

# News of Noam: Unpacking Media Coverage of Chomsky

Jeanne M. Fox, Ross A. Jackson\*, and Kevin R. Crawford

**Abstract**—Media inform and obfuscate. Corporate motives influence how news is neglected, reported, and contextualized. It is informative to examine the extent to which news content varies based on source and period. As a longstanding critic of news media, and a leading public intellectual, *Noam Chomsky* is a worthy case study. Three author-created, corpora of news articles referencing *Noam Chomsky* were created. The corpora contained articles from *Agence France-Presse* (AFP;  $n = 54$ ), *The Associated Press* (AP;  $n = 48$ ), and the *Cable News Network Wire* (CNNW;  $n = 6$ ), from the years 2012 to 2022. Number and length analyses, along with hypothesis tests, established the degree of similarity existing among the articles of the three news wire services and periods. Analysis of variance showed that news source was significant in terms of both the number of articles (H2),  $F(2,6) = 5.916, p = 0.038$ , and article length (H4),  $F(2,105) = 23.936, p = 0.000$  ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ). Little commonality in content or framing was established among the three news sources or periods in terms of top words or bigrams of merit. Whereas there were differences in the absolute values and degree of change, each of the three news sources contained a slightly negative average sentiment score when using the AFINN lexicon. The results of this study, while limited to a single case, are illustrative of broader concerns and are potentially useful for those engaged in media studies, politics, rhetoric, organizational management, and the social sciences.

**Index Terms**—Analytics, public intellectual, rhetorical icon

## I. INTRODUCTION

Making sense of what is going on is challenging [1–4]. Accurate news is useful for social constructions of reality [5]. Media inform and obfuscate understanding [6–8]. Given the role of corporations in the creation and propagation of news, it is useful to acknowledge the possibility that coverage is influenced by considerations of profit [9]. Examining the extent to which news content varies, based on source and period, reflects choices made by news corporations in how they neglect, report, and contextualize people and events. Concern over this aspect of news coverage is established.

Research within the field of news media has examined media consolidations [10–12], infotainment [13–15], fake news [16–18], sensationalism [19–21], and bias [22–24]. Each contributes insight into how news is presented and consumed. Within the space of media studies there is focus on the treatment of public intellectuals [25–27]. More narrowly, the concept of rhetorical icons could be useful in exploring the variation of news coverage and contextualization of a given individual. Kenny explained, “the concept of the rhetorical icon craves attention in public

discourse...because it reminds one of the manner in which a speaker loses autonomy as a speaking agent when the individual moves from being a private to a public figure” [28]. Given his engagement as a public intellectual, media coverage of *Noam Chomsky* provides a case study for exploring this phenomenon.

Noam Chomsky is a complex, public figure. His contribution to society could be subdivided into his roles as linguist [29–31], activist [32–34], and public intellectual [35–36]. These elements potentially blur in media coverage of *Chomsky* as a rhetorical icon. In that capacity, Chomsky becomes more of a character than a person. It is at this confluence that this examination becomes most relevant for those engaged in the study of language, literature, and linguistics. As indicated, Chomsky’s career was as a linguist. This study is a mixed-methods textual analysis of the language contained in news wire articles of Chomsky, examined as a rhetorical icon which has traces of literature as much as news. It is international both in terms of the news sources used, and the potential relevance of the findings. This point is substantiated by a closer examination of the study itself.

This research study, examining news wire coverage of Noam Chomsky from 2012 to 2022, used a mixed-method approach consisting of both formalized hypotheses, quantitative descriptive results, and qualitative interpretation. The four hypotheses were as follows:

*H1: The mean number of articles for the early years = the mean number of articles for the middle years = the mean number of articles for the late years*

*H2: The mean number of articles from AFP = the mean number of articles from AP = the mean number of articles from CNNW*

*H3: The mean length of articles for the early years = the mean length of articles for the middle years = the mean number of articles for the late years*

*H4: The mean length of articles from AFP = the mean length of articles from AP = the mean length of articles from CNNW*

The approach is described in the methodology in Section III. Additionally, this study examines the top words and bigrams of merit [37], and the average sentiment using the AFINN lexicon [38]. This introduces the research focused on unpacking media coverage of *Noam Chomsky*. Context is developed through research related to public intellectuals, media, and *Noam Chomsky* in Section II. The methodology in Section III is presented, followed by the results in Section IV. The paper concludes with a summary of the research, limitations, and extensions in Section V. Situating this research effectively is facilitated by examining the survey of

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J. M. Fox is with Aerospace Business Development Associates, Fairborn, OH 45324 USA.

R. A. Jackson is with Wittenberg University, Springfield OH 45501 USA.

K. R. Crawford with Regent University, Virginia Beach, VA 23464 USA.

\*Correspondence: jacksonr@wittenberg.edu (R.A.J.)

literature first. This is presented in the following sections.

## II. NEWS MEDIA, PUBLIC INTELLECTUALS, AND CHOMSKY

As presented in the introduction in Section I, this examination of news wire coverage of Noam Chomsky was aided by an examination of research related to news media coverage, the role and treatment of public intellectuals in news, and the work and treatment of Noam Chomsky as a public intellectual and rhetorical icon. Each of these areas is constrained to a summary examination. Even in this form, these elements converge to situate this case study as uniquely informative of the type and degree of ambiguity potentially induced through selective news coverage of people and events. Because of its central role in defining the context of this study, research on news media is presented first.

### A. *News Media*

News media are complex and varied. With the advent of the telegraph, news wire services were established in the United States during the mid-nineteenth century to provide content to local newspapers [39]. Such a service is inherently risky. Concerns associated with news wire services have included topics ranging from foreign news coverage [40–41], to news accuracy [42, 43], and political motivations [44–45]. Such concerns of news wire service coverage are related to but distinct from the concerns associated with news media in general. Whereas the focus of this study is on coverage from news wire services, it is beneficial to situate these concerns within a broader sense of news media in its economic context.

There is wisdom to be found in the politico-economic adage to follow the money. In terms of the underlying economic model confronted by news service providers, McManus described that “for both newspapers and television, having advertising rather than consumers as the primary source of income means that the way to increase profit is to produce a product that has a minimal threshold appeal to the maximum number of demographically desirable consumers in the signal or circulation area. Because consumers pay little or nothing directly for the news, it would be inefficient to produce content that a smaller number of consumers used but valued more highly” [46]. This economic reality potentially informs the decisions of major media corporations. One point of intersection among these three foci of literature, is that Noam Chomsky has critiqued this aspect of the news media [47–49].

As indicated, news media coverage, to include that of the news wire services, is shaped by corporate concerns [50–52]. A specific concern is understanding how news media coverage creates, portrays, or ignores individuals considered to be public intellectuals. Before progressing to research related to Noam Chomsky as a leading, American, public intellectual, it is useful to examine the socially constructed phenomenon of public intellectuals in general.

### B. *Public Intellectuals*

What is a public intellectual; what is the relationship between one and the news media? Crick defined public intellectuals as “those who respond to their philosophical situation by producing a work that conceptualizes and provides direction for solving longstanding and pervasive

problems and are then successful in helping change the habits and practices of a public” [53]. Such a view is useful as it focuses upon context, person, product, and consequence. Frequently, public intellectuals emerge from academia. Cushman examined this confluence by noting that, “public intellectuals can use their service, teaching, and research for the benefit of those inside and outside the university. Their knowledge...can have political implications in contexts beyond the university...public intellectuals can enact the kind of civic-minded knowledge-making that engages broad audiences in pressing social issues” [54]. Whereas there is power associated with the work of public intellectuals, their contribution to society has been devalued [55]. Such social valuations are (in)formed through news media.

News media contribute to the public perception of intellectuals and their work, and public intellectuals operate in and through news media. Townsley explained, “journalists (re-)produce the trope [of public intellectuals] in many different ways...the formulation of the article as a review of events, programs and persons surrounding the idea of the ‘public intellectual’ associates all the speakers quoted in the article with the idea of the ‘public intellectual’—either as public intellectuals themselves, or as attributors with the power to nominate public intellectuals (which is very close to the same thing)” [56]. One might reasonably consider Noam Chomsky to be such a public intellectual and rhetorical icon.

### C. *Noam Chomsky: Public Intellectual & Rhetorical Icon*

Any person with as productive and visible of a career and level of political engagement as Noam Chomsky is bound to be known for a variety of things, by different people in different contexts. As mentioned in the introduction in Section I, Noam Chomsky is primarily known as a linguist [29–31], activist [32–34], and public intellectual [35, 36]. Within the context of this study, it was Chomsky as a public intellectual who was of primary interest. In the role of public intellectual, Giroux indicated that being “rooted in the fundamentals of anarcho-syndicalism and democratic socialism,” Chomsky has “incessantly exposed the gap between the reality and the promise of a radical democracy,” and has “attempted to refigure both the promise of democracy and develop new ways to theorize agency and the social imagination outside of the neoliberal focus on individualization, privatization, and the assumption that the only value that matters is exchange value” [57]. Such a focus is consequential as Marshall and Atherton noted, “Noam Chomsky is often identified as the number one living public intellectual,” and “his discussion of the dissident public intellectual as the more authentic, or only true, public intellectual is supported by this argument about the suppression of dissident voices in public” [58]. Given that Chomsky is established as a public intellectual, it is useful to extend this by examining him as a rhetorical icon.

Starting with the work of Kenny quoted in the introduction [28], a rhetorical icon is talked *about* to justify or substantiate a position. This conceptualization is not unique, as 1960’s radical Jerry Rubin has been analyzed as a rhetorical icon as well [59]. As explained by Kenny a rhetorical icon is an “icon of the public sphere” and “has no subject status, but is an object chosen because of its capacity to signify aspects of the rhetorical situation which it

represents” [60]. In the context of this research, the supposition is proffered that Chomsky could be considered a rhetorical icon for political dissent [61–63]. Such an approach provides a basis for interpreting the various conceptualizations of Noam Chomsky made by news wire services in their coverage of him.

Previous research on news media, public intellectuals, and Noam Chomsky as a public intellectual provided a basis for this study. Through a mixed-methods, corpus linguistic analysis of news wire coverage of Chomsky, one can unpack these concerns and fill a portion of the gap in existent research. The approach used is presented next in Section III.

### III. METHODOLOGY

Rigorous understandings are facilitated by robust methodologies [64–66]. This study was conducted as a mixed-method approach based on a collection of qualitative and quantitative data. Creswell and Creswell defined mixed methods research as a form of inquiry involving the collection and integration of quantitative and qualitative data [67]. Sentiment analysis was used qualitatively to identify potential shifts in the tone or mood of the articles. Text analysis was used to analyze news content, detecting frequencies and significant correlations among words and bigrams of merit. The methodology described here consists of three major foci: collection of data and statistical analyses, data processing and corpora creation within RStudio, and the thematic analysis approach. These areas influence the approach taken to communicate the results [68]. Since data must be collected to be analyzed that step is presented first.

This study was based on the collection and analysis of news wire articles from three organizations (abbreviation, country): the Agence France-Presse (AFP, France), the Associated Press (AP, United States of America), and Cable News Network Wire (CNNW, United States of America). News articles were collected via a computer search of the Nexus Uni database for all text articles by these three agencies from 2012 to 2022 that contained the name *Noam Chomsky*. No audio or video files were collected. The articles from these three news wire services were partitioned into three date ranges: 2012–2015, 2016–2018, and 2019–2022. These date ranges are not explicitly tied to American Presidential administrations but rather cross administrations to capture macro-system influences. Count and length data were then input into Excel for statistical analysis. Since H1-H4 were comparisons of more than two means, single factor ANOVA tests were used for all four hypotheses [69]. The processing of article content was conducted in RStudio.

Article processing and corpora generation were conducted in RStudio, a free, integrated, computer coding environment for the programming language R [70–71]. The following packages were used to analyze the three Chomsky corpora as reported by AFP, AP, and CNNW from 2012 to 2022: *dplyr* [72], *ggplot2* [73], *textdata* [74], *tidyr* [75], *tidytext* [76], *tidyverse* [77], *tm* [78], *readxl* [79], *stringr* [80], and *xlsx* [81]. Collectively, these packages allow one to ingest the content of the news articles, process the data by removing common, English stop words (e.g., *a*, *the*, *and*), and conduct sentiment analysis. The AFINN sentiment lexicon [38] was used to calculate average sentiment values. In total, with

three sources and three periods, there were nine points of observation and content comparison. The top words and bigrams of merit were the primary basis of comparison [37].

As indicated, the words and bigrams of merit formed the core of the subsequent thematic analysis of the coverage of *Noam Chomsky* by the AFP, AP, and CNNW news wire services. The approach taken was emergent themes based on aggregation categories. A couple of examples are provided here to illustrate how the emergent thematic categories could be used to aggregate key words and bigrams. The terms *United Kingdom*, *United States*, and *Canada* might be aggregated under the theme *geopolitics*. The terms *Al Qaeda* and *Bin Laden* might be aggregated under the theme *terrorism*. It is beneficial to understand the primary goal associated with utilizing thematic analysis in this fashion. This approach provided an interpretative layer to news wire coverage, as there is a risk of erroneously concluding that news coverage differs because the exact words used vary. It is possible that whereas the words being used vary, the overarching theme is consistent. This approach allowed for insight into the degree to which this occurred among the three, author-created corpora, and points to a concern related to the validity of analytic results [82].

The methodology explained the approaches used for data collection and statistical analysis, the use of RStudio for data processing and corpora creation, and the approach for the thematic analysis of key words and bigrams of merit. With the methodology established, it is possible to turn attention to the results of this study in Section IV.

### IV. RESULTS

As indicated in the methodology, the focus of this research was on understanding the extent to which the coverage of *Noam Chomsky* changed as a function of news source and period. Such an interrogation was examined in terms of the total number of news articles (Table I), the average number of articles (Table II), and the average article length, in words (Table III). Once these data were established it was possible to conduct the four ANOVA tests to determine the degree of statistical significance in the observed variation (Table IV). The focus of results then transitioned from structure to content. The top words of merit (Fig. 1) are presented prior to the top bigrams of merit (Fig. 2), and an assessment of the average sentiment by news source (Fig. 3). Collectively, these results are suggestive of how news coverage varies in terms of source, period, and content. Attention can now be given to the results of the assessment of the number of news articles by source and time (Table I).

TABLE I: NUMBER OF NEWS ARTICLES BY SOURCE AND TIME

Source	Early (2012–2015)	Middle (2016–2018)	Late (2019–2022)	Total
AFP	17	23	14	54
AP	18	20	10	48
CNNW	5	0	1	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>108</b>

There were 108 news articles referencing *Noam Chomsky* in the three news services from 2012 through 2022. Of those 108, the most were from AFP ( $n = 54$ ) and the fewest were

from CNNW ( $n = 6$ ). In terms of period, most were in the middle period from 2016 to 2018 ( $n = 43$ ), and the fewest in the late period from 2019 to 2022 ( $n = 25$ ). Because the time periods do not contain the same number of years, it was useful to also analyze the data in terms of the average number of articles per year to adjust for that structural anomaly. Those results are presented in Table II.

TABLE II: AVE. NO. OF NEWS ARTICLES PER YEAR BY SOURCE AND TIME

Source	Early	Middle	Late
AFP	4.25	7.67	3.50
AP	4.50	6.67	2.50
CNNW	1.25	0.00	0.25

In terms of the average number of news articles per year (Table II), CNNW had fewer than either AFP or AP. The average number of articles for CNNW in the early period ( $M = 1.25$ ) was fewer than either AFP ( $M = 4.24$ ) or AP ( $M = 4.50$ ). A similar finding was observed for the late period, where the value for CNNW ( $M = 0.25$ ) was fewer than that of AFP ( $M = 3.50$ ) or AP ( $M = 2.50$ ). There were no news articles referencing *Noam Chomsky* in the middle period from CNNW. The number of articles, along with the average number of articles convey one aspect of news coverage. The number of articles (or average number of articles) denotes frequency of coverage. Extent of coverage is also important and can be measured by the average article length. Since it is possible for an article to be less frequent but more extensive, it is useful to assess both. The results of the assessment of the average article length are presented in Table III.

TABLE III: AVERAGE ARTICLE LENGTH (IN WORDS) BY SOURCE AND TIME

Source	Early	Middle	Late
AFP	394.53	547.43	530.36
AP	617.50	675.35	872.60
CNNW	1,363.00	0.00	1,179.00

There was a difference among the three news sources in terms of the average article length. The average article length, in words, for CNNW in the early period ( $M = 1,363$ ) was longer than either AFP ( $M = 394.53$ ) or AP ( $M = 617.5$ ). A similarly scaled difference was observable for the late period, in which the average article length, in words, for CNNW ( $M = 1,179$ ) was longer than either AFP ( $M = 530.36$ ) or AP ( $M = 872.6$ ). The middle period did not contain an observation for CNNW. Collectively, the previous results (Tables I–III) are suggestive of potentially statistically significant differences. A summary of the results from the four hypothesis tests are presented in Table IV.

TABLE IV: HYPOTHESIS RESULTS

Hypothesis	Test	Result	p Value
H1: Number-Time	ANOVA	Fail to Reject	0.534
H2: Number-Source	ANOVA	Reject	0.038
H3: Length-Time	ANOVA	Fail to Reject	0.594
H4: Length-Source	ANOVA	Reject	0.000

Hypotheses one and two focused on the number of articles, first in terms of a comparison of the early, middle, and late periods (H1) and then in terms of news wire source (H2). In terms of the first hypothesis (H1), the analysis of variance failed to show a significant different among the average number of articles for the three periods,  $F(2,6)$ ,  $p = 0.534$ . When examined in terms of the respective news sources (H2), an analysis of variance showed that the news source was significant,  $F(2,6) = 5.916$ ,  $p = 0.038$ . Similar findings were determined when the length of the articles was examined. More specifically, in terms of the third hypothesis (H3), the average length of articles was not significantly different among the three periods,  $F(2,105)$ ,  $p = 0.594$ . When examined in terms of the respective news sources (H4), an analysis of variance showed that the news source was significant,  $F(2,105) = 23.936$ ,  $p = 0.000$ . Collectively, these results suggest that in terms of period, the number and length of articles referencing *Noam Chomsky* are similar among the three periods, but that there is significant variation in terms of coverage by news source. These results are useful for understanding form but provide little insight for content.

To understand the degree to which content varies in terms of source and period, it is useful to examine the most frequent words of merit. This was accomplished by determining the most frequent words, excluding stop words, by news source and period. The results are presented as shown in Fig. 1.

Among the three news sources examined in three periods, there were a total of nine potential lists of top words of merit to examine. There were no articles referencing *Noam Chomsky* in the CNNW middle period. As a result, the maximum number a given word appeared in common was eight. Among the eight lists, there were 50 unique words (~80%) and 13 words shared among some of the respective lists (~20%). The 13 words (number of lists on which the term appeared) were *Chomsky* ( $n = 4$ ), *Noam* ( $n = 4$ ), *people* ( $n = 4$ ), *U.S.* ( $n = 4$ ), *President* ( $n = 3$ ), *Assange* ( $n = 2$ ), *court* ( $n = 2$ ), *Israel* ( $n = 2$ ), *Kurdish* ( $n = 2$ ), *military* ( $n = 2$ ), *singer* ( $n = 2$ ), *time* ( $n = 2$ ), and *Turkish* ( $n = 2$ ). In terms of news source, the term *Chomsky* was used by both AFP and AP, as was *Noam*, and *people* ( $n = 4$ ). The term *U.S.* was the only one used in AFP, AP, and CNNW. In general, except for the name *Noam Chomsky*, there was little similarity among the respective top words of merit lists by source and time (Fig. 1). The maximum observed commonality was words showing up on 4 of the 8 lists (50%). The greatest commonality in terms of source was observed between AFP and AP. CNNW was the least common, with the CNNW list for the late period being the most unique focusing predominately on *Trump* ( $n = 10$ ), *sexual* ( $n = 9$ ), and *allegations* ( $n = 9$ ). A focus on single word frequencies is potentially overly sensitive to idiosyncratic differences. To account for this, it was useful to also examine the top bigrams of merit. The results of that analysis are presented graphically as Fig. 2.

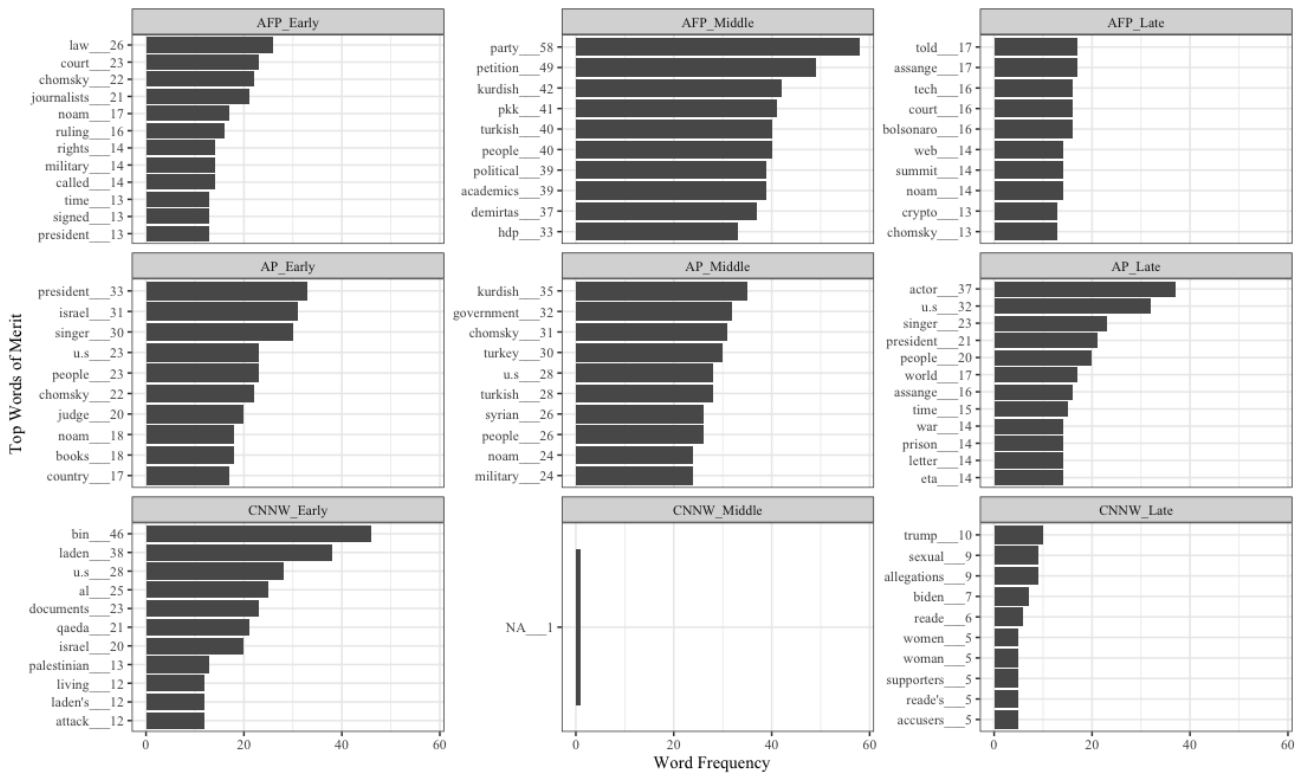


Fig. 1. Top words of merit from corpora of news articles referencing Noam Chomsky by source and period.

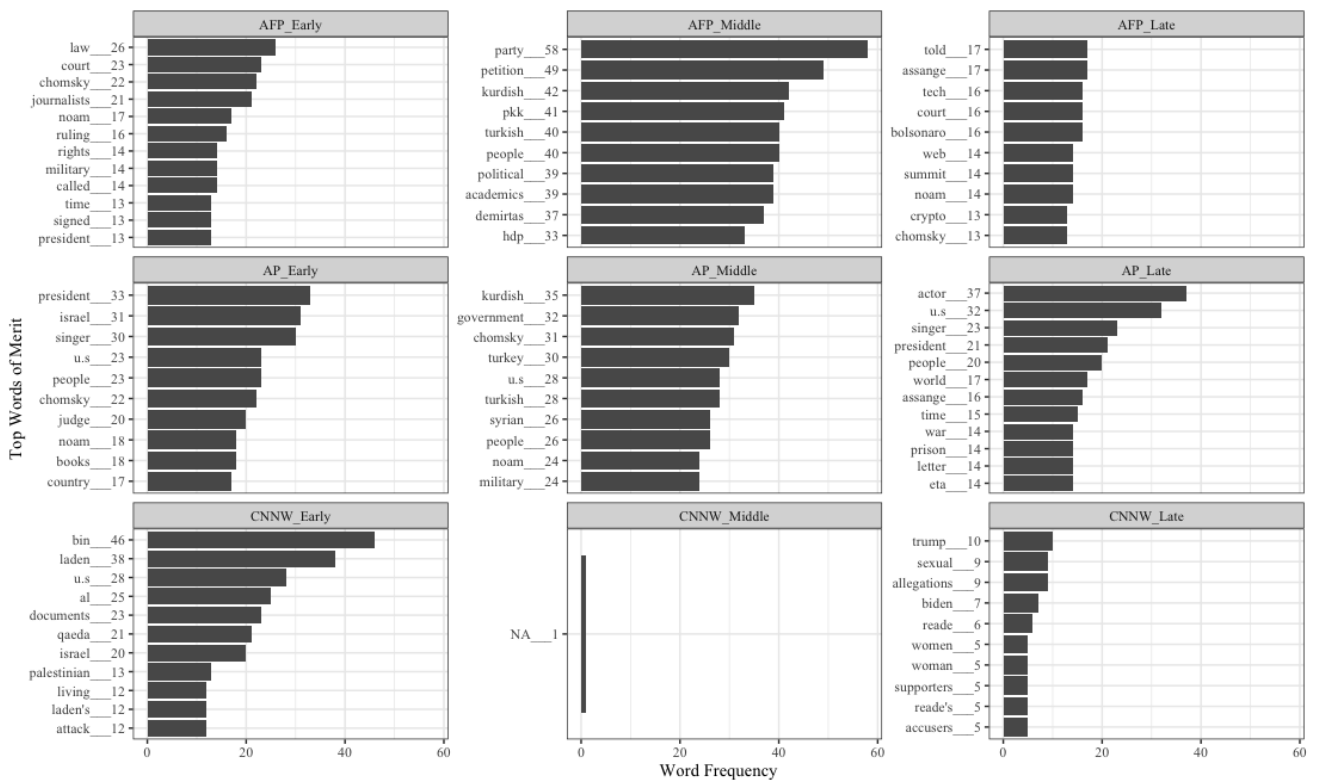


Fig. 2. Top bigrams of merit from corpora of news articles referencing Noam Chomsky by source and period.

Because bigrams tend to be less frequent than single word frequencies, it was useful to make a minimum threshold for inclusion. The bigrams of merit for this study had to occur at least five times to be included in the lists. With this threshold in place, the CNNW list for the late period failed to generate any bigrams of merit. Consequently, there were seven lists for the bigrams of merit instead of the eight lists for the words of merit. This finding, in and of itself, was of potential interest as a lack of significant coverage is as informative as

observed differences in the coverage itself. Examining the bigrams of merit of the seven lists provided insight into those differences.

Among the seven lists, there were 39 unique bigrams (~81%) and 9 bigrams shared among some of the respective lists (~19%). The 9 bigrams (number of lists on which the phrase appeared) are *Noam Chomsky* ( $n = 6$ ), *human rights* ( $n = 4$ ), *linguist Noam* ( $n = 3$ ), *Al Qaeda* ( $n = 2$ ), *Bin Laden's* ( $n = 2$ ), *country singer* ( $n = 2$ ), *Dec 7* ( $n = 2$ ), *news agency* ( $n =$

2), and *Prime Minister* ( $n = 2$ ). In terms of source, like the results of the top words of merit, the top bigrams of merit exhibited more similarity among the AFP and AP sources than with the CNNW lists, however, the bigrams *Al Qaeda* and *Bin Laden's* were on the CNNW list as well. Some of the common bigrams (e.g., *Dec 7, country singer*) were potentially odd at first. Upon review of the source material, it turned out that *December 7<sup>th</sup>* is Noam Chomsky's birthday, a birthdate he shares with *country singer* Sunny Sweeney. Enough of the news articles were simply a yearly republished birthday announcement that those phrases appeared on the top bigram of merit lists. Whereas these bigrams appear only on the AFP list for the middle period, the bigrams *military operations* ( $n = 14$ ), *terrorist propaganda* ( $n = 13$ ), and *human rights* ( $n = 13$ ) were frequent and consistent enough with the work of Chomsky that the source and period might be considered the one that most closely conveys *Chomsky* as a rhetorical icon. With these results established, attention can be given to the results of the sentiment analysis (Fig. 3).

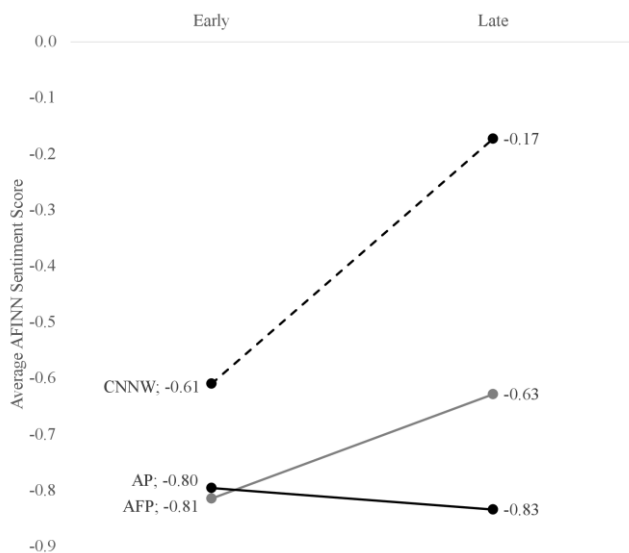


Fig. 3. Average sentiment of news articles referencing Noam Chomsky.

To place the average sentiment scores depicted in Fig. 3 into context, it is useful to reiterate a few key points presented in Section III. The AFINN sentiment score was used. That scale ranges from  $-5$  (highly negative) to  $+5$  (highly positive) with zero being neutral. Words in the AFINN lexicon with a sentiment value of  $-1$  include *anti*, *apology*, *attack*, *battle*, *cancel*, *curse*, and *demonstration*. All the average sentiment scores, irrespective of source or period were between  $-1$  and  $0$  indicating a slightly negative sentiment. When assessed on that level, there was no discernable difference between the three news sources. However, as indicated in Fig. 3, there were observable differences in the direction and degree of sentiment movement within that narrow space. Specifically, CNNW had the most positive average sentiment score in the early period ( $-0.61$ ), and the score which was closest to neutral in the late period ( $-0.17$ ). Consistent with earlier findings, there was a degree of similarity between the AFP and AP news sources in terms of their average sentiment scores, with a score of  $-0.81$  for AFP and  $-0.80$  for AP. However, the directionality between these two sources differed, with the average sentiment score for AFP improving ( $-0.63$ ), whereas that of AP ( $-0.83$ ) declined slightly. When

viewed on the scale of the AFINN sentiment score, such movements in average sentiment might be considered relatively minor fluctuations. Conversely, one might attune subconsciously to such subtle variations in sentiment and be left with different impressions based on one's news source. This concern is pursued further in the following section.

## V. LIMITATIONS AND EXTENSIONS

Among the limitations of this study, the first is the period analyzed. Noam Chomsky's career as a linguist started in the 1950s and he has been engaged as a public intellectual since in the 1960s. With such a long career, this study is limited by its focus on the years 2012 to 2022. The results from the study are useful for understanding current variations in coverage but are limited to a narrow portion of Chomsky's work. Another limitation of this study is that it is a case study focused on a single individual. Constrained to the insights of a single case, it is unclear the extent to which (if at all) the results are generalizable or if media coverage of *Chomsky* is idiosyncratically different from the norm. Lastly, the focus of this study was on a comparison of coverage from three, major news wire services. Such a focus provides coherence but is limited by the lack of perspective established from a wider aperture including various media (e.g., alternative, network broadcasting, newsmagazines). Each limitation provides a potential basis for future research.

Future studies could address the limitations of this study. Specifically, one could extend the timeframe of analysis to the 1960s to gain a more holistic appraisal of print news service media treatments of *Noam Chomsky*. Additionally, one could move beyond this single, case study, by pursuing research of a cohort. This would produce greater context and allow for more refined interpretations. Lastly, future studies could incorporate various media to determine the relative influence of source, time, and medium for the frequency, length, and sentiment of respective news coverage of public intellectuals. Addressing these limitations through future research will improve understandings of this phenomenon. With these limitations and extensions established, it is possible to turn attention now to a summary of the key points established through this analysis.

## VI. CONCLUSION

Research from this study focused upon understanding the extent to which news media coverage of *Noam Chomsky* changed as a function of news source and period by examining articles from three news services (AFP, AP, CNNW) in three periods from 2012–2022. There were 108 articles, with CNNW accounting for only  $\sim 5\%$  (Table I). In terms of the average number of articles per year, by period, CNNW had the fewest, ranging from 1.25 per year in the early period and 0.25 per year in the late period (Table II). However, in terms of article length, the articles in CNNW were observably longer (Table III). The ANOVA tests comparing the early, middle, and late periods (H1 & H3) resulted in no statistically significant difference, whereas the ANOVA tests examining the three sources (H2 & H4) did ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ). In the eight lists of words of merit, there were 50

unique words (~80%) and 13 words shared among some of the respective lists (~20%). The words *Chomsky* ( $n = 4$ ), *Noam* ( $n = 4$ ), *people* ( $n = 4$ ), *U.S.* ( $n = 4$ ), *President* ( $n = 3$ ) were among the most frequently shared between source and period (Fig. 1). Of the seven bigram lists, there were 39 unique bigrams (~81%) and 9 bigrams shared among the lists (~19%). The bigrams *Noam Chomsky* ( $n = 6$ ) and *human rights* ( $n = 4$ ) were relatively common among source and period (Fig. 2). The average sentiment scores, irrespective of source or period were between  $-1$  and  $0$  indicating a slightly negative sentiment, with the scores of CNNW being the most neutral of the negative scores (Fig. 3). In terms of number, length, and sentiment, the articles from AFP and AP were more similar than those from CNNW. These results are informative and constructive for an understanding of media coverage in general and coverage of *Chomsky* in particular.

Unpacking media coverage of Chomsky provides one with a sketch of news variation, in terms of frequency, depth, and sentiment, depending on source. This is useful for those engaged in media, politics, rhetoric, the social sciences, and those tasked with managing them [83]. News of Noam varies from *military operations* and *terrorist propaganda* to *birthday candles* and *Captain Fantastic*, and from the quintessential to the incidental. Chomsky admonished that the responsibility of intellectuals is “to speak truth and to expose lies” [84]. Media neglect, report, and contextualize news consistent with their corporate motives and not those of the public, a point Chomsky himself critiqued [85].

#### CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

#### AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Conceptualization, J.M.F., and K.R.C.; methodology, J.M.F. and R.A.J.; analysis, J.M.F. and R.A.J.; writing—original draft preparation, R.A.J.; writing—review and editing, J.M.F., and K.R.C.; All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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