



The Us Approach To The October 7 Attacks And The Israel-Hamas Conflict In The Context Of Antony Blinken's Discourses

Antony Blinken'in Söylemleri Bağlamında ABD'nin 7 Ekim Saldırıları ve İsrail-Hamas Çatışmasına Yaklaşımı

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ABSTRACT

The risk of the political friction between Israel and Hamas escalating into an armed conflict has been a source of great concern worldwide. Aligning with this pessimistic anticipation, on October 7, 2023, Hamas initiated a military action from Gaza into Israel, prompting Israel to respond with a significantly devastating counteroffensive. The military operation specifically targeted places populated by civilians and elicited a response from the global community. US Secretary of State Antony Blinken engaged in numerous meetings and conducted a series of press interviews during this time. These interviews were subsequently published in text format on the official website of the US State Department. The objective of this study is to examine the discourse content of Antony Blinken's interviews regarding the Israel-Hamas conflict. The discourse content was thoroughly examined using discourse analysis. The conversation materials were analyzed using Rstudio, a code-based application. The analysis demonstrates that Blinken disregards the human rights violations committed during Israeli acts of aggression. However, Hamas was held responsible for these transgressions. Iran and Hamas were linked to terrorism as a result of their affiliation. Blinken consistently places a high importance on Israel's security in his language and communication. Blinken's affirmation of his Jewish identity during his initial visit to Israel following recent events confirmed the theopolitical connection between the US and Israel. Furthermore, it was noted that Blinken's words endorsed the framework of the religious ties between the United States and Israel. It was noted that Blinken's use of language focusing on the civilian population in Gaza did not have an impact on the current situation on the ground. The US's lack of success in providing humanitarian relief can also be attributed to its unwavering support for Israel, as reflected in Blinken's rhetoric.

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ÖZ

İsrail ile Hamas arasındaki siyasi sürtüşmenin silahlı bir çatışmaya dönüşme riskinin varlığı tüm dünyada büyük bir endişe kaynağı olmuştur. Bu kötümser beklentiye paralel olarak, 7 Ekim 2023'te Hamas, Gazze'den İsrail'e doğru bir askerî harekât başlatmış ve İsrail'in önemli ölçüde yıkıcı bir karşı saldırıyla cevap vermesine yol açmıştır. Askerî operasyon özellikle sivillerin yaşadığı yerleri hedef almış ve küresel toplumun tepkisini çekmiştir. ABD Dışişleri Bakanı Antony Blinken bu süre zarfında çok sayıda toplantıya katılmış ve bir dizi basın röportajı gerçekleştirmiştir. Bu mülakatlar daha sonra ABD Dışişleri Bakanlığı'nın resmi internet sitesinde metin formatında yayımlanmıştır. Bu çalışmanın amacı, Antony Blinken'in İsrail-Hamas çatışmasına ilişkin röportajlarının söylem içeriğini incelemektir. Söylem içeriği, söylem analizi kullanılarak kapsamlı bir şekilde incelenmiştir. Görüşme materyalleri kod tabanlı bir uygulama olan Rstudio kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Analiz, Blinken'in İsrail'in saldırı eylemleri sırasında işlenen insan hakları ihlallerini göz ardı ettiğini göstermektedir. Ancak bu ihاللerden Hamas sorumlu tutulmuştur. İran ve Hamas, bağlantılarının bir sonucu olarak terörizmle ilişkilendirilmektedir. Blinken, dilinde ve iletişimde İsrail'in güvenliğine sürekli olarak yüksek önem vermektedir. Blinken'in son olayların ardından İsrail'e yaptığı ilk ziyarette Yahudi kimliğini teyit etmesi, ABD ile İsrail arasındaki teopolitik bağı teyit etmiştir. Ayrıca, Blinken'in sözlerinin ABD ve İsrail arasındaki dini bağların çerçevesini onayladığı da kaydedilmiştir. Blinken'in Gazze'deki sivil nüfusa odaklanan bir dil kullanmasının sahadaki mevcut durum üzerinde bir etkisi olmadığı da açıkça değerlendirilmektedir. ABD'nin insanı yardım sağlama konusundaki başarısızlığı, Blinken'in söyleminde de yansıtıldığı gibi, İsrail'e verdiği sarsılmaz desteğe de bağlanabilir.

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1. Introduction

On October 7, 2023, the military operation launched by Hamas was a very important breaking point in the historical Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Following the Hamas attack, Israel launched an air and ground military operation in Gaza, which resulted in a massive destruction. At this point, the study focuses on the official press releases and interviews of Blinken, the Secretary of State of the United States, Israel's traditional ally, during the conflict that began on October 7.

Long before October 7, Ehud Barak made sweeping concessions towards a two-state solution at Camp David in 2000, Sharon unilaterally withdrew Israel from the Gaza Strip in 2005, and Netanyahu called for Israeli recognition of a demilitarized Palestinian state in 2009 (Dermer, 2020). Today, it is possible to say that the plan to demilitarize or destroy Hamas in 2009 is behind Israel's will to continue military operations under the leadership of Netanyahu. However, there are also those who argue that Trump's Jerusalem decision destroyed the two-state solution initiatives (Jensehaugen, 2023). These policies include again recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's capital and moving the embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem (Shalom & Michael, 2018), cutting funding to NGOs such as UNRWA and USAID, thereby weakening their activities in the Palestinian territories (Deutsche Welle, 2018), withdrawing from UN bodies hostile to Israel and, most recently, recognizing Israeli sovereignty over the Golan Heights. Previous administrations at least recognized the Palestinians as an important entity influential in the peace process with Israel. Moreover, under Trump, by supporting Israel, he is undermining any future opportunity for a peace agreement (Ward, 2019).

Looking at the US relations with Israel, the policy of unconditional support continues. Recently, during the US presidency, Trump stated that it was time to officially recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel (Farrell, 2018). It would not be difficult to say that this will was entirely aimed at realizing Israel's policy. In reaction to this, Palestinian President Abbas stated that the United States could no longer be part of the peace negotiations after Trump's decision and that this decision seriously harms lasting peace and stability (Black, 2018). Therefore, it can be said that today's developments have come to this point step by step. In addition, the US under Biden's administration's continued staunch pro-Israel stance may strengthen its potential to distance itself from its role as a mediator and solution partner. In addition to the existence of this strong potential, the latest breakthrough is the "Al-Aqsa Flood" launched by Hamas on October 7. operation. The sudden attack on Israel by a large number of Hamas members who had infiltrated into Israel from Gaza was undoubtedly a great shock to the whole world, but especially to Israel and the United States. In this process, Israel launched a very strong military operation against Gaza territory, which was characterized as a "war". Israel's military response was widely criticized around the world for causing the deaths of thousands of civilians. However, the United States strongly offered its political and military support to its close ally Israel. In this regard, Antony Blinken's speech "*I come before you not only as the United States secretary of state, but also as a Jew*" (Blinken, 2023)

during his visit to Israel on October 12 has gone down in history as a reflection of both US foreign policy and foreign policy representation. Including this speech, official visits, press interviews and statements made within the scope of the conflict that started on October 7 were also shared on the official website of the US State Department by opening a special link on the subject. Accordingly, the research is based on Antony Blinken's speeches among the text-based content posts on the website. The aim of the study is to identify Antony Blinken's outline of the US policy on Israel during the ongoing Israel-Hamas conflict and to analyze his current political position. The method used to analyze the discourse content is Jäger's (2009) discourse analysis model. The text contents were analyzed with the Rstudio program within the scope of the relevant stages of the model. The findings were discussed in the context of human rights, partly in the context of theopolita and the US view of Israel, and the results were obtained within this framework. Finally, the study will fill an important gap in the literature in terms of its subject and results. Because, although the official policies of the US are not a secret, it is very important to address the specific discourse content, especially regarding the conflict process in which Israel is involved, in order to provide more detailed information. Moreover, observing the link between official policy and personal discourse in terms of institutional representation will also contribute to the relevant literature. Therefore, in the following section, the relevant literature is reviewed and it is stated that the study is positioned at a different point in the literature.

2. Literature Review

When we look at the literature on the US, Israel and Palestine, it is seen that most of the studies focus on the results of the political process. Accordingly, the literature, mostly recent studies, is reviewed and the contribution of the research is mentioned at the end of the literature review.

Watkins (1997) argued that the US formerly sought oil security and Israel as a Jewish homeland in the Middle East. The US penalizes states that don't follow these policies. This analysis found that US actions directly endanger its interests. According to Christison (2004), Bush-era leaders were unlikely to involve the US in a meaningful Palestinian-Israeli conflict resolution. Bush's intentional ignorance of the domestic situation and indifference to Palestinian grievances, his apparent personal connection with Ariel Sharon, and intense domestic political pressure from the pro-Israel lobby, Congress, neo-conservatives, and fundamentalist Christian lobby. All of these circumstances make US pressure on Israel likely. Mearsheimer & Walt (2006) warn that the Jewish lobby's effort for regime change in Iran and Syria could lead to US action and dire repercussions. Washington appears hypocritical in urging other nations to uphold human rights and hurts its democracy promotion efforts abroad. Democracy suffers from the Lobby's ban on Israel discourse. Shutting down opponents by calling them anti-Zionist or organizing boycotts contradicts democracy's core tenet of open debate. The democratic process is hampered by the US Congress's incapacity to debate these crucial topics. Israel supporters should speak up and debate opponents. However, free speech advocates should strongly denounce attempts to restrict debate on vital public problems. In another study,

Yahaya (2020) said the Israel-Palestine conflict is about land, Israeli settlements in the west, and the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Palestine asked that Israel return the land it conquered in 1967, but Israel kept building settlements throughout the peace process. Current strife is raising concerns about this. Pratiwi, Qomara, and Syarafi (2020) evaluated the US mediatorship in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This report also seeks alternatives to US-led mediation. The essay opens by discussing the US mediation role and its efforts to resolve this unresolved problem. The tighter US-Israel alliance also hinders peace and conflict resolution, it claims. The conversation also examines how US initiatives in the Middle East, such as moving the US embassy to Jerusalem, have intensified the situation. This article concludes by proposing Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE as alternate mediators. It concludes that the US cannot be an honest mediator to address the Israeli-Palestinian problem while maintaining its special relationship. The document also acknowledges that the US is the only nation with the material resources to bring the parties to the table. An ideal but realistic solution would involve other nations in addition to the US to resolve the dispute.

Aksendi (2021) analyzes Donald Trump's speeches focusing on identification and concludes that the US considers Israel a 'friend' because they share things, but Palestine is a 'rival' because they share no identity, interests, or conflicts. Pace & Yakobi (2021) state that Israel's settlement colonization of the occupied Palestinian areas impacts all elements of Palestinian life. This article shows that settler colonialism and gradual violence can explain Israel's operations, especially since its 2005 pullout from Gaza. Although Israel has fewer moral duties to Gazans, it may manipulate its destructive power and violent behaviors. The paper critically examines how power, violence, and health are intertwined in conflict zones and Gaza, focusing on Israeli health interventions and the effects of violence and infrastructure destruction on Gaza residents' daily lives. Israel's pullout from Gaza continues settler colonialism and radicalizes it, typically through slow violence, according to the author. Warasti, Qonita & Sholeh (2022) found that US foreign policy toward Israel has always favored Israel. Trump favors Israel in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This approach benefits Israel. Trump's administration doesn't talk to Palestinians or consider their stories when making regional decisions. The US's partiality and backing for Israel make it a poor mediator since it inhibits the peace process and complicates the situation. Marcella (2022) states that once Hamas took authority in Gaza, the US isolated and expelled the group. After this policy failed, the US took a more measured approach. Policymakers treated Gaza as an afterthought to be resolved after peace. Without a peace agreement soon, a vigorous American policy toward Gaza over a wide frequency range is no longer possible. To end the crisis, international stakeholders, Israelis and Palestinians, must be more involved in Gaza. Jamal (2022) uses Jacques Derrida's concept of "difference" to demonstrate that Israel's strategy is a discursive and practical attempt to create differences between Palestinian groups and exploit the gaps between them to control the millions of Palestinians under Jewish sovereignty. Difference forces gaps between worldly forms. These kinds are best described by Martin Heidegger's "worldless," "poor

in the world," and "world-shaping." Chen & Guo (2023) employed Realism to examine and explain US conduct and performance in the 2021 Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Realism holds that anarchy is the state of the international system, sovereign nations are key actors, sovereign states are unique and rational, and power and security are state interests. All of these explain why the US supports Israel in the conflict. According to the report, Israeli-Palestinian peace is impossible to establish quickly. The peace process will struggle as long as the two factions have different state powers. In a world full with problems, Realism will remain invaluable. Yiftachel (2023) theorizes that entrenched Jewish colonialism in Palestine, ethnocracy, partial liberalization under global capitalism, and apartheid are linked. The study argues that Jewish settlement in Palestine, the regime's underlying rationale, proceeded in six historical-geographical stages, confronting continual and sometimes violent Palestinian resistance. The article then details the rise of a regime between the River and the Sea in which the state used military, spatial, economic, legal, and geopolitical powers, especially US support, to repress Palestinians and promote Jewish democracy and economic development. Israel might assimilate and "whiten" Mizrahi and other Jewish groups into mainstream Zionism. After Israel's 1967 invasion, Dana & Jarbawi (2023) propose 'Colonial Extraterritorial Autonomy' as a colonial government to address this conceptual void. This word was created to solve the land/population conundrum for Israel's colonial goal of 'maximum land with least Palestinians'

Israeli policies on Palestine are generally criticized in the literature. This critique also involves the US. Accordingly, Israel is violating Palestinian human rights, especially in Gaza and the West Bank, illegally expanding settlements, and impeding the two-state solution. More crucially, while the US appears to support a two-state solution, studies have demonstrated that it is not making serious steps to implement it and is supporting Israel's policies. This study examines US discourse during the October 7, 2023 Israeli-Palestinian conflict, a recent example. The study analyzes the US Secretary of State's discourses on the process using a novel paradigm. Thus, the study seeks to address a relevant gap in the literature by focusing on the issue and approach.

3. Methodology

The speeches used in this study were taken from the speeches and interview transcripts posted on the "Israel-Hamas Conflict: Latest Updates" tab on the official website of the US State Department. These texts include Antony Blinken's official statements and interviews with the press since October 7. The analysis of the discourse content was conducted in the Rstudio program. The basic analysis packages "tm," "syuzhet," "dplyr," and "tidytext" were used in the analysis. Sentiment analysis was categorized as "positive" and "negative" based on emotion classification in the range of -5 and +5. The package used in sentiment analysis can filter out variables that may produce false results, such as run-on sentences, negative expressions used in a positive sense, or positive expressions used in a negative sense. Therefore, the program has the capacity to produce sentiment analysis results with high precision. The "igraph" package was used as the graphic tool for the

obtained results, and content result visualization was done through the package.

This study analyzed Blinken's discourses holistically to accurately express the content's spirit, as Jäger (2009) believes to directly reflect discourse's force. As a compilation of lectures about a single phenomenon, the texts are not regarded as isolated parts. The only variables now are the partial consequences of different days' advancements. Thus, "The general is present in the discourse; the particular is only the different manifestations of the general on the same plane" (Jäger, 2009: 209). Whether the analytical results can be generalized is answered yes. Thus, the research technique began with discourse and then addressed the discourse analysis model. Finally, the discourse analysis model and research methods are described.

Discourse is a meta-activity that transforms ideology, knowledge, discourse, expression, manner of expression, negotiation, power, and power into action. Discourse affects social, political, cultural, and economic life (Sözen, 1999). Gee (1999) claims that all language use is political. Language is engulfed by society and its ideals. Political discourse is inseparable from language. Discourse analysis is needed to progress from generic, theoretical, and quantitative methods to characterized, detailed, and qualitative ones (Wood and Kroger, 2000). Thus, discourse analysis is an advanced hermeneutics and social semiotics that examines "meaning" in its variety (Elliott, 1996). Discourse analysis is a technique that draws from other disciplines and is armed with their theoretical viewpoints (Potter & Wetherell, 1987; Tonkiss, 2006). Here, discourse analysis is not a single theory, method, or practice. It is a heterogeneous qualitative research method used in various fields and cultures (Tonkiss, 2006). Discourse analysis focuses on language and results (Wood & Kroger, 2000). Discourse analysis can be used to study formal written material like news reports, political party statements and declarations, academic articles, and any document that exhibits social interaction (Elliott, 1996).

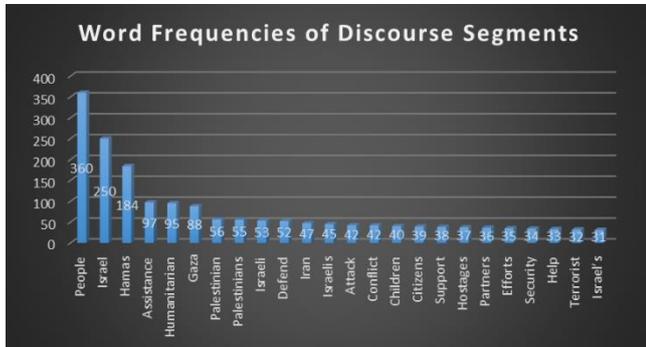
Discourse analysis sample size and representativeness depend on study objectives and questions (Elliott, 1996). Sample size does not determine discourse analysis success. It focuses on study topics, not sample size (Sözen, 1999). Blinken's interviews and press releases on his website during the October 7 skirmishes are the focus of the inquiry. In discourse analysis, written texts are used alongside interview data due of language structure. Each writing should be analyzed-friendly. This requires texts with integrity and consistency (Mil, 2007). Thus, the data was based on the US State Department's written interview and record presentation, clustered inside the title provided by the US State Department for the October 7 process. Thus, coherent, single-topic content might be gathered. The Jäger discourse analysis paradigm was used to analyze the texts. Jäger discourse analysis is a social and cultural research method. Speech and text meaning products are examined in this manner. Discourse analysis is a qualitative research method. The theoretical foundation of discourse analysis spans various social sciences, including sociology, psychology, linguistics, media, and politics (Çelik & Ekşi, 2008).

In the context of the discourse analysis model based on Foucault's discourse theory, Jäger (2001) argued that there are some important issues. For instance, what is legitimate knowledge in a specific area and time. How valid knowledge is created, shared, and accepted matters. Its role in topic and society building and impact on society's growth from the ground up are also questioned. Like Foucault, Jäger (2001) defines knowledge as all of the consciousness and meaning that humans use to interpret and shape reality. Jäger detected a gap in Foucault's theory: discursive and non-discursive behaviors and their representations (objects) are disconnected (Meyer, 2001). Foucault's blind hole is avoided by conceptualizing the subject as a social act-performer as the link between discourse and reality. Jäger (2001) states that discourse analysis is concerned with the formation of reality by discourse and active subjects, not the interpretation of what is already existent or the distribution of meanings. The *dispositif*, in Foucault's view, includes discursive and non-discursive acts and their linkages (Jäger, 2001; Caborn, 2007). So it covers both what is stated and not said. Thus, Jäger suggests a discursive and *dispositif* analysis that investigates discourses and *dispositifs*. Jäger (2001) views talks, texts, and discourses in connection to each other and the *dispositif*. According to Jäger (2001), sovereign discourses can be criticized and questioned. This can be done by analyzing their inconsistencies and unstated contents, what they allow to be said and done, and how they affect the acceptance of specific realities or truths at a certain time. Jäger advocates a content-oriented structural analysis of discourse and a "sensitive" language analysis. Jäger explains discourse structures before analyzing: discourse fragment, discourse thread (thematically related discourse fragments), discursive events and contexts, discourse plane (areas like science, politics, media, education, everyday life, working life, etc. in which interrelated discourse fragments operate), discourse position (a person's or medium's ideological position), and social discourse Jäger (2001) presents a 6-stage analysis based on these ideas. The stages of the analysis and the variables according to which the research addresses this model are presented below:

The crucial portion of the discourse analysis above needs clarification. Because the following inquiry may arise about this issue: Is discourse analysis data just scenario description and determination? Or can criticism achieve other goals? Critical discourse analysis goes beyond situation determination, albeit it's hard to say. As "it requires a critical gaze to identify discourses in the first place, to make visible the implied and unspoken conditions and claims that are represented as truth, or statements that unjustly seek to compromise, false generalizations and corresponding escape routes, etc." (Jäger, 2010). Thus, implicit assumptions and conventions in society, realities produced, information transferred, and normalized can be revealed. People's consciousness is the goal now. Discourse analysis is crucial here.

The research analysis framework adapted to Jäger's (2009) model was designed as above. Accordingly, coding based on frequency distribution was made by taking into account the critical discourse parts within the scope of the topic in the discourse content. Algorithmic word grouping, clouding and sentiment analysis were performed based on all content components. Each data set constitutes the main findings of

from this, the word "people" was mostly used to refer to the people of Israel, but also to the people living in Gaza. "Hamas" was also used quite frequently in this distribution. Since the official US discourse is known, Blinken also used the word "terrorist" frequently, which, as expected, has a high correlation with the word "Hamas". Below is a subject-oriented narrowed frequency graph of this distribution.



Graphic 1. Word Frequencies of Discourse Segments

According to the word frequency table, the phrases used can be categorized into several groups. Accordingly, Blinken used Israel-centered discourse patterns (Israel, Israeli, Israelis and Israel's) with a total frequency score of 379. This means that the largest expressions in terms of conceptual density are Israel-centered. The significant frequency codes obtained were categorized into specific groups based on textual context. The grouping and the ways in which each group represents the overall content are discussed below.

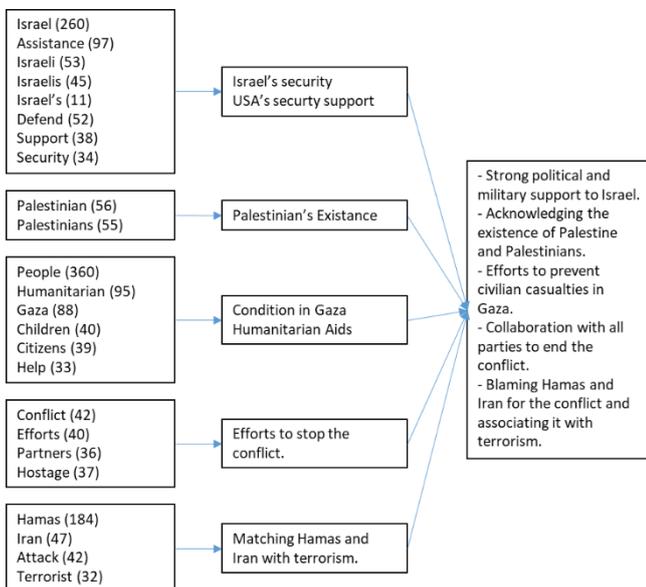


Figure 3. Thematization of Meaningful Frequencies

The words obtained in terms of content were categorized into five different groups. Accordingly, it is seen that the strong US support for Israel, the existence of Palestine, the humanitarian situation in Gaza, efforts to end the conflict and accusations of terrorism against the Iran-Hamas axis are emphasized in the general framework. Therefore, it can be said that the coded discourse contents are compatible with the US policies towards Israel and Palestine.

Below are the word groupings developed by the algorithm. Accordingly, the prominent word groupings in Blinken's

discourses were evaluated according to their subject content.

Table 2. Word Grouping Results

	Word Groups	Frequencies	Percentage of Main Text
1	October - 7th - never - happens	5	(1%)
2	Make - sure - israel - needs	5	(1%)
3	Men - women - children - gaza	4	(1%)
4	Being - held - hostage - hamas	3	(1%)
5	Two - states - two - peoples	4	(1%)
6	Food - medicine - medical - equipment	5	(1%)
7	Many - lives - been - lost - Israel - remains - under - attack	3	(1%)
8	Buildings - under - hospitals - under - schools people - human - shields	1	(0%)
9	Someone - explain - assault - rifles - next - mRI - machines - good	1	(0%)
10	Set - conditions - durable - sustainable - peace - durable - sustainable - security	2	(1%)
11	Durable - sustainable - peace - durable - sustainable - security - Israelis - Palestinians	2	(1%)
12	Imagine - terrorists - come - across - border - october - 7th - slaughtered	1	(0%)
13	United - States - stands - Israel - people - today - tomorrow - every	2	(1%)
14	Worst - attack - Israel - since - Yom - Kippur - war - almost	2	(1%)
15	Operation - fully - expect - operation - completed - Israel - show - more - evidence - Hamas	1	(0%)
16	Israel - show - more - evidence - Hamas - hospitals - under - hospitals - Because - tunnels	1	(0%)

1- Blinken prioritizes Israel's security and does not want attacks against Israel for whatever reason.

2- Blinken is willing to meet all of Israel's needs. Given the current war situation, this includes military supplies and offensive munitions.

3- Blinken does not want Israel to target civilian targets intensively, and does not want civilian casualties. However, this expectation does not go beyond the rhetoric and does not lead to an actual situation.

4- Blinken wants the hostages to be released. However, according to the grouping, this expectation was emphasized mostly in terms of the hostages held by Hamas. Therefore, the expectations regarding the hostage swap were realized by prioritizing the hostages who are Israeli citizens.

5- Blinken states in his official discourse that he is not against a two-state solution. It is seen that expressions in line with the official discourse are used here as well.

6- This phrase is related to Blinken's inclusion of the needs of the civilian population living in Gaza.

7- Blinken expresses concern about the civilian casualties in Israel following the attacks launched by Hamas.

8- Blinken justifies Israel's bombing attacks on civilian infrastructure. The justification is based on Israeli claims that there are Hamas tunnels under civilian infrastructure and that civilians are being used as human shields.

9- This statement, which supports Israel's claim that weapons were found in Gaza hospitals, is used by Blinken to justify Israel's bombing of civilian infrastructure.

10- Blinken emphasizes Israel's sustainable security perception as a precondition for sustainable peace.

11- Blinken emphasizes that a sustainable and durable peace is important for the security of Israel and the Palestinians.

12- Blinken emphasized the need to empathize with the attack on Israel by Hamas on 7 October.

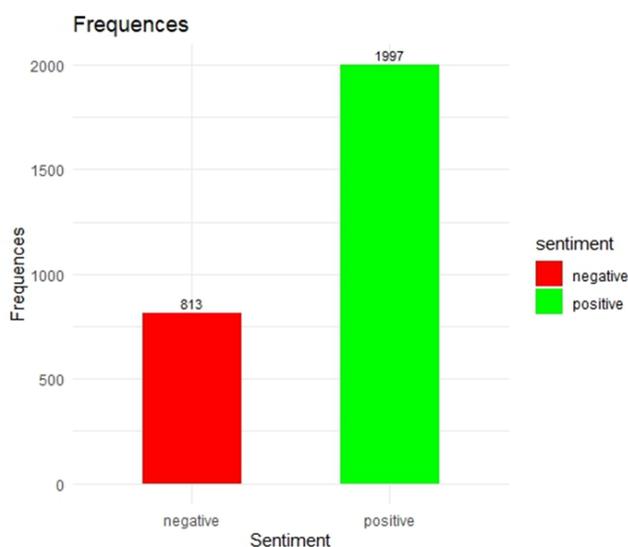
13- Blinken emphasized that the United States stands with the people of Israel today and in the future.

14- Blinken emphasized that since the Yom Kippur war, Israel has experienced almost the worst attack since October 7.

15- Blinken emphasized the expectation that Israel will eventually have the evidence to prove Hamas' guilt in its operation in Gaza.

16- Blinken emphasized that Israel's justification for bombing civilian hospitals was Hamas' underground tunnels.

It is seen that the word grouping results are not very different from the frequency coding results. Accordingly, subject content groups such as Israel's security, commitment to the two-state solution, Israel's efforts to legitimize its operation, Hamas and Iran connection and association with terrorism, disapproval of civilian casualties in Gaza and humanitarian aid can be seen.



Graphic 2. Sentiment Analysis Graph

It is observed that Blinken's statements throughout the process were mostly presented by choosing positive words. The lack of a harsh tone of discourse in terms of official US

policy and Blinken's direct pro-Israel stance may be due to the reaction of global public opinion. Because Blinken's speeches throughout the process seem to be in favor of the current conflict situation in favor of Israel and against the de-escalation and ceasefire initiatives, and in fact do not allow for any positive developments. Therefore, the US may be manipulating global public opinion by only changing the tone of its rhetoric without changing its current position in the conflict process. Because when we look at the discourse patterns, Blinken's citing underground tunnels as a justification for the bombing of hospitals and civilian infrastructure is actually a positive statement towards a negative situation. The intensity of such statements affects the overall tone of sentiment.

5. Discussion

The United States has been the unconditional patron of the State of Israel since its establishment. This relationship, in which physical security interests were at the forefront until the Donald Trump era, has shifted towards a foreign policy line that can be explained from an ontological security perspective due to Trump's religious policies. On the other hand, it is not difficult to say that the Biden administration also tends to continue the line that we think is structural. The current discourses still make themselves felt as the manifestation of evangelical messianic narratives in the White, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant identity of the US. Antony Blinken's foregrounding of his Jewish identity during his first visit to Israel after the Hamas attacks began is one of the most recent examples of this reflection on state policy. Therefore, this situation reveals the national myths rooted in the Protestant national myths of the US, whose self-identity is shaped by identification with Israel, civil religion, broad grassroots support and the passion for Israel in American political life (Düzgün, 2023). The interesting thing is that Israel is a state that is trying to complete the construction of a nation that was mostly subjected to genocide. According to Erdem (2010), the Nazi regime used three different methods to solve the Jewish problem: "Expulsion", "Gathering" and "Killing" as the final solution. Ironically, years later, Israel is doing something similar by occupying Palestinian territories, rounding up people in Gaza and finally killing them. But of course, this cannot be done without the unlimited support of the United States, which Blinken's rhetoric confirms. Indeed, Pace & Yakobi (2021) have previously presented results proving that the situation is no different. Blinken's referring to Israel's bombing of civilian areas in Gaza as "self-defense" and his "almost" indifference to the massacre of thousands of civilians is only a small part of the many evidences of this unlimited support. The only exception to the support for Israel's Nazi regime-like operations is Blinken's not-so-intense rhetoric about civilians in Gaza and humanitarian aid. However, it would not be correct to say that the US has no political will for a "two-state" solution. Even if not with great emphasis, we can see that Blinken has made statements towards the US policy of a two-state solution. However, in the context of Israel-US relations, it is also possible to say that the possibility of this realization is very difficult due to Israel's own plans. However, Düzgün (2023) evaluated the unconditional support of the US to Israel as irrational and saw it as a regression in American policy. Therefore, it can be supported by first-hand discourses that the Israel-centered approach continues strongly in Blinken's

current discourses, while theopolitical approaches exist in the background of political support.

In terms of reflecting the US foreign policy, Blinken's current statements directly equating Hamas with terrorism is not an empty approach. Chomsky (2007) strongly criticized the approach that "terrorism is terrorism if it is used against us, but it is benign and humanitarian intervention if we use it against you". In fact, this criticism is directed at the US foreign policy itself. Today, Blinken's rhetoric about Israel's right to defense is a direct manifestation of Chomsky's approach to terrorism in the US. Moreover, adapting this idea to Israel's bombing of civilian areas and defending it can take its place as a defense of unprecedented violations in the history of human rights in the world. In fact, the fact that Blinken's rhetoric is highly positively worded can be interpreted as an attempt to oversimplify the issue or as an abuse of diplomatic language. Moreover, the US policy of supporting Israel under all circumstances is so clear in Blinken's rhetoric that Warasti, Qonita & Sholeh (2022) reaffirmed their conclusion that the US supports Israel under all circumstances.

Blinken made some references to mediating countries to end the conflict in his rhetoric, but these statements do not stand out in the research findings due to their low data density. In the context of mediation, Blinken mentioned countries such as Egypt, the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia, which are mentioned in Pratiwi, Qomara & Syarafi (2020)'s study, but the topic was discussed in a limited way, probably due to Israel's rejection of their proposals. Interestingly, although Blinken discussed the issue with Turkey, he did not present Turkey as a mediator to the world public opinion. As mentioned earlier, the reason for this may be that the U.S. did not raise the issue much, as cooperation with political factions that openly criticize Israel would not be to Israel's liking.

According to Human Rights Watch Organization [HRW] (2023a), White phosphorus has a significant flammable effect, which can be used for marking, signaling and concealment, as well as a weapon that can incinerate people and objects, and can set fire to nearby structures, fields and other civilian objects. The use of white phosphorus in Gaza, one of the most densely populated areas in the world, increases the risk to civilians and violates the prohibition against placing civilians at unnecessary risk. Blinken dismisses Israel's reported human rights violations on the grounds of the security of Israel and its citizens and Hamas' use of civilian infrastructure as a shield. In contrast to this indifferent attitude, Ida Sawyer (2023), crisis and conflict director at Human Rights Watch, indirectly criticizes Blinken's rhetoric by saying that "These attacks underscore the importance of the ongoing investigation by the International Criminal Court (ICC)". This is because Blinken's rhetoric promises a degree of support for Israel that would also reduce the pressure for a global prosecution. However, in order to ensure that the process is handled fairly, it is crucial that the ICC prosecutor makes it clear that he or she can investigate serious crimes committed by Palestinian armed groups in Israel and Israeli authorities in Gaza, in order to meet global expectations for justice in the process (Human Rights Watch Organization [HRW], 2023b).

After imposing a "total blockade" on Gaza on October 9, Israeli authorities resumed water supply to parts of southern Gaza on October 15 at the urging of the United States, and allowed limited humanitarian aid through the Rafah crossing with Egypt as of October 21. On October 18, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu stated that Israel would not accept humanitarian aid "in the form of food and medicine" into Gaza through the crossings unless hostage-takers were returned. The government continued to block the entry of fuel until 15 November, despite warnings of serious consequences, leading to the closure of bakeries, hospitals, sewage pumping stations, water treatment plants and wells. These rendered unusable facilities are essential for the survival of the civilian population. Although a limited amount of fuel was later allowed to enter, on December 4, the United Nations Humanitarian Affairs Coordinator Lynn Hastings stated that it was "totally inadequate". On December 6, Israel's war cabinet approved a "minimal" increase in fuel supplies to southern Gaza (Human Rights Watch Organization [HRW], 2023c). Blinken's rhetoric on humanitarian aid in particular, and not a small number of his statements on Gaza and its civilians, may have influenced Israel's short-term approval of humanitarian aid. However, Blinken's rhetoric of unconditional support is also a serious motivator for the tendency to stop authorizing aid.

It was reported by Country Reports on Human Rights Practices (2022) that many residents of Gaza have fled many times in search of safety, obeying Israeli orders. But there is no safe place in this cramped and narrow territory and no safe way to get there. According to the Gaza Ministry of Health, at least 19,600 people, mostly women and children, have died since the fighting began, including in areas where they were told to flee by the Israeli military (Hsrđman, 2023). International humanitarian law temporarily prohibits the forced displacement of civilians when their safety or imperative military reasons require it. People should be allowed to return after the end of hostilities (Hardman, 2023). Given Blinken's support for Israel's military operations, it is easy to see that the principles of international humanitarian law have largely been sacrificed to Israel's relentless disproportionate attacks. This situation reveals the extent to which the United States is in contradiction with the principles that it defends from a high bandwidth, such as human rights and democracy. Moreover, Blinken's mention of civilians, women and children living in Gaza does not produce any practical results. After all, the only purpose of mentioning the situation in Gaza at a time when Israel continues to commit massacres may be an attempt to maintain an image for the world public opinion. A comparison between Blinken's rhetoric and the political practices of the US reveals an interesting situation, as in the results of the sentiment analysis. In other words, no matter how much the rhetoric is tried to be softened, unless it is supported by action, the result is only hypocrisy. Therefore, if Israel's attacks are not stopped today, it may soon produce discourses that confirm Blinken, Dana & Jarbawi's (2023) observation of Israel's complete colonization of Palestine or Yiftachel's (2023) criticism of the Apartheid regime.

6. Conclusion

The analysis of discourses is not only done to observe and understand the discourse content more clearly. Therefore, discourse analysis has a critical aspect. The critical aspect of discourse analysis has the responsibility of revealing the aspects of discourse content that can be criticized and presenting them to the reader. The findings of this study are based on Antony Blinken's discourse after Israel launched a massive military operation following the Hamas attacks that started on October 7. Accordingly, Blinken conveyed the political repercussions of the strongest military resistance Israel has faced since its occupation of the Palestinian territories. It can be clearly said that Israel's trauma was reflected in Blinken's spokespersonship in the US. It is also clear from Blinken's rhetoric that the US can disregard humanitarian values for the sake of Israel's security sensitivities.

Antony Blinken traveled to Israel in the early days of the conflict and made statements of support, especially through his Jewish identity. Although Blinken's Jewish identity is not part of the official foreign policy of the US, the ease with which this discourse can be used shows that the US and Israel have a theopolitical partnership beyond realpolitik. Therefore, this partnership should be handled carefully, and interdisciplinary studies should be developed in terms of revealing the connection between Judaism and Evangelical Christianity. Because in some studies, there are criticisms that the US support for Israel's reckless policies and practices is a big mistake and that it is not in line with its interests. The fact that the US sometimes confronts the world public opinion for Israel for the sake of its own interests raises questions that can be explained by religious-based political approaches. The fact that this issue is only mentioned in one speech does not mean that it is insignificant in terms of analysis. This is because in the literature review section of the study, the results of many studies showed that religious affiliations have a significant impact on the nature of Israel-US relations.

In the results obtained in this study, the concern of the US Secretary of State to produce arguments against this massacre while Israel is committing massacres is noticeable. Therefore, as in other studies, the defense of completely opposite actions in the context of the US's global image and the fundamental values it defends brings irrational ties to mind. Even in a situation where Israel's human rights violations are so flagrant, Blinken's statement that Hamas is using civilian shields for bombardments in civilian areas is quite remarkable. Considering the clarity of the rhetoric, the risk that the United States will not avoid the conflict by using the justification of Israel's security, given the risk of the conflict spreading to the region in the continuation of the process, seems quite high. Hence, it seems that Blinken will continue to express that an increase in civilian casualties in Gaza is not only undesirable but also undesirable. In the meantime, Blinken intensely emphasizes Israel's security as a top priority. Therefore, unfortunately, there is no strong warning that Israel will not continue with its current policies. Therefore, the body of discourse on which this study is based is US foreign policy from Blinken's perspective and the context of the Israel-Hamas conflict. In this respect, it is possible to say that Blinken's position on this issue will continue to be in defense of

Israel's policies, even if he is forced against world public opinion. In terms of the humanitarian aspect of the issue, although Blinken makes positive statements about humanitarian aid, it does not seem that the actual delivery of aid to those in urgent need can be realized without Israel's approval. In order to address the current situation in more detail, it may be important for future research to compare the discourses made over more than one period, to increase the depth of the subject, and to develop future-oriented inferences. In addition, analyzing opposing discourses from the same period on a common phenomenon can be very useful for researchers in terms of comparative analysis.

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