

# The Representation of Gaza War (2021) in the Official Remarks of Hamas and Israel: A Critical Discourse Study

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**Abstract**—This study investigated the representation of Gaza War (2021) in the official remarks of Hamas and Israel. All remarks released over the 11-day war were collected and analysed according to Van Dijk's (2006) ideological square to explore the discursive strategies that each party utilized and uncover the possible hidden ideologies. Two main strategies were employed in the speeches, namely, *emphasizing our good things* and *emphasizing their bad things*. The collected examples generated different themes including praising war achievements, war justifications, threats, future aims, and national glorification. The study found that each party tended to represent themselves positively and the other negatively. Israel focused their speeches on war achievements and threats while Hamas's speeches were more emotional and centred on self-glorification.

**Index Terms**—official remarks, Gaza War (2021), Hamas, Israel, CDA, Van Dijk

## I. INTRODUCTION

The Palestinian-Israeli conflict is one of the oldest and most significant national liberation struggles in the Middle East. It has been an international issue since the establishment of the Zionist Entity in 1948, which was followed by many wars in different periods of time, the most recent of which is Gaza War which broke out in May 2021. It all started when Palestinians began protests in East Jerusalem over the decision of evicting six Palestinian families in Sheikh Jarrah issued by the Supreme Court of Israel. This area is part of the occupied Palestinian territories but effectively annexed by Israel. The war lasted over 11 days of intense fighting through which the Israeli airstrikes and artillery barraged on Gaza killing at least 230 people. In the other direction, Hamas missiles rained over Israeli towns, sowing fear and killing at least 12 Israeli settlers.

The war on the Gaza Strip, which was known to the Palestinians as the "Sword of Jerusalem" and to the Israelis as the "Guardian of the Walls", represented an important station in the history of the Palestinian-Israeli national liberation struggle. During this war, the official spokesman of Hamas (Abu Obeida) and the official spokesman of the Israel Defense Forces (Avichai Adraee) delivered statements in which they used language as a weapon aimed at conveying ideas, ideologies and viewpoints that might influence Palestinian, Israeli, and international public opinion alike. This study aims to investigate the official remarks conveyed during Gaza War (2021) by Hamas and Israel. It also attempts to shed light on the discursive strategies used to highlight certain ideas and ideologies of both sides in light of Van Dijk's (2006) socio-cognitive approach. It mainly attempts to answer the following question:

1. What are the main themes utilized in the remarks delivered by the official spokespersons for Hamas (Abu Obeida) and the Israel Defense Forces (Avichai Adraee) during the Gaza War (2021) to highlight the "us" vs. "them" dichotomy?
2. What are the discursive strategies used in constructing "us" and "them" in the remarks delivered by the official spokespersons for Hamas (Abu Obeida) and the Israel Defense Forces (Avichai Adraee) during the Gaza War (2021)?

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section sheds light on several issues related to political discourse. It also gives a brief account on Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Van Dijk's socio-cognitive approach. Moreover, it reviews previous studies on the representation of previous wars in speeches.

### A. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a sort of discourse analysis research that focuses on how speeches and texts in political and social contexts are used to perpetrate, reproduce, and oppose societal abuses of power, authority, and inequality (Wodak, 2002; Al-Abbas & Haider, 2020; Haider et al., 2021). CDA tackles social issues, discursive power

structures, and forms culture ideological activity and society (Fairclough, 2013; Al-Abbas, 2022). Finally, discourse is a sort of social activity, in addition towards the historical relationship between literature and society.

Van Dijk's (2006) approach aims to link the microstructure of language to the macro structure of culture. The micro level relates to language usage, verbal contact, discourse, and communication, whereas macro level refers to dominance, power, and disparity among the social groupings. Van Dijk (2001) suggested four strategies to examine ideological discourse as follows:

- Emphasize Our good things
- Emphasize Their bad things
- De-emphasize Our bad things
- De-emphasize Their good things

The micro-strategies are represented in Table 1 (Van Dijk, 2006).

TABLE 1  
LIST OF VAN DIJK'S DISCURSIVE STRATEGIES

Actor description	Authority	Burden
Categorization	Comparison	Consensus
Counterfactuals	Disclaimers	Euphemism
Evidentiality	Example/ Illustration	Generalization
Hyperbole	Implication	Irony
Lexicalisation	Metaphor	National Self-Glorification
Negative Other-representation	Norm Expression	Number Game
Polarization	Populism	Positive Self-Representation
Presupposition	Vagueness	Victimization

### B. Previous Studies

Investigating political speeches attracted the attention of many scholars over the years. Bilal et al. (2012) investigated and explored the linkages between ideology and language through the study of political chat programs broadcasted on private TV channels. The study found that some tactics allow speakers to change realizations of authority and power in intervention representations to generate meanings that aren't necessarily obvious to all viewers.

Similarly, Baidoun (2014) investigated the process of two Israeli, and two Palestinian media outlets covered the increase in violence in Gaza in 2013. The major goal of this study was to see how ideologies influence media coverage of the Palestinian- Israeli conflict. The study found that there are discrepancies between Palestinian and Israeli media reportage.

In the same vein, Amer (2017) conducted a study about the portrayal of political and social forces in media reportage of Gaza conflict of 2008–2009. The results revealed that the social orientations of publications, as well as their liberal and conservative ideological viewpoints, affected news coverage of the Gaza conflict in 2008–2009. Generally, Israeli government leaders are the most well-represented actors, whereas Palestinian performers are Hamas members.

Hamood (2019) examined US President Donald Trump's political language from November 2017 about the move of the US Ambassador from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. The analytical qualitative approach was used to investigate the political discussion in order to characterize it and learn everything there is to understand about it. The outcome demonstrated Donald Trump's decisions depend on freedom, and how the leader of the free world was so conflicting in his texts, particularly to the Palestinian side, and also how his choice reflected his domestic political concerns on a reasoned and realistic style of governance.

Likewise, Rababah and Hamdan (2019) compared and contrasted the addresses of Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas before the UN General Assembly on the Gaza War (2014). The 'Ideological Rectangle' hypothesis of Van Dijk is used to investigate the group stratification of the 'us' versus 'them' dichotomy. In addition, Halliday's objectives of development grammar are used to investigate how the polarity of "Self" and "Other" is achieved by certain grammatical transitivity options. The findings revealed that the statements' depictions of "Self" and "Other" represent two conflicting ideologically-governed viewpoints on the Gaza war.

Although there is a multitude of studies that investigated political speeches in general and those related to Gaza wars in particular, no similar studies have been conducted on the official remarks released in Gaza War (2021) to the best of the researcher's knowledge. Therefore, this study fills this gap as it examines the representation of the Gaza War in the official remarks of Abu Obeida and Adrei.

## III. METHODOLOGY

This study is interpretive qualitative research. It provides a linguistic and cognitive investigation of the relevant linguistic features of the official remarks by Abu Obeida and Avichai Adraee during the Gaza War (2021).

### A. Data Collection

The official remarks released during Gaza War 2021 were collected. The transcripts of the spokesperson were obtained from the following weblinks. The links below are the videos of Abu Obeida's official remarks:

<https://youtu.be/G3ASxFnADWY>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4NHMDAjb3vU>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SpBu3G2O1qk>

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j\\_1Y5a\\_t6lQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j_1Y5a_t6lQ)

The links below are the videos of Avichai Adraee official's remarks:

<https://youtu.be/6R6jFbfjUHs>

[https://youtu.be/7TYVO-dVk\\_4](https://youtu.be/7TYVO-dVk_4)

<https://youtu.be/bh6hXBex8Cg>

<https://youtube.com/shorts/7iJEaiQN9K4?feature=share>

[https://youtu.be/GesajYr\\_5-k](https://youtu.be/GesajYr_5-k)

## B. Data Analysis

The data were analyzed on the basis of Van Dijk's (2006) ideological square, focusing on the two main discursive strategies, namely, "positive self-representation" and "negative other representation." It stresses people's tendency to present themselves as having positive attitudes while focusing on the other groups' negative attributes. Polarization is the overall discursive strategy through which many discursive sub-strategies are realized (Van Dijk, 2006).

## IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

During the Gaza War of 2021, each side of the conflict tried to use all available tools to strengthen its side, as one of these tools was the use of language in official speeches to convey certain ideas to the public. The themes generated in each spokesman's speeches are discussed separately in this section.

### A. Avichai Adraee's Official Remarks

The official remarks of the Israeli Defense Forces concerning Gaza War 2021 adopted two general strategies, namely, *emphasizing our good things* and *emphasizing their bad things*.

#### **Emphasizing Our Good Things/ Emphasizing Their Bad Things**

Israel seemed to praise itself not only as a strong power in the Middle East but also as a democratic and modern government. For example, it appears that it has modern weapons such as the metal dome, accurate rockets, and modern planes. In addition, Israel emphasized the strength of its soldiers, claiming that they cannot be conquered because they are well trained and armed with the strongest weapons. On the other hand, Israel tried to characterize the enemy with bad things using negative descriptions. The in-group-out-group polarization is created by using the pronouns: 'I', 'we', and 'us' against 'you', 'he', and 'him'. This generates an image of people coming together against one enemy who has different qualities that prevent him from being a member of the group. In this context, different themes were generated to stress these claims including war achievements.

#### **- War Achievement**

Adraee used to announce their achievements in the war against Hamas. His official remarks claim that they attack Hamas's locations in Gaza and destroy them as a victorious power. Table 2 includes examples that highlight Israel's achievements.

TABLE 2  
ADRAEE'S STATEMENTS ON WAR ACHIEVEMENTS

No.	Source Statement	English Translation
1	حقق جيش الدفاع الاسرائيلي خلال ال ٢٤ ساعة الأخيرة إنجازات ميدانية تمثلت باستهداف أهداف تعد كنزاً استراتيجياً لحركة حماس.	During the last 24 hours, the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) performed field achievements by striking targets considered a strategic treasure for Hamas.
2	واستهدف جيش الدفاع خلايا إرهابية كانوا بنون إطلاق صواريخ على إسرائيل فيما أحبط محاولات حماس بإرسال طائرات مسيرة.	The Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) targeted terrorist cells who intended to launch missiles at Israel, while thwarting Hamas' attempts to send drones.
3	فاليوم أحبطنا محاولة لتنفيذ اعتداء عبر المجال البحري واستهدفنا النشطاء واستهدفنا الآلية وهي عبارة عن سفينة بحرية ذات قدرة على الغوص.	Today, we thwarted an attempt to carry out an attack across the sea. We targeted the activists, and we targeted the vehicle, which is a ship with diving capabilities.

Adraee intended to show their power and achievement in this war. Example (1) includes details on the Israeli achievements. It praises itself and claims that it has carried out this action. It has the power to defend itself and destroy its enemy (Hamas forces). At the same time, it describes Hamas with terrorism. The description of the events determined by the person's ideology. Out-group individuals are frequently described unfavorably, whereas in-group individuals are characterized neutrally or positively. People prefer to "mitigate unfavorable assessments of individuals of our own group and highlight the imputed bad features of Others," according to Van Dijk (2006, pp. 728-740).

In example (2) Israel intends to inform its citizens and the public that it targets Hamas because it intended to launch missiles at Israel. It has the power to destroy their missiles. Showing its achievement and power are considered one of its strategies in fighting the Palestinians in Gaza Strip. Here, the process of praising 'The Self' is clear. Moreover,

Hamas is described as terrorist which emphasizes that that Israeli soldiers have the right to attack Gaza Strip as a matter of self-defense. This may be intended to make people feel pity and sympathy towards Israeli citizens.

Example (3) shows Israeli power and ability to thwart any Hamas's attempts to attack Israel. This represents the positive sides of Israel being a strong entity that can protect its citizens, while it uses negative description of the outgroup members, being Hamas, associating it with words like *attack* to show their violence.

#### - Ongoing Actions

Israel used statements that showed its continuous actions against the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip to denote its existence as a powerful government that is able to protect its citizens against ongoing threat. Table 3 includes examples that show Israeli ongoing actions during the war.

TABLE 3  
ADRAEE'S STATEMENTS ON ONGOING ACTIONS

No.	Source Statement	English Translation
4	نواصل إحباط المفاجآت التي أعدتها حماس.	We continue to thwart the surprises prepared by Hamas.
5	نحقق الإنجازات الميدانية ساعة بعد ساعة	We have field achievements hour after hour..
6	سنستمر في توجيه ضربات قاسية لهذه المنظمات كما حصل خلال ال ٢٤ ساعة الأخيرة	We will continue to direct harsh blows to these organizations, as happened during the last 24 hours.
7	في اليوم الثامن للعملية العسكرية ضد أوكار الإرهاب في قطاع غزة نواصل توجيه الضربات والصفعات إلى حركتي حماس والجهاد الإسلامي.	On the eighth day of the military operation against terrorist dens in the Gaza Strip, we continue to strike and slap at Hamas and Islamic Jihad.
8	نواصل اصطياد النشطاء.	We continue to hunt the activists.

Example (4) points to Israel's readiness to thwart their attacks even if they are carried out secretly or at night. Using the verb *continue* indicates that there is no hope for the Palestinians to succeed in their mission against Israel as it is always ready to ruin the violent attacks Hamas prepared. This represents Israel positively as an unbeatable power and implies that Hamas is no match to it.

In example (5), the spokesman continues showing Israeli power and strength. Lexicalization is utilized here represented in the choice of words that describes the actions they are taking against Hamas as achievements. The reference to time is also important as it indicates the intensity of the ongoing efforts Israel is exerting to defeat Hamas.

Example (6) is a statement that indicates Israeli victorious battles during Gaza War. As he claims, achieving victories all the time is a continuous action that Israelis should be proud of using the verb *continue*. This makes Israeli feel safe during the War.

During Gaza War 2021, the spokesman of Israeli forces described Hamas and Islamic Jihad that they stay in their terrorist dens. They look like cowards who are afraid of Israeli forces and strikes. This is emphasized in example (7). In example (8), Israeli forces used the word hunt the activists. It must be noted that lexicalization of negative attributes was utilized using terminology used normally with animals, namely, *dens* and *hunt*.

#### - War justifications

Some statements were meant to justify the war against the Palestinians as demonstrated in Table 4.

TABLE 4  
ADRAEE'S STATEMENTS ON WAR JUSTIFICATIONS

No.	Source Statement	English Translation
9	يواصل جيش الدفاع الإسرائيلي شن سلسلة غارات على قطاع غزة ردا على الاعتداءات الصاروخية المستمرة من داخل القطاع باتجاه البلدات الإسرائيلية والمتمثلة بمئات القذائف الصاروخية.	The IDF continues to launch a series of raids on Gaza Strip in response to the continuous rocket attacks from inside the Strip towards Israeli towns, represented by hundreds of rockets.
10	نحن مستمرون في التصدي لكل الاعتداءات الإرهابية بيد من حديد حتى استعادة الاستقرار والأمن لمواطنينا وسيادتنا	We will continue to confront all terrorist attacks with an iron hand until stability and security are restored to our citizens and sovereignty.

In examples (9), the spokesman of IDF claims that Hamas forces continue attacking Israeli towns with their rockets all the time. Thus, Israeli forces are forced to launch a series of raids on Gaza Strip as a reaction. This may make people feel pity and sympathy towards Israeli citizens as all what they do is a matter of self-defense. They might also support Israel because they, according to their official remarks, believe that they have the right to live peacefully in their own country (Israel). Number game is utilized here by referring to the number of rockets fired by Hamas towards Israel.

Example (10) indicates that Hamas is responsible for starting this war, and Israel's actions are only meant to restore stability and calmness to the citizens. This manifests that Israeli forces have the right to attack Hamas as it fired some rockets at Israeli areas where the innocent Israeli citizens live. Here, Israeli attacks at Gaza Strip should be regarded as a process of self-defense to get its security back.

#### - Threats

Israeli government used some statements to threaten Hamas as a mean of imposing Israeli control and ideology. The following examples show Israeli threats against Hamas and Islamic Jihad's forces.

TABLE 5  
ADRAEE'S STATEMENTS ON THREATS

No.	Source Statement	English Translation
11	فلا مكان آمن تحت الأرض لقادة ونشطاء حماس والجهاد الإسلامي.	A safe place on earth for leaders, activists and Islamic Jihad.
12	حماس تتحمل مسؤولية ما يجري في قطاع غزة وينطلق منه وستتحمل تداعيات اعتداءاتها ضد سيادة إسرائيل ومواطنيه.	Hamas bears the responsibility for what is happening in and stemming from Gaza Strip, and it will bear the repercussions of its attacks against the sovereignty of Israel and its citizens.

Example (11) is regarded as a threat to those activists and Islamic Jihad's soldiers that Israeli forces are able to strike them even if they hide themselves under the earth. Similarly, example (12) represents Israeli spokesman threatening Hamas who fight against the Israeli citizens. The choice of words used shows the strength of Israel that it can threaten its enemy.

#### B. Abu-Obaida's Official Remarks

Abu-Obeidah's official remarks were in response to Israeli official remarks that justify their attacks at Gaza Strip. Abu-Obeidah's speeches have to do with some themes such as the achievement, self-defense, ongoing actions, glory, and other themes that are clarified as follows:

#### **Emphasizing Our Good Things/ Emphasizing Their Bad Things**

Abu-Obeidah's remarks demonstrate similar themes to the ones delivered by Adree.

#### - **War achievements**

Abu-Obeidah included in his remarks some statements that praise their achievements in the war against Israel as seen in Table 6.

TABLE 6  
ABU-OBIDA'S STATEMENTS ON WAR ACHIEVEMENTS

No.	Source Statement	English Translation
13	فبالرغم من فارق القوة الكبير بيننا وبينكم في الإمكانيات العسكرية إلا إننا وجهنا بعون الله ضربات صاروخية هائلة لم تجرؤ دول وأنظمة منذ النكبة ان توجه عشرها لكم.	Despite the great difference in the field of strength between us and you in terms of military capabilities, we have, with God's help, launched massive missile strikes that countries and regime since the Nakba have not dared to direct a tenth of them to you.
14	لقد تمكنا بعون الله من إذلال العدو وكيانه الهش وجيشه الهمي.	With God's help, we were able to humiliate the enemy, its fragile entity, and its barbaric army.
15	من غزة يطلق في هذه اللحظات صاروخ عياش ٢٥٠ بمدى اكبر من ٢٥٠ كم وبقوة تدميرية هي الأكبر بفضل الله.	At this moment, the Ayash 250 Rocket is launched from Gaza, with a range of more than 250 km, and with the greatest destructive power, thanks to God.

The spokesman of Hamas Movement praises their achievements in Table 6. In example (13), he used a counterfactual statement emphasizing that although there is a great difference in capabilities, Hamas still could launch rockets and missiles at the Israeli forces. The lexical items he used such as *no one dared* and *massive missiles* points to the power of Hamas that could be incomparable to other countries.

In example (14), negative words were used to refer to Israel such as *humiliate*, *fragile* and *barbaric* emphasizing the weakness of Israel and the cruelty its army has against the Palestinians.

In example (15), Abu-Obeidah stresses his military achievement in this war by stating that 250 destructive missiles were targeted at Israel. Using the number game may be a means to spread panic and fear among the Israelis taking into account the hundreds of missiles being rocketed at Israel.

#### - **War justifications**

Starting a war without reasons is not reasonable. There should be war justifications for fighting someone. Hamas has its own war justifications to defend itself against Israeli forces. The following are Abu-Obeidah's justifications demonstrated in Table 7.

TABLE 7  
ABU-OBIDA'S STATEMENTS ON WAR JUSTIFICATIONS

No.	Source Statement	English Translation
16	واليوم نخوض إحدى هذه المعارك معركة سيف القدس التي جاءت استكمالاً لانتفاضة أهلنا في القدس والأقصى وانتصارا لحي الشيخ جراح المهدي بالتهجير والتهميد واستجابة لصرخات أهلنا في ساحات وميادين المدينة المقدسة.	Today, we fight against our enemy. It is the battle of Jerusalem, the battle of Jerusalem, the battle of Jerusalem. This battle is for our people in Jerusalem, Al-Aqsa, and as a victory for the Jarrah neighborhood which is threatened with displacement and Judaization. This battle is for the sake of our people's cries in the crowded city squares and cities.
17	يخرج هذا الصاروخ الآن نصرة للأقصى وجزئا من ردنا على اغتيال قادتنا ومهندسينا الإبطال.	This missile is now considered a victory for Al-Aqsa and a part of our response to the assassination of our leaders and engineers.

In example (16), a justification is given for fighting Israel. It is a response to the cries of people in Jarrah neighborhood and the Israeli attack on Alaqsa Mosque. Example (17) states that the war is a reaction to assassinating the Palestinian leaders. Such justifications mobilize people's attitudes with the Palestinians making the war against Israel a matter of self-defense.

#### - Glorification

Glorification of one's country is essential for every nation. Hamas and Islamic Jihad glorify their abilities in front of their citizens and Israel and feel proud of their military actions and courageous attributes as shown in Table 8.

TABLE 8  
ABU-OBAIDA'S STATEMENTS ON GLORIFICATION

No.	Source Statement	English Translation
18	ولقد شاهدتم خلال الأيام الماضية يا أبناء شعبنا المرابط الصابر بعضاً مما أعدناه وراقبناه في سنوات طويلة لم نقف فيها ساعة عن الإعداد لذلك حصون العدو ومعاقله.	During the past few days, our patient people, you have seen some of what we have prepared and watched for many years, during which we did not stop for an hour in preparing to demolish the enemy's fortresses and strongholds.
19	فقرار قصف تل أبيب والقدس وديمونة وعسقلان والسدود وبنز السبع وما قبلها وما بعدها من مدننا المحتلة أسهل علينا من شربة الماء.	The decision to bomb Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Dimona, Ashkelon, the dams, Beersheba, and before and after our occupied cities is easier for us than drinking water.
20	فهل أرهبتنا الاغتيالات يوماً أو هل شاهدتم طفلاً فلسطينياً يخاف من جبروتكم وهل أوقفتم يوماً مقاومتنا بعدوان أو حصار أو دمار.	Have you ever been intimidated by assassinations? Have you seen a Palestinian child who is afraid of your tyranny? And have you ever stopped our resistance with aggression, siege or destruction?

In example (18), Abu-Obeidah addresses his people by describing them with patient and emphasizing that they ready to confront the enemy (Israeli forces). Such positive expressions assure the Palestinians that they can fight Israeli forces any time and are ready to demolish the Israeli fortresses.

In example (19), the spokesman of Hamas uses a metaphor in which he likens striking Israel to drinking water to indicate how easy this mission is. This may indirectly threaten Israel and spread panic among its citizens.

Example (20) shows that Abu-Obeidah ironically asks a question that shows Palestinians' courage and represents them as being unafraid of the assassinations, tyranny, or destruction caused by Israel. Even children are not scared by what Israel does which may indicate its weakness and cowardice.

#### - Threats

Threats are considered a main technique in war and were utilized in Abu-Obaida's speeches as can be seen in Table 9.

TABLE 9  
ABU-OBAIDA'S STATEMENTS ON THREATS

No.	Source Statement	English Translation
21	وان ضرباتنا ستكون حاضرة متى عدتم للعوان او تماديتم فيه.	Our strikes will be ready whenever you return to the aggression or persist in it.
21	وعلقنا هذه الضربة الصاروخية لنرقب سلوك العدو حتى الساعة الثانية من فجر الجمعة.	We suspended this missile strike in order to monitor the behavior of the enemy until two o'clock in the morning on Friday.
22	وقد اعدنا لكم أصنافاً من الموت ستجعلكم تلعنون أنفسكم.	We have prepared for you different types of death that will make you curse yourselves.

Examples (20) and (21) are considered threats directed to Israeli forces in case they attack the Palestinians again. Such statements point to Hamas' strength that it is completely ready to respond if the enemy tries to attack. Example (23) includes a frightening threat considering the lexical items used such as *different types of death* which would function as way to spread fear among the Israeli soldiers.

#### - Future aims

Future aims are a positive mean of sending a message to all citizens of Palestine that Hamas will greet and remember the righteous martyrs of the battles against the enemy as shown in Table 10.

TABLE 10  
ABU-OBAIDA'S STATEMENTS ON FUTURE AIMS

No.	Source Statement	English Translation
23	تحية لشهداء معركة سيف القدس الإبرار وعهدا لهم إن نواصل الطريق الذي بدأوه.	A salute to the righteous martyrs of the battle of Saif Alquds and a pledge to them to continue the path they started.
24	وإنما النصر صبر ساعة وسيعلم الذين ظلموا أي منقلب ينقلبون.	Victory is the patience of an hour, and those tyranny individuals will know their bad fate later.
25	يا أبناء شعبنا ويا جماهير امتنا إن هذا الكيان الضعيف يمكن أن يهزم بل سيهزم يقينا ويندثر حتماً لأنه كيان قائم على غش وباطل وظلم وعدوان.	O sons of our people and oh masses of our nation, this weak entity can be defeated, but will certainly be defeated and inevitably destroyed because it is an entity based on fraud, falsehood, injustice and aggression.

Example (23) shows a future aim that has to do with the process of respecting those righteous martyrs of the battle of Saif Alquds and a pledge to them to continue the path they started. It is a matter of evaluating them all the time.

Example (24) is a future pledge that the Palestinians will achieve victory in the war against Israel. In example (25), the spokesman of Hamas assures that the Israelis will be removed and defeated one day. This is an indication that is expected by the spokesman of Hamas Movement.

#### - Enemy's Actions

In Gaza War 2021, Hamas Movement emphasized Israeli bad behaviors during this war as shown in Table 11.

TABLE 11  
ABU-OBAIDA'S STATEMENTS ON ENEMY'S ACTIONS

No.	Source Statement	English Translation
26	لقد شاهد كل العالم حجم الخزي والعار لهذا الكيان الذي تنتج قيادته بقصفها الأبراج السكنية.	The whole world witnessed the shame and disgrace of this entity whose leadership boasts of bombing residential towers.
27	وتفاخر إسرائيل بقصف المنشآت المدنية وقتل الأطفال والنساء كاهداف مشروعة وانجازات عظيمة.	Israel boasts of bombing civilian facilities and killing children and women as legitimate targets and great achievements.

In example (26), Abu-Obeidah tries to convince other people how Israeli forces bomb residential towers in the Gaza Strip by using lexical items that show this. Their actions are not considered good achievements, but they are actually shameful and disgraced of their entity. Example (27) indicates Israeli destruction of civilian buildings and killing of women and children. These actions are not legitimate targets nor great achievements, but they are actually cruel and barbaric. Such statements victimize the Palestinians and mobilize people against Israel.

#### C. "Us" Vs. "Them" Dichotomy

The pronoun 'they' is used extravagantly by politicians as a sign of reinforcing the independence of their identities by essentially expressing who they are not. Intentionally, politicians use the plural pronouns of 'they' to deeply root the schism and press on the idea of the identity and the group membership (Al-Tarawneh, 2019). For example, the Israeli spokesperson Avichai Adraee used the plural pronoun 'they' to address Hamas soldiers for the sake of showing the ideology of 'us' versus 'them'. Finally, both candidates were skilled in using the pronoun "they" so as to distance themselves from their rivals. For instance, Avichai Adraee announced the following statement in Gaza War (2021): "**They** (Palestinian soldiers) are terrorists. **They** deserve death. **They** tried hard to harm us. **We** are always ready to fight **them** and destroy them". The Israeli spokesperson's statements used the pronouns: 'we' and 'us' in order to indicate the Israeli power and strength. He intended to show the power of Israeli defense forces. For instance, "**our** forces are always ready to fight and strike the enemies". They attempted to linguistically modify the pronouns they often used influence negatively their adversaries and sound more compelling, which seemed to represent their collective identity, solidarity, and personality. **We are, for example, constantly prepared to battle and kill them.**" On the other hand, the Israeli spokesman used the pronoun "they" in order to indicate to his enemy.

Similarly, Abu-Obeidah, the spokesperson of Hamas forces, used the pronouns: 'us' and 'they'. He used the pronoun 'we' in order to show Hamas' strength and power. He also used the pronoun 'they' in order to indicate to his enemy. For instance, He announced that "**Our** people's battle with the hateful occupation continues since **they** set foot on this land, and Jerusalem has always been the focus of the conflict. It is the icon of the uprisings and the detonator of revolutions. Today, **we** are waging one of these battles, the Battle of the Sword of Jerusalem. **They** are our enemies, and **they** should be defeated one day." This remark shows the meanings of 'we', 'us', and 'our'. These pronouns mean that the Palestinians have the power and the strength to defend their nation. The pronouns: 'they' and 'them' refer to enemies.

The speaker's attempt to classify people into in-group and out-group is the focus of this method. On the basis of the formation of 'us' and 'them', discursive techniques are implicated in the notions of positive and negative acts. The discursive official strategies used by the two spokesmen of Hamas forces and Israeli Defense Forces can persuade the other individuals and nations to believe what they intend to say. Their strategies are used to obtain certain goals such as political support, weapons, positive point of view, and psychological support. It should be noted that the discursive construction of the "self" and the "other" is said to become accentuated in the cases of intense conflicts, or the case of threatening forces, i.e. when people need to defend themselves by establishing a dichotomy that affirms who they are and indicates who the others are.

## V. CONCLUSION

During the Gaza War of 2021, each side of the conflict tried to use all available tools to strengthen its side, as one of these tools was the use of language in official speeches to convey certain ideas to the public. The two spokesmen of Hamas and Israeli Defense Forces used self-defense strategy as a mean of persuading their citizens and other people all over the world that they are right, but the other one is wrong. Israeli spokesman tried to persuade the others that Israel has the right to defend itself, while Hamas is the enemy. At the same time, the spokesman of Hamas Movement used the same strategies to defend himself and his people indicating that the Israeli soldiers are terrorists and they occupied their lands. Thus, they should defend themselves.

People are classified into categories based on their beliefs and actions. When individuals are categorized, negative or positive qualities are assigned to them. These qualities generated different themes within the discourses under study, the most prominent in Adraee's speeches were war achievements. Other themes were also highlighted including ongoing actions, war justifications, and threats.

On the other hand, Abu-Obaida used several themes to convey his ideas during his speeches, the most prominent of which was self-glorification in addition to many other themes such as war justifications, war achievements, threats, glorification and future aims.

Many of Van Dijk's discursive strategies were used to analyze the remarks such as metaphor, disclaimer, lexicalization and number game. On the basis of the formation of 'us' and 'them', discursive strategies are implicated in the notions of positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation. The above discursive strategies that use the pronouns: 'We', 'our' and 'us' indicate to positive signals, while the pronouns: 'they', 'their' and 'them' indicate to negative signals. Most of these discursive strategies serve the intended goals.

A universal awareness of tolerance and harmonious cohabitation among peoples from different places is required. It's also critical to denounce and combat all forms of extremism and violence. To this purpose, more study on all types of prejudice, injustice, and racism is essential to preserve human lives by preventing terrorism provocation and ensuring equal treatment, justice, liberty, and equity.

This study was conducted on the official remarks released by Hamas and Israel during Gaza War 2021. Future studies are recommended to investigate other speeches delivered by spokespersons of different parties in other wars.

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