

حرب وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي: تحليل نقدي للخطاب لمقابلة باسم يوسف مع  
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## Social Media War: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Black Humor in Bassem Yousef Interview with Piers Morgan

### Social Media War: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Black Humor in Bassem Yousef Interview with Piers Morgan

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#### المخلص

مع تطور تكنولوجيا التواصل الاجتماعي، أصبحت اللغة معيارًا حاسمًا يؤثر على إدراك العالم أجمع، لا سيما في قضايا حساسة كالحرب الفلسطينية الإسرائيلية على غزة في أكتوبر/تشرين الأول ٢٠٢٣. إن إثارة الشارع العالمي، العربي والغربي، هو وسيلة فكرية لإنهاء الحرب وإنقاذ الفلسطينيين من المحرقة الإسرائيلية. الفكاهاة سياسة حكيمة يُمكن استخدامها في وقتٍ تكون فيه جميع الأطراف المعنية مشحونة عاطفيًا. يستخدم باسم يوسف هذه الدبلوماسية في مقابلته مع بيريس مورغان لإظهار رفضه للحرب ولأسلوب القتل الذي تتبعه إسرائيل. ويبدو أن هذا الإجراء فعال، حيث شاهد أربعة ملايين شخص مقابلته بعد ثلاث ساعات فقط من نشرها. في الوقت نفسه، دعم العديد من المؤثرين والفاعلين على وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي الشعب الفلسطيني من خلال رسائل منشورة على حساباتهم، وهو أمر لم يفعلوه من قبل. تحاول هذه الدراسة الإجابة على كيفية استخدام الفكاهاة لتسليط الضوء على الحرب العدوانية من منظور الخطاب النقدي.



كما تهدف إلى معرفة كيفية تقلب هذه الطريقة وتأثيرها على العقول البشرية. ولتحقيق هذه الأهداف، افترضت الدراسة استخدام أدوات خطاب نقدي مختلفة مثل التهويل والأسئلة البلاغية والتكرار. ولتحقيق الهدف المذكور واختبار الفرضيات المذكورة، تم اعتماد إجراء تحليل نقدي للخطاب على مقابلة بييريس مورغان مع باسم يوسف من خلال نموذج انتقائي. اعتمد يوسف على الكوميديا الراقية كنوع من الفكاهة لتقديم نقده لقسوة إسرائيل وقوتها.

### **Abstract**

With the development of social media technology, language becomes a crucial tool that influences the recognition of the entire world especially in sensitive cases like the Palestinian-Israeli war in Gaza, October 2023. Agitating the world street, Arabic as well as the western one, is an intellectual method to end the war and save Palestinian citizens from the Israeli Holocaust. Black humor is a knowledgeable policy which can be used in a time when all the parties involved are emotionally charged. Bassem Youssef uses such genre with Piers Morgan's interview to show his rejection toward the war as well as the Israeli state's methods of warfare. Such procedure appears to be operative as his interview is watched by four million people after only three hours of publication. At the same time, many social media influencers and actors support Palestinian people through messages posted on their social media accounts though they had not done so previously. This study attempts to answer the question of how humor is used to expose the violence of the war from a critical discourse point of view. It also aims at finding out how this method influences and shapes public perception. To achieve the aims, it is hypothesized that different critical discourse tools are used like speech acts, understatements, rhetorical questions and repetition. To accomplish the aim and test its hypothesis, a critical discourse analysis is conducted on Piers Morgan interview with Bassem Youssef by means of an eclectic model.

### **1. Introduction**

Meyer (2000: 314) considers humor as “a Double-Edged Sword” that could be used both for relationship building and for both outward- and inward-directed aggressive actions. Romero and Cruthirds (2006: 59) define humor as 'amusing communications that produce positive emotions and cognitions in the individual, group, or organization'. It is interesting to say that Humor is a natural human behavior used to alleviate stress and support psychological well-being.

Youssef, an Egyptian comedian and television host, resorts to a type of humor that is black comedy as a form of social critique against the Israeli war with an attempt to convince and show the world Israeli deeds in Gaza



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in humorous way. To analyze this approach, critical discourse analysis is used as an instrument to extract Basim's ideology (sympathetic to the Palestinian cause).

Thus, the study explores Bassem Youssef's ideological and politically charged use of humor to expose horrible Israeli deeds to answer the question of how Bassem fluctuate between critical discourse tools to serve his rhetorical intent? In relation to the aim of finding answers to this question, it is hypothesized that different discourse analysis tools are used to shape the audience's perception and reinforce ideological messaging.

### **2. The Concept of Humor and its types**

The concept of humour is defined as 'the quality of being funny' or 'an ability to perceive and express a sense of the clever or amusing' (web source 1). It encompasses incongruities in a situation . It is normally utilized to demonstrate significant incompatibility in person's life, then is commonly regarded as a mannerism: a friendly and smooth kind of humor.

To define humor, scholars have not settled on a single definition, as humor depends on the context of its use. Attardo (1994:13) depends on Kerbrat-Orecchioni's (1981) pragmatic meaning of humor as: a text whose end or result is not essentially for amusement. That is, humor is not necessarily anything planned to be humorous, even though it is not continuously be observed or understood as such.

According to Singh (2012: 71), humour is a broad terminology signifying non-serious reaction to the literature by the audience, 'a light-hearted, frivolous, whimsical reaction caused by an unexpected departure from reason or sense—a play on words, a clever analogy, an understatement, etc'. It can have a concealed threat or criticism in it but is not to be taken seriously by the recipients in conversation.

According to Hadiati (2018: 2), humour has two main types, each with its own subtypes. The primary goal is to establish a comic situation. They are low and high comedy. The comedy, which is called low, does not infer any societal critique which is mostly based on a variety of themes, such as: "romantic comedy (fight of sexes, sexual insinuation), sitcom (foolishness/ innocence), slapstick (bodily humor, enjoyment in the misfortune of others and physical oddness). The high comedy offers a critique, to a certain extent harsh of human faults and customs, social construction, and authority. It includes, but is not limited to, black and dark comedy which is the concern of this study.

### **Black comedy as social critique**

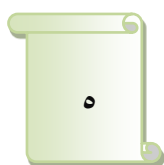
Black comedy utilizes humor as an instrument to separate social and political issues, undertaking topics like unfairness, organization, dishonesty, war and violence. Black comedy often criticizes social norms, power structures, and cultural conventions. According to Connard (2005: 8-13), black comedy is a genre that describes the suffering of people in a humorous way or from the wrongdoing of taboos linked to deeply severe subjects, particularly death. It is considered as an examination, and a copy of existing society's worries where humor is connected to subjects that are normally treated as very serious.

Black comedy is regularly portrayed as presenting an exaggerated contrast to reality to raise public awareness as it is designated for change. The dramatic genre of black comedy offers a purifying and challenging experience for audiences. It means a discussion and integration of controversial as well as taboo topics such as pain, loss and grief (Griend, n.d: parag: 1, 2). Cruel scenes as well as offensive subjects and words are presented through this type of genre to clarify the suffering of others that can be utilized to entertain and provide memorable and cathartic experiences for audiences. Connard (2005: 27-35) points out that performers in black comedy are characterized by the lack of power which effectively without taking a signature by indicating how the public wrongly idolizes systems, institutions, and values in which the central conflict and struggles for institutional change.

In black comedy, focus is placed on jokes that make light of a tragic event or subject matter. Taflinger (1996: para: 1) sets the following criteria for black humor or black comedy:

1. Using to the intelligence rather than emotion,
2. Recognized societal norms,
3. Oddness to those norms,
4. Moreover, the awareness by the addressees that the incidences are fundamentally inoffensive to both the characters and to the sensitivity and principles of the addressees.

Black comedy consumes humor as an instrument to divide social and political issues, undertaking topics like disparity, organization, dishonesty, war and violence. Black comedy often criticizes social norms, power structures, and cultural conventions. The tools black comedy uses are irony, satire, and observational humor.





### 3.1 Irony

Irony is a manner of establishing a work so as to give full expression to contradictory or complementary impulses, attitudes, etc., particularly as a means of representing objectivity from a subject, theme, or emotion. (Ravshanovna, 2022: 1). In other words, irony refers to a difference or incongruity between what is said and what is understood, or what is predictable and what really occurs. It can be used deliberately or can happen accidentally. In this respect, addressees' role is precisely significant so as to emphasize the central idea where they stop thinking about what has been said. In this case, to have a successful use of irony is to realize the inconsistency between what is uttered and what is usual or predictable is vital (ibid).

According to Singh (2012: 65), irony means the unintended production of inconsistency between a deed or utterance and the context in which it happens. Its emphasis is located in the opposition between the literal and intended meaning of a statement. That is, the opposite meaning is inferred, for instance, "Lovely weather, isn't it?" made when it is so hot or horrible. Within character development or situation, irony paradoxical nature focuses on the illogicality that found in the contradiction between substance and form. That is, a sharp contrast is made between the actual meaning and what is being said.

### 3.2 Satire

Phiddian (2013: 50) points out that satire signifies the literary forms in which immoralities or irrationalities are scorned. As a broad term, it frequently stresses the state other than the person himself, and regularly infers ethical decision and remedial purpose. Satire means ridiculing, revealing, disapproving, or mocking, folly, etc. It is an arrangement whether in verse or prose using social irrationality and evils, which intended to scorn, disdain, or ridicule specific works or morals.

For its functions, satire typically implies the use of sarcasm for severe or critical purposes and is often directed at the community, public figures or institutions, conventional behavior, political situations, etc (web source 2).

### 3.3 Observational Humor

Observational humor or comedy is a form of humor based on the everyday life aspects. It is central type of humor in stand-up comedy. In an observational comedy act, the comedian makes a statement about something, which is common enough to be familiar to the audience, but not frequently discussed (Carrara, 2023: para. 5).



In the perspective of this study, black comedy, which creates laughter, can operationally be defined as a genre that presents events in contrast to the truth in order to raise public awareness that creates laughter. It can be realized through various critical discourse strategies and context-dependent linguistic choices that shape the social reality and influence public attitudes and societal policies. As for interviews on social media, Social media interviews are powerful tools that can shape public opinion, influence policy decisions, and even impact social and political landscapes. Media outlets, through their ability to select, frame, and disseminate information, hold significant power to influence what issues are considered important and how the public perceives them. Thus, black humor in interview discourse is a critical issue that may convey implicit or explicit critique of Israeli actions and such a rhetorical tactic can be used to influence policy and determine group identity.

### **3. Critical Discourse analysis**

A critical discourse analysis (henceforth CDA) emerges with an aim of uncovers the hidden meanings embedded in texts and conversations. It analyzes how language encompasses power relationships, social hierarchies, and ideologies (Mahdi and Dhia' 2021: 5130). CDA is a critical theory approach to the study of discourse that views language as a method of societal exercise, which is developed by Fairclough followed by Wadak and Van Dijk, etc. who combines discourse analysis with critical study language (ibid). They all agreed that discourse is systematically examined as being a social interaction or a relationship of meaning and a mechanism of power that generates inequality, with ideology at its focus.

Functionally, a critical discourse analyst such as Fairclough (1989: 5) concentrates on the term 'critical', which is specifically linked with revealing the connections, which are hidden from people like the connection between language, ideology and power. In this case, discourse is a prevailing way of influencing people's minds. To do so, CDA analyst has to uncover such ideologies through alluding to different linguistic and rhetorical tools such as focusing on some vocabulary, speech acts, deixis and special rhetorical devices. Thus, CDA study is mainly composed of two parts, linguistic and ideological, which form the core of this field.

### **5. Methodology**

In this precise research, a qualitative method is applied to examine the data. The interview that is embraced for analysis is the interview between Piers Morrison and Bassem Yousef (Egyptian-American comedian) about Israeli -Palastian Gaza War on October 2023, which comprises several





occurrences of the concept under study. The choice of extracts is prepared with a purposive sample policy, which contains deliberately taken from situations where the forms of black humor are found. The researcher employs the CDA analytical instrument to analyze the extracts. The analysis begins with choosing the extracts to analyze. For each extract taken is based on the following criteria:

- 1.The interview was watched numerous times to select portions that have the greatest ideological inferences of black humor.
- 2.The form of black humor was distinguished in which Yousef uses in each extract.
- 3.The selected extract was examined to extract one or more CDA tools. The model to be applied in the analysis of the data selected is an eclectic model consisting mainly of two components; linguistic and ideological ones, as follows:

**5.1 Linguistic Analysis:**

This aspect examines the specific language choices made in the discourse, such as vocabulary, grammar, sentence structure, and rhetorical devices focusing on how these linguistic features contribute to the overall meaning and effect of the communication.

**5.1.1Transitivity**

Transitivity is advocated by Fairclough (1992: 27) to mean the characteristics of the grammar of clauses, which is related to their ideational meaning. According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2014), there are three experimental components that constitute the transitivity structure of a clause: "participants (the entities involved), processes (the actions or states), and circumstances (the situational context). Participants are essential in any process: each experiential kind of clause has one to three participants. In contrast, circumstances are nearly always optional extensions of the clause" (p: 221).

The process types are six and they are divided into two types, namely, principal and subsidiary. The principal processes are 'material', 'mental', and 'relational' whereas the subsidiary ones are 'behavioural', 'verbal', and 'existential'. The participants' roles associated with each process type are as in the following table:

**Table (1) Process types and participants' roles based on (Halliday and Matthiessen's, 2014: 311 classification of transitivity)**

Process Types	Roles
Material	Actor, Goal, Recipient
Mental	Sensor



Verbal	Sayer, Target, Verbiage, Receiver
Behavioural	Behaver
Relational	Identified
Existential	Existent

### 5.1.2 Vocabularies

Talmy (1985: 59) states that lexicalization is implicated where specific meaning component is found to be in normal association with a particular morpheme. That is words have a strong association with the ideological meaning where beliefs systems are formulated as meanings of discourse.

### 5.1.3 Deictic Expressions

Deictic Expressions are those expressions of a language that are dependent upon the situation which they are enacted (Rauh, 1983: 10). As for the pragmatic meaning they designate, deictic expressions are those linguistic devices that signal out an entity, person, time, or place whose interpretation is contextually dependent. They deal with connections between discourse and the situation in which discourse is used (Renkema, 2004: 121).

### 5.1.4 Rhetorical Devices

Rhetorical devices refer to the creative use of language to engage the audience and convey a message effectively such as repetition, overstatement, understatement, and rhetorical questions.

#### 1. Repetition

Tannen (2007: 2) defines it as a reappearance of words or word combinations or their association within a particular discourse. Cuddon (2013: 619) describes it as “an essential unifying element in nearly all poetry and much prose. It may consist of sounds, particular syllables and words, phrases, stanzas, metrical patterns, ideas, allusions and shapes.”

#### 2. Understatement

Understatement is a figure of speech in which an idea is expressed as less important than it really is. It is a statement of quantity or intensity of something that is less than what its natural states are. It is the opposite of overstatement (Cruse, 2006: 186).

#### 3. Overstatement

In contrast to understatement mentioned above, overstatement can be illustrated as a rhetorical device where things are described in a way that seems more important than they really are. It is an exaggeration to attract the addressee’s attention to create specific effect. It is regarded as a synonym with hyperbole.





#### **4. Rhetorical Question**

Cruse (2006: 128) defines the rhetorical question as: "...a question used as a challenging statement to convey the addresser's commitment to its implicit answer, in order to induce the addressee's mental recognition of its obviousness and the acceptance, verbalized or non-verbalized, of its validity".

#### **5. Synecdoche**

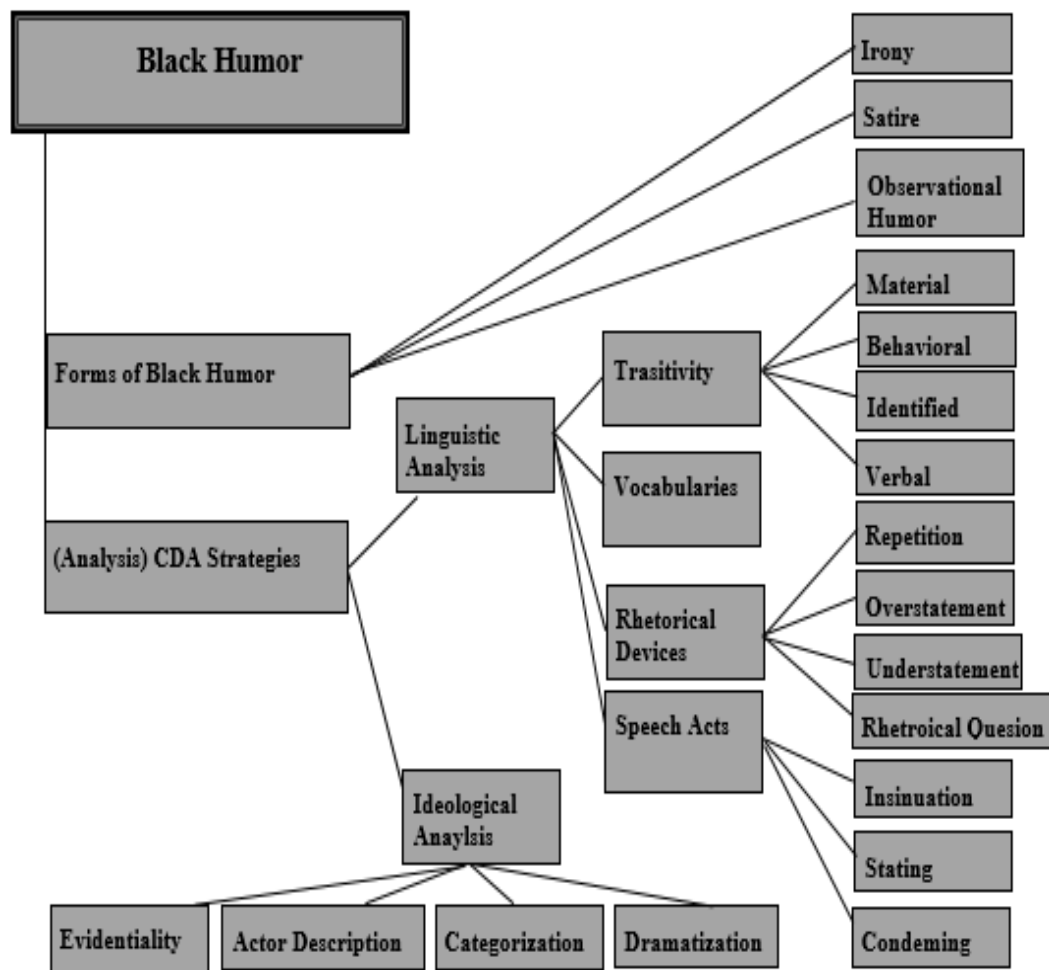
Synecdoche is the figure of speech in which a word refers to a part of something that is substituted to stand in for the whole (Chrzanowska-Kluczewska, 2013: 235)

#### **5.2 Ideological Analysis:**

This aspect delves into the underlying social, political, and cultural ideologies embedded within the discourse. It explores how language is used to express, reinforce, or challenge power structures, social inequalities, and dominant belief systems. Ideology can be described as a portrayal of certain world aspects ingrained in the minds of group members that aid in creating and sustaining power dynamics, dominance, and exploitation (Fairclough, 2003: 57). In other words, ideology denotes the manner in which the concept is expressed in excerpts. Van Dijk (2006) suggests that this concept can be expressed through categorization, evidentiality, actor description, and dramatization

In order to put ideology in an intellectual way, different speech acts can be utilized. Speech acts are actually the performance of multiple acts in a single communicative event, characterized by various aspects of the speaker's intention: what one does in saying something, like insinuating, condemning, and stating, and how one is trying to affect one's audience. The eclectic model is evidently sketched in Figure (1) below:





The subsequent section offers an analysis of the data of Bassem Yousef’s speech (or utterances) in his interview with Piers Morris by selected model of CDA mentioned earlier.

**Extract (One)**

But you know, we’re used to that. I mean, it’s just like, it’s very repetitive. We’re used to them being bombed every time and moving from one place to the other. You know, it’s just like those Palestinians, they’re very dramatic. ‘Ah, Israel is killing us,’ but they never die. I mean, they always come back. You know, they’re very difficult to kill, very difficult people to kill. I know because I’m married to one. I tried many times, couldn’t kill her.

In the above quotation, Yousef makes use of sarcasm as he mentions the truth in a skillful and intelligent way. He summarizes the situation of Palestinians where they are killed and never surrender as he says "Ah, Israel is killing us" and "they’re very difficult to kill". This reflects the ideology he aims to communicate to a global audience. At the same time,



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he combines sarcasm with irony, particularly evident in his remark "you know, it's just like those Palestinians, they're very dramatic."

Three process types are used here; material, behavioural and identified. In these processes, Palestinians are assigned the role of recipient twice in material process type and identified role four times in relational process type, as in "We're used to them being bombed", "Israel is killing us", "they're very dramatic", "they never die", "they always come back", "they're very difficult to kill", and "very difficult people to kill."

Before that, observational humor is manifested in this speech where Yousef focused on the number of Palestinian citizens who are bombed and their miserable way of moving from one place to another every day as in "we're used to them being bombed every time and moving from one place to the other."

To express such ideology, he utilizes precise vocabulary that sarcastically express Palestinians' situation. He starts with the idea of killing which is a violent way of punishment and names it as 'repetitive', 'bombed', and 'killing' to express the oppression in which they suffer. To express their resistance, he uses sarcastic words that they are "dramatic, never die, always come back, very difficult to kill, and very difficult people to kill". Yousef presents the aggressive deeds that practiced by Israel as a shared knowledge between him and Morgan using speech act of asserting explicitly. At the same time, he utilizes explicit accusation to Israel as the source of evil and killing innocent children.

In order to enhance the impact of his language, Yousef repeatedly uses the phrase "you know". In doing, he adds more humorous atmosphere to his interview to help the interviewee feel more at ease. However, such use of language adds rhetorical strength to his speech where his partner could say anything in return. He also repeats the words "difficult to kill" to insinuate the idea of resistance.

In an attempt to be realistic and objective, Yousef separates himself and his interviewee from what is happening as if viewing the events from a distant, detached perspective. He does so through using the first person singular pronoun "I" repeatedly to estrange himself from what is happening and he does not sympathize with Palestinians as in "I mean, they always come back". Suddenly, he fluctuates to the first-person plural pronoun "we" to insinuate the idea the he is part of Palestinians. Then, as a matter of fault and humorous matter, he returns back to the separation of pronoun by using "I and her" as he is married to a Palestinian woman from Gaza as in "and I know because I'm married to one". Meanwhile, the third person plural pronoun "they" is also used to refer to Palestinians for the same reason mentioned earlier.

Seeking to focus on the beastly way of killing, Youssef uses sarcastic metaphorical image when he says "she uses our kids as human shields. I can never take her out". He is trying to create the barbaric image of Israel killing to the children in the hospital and everywhere. At the same time, he insinuates an image of resistance of Palestinian against their killers. Additionally, he employs sarcastic overstatement when he says " they're very difficult to kill, very difficult people to kill" describing Palestinian resistance.

Ideologically, Youssef depicts actor description of Israel way of killing providing sarcastic categorization to Palestinian citizens.

***Extracts (Two):***

I think that Ben Shapiro is one of the smartest people who ever walked this Earth. He's very, very smart...his solution was that the solution for this is for Israel to annex Gaza and to kill as many sons of b\*tches as possible to make sure that this will never happen again. And anyone, anyone who calls for a ceasefire will be a terrorist sympathizer...I agree with Ben Shapiro. I think we should kill as many sons of b\*tches as possible. 3,500 people were killed, including 5,000 sons of b\*tches in the bombing of the Baptist hospital as we speak right now. One-third of those 3,500 were children. So, my question to Ben Shapiro is, how many more sons of b\*tches do we need to kill so Ben Shapiro is happy?

In the above extract, Youssef tries to attract audience attention to what Ben Shapiro, the American lawyer and politician, has said. Youssef ironically admires him by calling him as smartest person in the world so as not to be interrupted by Morgan, the interviewee. In fact, he elegantly insinuates Israel's plan of dismissing Gaza's people. Ideologically, he attempts to say that anyone who supports Palestinians will be labeled a terrorist and he ironically does not want to be so.

Two process types are attributed to Palestinians: material and verbal. They have the recipient role three times whereas they serve as the target only once, as in " kill as many sons of b\*tches", "we should kill as many sons of b\*tches as possible", "3,500 people were killed" and "how many more sons of b\*tches do we need to kill" respectively.

To express the ideology, Youssef resorts to describe the politician (Ben Shapiro) as the smartest person in the world aiming to focus on his words as in "He's very, very smart". By contrast, he describes Palestinians as "many sons of b\*tches" and the person who stands against Israel discussions and extinction of Gaza is a "terrorist". Additionally, he invites the two coordinated words "terrorist sympathizer" which designates his situation and anyone who pleads for their survival.





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To pave the way to aggressive deeds being done in Gaza, Yousef alludes to speech act of praising Bin Shapiro and characterizing him as the smartest person ever. Then, he uses assertive speech acts to narrate what happened to such number of Palestinian citizens who are killed.

To ironically position himself within Israel's narrative, Yousef repeats the words "many sons of b\*tches" twice. Firstly, he quotes Ben Shapiro's words. Secondly, he himself ironically follows or has the same ideology as Ben Shapiro in "I think we should kill as many sons of b\*tches as possible". In this case, he uses understatement. Before that he ironically admires Ben Shapiro's thinking by saying he is very very smart as a matter of overstatement. Finally, he uses the word "happy" to really reflect Ben Shapiro's apparent indifference to the killing of Gaza's citizens, particularly children. In so doing, he uses a rhetorical question that requires no answer as in "my question to Ben Shapiro is, how many more sons of b\*tches do we need to kill so Ben Shapiro is happy?" Of course, Yousef does not only mean Ben Shapiro but the way Israel as well as any one stands with her including America.

Ideologically, Yousef scrutinizes evidentiality as ideological representation as he intertextually uses Ben Shapiro's as his own evidence critically and sarcastically criticizes Israeli deeds.

### **Extract (Three):**

I would do exactly like Israel did. Kill as many people as possible since the world is letting me do it. I mean, I can do it because I can, you know... 'Do you condemn Hamas for the atrocity?' Yes, I condemn Hamas. I condemn Hamas. I condemn H... Hamas is the source of all evil, they are the reason for this. And you know what, let's for a minute imagine a world without Hamas. What will this world look like? Let's give this world a name, and let's name this world the West Bank. Hamas has absolutely no control in the West Bank. And since the beginning of this, only through August, 37 Palestinian kids were killed. No music festival, no paragliding, no Hamas. Since the occupation of the West Bank, 7,000 Palestinians were killed.

In the above extract, Yousef uses sarcasm with **irony** to explain the actual picture of the war between Hamas and Israel where Hamas is framed as the cause of the conflict. Ideologically and through sarcasm, he justifies the war by allocating the motive to Hamas and indirectly to Israel unlimited use of power and global sympathy as in "I would do exactly like Israel did. Kill as many people as possible since the world is letting me do it."

Palestinians are assigned the roles of recipients (three times), and target (one time) in material process type as in "kill as many people as



possible", "37 Palestinian kids were killed", and "7,000 Palestinians were killed". However, Hamas is given the roles of both target and actor to ironically tell the world that they are the reason behind such carnage.

With an ironic ideological manifestation, Yousef uses negative vocabulary that depict the atrocity of war between the two parties where children are the victims. He uses "kill as possible" to underscore the excessive nature of the violence. At the same time, human rights are seemingly absent from Israeli military conduct as far as citizens and Palestinian children are concerned.

The expression "killed" is repeated three times as in "Kill as many people as possible...Palestinian kids were killed. ...Palestinians were killed." At the same time, he specifies the Palestinian kids not any other part of society so as to shed light on what is happening to innocent citizens who should be out of such murder.

By putting himself in the position of Israel, Yousef uses the speech act of assertion. He reinforces the belief that Israel does as the international community gives the privilege. This leads us to the indirect accusation speech act use. Then, ironically, he utilizes speech act of condemnation as in "I condemn Hamas. I condemn Hamas. I condemn" which indirectly accuses Israel.

In his interview, Yousef sarcastically and ironically resorts to positively framed vocabulary that describe war atrocity and Israel as in "I really applaud Israel for doing one thing that no military force in the world does... Israel is the only military force in the world that warns civilians before bombing them... Israel gives you the nice warning, the cute warning". In this extract, overstatement is alluded to in characterizing Israeli military force solidarity of warning citizen before bombing them. However, this force and tendency is named as "nice and cute".

In his attempt to give the world a picture of the nature of Palestinian people, Yousef resorts to Synecdoche. That is, he uses one citizen as an example to Palestinian people who are suffering from idleness. However, they are killed. He wants to say that they are innocent, jobless, and human shield as in "my wife's cousin, he's a loser. You know, he told me, you know, when I asked him, does that happen, he told me no. The lying son of a b\*tch lied to me. I told him, you don't understand. Ben Shapiro and Ron DeSantis keep saying that Israel warns you...he's a loser. He never kept a job. He even failed in all of the interviews to become like a human shield." This form of humour is called self-defeating

To isolate himself from Hamas deeds and ironically explains the matter, Yousef describes Hamas as an evil group of people who are the reason behind this world distortion as in "Hamas is the source of all evil; they





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are the reason for this." He intentionally means that the real evil is Israel since he excludes Hamas from the West Bank and still the number of killed people was more. Despite this reality, no one remembers that "7,000 Palestinians were killed" at that place. This leads us to the conclusion if Hamas exists or not, Israel kill Palestinians everywhere.

To enrich his humor, Yousef alludes to rhetorical question that supported with a response. This question is the most important one that the interviewee wants to see Yousef's reaction. Instead of direct response, he answers his question by ironically repeats his condemnation Hamas war against Israel. He clearly uses the speech act of condemnation three times with an aim of ironically expresses opposition to the conflict between Israel and Palestine with a humorous atmosphere as in "Yes, I condemn Hamas. I condemn Hamas. I condemn H..."

Through explaining the situation of the West Bank, Yousef insinuates the number of Palestinian children killed under Israeli control in the West Bank as in "let's name this world the West Bank. Hamas has absolutely no control in the West Bank...only through August, 37 Palestinian kids were killed...Since the occupation of the West Bank, 7,000 Palestinians were killed."

Ideologically, Yousef humorously suggests that Palestinian citizens and Hamas are the bothersome group that irritates Israel. This is the reason categorization serves as the ideological mechanism referenced in this excerpt.

***Extract (Four):***

If we agree, the 14,000 casualties, I mean, who's counting, they are human shields. Does that mean that every single one of those civilians was standing, obscuring a military target behind them? Because that's a lot of weapons. I mean, Hamas is packing...So there is some collateral damage. Lots of collateral damage. Yes, it's fine. Yeah, you kill, you kill some to save some, and then kill some more. Yeah, I agree. Yeah, yeah, yeah, I agree.

In the above extract, Yousef interrupts Morgan's attempt to ask him a question. He resorts to satire in mentioning the number of the people killed in the war between Israel and Palestine. He humorously attracts the audience's attention to the huge number of the slain citizen. At the same time, he chooses oxymoron as a rhetorical device referring to world's neglectfulness to what is happening by saying "who's counting". What is more, he insists that citizens are human shield although Israel claims that she warns people before bombing as in "I mean, who's counting, are

human shields. Does that mean that every single one of those civilians was standing, obscuring a military target behind them?"

Two process types are allocated to Palestinians: material and verbal. They occupy the role of recipient (two times) and a receiver (one time) as in "they are human shields", "you kill some to save some", and "every single one of those civilians was standing, obscuring a military target behind them?" respectively.

Yousef argues that the war between the two parties is not equivalent. To express such difference, he uses "Lots of collateral damage" which ironically means that the damage in the two parties is similar. However, the reality is not so. What proves such analysis is what he says later "you kill some to save some, and then kill some more". This means that the number of the slain citizens is double in comparison with Israeli ones.

The use of numerical references in the interview between Yousef and Morgan has special importance in shedding light upon the reality and the carnage. In so doing, he employs oxymoron by placing two contradictory statements side by side as "the 14,000 casualties, I mean, who's counting, are human shields." That is, the number of the Palestinian citizens is huge yet met with global apathy.

As previously analyzed, Yousef uses the speech act of insinuation where he gives the entire world a picture of what is going on. He does so twice. First, he refers to carelessness of the world to what is happening. Second, he mentions the inequality in the number of people killed.

To break out the metonyms atmosphere, Yousef alludes to rhetorical question to humorously focus on the idea of Palestinians as human shields as in "Does that mean that every single one of those civilians was standing, obscuring a military target behind them? Because that's a lot of weapons." It means people being killed indiscriminately. Israel offers unbelievable and trivial excuses to destroy Gaza.

Ideologically, dramatization as an ideological tool is used to articulate the suffering in Gaza. It highlights the tragic realities faced by Palestinians.

### **Conclusions**

Based on the analysis conducted in the present study, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. Youssef employs on high comedy as a type of humor to offer his critique to Israel's harshness, and power. His humor is characterized by satire, irony, dark or black comedy and observational humor. He skillfully employs most forms of humor in his interview. The most common form of humor is irony to shed the light on the oppression that Palestinians are under. Youssef's ideology is represented through his humorous interview especially when he talks about Palestinians' suffering





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and Israel deeds. It is used to convey additional layers of meaning, underscore severity, and shape the speaker's persona.

2. Humor is viewed as a discursive practice that serves a number of political, ideological, and social purposes rather than just being an expression of individual viewpoint. It functions as a tactical instrument incorporated into language, media, and policy to manipulate, and uphold hierarchies of power.

3. Yousef puts his faith in pragmatic strategies like assertive and expressive speech acts in his humor discourse. These speech acts allow him to mobilize support and shape global public perception to what is going on in Gaza.

4. The critical strategies that trigger aggressive deeds in Yousef's discourse are the strategies of repetition, overstatements, understatement and rhetorical question frequently used. These strategies are scrutinized to normalize such deeds, manipulate public opinion, and justify exclusionary policies. They shape humor discourse by strengthening the injustice, illegitimate use of power, and making life-threatening views appear more acceptable.

5. The social media power significantly affects how diverse types of audience are capturing aggressive deeds successfully and such power can shape the audience's perceptions and their behaviors. The reason is simply that humor is perceived as a credible source of information and its authority lends legitimacy to their utterances, making the audience more likely to accept such views.

6. Politically speaking, humor discourse that displays such aggressive deeds encourages anti- Israeli agendas, which influence public opinions and policy decisions. Thus, Yousef uses satire-based discourse to frame Palestinian as threats, which mobilizes support for stopping the war against Palestine.

7. Ethically, the use of humor discourse by Egyptian-American comedian and TV host leads to divisive and discriminatory attitudes. The reason is that humor lightens up realities and creates relief atmosphere through the interview especially about a sensitive topic like Palestinian suffering. It also carries serious ethical implications that undermine fundamental values such as humanity and equality of rights.

8. From a critical discourse perspective, this study underlines how black humor discourse operates explicitly through direct utterances and implicitly through indirect or coded utterances.

9. By examining the language used by Bassem Yousef, it is demonstrated that his critical discourse choices influence public perceptions of Arabs as well as the Palestinian supporters in the world.

10. The figurative language that arises from the non-observance of the cooperative principle is vast and used to deliver black humor in an intellectual manner.

11. Presenting aggressive deeds through black humor looks legitimate and effective way to send vital message. It can serve as a release for tension and allows for the expression of controversial issues. That is, humor strengthens and reinforces identity and the potential disdain for the target. It is intended to reinforce one's identity and viewpoint.

12. With respect to the eclectic critical model of black humor, it has proved its workability as a successful mechanism used to examine humor in the context of interview discourse. Thus, it is applicable and it could be practical in other contexts.

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