel's operations in Lebanon on the part of some world powers, its implied concern not to cause casualties by warning civilians before striking and the losses and damage inflicted on it by Hezbollah. Although an analysis of the reported content reveals that Israel is not always positively represented, occasionally a negative

representation of Israel may be communicated, allowing Israeli sources more access could be an indication of a relatively higher valuation of Israel within the BBC ideological system. The BBC credibility is also questioned as the analysis reveals a number of processes of news selection and transformation whereby certain aspects of representation are brought into focus, whereas other aspects are overshadowed, particularly when compared with headlines of the BBC.

Another textual choice that is found in both the headlines and the leads of the BBC and that might indicate opposing representations of Israel and Hezbollah is the way the text producer refers to Hezbollah and its members using expressions and labels that denote members of unorganized unofficial group as opposed to the Israeli soldiers who are referred to in such ways that denote an official state member of the military. The influence of editorial work is also noticed in the absence of certain referring expressions in reference to Hezbollah and the low frequency of ascribing the negatively connoted *material action* “kill” to Israel in headlines when compared to leads.

The analysis reveals a number of features of representation that demonstrate the BBC credibility and balanced coverage. For example, a number of leads belong to news reports that are devoted to reporting equally on the difficulties facing civilians on both sides of the Israeli-Lebanon borders, allowing both Israeli and Lebanese citizens the chance to tell their stories of the ongoing conflict. In addition, the text producer reports on seemingly opposing news such as Israel’s rejection to halt or stop fighting as well as its subsequent approval of a ceasefire plan; international condemnation of Israel’s bombing of Qana as well as Israel’s feelings of regret over the bombing;

Iran's alleged close connections with Hezbollah as well as the US alleged close connections with Israel; and the British adverse attitude towards supplying weapons to Hezbollah from Iran as well as supplying Israel with weapons on the part of the US.

This chapter moved us one step forward towards providing an answer for the overarching research question by investigating the representation of the two sides in the war by the BBC. Building on the analyses of transitivity and lexical choices conducted in this chapter as well as the comparisons held between the representations of the two sides in the war by the BBC, chapter 8 comparisons of findings and discussion, seeks to reach conclusions as regards the ways the selected news outlets represent the war. The analysis conducted in this chapter reveals certain aspects of representation of the 2006 war that demonstrate the BBC's credibility, accuracy and balanced reporting. However, other aspects of representation show subjective reporting and opposing representations, which, one might claim, are found to be partial in favour of Israel.

## **CHAPTER 8**

### **Comparisons of Findings and Discussion**

#### **8.1. Introduction**

In an attempt to answer the overarching research question – namely, whether the selected news outlets, Al-Jazeera and the BBC, offer different or similar constructions of reality and hence position their readers into adopting certain points of view, the first part of this chapter, section 8.2, juxtaposes the representations of Israel and Hezbollah, comparing the headlines of Al-Jazeera and the BBC. The same step is also followed to compare the leads of each of the selected news outlets. This is done to find out whether, and how, the way in which the war is represented varies between the two selected news outlets, i.e. whether the selected news outlets offer different or similar representations of the war, its participants and its events, resulting in positioning readers to adopt certain opinions. Throughout these comparisons, I try to offer explanations for the findings based on a number of factors including: 1) the historical, socio-political and cultural contexts of the action and main participants as well as different accounts and views of the 2006 war reviewed in chapter two; 2) the background of the selected news outlets including their history, ownership and funding, political and ideological orientation, journalistic ethics, and editorial

guidelines offered in chapters two and three; and 3) personal knowledge of the wider situational context including the relative evaluation of the two sides in the war Hezbollah and Israel within text producers' own ideological systems. Based on the findings of the analyses conducted in chapters 6 and 7, the comparisons held in the first part of the present chapter (section 8.2) as well as the findings of the analyses of selected headlines and leads reporting on the same event (section 8.3), the last part of the chapter (section 8.4) attempts to offer an interpretation of the findings in the light of van Dijk's (1998, 2011) framework for the analysis of ideologies and opinions in the press and insights from Fairclough's framework.

## **8.2. Comparing Al-Jazeera and BBC representations**

The following sections compare the representations of the same participant, Israel or Hezbollah, in the headlines and leads of each of the two selected news outlets' coverage of the 2006 war. It should be mentioned at this stage that the following overall representations of Hezbollah and Israel in the headlines and leads of each of Al-Jazeera and the BBC as well as the proposed explanations are based on the factors mentioned above. The highly detailed textual analysis of the representation of Hezbollah and Israel in each of the selected news outlets as well as the comparisons made between their representations within each news outlet, which form the core of chapters six and seven, provide the basis for reaching the interpretations and explanations proposed in the following sections. The statistical data including the frequencies and percentages of reference to each of Hezbollah and Israel in the headlines and leads of each of the news outlets are used as a starting point for the qualitative analyses.

### 8.2.1. Representation of Hezbollah in the selected news outlets headlines

Table 35 illustrates the percentages of reference to Hezbollah in different participant roles as related to the total number of mentions of Hezbollah in the headlines of each of Al-Jazeera and the BBC:

Participant roles	News outlet	
	Al-Jazeera	BBC
1 <i>Actor</i>	13.6	17.4
2 <i>indirect Actor</i>	0.0	8.7
3 <i>Sayer</i>	18.2	17.4
4 <i>Beneficiary</i>	0.0	4.3
5 <i>Senser</i>	9.1	4.3
6 <i>Carrier/Attribute</i>	4.5	0.0
7 <i>Target</i>	13.6	4.3
8 <i>Goal</i>	40.9	39.1
9 no clear role assigned	0.0	4.3
<b>Total number of references</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>

35. Representations by the selected news outlets of Hezbollah in headlines (1)

Table 36 groups the participant roles assigned to Hezbollah in the headlines of each of the selected news outlets in distinct semantic categories based on the ways Hezbollah is introduced into the clause from a transitivity point of view:

Participant role	News outlet	
	Al-Jazeera	BBC
performer of action	31.8	43.5
benefits from action	0.0	4.3
part of a relation	4.5	0.0
undergoes action	9.1	4.3
affected by action	54.6	43.5
no participant role assigned	0.0	4.3

36. Representations by the selected news outlets of Hezbollah in headlines (2)

An intuitive look at the percentages of reference to Hezbollah in the above tables shows that the representations of Hezbollah in Al-Jazeera and the BBC are to some

extent different. Whereas the percentage of reference to Hezbollah as the performer of action is higher in the BBC (43.5%) than in Al-Jazeera (31.8%), the percentage of reference to Hezbollah as an affected participant is lower in the BBC (43.5%) than in its counterpart in Al-Jazeera (54.6%). In addition, by comparing the performer of action/affected by action ratio in the BBC with its counterpart in Al-Jazeera, we notice that in the BBC the percentages are identical, whereas in Al-Jazeera Hezbollah is more likely to be represented as affected by action than as performer of action. One might therefore conclude that Al-Jazeera is more likely to represent Hezbollah as a victim. A thorough textual analysis of the headlines of Al-Jazeera and the BBC as well as well-informed knowledge of the context reveal significant variation and considerable differences in the representation of Hezbollah in the two news outlets that are in accordance with the above statistical differences.

The representation of Hezbollah in Al-Jazeera headlines is characterized by highlighting the group's military potential and fighting capabilities and giving credit to Hezbollah's tactics and strategies in the war. Al-Jazeera's coverage also communicates a representation of Hezbollah as not deterred by Israel's military force; rather the group is represented as enjoying a degree of confidence and as having a high estimate of its military potential.<sup>1</sup> The representation of Hezbollah is also characterized by polishing the public image of the group by attributing the group and its leader a threatening tone directed at Israel. The text producer simultaneously depicts the group as an inactive in material terms, involved in saying rather than doing, as a means of weakening the group's responsibility and agency. Text producers frequently cite Hezbollah in headlines, allowing the group and its spokespersons

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<sup>1</sup> See section 6.2.2 for a summary of the representation of Hezbollah in Al-Jazeera headlines.

access to its coverage of the war. The affliction of the group is highlighted as a means of emphasizing Israel's agency, for example through introducing Israel as the performer of *material actions* whenever Hezbollah is represented as an affected entity. Hezbollah is represented as affected by the *material action* "kill" one time where it is ascribed to Israel, whereas on no occasion Hezbollah is ascribed the *material action* "kill". These characteristic features are clearly reflected in, and simultaneously substantiated by, the percentages of reference in Al-Jazeera noticed above.

The BBC's representation of Hezbollah is characterized by a number of significant features that are very much different from those characterizing Al-Jazeera representation.<sup>2</sup> For example, Hezbollah is occasionally represented as a potential threat to Israel, as receiving arms supplies from Iran and as having links with alleged terrorist groups as part of projected clauses attributed to sources such as the Australian PM, the British PM Tony Blair, the US president Bush and the G8. This textual choice, when considering the valuation of the sources as credible within the ideological system of the text producer, may have the effect of communicating a negative representation of Hezbollah. When Hezbollah is cited in headlines the reported content brings into focus the group's readiness to extend its war against Israel and its threatening tone targeting Israel. In addition, analyzing the representation of Hezbollah in the headlines of the BBC reveals the presence of processes of news selection and transformation whereby text producers make unnecessary generalizations or omit important information resulting in creating a negative representation of the group. The frequency of reference to Hezbollah as affected by action is identical to the frequency of reference to the group as performer of action

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<sup>2</sup> See section 7.2.2 for a summary of the representation of Hezbollah in the BBC headlines.

within the BBC coverage which might be interpreted as a sign of possible balanced coverage. However, a closer look reveals that when represented as the performer of action, the text producer brings into focus Hezbollah's potential military capabilities which enable the group to strike deep into Israel and how far the extent to which the situation is hazardous for Israel. Similarly, a closer look at the entities assigned the role of *Goal* shows that this role is explicitly assigned to inanimate entities belonging to Hezbollah, which may have the effect of weakening both Israel's agency and Hezbollah's affliction, as military entities are more likely to be regarded by readers as legitimate targets within a war context. While the above features could communicating a negative representation of Hezbollah and possibly question the reliability and credibility of the BBC, one might claim that other noted aspects of representation could demonstrate the BBC's accurate and fair reporting and its balanced coverage. These aspects include the overall insistence on attributing the reported content to sources other than the text producer cutting across all patterns of representation. Offering readers the possibility of questioning the truth of the reported content through the use of varying textual strategies is another indication of this balanced coverage. On one occasion the text producer offers a positive representation of Hezbollah by providing the potential for inferring the group's willingness to adhere to the UN ceasefire decision.<sup>3</sup> Whereas Hezbollah is never affected by the *material action* "kill", on no occasion do the group's *material actions* extend to human civilian participants and on only one occasion is Hezbollah ascribed the *material action* "kill" in the BBC headlines, where the affected participants belong to the military and reference to Hezbollah is not made explicit. In this manner, the BBC could possibly enhance its credibility and impartiality as a news outlet in the minds of readers.

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<sup>3</sup> It is important to note that most negative or positive representations arise in readers' minds in combination with background knowledge and beliefs.

### 8.2.2. Representation of Israel in the selected news outlets headlines

Table 37 illustrates the percentages of reference to Israel in different participant roles as related to the total number of mentions of Israel in Al-Jazeera and the BBC headlines:

Participant role	Israel in headlines	
	Al-Jazeera	BBC
1 <i>Actor</i>	51.0	48.1
2 <i>indirect Actor</i>	5.9	3.7
3 <i>Sayer</i>	15.7	9.9
4 <i>Senser</i>	5.9	6.2
5 <i>Beneficiary</i>	2.0	1.2
6 <i>Carrier/Attribute/Value</i>	3.9	3.7
7 <i>part of a circumstance</i>	2.0	3.7
8 <i>Phenomenon</i>	0.0	1.2
9 <i>Receiver</i>	2.0	1.2
10 <i>Target</i>	2.0	4.9
11 <i>indirect Goal</i>	3.9	1.2
12 <i>Goal</i>	5.9	14.8
<b>Total number of references</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>81</b>

37. Representations by the selected news outlets of Israel in headlines (1)

Table 38 groups the participant roles assigned to Israel in the headlines of each of the selected news outlets in distinct semantic categories based on the ways Israel is introduced into the clause from a transitivity point of view:

Participant role	News outlet	
	Al-Jazeera	BBC
performer of action	72.5	61.7
part of a relation	3.9	3.7
benefits from action	2.0	1.2
triggers action	0.0	1.2
part of a <i>circumstance</i>	2.0	3.7
undergoes action	5.9	6.2
receiver of <i>verbal action</i>	2.0	1.2
affected by action	11.8	21.0

38. Representations by the selected news outlets of Israel in headlines (2)

Similar to the differential representations of Hezbollah noted in the headlines of Al-Jazeera and the BBC, the representation of Israel in the headlines of Al-Jazeera seems to be relatively different from that of the BBC. Whereas the percentages of reference to Israel as an affected participant in the headlines of Al-Jazeera is lower than that of the BBC, the percentage of reference to Israel as a performer of action in Al-Jazeera is higher than that of the BBC. This statistical observation substantiates, and is simultaneously validated by, the findings of the textual analysis.

Based on the thorough textual analysis conducted in chapter 6, the representation of Israel in the headlines of Al-Jazeera is found to exhibit a number of characteristic features.<sup>4</sup> These features include conveying a representation of Israel as planning to widen and continue its offensive, and emphasizing Israel's agency and dominance by representing it as the performer of different types of actions. Text producers also communicate to readers a representation of Israel as a blind force whose actions extend to civilians as well as military targets. The text producer highlights certain aspects that may communicate a representation of Israel as disregarding international law and as negligent to ceasefire calls. Israel's alleged close connections with the US as Israel's main weapons provider and ally are also brought into focus. As part of negative other-representation, the text producer makes reference to Israel's unpreparedness, its ill intentions and unwillingness to stop the war. The text producer intensifies potential incrimination of Israel and its responsibility for the ongoing onslaught by ascribing to it negatively connoted *material actions*, particularly "kill", that affect, beside military entities, civilian victims. The features distinguishing the

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<sup>4</sup> See section 6.2.4 for a summary of the representation of Israel in Al-Jazeera headlines.

representation of Israel in the headlines of Al-Jazeera communicate to readers an overall negative view of Israel in the war.

The detailed textual analysis of the headlines of the BBC conducted in chapter 7 as well as the comparison between the representations of Israel and Hezbollah that concludes the same chapter show a number of significant features.<sup>5</sup> The noted patterns, though revealing a higher degree of balanced coverage compared to Al-Jazeera's representation, communicate a representation of Israel that exhibits features of subjective reporting. The BBC develops a representation of Israel characterized by focusing attention on Israel's restrained power reflected in warning civilians before delivering strikes. On more than one occasion, the analysis reveals a process of news selection whereby the text producer picks on certain parts of the lead, while avoiding reference to other parts. The analysis reveals that the foregrounded aspects are predominantly in favour of Israel, whereas the parts which are left out potentially develop a negative representation of Israel. Israel is predominantly depicted as being in full control of the actions and as dominating the war scene. Agency and affliction are occasionally blurred, weakened or hidden resulting in blurring responsibility and blame. For example, the majority of Israel's *material actions* describe Israel's tactical moves along either the spatial and temporal dimensions or they extend to inanimate entities where reference to casualties is absent. In addition, the text producer uses the *non-ergative intransitive process* "die", rather than "kill", on one occasion where the affected entities are civilian. Israel is ascribed the negatively connoted *material action* "kill" on four occasions, where the affected participants are both civilian and neutral non-combatants. When represented as affected by *material actions*, the text producer

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<sup>5</sup> See section 7.2.4 for a summary of the representation of Israel in the BBC headlines.

occasionally uses the referring term “Israelis” in reference to military casualties, rather than using a term such as “soldiers” that explicitly indicates the victims’ military status, which may result in directing some readers towards mistakenly inferring the victims as civilians. It is worth mentioning that whereas Israel is ascribed the *material action* “kill” four times (4.9%), Hezbollah is ascribed “kill” one time (4.3%), where it could be noticed that these frequencies are quite low and roughly similar. Considering the imbalance of military power and that in actual fact the numbers of Lebanese victims in the 2006 war is higher than the number of Israeli victims (a reported ratio of roughly 10 Lebanese casualties for every one Israeli casualty), the above frequencies of ascribing the *material action* “kill” to the two sides in the war could possibly be viewed as indicating a stance which is potentially partial and in favour of Israel.<sup>6</sup>

Reporting on news communicating opposing views of Israel could be seen as demonstrating the BBC credibility in its coverage; the news outlet reports on the state of affairs regardless of the sides involved and how they are represented. For example, the text producer focuses attention on both the Israeli media opposition to the war because of Israel’s apparent failure to achieve the war goals and, simultaneously, reports on the support Israel gains in its ongoing war against Hezbollah from the Israeli media, as well as from international powers. Similarly, the text producer brings into focus Israel’s rejection of ceasefire and, simultaneously, reports on its readiness to accept ceasefire and peacekeeping force in Lebanon. Apart from reporting on these seemingly opposing pieces of news, another feature of representation that potentially demonstrates the BBC credibility involves reporting on the suffering of ordinary people who are affected by the ongoing crisis in both Israel and Lebanon. The BBC

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<sup>6</sup> For further discussion on this point, see section 7.2.5.

also reports on evacuation of foreign nationals and the suffering of foreigners trying to flee Lebanon, while there is no similar mention of people fleeing Israel or evacuation plans of foreigners from Israel. In this way, the situation in Lebanon is depicted as hazardous because of Israeli attacks, whereas it is not equally depicted in Israel despite Hezbollah’s rocket attacks. This feature of representation may have the effect of incriminating Israel by implication. Moreover, while source attribution absolves the text producer from commitment to the claims made in the reported content, it simultaneously builds an effect of credibility and balanced coverage – international news outlets, such as the BBC, strive for – in the minds of the readers. Having said that, analyzing the reported content shows that a positive representation of Israel may potentially be communicated while Hezbollah is predominantly represented as a potential threat.

### 8.2.3. Representation of Hezbollah in the selected news outlets leads

Table 39 illustrates the percentages of reference to Hezbollah in different participant roles as related to the total number of mentions of Hezbollah in Al-Jazeera and the BBC leads:

Participant role	News outlet	
	Al-Jazeera	BBC
1 <i>Actor</i>	36.8	22.5
2 <i>indirect Actor</i>	8.8	18.0
3 <i>co-Actor</i>	5.9	15.7
4 <i>Sayer</i>	14.7	7.9
5 <i>Senser</i>	2.9	1.1
6 <i>Carrier/Attribute</i>	1.5	2.2
7 <i>Identified</i>	0.0	4.5
8 <i>Target</i>	8.8	2.2
9 <i>part of a circumstance of location</i>	0.0	2.2
10 <i>indirect Goal</i>	8.8	11.2
11 <i>Goal</i>	11.8	11.2
<b>Total number of references</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>89</b>

39. Representations by the selected news outlets of Hezbollah in leads (1)

Table 40 groups the participant roles assigned to Hezbollah in the leads of each of the selected news outlets in distinct semantic categories based on the ways Hezbollah is introduced into the clause from a transitivity point of view:

Participant role	News outlet	
	Al-Jazeera	BBC
performer of action	66.2	64.0
part of a relation	1.5	6.7
benefits from action	0.0	1.1
part of a <i>circumstance of location</i>	0.0	2.2
undergoes action	2.9	1.1
affected by action	29.4	24.7

40. Representations by the selected news outlets of Hezbollah in leads (2)

An intuitive look at the percentages of reference to Hezbollah, particularly as an affected participant and as the performer of action, in Al-Jazeera and the BBC leads would suggest that the two news outlets' representations of Hezbollah are very much the same. However, a thorough textual analysis of the leads of Al-Jazeera and the BBC as well as well-informed knowledge of the context reveal considerable differences in the representation of Hezbollah in the two news outlets.

The representation of Hezbollah in Al-Jazeera leads is characterized by a number of recurrent features. Hezbollah is depicted as intending to stop fighting, as evident in its acceptance of a ceasefire. Other features include blurring the group's agency and its direct responsibility and weakening the causal link when Hezbollah is ascribed military actions. To balance Israel's superiority in the war without possibly incriminating Hezbollah, the text producer ascribes *material actions* to Hezbollah while representing these military actions as either defensive ones, instigated by, following in temporal order, or a consequence of Israel's military actions. So, despite

the high percentage of reference to Hezbollah as an *Actor* (36.8%) in Al-Jazeera leads, compared to a percentage of (22.5%) in the BBC's leads, the analysis shows that different textual strategies are employed with the effect of weakening Hezbollah's agency. Text producers also attribute to Hezbollah and its leader threatening language directed at Israel to balance Israel's dominance. This is evident in the high percentage of reference to Hezbollah as the *Sayer* (14.7%), compared to a much lower percentage (7.9%) of reference to Hezbollah as the *Sayer* in the BBC leads. In cases where the reported content may communicate a negative representation of Hezbollah, the text producer absolves him/herself from being read as asserting the claims made in the reported content by attributing them to external sources. Based on knowledge of Al-Jazeera's ideological valuation of different sources, which itself is governed by a knowledge of the wider social as well as political context, these negatively connoted claims about Hezbollah, which are often attributed to Israeli sources, are to be viewed and judged as less credible from Al-Jazeera perspective. This valuation which is communicated to readers is often based on shared knowledge. When Hezbollah is the performer of *material actions*, the analysis shows that on no single occasion are the affected participants represented as civilian, belonging to Israel or any other side. Similarly, the negatively connoted *material action* "kill" is ascribed to Hezbollah three times only in the entire corpus of Al-Jazeera leads where the affected entities are Israeli military participants. This overall positive representation of Hezbollah within Al-Jazeera leads seems to be in line with Hezbollah's representation within the headlines of the same news outlet.

Moving to the representation of Hezbollah in the leads of the BBC, the analysis reveals a number of characteristic features. These features include communicating a

representation of Hezbollah as a potential threat that should be neutralized, focusing attention on Hezbollah's alleged close links to both Syria and Iran and bringing into focus the way international powers are critical of Hezbollah. Representing Hezbollah's actions as balancing, providing the reason for, or offering explanations for Israel's military operations is another feature of the representation of Hezbollah in the BBC leads. Source attribution is used extensively in leads as a strategy aiming to absolve the text producer from commitment to the claims the reported content makes, which could be seen as a sign of credibility. However, the analysis reveals that while Israeli sources are frequently cited, Hezbollah is not one of the accessed voices in the BBC – the percentage of reference to Hezbollah as the *Sayer* in the BBC is quite lower than that of Al-Jazeera, which in a way reflects the relative evaluation of both sides in the BBC. More importantly, the reported content predominantly represents Hezbollah as a potential threat to Israel and brings into focus the group's military capabilities as well as its alleged close connections with Iran. When Hezbollah is ascribed *material actions* that affect human participants, the affected participants are in most cases the two Israeli soldiers whose capture triggered the war and the *material actions* used are quasi-synonymous. By ascribing Hezbollah *material actions* that affect Israeli human participants, the effect could potentially be incriminating the group by implication. However, the text producer simultaneously manages to keep Israel's superiority and dominance by limiting the range of the military human participants affected by Hezbollah's *material actions* as well as limiting the range of these *material actions*, as shown above. The BBC balanced coverage could be seen in ascribing Hezbollah the negatively connoted *material action* "kill" on only two occasions in leads; whereas, human participants belonging to Hezbollah are affected by the *material action* "kill" on only one occasion where the text producer pairs

Hezbollah's affliction with Israel's. Although the representation of Hezbollah in the BBC shows signs of balanced and accurate reporting, signs of subjectivity and biased reporting are equally found, resembling in this respect the representation of Hezbollah in the headlines of the same news outlet.

#### 8.2.4. Representation of Israel in the selected news outlets leads

Table 41 illustrates the percentages of reference to Israel in different roles as related to the total number of mentions of Israel in Al-Jazeera and the BBC leads:

Participant role	News outlet	
	Al-Jazeera	BBC
1 <i>Actor</i>	42.0	38.5
2 <i>indirect Actor</i>	3.9	4.8
3 <i>co-Actor</i>	2.8	5.1
4 <i>Sayer</i>	13.3	10.6
5 <i>Beneficiary</i>	1.7	1.1
6 <i>Senser</i>	5.0	2.9
7 <i>Behaver</i>	0.0	0.4
8 <i>Carrier/Attribute/Value/Token/ Identifier</i>	1.7	3.7
9 <i>Phenomenon</i>	0.0	1.1
10 <i>Receiver</i>	1.1	1.5
11 <i>Target</i>	3.9	4.0
12 <i>part of a circumstance of location</i>	6.1	5.5
13 <i>indirect Goal</i>	5.0	7.7
14 <i>Goal</i>	13.3	13.2
<b>Total number of references</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>273</b>

41. Representations by the selected news outlets of Israel in leads (1)

Table 42 groups the participant roles assigned to Israel in the leads of each of the selected news outlets in distinct semantic categories based on the ways Israel is introduced into the clause from a transitivity point of view:

Participant role	News outlets	
	Al-Jazeera	BBC
performer of action	62.4	59.3
part of a relation	1.7	3.7
benefits from action	1.7	1.1
triggers action	0.0	1.1
part of a <i>circumstance</i>	6.1	5.5
undergoes action	5.0	2.9
receiver of <i>verbal action</i>	1.1	1.5
affected by action	22.1	25.0

#### 42. Representations by the selected news outlets of Israel in leads (2)

The percentages of reference to Israel in the leads of Al-Jazeera and the BBC, particularly when represented as performers of action and affected by actions, are very much similar suggesting that the two news outlets' representations of Israel are more or less the same. However, the thorough textual analysis conducted reveals that the selected news outlets' coverage of the war and its events communicates different representations of Israel.

Starting with Al-Jazeera, the analysis reveals that the representation of Israel is characterized by depicting Israel as expansionist and in a continuous state of war against Hezbollah and Lebanon. In addition, the text producer employs varying strategies that aim at intensifying Israel's agency and casting more blame on Israel by strengthening the victims' affliction, ascribing Israel the negatively connoted *material action* "kill" and by referring to explicitly-mentioned human civilian victims. In this way, Israel is represented as the one who is responsible for, hence to be blamed for, war calamities. This representation is reflected in the high percentage of reference to Israel as performer of action compared to its representation as an affected participant within Al-Jazeera leads. Besides its aggressive military actions, the text producer also

sheds light on Israel's strong and threatening language. This potential negative representation of Israel is emphasized by depicting Israel as disregarding international law; bestowing a sense of potential international condemnation of Israel's military actions; and providing the potential for inferring Israel's ill intentions by introducing the destruction of Lebanon as its "ultimate goal". To balance the support Hezbollah receives from Syria, Iran and Russia, the text producer reports on the US support for Israel in its offensive.

Simultaneously, role assignment and the types of processes associated with Israel provide the potential for inferring Israel's unpreparedness and Hezbollah's competence and convey a representation of Israel as facing strong resistance from Hezbollah. The text producer strategically attributes this latter image to Israeli sources in order to reinforce the news outlet's objectivity, while simultaneously giving credit to the account of Hezbollah's tough resistance by attributing it to Israel. On the other hand, when Israel is represented as an affected participant, the text producer employs strategies that result in blurring the causal link and weakening Israel's affliction. The percentages of reference to Israel in the leads of Al-Jazeera seem to substantiate these overall representational patterns and textual strategies. In addition, the overall representation of Israel in the leads of Al-Jazeera seems to be in line with the representation of Israel in the headlines of the same news outlet.

Although as indicated earlier the percentages of reference to Israel in the leads of Al-Jazeera and the BBC are pretty much similar, the textual analysis reveals the presence of differential representations. The representation of Israel in the leads of the BBC is characterized by depicting Israel as a major military power with potential capabilities

which enable it to control and dominate the war scene.<sup>7</sup> This military superiority is reflected in presenting Israel as being in a position of power to accept or reject the internationally-powered ceasefire and in depicting Israel as planning to continue and widen its offensive with the purpose of neutralizing Hezbollah. To bestow a degree of legitimization on Israel's offensive, the text producer brings into focus the official and legitimate status of Israeli soldiers as opposed to the unrecognized unofficial Hezbollah militia and depicts Israel's incursion as a consequence of Hezbollah's military actions. By leading readers to focus on Israel's warning of civilians before delivering strikes, its ignorance of the presence of civilians inside the bombed building in the incident of Qana and its willingness to cooperate with the UN and to accept ceasefire, the potential effects, for some readers, could be communicating a positive representation of Israel and weakening its potential incrimination. The text producer also focuses attention on Iran's alleged close connections with Hezbollah, its role in the ongoing war and Iran's threats to Israel's national security. When Israel is ascribed agency, the text producer occasionally employs strategies that may result in blurring the causal link by widening the gaps between agency and affliction<sup>8</sup>. Similarly, different types of *expansions* are employed with the effect of balancing, weakening or explaining Israel's military actions. Israel is ascribed the negatively connoted *material action* "kill" on 16 occasions; however, it should be noted that 8 out of these 16 references cover only two incidents in the war, which could potentially result in limiting the range of the victims of Israel's military operations to the same entities in the real world. Narrowing the range of casualties may have the potential effect, for some readers, of weakening Israel's potential incrimination. It is worth noticing that the analysis reveals a process of news selection whereby the text

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<sup>7</sup> See section 7.3.4 for a summary of the representation of Israel in the BBC leads.

<sup>8</sup> See table 29.

producer picks on certain parts of the lead, while avoiding reference to other parts. For example, whereas the *material action* “kill” is ascribed to Israel 16 times in the BBC leads, it is only ascribed to Israel 4 times in headlines of the BBC. This discrepancy could potentially be said to be in favour of Israel, as it could result in concealing both Israel’s agency and the Lebanese’ affliction. As for those cases where Israel and Hezbollah share the role of *co-Actor*, i.e. agency is shared, bearing in mind the imbalance as regards Israel’s and Hezbollah’s military capabilities as well as the actual reported casualties on both sides, one might claim that this representation enables the text producer to avoid attributing responsibility to Israel. This representation also enables text producers to equally distribute blame between Israel and Hezbollah and to conceal the identity of Israel the actual *Actor* by blurring agency. When Israel is represented as an affected participant, the analysis shows that the BBC does not emphasize Israel’s affliction and Israel is by no means depicted as lacking control.

Despite the fact that almost all of the above features of representation communicate a positive representation of Israel, other features of representation seem to convey a somewhat different view. For example, the text producer reports on the alleged close connections between the US and Israel besides those between Hezbollah and Iran. The text producer similarly sheds light on the British adverse attitude towards supplying weapons to Hezbollah from Iran as well as supplying Israel with weapons on the part of the US. The BBC also reports on the worldwide pressure on Israel to put an end to the war. Other noted features include drawing attention to the international as well as the Israeli media opposition and critical response towards Israel’s performance in the war, particularly its overconfidence and decisions that result in failing Israel, which

has the potential of communicating to the readers an image of Israel's war on Lebanon as being opposed not only internationally but also from within Israel itself.

The BBC's credibility and balanced coverage can also be seen in equally reporting on the suffering and reactions of ordinary people on both sides of the conflict. The text producer also highlights the difficulties facing displaced Lebanese and foreign nationals fleeing war zones, evacuation plans of foreign citizens by their governments and the difficulties facing aid and relief efforts. The analysis reveals the absence of equal reporting on similar incidents in relation to displaced Israelis, foreigners fleeing Israel or evacuation of foreign nationals from Israel. These discrepant representations depict the situation in Lebanon as potentially hazardous because of the continuing Israeli attacks, which may have the effect of incriminating Israel by implication.

Another feature worth commenting on is the fact that the Israeli media are heavily cited in the BBC. While source attribution generally enables the text producer to absolve her/himself from the claims made, it may optionally be an indication of a high and positive valuation of the source, Israel in this case, within the BBC ideology. There still is the possibility that the reported content might be indicative of the text producer's view point, which conforms with Richardson's (2007: 216) comment that "journalists often quote sources whose views accord with their own or their newspaper's view of an event". The finding that the reported content covers different views related to the Israeli media criticism of the Israeli government and the military for the war decision and for accepting ceasefire could be indicative of the BBC's attempt to build credibility and impartiality as being one of the journalistic ethics international news outlets strive for. Having said that, the reported content could be

said to predominantly communicate, for some readers, a positive representation of Israel, as, for example, is evident in warning civilians before delivering strikes and its acceptance of UN decisions. The analysis of the representation of Israel in the leads of the BBC reveals certain representational patterns that resemble to a great extent those patterns characterizing the representation of Israel in the headlines of the same news outlet, particularly the presence of signs of balanced and accurate reporting, as well as signs of subjectivity and biased reporting in favour of Israel.

### **8.3. Different representations of the same event: headlines and leads**

This section offers detailed analyses of headlines and leads that refer to the same historical episode across the two data sets, Al-Jazeera and the BBC. In answering the question: Do the selected news outlets offer similar or different representations of the 2006 war events and their participants, the qualitative as well as quantitative analyses conducted (in chapters 6 and 7) focus on those recurrent linguistic features that constitute patterns characterizing the representation of the two sides of the war within each news outlet. This section offers a complementary and integrated approach to the data by examining selected headlines and leads reporting on the same event(s) as a means to substantiate the findings of the analyses conducted in chapters 6 and 7. The headlines and leads selected from the coverage by the two news outlets of the war cover high impact incidents, as this type of incident is more likely to reveal any discrepant representations in and between Al-Jazeera and the BBC reporting of the war.

The analysis conducted in this section of same-event headlines and their accompanying leads by Al-Jazeera and the BBC utilizes the same linguistic tools used

in chapters 6 and 7 analyzing the corpora of Al-Jazeera and the BBC news reports headlines and leads. In addition to the analysis of transitivity and the logical relations between clauses, this section also analyzes any significant cases of syntactic transformation, such as passivization and nominalization, as well as any significant lexical choices made by text producers.

**8.3.1. Event 1: Hezbollah captures two Israeli soldiers**

The first event is the incident that led to the 2006 war, the abduction of two Israeli soldiers by members of Hezbollah group. This operation which occurred in southern Lebanon during a cross-border raid was designed by Hezbollah to arrange prisoner exchange; however, the cross-border attack triggered a war between Israel and Hezbollah that has lasted for about 33 days. Table 43 shows the headlines and leads of the first news reports by Al-Jazeera and the BBC on Wednesday, 12 July covering this incident:

Al-Jazeera	BBC
Hezbollah captures Israeli soldiers	Hezbollah seizes Israel soldiers
Hezbollah has captured two Israeli soldiers during cross-border clashes, prompting Israel to carry out a ground and air assault that has killed at least two Lebanese civilians	Lebanese guerrillas have captured two Israeli soldiers in a cross-border raid, triggering the first Israeli land incursion into the country since 2000

43. Comparable headlines and leads: Event 1 (12 July)

Starting with Al-Jazeera headline, the text producer assigns to Hezbollah the role of *Actor* ascribed a *material action* (“captures”) that affects animate military participants

belonging to Israel (“Israeli soldiers”), who are assigned the role of *Goal*. Assigning the role of *Goal* to a military, rather than civilian, participant belonging to Israel may have the effect of weakening the impact of the *material action*, as these would be expected targets within a war context.

In the accompanying lead, the text producer similarly assigns to Hezbollah the role of *Actor* ascribed a *material action* (“has captured”) that affects an animate military participant (“two Israeli soldiers”). The text producer then employs an *expansion* in which the verb “prompting” encodes a causal relation where the opening clause (“Hezbollah has captured two Israeli soldiers during cross-border clashes”) could be assigned the role of *Initiator*, with Hezbollah’s capture of the Israeli soldiers causing Israel, which would be assigned the role of *agent/Actor*, to perform the *material actions* (“carry out”, “has killed”) in the *expansion*.<sup>9</sup>

Within the *expansion*, the text producer assigns Israel the *material action* “carry out” that extends to the entity “a ground and air assault”, which is apparently not affected by the *material action* in any physical sense. Rather, the *material action* (“carry out”) together with the entity (“a ground and air assault”) assigned the role of *Goal* are used to represent Israel’s comprehensive military reaction to Hezbollah’s operation. Within the *expansion*, the “that” relative clause is used to ascribe to Israel, assigned again the role of *Actor*, the negatively connoted *material action* “kill” that affects human civilian participants (“at least two Lebanese civilians”).

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<sup>9</sup> cf. Thompson (2004: 137) for a more detailed discussion of causative structures.

The text producer's choice to ascribe to Israel the negatively connoted *material action* "kill", as part of a relative clause, is of interest because this choice may have the effect of blurring Hezbollah's agency and weakening as well as balancing the causal relation expressed earlier in the lead. This effect is further emphasized by the choice of the adverbial "at least", together with explicit reference to the number of victims ("two") and the use of the human referring term ("civilians") to categorize the victims which may have the effect of enhancing the sense of affliction and further incriminating Israel's actions.

Moving to the BBC, the text producer, resembling in this respect Al-Jazeera's, Hezbollah is assigned the role of *Actor* ascribed agency associated with the *material action* "seize" that affects human military participants ("Israel soldiers"), assigned the role of *Goal*. The only difference between this headline and its counterpart in Al-Jazeera is the use of the verb "seizes" in place of Al-Jazeera's "captures". The *material action* "capture" does not necessarily imply the use of physical force, whereas "seize" seems to imply a degree of force and speed.

In the accompanying lead, the text producer assigns to Hezbollah the role of *Actor* ascribed the *material action* ("have captured") that affects animate military participants ("two Israeli soldiers"), assigned the role of *Goal*. Before moving to the *expansion*, comparing this initiating clause to its counterpart in Al-Jazeera shows that the two clauses are structurally identical with two differences in word choice. First, instead of Al-Jazeera's choice of the word "Hezbollah", the BBC refers to members of the group by the use of the categorical expression "Lebanese guerrillas" which denotes their unofficial status. Second, instead of Al-Jazeera's choice of the word

“clashes” as part of a *temporal circumstantial element* (“during cross-border clashes”), the BBC used the noun “raid” as part of the *circumstantial element* “in a cross-border raid”. One might claim that the word “clashes” implies mutual attacks and actions without ascribing agency to one side and affliction to the other, whereas the noun “raid” clearly ascribes agency, hence responsibility to one side, i.e. the performer of the action, while ascribing affliction to the side which is raided. The text producer then employed an *expansion* (“triggering the first Israeli land incursion into the country since 2000”) that represents Hezbollah’s actions in the initiating clause as the reason for Israel’s reaction (“Israeli land incursion”) in the expanding clause, i.e. Israel’s action is represented as a consequence of Hezbollah’s action. Apart from the meanings and structures used in the expansions after “prompting” and “triggering”, the fact that the two leads have the same grammatical structure with different lexical choices could suggest that the two news outlets are copying a common news agency source, but editing the vocabulary.

The type of relation the text producer establishes between clauses in the two leads is of interest because it shows the ways in which processes and participants are related on the level of clause complex. The initiating clauses which represent Israel as the *Goal of material actions* ascribed to Hezbollah simultaneously explain *material actions* ascribed to Israel in the following clauses. In both cases the relationship between the two clauses is one of *cause-effect*, i.e. the *material action* in the initiating clause provides the reason for the *material action* in the non-finite dependent clause that expands the meaning of the first clause through *enhancement* (cf. Halliday; 1994: 232-239). In doing so, the text producer represents Israel’s incursion as a consequence of Hezbollah’s military actions. However, while the BBC lead does not refer to any

*material actions* ascribed to Israel, the Al-Jazeera reporter employs a relative clause, as discussed above, that ascribes to Israel the *material action* “kill” affecting human civilian participants (“two Lebanese civilians”). The effect could be that of balancing Hezbollah’s *material action* in Al-Jazeera leads.

Compared to Al-Jazeera’s representation of Israel as the *Actor* ascribed a *material action* (“carry out”) in “Israel to carry out a ground and air assault”, the BBC replaces the whole verb clause with a nominal structure (“the first Israeli land incursion into the country since 2000”), where the noun “incursion” can be interpreted as a *nominalized material process*. The way the text producer situates the current Israeli offensive historically by reference to the fact that it is the first since 2000 could be interpreted in different ways. First, this reference could be seen as an indicator of the efforts exerted by the BBC to provide readers with a sufficient view of the wider context of the Israel-Lebanon conflict. Second, this historical contextualization of the Israeli military offensive shows that Israel has not attacked Lebanon for about six years, and that Israel’s attack this time is a reaction to Hezbollah’s cross-border operation.

Another textual choice that is worth commenting on and which might indicate opposing representations of Israel and Hezbollah by the BBC is that the reporter in reference to Hezbollah and its members used the label “Lebanese guerrillas”, whereas in reference to Israel, used the term “soldiers”. This feature highlights the choices available for text producers to categorize different participants in the process in such ways that can be indicative of their stance and ideologies. One might claim that labels such as “commandos” and “soldiers” denote an official state member of the military,

compared with “fighters”, “militants” and “guerrillas”, which collocate with Hezbollah, denoting members of unorganized unofficial group.

The two news outlets’ coverage of the incident that led to the 2006 war shows a number of differences in the representation of the event. These differential representations are evident on the level of lexical choices, as can be seen in lexical choices such as “captures/seizes”, “Hezbollah/Lebanese guerrillas”, “clashes/raid” and “a ground and air assault/incursion”. Similarly, on the level of transitivity choices and logical relations, Al-Jazeera uses expansions to ascribe to Israel negatively connoted *material actions* that could balance Hezbollah’s agency and could equally cast blame on both sides. By contrast, the BBC reports on Hezbollah’s *material action* without making reference to the victims of Israel’s military reaction. The BBC integrates contextual background that could communicate a positive representation of Israel as being in a state of peace for six years and that it has been driven to get involved in the war because of Hezbollah’s military operation. One can conclude that Al-Jazeera’s coverage of this incident offers a representation that equally distributes agency, responsibility and blame on both Hezbollah and Israel, while accurately reporting on the incident that triggers the war. The BBC’s representation might be viewed as excluding aspects of representation such as the Lebanese civilian victims, while foregrounding other aspects such as Hezbollah’s military operations and Israel’s peaceful coexistence with its neighbour for six years before being provoked to initiate a war. Total absence of reference to the Lebanese victims and the specific actions that led to their death, labelled “radical exclusion” using van Leeuwen’s classification, is particularly implicated when critically analyzing the representations of the same incident by different news outlets (cf. van Leeuwen, 1996: 39).

### 8.3.2. Event 2: Israeli bombing of a UN post

This incident involves the bombing of a UN observation post in southern Lebanon by Israeli warplanes at the night of Tuesday, 25 July. The bombing of the UN post is one of few incidents in the war that raised international criticism directed at Israel because the target was the UN peacekeeping force and because the bombing resulted in the killing of four UN soldiers. The incident occurred after several warnings from the UN that Israel had been bombing close to the UN buildings. Israel, on its part, while expressing its regret for the casualties, stressed that the bombing was not deliberately targeting the UN location. Table 44 compares the coverage by Al-Jazeera and the BBC of this incident:

Al-Jazeera	BBC
Israel ‘ignored UN bomb warnings’	Israeli bomb kills UN observers
Israel ignored repeated warnings it was shelling close to United Nations observers in southern Lebanon before an Israeli bomb killed four for them, the Irish foreign ministry has said.	Four United Nations observers have been killed in an Israeli air strike on an observation post in south Lebanon.

44. Comparable headlines and leads: Event 2 (26 July)

Starting with Al-Jazeera news report headline, the text producer assigns Israel the role of *Senser* undergoing the *mental cognitive process* “ignored”.<sup>10</sup> Within the NP “UN bomb warnings” the noun “bomb” can be interpreted as a *nominalized material process* extending to the entity UN which would be ascribed the role of *Goal*. The text

<sup>10</sup> The English verb “ignore” means “not react to or acknowledge something”, i.e. it means not to perform some action that might normally be expected, e.g. “the speaker ignored the interruption”. The reason it is treated as a *mental process* is that not responding to something seems to imply a conscious decision not to act, i.e. it involves a mental act.

producer's choice to use a complex noun group in "UN bomb warnings" makes it possible (though not necessary) to create a presupposition, which could be paraphrased as: "Israel was bombing [near to] UN [post]".

Within the accompanying lead, similar role assignment can be found where the text producer assigns to Israel the role of *Senser* associated with the *mental cognitive process* "ignore". Assigning to Israel the role of *Senser*, typically a human participant, bestows a degree of humanness on Israel by its involvement in the *mental process* (cf. Halliday, 1994: 114; Thompson, 2004: 93); only participants who are human can "ignore", which may have the effect of further enhancing both the causal link which associates Israel with the specified actions as well as the sense of responsibility attached to Israel for the specified actions.

One point worth commenting on, which applies equally to the headline and the accompanying lead, is that although the wording brings in a *mental (cognitive) process* colouring, one might suggest that a *material (action)* meaning is dominant, though not explicitly stated. To put it simpler, the fact that Israel ignored repeated warnings that it was doing some action implies that it continues *doing* it. Moreover, one might suggest that the text producer's choice to represent Israel as ignoring "repeated warnings" depicts Israel as negligent and casts more blame on Israel.

Israel is then assigned the role of *Actor* ascribed the *intransitive material action* "was shelling" where the process, though does not extend to a direct *Goal*, evokes an offensive military attitude by Israel. Within the projected clause associated with the *nominalized verbal process* ("warnings"), the PP "close to United Nations observers",

while functioning as a *circumstance of location* specifying the process setting, offers an explanation for the “repeated warnings”.

Within the same lead by Al-Jazeera, the text producer employs an *expansion* in which Israel (“an Israeli bomb”) is depicted as the *Actor* ascribed a negatively connoted *material action* (“kill”), while assigning the role of *Goal* to human civilian victims (“four [of] them”). The sequencing of actions signalled by the type of logical relation established between the expanding clause and the initiating clause as indicated by the temporal marker “before” represents Israel’s *material action* as following the “repeated warnings”. This sequencing communicates a representation of Israel as negligent or as deliberately involved in the incident.

The text producer’s explicit reference to the number of victims (“four”) together with the use of human referring term to categorize the victims (“them” referring to “observers”) may have the effect of enhancing the sense of affliction. What is of interest here is that attributing the content of the lead to a highly-valuated source such as the Irish foreign ministry, apart from absolving the text producer from the reported content, can add more credibility to the reported content which explicitly casts blame on Israel.

Moving to the BBC news report headline, the text producer assigns Israel (“Israeli bomb”) the negatively connoted *material action* “kills” which affects the non-combatant participants “UN observers”. The text producer directly assigns participant roles to both the performer of action and the affected participants. Compared to its counterpart in Al-Jazeera, it is clear that role assignment in the BBC headline is more direct and reference to involved participants is more explicit. Whereas reference to the

performer of action Israel is made clear in Al-Jazeera headline, reference to casualties is absent.

Within the BBC accompanying lead, the text producer shifts the victims (“Four United Nations observers”) to sentence-initial position affected by the negatively connoted *material action* “have been killed”, which is passive in voice. By shifting the affected participants to sentence-initial position, which is a position of thematic focus, the effect could be foregrounding their affliction. Notice the way the text producer introduces the Israeli entity “an Israeli air strike”, which represents the responsible *Actor*, into the *material process* clause within a *circumstance*, that provides context for the *material actions*, via the intermediary of a preposition (“in an Israeli air strike”), rather than through the typical PP with “by” (“by Israel”), used to introduce the responsible agent in a passive construction. This choice may result in potentially weakening the causal link by widening the gaps and blurring the relations between the *Actor*, *material action* and affected participants. Within the NP “an Israeli air strike on an observation post in south Lebanon”, Israel could be assigned the role of *Actor* ascribed the *material action* “strike”, which is nominal in form (“air strike”), extending to the inanimate affected entity “an observation post”, which is indirectly introduced to the clause via the intermediary of a preposition (“on”). The preposition “on” within the *circumstantial element* can be interpreted as a minor process, meaning something such as “targeting”, where the entity “an observation post” functions as an *indirect Goal*. One lexical choice worth commenting on is the way the BBC *functionalized* and *personalized* (using van Leeuwen’s classification) the participants via reference to their role in both the headline (“UN observers”) and the Lead (“Four

United Nations observers”), which equally applies to Al-Jazeera lead (“United Nations observers”, “four of them”).

It is worth mentioning that on Wednesday, 26 July, Al-Jazeera offered a follow-up report on the same incident:

#### Israeli strike kills four UN soldiers

Four soldiers from the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon in south Lebanon have been killed by an Israeli strike.

As can be noticed, within this headline role assignment is explicitly made and responsibility is clearly assigned. The text producer assigns Israel (“Israeli strike”) the role of *Actor* ascribed the negatively connoted *material action* “kills” that directly affects the human military participants “four UN soldiers”. Though the UN soldiers are military rather than civilian, the killing of soldiers of a peacekeeping force belonging to the international organization UN could further incriminate Israel by implication. Within the accompanying lead, Israel is assigned the role of *indirect Actor*, via a PP (“by an Israeli strike”), where it is ascribed the negatively connoted violent *material action* “kill”, which is passive in voice, affecting human participants (“four soldiers from the United Nations Interim Force”). The passive construction results in foregrounding the *Goal* of Israel’s *material action* by shifting the human victims to sentence-initial position, which is a position of thematic focus, while the perpetrator is simultaneously retained and delayed to come in sentence-end position – which is also a position of thematic focus.

Al-Jazeera’s coverage of this incident could be said to communicate, for some readers, a negative representation of Israel as causing casualties through its negligence, with

the potential of implicitly conveying that the post was deliberately bombed. Al-Jazeera casts further potential blame on Israel by explicitly ascribing to Israel negatively connoted *material actions* and by explicit reference to the victims. Al-Jazeera also utilizes source attribution to represent the content as credible by attributing it to an official, supposedly neutral, source. The BBC makes explicit reference to Israel, the responsible *Actor*, as well as to the UN casualties in its headline, where both are introduced directly into the *material process*. Reference to Israel as the responsible *Actor* and to the victims in the accompanying BBC lead is also made explicit, though the passive construction is used with the potential effect of bringing the affliction of the UN human victims into focus in sentence-initial position, whereas the responsible agent is indirectly introduced, which may have the potential effect of weakening and blurring the causal link. The overall representation of the BBC draws attention to both Israel's agency and the victims, whereas Al-Jazeera's reporting on the incident incriminates Israel by implication by providing the potential for inferring its negligence.

### **8.3.3. Event 3: Qana bombing**

The bombing of the village of Qana in southern Lebanon by an Israeli airstrike on July 30, 2006, is one of the main events in the 2006 war. After being displaced because of the continuing Israeli bombarding, a number of families took shelter in a building basement, which was later hit by an airstrike. The incident which was at that time described as "the deadliest Israeli strike so far in this conflict" resulted in the deaths of about 54 Lebanese civilians. Table 45 compares the headlines and leads of news reports by Al-Jazeera and the BBC, on Sunday, 30 July, covering this incident:

Al-Jazeera	BBC
Hamas condemns ‘state terror’	Reporters describe carnage at Qana
A Palestinian official has said that Hamas will carry out attacks on Israel in response to its attack on the Lebanese village of Qana.	Reports from the southern Lebanese town of Qana have described a scene of carnage, with rescue workers continuing to pull bodies from the ruins of a civilian building.

45. Comparable headlines and leads: Event 3 (30 July)

Starting with Al-Jazeera headline, the text producer introduces Hamas into the clause as the *Sayer* attributed the *verbal action* “condemns” that extends to the entity “state terror”, assigned the role of *Target*. The NP “state terror” in the headline makes implicit reference to Israel (“state”), where it refers, though indirectly, to the Qana raid, as the immediate following context in the lead indicates. This lexical choice represents an example of *abstraction*, using van Leeuwen’s term, where “the qualities abstracted from their bearers serve, in part, to interpret and evaluate them” (van Leeuwen, 1996: 60). In other words, Israel is implicitly accused of being involved in acts of terrorism or of being a terrorist state. It is because of these connoted meanings that the headline is marked by the use of the single quotes as being attributed to a foreign source, in this case a Hamas member of parliament as stated in the news report body text.

In the accompanying lead, Israel is introduced as an *indirect Goal*, as part of a PP (“on Israel”), affected by a *nominalised material process* (“attacks”), ascribed to the *Actor* Hamas. Within the same lead, the text producer employs an *expansion* that enhances

the meaning of the initiating clause by means of offering the cause. Within the *expansion* the text producer assigns Israel (“its”) the role of *Actor* ascribed the *negatively connoted nominalized material action* (“attacks”) that extends to a civilian entity (“the Lebanese village of Qana”), assigned the role of *indirect Goal*, via a PP. Representing Israel as directing its attacks at civilian areas casts more blame on Israel and depicts it as a blind force. Notice the way the text producer represents Hamas threats of carrying out military operations against Israel in the initiating clause as a consequence of Israel’s bombing of Qana.

Moving to the BBC news report headline, though the text producer makes explicit reference to the entity affected by Israel’s bombing (“carnage at Qana”), she/he avoids any reference, explicit or implicit, to either Israel as the performer of the *material action* as well as to the *material action* itself, i.e. the bombing of the village. The same representation equally applies to the accompanying lead where the text producer has not made any explicit reference to Israel, as the responsible *Actor*, or to the *material action* that results in the “scene of carnage”. While no reference to civilian casualties is made in the headline of the BBC news report, within the lead the text producer makes reference to civilian casualties (“bodies”). The *circumstantial element of location* (“from the ruins of a civilian building”) casts more blame on the responsible *Actor* by means of highlighting the civilian nature of the target. It is worth mentioning that the noun “carnage” could mean “mass slaughter” particularly in war, and it could also mean the bodies of the people killed in a war. Representing the victims of the bombing collectively as an assimilated group using the noun “carnage” could draw attention to their immense number.

While the BBC headline and accompanying lead analyzed above belong to a news report which has the date Sunday, 30 July 2006, 14:53 GMT 15:53 UK, the BBC coverage of the war includes another news report which has the date Sunday, 30 July 2006, 17:15 GMT 18:15 UK that reports on the same incident:

Dozens killed in Lebanon air raid

More than 54 civilians, at least 34 of them children, have been killed in a town in south Lebanon in the deadliest Israeli strike of the conflict so far.

Although the dates of the two news reports show that the latter is a follow-up report, a closer look at the content of both headlines and their accompanying leads suggests that this news report might have preceded the above analyzed report.

Starting with this news report's headline, the text producer assigns the entity "dozens" the role of *Goal* affected by the negatively connoted *material action* "killed", which is passive in voice, where no reference is made to the responsible *Actor* Israel. Reference to the performer of the *material action* is made only indirectly within a *circumstantial element*, as is evident in the *nominalized material action* "raid", which is not ascribed to any explicit *Actor* ("in Lebanon air raid"). In reference to casualties, the referring term "dozens" is used where it is not made clear whether the victims are civilian or military. The choice of "dozens", while absolving the text producer of responsibility for inaccuracy, implies a high number of victims, which may have the effect of enhancing the pattern of violence attached to Israel. A similar structure is found in the BBC accompanying lead. The affected participants ("More than 54 civilians, at least 34 of them children") are shifted to sentence-initial position affected by the *material action* "have been killed", which is not ascribed to an explicit *Actor* in the main clause, which is passive in voice. So, in both the headline and its accompanying lead,

rather than presented as a delayed *agent* in the passive clause through the typical PP with “by” (“by Israel”), typically used to introduce the agent in passive constructions, the text producer shifts the performer of the *material action* further back to appear within *circumstantial elements* that define the context for the *material process*, bearing in mind that no explicit reference is made to Israel in the headline.

Whereas shifting the affected participants in both the headline and its accompanying lead to come in sentence-initial position, which is a position of thematic focus, foregrounds their affliction/victimization, the complete absence of reference to Israel in the headline and structurally distancing it to appear as part of a *circumstance* that provides context for the *material action* in the accompanying lead may have the potential effect, for some readers, of weakening Israel’s potential incrimination by widening the gaps and blurring the relations between the *Actor*, *material action* and affected participants.

Reference to victims in the accompanying BBC lead suggests that a process of news selection is performed, whereby an editor or sub-editor picks on one aspect of the lead while ignoring other aspects. Whereas the lead refers to the number of victims “more than 54” and categorizes them using the referring term “civilians”, with further specification in “at least 34 of them children”, reference to the victims in the headline is reduced to the referring term “dozens”. The potential effect of this selection, for some readers, could be backgrounding of those aspects of representation that potentially cast blame on Israel or communicate a negative representation of Israel.

Al-Jazeera coverage of Qana bombing explicitly ascribes the action to Israel in the lead, whereas implicitly depicts the action as state terrorism by Israel in the headline. Al-Jazeera's choice to report on Hamas' reaction to Qana raid rather than the raid itself is one interesting aspect of Al-Jazeera coverage of this event. The Palestinian organization Hamas, known as the "Islamic Resistance Movement", has both a political party and a military wing. The movement which sets among its goals the liberation of Palestine and the termination of the Israeli occupation of the country is classified as a terrorist organization by both Israel and the US, among other countries, mostly western, though not so by most Arab countries. It could be the case that the text producer, being aware of the wider context of the conflict, finds it more relevant and more eye-attracting to report on this categorization of Israel's actions by Hamas. The effect could be contrasting an organization terror with a state terror. While both the BBC news report's headline and lead do not make any reference to Israel as the responsible *Actor*, both the headline and the lead draw a dramatic picture of the bombing scene, using such words as "carnage", "bodies" and "civilian". The BBC credibility is demonstrated in providing a follow-up report covering this incident. Within this follow-up report, reference to victims is made explicit in both the headline and its accompanying lead, whereas reference to Israel is absent in the headline or made only indirectly in the lead.

The BBC credibility is also demonstrated in its choice to report the fact that the Israeli attack shocked the UN Security Council in two follow-up news reports:

Annan urges Lebanon action 'now'

The UN secretary general has called on Security Council members to take urgent action after 54 Lebanese civilians were killed in an Israeli attack on Sunday.

## UN Council 'shocked' by Qana raid

The UN Security Council has expressed its "shock and distress" at an Israeli attack in which 54 Lebanese civilians, many of them children, were killed.

This representation implicitly incriminates Israel and should be seen as part of the text producer's representation of Israel, at least with regard to this particular incident in the war. It is worth noticing that the absence of any explicit reference to Israel in the headlines of the four news reports by the BBC reporting on this incident as opposed to explicit reference to Israel in the leads might suggest that a process of news selection is performed by some editor or sub-editor. This shift in authorship results in avoiding direct reference to Israel, which may have the effect of concealing Israel's responsibility and agency.

### 8.3.4. Event 4: southern Lebanon airstrikes warnings and civilian casualties

The 8<sup>th</sup> of August is one of the days of the most intense fighting in the 2006 war. During this day a number of Israeli airstrikes and ground operations resulted in about 60 casualties across Lebanon, including the southern areas of Beirut, the eastern region of Baalbek, and the city of Tyre. Table 46 compares the headlines and the leads of news reports by Al-Jazeera and the BBC on Tuesday, 8 August covering the series of incidents that happened that day:

Al-Jazeera	BBC
Israeli strikes kill scores in Lebanon	South Lebanese warned of strikes
Israeli attacks against villages in southern and eastern Lebanon have claimed about 60 lives in 24 hours.	Israel has warned residents of southern Lebanon that it will escalate operations there as it continues its campaign against Hezbollah militants.

46. Comparable headlines and leads: Event 4 (8 August)

It is worth noticing that while Al-Jazeera reports recent past action, the BBC (via the use of “warn”) takes a virtual stance *before* the action. At first sight, it could seem that the BBC report is from before the event; however, the fact that the body of the BBC text does report the recent past action by Israel suggests that the BBC has put the Israeli action right out of attentional focus. What takes precedence in the Al-Jazeera headline and lead, the civilian casualties of Israel’s strikes, is only partially referred to by the BBC in the text body of its news report:

Reports say at least 15 people were killed when a predominantly Shia area of Beirut was hit late on Monday

This could reflect a process of news selection on the part of the BBC whereby the text producer, or possibly a copy editor, picks on one aspect of the news text body to report on in the headline and lead while avoiding reference to news related to the Lebanese casualties. The two headlines seem to take different time points for their perspective.

Starting with Al-Jazeera news report headline, we notice that the *material action* (“kill”) ascribed to Israel (“Israeli strikes”) is of the type negatively connoted *material action* to intensify Israel’s agency and violence, whereas the system of voice is active, emphasizing the causal link. The role of *Goal* is assigned to the entity “scores” where the use of the vague indefinite term “scores” absolves the text producer of responsibility for inaccuracy, while implying high numbers of victims, which may have the effect of casting more blame on Israel.

Within the accompanying lead the text producer assigns the Israeli entity (“Israeli attacks”) the role of *Actor* ascribed the *material action* “have claimed”, where the role

of *Goal* is assigned to human civilian victims (“60 lives”), who are explicitly mentioned. The predicate “have claimed”, though encoded as a *verbal process*, is used metaphorically (though in a conventional idiom) to denote a process of the type *material*. The text producer’s explicit reference to the number of victims together with the use of a human referring term (“60 lives”) to categorize the victims may have the effect of enhancing the sense of affliction and further prompting possible incrimination of Israel’s actions. The *circumstantial element of extent* (“in 24 hours”) that defines the duration along which the 60 people were killed casts more blame on Israel as it reflects the intensity and severity of the attacks. The PP “against villages in southern and eastern Lebanon”, which offers the location of the *nominalized material process* (“attacks”), simultaneously introduces the entity “villages” into the clause as an *indirect Goal*. The categorization of the *Goal* (“villages”) as being a civilian area further adds to the sense of incrimination of Israel by implication.

Moving to the BBC news report headline, an initial look can easily see that, compared to its counterpart in Al-Jazeera, no reference is made to the affected participants, no reference is made to Israel as the performer of the action and the action is of the type *verbal*, rather than *material*. In the BBC headline the *verbal action* “warned”, which is passive in voice, is not attributed to an explicit *Sayer*. The *Sayer* can be retrieved from the immediate following linguistic context in the lead as being Israel. The most plausible interpretation for using the agentless passive construction is that the *agent* is easily recoverable by readers from background knowledge and hence explicit reference is unnecessary. However, more significant is the representation of Israel as a restrained and considerate power as it warns civilians before striking.

In the accompanying lead, the BBC reporter introduces Israel as the *Sayer* attributed the *verbal action* “has warned”. The type of predicate (“has warned”) as well as the reported content of the projected clause (“that it will escalate operations there”) construct Israel as controlling and dominating the war scene. Analyzing the content of the projected clause shows that the text producer ascribes Israel (“it”) a *material action* (“will escalate”) that extends to an inanimate entity (“operations”) which is not affected in any material sense. Similarly, within the *expansion* Israel (“it”) is assigned the role of *Actor* ascribed the *material action* “continues” which extends to the entity campaign, assigned the role of *Goal*. The entities (“operations” and “campaign”) can be interpreted as *nominalized material processes*, with the verbs (“escalate” and “continues”) signalling the temporal dimension of the process. Notice the way the affected participants (“Hezbollah militants”) are introduced within a PP as an *indirect Goal*. Notice the type of relation the text producer establishes between the two clauses where the expanding clause is used to offer explanation for Israel’s warning and its potential escalation as being part of its attempt to neutralize Hezbollah. Compared to its counterpart in Al-Jazeera, in the BBC lead no reference is made to casualties of the Israeli strikes.

The way in which Al-Jazeera combines the incidents that occurred that day in one news report may have the effect of implicitly encouraging the incrimination of Israel. The use of the negatively connoted *material action* ‘kill’, the exaggeration in the number of victims and the short duration over which these attacks occur communicate a negative representation of Israel. By contrast, the BBC headline and its accompanying lead show a radical exclusion of the *Actor*, the *material action* and the affected participants, whereas Israel is implicitly represented as a considerate and

restrained power. The BBC coverage communicates a positive representation of Israel as being considerate not to cause casualties by warning civilians before striking. The BBC also highlights the context of the operations by reference to Hezbollah militants as being the target of Israel's campaign, which may have the effect of implicitly adding legitimation to Israel's military operations. Further reading of the BBC news text body shows a process of news selection whereby the lead and the headline picks on one aspect of the text body, namely the Israeli warnings of civilians, whereas it conceals other aspects, namely the killing of the Lebanese civilians.

The analysis conducted in the above section of four cases of headlines and leads that refer to the same war episode by Al-Jazeera and the BBC is meant to offer a complementary and integrating approach to the analysis of the 2006 war representation by the two selected news outlets. Utilizing the same linguistic tools used in chapters 6 and 7 in the analysis of selected headlines and leads of news reports from the coverage of the war by the two news outlets, the present section reaches conclusions that support the findings of the analyses conducted earlier in chapters 6 and 7. Al-Jazeera's representation of the 2006 war seems to communicate a negative representation of Israel and a positive representation of Hezbollah. The BBC, by contrast, shows more signs of balanced, accurate and objective reporting in its coverage of the war. However, the BBC also shows some signs of unbalanced coverage that are mostly found to be in favour of Israel. The opposing representations of the different sides of the war by the BBC and Al-Jazeera, one might claim, have the potential of enhancing and emphasizing the polarization in the ideological square, which is the focus of the following section.

#### 8.4. Discussion

Whereas the findings of the lexico-grammatical analyses conducted in chapters 6 and 7, as well as the findings of the comparable studies conducted in section 8.3, show that Al-Jazeera and the BBC differ significantly in their representations of the Israel-Hezbollah 2006 war, aspects of representations that are shared between the two news outlets are discerned. In the process of interpreting the findings of the detailed textual analysis conducted in this thesis, as well as in the formulation of a well-based critique, this section first offers some explanations for those aspects of representation which are found to be shared in the coverage of the war by Al-Jazeera and the BBC. I then suggest a number of explanations to account for the differences in representation of the 2006 war by Al-Jazeera and the BBC. I round off the discussion by drawing on van Dijk's (1998, 2011) approach to the analysis of opinions and ideologies in the press.

These aspects of representation which are found to be shared in the representation of the war by Al-Jazeera and the BBC could be accounted for on the following grounds. First, it might be argued that both news outlets reflect the diversity of the audiences they serve and that this leads to a balanced representation. This notion of balanced representation of the target audience is of great significance in the case of international news media, such as the news websites of international news institutions, which typically target international audiences with a wide range of backgrounds, attitudes and ideologies. Volkmer (2005: 357-358) argues that both the BBC and Al-Jazeera deliver their news services worldwide and have already established "substantial" international audiences. Al-Jazeera and the BBC are primarily international news outlets serving international audiences of varying backgrounds and

ideologies; hence, these news outlets will attempt to adopt a balanced stance in their coverage of the reported events in order to satisfy their multi-cultural audiences.<sup>11</sup>

Second, the selected news outlets have declared codes of ethics that stress objectivity, balance, credibility, impartiality and fairness as journalistic values which they claim to abide by in their news coverage. Assuming this claim to be true, the discerned similarities in the representations of the 2006 war could be due to Al-Jazeera and the BBC's endeavours to adhere to such journalistic values.

Third, similar aspects of representation in Al-Jazeera and the BBC reporting of the 2006 war can also be traced to one more factor which is the style of the genre itself. Hard news reports are meant to be factual, i.e. offering factual accounts of events.<sup>12</sup> Van Dijk (2011: 393) argues that a specific context model can potentially "block direct ideological expression as being inappropriate" which, one might claim, is the case with the claimed factuality of news reporting, particularly of wars. In such cases, van Dijk argues, ideologies are sometimes difficult to detect in discourse.

The differences discerned in the coverage by Al-Jazeera and the BBC of the 2006 war could be accounted for on the following grounds. First, the representation of factual accounts free from partisan values as dictated by journalistic values, such as objectivity and impartiality, particularly during times of conflict, is never fully achieved in reality. All stages of the process of news production (including the selection of what is to be reported as well as news writing and editing) inevitably

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<sup>11</sup> The notion of *targeted audience* and its influence on the reporting process are discussed earlier in section 3.3.2. The choice of international news outlets is one of the data selection criteria discussed in section 5.5.2.

<sup>12</sup> For further discussion of this factual approach as a distinctive style of hard news reporting, see section 3.2.2.

involve respective work being done from a certain perspective by people (or institutions) who are situated socially, politically and historically, and who have varying backgrounds and adopt different opinions or stances, which are ideologically shaped reflecting certain social values and beliefs.<sup>13</sup> Consequently, news stories which are the product of different news institutions would necessarily reflect these institutions' standpoints and be told from differing perspectives (socially as well as ideologically constituted). Simpson and Mayr (2010: 65-66) argue that "news is simply not a reflection of reality, but a product shaped by political, economic and cultural forces". This point might explain the differences in representations or constructions of the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah war discerned in the coverage by Al-Jazeera and the BBC.

Second, related to the above explanation is the fact that the BBC and Al-Jazeera represent different models of news media. While the BBC is a public service corporation that relies for its funding on a public licence fee, Al-Jazeera represents a commercial broadcasting institution which is owned by the emir of Qatar and shareholders and is funded both by the emir of Qatar (state-funded) and by revenue from commercial advertising. This difference in ownership and source of revenue could potentially affect editorial independence among other aspects of the process of news production, as well as the way journalists function.<sup>14</sup>

However, rather than being a matter of conscious choices being made, news media endeavour to adhere to journalistic values, their awareness of the multi-cultural nature of their audience, of the claimed factuality of the hard news report and, on the other

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<sup>13</sup> I covered these points earlier in sections 1.2, 3.4.4 and 3.5.1.

<sup>14</sup> For further discussion of these two news models, see section 3.4.1, with particular reference to Al-Jazeera in section 2.3.1.2 and the BBC in section 2.3.2.5.

hand, their awareness of the control and censorship exercised by media owners and governments on news production, of the set of ideologies that construct media institutions' opinions and stances and their representations of events often combine and interact.

One way of accounting for the differences discerned among Al-Jazeera and BBC representations of the war, its events and participants is van Dijk's (1998, 2011) approach to the analysis of opinions and ideologies in the press. The ideological square can be used efficiently to explain and interpret representation on all levels of analysis conducted in chapters 6 and 7 and in section 8.3 of this chapter. Based on van Dijk's (1998: 33, 2011: 396-397) notion of "polarization", which involves "positive in-group description" (positive self-presentation), and "negative out-group description" (negative other-presentation), the present study argues that news outlets have an ideologically-driven categorization of news actors which classifies people and individuals and fits them into one of two more or less cognitive groups: the ingroup or the outgroup. As a strategy, polarization involves positive representation of ingroup members as opposed to negative representation of outgroup members. Polarization can be realized on the level of discourse through what van Dijk (1998: 33, 2011: 396) calls the "ideological square":

Emphasize [foreground] <i>Our</i> good things [properties/actions]	Emphasize <i>Their</i> bad things
De-emphasize [mitigate/background] <i>Our</i> bad things [properties/actions]	De-emphasize <i>Their</i> good things

The ideological square can be seen as a means to represent or reflect the world, in particular *our* actions and position(s) as opposed to *their* actions and position(s) (cf.

Richardson, 2007; van Dijk, 1998, 2011). It is noteworthy that “‘our’ may refer to the ingroup or its friends and allies, and ‘their’ to the outgroup and its friends or allies”, according to van Dijk (1998: 33). The representations by the selected news outlets, Al-Jazeera and the BBC, of the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah war, specifically of the combatant sides, Israel and Hezbollah, and their actions, one might suggest, can be well accounted for using van Dijk’s notion of polarization and the ideological square. The majority of the headlines and leads analyzed presented findings that are in accordance with and can be interpreted in terms of van Dijk’s ideological square. Exceptions to the role, or as Richardson (2007: 209) labels “cracks in the hegemony”, should be seen as “conspicuous”.

An important starting point is knowledge of the relative evaluations of the two sides in the war, Israel and Hezbollah, within the ideological system of each of the selected news outlets. Based on knowledge of the historical, socio-political as well as cultural background of Al-Jazeera, as well as its predominant stance towards the two sides in the war,<sup>15</sup> one might argue that Hezbollah enjoys a relatively higher positive representation within Al-Jazeera ideological system compared to Israel. This means that Hezbollah can be categorized as an ingroup member, as opposed to Israel which is seen as an outgroup member on the part of Al-Jazeera. The overall representational patterns that have been discerned upon analyzing the representation of Hezbollah in Al-Jazeera can be accounted for using the ideological square. For example, when Hezbollah is represented as the performer of actions, particularly negatively connoted ones, the text producer employs varying textual strategies that result in potentially blurring, weakening, hiding or explaining the group’s agency and responsibility, while

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<sup>15</sup> Section 2.3.1 provides a thorough background of Al-Jazeera and explains the role the news outlet plays as part of the political context.

bringing into focus its affliction. In contrast, Al-Jazeera highlights Israel's agency and responsibility for the actions of the war, while blurring the damage Hezbollah inflicts on Israel. In this way, the text producer can be said to emphasize Hezbollah's good actions while mitigating its bad actions; meanwhile, Israel's bad actions are emphasized. One point worth commenting on is that highlighting the representation of Hezbollah as an affected participant by Al-Jazeera can be said to communicate a positive representation of Hezbollah, at least by means of conveying a negative representation of the aggressor; hence, it can be seen as resembling emphasizing "good actions/properties" of ingroup members in the ideological square. Another example of this differential representation can be seen in the proliferation of lexical items used to describe Israel's offensive against Lebanon, its military arsenal, its *material actions* and the victims of its operations, which may have the potential to emphasize and foreground Israel's bad aspects and properties. By contrast, in reference to Hezbollah's military operations and *material actions*, text producers use a limited range of referring terms, which is also the case when representing the victims, who are most frequently military personnel belonging to Israel. In this way, Al-Jazeera's coverage can be said to mitigate or background Hezbollah's bad aspects.

A further point worth commenting on concerns the low percentages of reference to ingroup members as affected entities, i.e. Hezbollah in Al-Jazeera and Israel in the BBC, compared to the high percentages of reference to the same participants as performers of actions within the news coverage of the same news outlet. As part of negative other-representation, text producers may attempt to refer to losses and casualties of ingroup members in ways that increase potential incrimination of the outgroup. However, overemphasizing the affliction of ingroup members, particularly

their military losses, could threaten their overall positive representation. The analysis in the present thesis shows that, except for the representation of Hezbollah in Al-Jazeera headlines, reference to the losses and casualties of ingroup members does not outweigh reference to ingroup members as performers of actions. In contrast, the high percentages of reference to ingroup members as performers of actions can be seen as a strategy to establish the ingroup members' superiority and control over events.

Knowledge of the relative valuation of Israel within the ideological system of the BBC is essential to interpret the findings of the detailed textual analysis. Based on contextual factors, one might argue that Israel enjoys an ideological valuation which, if not positive, is relatively higher than that of Hezbollah.<sup>16</sup> For example, the classification of Hezbollah as a terrorist group by many Western countries, including Britain, could potentially shape the way the group is perceived and represented by Western media institutions, including the BBC. While some aspects of the BBC's representation of the 2006 war between Israel and Hezbollah demonstrate the BBC's balanced, accurate and impartial reporting, other aspects show signs of partial and unbalanced coverage, in favour of Israel. The BBC's balanced representation of the two sides of the war can be seen in striking a balance between those features that would convey a positive representation of each of the two sides and those that would communicate the opposite effect. For example, the BBC's representation of Israel is characterized by highlighting certain features that are likely to convey a positive representation of Israel, as well as other features that might communicate a negative representation of Israel. However, the analysis of the BBC coverage reveals the recurrence of processes of news selection and transformation, whereby the text producer picks on certain aspects of representation while excluding others. While the

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<sup>16</sup> Section 2.3.2 offers a thorough background of the BBC and explains the role the news outlet plays as part of the political context.

foregrounded aspects predominantly communicate a negative representation of Hezbollah or a positive representation of Israel, the parts which are left out, or overshadowed, are seen to develop a negative representation of Israel. In this way, the text producer can be said to emphasize Israel's good actions and properties while de-emphasizing or backgrounding its bad aspects. Another representational feature that could be indicative of subjective reporting can be seen in allowing Israeli official sources as well as the Israeli media more access to the BBC news coverage of the war, particularly in leads, compared to the outgroup member, Hezbollah, whose spokespersons are rarely cited by the BBC. Even, in headlines, where Hezbollah is frequently cited, the analysis reveals that the reported content attributed to Hezbollah sources predominantly communicates a positive representation of Israel while communicating a negative representation of Hezbollah.

As a matter of fact, one could argue that the representations by the BBC of the 2006 war demonstrate the intertwined effects of adhering to journalistic values of accuracy and fairness and the lack of proprietorial control – the BBC is a public service corporation – on the one hand, and ideologically-shaped opinions and stances and potential government control on the other. The representations by Al-Jazeera demonstrate, though in quite opposing directions, the way news media attitudes and opinions, which are ideologically shaped, reflecting dominant social values and beliefs, can outweigh a full commitment to journalistic values, resulting in representations that have clearly undergone a process of polarization.

Overall, the analysis conducted in this thesis of the representation of the 2006 war, its actions and participants in light of the system of transitivity as well as other analytic

tools reveals the presence of differential representations in the reporting by Al-Jazeera and the BBC. Al-Jazeera's coverage of the war is found to be in favour of Hezbollah, as an ingroup member, offering a positive representation of the group. By contrast, Al-Jazeera's coverage communicates a negative representation of Israel that emphasizes its bad sides and puts blame on Israel. The BBC's coverage shows signs of balanced and impartial coverage that are not equally discerned in Al-Jazeera. But the reporting on the war by the BBC also exhibits certain features that potentially communicate a positive representation of Israel as opposed to a negative representation of Hezbollah. Features that could potentially communicate a positive representation of Hezbollah are found to be very rare in the BBC coverage of the war. The BBC's coverage can be seen as showing both signs of balanced and impartial coverage as well as signs of a partial stance in favour of Israel.

## CHAPTER 9

### Conclusion

#### 9.1. Summary

The present study was undertaken because of the significant place that news media, particularly electronic media such as the internet, occupy in contemporary societies and because of their potential to shape public opinion and influence people's perceptions of events. This potential of news media is maximized in times of conflict such as wartime, when news institutions and their reporters become the main, if not the only, source of information. In such times, news reporting represents to people different versions of reality as perceived and interpreted by the news correspondent or reporter who possesses exclusive rights to access battlefields and frontlines. Considering the emphasis most news organizations, including the selected ones, place on their commitment to journalistic ethics such as objectivity, impartiality, fairness and accuracy, people are invited to accept news reporter's representations of events as being truthful accounts of reality. However, considering the controversy surrounding *claimed* media ethics, which is maximized in times of wars where war correspondents are constantly put under such pressures as government and military control of news flow, meeting deadlines, and so forth, news reporters may find themselves maybe

obliged to abandon their commitment to accuracy, fairness as well as balanced reporting.

The aim of the present study has been to investigate the issue of representation in reporting of the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah/Lebanon war by Al-Jazeera and the BBC as a means to find out if there are significant patterns of unbalanced coverage and inconsistent treatment of the selected event, and to examine similarities and differences between the selected news outlets in their representations of the 2006 war. The present study also seeks to highlight the patterns of beliefs and values, i.e. ideologies, as expressed in language, which might not be accessible without going beyond the surface structure of news texts. Both Al-Jazeera and the BBC corpora consist of the leads and headlines of the web-based news reports – that fit with the selection criteria stated in chapter 5 (see section 5.5.1 and 5.5.2) – constituting the body of the two news outlets coverage of the 2006 war between Israel and Hezbollah. In addition to the analysis of process types, participant roles and circumstances, within the scope of the system of transitivity, as well as the analysis of the logical relations between clauses, as part of the logico-semantic system of expansion and projection, the analysis also focused on lexical choices and cases of syntactic transformation, such as passivization, nominalization and agency foregrounding and backgrounding, which are significant for the analysis of representation. Other linguistic structures, such as reference and source attribution are examined. The aim of this thesis is to compare the two corpora – viz. Al-Jazeera and the BBC – with respect to different choices by producers in using these linguistic structures.

In answering the overarching research question: **Do the selected news outlets, Al-Jazeera and the BBC, offer different or similar representations of the 2006 war and hence position their readers into adopting certain points of view?**, the present thesis reaches the findings summarized below.

The representation of Hezbollah in Al-Jazeera is characterized by a number of features that communicate an overall positive representation of the group. The text producer emphasizes Hezbollah's good aspects as part of positive ingroup description as, for example, in depicting Hezbollah as intending to stop fighting, which can be seen in its acceptance of a ceasefire. In order to polish Hezbollah's public image, Al-Jazeera represents Hezbollah as not deterred by Israel's military force, drawing attention to its fighting capabilities and military strategies, and attributes to Hezbollah threatening language directed at Israel. To balance Israel's military superiority in the war without potentially incriminating Hezbollah, the text producer ascribes military actions to Hezbollah while representing these actions as either defensive ones, instigated by, following in temporal order, or a consequence of Israel's military actions. Hezbollah is one of the accessed voices in Al-Jazeera, where text producers frequently cited the group's leader and spokesperson. Text producers also employ textual strategies including blurring the group's agency and its direct responsibility and weakening the causal link. Al-Jazeera simultaneously highlights the representation of Hezbollah as an inactive participant involved in saying rather than doing, by ascribing to the group more *verbal actions* and fewer *material actions*. In cases where a negative representation of Hezbollah may be communicated, text producers absolve themselves from being read as asserting the claims made in the reported content by attributing these claims to external sources. The fact that most of these negatively connoted

claims are attributed to Israeli sources would lessen the credibility of the reported content. The affliction of Hezbollah is brought into focus as a means of foregrounding Israel's agency and responsibility. For example, whenever Hezbollah is represented as affected participant in *material process* clauses, Israel is introduced as the performer of action.

In contrast to its positive representation of Hezbollah, Al-Jazeera's coverage of the war has a number of features that could possibly communicate an overall negative representation of Israel. Al-Jazeera draws attention to certain aspects of Israel that could be said to be part of negative other-representation in, for example, introducing Israel as expansionist and in a continuous state of war against Hezbollah/Lebanon. Al-Jazeera also emphasizes Israel's agency and responsibility by attributing to Israel wide range of negatively connoted *material actions* such as "kill", which affect, besides military targets, explicitly-mentioned human civilian victims and Lebanon's infrastructure. Besides its aggressive military actions, the text producer also focuses attention on Israel's strong and threatening language. Israel's unpreparedness and the tough resistance Israel faces from Hezbollah are also present as part of negative other-representation. Al-Jazeera attributes this latter negative depiction of Israel to Israeli sources, in order to reinforce the news outlet's credibility and objectivity, while simultaneously giving credit to the account of Hezbollah's tough resistance by attributing it to Israel. The negative representation of Israel is communicated by depicting Israel as disregarding international law and ceasefire calls, as well as by referring to international condemnation of its military actions, as in the case of Israel's bombing of the UN post. Drawing attention to the US defensive and supportive stance as well as its alleged close connections with Israel, being Israel's main ally and arms

supplier, could possibly balance western media focus on the support Hezbollah allegedly receives from Syria, Iran and Russia.

The reporting by the BBC on the 2006 war reveals a higher degree of balanced coverage compared to Al-Jazeera's reporting; however, the BBC's coverage also communicates representations of both Hezbollah and Israel that exhibit features of subjective reporting. The representation of Hezbollah has a number of features that could be seen as indications of negative other-representation by the BBC. For example, depicting Hezbollah as the target of criticism and condemnation from international powers, as enjoying close connections with both Syria and Iran, where the latter is known to be Hezbollah's major ally and main arms supplier, and as having links with alleged terrorist groups may potentially convey a representation of Hezbollah by the BBC that could possibly be interpreted as providing explanations for Israel's military operations. Hezbollah's military actions are represented as leading to Israel's military operations. Another aspect of the representation of Hezbollah by the BBC involves leading readers to focus on Hezbollah's threatening tone, its willingness to continue the war and its potential military capabilities which enable the group to strike deep into Israel and makes of the group a rival to Israel. Highlighting these aspects may have the potential effect, for some readers, of representing Hezbollah as a potential threat that should be neutralized. Attributing this latter representation to some credible sources has the potential of casting more blame on Hezbollah, while absolving the text producer from the claims that are made.

By contrast, the representation of Israel has a number of features that could potentially communicate a positive representation of Israel by the BBC. To bestow further

possible legitimation on Israel's offensive, the text producer highlights the official and legitimate status of Israeli soldiers as opposed to the unofficial Hezbollah militia and depicts Israel's incursion as a consequence of Hezbollah's military actions. The BBC also draws attention to the support Israel gains in its war against Hezbollah from the Israeli media, as well as from international powers. The BBC highlights certain aspects that could be seen as positive traits of Israel, including warning civilians before delivering strikes, which has the effect of representing Israel as a considerate restrained power. The BBC also develops a potential positive representation of Israel as being regretful for its actions in the incident of bombing the village of Qana and as being ready for acceptance of the UN ceasefire and the deployment of peacekeeping force in Lebanon. The representation of Israel as intending to expand and continue its military operation is explained as aiming at neutralizing Hezbollah. The BBC brings into focus the role of Iran in the ongoing war and the way it threatens Israel's national security as a means to explain Israel's offensive against Hezbollah. As part of de-emphasizing the negative aspects of the ingroup, Israel's agency is often balanced, explained, blurred or concealed. For example, whereas Israel is ascribed the negatively connoted *material action* "kill" on 16 occasions, the analysis reveals that half of these references report on only two incidents in the war, with the potential effect, for some readers, of weakening Israel's incrimination by limiting the range of the victims of its military operations. Distributing agency between Israel and Hezbollah, via the role of *co-Actor*, could possibly have the effect of blurring the identity of the actual *Actor*, mostly Israel, and equally distributing blame between Israel and Hezbollah. The analysis of the BBC headlines also reveals the presence of recurrent processes of news selection and transformation that may have the effect of foregrounding certain aspects while overshadowing others. The foregrounded aspects

predominantly communicate a negative representation of Hezbollah and/or positive representation of Israel, whereas the aspects which are left out tend to develop a negative representation of Israel. For example, whereas Israel is ascribed the *material action* “kill” 16 times in the BBC leads, it is only ascribed to Israel 4 times in the accompanying headlines. This discrepancy could be said to be in favour of Israel as it may result in concealing both Israel’s agency and the Lebanese affliction. The finding that the negatively connoted *material action* “kill” is ascribed with relatively close frequencies to Israel and Hezbollah; one time to Hezbollah (4.3%) compared to four times to Israel (4.9%) in headlines and three times to Hezbollah (3.4%) compared to 16 times to Israel (5.9%) in leads, including 8 times reporting on only two incidents as shown above, can possibly indicate balanced coverage. However, knowledge of the wider context could offer a somewhat different interpretation. In the 2006 war, the fact that for every 10 Lebanese deaths there is one Israeli casualty, as reported by Gaber et al. (2009), could possibly explain the BBC’s relatively close frequencies as an indication of a partial stance in favour of Israel that potentially aims to hide Israel’s responsibility and the Lebanese affliction. This is not to say that the text producer totally avoids reporting on certain aspects that might communicate a negative representation of Israel. For example, the text producer frequently reports on Israel’s readiness to widen its offensive, though this is often accompanied by reference to neutralizing Hezbollah. The text producer also reports on Israel’s negligence in the incident of bombing the UN post. In addition, whereas the text producer draws attention to Hezbollah’s positive reaction towards the UN decision, the text producer reports on mixed reactions on the part of Israel towards the UN decisions.

Other features of representation show the BBC as reporting on the state of affairs regardless of the sides involved, which demonstrates the BBC's credibility and accuracy. For example, the BBC reports on the Israeli media's opposition to the war because of Israel's apparent failure to achieve its war goals, particularly its overconfidence and decisions that result in failing Israel. In addition, the text producer reports on Israel's rejection to halt or stop fighting as well as its subsequent approval of a ceasefire plan. The BBC also reports on the support Israel gains in its ongoing war against Hezbollah from the Israeli media. The BBC also reports on the worldwide pressure on Israel to put an end to the war and the international opposition and critical response towards Israel's military actions, as in the case of bombing the village of Qana. The BBC also reports on Hezbollah's alleged close connections with Iran and Israel's alleged close connections with the US. The text producer similarly draws attention to Britain's adverse attitude towards supplying weapons to Hezbollah from Iran as well as supplying Israel with weapons on the part of the US. The analysis also shows a process of news selection whereby reference to Hezbollah members using evaluative terms such as "guerrilla", that could potentially communicate a negative representation of the group, is found in leads while it is totally absent in headlines. The absence of such referring expressions from headlines, which are often subject to further editing by a sub-editor or copy editor after the story is written, could be seen as a sign of balanced coverage by the BBC.

Source attribution, which constitutes another distinctive feature of the BBC coverage of the war, while absolving text producers from the responsibility for what is reported, could possibly build an effect of credibility and balanced coverage – something that international news outlets strive to establish in the minds of their readers. A closer

look at the range of accessed voices in the BBC shows that sources belonging to Hezbollah are cited less frequently compared to Israeli sources, who are heavily cited in the BBC. This relative lack of balance in allowing equal space to the two fighting sides, though it could be due to difficulty in reaching Hezbollah's spokespersons, may be an indication of a high and positive valuation of Israel within the BBC ideology. However, no claims could be made without analyzing the associated projected clauses. Although the finding that the related news reports frequently cover the Israeli media criticism of the Israeli government and the military for the war decision and for accepting a ceasefire is indicative of the BBC's attempt to build its credibility and impartiality, the type of processes and roles assigned to Israel and Hezbollah within the projected clauses predominantly communicates a positive representation of Israel while representing Hezbollah as a potential threat. For example, the reported content predominantly represents Hezbollah as a potential threat to Israel and brings into focus the group's military capabilities, its involvement in military operations against Israel and its readiness to extend its fighting as well as its alleged close connections with Iran. By contrast, the reported content communicates a positive representation of Israel as, for example, is evident in warning civilians before delivering strikes, its acceptance of UN decisions and the international approval of Israel's operations in Lebanon. In addition, the reported content predominantly explains Israel's readiness to expand and continue its offensive as a means to neutralize Hezbollah and retrieve the captured soldiers.

Another feature of representation that could be said to demonstrate the BBC credibility involves equally reporting on the suffering of ordinary people who are affected by the ongoing crisis in both Israel and Lebanon. The BBC also reports on

evacuation of foreign nationals from Lebanon, the difficulties facing displaced Lebanese and foreigners trying to flee Lebanon, and the difficulties facing aid and relief efforts in Lebanon. The analysis reveals the absence of equal emphasis on similar incidents in relation to displaced Israelis, foreigners fleeing Israel or evacuation of foreign nationals from Israel. These discrepant representations potentially depict the situation in Lebanon as hazardous because of the continuing Israeli attacks, which may have the effect of incriminating Israel by implication.

The detailed textual analysis of the selected news texts reveals that Al-Jazeera and BBC representations of the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah war demonstrate a number of similar features. However, the representations by the two news outlets are also found to differ significantly in many aspects reflecting the fact that the two news outlets possess varying backgrounds and adopt different ideologies that inevitably find their way into their reporting. In accounting for the aspects of representation that the BBC and Al-Jazeera share in their representations of the war, this thesis suggests the following explanations. First, both news outlets reflect the diversity of the audiences they serve and this factor leads to a balanced representation. Second, both Al-Jazeera and the BBC apparently endeavour to adhere to the journalistic values of objectivity, balance, credibility, impartiality and fairness, which form part of the two news outlets' declared code of ethics. Third, shared aspects of representation can also be traced to the style of the hard news report which is meant to offer factual accounts of events.

The differences discerned in the coverage by Al-Jazeera and the BBC of the 2006 war could be accounted for on the following grounds. First, the representation of factual accounts free from partisan values, particularly during times of conflict, is never fully

achieved in reality. All stages of the process of news production inevitably involve the work being done from a certain perspective by people (or institutions) who are situated socially, politically and historically, and who possess varying backgrounds and adopt different opinions or stances, which are ideologically shaped. Consequently, news stories which are the product of different news institutions would necessarily reflect these institutions' standpoints and would be told from differing perspectives. Second, the BBC and Al-Jazeera represent different models of news media. While the BBC is a public service corporation, Al-Jazeera represents a commercial broadcasting institution which is funded both by the emir of Qatar (state-funded) and by revenue from commercial advertising. This difference in ownership and source of revenue could potentially affect editorial independence among other aspects of the process of news production, as well as the way journalists function.

## **9.2. Questions of methodology**

The findings of the analyses conducted in the light of the system of transitivity show that the analysis of participant roles and associated process types, backed by an analysis of the logical relations between clauses as well as relevant syntactic transformations and lexical choices, has been effective in showing the non-obvious ways in which different news media institutions offer different representations of war. Having said that, a number of general methodological as well as theoretical points come through clearly in the last three chapters. The highly detailed textual analysis conducted in the present study reveals a number of limitations of SFG in the study of representation. An analytic problem that one might face when analyzing specific texts in the light of the system of transitivity is the applicability of more than one type of process to a specific predicate. In these cases, knowledge of both the context of use

and the core meanings of predicates are clearly crucial in assigning predicates to specific process types.

The findings of the analyses conducted in chapters 6 and 7 as well as the comparisons undertaken in chapter 8 reveal limitations of a purely quantitative analysis in the study of representation. While the statistical analysis of the distribution of participant roles in transitivity patterns is a relatively precise method for drawing interpretative conclusions concerning crucial aspects of representational bias over relatively large amounts of textual data, more detailed syntactic-semantic analysis is also required. The kind of comparison undertaken in section 8.3 provides more fine-grained analyses that are able to bring together various relevant elements of representation that can be discerned at the textual level. The more detailed semantic analysis of participant roles and associated process types as well as the analysis of the logico-semantic relations between clauses, may in one sense be more efficient in capturing patterns of representation, e.g. the actual verbs that are used, grammatical transformations of the sentence as well as logical relations between clauses, that statistical analysis has failed to discern. Such detailed analysis can, of course, be only done on a small scale and on the basis of relevant sampling. Such sampling can be guided by contextual and pragmatic considerations, such as selection of historically (and in the present case, militarily) significant events.

### **9.3. Originality of the study**

The present study explores representation in war reporting investigating the ways in which different news outlets report on the same event and their representations and reconstruction of some of the aspects of reality, such as events and their attendant participants, and the ways these representations are constructed by the ideologies of

the news outlets. In doing so, some of the most salient aspects of representation in news reporting are highlighted.

### **9.3.1. The textual level**

The originality of the present study lies in a number of aspects. The textual analysis conducted in the light of the system of transitivity, as well as the logico-semantic system of projection and expansion, has not been done in such a detailed highly systematic manner in any previous work investigating media discourse. The same can be said of the analysis of news media representation and construction of some aspects of reality which has not been conducted in such a detailed systematic manner so far. Fine-grained qualitative analysis of this kind provides the rationale for limiting the corpus size to manageable manual analysis. Fine-grained analysis is essentially a bottom-up approach that moves from the thorough analysis of the available texts to form an interpretative critique. In other words the approach begins with exhaustive and objective linguistic description and then moves to the more subjective, context-based, level of critical interpretation. The linguistic features described are not selected to prove a pre-conceived point. The originality extends to include the event used to provide the data for the present study. No single study has conducted such a thorough highly systematic linguistic analysis of the representation of the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah war in the selected news outlets in an attempt to find out how they construct the war and the potential of their reporting to shape readers' perceptions of the war.

### **9.3.2. Toward a theory of agency weakening**

In the light of the discussion on agency, the phenomena of backgrounding and foregrounding and syntactic transformations in sections 5.4.1 and 5.4.3, the present study suggests that it is worth outlining a broad theory of agency weakening that

describes on both grammatical as well as functional bases how the text producer can manipulate the syntactic structure of the clause and the clause complex to achieve varying degrees of agency weakening. Such a theory would place degrees of agency on a cline. Starting with overt agency which could be realized on the textual plane through the use of the grammatical structure “SVO” with the *Actor/agent* occurring in the syntactic subject position followed by the predicate and then the *Goal* in the syntactic object position. The lowest degree of agency weakening can be achieved in using the passive construction with the agent explicitly stated, though delayed. Shifting the agent from the subject position to appear later in the clause means that the thematic focus goes to another sentential element, in this case the patient. The *agent/Actor* can be shifted to later in the clause to appear in a PP, functioning as a *circumstantial element* in the clause, and hence introduced into the clause as an indirect rather than direct participant. This would seem to imply a weakening of the causal link. More agency weakening can be achieved in using the agentless passive, i.e. with the *Actor/agent* left out, and the (im)possibility of retrieving it being contextually determined. In cases of zero-agency, the text producer leaves agency unmentioned and the text reader has to infer it based on either the (immediate) linguistic context or, moving one step further towards blurring agency, from the wider context. These degrees of agency weakening and strengthening can be illustrated on a cline with “overt agency” on the one end and “unrecoverable agency” on the other end, with such intermediate degrees as “inferred agency” and “backgrounded agency”.

The textual analysis reveals that the use of prepositions to convey varying degrees of agency represents a well-developed and illustrated pattern of representation in the selected news outlets reporting. While “against” and “on” can be said to clearly

convey agency and affliction, with the latter expressing a lesser level of agency, the use of “with” weakens and blurs the causal link still more. This observation is in accordance with similar findings in Bazzi (2009: 139). One might claim that the use of “with” rather weakens the affliction of the affected and agency of the perpetrator, particularly, compared to the use of “on” or “against”, as it represents the afflicted as an equal side rather than a victim. On the other hand, the use of “between” may have the effect of completely blurring role assignment. Moreover, co-agency as expressed in “between” allows the text producer a chance to avoid attributing responsibility and distributing blame (cf. Beard, 2000: 30). The case of “null-preposition”, i.e. the complete absence of a preposition, as in “Israeli-Hezbollah” further mystifies the causal link by identifying the two sides in the war as one entity through the use of grammatical compounding. This theory of agency weakening highlights the choices available for text producers when assigning roles to participants.

Among the varying choices available for text producers such as explicit role assignment, hedged or blurred role assignment (as in the case of indirect participants), and cases where no role can be clearly assigned (participants “emptied” of any roles), the case of “between” where both participants are represented as co-performers, assigned the role of *co-Actor*, deserves particular attention. This choice can be said to serve a number of strategic discursal functions based on the text producer’s ideology and purpose; hence it could suggest different interpretations. The assignment of the participant role of *co-Actor* simultaneously to two participants could not be interpreted without reference to the relative evaluation of the participants within the news outlets’ ideological system as well as knowledge of the nature of the actions reported on. For ingroup members, e.g. Hezbollah in Al-Jazeera, the effect could be that of blurring the

causal link, i.e. no *Actor-Goal*, *agent-patient* or doer-affected relationship is established, if, for example, blame is to be attributed to the ingroup member or if the ingroup member is ascribed a negatively connoted action. The absence of clear role assignment in this case can serve to blur or hide the agency of the participant who is responsible for the actions and the affliction of the receiver of action, or at least distributing agency in a way that no one participant is represented as the sole performer of action. A related possibility is that the text producer is attempting to distribute blame and responsibility evenly between the two participants, i.e. responsibility and blame are shared, by representing each of the two sides as a *co-Actor* sharing the responsibility for the *material actions*. On the other hand, the ingroup member could be credited by inexistent power in those cases where the text producer seeks to polish and improve the public image of the ingroup member, e.g. as in the case of Hezbollah in Al-Jazeera.

Agency can also be manipulated on the level of clause complex. A text producer can intensify the agency of one particular participant by ascribing more negatively connoted actions, in particular *material actions*, to this participant via the grammar of clause complex by expanding the main clause by means of addition. Similarly agency weakening could be realized on the level of clause complex via ascribing (negatively connoted) *material actions*, in expanding clauses, to the other fighting side with the effect of balancing agency and distributing blame and responsibility. Similarly, text producers can make use of the type of interdependency and the ordering of clauses in a clause complex to communicate varying degrees of agency foregrounding and backgrounding (cf. Fairclough, 1995a: 120-121; Halliday, 1994: 218).

Knowledge of such minute details of the different choices available for text producers in their representation of events can provide readers as well as linguists with tools to detect balanced coverage and accurate and objective accounts as well as subjectivity and biased reporting. Such findings can also enlighten research conducted in the area of news reporting and representation of some of the aspects of reality.

#### **9.4. Beyond the present study**

The present study does not attempt any sort of genre or stylistic analysis of the selected news texts. The overall structure of the selected news reports is highlighted, but the present study does not seek to find out how this structure reflects genre conventions of news reports (cf. Gruber, 2008: 65). It is expected that an analysis of communicative practices and generic features of the selected web-based news reports can reveal that certain structural features resemble news reports within other media types such as newspapers (cf. Gruber, 2008: 68). In addition, certain stylistic features might be shared between the selected news reports whereas the selected news outlets might differ along other stylistic features.

The present study does not also attempt any sort of analysis of extra-textual features, i.e. “nonverbal message components” (cf. Mautner, 2008: 43). Semiotic forms including photographs, charts, maps, captions, boxed inserts, font style and size and the like are not analyzed in the present study. Analysis of extra-textual features would deserve a study on its own to investigate the way such features as photographs can be exploited by text producer to communicate specific representations of the war; hence shape and affect audience perception of the war.

The present study limits its scope to the analysis of headlines and leads without analyzing the news text body. Despite the fact that this choice is well-founded in the literature review and has enough rationale explained in chapter three, combining the analysis conducted in the present study with a detailed textual analysis of news texts' body as well as with a corpus analysis of the body of the whole news texts can support, or otherwise undermine, the findings of the headlines and leads analyses. It should be noted that an intuitive look at a sample of the news texts' body has noticed patterns that are similar to the ones discerned in the headlines and leads in the selected news outlets; however, no claims can be made based only on this initial intuitive look and further detailed qualitative analysis is required to make any claims concerning the body of the selected news texts.

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