

An Appraisal Analysis Study of Speech Pertaining to Normalization with Israel

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Abstract

Public political speeches have a significant impact on the economy and culture, drawing considerable attention due to their political influence. The quantitative content analysis explored the journalistic stances of Emirati news towards Israel and Palestine before and after the UAE and Israel formally signed a normalization agreement on September 15, 2020. The current study utilized an appraisal theory tool (attitude system) to analyze data from the Al Bayan news. The discourse analysis involved breaking down the discourse into several sentences and analyzing them to identify Appraisal Devices and the types of Attitudes used. Analyzing the data, it could be inferred that the speech employed three kinds of Attitudes: Affect, Judgment, and Appreciation. There were 400 clauses consisting of 166 Affects, 180 Judgments, and 54 Appreciations. The results showed that negative Judgment was most frequently represented in the newspaper, the Al-Bayan discourse regarding Israeli crime, which used an adverse reaction towards Israel before normalization. In addition, the attitudes of newspapers changed after normalization. The Al Bayan mostly used positive expressions towards Israel after normalization.

Keyword: Normalization, appraisal theory, attitude system, Al Bayan.

دراسة تحليلية تقييمية لخطاب التطبيع مع إسرائيل

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المخلص

تؤثر الخطابات السياسية العامة على الاقتصاد والثقافة وتحظى بقدر كبير من الاهتمام بسبب تأثيرها السياسي. تناول التحليل الكمي للمحتوى المواقف الصحفية للأخبار الإماراتية تجاه إسرائيل وفلسطين قبل وبعد توقيع الإمارات وإسرائيل رسميًا على اتفاقية التطبيع في 15 سبتمبر 2020. استخدمت الدراسة الحالية أداة من نظرية التقييم (نظام المواقف) لتحليل البيانات الواردة من أخبار البيان. وتم تحليل الخطاب من خلال تقسيم الخطاب إلى عدة جمل وتحليلها لمعرفة أدوات التقييم وأنواع المواقف المستخدمة. وتحليل البيانات، يمكن الاستدلال على أن الخطاب استخدم ثلاثة أنواع من المواقف: التأثير (Affect)، والحكم (Judgment)، والتقدير (Appreciation). كان هناك 400 عبارة تتكون من 166 تأثيرًا، و180 حكمًا، و54 تقديرًا. وأظهرت النتائج أن الحكم السلبي كان

في أغلب الأحيان ممثلاً في خطاب صحيفة البيان بشأن الجريمة الإسرائيلية، والذي استخدم رد فعل سلبي تجاه إسرائيل قبل التطبيع. كما تغيرت مواقف الصحف بعد التطبيع. استخدم البيان في الغالب تعبيرات إيجابية تجاه إسرائيل بعد التطبيع. الكلمة المفتاحية: التطبيع، نظرية التقييم، نظام المواقف، البيان.

1. Introduction

More than seventy Arab leaders, individuals, and political and social movements have taken up the cause of Palestine as their rallying cry. Arab nations have often been the leaders in defending Palestinian rights against Israel since Israel's founding in 1948 [1]. Never before have official Arab political positions on Israel been so sharply split. In 2020, several Arab countries formally announced the normalization of diplomatic relations with Israel. Several Arab countries have already ratified specific military, economic, and peace agreements. For many years, some Arab nations have been secretly working with Israel [2].

Nonetheless, there were three main reasons behind the 2020 normalization initiatives. First, the normalization process in 2020 was collaborative, with numerous Arab nations—including Sudan, Bahrain, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE)—announcing agreements to normalize within a few months of each other [3]. Second, previous conditions for Arab normalization with Israel, the formal end of the occupation of Palestinian territory [4]. Third, efforts at normalization have coincided with increasingly forceful public campaigns in recent years. Recent Palestinians and advocates for Palestinian rights denounced the attempts at normalization. It has been said that the betrayal of Palestinians is a form of progress. The attempts at normalization in 2020 were different for at least three reasons. First off, according to Black [3], the normalization process in 2020 was a cooperative effort, with the UAE, Bahrain, and Sudan all proclaiming agreements to normalize within a short timeframe. Second, prior prerequisites for Arab normalization with Israel, such as the formal ending of the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory, were downplayed" [4]. Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, more vigorous public efforts were launched in tandem with the recent initiatives aimed at normalization.

The United Arab Emirates is the focus of the study due to its status as the first Arab nation to normalize relations and its reputation as the movement's most vocal and committed supporter. On September 15, 2020, Israel and the United Arab Emirates signed the Abraham Accords.

After the normalization accord, the UAE actively sought out Israeli-Emirati business and investment relationships as well as cross-border travel [5], [6]. A well-known Emirati poet's trip was reportedly forbidden due to remarks she made on normalization [7]. The coverage of normalization in Emirati publications is the main topic of this study. There is only one goal for the investigation. The intention is to examine the discourse in Emirati publications before and after Israel's normalization using the Appraisal System (attitude theory).

2. Problem Statement

The Muslim world is currently facing significant challenges, encompassing both external and internal issues. The situation in Palestine, especially regarding the normalization declared in Emirati publications, is a key concern. Discourse is a central issue in the Islamic world. This study primarily aims to investigate how articles in Emirati publications, before and after normalization with Israel,

serve as a valuable resource for research in the field of linguistics. These articles use carefully chosen words to sway public opinion [8]. Therefore, analyzing the discourse of Al Bayan newspaper will reveal their thoughts, ideas, and intentions in relation to specific events. Consequently, this study examines the discourse of Al Bayan from the perspective of political discourse, focusing on how it investigates interpersonal meanings. Utilizing Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), particularly the appraisal systems (attitudes), this study examines the phrases used by Al Bayan regarding Israel before and after normalization.

3. Research Objectives

- 1.To study appraisal resources in the attitude used by the Al Bayan newspaper discourse regarding Israel before and after normalization.
- 2.To evaluate interpersonal meanings in the discourse of Al Bayan newspaper concerning Israel before and after normalization.

4. The Israeli and Palestinian Struggle in the Media

Anger has been generated on both the Arab and Israeli sides of the long-running Palestinian-Israeli conflict by a number of stages, historical occurrences, and turning points. The crisis has dominated Arab news media coverage from its inception [9]. Claims the conflict's (news) rhetoric is as ideological and divisive as the conflict itself." Studies examining the reporting styles of the Arab press during wars reveal several recurring themes in reporting. The majority of the time, Arab media have backed the Palestinian cause and demanded an end to the suffering of the Palestinian people.

Studied the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through a qualitative textual analysis of three Palestinian newspapers: Falistin Muslimeh, Al-Quds, and Al-Ayyam. The study claims that between 1998 and 2014, Israel made an effort to sabotage the peace process by expanding the number of illegal settlements, a move that all three media outlets covered [10].

Investigated the bias of Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya, two pan-Arab networks, in support of the Palestinian side during the 2008–2009 Gaza crisis. In both periodicals, the Palestinians were shown as the underdogs standing up to Israeli misdeeds [11].

Quantitative content analysis was used by Al-Jazeera America News to cover the 2014 Gaza war, according to Farrah [12]. The results indicated that the network "always distinguished between militants and civilians when reporting on the Palestinian death toll and cited only Palestinian citizens in its articles." Another study [13] examined the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in Gaza in 2014. According to the study, two sides of the conflict were highlighted on the website of the Palestine News and Information Agency (WAFA), which is connected to the Palestinian organization Fatah: "the powerful Israeli army and the powerless Palestinian civilians." Additionally, [13] highlighted the "Zionist" perspective, which refrained from blaming the Israeli government (p. 246). Three online newspapers in Israel published a patriotic article: Ynet, JP, and Haaretz.

Pro-Israel opinions were voiced in Israeli Yedioth Ahronoth's coverage of the Gaza War in 2014, according to a study by Elmasry [13]. Most of the news was from Israeli sources, which provided justifications for Israeli attacks on Palestinian objectives.

5. Literature Review

Numerous studies utilize appraisal as an analytical tool in political discourse. For instance, Awni Etaywe [14] applied the Appraisal framework [15] to examine the patterns and functions of attitude semantics in identity attacks within terrorist communications. Introduces the ideas of 'evaluative textbites' and 'attitudinal priming' for linguistic analysis. It promotes a functional approach to understanding identity attacks, utilizing corpus analysis techniques such as word frequency and qualitative analysis of concordance lines. The findings indicate that attitudinal priming, associated with stance taking, provides insights into how certain ideational targets are prepared for specific attitudinal and evaluative roles. Evaluative text bites serve as linguistic proof of an author's embedded hostile attitude and the intricate patterns of 'ideation-attitude' co-occurrences in these attacks. Identity attacks function as a rhetorical strategy, based on norms and values, aimed at highlighting the immoral behaviors of individuals or out-groups while devaluing victims based on their personal characteristics, power dynamics, interaction roles, and master identities.

Additionally, Istianah and Suhandano [16] examined appraisal patterns to analyze the linguistic strategies that assess a tourism website from an ecolinguistic perspective. Therefore, the primary aim of this paper is to explore the ideology present in Kalimantan tourism texts through an ecolinguistic lens. The analysis concludes that the promotional language used in tourism marketing conveys a mixed message. While the website highlights the natural wealth of Kalimantan to enhance awareness of its significance as the world's lungs, it simultaneously promotes the objectification and commodification of nature within the tourism industry.

In [17], Razzk and Khalil sought to understand how the world views Islamophobic incidents. This global perspective can be gathered through a widespread discourse emanating from international institutions and aimed at the world. Therefore, the linguistic analysis focused on news reports as a form of global media discourse. The linguistic framework used for this evaluation is Martin and White's [15] appraisal theory (attitude). The methodology examines three aspects of the Islamophobic incident: the aggressor, the victim, and the motive. The investigation aims to determine the affective attitude towards the victim, the judgment of the aggressor's behavior, and the appreciation of the incident's motive. The study also categorizes these attitudes as either negative or positive, their types (sub-classifications), engagement (monogloss or heterogloss), and graduation (force and focus) of the identified attitudes. The data includes twelve news reports, chosen based on their topic, from three news agencies: BBC, The Independent, and Fox News. The analysis shows that, against many assertions, news reports usually take a neutral view of both Muslims and Non-Muslims. They often depict Islamophobic events as closely aligned with reality.

In the study of Cockburn [18], An Inaugural Address refers to a speech given by someone when they take on a new role, outlining their position, beliefs, and policies in relation to both domestic and international political and economic contexts. This paper primarily employs Martin's Appraisal Theory, focusing on its three subsystems-Attitude, Engagement, and Graduation-to examine and analyze the evaluative tools in Kennedy's Inaugural Address, highlighting the speaker's views and attitudes, and to uncover the reasons behind the speech's enduring appeal. A review of earlier research that applied the SFL theory indicates that no study has previously used the SFL framework to assess and investigate the journalistic perspectives of Emirati news regarding Israel and Palestine before and

after the UAE and Israel officially signed a normalization agreement on September 15, 2020. Therefore, this study aims to address this gap.

6. Theoretical Framework: Appraisal system (attitude)

We evaluate the Emirati Al-Bayan's pre- and post-normalization discourse on Israel based on a single linguistic factor: assessment (attitude). According to Halliday [19], "how evaluation is established, amplified, targeted and sourced" is the focus of the assessment framework. According to Hatuqa [20], this is a part of the Systemic Functional Linguistics approach. Regarding "the subjective presence of writers/speakers in texts as they adopt stances towards both the material they present and those with whom they communicate, "evaluation is linked to the interpersonal element [19].

The assessment approach is divided into three categories: attitude, engagement, and graduation. The focus of the current inquiry is the Attitude system. Emotions, opinions on things, and both favorable and adverse emotional reactions are all included in attitude. There are three subcategories of attitudes: Effect, Judgement, and Appreciation. The sphere of emotions and sentiments encompasses a range of experiences, including happiness and misery, contentment and discontent, as well as security and insecurity. The decision addresses behavior that conforms to a range of normative standards (moral, societal, etc.). The last aspect of attitude is appreciation, which comprises instruments for recording aesthetic assessment.

7. Method

The normalization agreement that Israel and the United Arab Emirates formally signed on September 15, 2020, is the subject of the current study. The study used the attitude system associated with (Appraisal theory) to analyze the data from the Al-Bayan newspaper. The present investigation employed quantitative content analysis to examine the communication content samples. The Israeli government approved the normalization agreement in mid-October. Hence, the study focused its analysis on November and December 2020.

Because these two months were the last two months of 2020 and fell immediately before coding work began" (in early 2021), the study chose to use the data. Additionally, November and December of 2017, 2018, and 2019 were selected for the study. The study selected periods both before and after normalization to determine what editorial changes might have contributed to the normalization agreement. Twenty articles from the Al-Bayan newspaper, before and after normalization, were chosen for this study. The assessment of the attitude resources in Al Bayan news, both before and after Israel's normalization, is the focus of this study. The research additionally determined if the stories included Palestinian violence against Israelis, Israeli violence against Palestinians, Palestinian violence against Israelis, and cooperation between Israelis and Palestinians.

8. Findings and discussions of Emirati's newspaper concerning Israel by the Attitudes theory

Table 1. The UAE described Israel's attitude against the Arab people before the normalization with different expressions, as shown in

Table 1: Distribution of Attitude Resources in Al Bayan Discourse pre-normalization

| Appraiser | Appraised | Appreciation | | Judgement | | Affect | | Total | | Percentage | |
|--------------------|-----------|--------------|-----|-----------|-----|---------|-----|--------|-----|------------|-----|
| Al-Bayan newspaper | Israel | (-) 54 | | (-) 180 | | (-) 166 | | 400(-) | | 100% | 0% |
| Polarity | | - | + | - | + | - | + | - | + | - | + |
| Frequency | | 54 | | 180 | | 166 | | 400 | | 100% | |
| Ratio% | | 24.3% | | 43.7% | | 32.% | | | | | |
| Explicitness | | Ins | Inv | Ins | Inv | Ins | Inv | Ins | Inv | Ins | Inv |
| | | 50 | 4 | 176 | 4 | 160 | 6 | 386 | 14 | 87% | 13% |

As shown in Table 1, negative Judgement was most frequently represented in a newspaper of Al-Bayan discourse regarding Israeli crime and so on, with (N=180 or 43.7%), followed by Effect within (N=166 or 32% %), and the last system was the Appreciation represented with (N=54 or 24.3%). Besides, they evaluated Israel's behavior against Palestine with a negative tone and more explicit attitudes instead of being implied. As has been shown in some examples below:

This analysis employs attitude Theory to systematically deconstruct the evaluative language used in claims regarding the actions of Israeli security forces, focusing on the attitudinal stances embedded within the accusations. Specifically, it examines how lexical choices, such as "violations of international criminal law," function to invoke negative evaluations concerning the legality and morality of the alleged actions. The categorization of these acts as "war crimes," "crimes against humanity," and "genocide" further intensifies this negative appraisal, framing them within established legal frameworks that denote severe moral reprehensibility and international condemnation. This linguistic framing is crucial for understanding the persuasive intent and the emotional resonance these accusations aim to elicit in an audience, compelling a particular evaluative response towards the depicted actions and actors.

The identification of specific acts like "murder, intentional targeting of civilians, and sexual violence" serves to concretize these abstract legal categories, grounding the generalized accusations in tangible and egregious human rights abuses [21]. These linguistic choices within the accusations frequently evoke a sense of unhappiness and antipathy towards the perpetrators, shaping public perception and discourse [21]. Such detailed articulation of alleged transgressions often aims to provoke a strong affective response, aligning with the negative poles of the 'affect' subsystem within Attitude Theory, particularly in relation to categories of 'displeasure' and 'insecurity' [22]. Moreover, the consistent cataloging of such severe allegations contributes to an intensified negative evaluation, which may potentially influence international legal and political responses [23].

Table 2: Reportage on Palestinian Oppression by Israel. As shown in Table 2, Al-Bayan newspaper highlighted Israeli oppression against Palestinians and Israeli violence against Palestinians. At the same time, Israeli violence is an act of aggression covered by newspapers.

Table 2 shows Al-Bayan newspaper discourse concerning Israel's oppression of Palestine after normalization.

| <i>Appraiser</i> | <i>Appraised</i> | <i>Appreciation</i> | | <i>Judgement</i> | | <i>Affect</i> | | <i>Total</i> | | <i>Percentage</i> | |
|---------------------|------------------|---------------------|-------|------------------|--------|---------------|--------|--------------|-----|-------------------|-------|
| <i>Al Bayan</i> | Israel | (-) 1 | | (-) 1 | | (-) 4 | | 6(-) | | 16.6% | |
| | | | (+)80 | | (+)160 | | (+)140 | (+) 382 | | 83.3% | |
| <i>Polarity</i> | | - | + | - | + | - | + | - | + | + | - |
| <i>Frequency</i> | | 1 | 80 | 1 | 160 | 4 | 140 | 6 | 382 | 83.3% | 16.6% |
| <i>Ratio%</i> | | 16.3% | | 44% | | 40.6 % | | | | | |
| <i>Explicitness</i> | | Ins | Inv | Ins | Inv | Ins | Inv | Ins | Inv | Ins | Inv |
| | | 1 | 80 | 1 | 160 | 4 | 140 | 6 | 300 | 83.4% | 16.6% |

As can be seen in Table 2, attitudes were expressed explicitly rather than implicitly. Moreover, Israel Al Bayan exhibited positive behaviors more frequently than negative ones, at a rate of 83.3%. Furthermore, the positive Judgment subsystem is denoted at 44%, followed by the effect at 40.6% and the Appreciation system at 16.3%. As can be seen in some examples below:

This analysis will delve into the attitudinal underpinnings of the statement, "Thank you ABZayed! Now is a good time to advance the historic non-belligerency and economic cooperation agreements between Israel and the Arab Gulf countries," specifically examining how these expressed sentiments reflect evolving attitudes within the geopolitical landscape of the Middle East. Specifically, this statement highlights a positive affective response towards the deepening of ties between Israel and certain Arab states, which can be interpreted through the lens of social judgment theory and cognitive dissonance, given the historical animosity and the traditional Arab stance regarding the Palestinian cause [24], [25].

For many years, Israel and the UAE have collaborated on defense, technology, and agricultural projects. The UAE took a further step in October 2018, permitting the playing of Israel's national anthem during a judo competition in Abu Dhabi, the capital of the United Arab Emirates [26].

In his publications, Al-Bayan covered 80% of the facts. Prior to normalization, there was Palestinian oppression by Israel. On the other hand, the newspaper's portrayal of Israeli mistreatment of Palestinians decreased after normalization. Additionally, post-normalization publications with (N = 0) by Al-Bayan addressed the Israeli mistreatment of Palestinians. The study observed that the Al-Bayan newspaper had emphasized that there would be less Israeli violence against Palestinians following normalization than there had been previously. Furthermore, Al-Bayan would be less likely to use the phrase "occupation" following the normalization agreement.

9. Conclusion

The current study examines 20 articles from the 2020 Al Bayan Emirati Daily, published both before and after Israel's normalization. According to the study's findings, the Al Bayan newspaper initially reacted negatively to Israel before normalizing relations. Newspaper views also evolved along with normalization. Al Bayan spoke positively of Israel following normalization. The study came to an end before Al-Bayan covered Israeli aggression, brutality, and oppression against the Palestinian people, which became more commonplace. These results demonstrated that journals adhere to implicit rules and ideological biases during the frame-building process. Thus, the following case was presented mainly by the Emirati publication.

According to the study's findings, Al-Bayan altered the framing patterns following normalization. Findings indicated that the press would cover more Israeli-Palestinian collaboration after normalization. In the meantime, Al-Bayan showed a strong endorsement of the theories prior to normalization, and the daily would be more inclined to portray relations between Israel and the Palestinians as cordial.

The analysis revealed that the Al-Bayan shift in framing patterns was more pronounced following post normalization. Following the normalization process, Al-Bayan reported on the absence of articles with pro-Israel framing and Israeli tyranny and violence. The Israeli presence in Palestinian territory was referred to as an "occupation" at the time by the newspaper following normalization.

Following post-normalization, Al-Bayan's piece presented Israel in a favorable light. Al-Bayan stopped characterizing Israel's renormalization negatively, and the UAE made an effort to support Israel's signature of the normalization deal. According to, social changes are malleable. However, it can be dangerous to alter what appears to be a generally accepted news frame because doing so could damage the communicator's credibility. Al-Bayan may be subject to this risk. According to a 2020 study by the Arab Centre in Washington, DC, 88% of Arabs would be against their countries' normalizing relations with Israel. Indeed, a recent quantitative analysis found that the interests of the UAE and Israel had been aligned for decades, encompassing defense, technology, and agriculture.

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