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Giuntina
I membri dell’AISG devono provvedere al versamento della quota associativa per l’anno 2015, che ammonta a 60 euro per i soci ordinari e 30 per i soci aggregati, tramite carta di credito direttamente sul sito dell’Associazione (www.aisg.it), oppure tramite un versamento sul c/c postale n. 36247666, intestato ad: Associazione Italiana per lo Studio del Giudaismo, c/o Dipartimento di Beni Culturali, via Degli Ariani 1, I-48121 Ravenna. Ai soci che risultano in regola con i versamenti delle quote entro il 31 gennaio 2015, la rivista dell’annata 2014 sarà inviata gratuitamente; mentre agli altri soci sarà eventualmente inviata solo successivamente alla documentazione dell’avvenuto versamento della quota sociale. Il mancato pagamento di due quote annuali consecutive comporta il decadimento dalla qualifica di socio.
This survey offers some data about the frequency of several Hebrew phrases commonly appearing in the context of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Various subjects were analysed and, for each one, different phrases that are being used to denote the same referent were taken into account, ascertaining the number of their occurrences in different sources; by calculating the frequency of each phrase in a single source, a comparison was made among the different sources in order to observe their usage. For each subject, some of the linguistic variants taken into account, even if denoting the same referent, convey extremely dissimilar connotations; in the most extreme cases, an oscillation is noticeable between euphemism and dysphemism, with a series of more neutral phrases in the middle.

Euphemism and dysphemism are two linguistic devices which operate by the same mechanism although in opposite directions: when referring to an unpleasant subject, a euphemism is a mild, oblique, indirect phrase used as a replacement for another one deemed too violent, explicit, or direct, whereas a dysphemism is a blunt, brutal and derogatory phrase deliberately chosen instead of neutral alternatives. In the event of a person’s death, we can state that he/she has passed away (euphemism) or that he/she kicked the bucket, popped off, or croaked (dysphemisms), along with many other options, each one with a different connotation. Euphemism is thus the result of linguistic choices aimed at hiding or understating the negative aspects of a situation, to the point of producing phrases that are completely opaque to those unfamiliar with their idiomatic meaning, as seen in some cases below; dysphemism, on the other hand, stresses negative aspects, usually in order to express hostility toward the referent, which is negatively connotated. In brief, considering the point of view of the speaker, euphemism blurs or improves, whereas dysphemism reveals or worsens.

In the languages of the world, euphemism regularly occurs with some categories subject to various forms of prohibition or taboo, such as sacrality, death, sex, and bodily functions; one should note that all those categories are ultimately instances of one subject, that is human mortality. Usage of euphemisms consists in avoiding all and every direct reference to such topics, whereas dysphemism shows itself as a means of resorting to no less than direct reference to forbidden topics, thus challenging the prohibition. The catalogue of forbidden subjects with their correlated level of prohibition changes in time and space: every single society shows its own attitude towards sensitive subjects and therefore the circumstances in which euphemism is needed may vary greatly; it will suffice to mention here, with regard to traditional sectors of Jewish society, the ban on the divine name and the euphemisms sometimes used to denote impu-

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re refers.\footnote{For an overview of the subject: S.M. Paul, Euphemism and dysphemism, in F. Skolnik & M. Berenbaum (eds.), Encyclopaedia Judaica, 2nd edition, Keter – Macmillan, Jerusalem – Farmington Hills, MI 2007, vol. 6, pp. 549-550; L.F. Hartman et al., Names of God, ibid., vol. 7, pp. 672-678.} As for the latter, a turn of phrase was of discussion in recent times, when a Haredi newspaper was faced with the difficulty of reporting on an accident involving wild boars: in addition to the common euphemism הבאר הלבן, literally “white meat”, for pork, Haredi Hebrew speakers have דבר אחזר, literally “other thing”, as a replacement for הערז “pig”; thus, in September 2012, the Haredi newspaper Hamodia described the aforementioned accident as having occurred on account of two דבר אחזר בר, an awkward “wild other thing” used in order to avoid חזר בר “wild pig”, the common Hebrew term for “wild boar”.

A great amount of topics can be related to the few categories listed above: to death, for example, one can directly connect illness and its signs, ageing, and physical decay, but also external events such as natural disasters, catastrophes, and war; the last is also connected to sacrality, since armed conflicts are normally associated with struggle for personal and collective freedom, cultural and religious heritage, ethnic identity, and other categories deemed highly valuable by a significant number of individuals.

The Arab-Israeli conflict, with its long history and highly symbolic value, is connected to many subjects which are extremely sensitive for the people who experience it in person; in such a context, linguistic choices adopted to refer to topics concerning the conflict may provide an insight into the different attitudes of the speakers. Assuming a link between political standing and choice – may it be deliberate or spontaneous – of a particular linguistic expression, newspapers of different leanings were used as sources: the four daily newspapers in Hebrew with the highest circulation in Israel.\footnote{According to a TGI survey from 2010. See: O. Bar-Zohar, ”שכ圍ל ווהם, עץ אנ”, ידיעת הארץ, 28 July 2010 (http://www.haaretz.co.il/mise/1.1214257).} Even though none of those newspapers has a definite political affiliation comparable to that of past party newspapers, each one has a political leaning. The oldest, Haaretz\footnote{A non-standard transliteration is used here for the names of the newspapers according to the spelling adopted by their English versions.} (founded in 1919), highly regarded and widely quoted abroad yet with relatively limited circulation, is progressive in matters of diplomacy and human rights; notwithstanding its tendency towards economic liberalism, it is considered a left-wing newspaper for its stances in favour of a compromise solution of the conflict.\footnote{O. Livio, »Ha-ayin ha-ševi’it« 1 July 2005 (http://www.the7eye.org.il/28306); Ha-ayin ha-ševi’it is a periodical specializing in Israeli journalism and media, published by the independent research group Ha-magon ha-yisra’el la-demugratyah, Israeli Institute for Democracy. N. Sheizaf, The political line of Israeli papers (a reader’s guide), »972 Magazine« 26 October 2010 (http://972mag.com/the-political-line-of-israeli-papers-a-readers-guide/4072).} Traditionally associated with the political centre is Yedioth Ahronoth (founded in 1939), which was for a long time the most widely circulated newspaper; in 2009 it stood out as a supporter of Kadima, the centrist party founded by Ariel Sharon which advocated Israel’s unilateral disengagement from Gaza, implemented in 2005.\footnote{O. Persico, »Ha-ayin ha-ševi’it« 10 February 2009 (http://www.the7eye.org.il/27356).} Its long-standing competitor is Maariv (founded in 1948), a centrist newspaper more oriented towards conservative and nationalist stances, whose political line has been oscillating over recent years due to frequent changes of both property and editors.\footnote{Sheizaf, The political line of Israeli papers, cit.} The last to appear, founded in 2007, is Israel Hayom, owned by the Ame-
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American tycoon Sheldon Adelson, who is an overt supporter of the Republican Party in the United States and of Netanyahu in Israel; it is estimated that Adelson invests 20 million dollars a year in this right-wing freely-distributed newspaper, which quickly attained the highest circulation in the country. For each newspaper, the online Hebrew edition was consulted for this survey.

**Territories**

Many issues are raised by the definition of the territories beyond the Green Line, where permanent settlements of Israeli civilians were established and some forms of military control are exercised by Israel. Such a definition is currently valid exclusively for the West Bank, i.e. the region west of the Jordan river which was annexed by the Kingdom of Jordan in 1948, conquered by Israel in 1967 and today partially administered by the Palestinian National Authority; in the past, the same condition was shared by the Gaza Strip, annexed by Egypt in 1948 and under Israeli administration from 1967 to 2005, when Israel implemented the unilateral disengagement plan. The Palestinian Authority claims sovereignty over both areas, which – along with the territory of the State of Israel – formed the British Mandate for Palestine (1920-1948); the name Palestinian Territories, generally adopted in the West when referring to the West Bank and Gaza, mirrors both the current Palestinian-Arab claims to sovereignty and the situation prior to 1948, when Palestine was a mere toponym free of ethnic or nationalist connotations, without distinctions between Jews and Arabs.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 242 (22 November 1967) required the “[w] ithdrawal of Israel armed forces from territories occupied in the recent conflict”; even the Israel military authorities, immediately after the Six-Day War, referred to the aforementioned areas as ha-šetähim ha-kevušim “the occupied territories”, a phrase soon replaced by ha-šetähim ha-mužakim “the administered territories” and later by ירושלים ושומרון Yehudah ve-Šomerim “Judea and Samaria”. Officially adopted in 1968, but successfully entered into common use only after Likud’s victory in the 1977 elections, the first ones won by a right-wing party, “Judea and Samaria” shows itself as a neutral designation solely based on geographical criteria; nevertheless, the choice of a biblical name, even though

10 Defined as “a rich conservative American Jew” whose daily newspaper “serves as a de facto mouthpiece for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu”; O. Nir, Supporting Israel’s media strengthens its democracy, Jewish Telegraphic Agency 15 October 2012 (http://www.jta.org/2012/10/15/news-opinion/opinion/op-ed-supporting-israel’s-media-strengthens-its-democracy).


12 The websites are: haaretz.co.il (Haaretz), ynet.co.il (Yedioth Ahronoth), nrg.co.il (Maariv), and israelhayom.co.il (Israel Hayom). Online English editions of these newspapers are available as well, but they were not taken into account, being the current research focused on Hebrew phrases.

13 The Green Line is the demarcation line set out between Israel and its neighbouring countries in the 1949 Armistice Agreements in Rhodes, after the first Arab-Israeli war.


15 R. HaCohen. Influence of the Middle East peace process on the Hebrew language, in M.G. Gayne (ed.),Undoing and redoing corpus planning, Mouton De Gruyter, Berlin – New York 1997 (Contributions to the Sociology of Language 78), pp. 385-414; “During a short period immediately after the 1967 war, the official term employed was ‘the Occupied Territories’ (ha-shetähim ha-kevušim). It was soon replaced by ‘the Administered Territories’ (ha-shetähim ha-mužakim) and then by the (Biblical) Hebrew geographical terms ‘Judea and Samaria’. The latter were officially adopted and successfully promoted by the governments (since 1977) and are still the official terms in use” (p. 397). The role of censorship after the first victory of the Right must not be overlooked; see I.S. Lustick, Unsettled states, disputed lands: Britain and Ireland, France and Algeria, Israel and the West Bank–Gaza, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY 1993: “Early in his second term, Prime Minister Begin condemned
Two definitions are quite neutral: the elliptical ha-šĕṯāhim “the Territories”, commonly heard in everyday language, and ha-gadāh ha-ma’aravit, a literal equivalent of West Bank, commonly heard from media abroad. Unquestionably non neutral is the definition ha-šĕṯāhim ha-maḥtirīyim “the occupied territories”, which stresses the disputed status of the region and immediately identifies the speaker as an opponent of the Israeli presence therein; a similar connotation is conveyed by ha-šĕṯāhim ha-palestīnyīm “the Palestinian territories”, which implicitly endorses Palestinian Arab sovereignty over the region.

The frequency of use of different phrases is shown below; as for the first table, which displays the total count of occurrences for each phrase in the four newspapers taken into account, it is useful to point out that absolute values are not meaningful by reason of the great disparity among the different newspapers in the number of articles.

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referring to entities which were politically separated in biblical times, is a means aimed at underlining the ancient connection of the Jewish people with the Land of Israel. At present, the region is called "Area of Judea and Samaria" only refers to the "Israeli localities in the Judea and Samaria Area". Such a distinction between the generic ezor “area, region” and the official mahoz “district”, which is used for the six administrative Districts of Israel (North, Centre, South, Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Haifa), is due to the fact that the West Bank was not annexed by Israel, which defines it “disputed territory” and therefore in the State of Israel.

Israel state radio as ‘anti-Zionist’ and likened its director to an official of the British mandatory regime. Thereafter use of the terms ‘occupied territory’ and ‘West Bank’ was forbidden in news reports” (p. 359).

16 S. GAZIT, Trapped fools: Thirty years of Israeli policy in the Territories, Routledge, London 2003 (translated by S.L. SAPPIR: Peta’im be-malkodet. 30 šanot mediniut Yisra’el ba-šĕṯāhim, Zmora-Bitan, Tel Aviv 1999); “[T]he Likud Government was not satisfied with the name ‘Administered Territories’. Even though the name ‘Judea and Samaria’ had been officially adopted as early as the beginning of 1968 instead of the ‘West Bank’, it has hardly been used until 1977” (p. 162).

17 Including Gaza, from which Israel disengaged in 2005, the official name is mahoz Šomron ha-šōrōm, English name is "Judea, Samaria and region of Gaza”, abbreviated in ידוסי.

18 The phrase, which refers to the localities commonly known abroad as the “Jewish settlements in the West Bank”, is used in the Statistical Abstract of Israel, yearly published by the Central Bureau of Statistics, 2013 edition, p. (32) (http://www.cbs.gov.il/shnaton64/shnaton64_541_all_e.pdf). Such localities that constitute the mahoz Šomron “District of Judea and Samaria” – as listed by the Israeli Government Portal in the section ("Local Authorities") – are 4 cities (Ariel, Betar Illit, Ma’ale Adumim, Modi’in Illit), 13 local councils, and 6 regional councils (http://www.gov.il/FirstGov/TopNav/OfficesAndAuthorities/OALocalAuthorities/OALSomron). It is noteworthy that the Map of Districts, Sub-Districts and Natural Regions included in the Statistical Abstract does not include the Area of Judea and Samaria in the Districts of Israel (http://www.cbs.gov.il/shnaton64/map/01_01e.pdf).


20 The numbers are the results of Google searches for exact phrases limited to single websites performed in September 2013. It must be taken into account that the total count of results for any search query is an estimate of the actual number of results, as explained by Google’s documentation (https://developers.google.com/search-appliance/documentation/64/xml_reference#appendix_num_results); the method is nonetheless useful to determine the distribution of different phrases in a single newspaper and to compare the results across different newspapers.
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The term "השטחים" "the territories" was searched by a query that explicitly required from the search engine to exclude results containing the modifiers "הכבושים" "occupied" e "הפלסטיניים" "Palestinian"; therefore the results comprehend the occurrences of "השטחים" alone.


The variant spelling "הפלסטינים השטחים" was also considered.

As said in a note to the previous table, these 16 occurrences are contained in quotations or sporadic critical articles.

Since the purpose of the current research is to observe the frequency of different phrases, it is necessary to compare the relative distribution of different phrases for each source rather than to determine the absolute number of occurrences for each phrase; percentage of use of each phrase in a single source allows for comparison across sources. The following table displays relative values.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Haaretz</th>
<th>Yedioth Ahronoth</th>
<th>Maariv</th>
<th>Israel Hayom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hữuדרה ושומרון / ירוש</td>
<td>19,500</td>
<td>18,500</td>
<td>9,970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>השטחים</td>
<td>16,900</td>
<td>13,800</td>
<td>5,680</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>תODULE</td>
<td>5,400</td>
<td>14,000</td>
<td>5,280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>הkształיתות</td>
<td>2,630</td>
<td>8,660</td>
<td>2,370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>וה랫וחיםFalashim</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>644</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Haaretz</th>
<th>Yedioth Ahronoth</th>
<th>Maariv</th>
<th>Israel Hayom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hữuדרה ושומרון / ירוש</td>
<td>43.75%</td>
<td>33.27%</td>
<td>42.49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>השטחים</td>
<td>37.92%</td>
<td>24.82%</td>
<td>24.21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>תODULE</td>
<td>12.11%</td>
<td>25.18%</td>
<td>22.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>הkształיתות</td>
<td>5.90%</td>
<td>15.57%</td>
<td>10.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>והלתוחיםFalashim</td>
<td>0.32%</td>
<td>1.16%</td>
<td>0.70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is immediately noticeable that the official naming "Judea and Samaria" is by far the most common in all newspapers; while its frequency on Israel Hayom, which uses it in more than half cases, is far from being unexpected, it is noteworthy that the same phrase is preferred over others also by Haaretz, with a percentage of occurrences comparable to that observed for Maariv. The newspaper that uses it with the least frequency is Yedioth Ahronoth, consistently the same one that offers the highest percentage of "הالطוחיםFalashim" "the occupied territories", a phrase carrying diametrically opposed implications; the latter appears with negligible frequency in Israel Hayom and in low percentage in Haaretz, whose English edition liberally uses the phrase occupied territories. The frequency of "הالطוחיםFalashim" "the Palestinian territories", which only in Yedioth Ahronoth exceeds 1%, is negligible; Haaretz displays a more frequent use of the neutral "הالطוחיםFalashim" "the territories", which Yedioth Ahronoth and Maariv alternate with a comparable frequency to the Hebrew equivalent of West Bank.

21 The term "הالطוחיםFalashim" "the territories" was searched by a query that explicitly required from the search engine to exclude results containing the modifiers "הالطוחיםFalashim" "occupied" e "הالطוחיםFalashim" "Palestinian"; therefore the results comprehend the occurrences of "הالطוחיםFalashim" alone.


23 The variant spelling "הالطוחיםFalashim" was also considered.

24 As said in a note to the previous table, these 16 occurrences are contained in quotations or sporadic critical articles.
Barrier

The Hebrew term used to denote the separation barrier between Israel and the West Bank is גדר "fence, boundary, border". The barrier is “a multi-layered composite obstacle” made up of ditches, barbed wire, patrol roads, and detection devices; about 5% of its total length, typically in densely inhabited urban areas, consists of a solid wall made up of concrete slabs. A merely descriptive phrase is the גדר ההפרדה "separation fence", whereas some variants used by its supporters are גדר ההפרדה הג_affah "security fence" and גדר הטרוריסטית "anti-terrorist fence". The latter underlines the role that the barrier – built since 2002 – actually had in preventing suicide terror attacks: the number of victims dropped from 220 in 2002 to 142 in 2003 and to only 3 in 2007. Even some representatives of terror organizations admitted the role of the separation barrier in preventing their attacks: Islamic Jihad leader Ramadan Abdal-Shalah, speaking on Hezbollah’s Al-Manar TV (11 November 2006), defined the separation fence “an obstacle to the resistance”; later, interviewed by the Qatari newspaper Al-sharq (23 March 2008), he told: “We do not deny that it limits the ability of the resistance to arrive deep within [Israeli territory] to carry out suicide bombing attacks, but the resistance has not surrendered or become helpless, and is looking for other ways to cope with the requirements of every stage”. A similar response had been given less than a year before by Mousa Abu Marzouq, deputy chairman of Hamas’s political bureau in Damascus, to some representatives of the Muslim Brotherhood who asked him, on Ikhwan online (2 June 2007), why suicide attacks had diminished in number: “[carrying out] such attacks is made difficult by the security fence and the gates surrounding West Bank residents”.

Opponents of the barrier refuse the term גדר “fence” and speak rather of גומת homah “wall”, adding some modifiers that are more or less dysphemistic according to the more or less radical stances: options vary from גומת ההפרדה homat ha-hafradah "separation wall" to גומת האפרטהייד homat ha-apartheidy “apartheid wall”, a phrase used since the beginning by some activist groups campaigning against the building of the barrier. It is self-evident that the label גומת “wall” attached to the barrier in its entirety is a dysphemism, owing to the fact that over 90% of the barrier is not a wall: on the other hand, in גדר “fence” one could see a

25 A description of the barrier’s design is available on the website of the Ministry of Defence (http://www.securityfence.mod.gov.il/Pages/ENG/operational.htm).
26 See the definitions in Hebrew and English on the websites of the Ministry of Defence (http://www.securityfence.mod.gov.il) and of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (http://securityfence.mfa.gov.il).
27 A decisive argument may have been the mainly successful experience with the Gaza fence: a first 60-kilometre fence around Gaza on the Green Line had already been built in 1994 and it had “provided an answer to the suicide bombers” (I. Kershner, Barrier. The seam of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Palgrave Mcmillan, New York 2005, p. 161). A new multi-component barrier system built in 2001 “helped the military achieve the previously unreachable goal of 100 percent prevention of terrorist infiltration”, according to Major General Doron Almog, then the head of the IDF’s Southern Command (ibid., p. 167); nonetheless, in March 2004 two 13-year-old suicide bombers were able to make their way out of Gaza killing ten in Ashdod (ibidem).
29 The leader of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad again admits that the Israeli security fence built by Israel in Judea and Samaria prevents the terrorist organizations from reaching the heart of Israel to carry out suicide bombing attacks, «The Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center» 26 March 2008 (http://www.terrorism-info.org.il/data/pdf/PDF_08_089_2.pdf).
31 The question is remarked by a recent article in the Official French-language Blog of the Israel
euphemism aimed at obfuscating the real nature of the barrier in some areas, where it consists of a wall up to 8 m in height. Such contrasting choices are clearly expression of an ideological clash, as expected for a hotly debated issue as the barrier is; but a sort of dilemma between radicalism and pragmatism is also observable inside group of opponents.\(^3\) Another term in use is mikṣol “barrier”, which recalls the definition adopted by the foreign media more inclined to keep a neutral approach; in Hebrew it occurs in the phrase mikṣol ha-hafradah, “separation barrier”\(^3\).

The following table displays the frequency of the main phrases used to denote the barrier.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phrase</th>
<th>Haaretz</th>
<th>Yedioth Ahronoth</th>
<th>Maariv</th>
<th>Israel Hayom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>דֶרֶךְ הַבִּיסָהוֹן</td>
<td>490</td>
<td>2,280</td>
<td>713</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>דֶרֶךְ הַפּוֹרְדוּה</td>
<td>10.59%</td>
<td>30.54%</td>
<td>21.12%</td>
<td>22.35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>חומת הַפּוֹרְדוּה</td>
<td>3,530</td>
<td>4,230</td>
<td>2,110</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76.29%</td>
<td>56.66%</td>
<td>62.50%</td>
<td>75.42%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>מִקְּסֶלֶל הַפּוֹרְדוּה</td>
<td>563</td>
<td>853</td>
<td>540</td>
<td>4(^1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>חומת הַפּוֹרְדוּה</td>
<td>12.17%</td>
<td>11.43%</td>
<td>15.99%</td>
<td>2.23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>מִקְּסֶלֶל הַפּוֹרְדוּה</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0(^3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.95%</td>
<td>1.37%</td>
<td>0.39%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4,627</td>
<td>7,465</td>
<td>3,376</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Israel Hayom, which use it three times out of four, whereas the lowest is found in Yedioth Ahronoth, which chooses this option half of the times, slightly less frequently than Maariv. The phrase that can be reasonably seen as the most favourable to the existence of the barrier, דֶרֶךְ הַבִּיסָהוֹן “security fence”, is used in almost a third of the cases only by Yedioth Ahronoth, slightly more than 20\% by Maariv and Israel Hayom, and remarkably less by Haaretz. The option מִקְּסֶלֶל הַפּוֹרְדוּה “separation wall” is seldom used by the three older newspapers and practically never by Israel Hayom; everywhere negligible is the frequency of מִקְּסֶלֶל הַפּוֹרְדוּה “separation barrier”.

Inconsistent attitudes apparently emerge if these data are compared to the ones seen abo-

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32 FeINSTEIN, cit., pp. 108-9. See the website of the organization B’tselem, which is strongly critical of the barrier but uses neutral phrases such as דֶרֶךְ הַבִּיסָהוֹן and מִקְּסֶלֶל הַפּוֹרְדוּה (http://www.btselem.org/hebrew/topic/separation_barrier).

33 Awareness of verbal strategies and media responsibility is demonstrated by a document containing the guidelines of BBC on Israel and the Palestinians: Key terms; under the entry “Barrier” we read: “BBC journalists should try to avoid using terminology favoured by one side or another in any dispute. The BBC uses the terms ‘barrier’, ‘separation barrier’ or ‘West Bank barrier’ as acceptable generic descriptions to avoid the political connotations of ‘security fence’ (preferred by the Israeli government) or ‘apartheid wall’ (preferred by the Palestinians). The United Nations also uses the term ‘barrier’. Of course, a reporter standing in front of a concrete section of the barrier might choose to say ‘this wall’ or use a more exact description in the light of what he or she is looking at” (http://news.bbc.co.uk/newswatch/ukfs/hi/newsid_8370000/newsid_8374000/8374013.stm).

34 Two of which refer to other topics.

35 An article where the phrase refers to the plan of a barrier on the Egyptian border was not taken into account.
Raffaele Esposito

ve: Yedioth Ahronoth, which is the most reluctant to call the West Bank יודית והארון: "Judea and Samaria" and liberally defines the territories "occupied", is also the most inclined to refer to the barrier as הר הגדר 되ות ה렇鐵 "security fence", the official denomination that implies a favourable attitude. There is arguably no homogeneity in the stances taken on different issues concerning the conflict: an attitude favourable to, for example, the existence of the barrier seen as a necessary means of self-defence does not necessarily imply an approval of the Israeli presence in the territories, or vice versa; the apparent contradiction in the data provide evidence for this assumption. Similarly, the unwillingness to use a definition that immediately express support to the existence of the barrier does not imply the use of phrases provided with a strongly critical connotation, also because they are customarily used by groups of opponents; Haaretz, for example, moderately uses both כוח ההגנה "security fence" and כוח הגדר "separation wall" (and nearly never כוח מגן ההגנה "separation barrier"), opting for the less problematic and virtually unbiased כוח המקצועים "security fence". In the use of the last phrase, the oldest Israeli newspaper is similar to the young Israel Hayom, yet their affinities do not go beyond this point: Israel Hayom uses כוח ההגנה כוח הגדר "security fence" twice as much as Haaretz does, while regularly abstaining from both כוח המגנה כוח הגדר "defense wall" and כוח הגדר כוח הגדר "security fence", which can be preceded by מבצע כוח,"operation" or פעולות כוח,"action"; the following table displays their distribution.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Haaretz</th>
<th>Yedioth Ahronoth</th>
<th>Maariv</th>
<th>Israel Hayom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1,100</td>
<td>6,770</td>
<td>2,950</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70.33%</td>
<td>61.71%</td>
<td>62.77%</td>
<td>68.66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>464</td>
<td>4,200</td>
<td>1,750</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.67%</td>
<td>38.29%</td>
<td>37.23%</td>
<td>31.34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,564</td>
<td>10,970</td>
<td>4,700</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The text of the ruling (14 December 2006) is available on the website of the Supreme Court (http://elyon1.court.gov.il/Files_ENG/02/690/007/a34/02007690.a34.htm).


Respectively 4 (2 in Haaretz, 2 in Yedioth Ahronoeth) and 3 (2 in Haaretz, 1 in Yedioth Ahronoeth).
towards a sterilization of the violence inherent to military actions. The more descriptive "elimination" is second choice, yet its frequency is irrelevant in all newspapers, up to nearly four times out of ten in Yediot Ahronoth, and it is abundantly used (over 30%) also by Israel Hayom; being the latter decidedly favourable to the policy at issue, the fact that it uses the blunter of the two options suggests the hypothesis that "elimination" in this context is not perceived as a reference to something objectionable or unacceptable, that has to be hidden or at least sterilized through language. This hypothesis appears even more plausible considering some data showing a general approval of the policy: according to different polls, 70 to 90% of Israelis approve of targeted killings, which thus enjoy a near-universal support like no other policy does. It is noteworthy that extrajudicial preventive killing is justified by the Hakakha, namely by the הָרָו הָרָו gimel rodef, the norms concerning the rodef ("pursuer"): according to the Babylonian Talmud, a rodef, i.e. an individual who makes an attempt on his/her neighbour’s life, must be killed if no lesser means would save the innocent’s life. Killing the rodef, which is not a punishment but rather a form of prevention, is not only legitimate but also a moral obligation, an action required in order to protect the life of an innocent and the community as a whole.

The large approval of this policy and the possibility to justify it through religious law are two conditions which make the use of opaque phrases less necessary; this is why the straightforward "elimination" is not censored despite its dysphemistic connotation. A general observation can also be drawn: the choice of a dysphemism over other options does not necessarily imply aversion to the subject; it can even express praise for the subject, when the subject is a practice or an event which is harmful to someone or something deemed hostile by the speaker.

Violent actions carried out against Israelis are also subject of discussion: the term הָרָו הָרָו "terrorist" is widely used, not limited to those who perform a פָּצְח "terror attack", whereas the opposing side abstains from using the Arabic equivalents of "terrorist" (such as irhabi) and "terrorism" in relation to the same events; on the contrary, a tendency is observable among them to attach those labels to the State of Israel and its operations. Palestinian authorities are accused of keeping an ambiguous attitude towards terrorism, avoiding both clear condemnation and overt support; such an attitude could be motivated by the necessity of keeping internal support without renouncing to the sympathy of the international community. Undoubtedly euphemistic is the use, in this context, of the Arabic terms šahid and istišhād, respectively "martyr" and back assassinating terrorists, «CNN» 16 December 2001 (http://asia.cnn.com/2001/US/12/15/ret.assassination.poll/index.html). In both Israel and the US, the policy is approved even by many who consider it ineffective in decreasing terrorism; therefore, targeted killings seem to be supported more as a form of retaliation than as an actual means of enhancing security (David, Fatal choices, cit., pp. 18-19).

In Sanhedrin 72b, in the discussion about one who is in pursuit of his fellow to kill him, we are told that whoever sheds the blood of man, his own blood shall be shed”, says the Torah [Gen 9:6]. You shall save the blood of this at the cost of the blood of that”. "These are saved [from committing sin] even at the cost of their life”.


40 Consider, for example, two editorials appeared in its English version: D. Gold, Legalizing targeted killings, «Israel Hayom» 30 March 2012 (http://www.israelhayom.com/site/newsletter_opinion.php?id=1658); C.D. Max, The ‘targeted-killing’ memos, «Israel Hayom» 14 February 2013 (http://www.israelhayom.com/site/newsletter_opinion.php?id=3438). Both describe the current situation as an armed conflict where it is impossible to bring terrorists to justice; they also claim that a new kind of enemy cannot be fought with traditional methods.
“martyrdom”, to denote a terrorist and a terror attack.\textsuperscript{45}

It may be significant that, according to an opinion poll carried out in 2011 by the Pew Research Center, 68% of Muslim Palestinians “say that suicide bombing and other forms of violence against civilian targets can often or sometimes be justified”;\textsuperscript{46} the Palestinian case is a clear exception in the Islamic world, where only a minority of people endorses suicide terrorism.\textsuperscript{47}

Terminology relating to suicide terrorism also raises discussion: the use of phrases such as \textit{suicide attack} and \textit{suicide bomber} was recently disputed “claiming that those who kill themselves while murdering others have few similarities to actual suicide victims”.\textsuperscript{48} Already in 2002 an alternative phrasing was used in reference to a suicide attack against Israeli civilians: on 12 April, after the massacre at the Mahane Yehuda Market in Jerusalem, the White House Press Secretary Ari Fleischer repeatedly referred to the event as an \textit{homicide bombing/attack}.\textsuperscript{49}

Hebrew equivalents of “suicide terrorist” and “homicide terrorist” are respectively מחבל מתאבד and רוצח מחבל; the distribution of the two alternatives is shown in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Israel Hayom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>מחבל מתאבד / מתאבד מחבל</td>
<td>2,070</td>
<td>3,340</td>
<td>3,610</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96.50%</td>
<td>78.85%</td>
<td>90.43%</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>מחבל רוצח / רוצח מחבל</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>1,030</td>
<td>382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.50%</td>
<td>21.15%</td>
<td>9.57%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,145</td>
<td>4,870</td>
<td>3,992</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Even though sometimes disputed as terrorist-focused, the phrase מחבל מתאבד “suicide terrorist” is by far the most commonly used in Israeli press, where מחבל רוצח “homicide terrorist” seldom appears. As a matter of fact, also foreign media prefer the former, whereas the latter is only used as an alternative aimed at underlining the murderous nature of such actions; nevertheless, some argue that \textit{homicide bombing/attack} is a less useful description as it fails to convey the key attribute of suicide terrorism.\textsuperscript{50}


\textsuperscript{47} Ibidem.


\textsuperscript{49} After having declared that “the president was informed about this morning’s homicide bombing in Jerusalem” and “condemns in the strongest terms possible this morning’s homicide attack”, Fleischer explained that “the reason I started to have used that term is because it’s a more accurate description. These are not suicide bombings. These are not people who just kill themselves. These are people who deliberately go to murder others, with no regard to the values of their own life. These are murderers. The president has said that in the Rose Garden, and I think that it’s just a more accurate description of what these people are doing. It’s not suicide; it’s murder”. A transcript of the conversation between Fleischer and CNN’s anchorman Bill Hemmer is available online (http://transcripts.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/2004/12/bn.14.html).

\textsuperscript{50} CNN spokeswoman Christa Robinson says...
**Conclusions**

In a world where an overwhelming majority of people have immediate access to information, wars are undoubtedly fought through words; since different names assign different weight and value to events, euphemism and dysphemism can be co-opted to serve a political agenda, as George Orwell put it soon after World War II.\(^{51}\) This is particularly true for the Arab-Israeli conflict, characterized by decades of a continuous hostility which makes the search for internal and external consensus a primary goal.

New terms proposed – or, rather, newer meanings for old terms – rapidly catch on with speakers of a language and thus euphemisms may take root with ease: in the same way as the English *graphic* has come to mean “explicit” and ultimately “representing sexual activity or violence”, terms like *prevention* and *martyrdom* may be immediately understood as, respectively, “killing” and “massacre”. Therefore, rather than reflect shared meaning, their usage by the media can create it. As regards the Israeli public, a big impact in this sense is feared by some for the case of *Israel Hayom*, which “is handed out free on every other street corner and threatens to dominate the public discourse”\(^{52}\); such a possibility cannot be excluded, yet a diachronic analysis of the sources is necessary in order to ascertain whether the other media and the public opinion were actually conditioned by a new player since its appearance.

**SUMMARY**

Euphemisms are widely used in public discourse in order to obfuscate potentially unwelcome or unacceptable measures and policies, whereas dysphemisms (i.e. their unpleasant counterparts) offer a means of expressing strong feelings on disputed issues. Alternative phrasings denoting the same referent were observed for several topics in the context of the Arab-Israeli conflict; depending on the choice between euphemism and dysphemism, they convey profoundly different connotations. This research was conducted through a content analysis of the four most widely circulated Israeli daily newspapers in Hebrew; three subjects – the territories, the separation barrier, and violent actions such as targeted killings and terror attacks – were taken into account in order to highlight the connection between linguistic choices and political stances.

**KEYWORDS**: Euphemism; Arab-Israeli conflict; Hebrew language and the media.

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\(^{51}\) “Political language – and with variations this is true of all political parties, from Conservatives to Anarchists – is designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable, and to give an appearance of solidity to pure wind”. G. Orwell, *Politics and the English Language*, «Horizon» 13/76 (1946), pp. 252-265.

\(^{52}\) Nir, *Supporting Israel’s media strengthens its democracy*, cit.