

Sharon Wins: News coverage and framing of the 2001 Israeli Prime Minister election in ten Western print media

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International news has not only increased in importance with the world becoming a communications village, but it is also the predominant source of knowledge about other countries for most citizens (Wu, 1998). As a result, international news shapes our comprehension of other nations and our communication with them.

The two main issues of studies in international news flow are: the news selection determinants (why do stories get published?) and the news structure (how do reporters cover events in particular countries?). How news is covered has been the center of a debate between developing and developed countries, in which the former blamed the latter of bias and misrepresentation in the Western news media (McPhail, 1983). The West refuted heavily this criticism with arguments supporting the claim that reporters practice core professional values: independence and objectivity. Quite similar to science, the journalistic field aims at a valid and true description and explanation of reality (Donsbach, 1993).

There is valid reason to believe that the news coverage of an event varies from country to country. As Gurevitch (1989) argued, the final news product is shaped domestically everywhere. He noted that the story selection tends to vary with the cultural background of the reporter. Comparative communication research, in particular in international news flow, has found parameters of influence on the process of news coverage in different cultures. In particular, findings on the relationship between news media and culture have contributed to fields of international or intercultural relations (Chang et al., 1987; Firat, 1995; Hester, 1973).

However, to date comparative media studies have provided little insight into the cultural operation of news media. Consequently investigations of the framing of a news story in different societies are rare. This study contrasted the newspaper coverage and framing of the Israeli election for Prime Minister among 10 of the leading nations in the Western hemisphere (USA, Canada, Australia, Great Britain, Germany, France, Italy, Spain, Austria and Russia) by investigating how the outcome of the election and the Intifada crisis surrounding it were covered and framed. In other words, assuming cultural differences, the study analyzed the relationship between political ties and framing of election story.

Sharon's Victory in Israel

Israel has been in the news around the world almost persistently since its inception as an independent modern nation in 1948. News reports as well as academic abstracts have discussed variously its geopolitical position, religio-historic circumstance or cultural communication efforts and dissonances with its neighbors (Garaudy, 2000; Lederman, 1992; Sofer, 2001). Potential reasons for why Israel has been covered so much could be found in the interest levels the world media have placed on its existence.

The Israeli election for Prime Minister on February 6, 2001, was all but guaranteed to receive global coverage. The news leading up to Election Day seemed to point to a clear victory for Sharon, accompanied by growing concern over the political consequences of such an occasion.

Since one could be reasonably certain that this particular election would receive some coverage, the primary interest concentrated on how news coverage would vary between the major economically and politically leading nations in the West. The aim was to examine how each country's newsprint media covered and framed the election results and reactions in the region.

Since the audience learns about national and international events from the news media, the media do not just achieve a powerful role as a facilitating agent, but also as a shaper of meanings of social phenomena by ways of news framing. During the communication process the media will diffuse a set of common norms, values, and symbols among the population, delivered in the frame of a story, so that identification will be established (Rowe, 1998).

Tankard et al. (1991) define a media frame as "the central organizing idea for news content that supplies a context and suggests what the issue is through the use of selection, emphasis, exclusion and elaboration." Accepting frames as constructions of a culture's central belief system, the news media do not remain passive carriers of messages and stories; they determine what is important through selection, emphasis, and presentation. Following this logic, Gitlin (1980) argued, media frames are persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation, and presentation, of selection, emphasis and exclusion, by which symbol-handlers routinely organize discourse.

This notion does define a news frame in terms of ideological or value perspectives. By excluding, e.g., all the benefits that a foreign election might bring and emphasizing its detrimental effects on the home economy, the national press would effectively have framed the news story very differently from another country's, which might have highlighted the positives of the change and suppressed the negatives.

Moreover, framing analysis suggests that the ways by which messages are presented and perceived have something to do with the meanings that are assigned to those messages (McLeod & Detenber, 1999). Audiences, contended Nelson et al. (1997), actually rely on a version of reality that is a mixture of personal experiences, interaction with peers, and selections from mass media interpreted to fit the purpose. Therefore framing analysis provides instruments to examine how media help construct reality by focusing on the processes by which a story is emphasized or how ideas are used as representatives for cultural phenomena (Hong, 2001).

In this context, framing analysis attains a useful role in the examination of message presentation by the news media. This will help to investigate the larger context within which the messages of the Israeli election are presented. Along with the national context audiences in the individual countries bring to the story, it gives us clues about the way the election is portrayed to the domestic audience.

Finally, in line with previous research, it was speculated that political ties play an important role in the coverage of a foreign story. Yu and Luter (1964) argued, for instance, that coverage of a story is intensely tied to conflict. In addition Chang et al (1987) found that political climate within a nation and its region plays a role in the news selection process as well. Finally, Golan and Wanta (2001) in their study on U.S. coverage of worldwide elections argued that highlighting elections in countries that pose a threat to the U.S. drove the coverage. The inclusion of variables, measuring political ties, is assumed to play an important role in determining reasons for coverage of the foreign event.

Hypotheses

Our research study compared the Election Day coverage in the major newspapers in 10 countries and the framing of the results of the Prime Minister election in Israel from February 6, 2001. Based on a country's relationship to Israel and cultural factors driving the national reporting style, possible differences in the

coverage and framing were analyzed. Using a country “relationship” index – constructed over parameters used in previous international news flow research – as a platform, the study asked three exploratory research questions regarding the story angle, sources and bias. With results from these questions we then proposed two hypotheses as possible explanations for the previous findings. The three research questions are:

RQ1: What are the emphases of the story between the 10 countries?

RQ2: What sources – if any – are used by the papers to comment on the election in Israel?

RQ3: What attitudes or biases – if any – are displayed by the newspapers regarding the outcome of the election?

While these three research questions explored the differences of news coverage elements between different countries, the following hypotheses try to find possible answers for these differences. Based on a country’s relationship to Israel, the outcome of the election will be regarded differently around the world. Countries that have close ties to Israel or call themselves a “friend” to Israel will have more favorable coverage of Israel than others. Those countries’ print media will most likely explore more subtopics of the election and ask citizens about responses. We can also assume that they will be less negative about the circumstances surrounding this election. We propose the following hypothesis:

H1a: Countries with closer ties to Israel will be more positive and focused on Israel's domestic and party issues than countries that have weaker ties.

H1b: Countries with closer ties to Israel will use more individual source than countries that have weaker ties.

Presupposing a culturally determined writing style of a country’s news organization (Cappella & Jamieson, 1997; Weaver et al., 1998), it was probed how the style reflected in the issue coverage, use of sources and bias. If it could be found that some countries predominantly apply an objective style (a largely opinion-free reporting styles) and that others subscribe largely to an evaluative style (a style that uses personal judgments by the reporter), we could gain an understanding of how different national ideologies or cultures might drive the story coverage. We speculate that news media in countries with an evaluative style do not just focus more on problematic topics. They will be also more negative overall, simply because the more negative aspects of an issue are covered, the more the media can make a case for their position. We propose the following hypothesis:

H2a: Countries with an evaluative style of news writing will be more critical in assessing the consequences of the election than countries that use an objective style.

H2b: Countries with an evaluative style of news writing will focus more on the candidates and the impending peace crisis than countries that use an objective style.

Sampling and Methodology

The core concern of this study of newspaper coverage of the 2001 election was the immediate reaction of the world press to the announcement of the new Prime Minister of Israel. Consequently, the Election Day and the day thereafter, February 6 or 7, were chosen. A content analysis was used in order to analyze how international newspapers covered and framed the election results, as content analysis is the main instrument used in international news flow research (Kim & Barnett, 1996).

Leading newspapers from 10 industrialized nations in the Western hemisphere were coded for content coverage and framing. Newspapers from these nations are likely to influence how other newspapers

around the world cover similar stories. As Chang (1998) found, western industrialized nations form a “core zone” of a world news system and act as filters through which other nations must pass.

To account for tone, use of sources, and writing style of the article, the paragraph was chosen as the unit of analysis. It was decided to look at “newspapers of record” and circulation-leaders only from either side of the political spectrum per country because of their elite and prestige status and the fact that other media use them as reference for story choice and presentation perspective (Subramony, 2000). The resulting 40 titles (about four per country) are not only usually used for public announcements, but with circulations above 300,000 per day, the papers lead their national news print media industry. Newspapers that were used included *Corriere della Serra*, *El Pais*, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, *Istvestiya*, *Le Figaro*, *Le Monde*, *Pravda*, *Republicca*, *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, *Sydney Morning News*, *The Independent*, *The New York Times*, *The Times of London*, *Toronto Star*, *Washington Post*, and *Wiener Kurier*. It furthermore appears that these papers are customarily used in academic research (Donsbach 1993; Subramony 2000;).

Borrowing from Straubhaar et al.’s study (1992) on the comparison of newscasts in different hemispheres of the world, content was coded into specific news element domains, generally classified as story emphasis, in order to address the hypotheses accurately. The following four content variables were selected for coding:

(1) *Story Emphasis* – Three categories were coded in order to assess the emphasis of the election story, i.e. what aspect did the newspapers in a country determine to be the most important element of the story (Appendix 1):

a) **Israel’s formal politics** – parties, election facts

b) **Social context** – Arab reaction, street fights, Palestinians, Mid-East peace process

c) **Personality profiles** – Sharon/Barak personal sketch, history of the candidates

(2) *Sources* – quoted sources were identified and coded in their capacity or position as official or individual sources (Appendix 2).

(3) *Biases toward story content* (Hong 2001) – stories were coded into three categories according to the position that the paper took toward the election (Appendix 3):

a) **Positive Frame** – this frame portrays positive aspects of the election and supports the new Prime Minister.

b) **Neutral Frame** – this frame includes coverage that is largely value-free.

c) **Negative Frame** – this frame deals with negative aspects and criticism of the election and the winner, such as return of hard-line politics or grid-locked parliament..

(4) *Writing style* – Three categories were coded to represent ascending degrees of a journalist’s style in his or her understanding of objective reporting (Appendix 4):

a) **Objective** – news reporting is unaffected by the journalist’s own beliefs.

b) **Skeptical** – news reporting expresses both sides fairly, but it questions viewpoints equally.

c) **Evaluative** – news reporting judges which side has better arguments, and it aims to uncover hidden truths.

In order to create a measure of the home country's relationship to Israel, we combined four relationship variables into a "strength-of-relations" index (based on findings in Chang et al., 1987; Wanta & Golan, 2001). This index includes the following variables:

Home country's Imports and Exports with Israel. International news flow research indicates that trade is a strong determinate of news coverage (Rosengren & Rickardsson, 1974). Nations that have strong trade ties with Israel would be more likely to be interested in the election results and their significance to the region. Naturally, trade is a strong indicator of strength or relations between nations. Nations that do not trade with one another are not as likely to have strong ties as nations who do trade amongst one another.

Tourism. Every year millions of individuals travel from one country to another. Tourism is another economic indicator that can be used to measure strength of relations between nations. Countries whose citizens often visit Israel are likely to have strong ties to Israel and to be interested in the events that take place there

Geographic Proximity. Nations with proximity to one another – measured as the distance between country capitals in miles – are more likely to care about events in the region than countries that are geographically distant. McLean and Pinna (1958) found that the further the physical distance between the viewer and source country, the less news coverage the county would receive.

Each variable ranged from strong to moderate to weak. The calculation of the index was measured by giving two points for each description of strong relations (e.g., heavy exports, heavy tourism), one point for each description of moderate involvement, and so on. As a result the higher the total value, the closer the ties to Israel are. The five items of the resulting relationship scales for the eleven countries ($M=2.57$, $SD=0.58$), ranging from zero to eight, had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.83. The resulting country values were collapsed into three indices: "weak relations" (values 0 through 2), "moderate relations" (values 3 through 5), and "strong relations" (values 6 through 8). This procedure helped to group countries and to simplify interpretations.

To be able to properly code the various languages of the newspaper articles, coding was performed by six coders, each fluent in at least one of the languages involved in the study. Coders were trained in practice sessions, and content indicators of each variable were discussed, to increase reliability of the coding frames. Foreign language text was also translated and back translated to check for loss of meaning. The intercoder reliability coefficient (Scott's pi) across the categories ranged from 0.72 to 0.89 with an acceptable average of 0.81.

Results

The content analysis produced 43 stories with 567 paragraphs. Differences in the number of paragraphs per country stemmed from the different length of paragraphs in expressing a thought, which seems to be a result of the language.

As could be expected, the majority of issues circled around Israel's formal politics (election itself, party politics, coalition debate) with 44 percent and the social context in the Mid-East (Palestinian reaction, Jerusalem debate, peace process) with 39 percent. Among the 10 countries Germany, Austria, Canada and Spain were focused particularly on the social context. The German *TAZ* wrote, "Sharon is not willing to make any concessions to the Palestinians, above all concerning the ruling over Jerusalem." The Canadian *Toronto Star* noted, "Those who yearn for the peace of Jerusalem must hope that this angry gesture doesn't provoke another."

Italy, Russia and the UK concentrated on Israel's formal politics. The British *Independent* remarked, "In a victory speech, Mr. Sharon called for the creation of as wide a "unity government" as possible."

The U.S. and Australia spent over-proportional attention to profiling the personality of the two candidates, a trait displayed in the domestic elections in those countries as well. *The New York Times* exclaimed, "Ariel Sharon, a burly 72-year-old hawk, who heads a newly reinvigorated right wing, rode a national anxiety to an overwhelming victory on Tuesday as Israel's fifth Prime Minister in more than five years." Overall, as an answer to the first exploratory research question, emphases of the election tend to differ between the 10 countries (Chi-Square=54.49, $p < .001$). It is speculated at this point that the nature of the differences can be traced back to political ties between the newspaper's country and Israel.

Table 1: Subtopic of story emphasis of the election coverage per country

| Country (Relations, Style) | Israel % | PoliticsMid East % | CrisisProfiles % | Total N |
|-------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------|---------------------|------------|
| Australia (w,s) | 39 | 37 | 24 | 76 |
| Austria (m, o) | 38 | 59 | 3 | 34 |
| Canada (w, o) | 36 | 56 | 7 | 94 |
| France (m, s) | 48 | 41 | 11 | 30 |
| Germany (m, o) | 42 | 58 | -- | 25 |
| Italy (m,e) | 78 | 16 | 6 | 20 |
| Russia (m, s) | 57 | 33 | 10 | 21 |
| Spain (m, o) | 43 | 71 | 18 | 35 |
| UK (s, e) | 52 | 29 | 19 | 65 |
| U.S. (s,s) | 43 | 31 | 26 | 167 |
| Total N | 248 | 221 | 98 | 567 |
| % | 44 | 39 | 17 | 100 |

Chi-Square = 54.49, $p < .001$, $df = 18$

Letters in parentheses after the countries indicate their relationship to Israel (w=weak, m=moderate, s=strong) and their writing style (o=objective, s=skeptical, e=evaluative)

Table 2: Percentage of news sources used per country

| Country (Relation, style) | Official Source % | Private Source % | Total N | Sourced Paragraphs % of total |
|------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------|----------------------------------|
| Australia (w,s) | 85 | 15 | 13 | 17 |
| Austria (m, o) | 88 | 12 | 17 | 50 |
| Canada (w, o) | 95 | 5 | 19 | 20 |
| France (m, s) | 100 | -- | 8 | 28 |
| Germany (m, o) | 100 | -- | 11 | 46 |
| Italy (m,e) | 67 | 33 | 3 | 17 |
| Russia (m, s) | 88 | 12 | 8 | 38 |
| Spain (m, o) | 100 | 3 | 3 | 9 |
| UK (s, e) | 92 | 8 | 12 | 19 |
| U.S. (s,s) | 28 | 72 | 46 | 27 |
| Total N | 99 | 41 | 140 | |
| % | 71 | 29 | 100 | 25 |

Chi-Square = 61.83, $p < .001$, $df = 18$

The use of sources in the article, as Table 2 indicates, seemed to be significantly different as well (Chi-Square=61.83, $p < .001$). It appeared that while countries overall quoted sources in only one-fourth of their paragraphs, the U.S. stood out as the one country that with 72 percent of total sources used predominantly individual (academics, political consultants, citizens) rather than official (Israel or other country's government members) sources. For instance, the *Washington Post* and *Los Angeles Times*

used Israeli citizens as commentators of the election results. “We need a strong hand, otherwise it is the Arab’s nature to exploit our weaknesses,” said Hila Barabash, a 25-year-old secretary (*Washington Post*).

Conversely, French and German reporters relied entirely on official sources. The French *Le Figaro* quoted exclusively government officials such as the Palestinian information minister Yasser Abbed Rebbi and Israeli legislator Yossi Beilin. Interestingly enough, newspapers in Germany, Austria and Russia – countries known for bureaucratic hierarchies and fact-driven neutral media organizations – had the highest percentage (38-50 percent) of source use.

The results in Table 3 show that countries varied in their position toward the story. Canada and the U.S. were the countries with the most positive feedback (10-15 percent of frame set) of the new Prime Minister. However, the fact that this election took place in the shadow of a third Intifada uprising has elicited predominantly concerned opinions. However, there were significant differences between the countries as far as their journalistic neutrality was concerned. While the newspapers in Canada (24 percent), Australia (33 percent), the U.S. (26 percent), and Spain (46 percent) were the most neutral, the ones in Russia (76 percent), the UK (77 percent), Italy (83 percent), and in particular France (90 percent) – a country friendly to Arabic countries – were the most critical and opposed. The French *Le Monde* stated, “Even worse, the outcomes lead to a government more right-wing than the country has ever seen. The 22 ultraorthodox deputies are now in a position to impose religious legislation.”

Table 3: Bias in framing the election story per country

| Country (Relation, style) | Positive % | Neutral % | Negative % | Total N |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Australia (w,s) | 1 | 33 | 66 | 76 |
| Austria (m, o) | 6 | 18 | 76 | 34 |
| Canada (w, o) | 15 | 24 | 61 | 94 |
| France (m, s) | 7 | 3 | 90 | 30 |
| Germany (m, o) | 12 | 17 | 71 | 25 |
| Italy (m,e) | 6 | 11 | 83 | 20 |
| Russia (m, s) | 10 | 14 | 76 | 21 |
| Spain (m, o) | 11 | 46 | 43 | 35 |
| UK (s, e) | 5 | 18 | 77 | 65 |
| U.S. (s,s) | 13 | 26 | 61 | 167 |
| Total N | 53 | 138 | 376 | 567 |
| % | 9 | 24 | 66 | 100 |

Chi-Square = 40.96, p = .002, df = 18

Letters in parentheses after the countries indicate their relationship to Israel (w=weak, m=moderate, s=strong) and their writing style (o=objective, s=skeptical, e=evaluative))

Hypothesis 1a was not supported. It had proposed that a more positive and focused view of Israel’s domestic and party issues could be traced back to a country’s relationship with Israel. It was argued that a relationship index that was primarily based on geographic proximity and economic ties would have some effect on the news media’s depth and kind of coverage. The story itself (the election) did not contain conflict elements (those could potentially arise as a result of armed conflict with the PLO). It can be argued that this index primarily represents cultural affiliation to Israel. The results in Table 4 show that relationships to Israel do correlate weakly and positive with story emphasis and weakly and negative with bias. It appears that papers in countries with weaker ties to Israel (Spain, Canada) concentrated slightly more on the social context of the election, in other words, the situation in the Mid-East region. Papers in countries with closer ties (UK, U.S.) did focus slightly more on formal politics in Israel and aimed to profile the candidates to their audiences. Hypothesis 1b was partially supported, the index explained the class of sources ($p < .01$) fairly well with the exception of the UK, which contradicts the hypothesis. Countries with stronger ties (U.S., Italy) seem to be slightly more willing to quote non-official sources than those with weaker ties (France).

Hypothesis 2a was supported. It had stipulated a greater bias (positive or negative) by newspapers applying an evaluative writing style. Analysis of writing style differences is based on the assumption that cultures that normally hold different work ethics and values would be vastly different in the way they comment on issues. It is assumed that print journalists as members of a national group are as influenced by their dominant culture as any other member of this nation (Fowler 1991; Ryan 1999; Yapple 1989) and will behave accordingly. As a result press values are born out of historical traditions and positions, and writing styles should not vary much between papers of the same country.

On face value, it seems likely from theory that commentaries would concentrate on those issues regarding the election that resonate with their values. As Table 4 shows, writing styles correlated significantly with the bias frame ($p < .01$). Papers practicing an evaluative style (U.S., France) seemed to hold a greater bias toward the story than papers applying an objective style (Germany, Austria). It was also speculated that variations in the writing style would illustrate each country's expectation about what kind of information should be delivered by the publications. Table 4 shows that this hypothesis was not supported. Writing styles did not correlate significantly with topic choice.

Table 4: Correlation between dimensions of election story coverage.

| Dimensions | Relationship | Writing-Style | Topic | Source | Bias |
|----------------------|--------------|---------------|---------|--------|-------|
| Relationship | 1.000 | | | | |
| Writing Style | .072 | 1.000 | | | |
| Topic | .009 | .076 | 1.000 | | |
| Source | .368** | -.005 | -.301** | 1.000 | |
| Bias | -.050 | .203** | .151** | -.020 | 1.000 |

Results calculated using Pearson Correlation Coefficients.

** Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed)

Conclusions and Discussions

The purpose of this study was to examine the factors that make an international story newsworthy for a country through the lens of writing style indicators and political ties. It was predicted that story bias and emphasis would vary as a function of national writing styles and its interplay with relationship determinants.

Perhaps the most interesting finding in this study concerned the differences in story emphases, source use and bias between countries that largely belong to a homogeneous group, in terms of economic power, political orientation and cultural advancement. In particular the findings for print media in the U.S. (and to some extent the UK) suggest opposing perspectives compared to other countries. This could probably be attributed to the longstanding friendly relationships between the U.S. and Israel.

Furthermore, it appears that papers in countries that expect its press to report very objectively on events, focus on factual topics (the state of the peace talks) and remain neutral in the framing (bias) of the story.

Donsbach (1993) found in his study on objectivity in journalism in different countries that journalists – while adhering to a universal code of professionalism – apply a “more culture- or country-specific professional value system.” It is a fitting assumption that journalists, being citizens of a particular country, learn and foster a set of frames that reflect larger national values. It follows that we ought to consider these elements to understand differences in news story reporting and writing style.

Second, it appears reasonable to assume that close ties of a nation to another have an effect on the media’s handling of the news event occurring in the other country. The findings point again to one of the crucial questions within international news flow research: the question of what triggers interest in a foreign news event. While we only dealt with a single story, the country that was chosen (Israel) and the context in which this particular election story took place (growing Israel-Palestine conflict) demonstrated fairly well that national print media did not judge a story impartially, but fed off a national predisposition toward that country. The longstanding, friendly relationships Israel enjoys with the U.S. reflected in the story coverage of the U.S. newspapers. Likewise, a more pro-Arab position of France (Nouschi, 1994) is echoed in the more critical discourse of Sharon’s victory in the French press. These data moderately suggest that the news media are something of a recycling tool for the opinions of domestic political elites.

This research looked at only one story for major industrialized countries in a specific timeframe. There are fundamental geographical, historical, and linguistic reasons for the Pro-Israel or Pro-Arab talk in the various papers. It may be fashioned by a basic feeling of closeness or separateness with regard to events in the Mid-East or, more specific, Israel. This could demonstrate a reasonable influence of the “Sharon” story content on the media’s position at this particular time in modern history. As one might not be able to find similar circumstances for other stories, it constitutes a limitation to the range and depth of the international scope of the analysis.

Although it was hoped that the immediacy of the story to the election would lead to interesting findings void of lengthy deliberation of the results, an examination of only two day's worth of coverage might not be sufficient to answer all the questions of interest. Furthermore, content analysis is one of the most common methods of inquiry in communication studies, but it generally is rather descriptive, and might not be the most appropriate method for the discovery of reasons for the use of certain frames and writing styles. It is possible that those reasons – and the ones mentioned before – might have contributed to some of the weaknesses and contradictions in the findings.

It is agreed that the explanation of storytelling variances with a relationship index and writing style arguments presupposes the validity of those two factors. By and large, the direction of today’s international media research lies in finding the “true” factors, as everybody agrees on the differences in news reporting between nations’ media organizations. The factors used in this study have been constructed from previous empirical research (Donsbach, 1993; Fowler, 1991; Wu, 1999), increasing their face validity.

It would be beneficial if future research would shed light onto the cultural identity origins of media reporting styles in different countries or subcultures of the same country. In addition, with the specific position of newsprint in the mass media landscape in mind, future research should incorporate potential inter-media differences. Can these findings extend to television, magazines, or interactive media?

This study attempted to suggest how the existence of discernible differences in the news coverage between national print media can be traced back to the interplay of writing styles of reporters and the influence of alliances of host and newsmaker country. Addressing the framing of international news and a more in-depth look at the potential explanatory power of socio-cultural aspects for the different frames in international news flow deserves further attention.

APPENDIX 1

Examples of the different emphases in news stories

(1) Israel's domestic politics: concentrates exclusively on domestic affairs, party coalition issues, and election facts and data.

Facing Arab hostility and an unsettled domestic political scene, Sharon pledged repeatedly to form a broad governing alliance in partnership with the Labor Party.”

Sharon must first woo support from within Israel's fragmented political spectrum, however, in an effort to build a coalition and ensure the survival of his government beyond a mere few months.”

(2) Peace process: focuses on the Mid-East situation and the fallout of the election for the ongoing struggle between Israel and the Palestinians.

The quest for peace in the Middle East entered uncertain terrain in the wake of Israel's election that handed power to the hawkish Ariel Sharon in a landslide.”

Palestinian president Yasser Arafat declared his willingness to negotiate even with Ariel Sharon to achieve a 'peace of the courageous'.”

(3) Candidate assessment: discusses the character and history of the two candidates for Prime Minister.

“Even in the volatile world of Israeli politics, Barak's rise and fall have been vertiginous. A former army chief of staff and the most decorated soldier in Israel's history, Barak took office in 1999 after a landslide victory over Likud incumbent Binyamin Netanyahu.”

“With a reputation for recklessly ignoring his superiors' orders, Sharon fought in all of Israel's wars and directed Israel's disastrous invasion of Lebanon. He was known for heroic exploits, such as crossing the Suez Canal to gain a decisive advantage in the 1973 Yom Kippur War, and for egregious excesses, such as the 1953 raid on a West Bank village in which 69 civilians were killed.”

APPENDIX 2

Examples of the different source citations in news stories

(1) Official: quoted sources are members of country governments or other public entities, such as cities, districts, and so on.

Nabil Shaath, the chief Palestinian negotiator, said: “Israel finally has to negotiate with us, not with itself. Today Israel was negotiating with itself in the election.”

(2) Individual: quoted sources are private individuals, ranging from everyday citizens to academics and business leaders.

“Will he make peace?” Nahum Barnea, a columnist, wrote today of Mr. Sharon. “Let's see him first make a government.”

APPENDIX 3

Examples of the different attitudes in news stories

(1) **Positive:** reports favorably about the election and support the new government.

“For Sharon, who has called for a government of national unity, the road ahead is not easy, but he is determined to go it.”

(2) **Neutral:** delivers the facts without taking side about the outcome and the future.

“Sharon defeated Prime Minister Ehud Barak by a walloping 62 to 38 percent of the votes, with 90 percent of the polling stations counted. The margin is unprecedented in Israeli electoral history, as was the low voter turnout.”

(3) **Negative:** criticizes the result or speculate negatively about future events.

“Ariel Sharon, the ironfisted warrior-turned-politician whose name is associated with some of the bloodiest chapters of Israeli history, was elected Prime Minister in a crushing landslide Tuesday with a promise to drastically change the way Israel pursues peace.”

APPENDIX 4

Examples of the different writing styles in news stories

(1) **Total objectivity:** implies a presentation of the news that is entirely unaffected by the journalist’s own political beliefs and concentrates on hard facts and data.

“Only 26 percent of the Israeli public favors Barak’s political achievements so far, according to a poll at the end of last month. The number opposing his leniency with the Palestinians has risen to 58 percent, its highest level since July last year.”

“The latest poll results indicate a landslide victory for Sharon. In response violence has already broken out in the predominantly Arab populated West Bank region.”

(2) **Fair skepticism:** does still contain the notion of fairness by expressing fairly the position of each side in a political dispute, but goes beyond by questioning the contending viewpoints by equal standards.

“The Shas Party will go back into government with Likud, but yesterday’s vote was too close for comfort, and certainly too close for real confidence that Sharon can govern without Barak’s Labor Party.”

The subdued reaction of Yasser Arafat to the results is diplomatic. After all, the PLO has not forgotten Sharon’s past.

(3) **Value judgment:** implies that the journalist should evaluate which side has the better arguments in a dispute, and insert subjective statements, making this a form of advocacy journalism. It also contains the assumption of an objective reality that the journalist has to dig out behind official assertions.

“Sharon’s victory will most certainly throw the already fragile peace negotiations into a tailspin. If he acts on all his campaign promises, the world will see a second Palestinian uprising.”

"It is obvious now that the Israeli population did not or could not see the accomplishments of Ehud Barak in bringing peace to the Middle East. His latest domestic missteps regarding the Jerusalem question seemed to have been the nail that shut his political coffin."

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About Olaf Werder

Olaf Werder (Ph.D., University of Florida*) was born in Dortmund, Germany. In 1992 I graduated with a "Diplom-Kaufmann" (Bachelor in Business) from the University of Dortmund. In 1994 I received my Master of Science in Advertising from the University of Illinois. Upon graduation I worked for six years as a media supervisor in Houston, TX and at the national agency Publicis Fallon in Minneapolis, MN. In 1999 I enrolled in the doctoral communications program at the University of Florida, where I taught advertising strategy, media and international campaigns. In the summer of 2002 I received my Ph.D. and began my appointment as assistant professor at The University of New Mexico in Albuquerque.

My research deals with the influence of values and culture on individual and organizational behavior and output, in particular in the realm of social issues and public goods. My dissertation, for instance, concentrated on the influence of values on opinions about recycling, and tested if values establish a valid segmentation for target audiences and messages. I am a member of AEJMC, ICA, AAA, and WAPOR.

Outside research I engage in numerous charitable activities, for which I was awarded the Alec Courtalis Award for outstanding contributions to the Gainesville, FL community in 2001.

Recent Publications & Presentations

"Debating the Euro - Media Agenda Setting in a Cross-National Environment", *Gazette – The International Journal for Communication Studies*, Vol. 64 (3), 2002

"Retreat in Dunkirk – How Cultural Differences Impacted Coca-Cola's Communications Strategy in Europe", *Proceedings of the International Advertising Association*, 2000.

"Olympic-size Comments – A Comparative Analysis of the Television Coverage of the Opening Ceremonies in Korea and the U.S.", (with Jaemin Jung) – presented to the Intercultural Division, International Communication Association, Washington D.C., May 2001.

"A Channel Apart – How British and German Print Journalists Report the News" – presented to the World Association for Public Opinion Research, Rome, Italy, September 2001.

Research Areas:

Social marketing, consumer behavior studies, attitudinal and values models, environmental communication, international and ethnic advertising, advertising as propaganda, public goods theories

Dr. Werder's doctorate was conferred after submission and acceptance of this paper to *Global Media Journal*.

About Guy Golan

Guy Golan is a doctoral candidate at the University of Florida's College of Journalism and Communications. Golan's research focuses primarily on political and international communications as well as on religion and media. He has published articles in *Journalism and Mass Communications Quarterly*, *Gazette* and the *Journal of Media and Religion*.