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Headline Information Structures and the Politics of Power: A Pragmatic Case Study of Gaza Crisis News Coverage*

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Abstract

This study examines how news headlines about the October 7, 2023, Gaza crisis employ linguistic structures to convey predetermined framing and reinforce power dynamics. Drawing on Information Structure Theory and the analytical framework of information packing theory, a corpus of 50 headlines from major international outlets (The New York Times, Reuters, CNN, AP, BBC, The Guardian, Al Jazeera) published between October 2023 and July 2025 was analyzed using qualitative discourse analysis. Information Structure Theory examines how speakers and writers organize and highlight pieces of information in sentences, such as what is presented as known or new, important or backgrounded, to guide the listener or reader's attention and interpretation. The study investigates how syntactic and grammatical choices frame events, highlight causes, assign or obscure responsibility, and shape readers' interpretations and thematic focus. Findings reveal that headlines systematically manipulate information structures to achieve pragmatic effects. Here, foregrounding (preposing) emphasizes key actors or consequences; postposing constructions activate presuppositions and dramatize urgency; passive voice, inversion, and interrogatives obscure responsibility and subtly assign or obscure blame; also, expansion constructions (relative clauses, appositives, and parentheticals) enrich context and amplify humanitarian or emotional dimensions. Overall, the study shows that linguistic choices function as pragmatic tools for managing discourse, framing narratives, and influencing perceptions of accountability. These results underscore the ideological and power dynamics embedded in news production and highlight the importance of analyzing information structures to understand how media discourse shapes public understanding and meaning.

Keywords: Construction Grammar, Gaza Crisis, Information Structure, Language, News Headlines

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1. Introduction

In addition to being a military battle, the Gaza-Israel conflict is a deeply ingrained sociopolitical struggle that reflects decades of territory disputes, ideological disagreements, and human suffering. Civilian lives, on both sides, are impacted by the conflict, having broad ramifications for foreign diplomacy, human rights, and regional stability. The battle once again revealed profound socioeconomic divisions, stoked political polarization, and heightened international discussions about occupation, resistance, and justice following the October 7, 2023, escalation. The media's position becomes even more crucial in this unstable environment. Public perception, emotional reaction, and political position have all been significantly influenced by news coverage, especially headlines.

Beyond the battlefield, Israel's war against the Palestinians is also being fought through narratives, images, and headlines that influence global public perception. Palestinians face a media landscape that often downplays, misrepresents, or equates their protests, making it a challenging battle for their story to be heard. The link between language, power, and media representation in conflict reporting has been studied by a wide range of academic disciplines, including political communication, media studies, and linguistics. This research requires an understanding that news headlines are not objective depictions of reality, but rather are constructed texts that both reflect and reproduce ideological viewpoints (Fowler, 1991; Van Dijk, 1988). By grammatical constructions and information structure, headlines serve as crucial entry points into news discourse and frequently influence readers' views (Bell, 1991; Teo, 2000).

Despite their brevity, headlines are not neutral; via nuanced

linguistic and structural choices, they reveal underlying power dynamics. Headlines that have distorted the situation are only one example of how the public, activists, and Palestinians themselves are increasingly fighting back, keeping the media responsible, and educating millions. Despite the central role that news headlines play in shaping public perception, limited attention has been paid to how their linguistic structures reflect and reproduce power relations, particularly in politically charged contexts like the Gaza war. Headlines often function not only as summaries but as strategic framings that guide readers' interpretation of events. However, the underlying pragmatic mechanisms, through which lexical choices and syntactic arrangements serve ideological ends, remain underexplored. This study addresses the gap by examining how information structures in headlines are manipulated to privilege certain narratives, marginalize others, and subtly encode political bias. Understanding these strategies is crucial for uncovering the latent power dynamics embedded in seemingly objective journalistic discourse.

In addition, studies by Philo and Berry (2004) and Herman and Chomsky (1988) demonstrate how media systems in liberal democracies employ a 'filtering' process to align media coverage with governmental and corporate goals, which is particularly noticeable during times of armed conflict. Information structure is a crucial place to start the analysis in this study since this phenomenon encompasses both the message and the language packaging. Focusing on the use of language as a potent instrument, this article aims to examine how the media purposefully tries to sway public opinion by 'framing' headlines in their coverage of Israel's attack on Gaza. This study explores how political prejudice is encoded, and prevailing narratives are reinforced through the information structure of headlines on the Gaza issue.

The study intends to reveal how linguistic techniques used in headline production contribute to the larger politics of power in news discourse. It is based on Information Structure Theory and influenced by information packaging analysis. Different news outlets may present the same event or topic in various ways. But why do speakers of all languages express the same idea using different grammatical structures depending on the situation? The assumptions about the listener's awareness and knowledge during speaking are reflected in the way the sentence is constructed. The rules and patterns of grammar govern this connection of the speaker's assumptions to the sentence structure, which is called 'information structure'. This structure focuses on four interconnected aspects: topic, focus, identifiability/activation, and presupposition/assertion. Lambrecht (1994) examines the relationship between sentence structure and the contexts in which those sentences are used. He demonstrates that there is a direct connection between each of these categories and the structural characteristics of the sentence. The article also includes a literature review that briefly examines research on the language used in news reporting and headlines. It then delves into the theoretical foundations of the 'information packaging' theory, a key linguistic theory that contributes to the broader theory of discourse. This section outlines the theoretical framework of the study. The data analysis includes a few examples of headlines that have led readers to question the accuracy of news coverage and its failure to represent reality truly. The current study's findings demonstrate that grammatical structures give news headline texts new meanings and enable readers to activate and absorb the intention of the authors. The research methodology is mainly based on an information structure analysis mechanism, in which the choice of the syntactic frame (construction) attributes additional meaning to the content of the sentence.

2. Review of Literature

Scholarly research on war journalism focuses on the ways in which language is employed to sway public opinion, place blame, and defend military actions. Comparative analyses of a variety of conflicts, from the Iraq War (Kenix, 2011; Richardson, 2007) to the Syrian Civil War (Ojala & Pantti, 2017), reveal recurring patterns in which some of the news organizations generally portray their allies and governments as rational actors while portraying their adversaries as irrational, barbaric, or aggressors. Van Dijk (1991) asserts that these frames are frequently constructed using syntactic strategies (e.g., the passive voice to conceal aggressive agents) and thematic patterns that highlight or limit responsibility.

There is a thorough literature on ideological framing and information structure, too. An effective technique for analyzing the ideological significance of headlines is the theory of Information Structure (IS), which refers to the arrangement and emphasis of given/new, topic/comment, and focal elements. According to research by Lambrecht (1994) and Prince (1981), sentence structure reflects presumptions about communication aim, relevance, and shared knowledge. Readers' perceptions of agency, responsibility, and legitimacy are influenced by IS choices made in conflict reporting, such as prioritizing victims over agents or events over reasons (Ungerer, 2000; Cotter, 2010).

Several academics have demonstrated the prevalence of framing strategies in the portrayal of the Israel-Palestine conflict in some media. From early coverage of the 1948 Nakba (Said, 1981; Khalidi, 1997) to more recent wars in Gaza (2008–09, 2014, and 2021), patterns of representation have been strikingly similar. Israeli narratives are often emphasised, depicting Palestinians as

passive victims or as violent actors without historical background (Philo & Berry, 2004; Nossek, 2004).

This absence of historical context is typically seen in headlines that depict every uptick as a decontextualized ‘eruption’ of violence. According to Fisk (2005) and Sabbagh (2021), such coverage hides the long-term structural violence of occupation, blockage, and dispossession. Thus, headlines become essential in preserving a ‘cycle of equivalency’ or ‘false balance’, which conceals the difference in power between the two sides.

Recent studies on headline bias during the Gaza conflicts have revealed stark differences in how agency representation and moral responsibility are distributed. For example, Khalil (2017) and Bassiouney (2020) show how some media use nominalization or passive language to describe Israeli military actions, so shielding them from moral condemnation (e.g., ‘missile hits Gaza’ instead of; ‘Israel fires missile’). An ideological viewpoint is often communicated via headlines through information packaging, which emphasizes Israeli losses while downplaying Palestinian suffering, even when the latter is disproportionately bigger. The necessity of integrating Information Structure Theory into a framework for critical and useful discourse is highlighted by these findings. This makes it easier to see how structural choices made in headline language are deeply political in addition to being stylistic, since they legitimize ideologies, apportion blame, and promote narratives.

Carland (2023) has looked at Instagram postings that discuss Israel, Palestine, and the conflict in Gaza. She thinks that just one of the six accounts met the criteria for Palestinians. Out of the six accounts, five were deemed acceptable by Israelis. All five accounts were more likely to utilize the active voice while

addressing assaults on Israel. When discussing events in Gaza, the passive voice was employed more frequently than when discussing events in Israel.

An overview of the first three weeks of some media's coverage of this conflict is given by Tweissi (2023). According to him, certain media outlets replicated the Israeli narrative without making an effort to confirm or look into the stories, images, or accusations that were put forward. They did this after receiving it from some authorities and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Early coverage decontextualized the conflict by portraying it as a lone provocation detached from the realities of occupation and history, and it was characterized by a lack of voices from the opposing side, or at most, very little representation.

According to Hanif (2024), linguistic variations have also been frequently seen in news reports. It seems that the wording frequently minimizes the killings of Palestinians by Israeli forces, in comparison to the Israeli killings. When referring to Palestinian killings, harsh and impassioned language that was appropriately used to characterize the October 7 assaults and the deaths of Israelis has rarely been utilized; instead, more passive language that leaves out the culprit (Israel) and the deed (shot, bombed, and murdered) is employed. According to certain headlines, Palestinians just perish.

The current study is a crucial and innovative addition to the existing critical literature since, despite its importance, information structure has not been extensively used in journalistic discourse analysis, particularly when it comes to coverage of the Middle East war. The innovative aspect of the present study is examining the headlines from the perspective of syntactic structures.

3. Theoretical Framework

Information Packaged Through Syntactic Constructions

How is information packaged based on construction grammar principles? Before going further into the details of syntactic structures, it must be noted that two parts of any utterance are: a) a less informative part that is given, old, or supposed information, and b) a more informative part that is new, modifying, old, or presupposed information.

The syntactic and prosodic characteristics of a phrase that represent its information packaging have garnered a lot of attention in the area over the last forty years (Schwabe & Winkler, 2007). The possibility of optional divergence from basic (canonical) word order is a universal property of natural language (Erteschik-Shir, 2007). The manner in which information is officially packaged and presented within a phrase is referred to as information structure, or information packaging, in linguistics. For example, the difference between an active clause (e.g., *the police wanted him*) and a corresponding passive (e.g., *he was wanted by the police*) is a syntactic difference, but one motivated by information structuring considerations. Other structures motivated by information structure include preposing (e.g., *that one, I don't like*), postposing (e.g., *There was a guy in my university years*), and argument reversals like inversion (e.g., *'the end', said the man*). The information structure includes the interaction between the structure and meaning of language utterances, the interlocutors' mental representations of information, discourse referents, and the discourse universe as a whole. The grammatical shape of linguistic statements usually reflects their information structure. The actualization of belief states and information updating are facilitated by linguistic marking of information structure. Because

of this, information packaging or content management is frequently used to describe information structure in a broader sense. More specifically, the concrete structural realization of information structure categories in language utterances is referred to as information structure. Information packaging serves the following purposes: a) arranging meanings in a meaningful way; b) connecting new meanings to already established meanings, and c) helping the listeners better integrate new knowledge with what they already know.

The relationship between sentence structure and the language and extralinguistic settings in which sentences are employed as propositional information units is the subject of the information structure theory. It focuses on the range of choices that grammars provide speakers to convey specific propositional contents in various grammatical forms under various discourse conditions. This study is founded on the finding that a speaker's presumptions about the hearer's level of knowledge and consciousness at the moment of an utterance are systematically and conceptually interestingly reflected in the structure of a sentence. According to the norms and conventions of phrase grammar, this relationship between the speaker's presumptions and the sentence's formal structure is governed by a grammatical component known as information structure, a term coined by Halliday (1967). Hilpert (2014) identifies three key information packaging principles, which are a) Information Flow Principle, b) Principle of End-focus, and c) Principle of End-Weight.

A. Information Flow Principle

1. (A conversation among three friends):

- a. When are you going to return?
- b. We will return next week.
- c. Next week, we will return.

In unmarked sentence constructions, old information comes first; then the new information appears. Because short-term memory is limited, it is easier to process new information near the conclusion of a phrase than it is to solve a puzzle in its final stages. As seen from the above example, the answer to the above question is easier with the (b) option than the (c) option, because the old information comes first, then the information about 'the next week' comes at the end of the sentence.

B. Principle of End-focus

Usually, a clause has at least one focus element, which usually appears at the end of the clause.

2. (A dialogue between three friends):

- a. Tomorrow we go to the movies.
- b. But it is the zoo that I want to see.
- c. But what I want to see is the zoo.

In response to sentence (a), sentence (c) is a better sentence, because it puts the emphasis on the final position of the clause, the word zoo.

C. Principle of End- Weight

Since the new information frequently needs to be delivered more thoroughly than the provided information by employing a large,

more comprehensive, complicated, heavier structure, try to place the large section at the end of an utterance if it comprises both short and lengthy parts. The informative flow principle and the end-weight principle complement each other. Consider the following example:

3.

- a. It may take them a little while, but it is important that you can take them to make an application and let them know of your needs.
- b. It may take them a little while, but that you contact them to let them know your need is important

It may be found out that processing the second sentence is more difficult than processing the first sentence because in processing the second one, something underlined must be kept in mind to reach its end.

In summary, the information-structure component entails examining three distinct yet connected sets of categories: focus, givenness (the state of being new or old knowledge), and topic (as defined in topicalization construction). It has been demonstrated that each of these categories, or groups of categories, directly correlates with the sentence's structural characteristics (Lambrech, 1994). The third category is focus, the component of a pragmatically structured proposition in which the assertion deviates from the presupposition and renders a sentence informative. There are three types of focus in English sentences, including sentence focus, argument focus, and predicate focus.

4. Research Methodology

According to Ward et al. (2017), English benefits from three linguistic strategies of preposing, postposing, and argument reversal constructions to deviate from the canonical word order, each construction conveying and bearing new meaning.

In preposing construction, any phrasal type subcategory argument of the verb appears in a non-canonical position to the left of the subject and verb. Preposing constructions often need the preposed constituent to reflect discourse-old knowledge, or a referent that has already been brought up in the current discourse.

According to postposing constructions, the postposed component must reflect either hearer-new information or discourse-new information (a referent that has not been brought up in the current discourse before and is also presumed to be one that the hearer is unfamiliar with).

Argument inversion occurs when a subcategory of a verb that canonically comes postverbally instead appears preverbally, and a constituent that canonically appears in subject position instead appears postverbally. Argument reversal, like preposing, places discourse-old information in a preverbal position; however, this restriction is not always present. Instead, information represented by the preposed element must be at least as well-known in the discourse as that represented by the postposed constituent. In other words, argument-reversing constructs will allow a structure where both constituents have the same information status and where new information comes after old information; a structure in which new information comes before old information is not permitted. Besides, sometimes expanding constructions are used to add other new information to the sentence through either appositives, relative

clauses, or parenthetical information. These construction categories can be categorized as below:

Preposing Constructions	Topicalization Left dislocation Focus fronting
Postposing Constructions	Existential 'there' Presentational 'there' Cleft and pseudo-cleft Right dislocation Extraposition
Argument reversal constructions	Passivization Inversion
Expanding constructions	Using relative clauses Using appositives Inserting parenthetical information

A. Preposing Constructions

a) **Topicalization Construction** is used for marking the preposed constituent as the **main topic** of discussion. In English, there may be found some varieties to convey the propositional meaning that "Churchill lost his confidence" through some syntactic varieties, like examples below:

4. As for Churchill, he lost his confidence (Topicalization Construction)

Topicalized construction like the above example emphasizes a

specific element of the sentence; here, Churchill is known as the topic of the sentence. The topic of a sentence is what the sentence is about. It is the subject matter of the sentence. Topicalization, pragmatically, is used to highlight or foreground certain information in a sentence by placing it at the front, even if that is not its default canonical grammatical position. It serves specific discourse and communicative purposes, especially related to information structure. Here are its key pragmatic uses: marking topic (what the sentence is about), inserting contrastive emphasis, managing discourse coherence, framing or shifting the topic, and expressing attitudes, expectations, or emotions.

b) Left Dislocation Construction is used for introducing or maintaining a discourse topic using a *resumptive element*. Examples:

5. That book on linguistics, I haven't finished it yet.

6. His confidence, Churchill lost it.

Left dislocation is pragmatically used to mark the topic, clarify reference, manage focus, aid coherence, and enhance processing, especially in spoken or informal contexts. It reflects how speakers structure information based on the listener's knowledge and discourse flow. It helps mark the Topic, clarify the referent, manage the focus/ emphasis, increase discourse coherence/listener orientation, and also facilitate processing.

c) Focus Fronting Construction is used for bringing contrastive or emphatic focus to the front; often marked by prosody. Example:

7. Into the tunnel, they fled. (Instead of *They fled into the tunnel*)

8. This book, I did read- but the others I didn't touch.

It is a syntactic strategy where a focused element (often conveying contrast, emphasis, or new information) is moved to the front of the sentence. This is used for inserting emphasis and contrast, spotting corrective or contrastive focus and marking new, important, or surprising Information. It is used for stylistic elevation / literary or dramatic effect, and structural attention. Example:

B. Postposing Constructions

a) *Existential 'There'*: The postverbal noun phrase (NP) is typically new information introduced into the discourse

9. There were 100 patients in the hospital killed by Israeli strikes. (existential construction)

By indicating when and where something exists, *existential 'there'* communicates more information than just its existence. The subject of the clause is an indefinite noun phrase introducing a new topic. *Existential there* can maintain end weight and end focus principles. Existential 'there' is used for introducing new entities into discourse, de-emphasizing the location or time (focus remains on the existence or presence of something, not where/when), avoiding definite subjects at the start, and also helping create a neutral, non-thematic subject.

b) *Presentational 'There'*: Again, on the NP that comes after the verb, new or notable entities can be seen.

10. 'There stood the king, silent and alone'.

11. 'There appeared a cloud in the sky'.

Presentational there is used to present something in a striking, vivid, or dramatic way. It is used for foregrounding events. Focus is on the appearance or emergence of an entity or event. Often used with verbs of coming, appearing, standing, and emerging.

c) Cleft and pseudo-cleft: The clefted element (X) is contrastive focus, highlighting one specific constituent in clefts, and the final constituent (X) is in focus. Examples:

12. Even during the darkest ages, Churchill never entirely lost the affection of his countrymen; what he lost was his confidence. (pseudo-cleft construction)

13. It was Churchill who lost his confidence. (cleft construction)

Why do we use cleft constructions (it-cleft and wh-cleft naming pseudo-cleft construction) like the examples above? To keep the long clause containing new information till the end of the sentence in the working memory, satisfying the end-weight principle in language. Meanwhile, the cleft structure and unmarked structure have a difference: the cleft structure activates presupposition (Chafe, 1987). Both *It was his confidence that Churchill lost* and *What Churchill lost was his confidence* are used when both the speaker and the hearer know something about who Churchill is and that Churchill has lost something. This information cannot be conveyed by simply saying that *Churchill lost confidence*. Clefts and Pseudo-clefts help to highlight focus and emphasize a particular element as the most important one. They also help to correct/contrast, reject/contrast prior assumptions (“It wasn’t Hamas—it was civilians...”), and mark new or surprising information. They help to stage new or emotionally significant content, delay the rheme for effect, build suspense or narrative rhythm, enhance clarity or disambiguation, clarify who did what in

complex events, orient the listener/reader, and manage topic–comment structure in spoken or written discourse.

d) Right dislocation: The main clause carries the focus; the dislocated NP is often discourse-old and serves to clarify or echo. Example:

14. He lost his confidence, Churchill.

Right dislocation is a syntactic construction where a constituent (usually a noun phrase) appears around the sentence's right edge, often after a pronoun or a placeholder has already appeared in its original syntactic position. Why do we use dislocation construction like the above example? Either to mark the topic of the sentence in left dislocations, like *His brother, he is a real genius*, or to clarify the topic of the sentence in right dislocations, like *He is a real genius, his brother*. It is used for the purpose of clarification or disambiguation (the right-dislocated element helps clarify or specify a previous pronoun or vague reference), topic continuity with emphasis on comment, processing ease/production planning, and expressivity/emotional marking.

e) Extraposition: The extraposed clause at the end is typically informationally heavy and new — the focus lies there. Example:

15. It is disturbing that Churchill lost his confidence.

-Why do we use extraposition construction like “it is disturbing that John spends so much time on Facebook” in which a subject or an object clause is moved outside its normal position? To move a heavy clause (that John spends so much time on Facebook), which needs to be kept in the memory as new information at the end of the sentence. This construction serves end weight and end focus

principles. It is used to satisfy information flow (packaging new information last) and focus placement (the extraposed clause often contains the focus of the sentence).

C. Argument reversal

a) Passivization

The grammatical change known as ‘passivization’ occurs when the agent (doer) is either removed or positioned in a ‘by’ phrase, and the object of an active sentence becomes the subject of the passive sentence. like:

16. Ten were killed by the Israeli army.

Focus is often on the patient/theme (e.g., ten), because it is moved to the subject position. The agent (*Israeli forces*) is usually backgrounded or omitted entirely if it is discourse-old or less relevant. The new or important information is frequently placed at the end, especially if the agent is introduced. This construction retains the end weight and end focus principles while managing information from new to given. The subject contains the given information, and each phrase contains new information. This is used for topicalizing or maintaining topic continuity, backgrounding or omitting the agent, adding impersonal or objective tone, inserting emphasis on the action or the patient, and avoiding blame or responsibility (in political or conflict discourse, the passive voice is often used for deflecting blame).

b) Inversion

The term ‘inversion’ describes the reversal of the normal English word order, which frequently involves putting the auxiliary or verb

before the subject or the adverb or complement before the subject and verb. There are several types of inversion:

a. Subject–Auxiliary Inversion:

17. Never have we seen such destruction.

Here, the focus is on the new information (e.g., *destruction*).

b. Locative/Directional Inversion:

18. On the hill remained the bodies of the family.

Here, the focus is typically on the subject that appears at the end (e.g., *the bodies of a family*). The preposed locative phrase (*on the hill*) sets the scene, possibly the topic, and the new, focal information comes later.

c. Negative or Limiting Adverb Fronting:

19. Rarely did they mention the casualties.

Here, the adverbial element (*rarely*) is contrastive or emphatic; it carries the focus. The inversion serves to highlight this non-canonical, marked structure and makes the negation or limitation prominent.

Inversion is used to insert emphasis or focus on the new or surprising information, to spot marked information structure (focus-comment), to add stylistic effect/elevated or formal tone, and to help thematic highlighting/discourse coherence.

D. Expanding Constructions

a) Relative Clauses: add background/elaborative information about a referent. The focus is on the main clause; the new or contrastive information is likely there, like

20. “The hospital *that was bombed* sheltered hundreds of civilians”.

Relative clauses are used to

- clarify, categorize, or identify the term they alter.
- supplement a referent with necessary or optional information.
- assist the reader in clarifying or concentrating on pertinent characteristics of individuals, occasions, or objects.
- emphasize agency, accountability, or qualities.

b) *Appositives*: identify or specify discourse-old referents. The focus is usually not on the appositive itself, like,

21. “Antonio Guterres, the UN Secretary-General, called for a ceasefire”. Appositives are used to

- give a noun additional identity or detail in order to rename, define, or clarify it.
- enable writers to distil intricate background data into brief, understandable formats.
- position voices, provide authority, or support assertions (e.g., by mentioning sources or roles).
- indicate affinity or separation from specific viewpoints.

c) Parenthetical Clauses add supplementary, often evaluative or clarifying information. The focus is typically not in the parenthetical. like,

22. “The aid — much delayed by Israeli checks — finally reached Gaza”.

They are used to offer further background information, attitude, or remark without detracting from the primary clause. It is also

used to express opinions, feelings, or contrast, frequently revealing the writer or speaker's viewpoint, and to influence how the reader interprets statements, soften claims, or encourage deductions that go beyond the precise meaning. Finally, it is used to permit the use of sarcasm, skepticism, or emphasis, among other levels of meaning.

4. Data Analysis

This data analysis section systematically examines the pragmatic functions of various syntactic manipulations employed in Gaza war news headlines. The analysis is structured around core transformational categories: Preposing Constructions, Postposing Constructions, Argument Reversal Constructions, and Expanding Constructions. Journalists strategically control information flow, emphasis, and reader interpretation by shifting the canonical word order, whether by bringing elements to the front (preposing), moving them to the end (postposing), or altering the relationship between actor and action (argument reversal). The goal of this rhetorical and grammatical strategy is to do more than merely report; it is to foreground causes, highlight suffering, deflect or assign responsibility, and inject emotional or authoritative commentary, thereby shaping the thematic focus and political valence of the news narrative. Furthermore, the final section on Expanding Constructions (e.g., relative clauses and appositives) details how core information is enriched with crucial, often contextual or humanitarian details. The following examples illustrate how these transformations are utilized to maximize impact and frame the discourse surrounding the Gaza war. As for the number of selected headlines, the name of the selected media,

the justification for the selection of this media, and the time frame of data selection. The total number of 50 headlines has been spotted and studied for the present research among the well-known media like The New York Times, Reuters, CNN, AP, BBC, The Guardian, and Al Jazeera, which were really published over the time course of October 2023 to July 2025. Meanwhile headlines bearing topicalization (4 cases), left dislocation (2 cases), focus fronting (1 case), ‘there’ structures (4 cases), clefts (3 cases), right dislocation (3 cases), passivized (11 cases), inversion (3 cases), relatives (2 cases), appositives (1 case), and parentheticals (1 case) have been analyzed here.

4.1. Preposing Constructions in Gaza Crisis Headlines

A. *Topicalization* in Gaza Crisis Headlines

Here are some headlines related to the Gaza war bearing a topicalization structure syntactically:

a. “With \$20 Billion Weapons Deal, U.S. Aims to Help Israel and Deter Iran”

- **Source:** *The New York Times*
- **Author:** Lara Jakes
- **Publication Date:** August 23, 2024
- **Link:** [nytimes.com](https://www.nytimes.com)

The unmarked form of the above sentence would be *U.S. aims to help Israel and deter Iran with \$20 billion weapons deal*. As the topicalization transformation acts on this sentence, the topic of the sentence becomes the phrase *with \$20 billion weapons deal*, which shows the focus. This new version shows that this economic aid will guarantee the goal that the US is seeking.

b. “In Gaza’s Hospitals, Starving Children Waste Away”

- **Source:** Reuters
- **Publication Date:** March 19, 2024
- **Link:** reuters.com

The unmarked form of the above sentence would be *Starving children waste away in Gaza’s hospitals.* . As the topicalization transformation acts on this sentence, the topic of the sentence becomes the phrase *In Gaza’s Hospitals*, which spots the focus. It also inserts a contrastive emphasis, indicating that it is in the hospitals that children pass away as a result of both sickness and starvation, nowhere else.

c. “To Starving Gazans, Even Animal Feed Looks Like Food”

- **Source:** *Reuters*
- **Publication Date:** February 26, 2024
- **Link:** reuters.com

The unmarked form of the above sentence would be *Even animal feed looks like food to starving Gazans.* The headline uses a preposing structure to convey emotive contrast to highlight suffering, triggering moral and political concern.

d. “Destruction, lawlessness, and red tape hobble aid as Gazans go hungry”

- **Source:** *Reuters*
- **Publication Date:** March, 2024
- **Link:** reuters.com

The emphasis here is on the topic “Destruction, lawlessness and red tape”, setting the scene for what follows. A revised version by

the same scholar explicitly foregrounded the actor: *Israel's destruction and red tape hobble aid to starve Palestinians*. In this revision, "Israel's destruction and red tape" is topicalized making the initial focus of the sentence. Pragmatically, that places responsibility squarely on the named actor, thereby sharpening the reader's understanding of who is causing the humanitarian crisis. This is a concrete example of topicalization in news headlines: by moving the subject (Israel's actions) to the front, the revised version foregrounds and frames blame clearly and explicitly. This is a powerful pragmatic tool to shape how the audience perceives responsibility and importance in crisis reporting. This is a strategic use of language that frames discourse to highlight responsibility, urgency, and moral evaluation.

B. Left Dislocation in Gaza Crisis Headlines

Examples of left dislocation in Gaza Crisis Headlines are

a. "Across Gaza, Families Bury Children They Couldn't Feed"

- **Source:** *Reuters*
- **Publication Date:** May 24, 2025
- **Link:** [reuters.com](https://www.reuters.com)

The unmarked form of the above sentence would be Families bury children they couldn't feed across Gaza. By placing 'Across Gaza' at the beginning, the headline immediately orients the reader geographically. It tells us where this is happening, the *entire region*, not just isolated incidents. This broadens the scope and frames the situation as widespread and systemic. It highlights the theme/topic, which is the burial of the hungry children all over Gaza. It foregrounds suffering as a collective event.

b. “What Little Food Remains, Israel Blocks from Entering Northern Gaza”

- **Source:** *Reuters*
- **Publication Date:** March 26, 2024
- **Link:** reuters.com

The unmarked form of the above sentence would be Israel blocks what little food remains from entering Northern Gaza. Placing “What little food remains” at the beginning emphasizes scarcity and desperation. It shifts the reader's focus immediately to the suffering of Gazans, not the actions of Israel. The fronting strategy highlights the impact of Israel’s action before naming the agent.

C. Focus Fronting in Gaza Crisis Headlines

1. “Nowhere is safe in Gaza” in “The United Nations and aid organizations have said that nowhere is safe in Gaza”

- **Source:** *Reuters*
- **Publication Date:** December 7, 2023
- **Link:** reuters.com

This fronted structure is used to dramatize and generalize the dire safety conditions across the enclave. It places maximum emphatic weight on “Nowhere”, making the entire sentence about total insecurity. The phrasing is echoed in statements by UN officials: “Nowhere is safe in Gaza”. Pragmatically, this emphasizes the severity and universality of civilian vulnerability, cutting through potential qualifiers or exceptions. This construction elevates the emotional or moral significance; phrases or clauses like “Nowhere is safe” operate as urgent warnings.

There are no verifiable Reuters or mainstream news headlines that employ focus-fronting structures such as ‘Even X...’ or ‘Only Y...’ at the very start. These constructions are practically absent from headline practice, as headlines favor concise, agent-first, or topic-first formats without emphasis-focused fronting. Table 1 abbreviates the findings of the analysis of preposing construction:

Table 1. Pragmatic Functions of Different Types of Preposing Construction

Type of preposing construction	Pragmatic function(s)	Real instance within headlines
Topicalization	foregrounds the cause/means/setting; places focus on something.	“With \$20 Billion Weapons Deal, U.S. Aims to Help Israel and Deter Iran”.
Left Dislocation	emphasizes the suffering/scarcity by fronting the affected entity	“What Little Food Remains, Israel Blocks from Entering Northern Gaza”.
Focus Fronting	dramatizes and generalizes the dire condition, often used for maximum emphatic weight (e.g., total insecurity).	“Nowhere is safe in Gaza”.

Source: Author

4. 2. Postposing Constructions in Gaza Crisis Headlines

A. Existential ‘There’ vs. Presentational ‘There’ in Gaza Crisis Headlines

a. “There is no safe place’ – Gaza wakes up after night of Israeli airstrikes”

- **Source:** *Reuters*
- **Publication Date:** *Oct 10, 2023*
- **Link:** *Reuters video headline, reuters.com*

In this existential construction, “there is no safe place” introduces the existence of an unsafe condition in Gaza, highlighting the absence of refuge amid aerial bombardments.

b. “There is no safe place in Rafah, people are displacing...”

- **Source:** *Reuters*
- **Publication Date:** *Feb 21, 2024*
- **Link:** [reuters.com](https://www.reuters.com)

This existential ‘there’ stresses the **non-existence of safety** in areas designated as ‘safe zones’.

c. “Gazans being bombarded in south say there’s nowhere to go”

- **Source:** *Reuters*
- **Publication Date:** *Dec 2023*
- **Link:** [reuters.com](https://www.reuters.com)

Here, “There’s nowhere to go” functions as presenting the desperation of civilians who feel trapped with no refuge.

The examples *a* and *b* assert the non-existence of safety, and example *c* introduces the plight or tableau of despair. Existential *there* introduce new entities or facts into discourse, while presentational there add drama, focus, or vividness to an emerging event. In other words, Existential constructions anchor new information into discourse, especially quantitative or situational updates (e.g., displacement figures).

d. “There appear cracks in Israel’s narrative as Israelis begin to acknowledge Gaza famine”

- **Publication:** *The New Yorker* (Magazine edition)
- **Author:** David Remnick
- **Date of Publication:** July 28, 2025

This headline comes from *The New Yorker*, reporting on how Israeli public discourse is shifting to recognize the humanitarian catastrophe unfolding in Gaza. Presentational constructions highlight emergent moments or turning points, which are rare in headlines but seen in more literary or live-report excerpts.

B. Cleft and Pseudo-cleft in Gaza Crisis Headlines

a. “It's morning in Gaza. Here's what you should know”

- Publication: *CNN*
- Date of Publication: Nov 11, 2023

Here, the cleft construction indicates that there had been some negotiation or dialogue between the writer and the readers about the Gaza crisis/issue. Compare the above sentence with this one: “You should know these about Gaza”. The current sentence does not activate any presupposition that there has been any exchange of information between the writer and the readers about the Gaza crisis/issue.

b. “What Drove the Israel-Gaza Conflict? Here’s What You Need to know”

- **Publication:** The New York Times
- **Date of Publication:** Nov 17, 2021

Compare this sentence with a construction without any transformation as in “You need to know things about the Israel-Gaza conflict”. The current sentence does not activate any presupposition, for instance the presupposition that there has been any exchange of information between the writer and the readers about the Gaza crisis/ issue.

c. “Here is what to know about heavy exchange of fire between Israel and Lebanon’s Hezbollah”

- Publication: *AP*
- Date of Publication: Aug. 25, 2024

Compare this sentence with a construction without any transformation as in “Things to know about heavy exchange of fire between Israel and Lebanon’s Hezbollah”. The current sentence does not activate any presupposition, such as there has been any exchange of information between the writer and the readers about the Gaza crisis/ issue.

C. Right Dislocation in Gaza Crisis Headlines

Examples of news headlines or coverage of the Gaza war that employ right dislocation in headline positions pertaining to the Gaza war, or comparable coverage, were not identified in actual published headlines. Such headline formats are often avoided by mainstream news organizations (e.g., Reuters, AP, BBC, Al Jazeera). But why do headlines rarely feature correct dislocation?

- Headlines encourage clear and succinct syntax: Topic-comment or subject-verb-object structures.
- It is rare to use attached or resumed sentences (‘..., Gaza’ / ‘..., that group’).
- Compared to formal headlines, these forms are more common in spoken or written prose.

D. Extraposition in Gaza Crisis Headlines

a. “It is clear that Gaza’s humanitarian situation is deteriorating rapidly” (Published in an article discussing the crisis, [theguardian.com](https://www.theguardian.com))

b. “It appears that ceasefire talks are making little progress”
(Typical phrasing in analysis pieces, bbc.com)

c. “It is believed that many civilians remain trapped in Gaza”
(Used in news reports about civilian conditions, aljazeera.com)

Table 2 abbreviates the findings of the analysis of postposing construction:

Table 2. Pragmatic Functions of Different Types of Postposing Construction

Type of postposing construction	Pragmatic function(s)	Real instance within headlines
<i>Existential/Presentational 'There'</i>	asserts the non-existence of safety	‘There is no safe place’ – Gaza wakes up after night of Israeli airstrikes’
<i>Cleft/Pseudo-Cleft</i>	activates a presupposition	“It's morning in Gaza. Here's what you should know”.
<i>Extraposition</i>	frames statements as objective facts or generally accepted beliefs (“It is clear that...”)	“It is clear that Gaza’s humanitarian situation is deteriorating rapidly”.

Source: Author

4.3. Argument Reversal in Gaza Crisis Headlines

A. *Passivization* in Gaza Crisis Headlines

Here are some more examples:

a. Heba Mahfouz and Sarah Dadouch, on November 20, 2023, in The Washington Post wrote, “*Another Gaza hospital caught in fighting, as storms deepen civilian misery*”.

b. The New Arab Staff, on November 13, 2023, writes, “Bodies pile up at surrounded Indonesian hospital, Gaza official says”.

c. Al Jazeera writes, “Several killed, injured in Northern Gaza”.

d. Al Jazeera writes, “Palestinian injured in occupied West Bank by Israeli settlers”.

e. Al Jazeera writes, “Palestinian killed in attacks by Israeli settlers in occupied West Bank”.

d. On 23 Aug 2024. Al Jazeera writes “Israeli strikes in Lebanon kill at least eight, including one child”.

The Reuters headline reads: “Issam Abdallah, a Reuters videographer, was killed while working in southern Lebanon”.

Would you like me to compare this with headlines that use the active voice or with headlines that overtly attribute blame (e.g., with an agentive subject)? This way, the readers do not know who killed Issam, and of course, this serves best for obscuring the fact that Israeli forces killed the journalist. Once the readers see this headline, they would 'store' the fact that a journalist was killed, but without storing in their minds the criminal who did it.

Here are some more examples:

e. Another Gaza hospital caught in fighting, as storms deepen civilian misery. By Heba Mahfouz and Sarah Dadouch, The Washington Post, November 20, 2023

f. *Bodies pile up at surrounded Indonesian hospital, Gaza official says.* The New Arab Staff, 13 November, 2023

g. Several killed, injured in Northern Gaza. Al Jazeera

h. Palestinian injured in occupied West Bank by Israeli settlers. Al Jazeera

i. Palestinian killed in attacks by Israeli settlers in occupied West Bank. Al Jazeera

It is undeniable that there have been widespread and prominent failures, from the dehumanizing language used about Palestinians to the passive voice largely used to downplay Israeli responsibility for the war crimes it is committing. A recent example courtesy of a Sky News report on the killing of a Palestinian child by Israeli forces in early January tells of a bullet “accidentally stray[ing]” in the back of a van and killing a “3-4 year old young lady”. A subsequent report changed the phrasing to “young girl” but kept the self-propelling, wandering bullet.

Now compare the passive voice construction with the active voice used in the following examples:

j. Israeli strikes in Lebanon kill at least eight, including one child. In Al Jazeera, 23 Aug 2024.

k. Israeli strike kills 4 aid workers in Gaza “safe Zone”, UK-based group says. In AP, July 13, 2024.

Functional Effects of passivization are: maintaining topical continuity, keeping patient/theme in subject position, omitting or background agent, avoiding naming actor (unknown/strategic), inserting impersonal/objective tone, reducing emotion, adding neutrality, emphasizing patient/result, highlighting impact or victim, deflecting responsibility, and hiding blame, especially in political talk.

B. Inversion in Gaza Crisis Headlines

As said above, there are three kinds of inversion in English:

1. Subject–Auxiliary Inversion
2. Locative/Directional Inversion
3. Negative or Limiting Adverb Fronting

While these inversion structures are not prevalent in headlines, they are utilized in journalistic writing to convey emphasis and draw attention to particular aspects of a story.

a. “Gaza Ceasefire Progress is an Illusion, Says Hamas” 17 August 2024. BBC

'...says Hamas” instead of the more canonical “Hamas says...” is used pragmatically for inversion in order to front an element to the beginning of the sentence. This places strong emphasis on that element, highlighting its importance. It makes the statement more striking and emotionally impactful than a neutral sentence. It creates a formal literary tone. It engages the Reader, for the unusual word order can grab the reader's interest by breaking expectations. It signals that the content is significant or extraordinary, encouraging further reading.

C. Using Interrogative Construction

b. Why is Israel demanding control over 2 Gaza corridors in the cease-fire talks? By Joseph Krauss, In Associated Press, Jan. 2024.

The presupposed proposition of this sentence is that Israel demands control over corridors. By using interrogative sentence structure, there may be room for implying that Israel demands control over corridors, and also, there may be room for justification of this demand through the process of answering the question.

C. Why Hamas Tried to Sabotage Peace Prospects With an Attack? By Sonnenfeld, October 8, 2023

The presupposed proposition of this sentence is that Hamas has tried to sabotage the peace deal through the attack. The article tries not only to convey the message that Hamas has tried to sabotage the peace deal, but also to provide the reader with suitable answers to this crucial question.

In standard English, the reporting clause would typically be:

“Hamas says Gaza ceasefire progress is an illusion”

But in the headline, it is inverted to:

“Gaza ceasefire progress is an illusion, says Hamas”

This is a stylistic inversion common in journalistic writing, especially in headlines and literary prose. It serves to:

- maintain thematic continuity: Keep the quote or key statement up front.
- delay the source: Emphasize the statement before revealing who made it.
- add rhetorical weight or a sense of formality.

In the headline “Gaza ceasefire progress is an illusion, says Hamas”, the inversion (putting ‘says Hamas’ at the end) serves several important pragmatic and rhetorical functions, especially in the context of news headline writing:

Try to compare three versions of the same sentence below:

- a. Hamas says Gaza ceasefire progress is an illusion
- b. Gaza ceasefire progress is an illusion, Hamas says
- c. Gaza ceasefire progress is an illusion, says Hamas

The unmarked typical direct speech construction depicted in example (a) shows that there is a direct reporting of what Hamas is thinking and saying about the process of cease-fire progress. Here, Hamas is the old information, and the following proposition (that the given cease-fire is an illusion) is the new information.

The parallel construction of the examples (b) and (c) shows that the proposition (that the given cease-fire is an illusion) has been considered as old information, and who Hamas is is newly introduced to the agent/speaker of such old information. By introducing new information (Hamas as the speaker), it is emphasized and conveyed that Hamas's pessimism will lead to the fact that the peace talks in Gaza will be fruitless. The writer is going to convey the message that if the peace talks about the Gaza crisis do not reach any results, the main reason for that is the pessimistic view of Hamas towards these talks, which entered this scene with pessimism from the very beginning. They have not had a definite and serious goal for real peace at all because they thought that a cease-fire was nothing but an illusion.

The construction of the (c) goes even further and shows that Hamas is the newest information of the sentence elements compared with the verb 'says'.

The pragmatic use of interrogatives in headlines goes beyond merely asking a question. Here is a structured explanation of how and why interrogative constructions are used in headlines from a pragmatic perspective to attract attention, signal controversy or doubt, reflect public discourse, suggest blame or challenge, and introduce speculation or forecasting. Table 3 abbreviates the findings of the analysis of argument reversal construction:

Table 3. Pragmatic Functions of Different Types of Argument Reversal Construction

Type of Argument Reversal construction	Pragmatic function(s)	Real instance within headlines
Passivization	It keeps an impersonal/objective tone, obscures or leaves out the agent, and avoids accountability by emphasising the patient, victim, or outcome (effect).	“Another Gaza hospital caught in fighting, as storms deepen civilian misery”.
Inversion (Reporting Clause)	by postponing the source or speaker, it preserves theme continuity and adds formality or rhetorical weight.	“Gaza ceasefire progress is an illusion, says Hamas”
Interrogative (Headlines)	attracts attention and implies justification or a search for answers, framing a controversial proposition as a topic for inquiry.	“Why is Israel demanding control over 2 Gaza corridors in the cease-fire talks?”

Source: Author

4.4. Expanding Constructions in Gaza Crisis Headlines

A. Using Relative Clause Construction

a. Islamic Jihad, (which is) the group Israel blamed for the hospital blast, is an armed group often aligned with Hamas. By Raja Abdulrahim, In The New York Times, on October 17, 2023

Compare the above sentence with this version: “*Islamic Jihad is an armed group often aligned with Hamas*”. This would be a declarative sentence in which Islamic Jihad is just the subject of the copula verb ‘is’. But when added to by the relative clause, the

Islamic Jihad would be the object of the verb ‘blaming’ because of carrying out the blast at the hospital.

b. Khaled Meshaal, who survived Israeli assassination attempt, tipped to be new Hamas leader By Nidal Al-Mughrabi, in Reuters, on July 31, 2023

Compare the above sentence with this version: “*Khaled Meshaal tipped to be new Hamas leader*”. Here, the main content is that Khaled Meshaal has been determined to be the leader of Hamas, and nothing else is conveyed. But when the relative clause is added to the main clause, then it is meant that the reader must be reminded of the fact that he has been rescued from assassination once in the past.

The two headlines mentioned above contain the relative clauses which have been marked by being underlined to show that the relative clause content aims for either reminding the readers of something that happened in the past (like the second example sentence) or inculcating a new idea to the reader/readers (like the first example sentence). The relative construction inserts some new information into the information structure of the main clause, adding to the content meaning of the complex clause.

B. Using Appositives

a. “Deaths of Gazans Hungry for Food Prompt Fresh Calls for Cease-fire”

This headline uses an appositive phrase, “Hungry for Food”, as a descriptive renaming or clarification of ‘Gazans’. It explains who those Gazans are in context, effectively amplifying the humanitarian dimension of the situation.

C. Using Parenthetical Information

a. “Aid deliveries a 'drop in the ocean' amid Gaza’s desperate hunger, UN says...” — *The Guardian* (July 28, 2025)

The phrase “a 'drop in the ocean’” is a quoted parenthetical clause, inserted for emphasis and commentary on the scale of aid relative to need. Table 4 abbreviates the findings of the analysis of expanding construction:

Table 4. Pragmatic Functions of Different Types of Information Expanding Construction

Type of expanding construction	Pragmatic function(s)	Real instance within headlines
<i>Relative Clause</i>	adds new, contextual information or reminds readers of past events relevant to the primary subject (e.g., historical actions).	“Khaled Meshaal, who survived Israeli assassination attempt, tipped to be new Hamas leader”
<i>Appositives / Parenthetical Info</i>	amplifies the humanitarian dimension or provides authoritative commentary, clarifying the subject's condition or the scale of the crisis.	“Aid deliveries a 'drop in the ocean' amid Gaza’s desperate hunger, UN says...”

Source: Author

5. Concluding Remarks

News and journalism are significantly impacted by ownership. Historically, newspaper proprietors would often utilize their publication to voice their personal political views and beliefs. News-making is also impacted by owners' current focus on short-

term earnings rather than medium-term investments. Among the consequences of big corporations purchasing newspapers is that news production is only one of many industries they work in; these are companies whose main objective is to make money. Networks and news outlets should oppose each organization's lobbying efforts that target specific journalists and newsrooms overall. No claim should be prioritized over or viewed as more legitimate than the others; fairness and impartiality are necessary. The events of October 7, 2023, require objective journalistic analysis due to the many claims and tales involved.

This article attempted to demonstrate how grammatical structures may be used to exercise prejudice and power. Looked at the most common ways bias manifests itself in news, such as the framing of stories, the construction of sentences, the selection and usage of words, and the creation of headlines is the aim of the article. This article discusses headlines, their grammatical characteristics, and the rhetorical strategies used to create them in print and online media, including several examples. The purpose of the headline, which comes at the beginning of the story, is to catch the reader's interest and clarify the subject matter. This article identifies some of the major themes in media coverage of Israel's war in Gaza and makes recommendations on how to make it more impartial and objective, putting aside the debate about who gets to choose news headlines and for whom.

The comprehensive pragmatic analysis of headline information structures in news coverage of the Gaza crisis, exemplified by the systematic examination of preposing, postposing, argument reversal, and expansion constructions, confirms that journalistic linguistic choices are far from accidental. This study demonstrates that the application of specific syntactic transformations functions

as a powerful, non-explicit tool for managing discourse, assigning responsibility, and establishing a dominant political frame.

The findings reveal a clear pattern where information structures are strategically manipulated to achieve specific pragmatic effects:

1. **Foregrounding (Preposing):** Transformations like Topicalization and Left Dislocation consistently move elements of impact to the initial, high-salience position. Whether it is emphasizing the means (*'With \$20 Billion Weapons Deal...'*) or the setting (*'In Gaza's Hospitals...'*), this strategic fronting immediately orients the reader's attention and emotional response before the main action or actor is named. Crucially, the analysis of topicalized agentive structures (e.g., *'Israel's destruction...'*) highlights the potential of this structure to sharpen the assignment of blame when an actor is explicitly named, or, conversely, to obscure agency when the focus is placed solely on the resulting conditions (e.g., *'Destruction, lawlessness and red tape...'*).

2. **Activating Presupposition and Dramatizing Scarcity (Postposing):** The use of Existential and Presentational 'There' constructions serves to anchor new, often urgent, information into the discourse, particularly by asserting the non-existence of safety (*'There is no safe place'*). Meanwhile, Cleft and Pseudo-cleft structures are identified as critical tools for activating presupposition, signaling that a topic is already under negotiation and allowing the headline to swiftly pivot to providing context or justifying an action, thereby shaping the reader's pre-existing knowledge structure.

3. **Reversing the argument by hiding agency and evading accountability:** The widespread and practical application of passivization is the most important finding about the politics of

power. News headlines usually shift responsibility and disguise agency by putting the patient, victim, or result in the subject position and omitting or backgrounding the agent (e.g., ‘Another Gaza hospital caught in fighting’; ‘Several killed, injured...’). In stark contrast to headlines that use active voice to specifically identify agents of action, this deliberate omission normalizes the event as a force of nature rather than a controllable activity. Similar to this, it has been demonstrated that the practical application of inversion (e.g., ‘...says Hamas’) and interrogative structures can govern the introduction of new, frequently contentious speakers or propositions, granting the writer authority over the framing and justification of opposing viewpoints or structural conflicts.

The passive voice is frequently used to depict one side of the dispute, depriving victims of their independence and uniqueness. Conversely, the active voice is typically used to portray the other viewpoint, subtly urging readers to empathize with their behavior. The media purposefully ignore the important ‘who does what to whom’ component required for a thorough and truthful story when they use the passive voice. They avoid accountability in this way, which effectively calls into question the veracity of war crimes and renders them appear less certain or warranted.

Why are news outlets using passive language to describe the killing of people in Gaza? News editors will say it is because they cannot verify the facts or trust the information provided by the Gaza health authority. This is particularly true when it comes to relations between Israel and Palestine, with activists and human rights campaigners frequently calling out news organizations for their choice of language and use of passive voice. Terrible things seem to happen without explicitly and consistently calling out the perpetrators. This refers to the media’s use of the ‘passive voice’ –

a form of dehumanization and marginalization. In these outlets, it is repeatedly seen that one side of the war is described in the passive voice, dehumanizing victims by taking away their autonomy. At the same time, the other party is typically described in the active voice, which implies to the readers that they can get behind the clause and justify their actions. When the media uses the passive voice, it intentionally ignores the 'who' did 'what' to 'whom' principle that is needed for a piece of information to be complete. They use the passive voice to evade the truth and somehow make the war crimes look doubtful. News outlets often use passive language to describe the killings in Gaza, and one reason cited by editors is the inability to verify the facts or trust the information provided by the Gaza Health Authority. This is particularly evident in the context of the conflict between Israel and Palestine, when human rights advocates and activists often criticize media outlets for their linguistic choices, notably their usage of the passive voice. This language strategy permits atrocities to take place without regularly and clearly identifying the offenders. In this instance, the use of the passive voice dehumanizes and marginalizes the speaker.

4. Expanding: Three specific grammatical constructions, including relative clauses, appositives, and parenthetical information, are employed in Gaza crisis headlines to expand, enrich, and add contextual depth to the core news information. These constructions serve to either inculcate new ideas, remind readers of past events, or amplify the emotional/humanitarian dimension of the situation, thereby enhancing the overall meaning and informational structure of the headlines beyond simple declarative statements.

The main argument of this case study, which is that crisis headline structure is a potent pragmatic act with clear political

ramifications, is strongly supported by the facts presented here. In order to impact thematic continuity, emphasize humanitarian impact, and gently but effectively manage the sense of accountability, syntactic alterations are used to structure the information flow systematically.

By dissecting these micro-linguistic choices, this analysis exposes the ideological infrastructure of news reporting. The recurrent tendency to structurally minimize the roles of certain actors, while maximizing the drama of consequence, suggests that the political agenda is often realized not through overt statements, but through the unmarked, grammatical mechanics of the text. Future research should build on these findings to further correlate the precise frequency of these constructions across various media outlets with their established institutional stances toward geopolitical conflicts.

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