

VOICING PROSECUTED VICTIMS: A MULTIMODAL ANALYSIS OF PALESTINE LIBERATION MOVEMENT POSTERS

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to convey the idea of Palestinian freedom through visual and textual modes. Based on Halliday's SFL (2004) and Kress & Van Leeuwen's (1996) visual grammar framework, this research aims to identify the multimodal features and convey contextual meaning within Palestinian protest posters. Furthermore, through this research, researchers examined how these posters represent the idea of Palestinian freedom through verbal and visual modes. There were five posters from the Palestinian Project Posters website analyzed in this research. The results revealed that Palestinians are depicted as the victimized party both in visual and verbal modes; it also voices the independence values so that people are persuaded to support the Palestinian liberation movement. The research is proposed to unveil the factual condition in Palestine through posters and raise awareness of the Palestinian struggle.

Keywords: *applied linguistics; multimodal discourse analysis; systemic functional linguistics; visual grammar; social semiotic.*

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INTRODUCTION

The ongoing conflict in Palestine, now in its 76th year, is often overlooked amid global geopolitical issues, despite being described as a genocide and systematic occupation rather than a conventional war, due to the severe imbalance of power and resources (Nijim, 2020; 2023). In 2023, however, the reality of the situation gained renewed global attention through widespread social media campaigns and mass protests. Outrage over the atrocities sparked demonstrations and solidarity movements across the

world, with digital campaigns playing a significant role in mobilizing support for Palestinians (Kelsch, 2022; Haugbolle & Olsen, 2023).

Digital campaigns have become a vital form of modern political activism, showing that the transmission of complex ideas is no longer confined to text or speech. Visual media, such as images and videos, are powerful tools to influence perspectives and mobilize support (Karamat & Farooq, 2020). The *Palestine Poster Project* exemplifies this by collecting graphic materials about Palestinian history, resistance, and culture. Since its launch in 2009, the website has operated as a growing open-access archive (Walsh, 2011). During the 2023 escalation of the Al-Aqsa Flood operation, social media saw a surge of pro-Palestine posters, including infographics, protest calls, and boycott messages (Kelsch, 2022; Abushbak et al., 2024; Hahn-Herrera, 2020). Many of these were later curated into the *Palestine Poster Project*, now the most comprehensive digital archive of such content. Its collection includes over 9,000 posters from international artists, 6,800 Palestinians, 5,200 from Zionists, and 1,400 from Arab or Muslim contributors. These materials, primarily sourced from platforms like Instagram and Facebook, invite critical discourse on visual resistance and ideological expression. Digital posters not only spread political agendas but also shape public attitudes, raise awareness, and foster new perspectives (Karamat & Farooq, 2020). Studies in multimodality show that such media affect metacognition and behavior by influencing how people manage beliefs, emotions, and attention (Makri et al., 2020; Brantner et al., 2011). As Van De Velde (2022) notes, textual elements within posters further clarify collective identities, emotions, and demands in protest contexts.

Research on protest posters has grown alongside digital political movements addressing global issues such as climate change, peace, and labor rights. These movements increasingly rely on digital modes to voice their aspirations. Posters, as tools for conveying political messages, have been studied by Jungblut and Zakareviciute (2019) and Belmonte and Porto (2020), who analyzed how multimodal elements are used to frame and depict Palestinians during the Gaza conflict. Their studies applied visual grammar and semiotic frameworks to examine participant representation in these posters. Similarly, Lulu et al. (2022) and Al-Dala'ien et al. (2023) employed visual social semiotics to analyze political cartoons and verbo-pictorial Facebook posts related to Palestinian displacement. Their findings reveal recurring themes that highlight Israeli oppression and portray Palestinians as victims. Additionally, Assaiqeli (2021) explored how posters function as visual discourse and counter-hegemonic tools against Zionist mystification of Palestinian history, particularly in representations of the 1948 Nakba.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This research analyzes resistance messages in digital protest posters related to the Palestine-Israel conflict, focusing on how verbal and visual modes, referred to as multimodal texts, work together to communicate meaning. Multimodality involves the integration of two or more semiotic

resources to enhance communication (O'Halloran & Smith, 2012) and is viewed as a social phenomenon present across all forms of discourse (Van Leeuwen, 2015; Belgrimet & Rabab'ah, 2021). Roland Barthes was among the first to explore the interaction between text and image in *Rhetoric of the Image* (1977), laying the groundwork for later developments by O'Toole (1994), Kress and Van Leeuwen (2022), and O'Halloran et al. (2019), who formalized Multimodal Discourse Analysis (MDA). This field of study has grown along with the visual and textual practices in academic development, as in research, the teaching-learning process, or daily use of written text.

This study adopts Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) and Kress and Van Leeuwen's visual grammar to examine how verbal and visual elements in the posters convey messages of Palestinian resistance and freedom. SFL, developed by M.A.K. Halliday in the 1960s and rooted in earlier work by J.R. Firth and Bronislaw Malinowski, emphasizes the social functions of language rather than its structural forms (Halliday, 1978; Ingold, 2023; Almurashi, 2016). Widely used in multimodal research, SFL includes concepts such as rank and scale (from morphemes to clauses), clause complexes, and metafunctions that explain how language constructs meaning in context (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2013). Recent contributions by Martin (2022) and Matthiesen et al. (2023) have continued to refine this framework. SFL was initially used only on language texts, but later it was also used to analyze other modes besides language (e.g. Kress and Van Leeuwen 1990, 2020; O'Halloran, 2012; O'Toole et al, 2015) widely known by the term of SF-MDA (Systemic Functional Multimodal Discourse Analysis). The SF-MDA framework defines multimodal semiosis as a set of interrelated systems of meanings (O'Halloran, 2019). This development builds upon Halliday's theory to extend the function and its adaptability towards linguistic and non-linguistic resources. SF-MDA as an analytical tool and interpretive framework has spread into multi-disciplinary and adapted into discourse analysis (e.g., music, sounds, movies, website design, gestures) (O'Halloran, 2014, 2019; Royce et al., 2007). Since the function of language could be variative and occur in multiple contexts, Halliday unfolded the metafunction to interpret the social functions of language into three relational meaning processes, namely ideational, interpersonal, and textual (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, 2013). Halliday's SFL framework and Kress van Leeuwen's visual grammar are considered the most appropriate analytical tools to dissect the ideas in the posters as a multimodal practice.

As the ideational meaning functions to depict human experiences, sociocultural and internal consciousness into a comprehensible language, the transitivity system was used to interpret these experiential processes into a grammatical system (Adawiyah et al, 2020; Mayr, 2008; O'Halloran, 2019). According to Matthiessen and Haliday (1997) transitivity has three prominent aspects namely the participant (Human/non-Human involved in the process) a subject that usually marked by noun group, the process (the action that happened) an event marked by verbal group, and the circumstances (the explanation of settings this process occurred, in which time, place, and the condition) marked by adverbial group. Halliday divided the process into six distinctive aspects based on the meanings of each process

created, namely material, mental, verbal, relational, behavioral, and existential (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2013).

Table 1. Transitivity Process

Process	Meaning	Verbs
Material	a process of doing a particular action	write, read, sing, etc.
Mental	a process of human cognition, reaction, and perception	think, love, adore, etc.
Verbal	a process of informational exchange	discuss, talk, negotiate, etc.
Relational	a process of relatable notions	be, have, etc.
Behavioral	a process of human physiological condition	smile, blink, sweat
Existential	a process of something that exists or happens	was, is, etc.

Kress and van Leeuwen's theory of visual grammar was used as an additional framework to support a more thorough visual analysis. This framework enables us to examine the semiotic resources contained within the images from visual analysis perspectives. The Visual grammar framework accommodates a comprehensive analytical system of non-linguistic resources (i.e, sign, images, or videos). Under Halliday's metafunction theory, Kress and Van Leeuwen build visual analysis terms to convey meaning similar to Halliday's Metafunction. The representational meanings (corresponding with ideational metafunction) define how semiotic systems may represent the represented participant and their relationship with their nature or reality. Afterward, this representation is categorized into two distinct categories: narrative and conceptual. Narrative representation is similar to the six transitivity processes of Halliday's SFL, while the conceptual representation displays events and actions that are happening, as well as change processes. The interactive meaning (corresponds with interpersonal metafunction) depicts social interaction among the represented participants or towards their world represented in the text. The compositional meanings (corresponding with textual metafunction) mainly concern informational value, framing, and the salience of the represented participant.

Table 2. Kress and van Leeuwen (1996, 2006) Metafunctional Framework

Mode	Category		
Representational	Participant	Human	Age Gender

			Sociocultural portrayal
		Non-Human	
Interactive	Distance	Close-up Medium shot Longshot	
	Perspective	Horizontal vertical	Frontal/Oblique High/Low Eye-levelled
	Modality	Colour	Saturation/differentiation/modulation
		Contextualization	
Compositional	Information value	Left-right- top-bottom	
	Saliency		
	Framing		

To generate new insights, a theory should be applied to specific research problems (Müller-Bloch & Kranz, 2015). Most previous studies employed visual grammar and social semiotic analysis of the posters. Hence, their research is more focused on the agency within multimodal text. Therefore, this research applies the SFL framework to see how the intersemiosis process between verbal and visual modes constructs the ideational meanings within the posters as an artifact. The research's primary interest is the interrelation between applied visual and textual protest posters in the Palestinian and Israeli conflict. As such, the research addresses one research question: How is the idea of Palestinian freedom visually and verbally represented in Palestinian protest posters?

METHOD

Research Design

This research applied descriptive qualitative research methods to unearth the constructed meanings within the Palestinian protest posters. Under the theoretical framework of multimodality and a visual grammar approach, the research intends to analyze the free Palestinian posters to find out how the idea of Palestinian freedom is verbally and visually represented,

develop the interpretation of images, and connect them to the intended meanings of the posters' makers.

Research Artifacts

Five digital Palestinian posters have been used as data for this research. These five posters (Walsh, 2011). In order to maintain the diversity in the dataset, five different posters from multiple artists have been chosen to be analyzed. These five posters were chosen since the quantity of verbal and visual representations within the posters is relatively balanced. The justification for choosing only five posters is that these posters have represented the idea of Palestinian independence and have similar substance to posters that are commonly used on social media. For research purposes, the researcher provides the following table, which contains the metadata of the posters analyzed in this research:

Table 3. Metadata of chosen artifacts

	Figures	Title	Artist
1	Poster	No Pride for Us	Unknown
2	Poster	God is Buried Under The Rubble in Gaza	Meg Ross
3	Poster	Liberation is Inevitable	Shupti Rozario
4	Poster	Our Voices	Hazem Asif
5	Poster	Kill Three Get One Free	Denny

Data Analysis

The analysis of the data in this research was conducted following these steps:

1. The modes in the posters will be analyzed separately. Regarding participants, process, and circumstances, verbal modes within the posters are analyzed using Halliday's verbal transitivity theory. On the other hand, the visual modes within the posters are analyzed using Kress and Van Leeuwen's theory of visual grammar.
2. The context is elaborated. In order to provide a correct interpretation of multimodal text analysis, the researcher needs to acquire in-depth contextual knowledge (O'Hagan, 2023). The comprehension of context gives a better understanding of how patterns and meanings within the communication are established, so the researcher can observe certain 'traditions of use' in communication in sociocultural practice, sociopolitical forces, and patterned uses as defined by Ledin and Machin (2019) by term of "canons of use".
3. Once the analysis of each mode has been completed, the analysis continues to see the intended meaning and the signified meanings of the verbal and visual representations, and how they relate to each other to shape the comprehensive meaning of the text.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Based on the evidence, the investigation found that the idea of Palestinian liberation is verbally constructed through the use of selected phrases of “God”, “our voices”, “our struggle”, and “no pride”, by the verbal participants. In terms of processes, the relational process serves as the dominant process used in the posters. This process is also strengthened and further elaborated by material processes that either show or indicate the Palestinians with actions to fight for their independence. Moreover, the verbal circumstances used in the poster show a diverse usage of locative circumstances, manner, and causative circumstances. The circumstance plays an important role in unveiling the context that the clause intended.

Visually, Palestinian liberation is expressed through human participants (a boy, a woman, and a child) and non-human elements (a flock of doves, a McDonald’s box filled with bullets, and a raised fist). These represented participants symbolize Palestinian identity, resistance, and the suffering of civilians. The narrative process emerges as the primary visual structure, with the conceptual process taking a secondary role. Additionally, the circumstances of accompaniment and location further reinforce the intended meanings. To offer a deeper understanding of these visual and verbal elements, the researcher provides a detailed analysis in the following section.



Figure 1. Poster One: No Pride for Us poster.

Palestinian Liberation Idea as a state and the relationship between entities.

The processes used in the posters are nearly evenly distributed, with the relational process dominating at 57.14% (posters one, three, and five) and the material process accounting for 42.86% (posters two and four). According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2004), the process within a clause forms the core structure of language, making it essential to understand their function in conveying the posters’ messages. For example, in poster one, the clause “some of us” (Carrier) cannot have “pride” (Attribute) unless there is “liberation for all of us” (Circumstance). This attributive relational process links pride to the condition of liberation, evoking strong emotions tied to Palestinian freedom. Since pride is a fundamental emotion shaping social behavior and group

identity, such wording aims to inspire action and solidarity (Tracy et al., 2023).

Similarly, other posters connect Palestinian independence to readers' morality and humanity, often employing direct satire as a persuasive strategy to foster empathy and encourage participation in the protest movement. The material process further reinforces the idea of Palestinian liberation as "unfolding action," emphasizing that freedom requires concrete individual and collective efforts. Many clauses function as calls to action, inviting defense of Palestine through resistance, demonstrations, and military efforts. These actions recall the historical context of Palestinian resistance, particularly the First and Second Intifadas (1987–2006). The First Intifada, a spontaneous grassroots uprising against Israeli settlements in Gaza, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem, highlighted the diminishing role of diplomatic efforts and mental processes in favor of direct action (Naser-Najjab, 2020). This resistance also contributed to the emergence of Hamas as a new armed faction (Awad, 2021).



Figure 2. Poster Two: God is Buried Under The Rubble in Gaza.

Furthermore, the analysis of verbal clauses shows a diverse role of participants in the posters. In total, there are five words that verbally represent the participant. They have been expressed through the utilization of diverse semantic representations such as names and identifiable references. The analysis reveals that Palestinian is represented as actors only in one poster. The Palestinian was given the carrier role in the analysis of the other posters. The verbal participants are constructed through the words "God", "our voices", "our struggle", "liberation", and "no pride".

In poster two, the clause "God is buried" appears contradictory to the Islamic concept of God, who is supreme and cannot be buried. Here, "God" functions metaphorically, representing hope, love, and peace—values in which Palestinians place their faith through worship and prayer (Bahmani et al., 2018). The Qur'an contains numerous verses emphasizing hope (Foroozanfar, 2020). In the context of the Palestinian conflict, "God is buried" symbolizes that peace has been buried beneath the destruction. Visually, the death of a child evokes profound loss and despair, reflecting a loss of hope and

faith, as if hope died alongside the child under Gaza's rubble. The poster aims to expose the genocide in Palestine and inspire protests against Israeli atrocities, advocating for lasting peace through Palestinian liberation.

Palestinian resistance is deeply rooted in religious belief, with the concept of Jihad—striving in the path of Allah—forming a central ideological framework (Bostom, 2021). This concept, grounded in the Qur'an, Hadith, and classical theologians such as Al-Ghazali and Ibn Khaldun, has historically underpinned Muslim governance and resistance, including the longstanding conflicts over Palestine, from ancient times through the Crusades to the modern Israeli-Palestinian struggle (Al-Mawardi, d. 1058).

The posters also use circumstances to provide context and motive, such as “under the rubble in Gaza” and “without liberation for all of us.” These adverbial and prepositional phrases clarify where and why the actions or conditions occur, helping the audience understand the processes. In poster two, “under the rubble in Gaza” situates the event explicitly in Palestine, enhancing comprehension of the metaphorical “God” and the relational process. While some posters lack explicit locative phrases, their visual elements effectively ground the message in the Palestinian context, demonstrating the pivotal role of multimodal representation in contextualizing the verbal content.

Palestinian Liberation Idea is “an Unfolding Action...”

The analysis of the posters centers on identifying and discussing the visual structure used in each poster, the role assigned to the represented participants, and the circumstances present in the posters. Based on the analysis of the visual structure used in the Palestinian protest posters reveals two primary structures: narrative and conceptual. The narrative is the dominant structure in the posters. Kress and Van Leeuwen (2020) defined the narrative structure as the tools to unfold actions and events. The use of this structure is intended to inform the readers of a sequence of events or actions through visual text. As can be seen in poster two, a lady embracing the dead body of her child creates several imaginary vectors such as her hands, head, and kneeling gestures. In addition, in poster four, a boy is raising the Palestinian flag in front of a burning city, which also creates similar imaginary vectors by the movement of the boy's hand. Based on the visual evidence of the burned city in figure four and kneeling gestures in figure 2, it indicates that the posters are telling what happened in Palestine. The event or action in the posters can be associated with sorrow, sadness, and war, aligned to the factual event that Palestine has been under Israel's aggression since the Nakba tragedy in 1948, where Palestinians were displaced violently and ethnically cleansed.

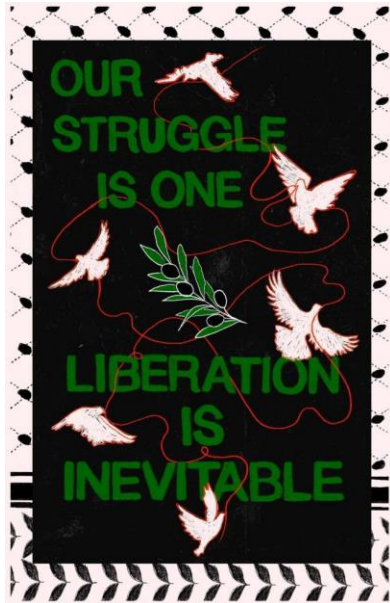


Figure 3. Poster Three: Liberation is Inevitable.

Whereas, the conceptual structure is defined as a process which generalizes the participants in terms of class, structure or meaning (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2020). To be specific, the conceptual structure used in the posters is a symbolical-suggestive structure which explains the relation establishment between participants' identity and the events (can be an abstract or associative means, often conveying deeper, metaphorical meanings). For instance, a fist as a symbol of resistance in poster one, a white dove as a symbol for peace in poster three, and a cardboard filled with bullets symbolizes the war in poster five. The example of conceptual process can be seen in poster three, visual modes in this poster show a flock of doves carrying a red thread and a sprig of olives. Additionally, the poster is framed with the traditional Palestinian turban motif, so-called keffiyeh. The poster uses many different semiotic resources as the symbols, yet the main aim is to highlight the identity of Palestinians, which was constructed by the Keffiyeh and the olives as the local commodity of Palestine.

The visual structures used in the posters lead the audience to interpret that Palestinians were the victims of Israel's aggression since the aggression continuously brings civilian casualties on the Palestinian side. With the increasingly massive use of posters showing support for Palestine on various social media platforms such as Instagram and Twitter, this fact proves that the posters created public sympathy and empathy to increase and show a political inclination towards Palestinian freedom. This claim is further supported by the fact that there have been massive waves of protests around the world, including protests in such prestigious universities as Harvard and Cambridge which uses posters as the representment for their voices, it is not a coincidence since posters has been used as a form of protest since the France revolution. A sense of humanity and morality arises as a result of being exposed to narrative information spread on social media. Concerning poster two, audiences who are specifically mothers will feel the same empathy and sadness if they lose their child. The use of narrative structure in delivering the

political message of Palestinian freedom ideology will become a trigger for more massive protests on social media.

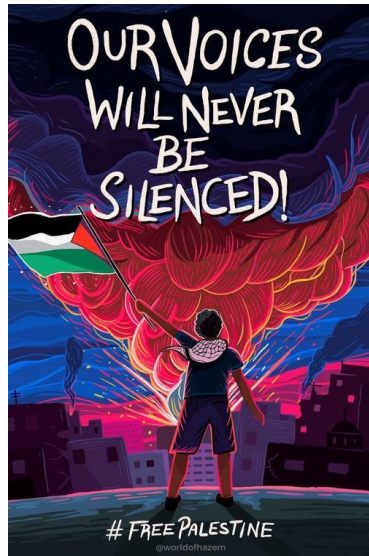


Figure 4. Poster Four: Our Voice.

The analyzed posters show an equal representation of human and non-human participants. Human figures—such as the woman and dead child in poster two, and the boy raising the Palestinian flag in poster four—serve to humanize the conflict and evoke moral and emotional responses from viewers (Chouliaraki, 2010; LeBuhn, 2018). Gender representation is balanced, featuring one man, one woman, and one gender-neutral figure across the posters. These participants also span different ages: a woman and a child in poster two, and a boy in poster four. Sociocultural identity is conveyed through visual cues like the keffiyeh worn by the boy (symbolizing Palestinian identity) and the hijab on the woman (signifying Muslim identity).

Since the Hamas offensive on October 7, Palestinian casualties have far outnumbered Israeli losses. By August 8, 2024, reports from Al-Jazeera, the Palestine Ministry of Health, and the Red Crescent Society documented approximately 40,000 Gaza civilian deaths, including at least 15,000 children. In contrast, Israeli casualties were about 1,000, mostly soldiers. WHO and UN OCHA report that over half of Gaza's homes and 85% of schools were destroyed, with only 16 of 35 hospitals partially functional. Thus, the posters portray Palestinian suffering realistically, depicting death, destruction, explosions, and other war symbols to reflect this harsh reality.



Figure 5. Poster Five: Kill Three Get One Free poster.

On the other hand, non-human participants portrayed in the posters such as cardboard filled with bullets, white birds, and a fist. The cardboard filled with bullets in poster three can be associated with French fries containers from McDonald's (a fast-food company), which is recognized by the shape of the cardboard and the logo in the center. It is a form of satirical expression towards the company, since the company had proven to provide financial support to Israel. Furthermore, the white birds and olive branches in poster three can be associated with a symbol of peace. In Western spirituality and Christianity, white doves have positive connotations, such as purity and love, not limited only to peace (Mathew, 2024; Vuori et al., 2020). White color is also believed to signal peace and truce as they are often represented with white flags (Vuori et al, 2020). The white color in the posters implies a meaning of hope that the conflict between Palestine and Israel can be resolved. Thus, these posters tried to express the idea that peace and liberation should be given to the Palestinians.

In terms of circumstance, the posters used locative circumstances and circumstances of accompaniment. Most of the posters used locative circumstances, as in posters two, four, and five, the represented participants are located in the foreground against a black and red background. Likewise, in poster four, the participant is foregrounded in front of a burned city background (Gaza in this context). The represented participants in these posters overlap in what is called the setting (background). The setting is often darker or blurry than the foreground, as can be seen in posters two and five, since the intention is to highlight the represented participants in the foreground (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2020). The evidence can be seen in poster two; the poster appears to highlight the lady and the children as the main represented participants since they have such semiotic resources that invite the reader to interpret the meaning of sorrow, condolences, and the suffering of Palestinian people as they lost their hopes and children. Additionally, in poster four, the placement of represented participants in front of the burned city conveys the strong meaning that can be interpreted as hope. Despite the burning and destruction of Gaza, there is still the courage, spirit, and struggle

of its citizens to keep fighting for their liberation and raising the Palestinian flag.

Another evidence can be found in poster five, there are no vectors or imaginary vectors within the posters, and the circumstance only appears as the context-giver of the posters and emphasizes the textual information. In this context, the red color would be associated with blood or danger towards the Palestinian people as a result of buying McDonald's products. Profits from the company are assumed to be used as war capital since McDonald's actively supports funds for Israel. Furthermore, the circumstances of accompaniment can be found on posters one and three. The circumstance is used since there is no vector in the image; it is more likely to depict a text providing descriptive details about the represented participant than a narrative explanation (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2020).

In relation to poster five, one of the remarkable impacts of Palestinian protests on the economic field is the massive boycott movement towards some products from multinational companies that have cooperated with the Israeli government. This boycott is not new in the resistance strategy to undermine Israel's hegemony. The Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) is a nineteen-year-old resistance in the field of economy, culture, and public policy, led by Palestinian academician, Omar Barghouti (Ula et al., 2024). The BDS movement has been carried out widely around the globe, especially in Muslim majority countries. It plays a pivotal role to strengthen the pressure on the Israeli government, force them to comply with international law, and to reduce the oppression toward the Palestinians (Kincaid, 2020).

Relating to the ideational function, color serves to denote specific individuals, locations, objects, as well as broader categories and concepts. For example, national flags use colors to distinctly represent different nation-states (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2002). Furthermore, color strongly influences human psychology and behavior (Elliot and Maier, 2014). Previous studies show humans commonly associate colors with certain emotions—for instance, white with honesty and black with sadness (Tham et al., 2020). To analyze color in the posters, the researcher adopts an associative approach, considering both metaphorical and metonymical meanings.

The analysis reveals a diverse use of colors, including both chromatic and achromatic palettes. Achromatic colors—white, black, and red—dominate the posters. White, symbolizing peace and purity, appears in all posters. Vuori et al. (2020) note that white semiotically represents peace under international norms. In Islamic culture, white is a prominent color symbolizing peace and holiness. Altohami (2022) found that white in Quranic verses connotes positivity, purity, honesty, faithfulness, and morality. In contrast, black and gray are associated with negativity, such as disbelief and immorality, evoking emotions like sadness and fear; these neutral colors are also linked to low-energy emotional states (Tham et al., 2020; Kaur, 2020; Altohami, 2022).

Chromatic colors such as red, yellow, and green add further richness to the posters. Red is often linked to anger, possibly because anger causes blood to rush to the face, creating a red hue (Benitez et al., 2018; Jonauskaitė, 2020). Red can also signify danger or prohibition, as seen in poster five, where a red

background behind a McDonald's fries container symbolizes a boycott against the company, which is perceived to support Israel. Yellow typically represents high-energy emotions, such as liveliness, aspiration, and warmth. Green, on the other hand, is calming, promotes inward focus, and encourages steady, peaceful action. The strategic use of color contextualizes the semiotic resources and enhances the visual appeal of the posters.

To sum up, the visual structures attempted to convey actions or events currently occurring in Palestine through narrative and conceptual structures. The represented participants in these posters are portrayed as people who are suffering and helpless against the violence perpetrated by Israeli forces. This can be seen from the kneeling gesture on poster two and the raised hand gesture on poster four. Their helplessness does not lead to resignation in the face of the situation. Yet, they still have the spirit to fight and defend their homeland, visually represented by raising the Palestinian flag in poster four and the fist as a symbol of fighting in poster one. Instead of depicting a desire to surrender, the represented participants in the posters are portrayed as symbols of resistance. Human figures or silhouettes in those posters were used as representative participants to illustrate a meaning that the real victims affected by the conflict between Palestine and Israel in the Gaza Strip are, regardless of age and gender. Most of the victims are children, teenagers, and women, vulnerable groups that should be kept away from conflict areas. The posters intend to emphasize the message of humanity through the posters by depicting the vulnerable and helpless group as the represented participants, in order to awaken the spirit of humanity. Moreover, the circumstance also plays a pivotal role in giving context to the poster, such as the place where the action occurred, the events of the war, and the psychological effect.

CONCLUSIONS

This research is unveiling the construction of the idea of Palestinian freedom within digital posters used to protest against Israel's aggression in Palestine. By integrating Halliday's systemic functional linguistics with Kress and Van Leeuwen's visual grammar framework, the study reveals that the verbal and visual elements in the posters are closely intertwined to represent Palestinian freedom and acts of liberation. Notably, the posters consistently relate the ongoing war context in Palestine to their verbal messages. Visually, Palestinians are depicted as victimized participants within the conflict, while Israel is portrayed as the aggressor or implicitly as a villain.

Additionally, both visual and verbal representations engage the psychological domain of the viewer by highlighting emotional aspects such as dignity, morality, faith, and pride. Positioned as victimized civilians, the posters evoke empathy by inviting readers to emotionally connect with the suffering, sadness, and grief experienced by Palestinians. Humanized figures, such as animated boys and vulnerable groups like women and children, are prominently featured to emphasize the civilian toll of the conflict. This emotional appeal is reinforced by the widespread sharing of these posters on social media, which has helped to amplify sympathy globally.

Correspondingly, numerous demonstrations worldwide testify to the growing sense of humanity and solidarity with the Palestinian cause.

The posters also convey messages of rebellion, which fall into two categories. First, some posters critique the global community's silence regarding the humanitarian crisis in Palestine, using satire to protest against nations and entities that remain passive or supportive of Israel despite ongoing atrocities. Second, other posters express resistance against Israeli occupation, functioning as a form of war propaganda that calls readers to action against oppression. These messages often employ ideological persuasion and enemy dehumanization, utilizing emotional appeals and opinion-shaping techniques. Overall, the findings suggest that digital posters serve as effective propaganda tools for promoting Palestinian freedom and influencing international audiences. Common persuasive strategies include emotional and ideological appeals, multimodal integration, and psychological effects achieved through color use. These strategies warrant further exploration in broader contexts.

It is important to note the limitations of this study, including the relatively small data set. Given the protracted nature of the Palestine-Israel conflict, future research should expand data sources across various digital platforms to enhance data diversity and volume. Longitudinal studies could provide deeper insights into the evolving relationship between verbal and visual modalities in political and war-related posters, particularly in the Palestine-Israel context.

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