

Phatic Function Analysis in Youtube Video Entitled “Israel and Palestine Middle Ground Roundtable”

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Abstract:

This study aims to identify the phatic communication functions used by Israeli and Palestinian speakers in a discussion forum addressing conflict between the two countries. Data was collected through conversation transcript from Jubilee YouTube channel, titled 'Israel and Palestine Middle Ground Roundtable.' The data was analyzed qualitatively using Jumanto's theory of 12 phatic functions. In this study, the researcher applied content analysis approach by coding and categorizing the data before conducting further analysis and interpretation. The analysis shows that Israeli and Palestinian speakers employed all twelve phatic functions in this discussion. These functions include breaking a silence, starting the conversation, engaging in small talk, gossiping, maintaining the conversation, expressing solidarity, creating harmony, providing comfort, expressing empathy, showing friendship, showing respect, and displaying politeness. Both parties actively used these twelve phatic communication functions to maintain social relationships and ensure a conducive discussion atmosphere. Based on the analysis, it can be concluded that the use of phatic communication can help maintain social connectivity and open up space for understanding the conflict from both perspectives.

Keywords: Phatic Communication; Phatic Function; Israel Palestine Conflict

Abstrak:

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi fungsi komunikasi fatis yang digunakan penutur Israel dan Palestina dalam forum diskusi yang membahas mengenai konflik kedua negara. Data dikumpulkan melalui transkrip percakapan video dari channel youtube Jubile berjudul “Israel and Palestine Middle Ground Roundtable”. Data dianalisis secara kualitatif menggunakan teori 12 fungsi fatis yang di usulkan oleh Jumanto. Dalam analisa ini, peneliti menerapkan pendekatan analisa konten dengan memberikan kode untuk mengkategorikan data sebelum melakukan analisa dan interpretasi lanjutan. Analisa ini menunjukkan bahwa para penutur Israel dan Palestina menggunakan keduabelas fungsi fatis dalam diskusi ini. Keduabelas fungsi fatis tersebut adalah memecahkan keheningan, memulai sebuah percakapan, melakukan obrolan ringan, bergosip, menjaga pembicaraan, menyatakan rasa solidaritas, menciptakan keselarasan, memberikan kenyamanan, menyatakan rasa empati, menyatakan keakraban, menyatakan penghormatan, dan menyatakan sikap sopan. Kedua pihak secara aktif menggunakan ketujuh fungsi komunikasi fatis tersebut untuk menjaga hubungan sosial dan kondusifitas diskusi yang berlangsung. Melalui hasil Analisa tersebut maka dapat disimpulkan bahwa penggunaan komunikasi fatis dapat membantu menjaga keterhubungan sosial dan membuka ruang pemahaman konflik dari sudut pandang kedua belah pihak.

Kata kunci: Komunikasi Fatis; Fungsi Fatis; Konflik Israel Palestina

INTRODUCTION

Humans naturally have the ability to use and develop language (Ellis, 1993). This capacity enables humans to adapt the use of language as times goes by. In the current digital era, the use of language has been widely adapted to meet human needs. The use of language in the digital era allows for global connections and interactions, supports the formation of online communities, and serves as a tool for self-expression and activism (Alek, 2021). In this context, digital platforms also serve as a medium for individuals or specific communities to publish their ideas or views on certain phenomenon. For example, on YouTube, there are various channels offering discussion forums between parties with different understandings. Regardless the potential of controversy during the discussion, such forums may encourage healthy discussions, broaden public perspectives, and provide deep insights into certain issues.

Fundamentally, language is a means used by humans to communicate (Amberg & Vause, 2010). Through language, humans can both receive and convey thoughts, feelings, and various information to others. On the other hand, people use language as a medium to build social relation and strengthen bonds in social interaction. The role of language as a tool for building and strengthening social connections is called phatic communication. Malinowski (1923) defines phatic communication as a way to fulfill the basic human need for reciprocal recognition and cohesion in social interactions. The primary focus in phatic communication is the act of speaking itself, not the content or message being conveyed (Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2015). This is because the purpose of phatic communication is to build a sense of togetherness or solidarity and to pave the way for further social interaction. In phatic communication, the utterances are often greetings, small talk, or expressions that do not carry significant informational value. The examples of this type of communication include conversations about the weather, gossip, or greetings when meeting someone (Coupland, 2000).

Knowing the importance of implementing phatic communication and the dynamic use of language in the digital era, the researcher is interested in conducting an analysis of phatic communication function using data from digital platforms. Several previous studies have analyzed phatic communication in digital platforms, such as (Rinawati et al., 2023) which analyzes phatic communication in Facebook comments and (Ren & Liu, 2021)

which analyzes phatic communion in students' emails. Rinawati et al. (2023) primarily focuses on understanding phatic communication among Indonesian students during online English classes conducted through Facebook. While Ren & Liu (2021) investigates the production and perception of phatic communion in gratitude emails written by Chinese graduate students to their professors. Aside from the analysis of phatic communication on digital platforms, the researcher also found an analysis of phatic communication in movies ((Ashidiq & Ruminda, 2022); (Mawadda, 2021); (Budiawati, 2021)). After examining the previous research, the researcher found that all of the previous research focused on analyzing interaction between harmonious parties' that did not involve the complexities of an issue. Whereas, an analysis on conflicting parties' interactions provide new insights in the analysis of phatic communication.

Therefore, the researcher interested in conducting phatic function analysis on conflicting parties' interaction to explore how phatic functions facilitate communication in sensitive discussions. The researcher selectively chooses the youtube video entitled **"Israel and Palestine Middle Ground Roundtable"** from Jubile's channel as the data of this research, which represent conflicting parties' interaction. The aim of this research is to discover the function of phatic communication used to maintain social relationships between the conflicting parties of Israel and Palestine. The main focus of the researcher in this study is to identify the variations of phatic communication functions used by speakers from Israel and Palestine in the videos. The researcher uses the theory of 12 phatic communication functions proposed by Jumanto (2014) From the results of qualitative research reviewing Malinowski's theory of phatic communication, Jakobson's six language function theory, and Brown and Gilman's theory of power and solidarity, this analysis is expected to provide an understanding of the dynamics of phatic communication that may not be visible in harmonious interactions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Israel Palestine Conflict

The conflict between Israel and Palestine is one of the most complex conflicts in the world. Based on the information (United Nations, 2023), the Israel-Palestine conflict began due to disputes over occupied territories and has been ongoing since the early 20th century. Various peace initiatives have not been able to resolve the conflict between these

two countries. This has led to ongoing warfare and caused civilians on both sides suffering for even more. As of October 7, 2023, the Israel-Palestine conflict escalated again due to an attack by the Hamas group on Israeli territory (Raleigh et al., 2023). The Hamas's attacks include the invasions of the ground, sea, and air from Gaza Strip into southern Israel. The impact of this attack has led Israel to carry out retaliatory strikes on Gaza, as well as cutting off access to essential services such as clean water and electricity (Human Rights watch, 2023). This prolonged retaliatory attack action has caused increasing chaos and worsened the humanitarian situation, particularly in the Gaza region. This ongoing conflict deteriorates trust between both parties and further distances the possibility of a peace agreement. These events create a significant escalation in the long-standing conflict between Israel and Palestine, which continues to impact the lives of many civilians on both sides.

Jumanto's Phatic Communication Theory

The term 'Phatic' comes from a Greek verb, consist of of two words: 'to speak' and 'communion', which means creating ties of union. This term was later used by Bronislaw Malinowski in his theory regarding phatic in communication. According to Malinowski (1923), phatic communion is "A type of speech in which ties of union are created by a mere exchange of words". Malinowski's theory of phatic communion has been further developed by other linguists such as ((Jakobson, 1960); (Coupland, 2000); (Jumanto, 2014)) and so on. Jumanto theory is the result of an elaborative qualitative study, based on three fundamental theories, namely Malinowski's phatic communion theory, Jakobson's language function theory, and the power and solidarity theory proposed by Brown and Gilman. In addition to these three fundamental theories, this study also involves 15 phatic communication theories by other linguists. The result of this study is 12 phatic communication functions, which consist of (1) Breaking the Silence, (2) Starting a Conversation, (3) Making Small Talk, (4) Making Gossip, (5) Keeping Talking, (6) Expressing Solidarity, (7) Creating Harmony, (8) Creating Comfort, (9) Expressing Empathy, (10) Expressing Friendship, (11) Expressing Respect, (12) Expressing Politeness (Jumanto, 2014).

RESEARCH METHODS

The researchers used qualitative research design in this present study. According to Dawson (2009), qualitative method focuses on the experiences, attitudes, and behaviors of individuals or groups. In this research, the main focus is on the analysis of the speaker's communication behavior. Meanwhile, the approach applied in this research is the content analysis approach. Content analysis is a systematic approach to understanding qualitative data by categorizing and coding the data, which facilitates the interpretation process (Jackson et al., 2007). Moreover, the data used in the analysis are verbal expressions from Jubilee's YouTube channel, which entitled 'Israel and Palestine Middle Ground Roundtable'. In this middle ground series, Jubilee tries to bring together 4 Israelis and 4 Palestinians to discuss the conflict from both perspectives. The main instrument of this research is the human instrument, as data collection process was done by the researcher.

There are three procedures in this analysis, namely research preparation, followed by data collection, and then data analysis. The first procedure, research preparation, is carried out by watching a video titled 'Israel and Palestine Middle Ground Roundtable' and then gathering and reading theories about the functions of phatic communication. For the data collection procedure, the researcher first transcribed the video from YouTube into Google Sheets. Then, the transcript was corrected and adjusted according to the dialogue in the video. For the data analysis procedure, the researcher conducted several steps; the first step is categorizing the speaker's expressions according to the theory of the 12 functions of phatic communication, second is explaining the data, and the final step is to draw a conclusion from the overall analysis.

FINDINGS

Based on the analysis, the study found 98 phatic expressions in the YouTube video entitled 'Israel and Palestine Middle Ground Roundtable'. The data selection was limited to phatic expressions conveyed by the Palestinian side to the Israeli side and conversely, within the context of building or maintaining social relationships. Furthermore, the researcher found that both parties used all twelve variations of phatic functions in this forum. Table 1 specifically shows the frequency of phatic expressions used by Israeli and Palestinian speakers. The table indicates that the most frequent phatic function used by all

the speaker is Creating Harmony (CH), while the least used phatic function is Starting a Conversation (SC)."

Table 1. Phatic Function Frequency between the speaker in “Israel and Palestine Middle Ground Round Table”

NO	Phatic Function	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Breaking the Silence (BS)	2	2%
2.	Starting a Conversation (SC)	1	1%
3.	Making Small Talk (ST)	2	2%
4.	Making Gossip (MG)	3	3%
5.	Keeping Talking (KT)	15	16%
6.	Expressing Solidarity (ES)	5	5%
7.	Creating Harmony (CH)	24	25%
8.	Creating Comfort (CC)	11	11%
9.	Expressing Empathy (EE)	13	13%
10.	Expressing Friendship (EF)	2	2%
11.	Expressing Respect (ER)	6	6%
12.	Expressing Politeness (EP)	14	14%
TOTAL		98	100%

Breaking the Silence (BS)

This function is used when the speaker wants to resume communication with the interlocutor after a pause or silence in a conversation. Breaking the silence can be done by mentioning someone's name, greeting, saying goodbye, commenting on something obvious, etc.

Datum 66/52:05 – 52:06/BS

Ariel: **Hello again.**

Gus: **Hello.** You wanna go?

In this conversation, Ariel implemented one of the phatic functions, namely breaking the silence through greeting. The conversation shows that there was an awkwardness between Ariel and Gus in this session, because of the long pause from the previous session. The word 'again' in Ariel's sentence indicates that they had actually met and greeted each other before. Therefore, we can see that the purpose of Ariel's greeting was not merely to offer greetings, but also to ease the awkwardness between them. In response to this, Gus then responded to the Ariel's greeting by saying 'Hello'.

Starting a Conversation (SC)

This function aims to initiate the beginning of a conversation with someone. Starting a conversation can be done with mentioning someone's name, giving comment on obvious thing, apologizing, interrupting, etc.

Datum 12/10:20 – 10:34/SC

Jonah: What was your name?

Talal: Talal.

Jonah: **Talal**, what you said when you first stepped down that you know, everyone there is your family, I feel that way as a Jew about Israel, but I didn't want to take away from who I'm sure had real personal connections.

This dialogue shows the interaction that applied one of the phatic functions, namely starting a conversation by mentioning someone's name. In this conversation, Jonah wants to give his response to Talal's opinion. Jonah specifically mentions Talal's name before beginning to strike up a conversation with Talal. This is done by Jonah to get Talal's attention, since Jonah wanted to give a start a new conversation which related to Talal's opinion. From the dialogue, we can see that Jonah managed to get Talal's attention through questions and direct mention of names.

Making Small Talk (ST)

The purpose of this phatic function type is to establish casual conversations on light topics to maintain a friendly atmosphere. Small talk can be done with asking certain question, greeting, giving comment on obvious thing, developing various casual conversation, etc.

Datum 8 and 9/07:38 – 08:02/ST

Tomer: I grew up in Southeast Jerusalem and I remember actually in the beginning of the nineties we used to go to Qalqilya and Jenin and we used to do shopping over there 'cause it was cheaper, you know, and we used to eat humus over there.

Talal: **Good humus huh?**

Tomer: **A lot, bro. A lot**

Jinan: **Kunafa?**

Tomer: **Kunafa**, I actually even understand some of the language.

This dialogue illustrates the small talk between Tomer, Talal, and Jinan. It started with Tomer sharing his experience about visited the areas of Qalqilya and Jenin, which was then responded to with questions from Talal and Jinan. Talal asked if Tomer enjoyed humus in those areas, while Jinan inquired about other food that Tomer might have purchased. The questions posed by Talal and Jinan, was not actually refer to the main point of the discussion but rather to secondary topics within it. Nevertheless, Tomer responded positively to these questions. This is because Tomer understood that Talal and

Jinan's questions were part of small talk aimed at easing tension and creating a more relaxed atmosphere for their discussion.

Making Gossip (MG)

Refers to a phrase that aims to share news or rumors related to other parties who are not directly involved in the conversation. Gossip can be done with asking question, developing the topic of the conversation, changing the topic, etc.

Datum 26/20:15 – 20:29/MG

Gus: So when you say they don't have let's say a dog in the race, it's just not true because Joe Biden clearly supports Israel unequivocally. So you can't say that there's no Israeli bias in America. The US always stands with Israel. That's a fact.

Tomer: **I have a problem with Joe Biden probably like,-**

Shanni: **Yeah. Everybody does.**

The conversation categorized as the making gossip through changing the topic. It can be seen that earlier Gus made a statement about Joe Biden's alignment with Israel which then triggered Tomer to argue. Tomer's phrases about Joe Biden lead to a negative assessment of his character or actions for no apparent reason and are supported by a subjective opinion. In this conversation, Tomer stated that he had a problem with Joe Biden, which Shanni quickly supported with the phrase, "Yeah, everybody does". The sentence implies that it is common to have problems with Joe Biden, without providing specific reasons or evidence to support the claim. This reflects the nature of gossip, where conversations are often not based on solid facts or data, but rather personal opinions spread in informal social discussions.

Keeping Talking (KT)

Refers to a function that is used to maintain and prolong the topic of conversation. Keeping talking can be done with avoiding silence, interrupting, asking question, expressing some listening noise, changing the conversation topic, etc.

Datum 7/07:32 – 07:37/KT

Tomer: **How long ago did you move out? Like did you guys move out from Palestine?**

Jinan: From Palestine, it was in the nineties, the mid-nineties.

This conversation between Jinan and Tomer can be categorized as part of the phatic function, precisely the Keeping Talking function because the conversation does not aim to convey in-depth information, but only to maintain the continuity of social communication

between them. This dialogue begins with Jinan who tells her experience while living in Palestine. After hearing Jinan's story, Tomer then responded by asking a question for more details information by saying, " How long ago did you move out?". Tomer's question was aimed at keeping Jinan's topic of conversation going.

Expressing Solidarity (ES)

Expressing solidarity aims to show unity and mutual support in a communication. Expressing Solidarity can be done by agreeing, congratulating, thanking, apologizing, expressing certain wishes on someone, etc.

Datum 6/04:39 – 05:39/ES

Jinan: You know, I have a lot of friends where I live in Washington DC who have their direct family members in Gaza right now. They left for studying or jobs and every day having to hear them frantically try to call to see if their families are alive. One of them, his brother was one of the last standing nurses at Al-Shifa Hospital up until just last week. He finally left, the uncertainty when it's like your immediate family, I think it's debilitating and you know, it puts you into a tunnel where you only can see your grief. **But it's obvious that the grief is everywhere and we're all feeling the same things. And you know, none of it should have happened and none of it should be happening.** Which is why I think a conversation like this right now is extremely important so that we can all understand that.

In this dialogue, Jinan wants to expressing solidarity through the statement which indicate a hope or a wish for a better situation for all. Jinan conveyed that both Israelis and Palestinians experiences the impact and deep sadness of the conflict. Jinan emphasizes this point through the phrase “the grief is everywhere and we're all feeling the same things”. This phrase was conveyed by Jinan so that both parties could understand each other's conditions. Then she went on to say that “none of it should have happened and none of it should be happening”. The function of expressing solidarity is one way to show emotional support and concern for others, as well as creating a sense of unity in the midst of difficulties experienced. Through her dialogue, Jinan seeks to build togetherness and solidarity by emphasizing that they experience the same struggle and hope that war should not happen.

Creating Harmony (CH)

This type of function promotes peaceful coexistence by using kind words or calming actions to reduce the tension. Creating harmony dapat dilakukan dengan agreeing,

criticizing indirectly, expressing wishes, congratulating someone, thanking, joking, apologizing, etc.

Datum 16/13:23 – 13:51/CH

Tomer: If you attack us, if you attack with rocks, you're gonna be jailed.

Talal: This is the prime example of not having to do trial. A trial means you get investigated, you look at the cause of what happened. You look at the situation.

Shanni: No no, I don't said that just because..., they have to go through actual process.

Talal: This is the logic, this is the logic of Israel. If you're Palestinian, you're a terrorist.

Shanni: **Love to say some final words about the actual prompt, if that's okay. 'Cause I think it's disrespectful to all the people that we did lose during this war to go down this route right now.**

The dialogue uttered by Shanni showed the used of creating harmony through indirect critic, which aim to neutralized the situation. The conversation happened when the discussion forum began to be not conducive due to differences of opinion regarding Israel's actions against the Palestinians. Realizing this, Shanni then tried to neutralized the situation by stating "Love to say some final words about the actual prompt, if that's okay". She also giving an indirect critic by saying that this talk could be considered disrespectful to those who lost their lives during the war. It is an attempt to create harmony by stopping the escalation of tensions and returning discussions to be purposeful and peaceful.

Creating Comfort (CC)

This function is done by providing emotional support or actions to can calm others. Comfort can be achieved by giving compliments, pacifying, expressing wishes, encouraging, agreeing on certain thing, etc.

Datum 53/46:56 – 47:13/CC

Tomer: The question is, what's the majority of your surrounding saying about Jewish? Because all we see right now, all we feel, by the way, we feel what you feel by the way, **and I'm not gonna take it away from you. Right, whatever you feel right now, I swear I wanna hug you. I'm not gonna take it away from you.**

The dialogue considered as creating comfort because it shows Tomer attempts to provide emotional support to Reema. Earlier, Reema had shared about how Palestinians are always associated with negative stereotypes and blamed for the ongoing war. In response, Tomer tries to comfort Reema by acknowledging her feelings and expressing

empathy by saying, 'we feel what you feel' and 'I swear I wanna hug you.' These words serve as pacifying statements intended to calm or provide comfort to someone experiencing a difficult situation or intense emotions. The function of creating comfort in phatic communication aims to foster a sense of safety, understanding, and emotional reassurance for the other person in the conversation. Tomer not only acknowledges the other person's feelings but also demonstrates a desire to emotionally embrace and respect what they are going through, which is very helpful in easing tension and creating a calmer atmosphere.

Expressing Empathy (EE)

The purpose of this function is to show sympathy and understanding for the feelings of others. Empathy can be expressed through saying bad words, expressing wishes, expressing sympathy, apologizing, agreeing on something, thanking, etc.

Datum 33/27:51 - /EE

Tomer: And there is a lot of people suffering in this. Listen, I'm listening to you, I swear I want to cry. **I swear no one, no one in this world. And I don't care what size, if it's a Palestinian or Jewish or Ukrainian or Russian supposed to live under bombs. No freaking way.**

Talal: Agree

Tomer's statement classified as the phatic function of expressing empathy because he expresses his emotions to show that he truly understands the feelings of others, regardless of their identity. This dialogue happened after Jinan shared her traumatic experience related to the war. Tomer responds by saying, "I swear I want to cry" and "No one... supposed to live under bombs," which demonstrates deep sympathy and awareness of the suffering experienced by everyone, whether Palestinian, Jewish, Ukrainian, or Russian. He also uttered bad word "No freaking way", to express that no one deserved the situation to live under bombs. These expressions communicate empathy because Tomer not only listens to others' feelings but also shares the same pain and concerns. In the phatic context, expressing empathy aims to strengthen social relationships by showing understanding and emotional support for others' situations.

Expressing Friendship (EF)

This type of function is done to show closeness and genuine bonding in a communication. Expressing friendship can be done by complimenting someone, joking, expressing wishes, apologizing, encouraging, joking, etc.

Datum 62/48:26 – 48:56/EF

Talal: And being opposed to an individual who subscribes, who has nothing to do with that part of the world, who has a religion of Judaism. **We're brothers, we're cousins. Abraham had two sons, Ismael and Isaac. Right, and we descend from that. So we're not only cousins, we're half-brothers.** We have a problem with the ideology whose entire basis is establishing a state strictly for Jewish people, which makes it by definition an apartheid state on the land of another people.

Talal utterance can be categorized as a phatic function of expressing friendship, as he explicitly expresses the close and fraternal relationship between himself and the Jewish. By mentioning the historical relationship that dates back to Abraham and his two sons, Ismael and Isaac, Talal emphasizes the strong brotherhood between Muslims and Jews, both as "Cousins" and "half-brothers". This phrase aims to create awareness of a deeper and genuine relationship, which is based on a shared history. Talal uses this fraternal narrative to emphasize that the conflict is not about differences in religious identities, but rather about political ideologies that are perceived as separating. Talal's utterances used as a way to show genuine bond between the two parties through expressing wishes that they could have a better friendship like brother.

Expressing Respect (ER)

Refers to expressions that aims to show a feeling of mutual respect in communication. Expressing respect can be done through expressing sympathy, expressing wishes, agreeing, congratulating someone, apologizing, giving compliments, etc.

Datum 39/35:33 – 35:59/ER

Jonah: We're going to disagree on whatever, but like one side has their story, their truth, their lived experience. The other has the same. **We don't have to convince the other to see it the exact same way. We just have to see each other and acknowledge that we're both in this situation and we both want to get out of it. And let's treat each other like human beings and find the way out of it.**

Jonah's dialog categorized as the phatic function of expressing respect, since he emphasizes the importance of recognizing and sympathizing each other's life experiences

and perspectives, without having to force the same views. Jonah says that "we don't need to convince the other party to look at it the same way", but rather it is enough to "look at each other and admit that we are in the same situation". This statement shows respect for the existence, experience, and views of the other party. Jonah reveals that in differences, we can still respect each other's humanity and find a way out together. It is a form of respect in communication that seeks to maintain a constructive and understanding relationship, even in the midst of disagreements.

Expressing Politeness (EP)

Expressing politeness is a function that is used to show manners and politeness, so that the interaction can run better. The function of Expressing politeness consists of the entire phatic function except the function of making gossip.

Datum 42/37:51 – 38:05/EP

Gus: I think we have disagreements on what we think needs to happen to end. You think (point at Jonah), oh well everybody disarm on the Palestinian side and submit. I think that they're not gonna,-

Jonah: That what I said? Did anybody hear me say that? You just pointed at me and said that. That's what I said?

Gus: Who said that?

Talal: He said that (point at Ariel), he said that.

Gus: Okay, well then, **I apologize for that.**

Gus utterances in the dialogue considered as expressing politeness, as Gus explicitly apologizes after realizing that he mistakenly associated the statement with the wrong person. When Gus says, "Okay, well then, I apologize for that", he admits his mistake and shows humility by apologizing. This action indicates the use of the function of expressing politeness through a polite apology to relieve tension and maintain harmony in the conversation.

DISCUSSION

The findings from this analysis indicate that the speakers in the video entitled "Israel and Palestine Middleground Roundtable" implement all phatic communication functions throughout the discussion process. Out of the total 12 phatic functions, we can observe that the creating harmony is the most frequent phatic function applied in this discussion forum. This differs from the results presented in several previous studies (Ren & Liu, 2021; Rinawati et al., 2023; Budiawati, 2021; Ashidiq & Ruminda, 2022). The four studies did

not identify or directly mention the usage of creating harmony function in their analyses. However, the study conducted by Mawadda (2021) becomes the only previous studies that identifies the function of creating harmony. This analysis uses data from the movie entitled “Wonder”, which tells the story of the social life of a character named Auggie, who has Treacher Collins syndrome. From the perspective of Mawadda (2021) phatic function analysis, creating harmony serves as a unifier between Auggie and the people around him. The characters in the movie use this phatic function of creating harmony through agreements and jokes to create a harmonious atmosphere in their interactions with Auggie.

Although this study and Mawadda (2021) both identified the function of creating harmony in building social relation, however there is a significant difference between the findings presented in these two studies. In this analysis, the function of creating harmony is identified as a tool for maintaining a conducive discussion atmosphere, especially due to the sensitive topic that has occasionally sparked debates and miscommunication between Israeli and Palestinian parties. The usage of creating harmony in the discussion forum is primarily aimed to neutralizing tense situation and directing the discussion back to the main topic. Moreover, the speakers applied creating harmony function through criticizing indirectly, expressing wishes and expressing agreement followed by impartial statement on certain issues. Implementing the function of creating harmony in this kind of sensitive discussion aims to maintain a conducive communication atmosphere, mutual respect, and allowing the topic to be addressed without excessive conflict. The effective implementation of creating comfort function, allowed both parties to understand the issues from two different perspectives and seek towards the most feasible solution to the Israel Palestine conflict.

CONCLUSION

Phatic communication plays a crucial role in communication, where the appropriate use of phatic communication functions can build and maintain social closeness between individuals. However, it cannot be denied that differences in opinions, perspectives, and backgrounds may possibly become an obstacle to using phatic communication. Therefore, this study aims to show how groups with differing views and socio-cultural backgrounds utilize phatic functions in communication. Based on the analysis of language functions in the YouTube video entitled “Israel and Palestine Middle Ground Roundtable”, it can be

concluded that the video contains 12 different types of language functions. The analysis found that the most frequent phatic function used in this interaction is Creating Harmony (CH), while the least frequent phatic function used is Starting a Conversation (SC). This finding highlights the importance of understanding the various functions of language in the context of social interactions, particularly in discussions involving complex issues such as the Israel-Palestine conflict. Therefore, understanding these language functions can help improve the quality of communication in dialogues aimed at achieving mutual understanding and finding a middle ground in complex issues.

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