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Research Article

A Van Dijk's Discourse Analysis of Palestine vs Israel Coverage on NBC News and Liputan6

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Abstract

The issue of the Palestine vs Israel dispute peaked again in mid-2023. This made the whole world's eyes focused on the issue and many parties then expressed various views. This research aims to explore the differences and similarities in the reception of discourse on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict between the international community and Indonesia. The data was taken from comments on two videos uploaded by two major media outlets, namely NBC News and Liputan6, with the titles 'Inside Israel's mission to destroy Hamas tunnels in Gaza' (NBC News) and Israel Tur Military in Gaza Ruins | Liputan6' (Liputan6) on YouTube. NBC News is a well-known international media based in the United States that presents news with a Western perspective, while Liputan6 is an Indonesian media that is followed by local people with a perspective from the public. This study focuses on the social dimension of Van Dijk's discourse analysis. Comments are pulled using Communalytic and a few that have more than equal to a hundred likes. The results obtained were fourteen comments that had several likes of more than 100 likes, identified as the dominant agents in the comment column. Judging from the factors of cultural values and norms as well as ideology and social identity, each audience that commented on the NBC News and Liputan6 video shows had a different impression of Hamas and Palestinians.

Keywords

Communalytic, Discourse Analysis, Gaza, Liputan6, NBC News

1. Introduction

The dispute between Palestine and Israel has become one of the most complex and protracted issues in the world's geopolitical history. These conflicts are rooted in political, ethnic, and religious tensions that have lasted over a century [1]. In mid-2023, tensions peaked again, causing global attention to the latest developments in the region. Various international and local media outlets report this escalation with different viewpoints and focuses, reflecting the diverse perspectives of people worldwide [2].

Since the start of the conflict, various peace efforts have been made, including by international bodies such as the United Nations (UN), but a permanent settlement appears difficult to achieve. Whenever the conflict escalates, various media play an important role in shaping public perception of both sides [3]. Palestine was originally part of the Islamic State under the Ottoman Empire. However, after the territory was taken over by the British in 1917, about 48 percent of the territory was annexed by the Jews, leaving Muslim-majority Palestine unindependent. This conflict is further complicated by claims to Jerusalem, Jewish settlements in the West Bank,

and the status of Palestinian refugees [4].

The media has a critical role in conveying information about this conflict to the public. However, in the context of such a sensitive conflict, it is possible that media coverage can be influenced by a variety of factors, including political interests, ideologies, or biased views. Bias in news can occur in any context. Not only that, with the internet and social media, it is easier for the international community to give their views regarding this conflict, including on platforms such as YouTube [2].

YouTube, as one of the world's largest video-sharing platforms, has become a space for people to express their views on global issues, including the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. News videos uploaded by various media outlets are often the center of discussion, with thousands of comments representing different points of view. In mid-2023, two major media outlets, NBC News and Liputan6, uploaded a video related to the development of this conflict, which then received a lot of attention and comments from the public.

NBC News, as one of the leading international media based in the United States, often presents news with a perspective that puts forward a Western perspective in reporting on international issues. On the other hand, Liputan6, an Indonesian news media that is widely followed by local people, provides a report that focuses more on the interests and viewpoints of the Indonesian people [5]. These two media outlets have very different audience bases, both geographically and culturally, which most likely influences how this conflict discourse is framed and received.

The importance of this research lies in efforts to understand the role of the media in framing international issues as well as how audiences from different cultural backgrounds respond to the same issues. Research on public discourse on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is very important, because it not only involves political actors in the Middle East, but also affects international relations more broadly. These differing views of conflict often influence the foreign policies of countries around the world [6].

Indonesia, as the largest Muslim-majority country in the world, has a long history of supporting Palestine in this conflict. This support is not only seen in the official attitude of the Indonesian government, but also in the views of Indonesian society in general. In contrast, in Western countries such as the United States, support for Israel is often stronger, and this is reflected in media reports that tend to present a more pro-Israel viewpoint [7].

These differences then became the main analysis material in this study, where comments on YouTube are considered to be a representation of the views of global and local communities. By focusing on two videos from two different media, this research is expected to provide insight into how the media affects public perception of international conflicts.

In a broader context, this study also provides an overview of the role of social media in shaping public opinion on geopolitical issues. YouTube, as a very popular platform, allows any-

one to give their opinion, regardless of their political or social background. Thus, the analysis of comments on YouTube can be a reflection of the various views that exist in society [8].

In addition, the use of the Communalytic application in this study shows the development of technology in social media analysis. The app allows researchers to not only collect data, but also analyze it more deeply by looking at the level of engagement and relevance of comments. This makes the research more focused on the views that actually affect public discussion.

Taking into account the complexity of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and various emerging perspectives, this study seeks to contribute to the literature on media discourse, public perception, and the role of social media in international issues. By understanding how the public responds to these conflicts, both in Indonesia and in the international community, we can better understand the dynamics of public opinion influenced by the media and communication technology. In an increasingly connected world, the media plays an important role in framing social and political realities. This research, focusing on the two major media outlets and how their audiences respond to the same issue, is expected to provide new insights into this dynamic, especially in the context of highly political conflicts such as the Palestinian-Israeli dispute.

Research Objective

This study seeks to explore the differences and similarities in the reception of discourse on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict between the international community and Indonesia. By analyzing the comments in two videos from NBC News and Liputan6, this study is expected to portray the public's view of the conflict from a broader perspective. The analyzed comments were taken from the 100 comments with the highest engagement score, which was measured using the Communalytic application.

2. Literature Review

Discourse analysis according to van Dijk [9] is an approach that studies the relationship between texts (discourses) and the social context in which they are produced and understood. Van Dijk emphasizes that discourse analysis focuses not only on the linguistic structure of texts, but also on the cognitive and social processes involved in the production and understanding of discourse.

The three dimensions that build Van Dijk's discourse analysis are the text dimension, the cognitive dimension, and the social dimension. This research specifically explores the events raised by NBC News and Liputan6 through the social dimension. The social dimension in Van Dijk's discourse analysis refers to contextual factors that affect the production, interpretation, and understanding of discourse in social interactions. This dimension emphasizes the interaction between language and the social environment, highlighting how power relations, cultural values and norms, as well as ideologies and social identities shape discourse [9].

3. Materials and Methods

Communalytic apps are cloud-based software used to analyze texts and social networks. These tools are useful for collecting, visualizing data and analyzing data from various online sources such as blogs, social media, forums, and so on. The Communalytic application is very useful for understanding interaction patterns and trending conversations on various online platforms [10].

The Communalytic app allows researchers to analyze interactions on social media in more depth, including how users react to content. In the context of this study, the application was used to identify the comments that received the most attention from users, such as "likes" or "replies," so that an overview of the most relevant and dominant views among the public could be obtained. After that, the data was analyzed using Van Dijk's discourse analysis which focused on the social dimension.

4. Results

The number of comments that the Communalytic application managed to attract on the video aired by NBC News [11] with the title 'Inside Israel's mission to destroy Hamas tunnels in Gaza' was 1817 comment uploads, while on the Liputan6 [12] show with the title 'Israeli military tours in the Gaza Ruins | Liputan6' received 3174 comment uploads. Here are a number of statements uploaded by audiences who have more than equal to 100 likes in two news stories that are each aired by these media offices.

Table 1. Audience Statement Data from NBC News.

NBC News		
Commentary	**Likes**	**Sentiment**
With the rocket sites in schools and the hamas tunnels nearby hospitals uncovered -- Yeah, Idk how they'll still deny it.	494	Negative
This is a very informative video. Hamas took millions and millions of dollars from the Palestinian people and, instead of building for them a proper infrastructure above ground, they built underground these horrible tunnels.	406	Negative
I'm starting to think that some civilians know about these tunnels cz they are under or they lead directly to homes	371	Negative
Wow! A tunnel right behind a civilians house 🏠.	279	Negative
The tunnels underneath hospitals and schools… really nice people ay	244	Negative
One of these days, Israelis will find a map of the tunnels that is left behind. Someone is always careless	216	Negative
How come everybody talks about Israel and a ceasefire But nobody talks about Hamas surrendering and handing back the hostages?? That's really odd This could all be over if Hamas surrenders and hands back the hostages Why isn't the lovely international community putting pressure on a terrorist organization to surrender??	202	Negative
"They have money for war but can't feed the poor" - 2pac	146	Negative

[*]Audience Statement Data from NBC News

Table 2. Audience Statement Data from Liputan6.

Liputan6		
Commentary	**Likes**	**Sentiment**
Hamas spokesman (Abu Ubaida): "In the near future we will pray in congregation at the Al Aqsa Mosque together".	122	Positive
Hamas is gone, Israel is partying, suddenly Hamas rockets launch	177	Negative

[*]Audience Statement Data from Liputan6

The sentiment that dominates the two news is negative. On NBC News, twelve of the fourteen comments that received

likes above 100 had negative sentiment with an additional one comment containing positive sentiment and one comment containing neutral sentiment. In contrast the comments on the Liputan6 show where the number of positive and negative sentiments is balanced.

5. Discussion

Negative sentiment in comments on NBC News was dominated by expressions of dislike for Hamas and the reality presented by NBC News regarding the discovery of tunnels under civilian homes in Palestine. One positive comment that was agreed by 105 users on the show was 'May God protect the IDF and Israel ❤ Long live Israel! free Palestine from the Hamas!' which if seen, the international audience still has a bad impression of Hamas.

This is inversely proportional to what is happening in Indonesia. The two comments that have the highest number of likes have the impression of supporting the resistance carried out by Hamas so far. Two comments from the audience on the Liputan6 broadcast hope that the Al-Aqsa Mosque will be filled with Muslims again and Israel will be destroyed at the hands of Hamas, such as in the comment 'Hamas is gone, Israel is partying, suddenly Hamas rockets are launched'.

In van Dijk [9] it is explained that individuals or groups that have a higher social position and have authority will try to influence this social dimension by dominating. Comments that have several likes above a hundred are the agents that dominate the comment forum because they are most liked by the audience who watches the show on both shows from two different media.

This practice of domination can also be seen in the language used by these agents. van Dijk [9] said that individuals who have power tend to use more authoritative and persuasive language. One of the characteristics of authoritative language according to Joullié et al., [13] and the characteristics of persuasive language [14] is that the arguments presented have strong reasons and logic and are written attractively and even rhythmically so that people can easily remember them. All of the dominant agents whose comments contain positive and negative sentiments reflect both characteristics. The language conveyed was straightforward and reasonable, and attracted the attention of other audiences when reading the comment column on the two videos.

The next factors that affect the social dimension are cultural norms and values as well as social ideology and identity. Different cultures may have different communication styles, norms of politeness, and expectations regarding van Dijk's discourse [9]. The phenomenon of Islamophobia in the Western world has developed as a result of several major events, namely the 9/11 attacks (2001), the war in Iraq (2003), the emergence of ISIS (2014), the immigrant crisis in Europe (2015), several legislative actions in Europe, such as the ban on the use of hijab in France and Belgium, as well as several other global events [15]. The incident on October 7, 2023, in Israel between Hamas and Israel has made the phenomenon of Islamophobia, especially in the UK, increasing. The forms of expression of Islamophobia that occur are hate speech, physical insults, threats, and vandalism [16].

Based on the information written in the report issued by The Carter Center [17], the international impression of Hamas is negative. The United States, the European Union, and Israel see Hamas as a terrorist organization. These countries view Hamas as the cause of acts of violence and terrorism against Israel and do not respect international law and human rights. Arab countries, some of which such as Qatar and Turkey, provide support to Hamas, namely providing financial support, political support, dialogue facilities, as well as military and strategic support. However, there are other countries, such as Egypt, that tend to be cautious. These aspects are ultimately the answer to why NBC News' coverage is dominated by negative impressions of Hamas.

What is happening in Indonesia is the opposite. As many as 71% of people in Indonesia support and are on the side of Palestine, while 3% state that Palestine is guilty, and 5% state that both parties are wrong according to the SMRC survey [18]. The values culture and ideology embraced in Indonesia are different. This can be seen from the ideology of the nation and state, namely Pancasila which is accompanied by the UUD 1945 Constitution which contains a legal basis in written form [4].

The commitment to maintain world peace and implement a world order based on independence, lasting peace, and social justice in the first and fourth paragraphs of the UUD 1945 is the basis for the commitment of the Indonesian people to continue to encourage Palestinian independence from the occupation carried out by Israel [19]. In addition to Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution, Muslims in Indonesia have a strong brotherhood with Palestine because of its theological aspect [20].

The amount of support of the Indonesian people and government for Palestine is expressed in the form of moral support, one of which is uploading a poster with the words 'All Eyes on Rafah' on social media. Not only moral support, but many people in Indonesia also make donations in material form through various channels. The Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) said that more than Rp. 27 billion has been collected for donations to Palestine raised by the MUI itself. The donation was channeled through the official channels of the Indonesian government [11].

The Indonesian government also helped Palestinian independence through foreign policy. Some of the efforts that have been made are to provide consistent support for the rights and independence of the Palestinian people; conduct bilateral and multilateral diplomacy; participate in international organizations to resolve conflicts; and promote human security, which emphasizes the importance of protecting and improving the welfare of individuals and society [21]. These are the things that distinguish the position in accepting the discourse delivered by the media about Hamas especially

what happened in the two shows.

6. Conclusions

The social dimension is one of the three dimensions that form the acceptance of discourse given by the media to the public in Van Dijk's discourse analysis. The social dimension is shaped by three main factors, namely power relations, cultural norms, and values, as well as ideology and social identity. It was found that there were fourteen audiences divided into two groups, namely the NBC News and Liputan6 audiences commenting in the comment column were the dominant parties in each comment column.

These audiences have different views, values, and cultural norms, as well as national ideologies and identities. NBC News audiences tend to view Hamas as a negative organization due to the rampant phenomenon of Islamophobia in Western countries and Hamas' actions that are seen as violating human rights. In contrast, the audience of Liputan6 is more supportive of Hamas by providing moral and material support. This can happen because of differences in cultural values and norms as well as ideologies and social identities owned by the Indonesian people as stated in Pancasila and the UUD 1945 which uphold world peace and implement world order.

Abbreviations

MPR	Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat
NBC	National Broadcasting Company
IDK	I Don't Know
CZ	Because
IDF	Israel Defense Forces
UK	United Kingdom
SMRC	Saiful Mujani Research and Consulting
UUD	Undang-undang Dasar

Author Contributions

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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