Oriental College Magazine, Vol.102, No. 03, Serial No. 385, 2026

Gaza War as "Clash of Civilizations": A Corpus Assisted Critical Discourse Analysis of Benjamin Netanyahu's Selected Speeches

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Abstract

The war in Gaza has triggered a great deal of political conversation that affects how people all over the world view identity, security, and war. In this respective context, Benjamin Netanyahu's statements are significant in using narratives of civilizations, security, and legitimacy to frame the Gaza war. This study employs a Corpus-Assisted Critical Discourse Analysis (CACDA) of five selected speeches delivered by Benjamin Netanyahu between 2024 and 2025 to examine how the language produces the Gaza war within a civilizational framework. The study adopts a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative corpus analysis with qualitative critical discourse analysis and thematic interpretation. AntConc (version 4.3.1.0) was used to analyze the corpus, utilizing methods such as frequency lists, concordance lines (KWIC keywords in context), and collocation analysis, while Van Dijk's socio-cognitive model was employed to examine ideological patterns, positive self-presentation, negative other-presentation, and the construction of "self" and "other." The findings demonstrate systematic discursive methods that produce a distinct in-group and out-group separation, depicting Israel as democratic, civilized, and morally and ethically justified while on the other hand framing Hamas and Iran as terrorist and existential threats. The corpus findings further reveal the recurrent use of lexical patterns related to Israel, Hamas, Gaza, war, threat, terror, security, civilization, democracy, and victory, which contribute to the construction of threat, legitimacy, collective identity, and ideological boundaries. These patterns reflect a wider narrative of

civilizational war related to that addressed in Samuel P.Huntington's thesis *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* and strengthen themes of collective identity, threat building, and the justification of military action. The study contributes to Corpus-Assisted Critical Discourse Analysis by examining ideological representations in political discourse and demonstrating how quantitative linguistic patterns can be connected with qualitative interpretations of power, identity, and civilizational narratives. It also provides a useful reference for future research on political discourse and war rhetoric.

Keywords:
Corpus-Assisted Critical Discourse Analysis, Gaza War, Political Discourse, Civilizational Narrative, Netanyahu Speeches

Introduction

The Gaza conflict has become a center of attention for international geopolitical tension by generating extensive curiosity due to its humanitarian, social, and political implications. Discourse surrounding the Gaza War not only depicts military and diplomatic developments but actively forms international public perception and political attitudes. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) has emerged as a key approach in examining how language conveys power, ideology, and conflict narratives in the political and the media contexts (van Dijk, 1993; Almustafa, 2024). While analyzing political speeches and public rhetoric/choices, researchers can trace how linguistic strategies contribute to constructing conflict realities and affecting both domestic and global audiences.

During times of war, political rhetoric and linguistic choice of words are crucial for justifying actions, creating collective identities, and presenting conflicts in ways that go beyond objective reporting. Van Dijk's socio-cognitive paradigm, which emphasizes that speech is not neutral but also highlights the underlying hidden cognitive and social processes that determine how groups see "Self" and "Other" in these conflict situations, is centered on these activities (van Dijk, 1993; van Dijk, 2014). That's why political speeches are a useful and inevitable source for examining how ideological positioning and narrative framing support power dynamics and interpretive frames that uphold conflict narratives.

Moreover, for thorough analysis, it is important to understand and grab both the grammatical construction and the thematic outlines of such discourse. This study uses Braun and Clarke's Reflexive Thematic Analysis to provide a methodical, structured, and adaptable framework for finding out themes and patterns/choices in qualitative data, enabling researchers to identify the implicit and explicit meanings present in political speeches (Braun & Clarke, 2006). One more in-depth critical examination of recurrent patterns/choices, discursive strategies, and narrative structures that define Netanyahu's linguistic choice of words and political stance on the Gaza War is made possible by combining corpus-assisted methodologies with reflexive thematic analysis. Additionally, the analysis provides deeper insights into the discursive dynamics that contribute to framing the war as a "Clash of Civilizations," and this hybrid methodological approach aids in bridging language research with thematic interpretation.

During times of war, political discourse/rhetoric is essential to justifying actions. Speeches delivered by national leaders, such as Netanyahu, during the times of war are designed not just to convey the strategic priorities but also to sway audiences both at home and abroad while generating unique narratives about the fight and shared identity. For example, Chiluwa and Ruzaite's (2024) study on war rhetoric and linguistic choice of words found that leaders of opposing parties, like those in the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, use linguistic word choice and discursive patterns/strategies to construct wars in ways that support state actions and national solidarity and communicate conflicting political objectives. This linguistic choice of words shows the potent influence of language in the conflict dynamics by unavoidably influencing listeners' perceptions of the nature of the conflict, who is deemed legitimate, and which acts are justifiable.

Statement of the Problem

Recent research on political discourse surrounding the Israeli Palestinian conflict has increasingly highlighted how ideological, cultural, and religious narratives shape representations of war and identity, often reflecting assumptions associated with Huntington’s (1993) Clash of Civilizations thesis (Huntington, 1993; Said, 1978; Wodak, 2015). Recent studies on the Gaza War further demonstrate that political and media discourse frequently employs ideological framing and polarized narratives that legitimize particular political

positions while marginalizing opposing perspectives (Almustafa, 2024; Wodak, 2021). Similarly, research on political rhetoric during contemporary conflicts has shown that leaders often use discursive strategies to justify military actions, construct national identities, and influence public opinion through strategic linguistic choices (Fairclough, 2013; Nirmala & Degaf, 2026). In line with Huntington's argument, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has portrayed the Gaza War, which began following Hamas attacks in October 2023, as a "clash of civilizations" between radical Islamist extremism and Western democracy. By emphasizing cultural and religious divisions rather than underlying issues such as occupation and socioeconomic inequalities, this framework may contribute to the marginalization of Palestinian perspectives, justify military actions, and limit opportunities for diplomatic solutions. Despite the availability of extensive political speech corpora, corpus-assisted Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) examining Netanyahu's linguistic strategies, including keyword patterns, recurring themes, and ideological constructions directed at both domestic and international audiences, remains limited. Therefore, this study seeks to address this gap by combining quantitative corpus techniques with qualitative CDA to investigate how Netanyahu's rhetorical choices and linguistic patterns shape power relations and influence foreign policy discourse surrounding the Gaza conflict.

Research Objective

To analyze linguistic choices/ patterns which represent Gaza war as clash of civilizations in the selected speeches of Netanyahu.

Research Question

How do the linguistic choices/patterns represent the Gaza War as clash of civilizations in the selected speeches of Netanyahu?

Delimitation of the Study

The study is delimited to the critical analysis of Benjamin Netanyahu's speeches made between 2024 and 2025, with its particular focus on the representation of the Gaza war as a "clash of civilizations." The linguistic and discursive characteristics of the study limit its scope, as observed through a corpus-assisted critical discourse analysis (CADS) perspective. It does not cover speeches or media text by the other political leaders outside. This work will only examine how Netanyahu's rhetoric portrays this war as a battle of civilizations; however, it does not thoroughly explore the broader geopolitical or military aspects of the Gaza conflict itself.

Significance of the Study

By critically analyzing how the Gaza conflict has been portrayed as a collision of civilizations, this work is important for people who are silent, voiceless, and unheard. The study systematically and structurally examines the linguistic choice of words, discursive strategies, and most recurrent themes in the selected speeches of Netanyahu while using these two models, Van Dijk's socio-cognitive model and Braun and Clark's reflexive thematic analysis model, and a mixed-method approach, qualitative and quantitative. In the respective context of the Gaza war, This approach reveals the underlying hidden discourse construction, revealing how the language is used to represent and reinforce ideological divides within the context of the Gaza war.

Literature Review

Putri (2025) argues that discourse plays its roles through language-in-use, where meaning emerges not only from a syntactic perspective but also from social intentions and politics. This perspective views discourse as a central mechanism for framing and negotiating social realities. In recent scholarship, discourse analysis conceptualises discourse as a socially situated practice rather than a collection of isolated linguistic element patterns. In these political contexts, leaders utilise discourse as a tactical tool to frame events, create interpretations, generate collective identities, and justify certain actions. This knowledge is specifically useful for analysing political statements made during times of conflict, when language is inevitable in influencing the public's opinions and moral assessments of war. The literature also shows how speech is intimately linked to power and ideology, as dominant social actors use language to shape and frame narratives, influence public opinion, and normalise specific worldviews while marginalising opposing viewpoints. Political discourse reinforces existing hierarchies and ideological divisions within society while implanting ideological meanings that present certain actions as necessary, crucial, and justified through selective lexical choices/patterns, thematic prioritisation, and framing strategies (Putri, 2025).

A number of studies within the field of critical discourse analysis have analysed how political leaders use language strategically to construct and justify armed conflict, with special attention to the Gaza War. In the selected speech of Netanyahu, Rababah and Hamdan (2019) Israel is consistently represented as a peace-seeking state compelled to act in self-defence, while on the

other hand Palestinians are discursively constructed through associations with threat, extremism, and terrorism. This contrastive representation establishes an obvious moral polarisation in which Israel is depicted as a legitimate and lawful victim responding to aggression, while, on the other hand, Palestinians are positioned as the primary source of violence. These representations are not neutral reflections of reality but are formed by ideological motivations that serve particular political interests, functioning to legitimise state actions and advance dominant narratives surrounding this conflict (Rababah & Hamdan, 2019).

Drawing attention to Van Dijk's socio-cognitive framework, Rababah and Hamdan (2019) demonstrate that ideology in political discourse is not just expressed randomly but is communicated through systematically and structurally repeated and carefully selected linguistic patterns/choices. Their analysis shows that Netanyahu's discourse consistently frames a favourable self-image by foregrounding Israel's democratic character, security imperatives, and moral legitimacy in the context of the Gaza war. Through this kind of polo strategy of positive self-representation, Israel is portrayed as an answerable and lawful actor whose actions are framed as necessary responses to external threats. In contrast, Palestinians are discursively represented through negative other-representation, where they are frequently associated with aggression, extremism, and social disorder. This kind of polarised pattern of representation shows a hidden ideological structure that organises meaning in ways that privilege one group while delegitimising the other. Rababah and Hamdan (2019) argue that such discursive strategies play an important role in forming public understanding of the Gaza Wartime by guiding audience interpretations of blame, culpability, and justification, thus influencing how the conflict is morally evaluated and politically understood.

While revealing pronounced ideological differences in the ways the conflict is discursively constructed, Al-Mahallawi and Al-Sayed (2022) analyse the representation of the 2021 Gaza War in the official statements issued by Hamas and Israel. Their study illustrates that each actor frames the war in line with its political stance and the strategic objectives, producing competing narratives that seek to legitimate their respective positions. So, Hamas presents this conflict as a justified struggle rooted in resistance and the pursuit of freedom, emphasising themes of liberation, subjugation, and historical injustices. That's why this representation positions Hamas as a

legitimate actor engaged in defending Palestinian rights against occupation. However, Israeli official discourse constructs the war primarily through the lens of self-defence, consistently framing military operations as responses to terrorism and threats to national security. Israel aims to establish moral and legal justification for the use of force by constructing its acts as preventative, protective and self-defensive. These kinds of divergent discursive representations show the important role that discourse plays in influencing public perception and the rationale for armed conflict by demonstrating how political actors strategically use language to legitimise their actions while, on the other hand, simultaneously delegitimising opposing parties (Al-Mahallawi & Al-Sayed, 2022).

Al-Hejin (2024) examines how the 2023 Gaza War is depicted in the internet reportage of Al Jazeera English and the BBC, while exposing striking ideological disparities in the framing and linguistic construction of the battle. According to this study, Al Jazeera English employs emotionally charged framing that shows ability disparity and the humanitarian crisis in order to highlight Israeli aggression and Palestinian suffering. The BBC, on the other hand, uses a more neutralised framing and regularly uses different kinds of phrases like variation, violence, and clash, which tends to obscure agency and dilute responsibility. These differences are further pondered in the lexical choice of words, as Al Jazeera English relies on judging terms like 'massacre' and 'genocide', while the BBC favours mitigated expressions such as 'escalation'. In addition to these differences, both outlets employ discursive strategies, including polarisation, nominalisation, and presupposition, to shape audience interpretation and guide public opinion. Overall, the study demonstrates that media discourse plays an important role in constructing ideological narratives of the Gaza War, influencing how events, actors, and the moral positions are perceived by international audiences (Al-Hejin, 2024, pp. 1–7).

Huntington (1993) discusses that in the post–Cold War world, ideological and economic conflicts are gradually being replaced by cultural and civilizational confrontations. He proposes that global conflicts are no longer driven primarily by nation-states or political ideologies but by the deep-rooted differences in culture, religion, and in collective identity. According to Huntington, civilisations constitute the widest cultural groupings, and conflicts between them emerge when cultural boundaries become fault lines of political and military clash. This theoretical stance is specifically pertinent to

assessments of the Gaza War, since political discourse frequently constructs the war in terms of civilisations and culture rather than just territory (Huntington, 1993). Ibrahim (2023) relates Van Dijk's socio-cognitive model to Arabic political speeches to exhibit how the discourse functions as a tool of ideological persuasion and power. The study shows that political leaders strategically sculpt public cognition by highlighting positive in-group representations while constructing negative portrayals of opponents. Ibrahim (2023) claims that political speeches are inherently ideological, serving to justify authority, justify political decisions, and mobilise public support.

Jabeen and Kalim (2024) highlight in A Corpus-Assisted Critical Discourse Analysis of the 2024 Pakistani Election Manifesto that by anchoring critical claims in the empirical outcomes of linguistic choices/patterns, CACDA allows academics to go beyond impressionistic verbal analysis. Their research shows that corpus tools, such as concordance lines, frequency lists, keyword analysis, N-grammes, and collocation networks, reveal recurring linguistic choices that political actors use to create ideological meanings within their specific contexts. Importantly, the study demonstrates that CACDA enhances Critical Discourse Analysis by reducing researcher bias because ideological interpretations are bolstered by analytically significant language use throughout a corpus rather than isolated textual instances.

Recent research on political discourse surrounding the Israeli Palestinian conflict has increasingly highlighted how ideological, cultural, and religious narratives shape representations of war and identity, often reflecting assumptions associated with Huntington's (1993) Clash of Civilisations thesis (Huntington, 1993; Said, 1978; Wodak, 2015). Recent studies on the Gaza War further demonstrate that political and media discourse frequently employs ideological framing and polarised narratives that legitimise particular political positions while marginalising opposing perspectives (Almustafa, 2024; Wodak, 2021). Similarly, research on political rhetoric during contemporary conflicts has shown that leaders often use discursive strategies to justify military actions, construct national identities, and influence public opinion through strategic linguistic choices (Fairclough, 2013; Nirmala & Degaf, 2026). In line with Huntington's argument, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has portrayed the Gaza War, which began following Hamas attacks in October 2023, as a "clash of civilisations" between radical Islamist extremism and Western democracy. By emphasising cultural and

religious divisions rather than underlying issues such as occupation and socioeconomic inequalities, this framework may contribute to the marginalisation of Palestinian perspectives, justify military actions, and limit opportunities for diplomatic solutions. Despite the availability of extensive political speech corpora, corpus-assisted Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) examining Netanyahu's linguistic strategies, including keyword patterns, recurring themes, and ideological constructions directed at both domestic and international audiences, remains limited. Therefore, this study seeks to address this gap by combining quantitative corpus techniques with qualitative CDA to investigate how Netanyahu's rhetorical choices and linguistic patterns shape power relations and influence foreign policy discourse surrounding the Gaza conflict.

Research Methodogogy

The study employs a mixed-methods approach to examine Benjamin Netanyahu's selected speeches on the Gaza conflict (2024–2025), combining qualitative and quantitative techniques. The qualitative analysis integrates Van Dijk's socio-cognitive model of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) (1998) to identify ideological patterns, rhetorical strategies, recurring themes, and the construction of "self" and "other," particularly in relation to national security, terrorism, victimhood, and civilizational conflict. The quantitative component uses corpus-assisted analysis through AntConc (Version 4.3.1.0) to examine word frequencies, concordances, and collocations, providing measurable evidence of recurring linguistic patterns. Five speeches delivered between 2024 and 2025 were purposively selected based on their relevance to the research objective, official accessibility, and focus on the Gaza conflict. The integration of CDA, thematic analysis, and corpus linguistics enables triangulation between linguistic patterns and their broader ideological and socio-political meanings, thereby providing a systematic analysis of how the speeches construct identities, ideological boundaries, power relations, and civilizational narratives.

Table 1: *Distribution of Speeches*

S. No	Date	Occasion / Event	Words	Source / Reference
1	25 July 2024	Netanyahu's Address to the U.S. Congress	2,350	Official gov.il page, Haaretz full text
2	27 September 2024	UN General Assembly	2,100	Official UN transcript (PDF)

3	26 September 2025	UN General Assembly	4,200	Times of Israel full text
4	4 October 2025	Israeli Government Statement	1,800	Official gov.il statement
5	10 October 2025	Israeli Government Statement	1,750	Official gov.il statement

These speeches were collected from the following official sources: These speeches were compiled into a digital corpus, cleaned for formatting errors, and prepared for AntConc analysis (Anthony, 2022). To choose speeches that are delivered by Benjamin Netanyahu (2024–2025) that are most pertinent to the Gaza war and its ideological framing, this study employs purposive sampling, a non-probability technique. These selected speeches offer a wealth of informed material for corpus-assisted research and critical discourse analysis, enabling a targeted analysis of linguistic patterns and choices, recurring themes, and representations of "self" and "other." While focusing on analytical depth above numerical generalization, purposeful sampling technique ensures that the data being used is contextually relevant and in line with the research aims. While enabling a methodical focus on texts that best show ideological strategies, power relations, and civilization discourse, all of which support the theoretical framework of Van Dijk's socio-cognitive model and Braun and Clarke's reflexive thematic analysis (RTA) model, this approach robustens the study's validity and reliability as well.

The first step, which is being used in data analysis, involves preparing the corpus for both qualitative and quantitative examination. All the selected speeches were converted into text document files, checked for accuracy, and formatted consistently. This preparation ensures that the corpus is ready for the word frequency counts, concordance analysis, and for the collocation studies using AntConc (Anthony, 2022).

This study analyzes how Benjamin Netanyahu's political rhetoric builds Israel's identity while depicting Palestinians as the "other" using both the Discourse and Society components of Van Dijk's approach. This framework directly informs the Research Questions. language is both a social practice and a reflection of societal structures, according to Van Dijk's socio-cognitive model of discourse, which emphasizes that discourse is more than just a collection of words but also a powerful tool for the reproduction and maintenance of ideologies, power dynamics, and group interests (Van

Dijk, 2008). Only the discourse and society components of Van Dijk's paradigm are used in this study; the cognitive component is purposefully left out. To show how Benjamin Netanyahu's selected speeches linguistically frame the Gaza War as a clash of civilizations, the Discourse element emphasizes the linguistic choice of words, including vocabulary, syntax, and stylistic patterns, which transmit ideological positions and power (Van Dijk, 1998). The paper analyzes how Benjamin Netanyahu's language techniques and discursive patterns and strategies create social realities and uphold ideological narratives. The research question is directly informed by this structure, which also makes it possible to systematically and structurally analyze the word frequency list, collocations, concordance lines, and syntactic structures that depict and replicate the Gaza War as a clash of civilizations while also revealing the political and social structures that underlie the discourse. Vân Dijk's model provides a theoretical foundation for understanding how political language serves as a vehicle of power, ideology, and its social impact when viewed through this perspective.

Data Analysis

The corpus was systematically and structurally analyzed in the selected speeches of Benjamin Netanyahu using a corpus-assisted approach to critical discourse analysis. This study employed a combination of both (quantitative and qualitative) approaches to analyze the corpus. The corpus was analyzed using AntConc (version 4.3.1.0). While using this frequency list, keywords, and concordance lines, collocates were analyzed to determine the dominant choice of words and discursive patterns in the corpus of data, which represents the Gaza war as a clash of civilizations. Furthermore, the analysis was further informed by the socio-cognitive model proposed by Teun A. van Dijk, particularly in terms of the concepts of ideological polarization, positive self-presentation, and negative other-presentation. This section illustrates that language is used strategically in framing and constructing power, identity, threat, and legitimacy within political discourse.

Frequency Analysis

Frequency analysis essentially determines and measures the linguistic choice of words that appear most frequently in a text. So in this research, it was employed for the selected eight keywords, namely, Hamas, Israel, Iran, Gaza, Terror, Threat, War, and Security. The analysis of the frequency of these words and their common

associations offers an in-depth look at the main topics in Netanyahu's selected speeches.

Table 2: *High-Frequency Words Grouped into Themes for Corpus-Assisted Critical Discourse Analysis*

Actors / Nations / Groups	**Israel**	**248**	**7**	**1**
	Hamas	87	24	1
	Gaza	80	26	1
	Iran	73	28	1
	Americans	14	172	1
	Palestinians	27	84	1
	Hezbollah	26	87	1
	Jewish	28	81	1
	Western	7	308	1
	Lebanon	11	214	1
Conflict / Violence / War	War	58	34	1
	Attack	16	149	1
	Fighting	15	158	1
	Hostages	57	35	1
	Genocide	11	214	1
	Terrorists	25	90	1
	Missiles	11	214	1
	Weapons	12	196	1
	Death	12	196	1
	Blood	12	196	1
	Soldiers	13	182	1
	Civilians	12	196	1
Ideology / Civilization / Religion	Civilization	7	308	1
	Democracy	7	308	1
	Peace	42	48	1
	God	7	308	1
	Evil	15	158	1
	Savage	7	413	1
	Terror	32	70	1
Security / Military / Political Actions	IDF	17	139	1
	Defend	17	139	1
	Security	23	93	1
	Victory	20	112	1
	Forces	13	182	1
	Attack	16	149	1
	Regime	11	214	1
Time / Event References	October	33	68	1
	September	10	234	1
	Today	28	81	1
	Years	23	93	1

In this table the very first thematic cluster, "Actors/ Nations/ Groups," places Israel as the dominant and authoritative subject (248 mentions), far exceeding Hamas (87), Gaza (80), and Palestinians (27), which sets up an obvious in-group and out-group binary. This lexical asymmetry implements Van Dijk's socio-cognitive model of positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation, defending and justifying Israel's military actions while on the other hand marginalizing Palestinians. The second cluster, which is used in the table, is "Conflict/Violence," and "Ideology/Civilization" mobilizes and civilizes this conflict. The Words like "war" (58), "hostages" (57), and "terrorists" (25) frame Hamas as threatening for Israel, while on the other hand, terms like "civilization" (7), "democracy" (7), "evil" (15), and "savage" (7) construct the Gaza war as a moral struggle, depicting Huntington's clash-of-civilizations thesis.

Concordance Analysis

Concordance analysis is another significant tool in corpus linguistics, which helps to study the use of linguistic choices of words, patterns, or phrases in a text or corpus of texts. It generates concordance lines that illustrate the keyword in its context (KWIC – Key Word in Context). So in this context, the use of specific linguistic choices of words, patterns, or phrases can be examined to determine and identify their links with other words. This tool is useful for understanding the use of specific words, patterns, or phrases in a structured and systematic manner, providing important insights into how rhetorical words relate to other words within a given context or discourse.

Table 3*: Concordance Analysis of "Israel": Lexical Framing in Netanyahu's Speeches*

Left Context	Keyword	Right Context
between the democratic State of	Israel	and the terrorist thugs of Hamas. We recently learned…
delivered on that promise. We removed an existential threat to	Israel	and a mortal threat to the civilized world. We…
growing Iranian threat. All countries that are in peace with	Israel	and all those countries who will make peace with…
the hostages home, defeat Hamas, slams Western leaders for abandoning	Israel	and buckling to Islamist pressure; denies genocide in Gaza…
Palestinian state but were required to end the conflict with	Israel	and recognize the Jewish state, every time over the…
Take Syria. For decades, the very idea of peace between	Israel	and Syria seemed unimaginable. No more. Today, we have…

Iraq have targeted	Israel	dozens of times over the past year as well.
Thousands of Iranian-backed Hamas terrorists from Gaza burst into	Israel	in pickup trucks and on motorcycles, and they committed…
axis of terror. Another part of that axis, Hezbollah, attacked	Israel	on October 8th, a day after the Hamas attack.
he said this: "This is not a war with	Israel	. Israel is merely a tool. The main war…
we must not let that happen. And I assure you,	Israel	will do everything in its power to make sure…
to commit genocide against us. We see this too when	Israel	is absurdly accused by the ICC Prosecutor of deliberately…
civilians as human shields. And no army has done what	Israel	is doing to minimize civilian casualties. We drop flyers…
again, no matter how diminished their forces. That is why	Israel	must finish the job, and that is why we…
all of you, and so too, you, the citizens of	Israel	, who showed steadfastness and patience during very trying days.

Various phrases like "the democratic State of Israel and the terrorist thugs of Hamas" and "between Islam and Judaism, between Mecca and Jerusalem" generate the lexical contrasts between civilization and the barbarism, democracy and terror, demonstrating Van Dijk's concept of lexical polarization. Throughout the text, Israel is strategically depicted as a victim under the existential threat of threatening states, with lines such as "Thousands of Iranian-backed Hamas terrorists from Gaza burst into Israel" or "Imagine an attack against America proportional to the attack against Israel" construction military action as defensive or legitimize their actions are ethical and morally necessary. In the whole, these linguistic patterns and choices showed how Benjamin Netanyahu's selected speeches or discourse operates across lexical and macrostructural levels to legitimize action/defend actions, dehumanize opponents, and insert ideological hierarchies within the political rhetoric.

Table 4: *Hamas" as Discursive Threat: KWIC Analysis of Delegitimization, Criminalization, and Civilizational Othering in Netanyahu's Speeches*

Left Context	**Keyword**	**Right Context**
men and women of the IDF have been systematically crushing	Hamas'	s terror army that once ruled Gaza. On October 7
network. In measured military operations, we destroyed nearly all of	Hamas'	s terror battalions—23 out of 24 battalions. Now, to complete
hammered the Houthis, including	Hamas'	s terror machine. We crippled

yesterday. We crushed the bulk of		Hezbollah, taking out most
Gazans who don't have enough food, it's because	Hamas	is stealing it. Hamas steals it, hoards it and
s not because Israel is blocking it, it's because	Hamas	is stealing it. So much for that lie, but
our existence here; and breaking the Iranian axis, of which	Hamas	is a central element. Despite all the pressure I
that instantly flipped the script. Instead of Israel being isolated –	Hamas	is isolated. As a result of the intense military
commit genocide? We're trying to get them out. And	Hamas	is trying to keep them in. This charge is
gentlemen, That victory is in sight. Israel's defeat of	Hamas	will be a powerful blow to Iran's axis
next to Gaza, suddenly heaven turned into hell. Three thousand	Hamas	terrorists stormed into Israel. They butchered 1,200 people from 41 countries
by our great friend, President Trump – that combination will cause	Hamas	to return all of our hostages, while the IDF
an end now. All that has to happen is for	Hamas	to surrender, lay down its arms, and release all

The KWIC concordance lines for "Hamas" demonstrate a systematic pattern of delegitimization in which the group is represented through the language of violence, terror, and devastation while being denied political legitimacy. Value distortion and counter-accusation, through which problems directed at Israel are linguistically transferred onto Hamas, constitute another recurring discursive pattern. Furthermore, the narrative frames the defeat of Hamas as a geopolitical and civilizational necessity, transcending its portrayal as a mere military objective.

Table 5: *KWIC Analysis of "Gaza": Discourse Patterns of Delegitimization and Civilizational Reimagining*

Left Context	**Keyword**	**Right Context**
until we destroy Hamas' military capabilities and its rule in	Gaza	and bring all our hostages home. That's what
demilitarized and deradicalized Gaza. Israel does not seek to resettle	Gaza	. But for the foreseeable future, we must retain overriding
curse of October 7th began when Hamas invaded Israel from	Gaza	, but it didn't end there. Israel was soon
people, both living and dead, into the dark dungeons of	Gaza	. Israel has already brought home 135 of these hostages, including

a post-war Gaza. We don't seek to resettle	Gaza	. What we seek is a demilitarized and de-radicalized
military capability, the terrorists still exercise some governing power in	Gaza	by stealing the food that we enable aid agencies
City before our military moves in. Displaced Palestinians flee northern	Gaza	by vehicle and on foot, carrying their belongings along
the help of regional partners, the demilitarization and deradicalization of	Gaza	can also lead to a future of security, prosperity
nothing less. The day after we defeat Hamas, a new	Gaza	can emerge. My vision for that day is of
war, just look at what we're doing now in	Gaza	City, the last Hamas stronghold, one of the two

The concordance lines for "Gaza" in this specific table expose the discursive framing in which the specific region is presented both a source of danger and a place for potential change. Various phrases such as "demilitarized and deradicalized Gaza" and "a new Gaza can emerge" explain military operations as crucial for the security, wealth, and advancement of the civilization. Overall, the linguistic choice of words presents Gaza as local to be changed in accordance with externally implemented Civilizational values rather than as a nation with its own political agency.

Table 6: *Threat as Discursive Weapon: KWIC Analysis of Existential Framing, Legitimation, and Civilizational Alliance in Netanyahu's Speeches*

Left Context	**Keyword**	**Right Context**
And we delivered on that promise. We removed an existential	Threat	to Israel and a mortal threat to the civilized
of terror, to ensure that Gaza never again poses a	Threat	to Israel. Gaza should have a civilian administration run
We removed an existential threat to Israel and a mortal	Threat	to the civilized world. We lifted a dark cloud
no choice. And Israel has every right to remove this	threat	and return our citizens to their homes safely, and
any other leader that Israel and America face a common	threat	He showed the world that when Iran and its
a security alliance in Europe to counter the growing Soviet	threat	Likewise, America and Israel today can forge a security
and above all – we would not have removed the existential	threat	of nuclear bombs and ballistic missiles from Iran. This

The above concordance lines for “threat” show an ideologically laden discourse pattern and choices in Benjamin Netanyahu’s selected speeches, where the word "existential threat" is methodically built to support geopolitical ties and defend the military action of Israel. Right contexts furthermore generalize the threat, with different statements such as “a mortal threat to the civilized world” and analogies to the Cold War, equating Israel’s enemies with historically acknowledged civilizational adversaries.

Table 7: *Terror” as Discursive Infrastructure: KWIC Analysis of Dehumanization, Spatial Criminalization, and Regime Delegitimization in Netanyahu’s Speeches*

Left Context	Keyword	Right Context
October 7th, the day of that invasion into Israel, that	terror	army numbered nearly 40,000 terrorists. It was armed with more
of Israel We won’t let the world shove a	terror	state down our throat Prime minister vows to bring
Western leaders: Israel will not allow you to shove a	terror	state down our throats. We will not commit national
women of the IDF have been systematically crushing Hamas’s	terror	army that once ruled Gaza. On October 7th, the
and his corpse was taken into the dungeons, into the	terror	tunnels of Gaza—a corpse held hostage. Salem Alatrash,
Hezbollah moved right up to our border. They secretly dug	Terror	tunnels to infiltrate our communities and indiscriminately fired thousands
urban areas on earth. It has hundreds of miles of	Terror	tunnels underground, and it has countless terror towers above
Not a chance! The United States would wipe out that	Terror	regime and ensure that such savagery would never threaten
Israel is doing in Gaza. We’re wiping out the	terror	regime of Hamas and ensuring that its savagery will
retain overriding security control there to prevent the resurgence of	terror	, to ensure that Gaza never again poses a threat

This table exposes a discourse pattern that emphasizes the aspects of dehumanization and delegitimization, as shown by the KWIC concordance lines for the term “terror.” Furthermore, civilizational terminology is integrated into right-context phrases such as “wiping out the terror regime” and “its savagery will never

prevail," which enforce and reinforce the dichotomy of civilizations versus barbarism.

Table 8: *Civilized World" as Discursive Boundary: KWIC Analysis of Civilizational Othering in Netanyahu's Speeches*

Left Context	Keyword	Right Context
committed to removing the curse of terrorism that threatens all	Civilized	societies. But to truly realize the blessing of a
existential threat to Israel and a mortal threat to the	Civilized	world. We lifted a dark cloud that could have

In this table, the two concordance lines for "civilized world" and "civilized societies" demonstrate a solid yet ideologically powerful speech pattern in which Benjamin Netanyahu transforms Israel's conflict into a global civilizational struggle. While creating this conceptual divide between the civilized and uncivilized worlds, phrases such as "a mortal threat to the civilized world" and "the curse of terrorism that threatens all civilized societies" compel Western audiences to adopt a unified identity in the face of this threat.

Table 9: *We as Discursive Solidarity: KWIC Analysis of Collective Identity, Defiance, and National Mobilization in Netanyahu's Speeches*

Left Context	Keyword	Right Context
allow you to shove a terror state down our throats.	We	will not commit national suicide because you don't
rest until our citizens can return safely to their homes.	We	will not accept a terror army perched on our
for a second. The people of Israel are with you.	We	will not falter, and we will not rest, until
I have promised to the relatives of the hostages that	we	will not give up on anyone. And indeed, all
surprise. When he founded the Islamic Republic, Ayatollah Khomeini pledged,	We	will export our revolution to the entire world. We
heavy military pressure on Hamas, combined with heavy diplomatic pressure,	we	will indeed be able to return all of our
the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea, across this bridge,	we	will lay rail 2 lines, energy pipelines, and fiber optic
phrase: Israel will not go gently into that good night.	We	will never need to rage against the dying of
We still face great challenges, but also great opportunities. Together,	we	will overcome the challenges; together, we will fulfil the
the underground terrorist hell of Hamas. I again promise you,	we	will return your loved ones home. We will not

In this table one of Netanyahu's most effective linguistic devices is in the concordance lines for "we," which use collective pronouns to generate national and civilizational identity. The use of future-tense phrases like "we will not falter," "we will defend," "we will overcome," and "we will fight" creates a rhythmic language of determination that serves as a statement of ideology, military activation, and political assurance simultaneously. This civilizational dimension is enforced and reinforced in lines such as "Israel will not go gently into that good night," raising the collective "we" to a symbol of democratic resistance against barbarism, which is legitimate action against them.

Table 10: *Iran as Discursive Axis: KWIC Analysis of Threat Amplification, Civilizational Confrontation, and Alliance Construction in Netanyahu's Speeches as*

Left Context	Keyword	Right Context
Responsible governments should not only support Israel in rolling back	Iran's	aggression, but they should join Israel. They should
a curse for Israel, then you should think again. Because	Iran's	aggression, if it's not checked, will endanger
saw this: Israeli fighter pilots and American B2 pilots bombed	Iran's	nuclear enrichment sites. I want to thank President
weapons. For decades, I've been warning the world against	Iran's	nuclear program. Our actions delayed this program by
history. Our world is in upheaval. In the Middle East,	Iran's	axis of terror confronts America, Israel and our
large percentages of Hezbollah's rockets, which were built with	Iran's	funding for three decades. We took out senior
must not allow Iran to rebuild its military nuclear capacities.	Iran's	stockpile of enriched uranium, these stockpiles must be
the Gaza Strip – while Hamas, Hezbollah, the Assad regime and	Iran	are all at the peak of their power. Yet,
throughout Israel. And last April, for the first time ever,	Iran	directly attacked Israel from its own territory. Firing 300 drones,
civilization and the world's greatest power. That's why	Iran	sees America as its greatest enemy. Last month, I

In the above table the KWIC concordance lines for "Iran" show Iran as a key orchestrator of local volatility and civilizational risk, exposing a language of threat magnification and geopolitical othering. The narrative of civilizational defense is generated by references to organizing strikes by "Israeli fighter pilots and American B2 pilots," and the declaration "Iran sees America as its

greatest enemy" unites Israel and the West, depicting Iran as the ultimate Other and legitimizing the military and ideological action.

Collocation Analysis

Collocation analysis analyzes which words frequently appear together in a text or in a corpus, revealing patterns of language use and its focus. In the context of Benjamin Netanyahu's selected speeches, collocation analysis emphasizes identifying words that commonly co-occur with key terms such as "Israel," "Hamas," "war," and "terror." These repeated pairings show the connections between actions, threats, and events while highlighting how certain ideas and themes are consistently linked throughout the speeches. While analyzing collocations, the study identifies the central concerns and priorities of the discourse.

Table 11*: Collocation Analysis of Key Terms: Discursive Patterns of Threat, Delegitimization, and Civilizational Framing in Netanyahu's Speeches*

S	Key Word	Collocate	Rank	Freq Scaled	Freq LR	Freq L	FreqR	Range	Likelihood	Effect
1	Hamas	Strategy	1	20	3	1	2	1	14.571	4.785
		Steals	1	20	3	0	3	1	14.571	4.785
		Stage	3	30	3	2	1	1	12.083	4.200
		Stealing	3	30	3	1	2	1	12.083	4.200
		Stronghold	3	30	3	0	3	1	12.083	4.200
2	Israel	Our	1	1460	6	2	4	1	17.650	-1.916
		Has	2	510	22	5	17	1	17.315	1.476
		Join	3	30	5	3	2	1	15.421	3.426
		Anti	4	70	7	7	0	1	14.803	2.689
		Between	5	180	11	9	2	1	14.168	1.979
		Peace	6	420	18	13	5	1	14.000	1.467
		Israel	7	2480	18	9	9	1	13.928	-1.095
		Citizens	8	160	10	9	1	1	13.228	2.011
3	Iran	S	1	2140	33	3	30	1	34.899	1.756
		nuclear	2	160	10	1	9	1	34.467	3.775
		proxies	3	60	5	0	5	1	20.008	4.190
		aggression	4	50	4	0	4	1	15.679	4.131
		Its	5	460	10	1	9	1	15.639	2.252
		weapons	6	120	5	0	5	1	13.405	3.190
		hezbollah	7	260	7	3	4	1	13.397	2.560
		developing	8	30	3	0	3	1	13.090	4.453
		Axis	9	80	4	0	4	1	12.067	3.453
		fighting	10	150	5	3	2	1	11.403	2.868
		B	11	40	3	2	1	1	11.375	4.038
		funding	11	40	3	0	3	1	11.375	4.038
4	Gaza	In	1	3090	45	36	9	1	38.506	1.542

		deliberately	2	70	5	4	1	1	17.633	3.836
		Seek	3	80	5	2	3	1	16.351	3.643
		Into	4	340	9	6	3	1	15.618	2.404
		dungeons	5	50	4	4	0	1	14.985	3.999
		Demilitarized	5	50	4	2	2	1	14.985	3.999
		War	7	580	11	10	1	1	13.320	1.923
		Strip	8	120	5	0	5	1	12.587	3.058
		stronghold	9	30	3	2	1	1	12.563	4.321
		starving	9	30	3	3	0	1	12.563	4.321
		woman	9	30	3	3	0	1	12.563	4.321
		Child	9	30	3	3	0	1	12.563	4.321
		lowest	9	30	3	1	2	1	12.563	4.321
		Post	9	30	3	2	1	1	12.563	4.321
		Food	15	80	4	1	3	1	11.399	3.321
		Hamas	16	870	13	8	5	1	11.338	1.579
5	Terror	Axis	1	80	6	2	4	1	32.352	5.228
		tunnels	2	50	4	0	4	1	22.069	5.321
		Shove	3	30	3	3	0	1	17.915	5.643
		underground	3	30	3	1	2	1	17.915	5.643
		regime	5	110	4	1	3	1	15.817	4.184
		Age	6	50	3	3	0	1	14.803	4.906
		That	7	2010	13	5	8	1	12.846	1.693
		Army	8	70	3	0	3	1	12.810	4.421
6	Threat	To	1	4280	7	3	4	1	8.604	1.902
7	War	I	1	40	6	1	5	1	33.923	5.370
		Post	2	30	5	4	1	1	29.384	5.522
		beginning	3	40	4	4	0	1	19.236	4.785
		Real	4	20	3	2	1	1	16.947	5.370
		End	5	120	5	2	3	1	15.497	3.522
		The	6	8700	55	38	17	1	15.316	0.802
		propaganda	7	30	3	2	1	1	14.422	4.785
		throughout	8	80	4	3	1	1	13.769	3.785
		Gaza	9	800	11	1	10	1	13.320	1.923
		Seven	10	40	3	3	0	1	12.689	4.370
		In	11	3090	24	11	13	1	11.313	1.099
8	Security	I	1	40	6	1	5	1	33.923	5.370
		Post	2	30	5	4	1	1	29.384	5.522
		beginning	3	40	4	4	0	1	19.236	4.785
		Real	4	20	3	2	1	1	16.947	5.370
		End	5	120	5	2	3	1	15.497	3.522
		The	6	8700	55	38	17	1	15.316	0.802
		propaganda	7	30	3	2	1	1	14.422	4.785
		throughout	8	80	4	3	1	1	13.769	3.785

		Gaza	9	800	11	1	10	1	13.320	1.923
		Seven	10	40	3	3	0	1	12.689	4.370
		In	11	3090	24	11	13	1	11.313	1.099

Various terms such as “strategy,” “steals,” “stealing,” and “stronghold” control the collocational outline of “Hamas,” characterizing the group exclusively through the criminality and territorial domination. While merging the direct and indirect military threats into a collective discourse of imperialism, collocations such as “nuclear,” “proxies,” “aggression,” and “axis” define “Iran” as an existential Civilizational threat. When captured as a whole, these collocational patterns and choices demonstrate how Benjamin Netanyahu’s declarations change the Gaza conflict from a local battle to a confrontation between civilizations, showing how the corpus-assisted analysis reveals the ideological framework that underlies hidden political discourse.

Findings and Discussion

This section presents a corpus-assisted critical discourse analysis (CDA) of five selected speeches given by Benjamin Netanyahu using AntConc (v4.3.1.0). The purpose of this section is to investigate how language contributes to the Gaza conflict within the context of a civilisational framework. According to the frequency lists, there is an obvious and understood in-group and out-group divide, as "Israel" (248 occurrences) controls the conversation, while on the other hand, "Palestinians" only appears 27 times. Israel is consistently depicted as civilised, democratic and morally justified, while on the other hand Hamas is repeatedly linked to terrorism, violence, and destruction. So, the concordance analysis of keywords such as 'Israel', 'Hamas', 'Gaza', 'terror', and 'Iran' uncovers the systematic patterns of positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation. These patterns are further guided by collocation analysis, which demonstrates that Iran clusters with keywords such as "nuclear", "proxies", and "aggression", while Hamas repeatedly collocates with key terms such as "steals", "stronghold", and "terror", depicting both entities as severe dangers.

The frequency analysis explores that "Israel" appeared far more frequently and repeatedly than "Palestinians", indicating a discursive emphasis on Israeli identity and experience. This finding is consistent with the outcomes of Rababah and Hamdan (2019) and Al-Ahmad (2022), who found that Benjamin Netanyahu’s political discourse affiliated Palestinians with violence and threat while depicting Israel as democratic, legitimised and victimised. Structure

and systematic polarisation were exposed by the concordance and collocation analyses: Israel was linked with democracy, security, and peace, while, on the other hand, Hamas was frequently and repeatedly associated with "terror," "stronghold," and "steals"; Iran with "nuclear," "aggression," and "proxies."

The corpus analysis showed the recurring lexical choice of words and collocational patterns, which repeatedly associate Israel with values such as democracy, security, and civilisation while, on the other hand, associating Hamas and, as a result, the largely Palestinian side, with terror and extremism. Frequency lists and concordance (KWIC) lines subsequently verified that these civilisational keywords are main rather than incidental to the speech. The repeated use of these lexical choices also contributes to the construction of ideological boundaries between "self" and "other." From a socio-cognitive CDA perspective, the positive representation of Israel and the negative representation of Hamas and Iran can be understood through the strategy of positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation. The findings therefore indicate that the selected speeches do not only discuss the Gaza conflict through military and security-related vocabulary but also construct broader meanings of identity, threat, morality, and civilisation. The combination of frequency, concordance, and collocation findings demonstrates that these patterns are recurrent across the corpus and contribute to the representation of the conflict within a civilisational framework.

Recommendations

This study's findings suggest several avenues for further research. To give a more thorough examination of the political discourse surrounding the Gaza crisis, future research should first broaden the corpus by incorporating a greater variety of speeches, interviews, and policy declarations made by Benjamin Netanyahu. Future studies may also include political speeches and statements of other leaders involved in the Gaza war to provide a comparative understanding of how different political actors construct identity, threat, security, and civilisational narratives. Researchers may further examine media discourse, social media discourse, and official policy documents to explore how these representations are reproduced and circulated across different forms of political communication.

Future research may also expand the corpus by including a larger number of speeches from different periods of the Gaza conflict. This can help identify whether the linguistic patterns, collocations,

and civilisational narratives remain consistent or change over time. In addition, corpus-assisted studies can examine other frequently occurring keywords and semantic patterns related to war, security, terrorism, peace, democracy, civilisation, and threat.

While integrating the corpus linguistic approaches with Teun A. van Dijk's sociocognitive model to examine the political speech delivered by leaders surrounding the Gaza war, this study enhances the area of critical discourse analysis (CDA). Future researchers may combine corpus linguistic methods with other CDA frameworks to provide further perspectives on ideological representation, power, identity, and the construction of the "self" and "other." This study employs corpus methods like AntConc to systematically analyze the frequency patterns/lists, collocations, and concordance lines (KWIC keywords in context). Future studies may extend these methods through n-gram analysis, keyword analysis, semantic analysis, and other corpus-assisted techniques to provide a more comprehensive examination of political discourse and war rhetoric.

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