Analysis of the differences in the conflict in Kyiv in international media with some global online press channels

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Abstract—This study examines the international media coverage of Kyiv's Kursk Offensive, adopting a multidisciplinary approach that combines document analysis, Python-based web scraping, statistical modeling with SPSS, and intercoding validation techniques. Grounded in Vietnam's perspective on international issues and the principles of Marxist-Leninist dialectical materialism, the research explores frequency, content, and presentation strategies across pro-Ukrainian, pro-Russian, and neutral media outlets. An initial dataset of 2,258 articles was collected through a Python-based web scraping tool, filtered down to 1,253 relevant articles. From this dataset, 399 articles were randomly selected for in-depth analysis, ensuring representation across three geopolitical alignments and key phases of the conflict. The analysis reveals significant differences in media strategies: pro-Ukrainian outlets emphasized military victories and humanitarian aspects, pro-Russian sources prioritized strategic justifications and propaganda narratives, while neutral platforms maintained analytical objectivity with a focus on balanced reporting. These findings underscore how geopolitical alignments shape media narratives during international conflicts, highlighting the strategic role of media framing, thematic focus, and multimodal presentation. The study provides insights into the interplay between digital media ecosystems and global political discourse, offering a foundation for further research on international media dynamics in conflict scenarios.

Keywords: Online Media, Kursk Offensive, Digital Journalism, International News Coverage, Multimodal Communication.

I. LITERATURE REVIEW

Conflict communication has emerged as a critical field of study, intertwining communication theory, international media studies, and conflict research. Foundational works such as Entman's Framing Theory (1993) and Herman & Chomsky's Propaganda Model (1988) have provided valuable insights into how media narratives are constructed and disseminated. Entman emphasized the power of framing in shaping public perception, while Herman and Chomsky highlighted systematic biases in media coverage driven by economic and political influences. Wolfsfeld (2004) further explored the media's role in either escalating or de-escalating conflict, emphasizing the cyclical relationship between media, politics, and public opinion. Similarly, Lynch & McGoldrick (2007) introduced the concept of Peace Journalism, advocating for responsible media practices that reduce conflict escalation.

Despite these significant contributions, existing theoretical frameworks often fall short of addressing the dynamics of contemporary conflicts, particularly in the era of digital communication. Scholars such as Seib (2016) and Hoskins & O'Loughlin (2010) have examined how digital platforms revolutionize war reporting, creating a hybrid media environment where traditional journalism intersects with social media influencers, user-generated content, and algorithm-driven news feeds. However, these studies often remain fragmented and fail to provide a cohesive framework for understanding the strategic use of media in complex, hybrid conflicts such as the Russia-Ukraine war.

The ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict underscores the critical role of media as a strategic tool. Western and Ukrainian narratives have emphasized resilience, national identity, and moral legitimacy, while Russian communication strategies have focused on internal legitimacy and controlling domestic discourse through state-controlled media and disinformation campaigns. Kragh & Åsberg (2017) analyzed Russian disinformation tactics, revealing how state narratives are strategically amplified to create confusion and distrust in international audiences. However, such studies have not fully explored how these campaigns interact with global digital platforms or how audiences actively engage with and interpret conflicting narratives.

The Kursk Offensive of 2024 represents a case study where traditional and digital media converged to influence both local and global perceptions. Existing analyses of the event have largely focused on military strategies and political implications, neglecting the multifaceted role of communication strategies in shaping public opinion and strategic decision-making. Research on the CNN Effect (Robinson, 2002) suggests that real-time media coverage can influence foreign policy decisions, but this

theory requires reevaluation in an era dominated by decentralized information flows on platforms like Twitter, TikTok, and Telegram.

Additionally, Udris (2023) examined the rise of digital influencers and citizen journalism in conflict reporting, noting their dual role as both accelerators of transparency and vectors for misinformation. Similarly, studies by Rid (2019) on information warfare have shed light on how state and non-state actors exploit digital platforms to manipulate narratives. Nonetheless, there remains a lack of systematic analysis of how these strategies played out during specific events such as the Kursk Offensive.

Another gap in current literature lies in the underexplored interaction between traditional media outlets and social media ecosystems. Chadwick's Hybrid Media System (2013) provides a useful foundation for understanding these interactions but does not specifically address their implications in conflict scenarios. This hybrid dynamic is crucial in modern warfare, where traditional news outlets often rely on social media for real-time updates, while digital platforms repurpose mainstream narratives to maximize engagement and emotional impact.

To address these theoretical and empirical gaps, future research must focus on developing an integrated model of Conflict Communication Ecology. This model should encompass multiple layers of analysis, including (1) the strategic use of traditional media, (2) the amplification of narratives on digital platforms, (3) the role of influencers and user-generated content, and (4) the psychological and behavioral effects of media exposure during conflict.

Furthermore, comparative case studies of previous high-profile conflicts, such as the Syrian Civil War (Lynch, 2014) and the Arab Spring uprisings (Howard & Hussain, 2013), could offer valuable insights into recurring patterns and unique features of conflict communication strategies. These studies demonstrated how social media platforms served both as tools of liberation and instruments of state surveillance and propaganda.

In conclusion, while significant theoretical contributions have been made in conflict communication, they remain insufficient for explaining the intricate interplay of traditional and digital media in contemporary conflicts. The Kursk Offensive presents an opportunity to build upon existing research and develop a more comprehensive theoretical framework that accounts for the complexity of modern conflict communication. By addressing these gaps, future studies can better explain how media narratives not only reflect conflict realities but actively shape strategic outcomes and public behavior.

II. BACKGROUNDS

Based on theories and models of international communication and international relations, this study proposes a research model for the conflict in the Kursk region in the Russia-Ukraine conflict as follows:
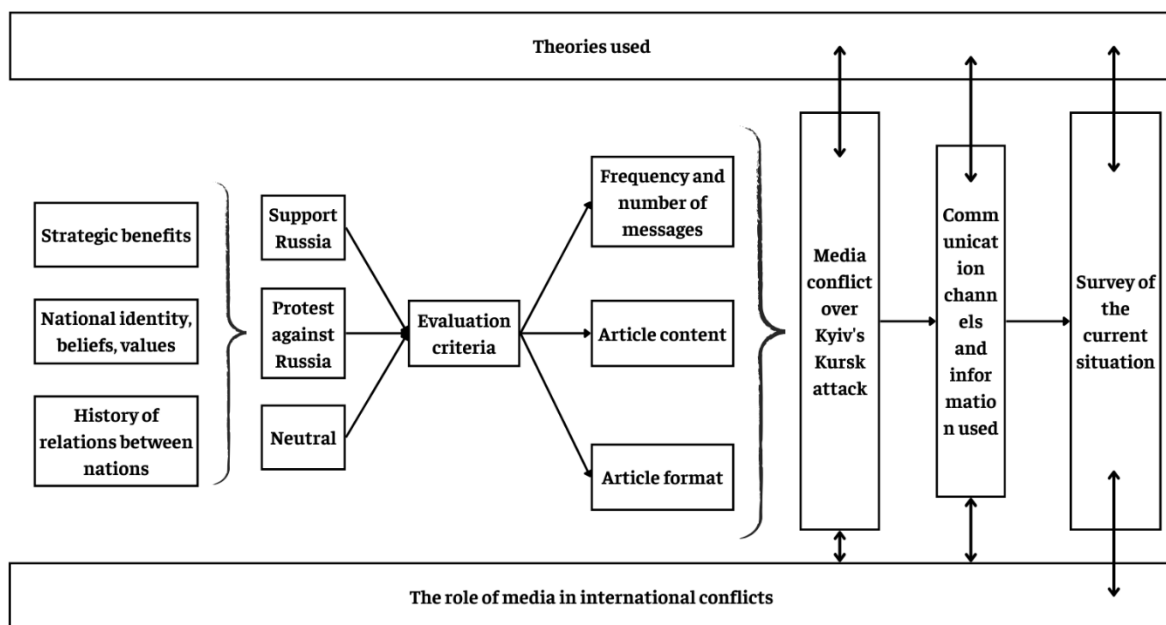

Figure 1: *Analytical framework for the Kursk conflict in international media*

The three hypotheses corresponding to the three variables measuring international media conflict are stated as follows:

H1: Frequency and quantity of news articles clearly reflect media conflict between national groups.

H2: Article content clearly reflects media conflict between national groups.

H3: Article form clearly reflects media conflict between national groups.

II.I. CRITERIA FOR FREQUENCY AND NUMBER OF POSTS

Frequency and number of posts reflect the level of media priority given to an issue, thereby determining the role of the issue on the national and international agenda (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). This is an important factor in understanding the presence of a country in global debates. Frequency and number of posts are important factors in assessing the presence of the media in reporting an international conflict. According to McCombs and Shaw (1972), the media has the ability to shape the public agenda by deciding how often and how much coverage a particular issue receives. In the context of conflict, the frequency of posting articles and news reports not only reflects the level of media attention but also influences how the public receives and prioritizes information about that event (Entman, 2004). States can use the strategy of increasing the frequency of coverage to shape domestic and international public perceptions, creating a specific image of the parties involved in the conflict.

Evaluating the frequency and number of posts, therefore, helps clarify the level of involvement and commitment of media organizations in expressing national views or influencing global public opinion. For example, in the Russia-Ukraine conflict, international media channels such as BBC or CNN regularly updated the war situation, creating pressure on global public opinion and international policy (Freedman, 2022).

Table 1: Criteria for measuring frequency and number of articles

Criteria	Measurement assumptions	Proposed Facility
Posting frequency	Frequency of posting	McCombs and Shaw (1972); Entman (2004); Arceneaux and Weiss (2010); Gerhards and Schafer (2010); Shoemaker and Reese (1996); Iyengar and Simon (1993); Wanta and Hu (1994); Van Dijk (1988); Cohen (1963); Galtung and Ruge (1965); Tuchman (1978).
	Frequency of posting related articles during the study period (by day, by week)	
	Frequency of number of articles over periods (periods 1; 2; 3)	
Number of articles	Number of articles	
	Total number of posts	
	Number of posts in each period of the event	

II.III. CRITERIA FOR NEWS CONTENT

Content is the core element in conveying messages and shaping public opinion. Based on Entman's (1993) framing theory, media content helps define the information groups of the conflict, identify who is responsible and suggest solutions. This is especially important in the international context, where countries use the media to shape their own image and that of their opponents. News content is a key factor in assessing the role of the media in international conflicts. According to Galtung (2002), media content can be divided into two main types: "war journalism" and "peace journalism". "War journalism" articles often emphasize conflict, confrontation and blame, while "peace journalism" focuses on solutions and the broader context of the problem. Analyzing the content of news articles allows us to identify how a country or media organization constructs a narrative to serve its political, economic, or social interests. During the Russia-Ukraine conflict, Russian media articles often emphasized the righteousness and defense of territory, while Western media focused on humanitarian information and Russia's alleged violations of international law (Ryan, 2024). This demonstrates that news content can be an important tool for shaping public opinion and reinforcing political positions.

Table 2: Criteria for measuring news content

Criteria	Measurement assumptions	Proposed Facility
Main content	Main information group	Entman (1993); Galtung (2002); Ryan (2024); Krippendorff (2004); Shoemaker and Reese (1996); Barthes (1977); Lasswell (1948); Nabi (2003); Aristotle (about 330 BC); McQuail (2010); Scheufele (1999); Fairclough (1995); Tuchman (1978); Gamson and Modigliani (1989); Pan and Kosicki (1993); Iyengar (1991).
	Main point	
	Images, videos, supporting graphics	
Message	Clarity	
	Consistency	
	Content Framework	
	Emotion and Values Conveyed	
	Persuasion and Influence	

II.IV. NEWS ARTICLE FORMAT CRITERIA

Communication format helps increase the effectiveness of message reception and evoke emotions from the public. As Dutton (2004) emphasized, the use of multimedia elements (images, videos, graphics) is a modern way of communication to increase its persuasiveness and influence. The format of news articles, including structure, writing style, and means of illustration, is an important factor in attracting public attention and enhancing the effectiveness of message transmission. As Dutton's (2004) research shows, the way information is communicated can amplify or detract from the importance of events, thereby directly affecting the perception and emotions of the recipient.

Countries often use multimedia forms such as articles combined with images, videos, and information graphics to increase persuasiveness and emotional impact. Particularly in international conflicts, images of violence or humanitarianism are often used to reinforce the reporting party's point of view (Baker, 2024). Analyzing the format of news stories can help understand how messages are designed to influence the public and promote sympathy or resistance.

Table 3: Criteria for measuring news format

Criteria	Measurement assumptions	Proposed Facility
Agenda Setting and Presentation Structure	Agenda Setting and Presentation Structure	McCombs and Shaw (1972); Entman (1993); Barthes (1977); Dutton (2004); Pavlik (2001); Lasswell (1948); Ryan (2024); Shoemaker and Reese (1996); Gamson and Modigliani (1989); Tuchman (1978); Fairclough (1995); Scheufele (1999); Iyengar (1991); Nabi (2003); Hall (1980); Krippendorff (2004); Aristotle (c. 330 BC).
Illustrations and Infographics	Compatibility between images and text	
	Symbolism and emotions conveyed by images	
	Presence of controversial or emphatic visual elements	
Video and Multimedia	Video Length	
	Video Quality	
	Content Presented Through Audio, Animation, and Subtitles	
	Audience Engagement Through Multimedia	

III. METHODOLOGY

This study adopts Vietnam's perspective on international issues, rooted in the principles of Marxist-Leninist dialectical materialism. This theoretical lens emphasizes the interconnectedness, evolution, and mutual influence of social phenomena, providing a comprehensive approach to analyze international media coverage of the Kursk Offensive. By integrating this philosophical foundation, the study aims to reveal the structural and contextual factors shaping global media narratives across varying geopolitical and ideological contexts.

The research employs a multidisciplinary methodology that combines document analysis, web-based data collection, statistical modeling with SPSS, and a rigorously structured intercoding validation process. Each method plays a specific role in ensuring the systematic, reproducible, and analytically rigorous analysis of international media content related to the Kursk conflict.

In the document analysis phase, the study systematically reviewed existing theories, conceptual frameworks, and prior empirical studies on international communication, conflict communication, and media framing. This process allowed the identification of theoretical gaps, recurring patterns, and established models, which were then used to develop a coding framework aligned with the study's objectives. Through this analysis, the research team refined the conceptual foundation necessary for consistent data interpretation across diverse geopolitical contexts.

To optimize the data collection process, a Python-based web scraping tool was developed to retrieve relevant articles from global online media outlets. The tool employed keyword filtering techniques to identify articles containing terms such as "Kursk," "Russia-Ukraine," and other associated phrases. Initially, 2,258 articles were collected, and a rigorous filtering process was applied to exclude irrelevant or duplicate entries, resulting in a final dataset of 1,253 articles. The dataset was then subjected to descriptive statistical analysis using SPSS software to assess coverage frequency, distribution patterns, and thematic trends. The findings were visually represented through frequency charts and comparative graphs, illustrating differences in media coverage intensity across pro-Russian, anti-Russian, and neutral media ecosystems.

To ensure data reliability and coding consistency, a stratified random sampling method was employed to select 399 articles from the final dataset of 1,253 articles for in-depth analysis of content and presentation criteria. This sampling strategy was designed to achieve balanced representation across the three groups of media outlets (pro-Russia, pro-Ukraine, and neutral) and to address temporal variations in coverage across the three phases of the Kursk conflict.

- In the pro-Russia group (*Russia Today* and *Xinhua News*), articles were randomly selected from Phases 2 and 3, as there were no articles published during Phase 1. This ensured proportional representation from both phases, reflecting each phase's unique media focus.

- In the neutral group (*Al Jazeera*), the dataset included all 60 available articles from Phase 3, as the overall sample size was limited. The inclusion of the entire dataset ensured no loss of critical data points and maintained analytical integrity.

- In the pro-Ukraine group (*CNN* and *Ukrinform*), articles were randomly selected across all three phases. Proportional sampling was applied to ensure balanced representation from each phase, thereby capturing evolving media narratives and strategies throughout the conflict.

This stratified random sampling method not only ensured temporal and geopolitical balance but also minimized sampling bias, preserving the objectivity and validity of the subsequent analyses.

Ensuring data reliability and coding consistency was a critical aspect of this study, achieved through an intercoding validation process. A team of four trained coders independently evaluated and categorized 399 articles according to a predefined coding framework developed from document analysis and refined through expert consultations. Each coder worked independently to reduce bias and ensure objectivity in the coding process. Following the initial coding phase, the intercoder agreement was assessed using the percentage agreement metric and the Cohen's Kappa coefficient via SPSS software.

The Cohen's Kappa coefficient (κ) was used to account for the possibility of random agreement among coders, providing a more reliable measure of intercoder consistency. According to Landis and Koch (1977), Cohen's Kappa values can be interpreted as follows:

- $\kappa > 0.75$: Excellent agreement

- κ between 0.60–0.75: Good agreement

- κ between 0.40–0.59: Moderate agreement

- $\kappa < 0.40$: Poor agreement

These benchmarks have become widely accepted in social science research, particularly in media studies and communication research, as they account for both chance agreement and coder reliability. Furthermore, Neuendorf (2002) emphasizes that achieving a minimum Kappa score of 0.70 is critical to ensure the robustness of intercoder reliability in content analysis research. Similarly, Krippendorff (2013) advocates for a minimum threshold of 0.80 for intercoder reliability, stating that anything below this suggests significant inconsistencies and undermines the validity of the findings.

In addition to Cohen's Kappa, the percentage agreement among coders was also calculated, with a threshold of 80% commonly considered acceptable in communication and media studies (Lombard et al., 2002). This threshold ensures that coding discrepancies are minimized and that the dataset can be considered reliable for further statistical analysis.

The intercoder agreement results in this study exceeded these benchmarks, with Cohen's Kappa values ranging between 0.72 and 0.82 and a percentage agreement surpassing 85%. These results indicate a high level of consistency among coders and align with established reliability standards in the literature.

The coded dataset was subsequently analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques in SPSS, focusing on key indicators such as mean, standard deviation, and frequency analysis. The mean values were used to identify general trends and patterns within the dataset, categorized into interpretative ranges such as:

- 1.00–1.80: Strongly Disagree

- 1.81–2.60: Disagree

- 2.61–3.40: Neutral

- 3.41–4.20: Agree

- Above 4.20: Strongly Agree

Meanwhile, the standard deviation was used to assess the consistency of coder responses, where values below 0.81 indicated low variance and high consistency, values between 0.81 and 1.60 suggested moderate variance, and values exceeding 1.60 highlighted significant inconsistencies requiring further review.

Finally, frequency analysis was employed to detect recurring patterns, anomalies, and significant differences in media portrayals across the sampled articles. This statistical method helped identify coverage trends and thematic focal points across the sampled digital media ecosystem.

By combining document analysis, web-based data collection, intercoding validation, and statistical modeling, this study establishes a robust methodological framework for analyzing global media coverage of international conflicts. The use of Cohen's Kappa coefficient, percentage agreement thresholds, and descriptive statistical techniques ensures transparency, validity, and reproducibility in the study's findings, reinforcing its contribution to the field of international media research.

IV. RESULTS

H1: Frequency and quantity of news articles clearly reflect media conflict between national groups (Hypothesis 1 was accepted)

Through a systematic web scraping process utilizing a custom-developed web application, this study collected and analyzed data from 1,253 articles across three major media groups: pro-Ukrainian, pro-Russian, and neutral outlets. The analysis covered three distinct phases of the Kursk Offensive, spanning from July 18, 2024, to November 21, 2024, and aimed to identify patterns in publication frequency, volume, and temporal distribution of reporting. The findings reveal significant disparities among the three media groups in terms of both the intensity and timing of their coverage, reflecting their geopolitical and ideological orientations.

The pro-Ukrainian media group, represented by CNN (United States) and Ukrinform (Ukraine), displayed a dynamic and responsive approach to news coverage. CNN maintained an average publication frequency of 0.59 articles per day across the study period, with coverage peaking in Phase 2 (06/08/2024 – 19/08/2024) at 1.7 articles per day before decreasing to 0.47 articles per day in Phase 3 (20/08/2024 – 21/11/2024). In contrast, Ukrinform demonstrated a far more intense publication pattern, averaging 6.57 articles per day overall, with a peak of 13.28 articles per day during Phase 2. This surge suggests a deliberate editorial focus on shaping narratives during periods of heightened military activity and perceived strategic advantages for Kyiv.

Conversely, the pro-Russian media group, represented by Russia Today (RT) and Xinhua News (China), exhibited distinct patterns of coverage that differed not only in volume but also in timing. Russia Today published a total of 228 articles, averaging 1.9 articles per day across the observed timeline. Notably, RT had zero coverage in Phase 1, followed by a sharp increase to 2.4 articles per day in Phase 3, with the peak occurring on November 21, 2024, when 14 articles were released in a single day. This concentration towards the final phase indicates a strategic focus on consolidating narratives at the climax of the conflict. In contrast, Xinhua News adopted a front-loaded reporting strategy, publishing 59 articles in Phase 2 (averaging 4.2 articles per day) and only 22 articles in Phase 3 (0.2 articles per day). The absence of coverage in Phase 1 across both outlets highlights a shared tendency to prioritize reporting during critical phases of the conflict.

In comparison, the neutral media group, represented by AL Jazeera (Qatar), demonstrated a more measured and consistent approach to coverage. Across the timeline, AL Jazeera published 69 articles, all concentrated in Phase 3 (20/08/2024 – 21/11/2024), averaging 0.7 articles per day. The peak occurred on September 18, 2024, with four articles published in one day, underscoring the outlet's focus on key turning points in the conflict rather than maintaining a high frequency of daily updates. This pattern aligns with AL Jazeera's editorial commitment to balanced reporting and in-depth analysis, as opposed to reactive or sensationalist coverage.

When comparing the timeliness and update frequency among the three media groups, clear distinctions emerge. Drawing upon theoretical frameworks such as Shoemaker and Reese's Hierarchy of Influences Model (2014) and Entman's Framing Theory (1993), it is evident that pro-Ukrainian outlets prioritized rapid and sustained coverage during key operational milestones, particularly in Phase 2. In contrast, pro-Russian outlets strategically concentrated their coverage during the final stages of the conflict, aligning with principles from agenda-setting theory (McCombs & Shaw, 1972), where selective emphasis on concluding events can disproportionately influence public perception. Meanwhile, neutral media adhered to a less frequent but more analytically focused publication schedule, ensuring coverage remained tethered to significant events rather than day-to-day developments.

These findings underscore the political alignment and strategic priorities that shape the publication behavior of international media during military conflicts. Pro-Ukrainian outlets dominated early and mid-phase coverage, pro-Russian outlets emphasized narrative consolidation towards the end, and neutral outlets maintained a steady focus on key events. This nuanced understanding of frequency and volume in media reporting sets the stage for subsequent qualitative analyses, including thematic analysis, sentiment evaluation, and audience targeting, to further illuminate the strategic role of media narratives in shaping global perceptions of the Kursk Offensive.

H2: Article content clearly reflects media conflict between national groups (Hypothesis 2 was accepted)

After ensuring the reliability of the dataset through an acceptable agreement rate and Cohen's Kappa coefficient, descriptive statistical analysis and frequency analysis were conducted using SPSS. This section presents a comparative analysis of the content characteristics of media coverage from three national groups: Neutral (e.g., Al Jazeera), Pro-Russian (e.g., Russia Today, Xinhua News), and Pro-Ukrainian (e.g., CNN, Ukrinform). The analysis focuses on key aspects such as main information themes, dominant perspectives, content framing, and multimedia usage, providing insight into how these groups constructed their narratives regarding the Kursk offensive.

Table 4: Intercoder Reliability Results for Criterion 2

Criteria	Agreement Rate (%)	Kappa Coefficient (κ)	Evaluation
Main Information Group	85%	0.78	Good
Key Perspectives	82%	0.75	Good
Supporting Images, Videos, and Graphics	88%	0.82	Very Good
Clarity	80%	0.72	Good
Consistency	86%	0.79	Good
Content Framework	82%	0.75	Good
Emotions and Conveyed Values	78%	0.71	Good
Persuasiveness and Impact	80%	0.72	Good

The analysis of news content across three national media groups—Neutral (Al Jazeera), Pro-Russian (Russia Today and Xinhua News), and Pro-Ukrainian (CNN and Ukrinform)—reveals distinct patterns in the selection, framing, and presentation of information regarding the Kursk offensive. Each group employed unique thematic priorities, framing strategies, and narrative structures aligned with their respective geopolitical positions and media objectives.

In the Neutral group, represented by Al Jazeera, the reporting displayed a commitment to objectivity and factual accuracy, focusing primarily on battlefield developments (63 mentions), followed closely by casualties and humanitarian impacts (61 mentions) and international reactions (60 mentions). The framing approach emphasized geopolitical struggles and heroic resistance, while multimedia usage remained limited. Although neutrality was the dominant perspective in Al Jazeera's coverage, occasional deviations toward Pro-Ukraine or Pro-Russia perspectives were noted.

In contrast, the Pro-Russian group, exemplified by Russia Today and Xinhua News, prioritized military technology and weaponry usage and casualty narratives to highlight Russia's resilience and legitimacy. Their framing relied heavily on propaganda and misinformation (47 mentions) and the David vs. Goliath narrative (33 mentions), which positioned Russia as a force standing firm against Western aggression. While a neutral perspective was numerically dominant in the dataset, the tonal and framing choices leaned strategically toward Pro-Russian messaging. Multimedia resources were used moderately, with a focus on reinforcing key narratives visually.

On the other hand, the Pro-Ukrainian group, represented by CNN and Ukrinform, emphasized military dynamics and battlefield developments, along with political negotiations and humanitarian impacts. Their framing strategies centered on geopolitical struggles (80 mentions) and moral appeals (29 mentions), underscoring Ukraine's perceived moral high ground and strategic

alliances. Compared to the other two groups, Pro-Ukrainian media exhibited the highest emotional engagement and the most extensive use of multimedia elements, including images, videos, and infographics, to maximize narrative impact.

Table 5: Comprehensive Comparative Analysis Across Eight Criteria

Criteria	Neutral (Al Jazeera)	Pro-Russian (RT & Xinhua)	Pro-Ukrainian (CNN & Ukrinform)
Main Information Group	Battlefield dynamics, casualties, and humanitarian impacts	Military technology, casualties, and propaganda narratives	Battlefield dynamics, political negotiations, and humanitarian impacts
Key Perspectives	Primarily neutral, with occasional leaning towards Pro-Ukrainian or Pro-Russian	Neutral façade but with a Pro-Russian bias in framing	Predominantly Pro-Ukrainian with a focus on legitimacy and strategic alliances
Supporting Images, Videos, and Graphics	Limited use of multimedia for factual support	Moderate use of images and videos to reinforce propaganda narratives	Extensive use of multimedia for emotional appeal and narrative emphasis
Clarity	High clarity with factual emphasis	Moderate clarity with intentional ambiguity in propaganda narratives	High clarity with emotional and factual alignment
Consistency	Consistent in neutral reporting	Consistent in strategic alignment with Pro-Russian narratives	Highly consistent in framing Ukraine as resilient and justified
Content Framework	Geopolitical struggle and humanitarian impacts dominate	Propaganda and David vs. Goliath dominate	Geopolitical struggle and moral justification dominate
Emotions and Conveyed Values	Low emotional appeal, fact-driven	Moderate emotional appeal, focused on national resilience	High emotional appeal, focused on heroism and moral legitimacy
Persuasiveness and Impact	Moderate persuasiveness, relies on factual reporting	Moderate persuasiveness, relies on narrative repetition	High persuasiveness, relies on emotional engagement and strategic framing

The comparative analysis highlights significant differences in framing approaches, emotional intensity, and multimedia usage across the three groups. While Al Jazeera's neutrality emphasized factual reporting, Russia Today and Xinhua News employed propaganda and symbolic narratives to align international perception with Russia's strategic goals. In contrast, CNN and Ukrinform relied heavily on emotional appeals and geopolitical framing to bolster Ukraine's legitimacy and strategic alliances on the international stage.

In conclusion, the most notable differences emerged in the content framing and emotional engagement criteria, with Pro-Ukrainian outlets demonstrating the highest multimedia integration and emotional intensity. These findings underscore the critical role of media framing in shaping international perceptions of the Kursk offensive, reflecting each group's strategic objectives and alignment within the broader geopolitical landscape.

H3: Article form clearly reflects media conflict between national groups (Hypothesis 3 was accepted)

The analysis evaluates the news presentation styles of three media groups—Neutral (Al Jazeera), Pro-Russian (RT & Xinhua), and Pro-Ukrainian (CNN & Ukrinform)—based on eight criteria: *Agenda Setting and Presentation Structure*, *Compatibility Between Images and Text*, *Symbolism and Emotions Conveyed by Images*, *Presence of Controversial or Emphatic Visual*

Elements, *Video Length*, *Video Quality*, *Content Presented Through Audio, Animation, and Subtitles*, and *Audience Engagement Through Multimedia*. Each criterion reflects the degree to which visual, textual, and multimedia strategies are employed to construct narratives about the Kursk offensive. To ensure reliability and consistency in the comparative analysis across four coders, Cohen's Kappa values and agreement percentages were calculated for each of the eight criteria:

Table 6: Intercoder Reliability Results for Criterion 3

Criteria	Agreement Rate (%)	Kappa Coefficient (κ)	Evaluation
Agenda Setting and Presentation Structure	91%	0.82	Very Good
Compatibility Between Images and Text	88%	0.76	Good
Symbolism and Emotions Conveyed	85%	0.71	Good
Presence of Controversial Visuals	83%	0.69	Acceptable
Video Length	87%	0.74	Good
Video Quality	89%	0.78	Good
Content via Audio, Animation, Subtitles	90%	0.8	Good
Audience Engagement	82%	0.68	Acceptable

In terms of Agenda Setting and Presentation Structure, Al Jazeera adopted a balanced approach, presenting key events with logical sequencing and maintaining a neutral stance. Headlines were consistently clear and proportional to the content's importance. Conversely, RT and Xinhua prioritized politically charged narratives, with bold and prominent headlines that emphasized military superiority and strategic arguments. CNN and Ukrinform demonstrated strong structural organization, employing bold headlines and logical sequencing to highlight political and humanitarian priorities effectively.

For Compatibility Between Images and Text, Al Jazeera exhibited moderate alignment, with visuals generally supporting textual content but lacking deeper integration into narrative development (Mean Score: 3.00). RT and Xinhua achieved higher alignment scores (Mean Score: 4.5), although the visuals were limited in both diversity and originality, frequently reiterating key propaganda messages. CNN and Ukrinform scored slightly lower (Mean Score: 3.94) but demonstrated frequent and contextually relevant visual usage, supporting the textual narrative comprehensively.

Regarding Symbolism and Emotions Conveyed by Images, Al Jazeera primarily focused on abstract symbolism labeled as *'Other'* (34 instances), followed by *Fear* (17 instances) and *Hope* (11 instances). Themes of *Justice* were nearly absent, appearing only once. RT and Xinhua favored a restrained emotional palette, centering visuals around abstract symbolism and military themes, while avoiding emotionally provocative imagery. In contrast, CNN and Ukrinform exhibited greater emotional diversity, with *'Other'* appearing in 63 instances, *Justice* and *Hope* in 40 and 42 instances respectively, and *Fear* in 17 instances.

When analyzing the Presence of Controversial or Emphatic Visual Elements, Al Jazeera largely avoided such visuals, with 52 non-controversial instances compared to only 11 controversial occurrences. Similarly, RT and Xinhua demonstrated a conservative approach, registering 20 non-controversial visuals against 7 controversial ones. In contrast, CNN and Ukrinform were more open to incorporating emphatic visuals, with 152 non-controversial and 28 controversial elements, strategically employed to amplify emotional engagement.

In terms of Video Length, Al Jazeera favored short videos (30 seconds to 3 minutes) in 36 instances, while longer videos (over 3 minutes) appeared only 11 times. RT and Xinhua demonstrated limited investment in original video production, often relying on externally sourced content, such as vertical-format videos from CNN. CNN and Ukrinform demonstrated a strong preference for short videos (135 instances), prioritizing concise and effective storytelling.

Video Quality was consistently high across Al Jazeera, with 45 high-quality videos compared to only 3 of lower quality. RT and Xinhua showed inconsistent results, reflecting reliance on external sources. CNN and Ukrinform displayed high standards in video quality, with 149 high-quality productions emphasizing professional visuals.

When examining Content Presented Through Audio, Animation, and Subtitles, Al Jazeera integrated these elements in 46 videos, while 2 lacked such features. RT and Xinhua displayed minimal use of audio-visual enhancements, often sticking to static presentations. CNN and Ukrinform, on the other hand, achieved extensive multimedia integration, with 162 videos utilizing audio, animations, and subtitles to enhance clarity and engagement.

The Audience Engagement Through Multimedia dimension revealed moderate interactivity from Al Jazeera (Mean Score: 2.44), reflecting a focus on clarity rather than emotional or participatory engagement. RT and Xinhua scored significantly lower (Mean Score: 1.01), indicating a lack of interactive or dynamic multimedia elements. In contrast, CNN and Ukrinform achieved higher engagement levels (Mean Score: 3.51), successfully leveraging multimedia strategies to foster audience involvement and emotional resonance.

The comparative analysis highlights distinct strategic approaches in news presentation across the three media groups. Neutral outlets (Al Jazeera) demonstrated professionalism and clarity, prioritizing factual reporting while avoiding emotional manipulation. Pro-Russian media (RT & Xinhua) leaned towards structured narratives with limited multimedia integration, focusing on strategic arguments. In contrast, Pro-Ukrainian media (CNN & Ukrinform) excelled in emotional storytelling, multimedia integration, and audience engagement, using rich visuals and interactive content to amplify their narratives.

These findings underscore the role of ideological framing and strategic intent in shaping news narratives, emphasizing the importance of multimedia tools in modern conflict reporting. Future research may focus on audience reception analysis to further elucidate the impact of these presentation strategies.

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study has illuminated significant differences in international communication strategies employed by distinct national media groups during the Kursk offensive—a critical international conflict event. Through a combined quantitative and qualitative approach analyzing over 1,200 articles from Neutral (Al Jazeera), Pro-Russian (RT & Xinhua), and Pro-Ukrainian (CNN & Ukrinform) media outlets, the findings reveal profound contrasts across three key criteria: frequency and volume of coverage, content focus, and presentation style. These distinctions are not merely superficial but represent deeply rooted strategic and ideological frameworks driving how each group constructs and disseminates narratives in times of conflict.

Key Findings Overview

Firstly, the frequency and volume of coverage varied significantly among the three media groups. Neutral media demonstrated balanced coverage, while pro-Russian and pro-Ukrainian outlets strategically amplified or downplayed aspects of the conflict to align with their respective narratives. Secondly, in terms of content focus, Pro-Russian outlets emphasized military superiority and political arguments, whereas Pro-Ukrainian media prioritized humanitarian crises and political resilience. Lastly, the presentation style, including multimedia integration, emotional framing, and structural clarity, revealed a spectrum of strategies—ranging from Pro-Russian conservatism in multimedia usage to Pro-Ukrainian dynamism in emotional storytelling and audience engagement.

These findings reinforce existing literature on media framing in conflict reporting, while also offering novel insights by systematically comparing diverse national media ecosystems in the context of a single event.

VI. RESEARCH LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Despite its contributions, this study acknowledges several limitations that provide both constraints and avenues for future exploration:

Limited Inclusion of Social Media Platforms: This study primarily focuses on traditional journalism, neglecting the dynamic and highly interactive nature of social media platforms. Social media, with its real-time dissemination and user-generated content, represents a critical frontier for understanding modern conflict communication.

Temporal Analysis Gaps: The research did not delve deeply into specific phases of the conflict regarding content and presentation criteria. Different stages of conflict may exhibit distinct media strategies, and future studies should adopt a phase-based analysis for a more nuanced understanding.

Sample Size Constraints in Specific Criteria: The dataset for content and multimedia analysis was relatively limited, particularly for the Pro-Ukrainian group. Expanding the sample size in future research could help validate or refine the findings further.

Focus on a Single Event: The study is centered on the Kursk offensive, a specific conflict scenario. Broader comparative studies across multiple international conflicts are necessary to identify recurring patterns or divergences in global communication strategies.

These limitations are not merely weaknesses but critical opportunities for subsequent research. Future investigations could expand the analytical scope to include social media, adopt a longitudinal approach, and integrate cross-event comparisons to solidify the understanding of global communication strategies during international crises.

VII. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study underscores the instrumental role of media narratives in shaping public perception and influencing geopolitical discourses during international conflicts. It highlights the strategic divergence among media groups rooted in ideological, political, and cultural factors. As global communication ecosystems continue to evolve, future research must adopt multifaceted methodologies to address existing gaps and further unravel the complexities of international media strategies in conflict reporting. The findings not only contribute to academic discourse but also offer valuable insights for policymakers, media professionals, and conflict resolution practitioners in navigating the intricate interplay of media and international politics.

VII. DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors

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