



### Ideological Representation of ‘Self’ and ‘Others’ in Political Discourse: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Danny Ayalan’s Interview

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**Abstract:** This article adopts Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to analyze the influential role of language in contemporary political discourse, focusing on the portrayal of the attack on Gaza in Israeli and Palestinian newspapers. Grounded in Van Dijk’s ideological square model, the study penetrates deep into how journalists construct positive “Us” and negative “Others”. The article brings to attention the selective emphasis on positive in-group attributes while downplaying negative attributes of the out-group. Utilizing a qualitative research approach, the study has examined an interview with Israeli politician Danny Ayalan to unveil the exploitative use of language in shaping and forming political narratives. This research contributes to unveiling the pervasive impact of language in shaping identities and realities, explaining how political leaders strategically manipulate linguistic resources to advance their vested interests and political agendas.

**Keywords:** Political discourse, CDA, Israel, Gaza attack, Ideological square model

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#### 1. Introduction

Language is a powerful tool that shapes and affects our political, social, and cultural life in several different ways. Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is a method or approach to uncover hidden and opaque meanings and agendas employed in the language (Nurullah, 2010). The role of Language, in today’s political discourse, cannot be denied. In speeches and interviews of political leaders, one can see the skillful and tactful use of language discursive techniques to glorify the in-group and to degrade the out-group (Handley & Ismail, 2010). According to Van Dijk, CDA builds a link between micro and macro levels of cognition and how dominant forces influence society and perception (Van Dijk, 2003). He presented the “ideological square model” in 1998 and presented ideological techniques and strategies to identify how positive self-representation and negative other-representation are being employed by manipulative use of language. These discursive strategies and techniques are tools to show ‘oneself’ as good and ‘others’ as bad (Van Dijk, 2003).

The ideological square model helps study the polarization in political discourse at the national and international

levels (Orgad, 2009). Political discourse shows the power of political groups where one political group tries to win over another. Using media and language, political leaders express their ideologies and try to shape others' realities within and outside of the country and reshape our perceptions and opinions (Grainge, 2003). Political leaders in the media sometimes misrepresent realities through the manipulative use of language to shape identities and ideologies within and outside the country (Fahmy & Neumann, 2012). They use language in skillful and tactful ways to influence media users so that they don't differentiate reality and fantasy and consider it 'common sense' (Tahir, 2013). In this way when the audience perceives it as normal, they start to accept anything without any resistance.

## 2. Literature Review

Research has been conducted to look at Palestinian-Israeli conflict from different perspectives. The studies dealt with issues such as representation, the choices of language, the issues of image and objectivity in framing. (Ackerman, 2010; Ibrahim, 2009; Said, 2011; Viser, 2003). In this section, the related works conducted for portrayal of Israel-Palestine through media coverage has been examined. Later, to provide a theoretical framework for examining print media coverage in both communities; Israel and Palestine, we have explored the concept of "othering" by Van Dijk.

Nikou (2016) conducted frame analysis and examined the framing of Gaza War of 2014 media coverage using "Us" vs "Them" concept of Van Dijk. The data was collected from two Iranian and two U.S newspapers. The findings of the study show that two different discourses emerge from two communities. The U.S media chose to highlight the Palestinians as cause for violence between their relationship and supported the Israeli officials voice. Where in Iranian media, their major voice was in favor of Palestinians officials and they found aggression of Israel causes the tension between Israel and Palestine. These two distinctive discourses show that news media favor the initiatives of foreign policies of Iran and U.S. Neureiter (2017) analysed the newspaper articles of German, British and U.S to explore the media biasness during the Gaza flotilla of 2010. The media bias framework of Dave D'Alessio and Mike Allen's used to measure media biasness. Results suggested that British and German show anti-Israel bias where U.S shows mixed views.

Mhanna and Rodan (2019) investigated the portrayal of Palestinian casualties in the 2014 Gaza War by Australian media. 75 articles were collected from two Australian newspapers; The Australian and The Sydney Morning Herald for the data analysis. Framing theory was used that how Australian media depicted the Palestinians casualties. The results show that the frame of conflict seen to be dominant in representation of Palestinian casualties in newspapers and their voices were integrated with the officials. The actions of Israel were considered justified depending on pro-Israeli sources. Palestinian casualties were depicted in both newspapers as tragic but not necessarily for the existence of Israel and their right to defend themselves.

Friedman and Mischler (2020) examined the relation between newspapers and blame agency, what is national identity and type of newspaper to find out why peace negotiations of 2014 failed. Data was collected from six newspapers which were from Israel, Palestine and U.S. The findings show stronger party which is Israel portray blaming on Palestine and also do self-criticism. While weaker party (Palestine) portray both blame on Israel and Israel's self-criticism. This reveal a distinctive pattern of weaker party report the stronger party is engaging with self-criticism. Gonen et al. (2020) examined that how media of each side in a conflict draws information from opposite side. Qualitative and quantitative both methods were used, collecting 600 articles of newspapers published by Israel and Palestine during the time of 2005 to 2015. Results indicated that stronger side (Israel) seems to be more skeptical about the data published by opposing weaker side which is Palestine and vice versa. This research also demonstrated that discursive choices of journalists to show reservations about published content. These reservations in news discourse question the reliability.

The criticism on media coverage sometimes arguably exceeds in Palestinian-Israeli conflict more than other issues. This may cause "flak". (Chomsky and Hermon, 2002). Tasserou (2021) examined the flak and how it is perceived during the 2014 Gaza War by foreign media. Data was collected in the form of interviews from the news media professionals who worked in that region. They were asked to demonstrate how flak is perceived and used in their work. The results show flak is an important factor for news editors and journalists. However, South African media facilitates the asymmetric of conflict which sympathise Israel like western context.

## 2.1 Theoretical Framework of the Study

This study aimed to investigate the portrayal of Gaza attack in Israel and Palestine newspapers to explore agendas of journalists to construct positive “Us” and “Them” as negative through Van Dijk’ Ideological Square model. Van Dijk (2004) proposed the framework of an ideological square model to explore the discursive production of the respective ideology of positive “Us” and negative “Them”. There are some points he demonstrated to examined “Self” and “Other”. Some of main points are; we focus on only the positive things about US, emphasis good things about self, then the emphasize goes towards the negative things about THEM by preserving, de-emphasize self’s bad things through blocking of demoting expressions, de-emphasize them’s good things by not uttering certain expressions. Representation of self as positive favors in groups by keeping face and coping impressions, while representation of other as negative favors outgroup by doing same strategies.

Van Dijk’s ideological square model was best suited as a tool to check the discrimination of powerful group against the less powerful group or minorities in the text. Discursive strategies like emphasize and de-emphasize serve ideological function to present oneself superior or to implement positive-self representation and negative other-representation. Other discursive strategies such as *Euphemism* (rhetorical devise used to make negative look positive) and *Derogation* (harsh connotation and terms), *Self-glorification* (to glorify one’s ideas and group), *Victimization* (to show oneself victim), *Comparison*, *Falsification* (to falsify other’s beliefs or ideas) and *Polarization* (to create divergence between two groups), *Hyperbole* (device to propagate and exaggerate ideas), *Vagueness* (a strategy to create confusion, uncertainty and doubt) *Actor-Description* (portrayal of characters), *Authority*, *Lexicalization*, *Number-game* and *Polarization* (division) are important to indicate how ideologies, identities and realities are being shaped by a dominant groups to glorify in-group and to delegitimize out-group

## 3. Methodology

To study the use of tactful, exploitive, and manipulative use of language as a tool or weapon to serve the vested political interest in the political discourse on media, it is necessary to use the most suitable tool of CDA, proposed by Van Dijk (2004) to examine the exploitive and biased language use. This is a case study designed on a qualitative research method and uses the ideological square model proposed by Van Dijk (2004). We applied this framework to our study to identify how Israeli representative constructs the identities and realities of events of the Gaza attack under the impact of this model. Danny Ayalon is an Israeli politician and he was on Mehndi Hasan’s talk show on Al Jazeera English news channel. The interview was about the Gaza killing incident where Israeli snipers killed innocent young doctors, journalist and kids in the Gaza Strip. The data is in the form of interview. The first step in data analysis is the selection of text from full interview and in the second step we are going to analyze the text using linguistic, rhetoric and argumentative strategies. For this purpose, data cleansing process was used to select relevant text from the interview. First half of the interview was included in sampling because the second half was consisted of on comments of journalists present in talk show.

### 3.1 Research Questions

This study addressed the following research questions

- a) What discursive strategies and techniques have been used to portray Palestinian Muslims as terrorists, trouble-creators and aggressor?
- b) How does Danny Ayalan try to shape the reality and ideology in front of the world by de-emphasizing their wrongdoings and brutal actions against the Palestinian Muslim?

## 4. Data Analysis

### 4.1 Analysis of Excerpt 1

There are various discursive strategies that were used by Denny Ayalon to give a cruel picture of the Palestinian Muslims as terrorist, trouble maker and aggressive. Through the use of such strategies, Denny Ayalon de-emphasized negative self -image of Israel and emphasized the positive-self -image by disclaiming their wrong doings. Danny Ayalon speaks as a spokesperson of Israel. When he was asked about the killing of innocent people

in Palestine on 14<sup>th</sup> May, he used positive in-group discursive strategies and negative out-group strategies to create polarization and to justify their brutal killing of innocent Palestinian people around Gaza territory. Through the discursive strategies, Danny is showing how Palestinian Muslims and Hamas is 'threat' to the western world in general and Israeli in particular. He used *Evidentiality* strategy when he says, "*some of them were behind them with bombs, incendiary, Molotov and other things*" to provide evidence to prove that Israel is in danger and Hamas is a threat and tells the names of Palestinian bombs as evidence. He further goes on and uses *Falsification* strategy when he says that "*Hamas accepted*" the responsibility of the whole destruction. Here he wants to prove that Hamas is a terrorist group and sole responsible for the killing of Palestinian Muslims. Danny is trying to create the image of a well-wisher of Palestinian Muslims but the facts speak of the brutal killings of Palestinian kids, women, paramedics and journalist at the hands of Israeli snipers. He uses again uses *Falsification* and *Hyperbole* strategies to deny the facts and says, "*...but I'm not sure this was the case.... they were pushed by their leaders of the Hamas*", he further goes on and says "*...who by the way want to destroy the state of Israel*". Such linguistic choice of words is an utter exaggeration and false because no one can destroy a nuclear power nation backed by most of western powers by just throwing stones.

Israel always emphasized on the idea that they only want to save their lives and tried to convince the international community that Hamas is responsible for the killing of Palestinian. He used *Empathy* and *Disclaimer* strategies to de-emphasize the negative of "us" by saying "*I don't like collateral damage...*" for face keeping. He further says, "*but we have to look at who is responsible for the death, and the responsible is only Hamas.*" The use of "*but*" here shows a clear excuse where he accuses the victim. He tries to propagate his ideology and says that majority of killed protestors belong to Hamas and other died due to Hamas' bombing without any proper investigation. According to Hamas, other international reports and institution this was not true. Danny tries to distort the reality and facts and points to the Islamic stereotype that Hamas is brain-washing youngsters to use them to disturb the peace in the Israel and Palestine and that Israel has every right to kill anyone coming to Gaza Strip. These linguistic choices are used to show superiority and hegemony that Israel is doing right (in-group favoritism) and Hamas, Palestinian Muslims and their supporters (out-group) are always wrong.

We can see the *Number-game* strategy in the Danny's second answer as he manipulates the facts and statistic to support his argument and to delegitimize the out-group. He says that "*50 out of 62*" were active members of Hamas to show that majority of killed people were from Hamas and a threat to Israel. By attaching the killed protester to Hamas, Danny is justifying Israeli snipers' firing on the protestors. It's because they know that, using Muslim stereotypes like 'terrorist and militants' group', it is easy to kill anyone and get away with it. He holds Hamas responsible because it is a terrorist group. He further goes on and says 'other 15 people were killed accidentally'. By using lexical choices like "*...all the rest*" he again plays with the statistics without proper investigation. In fact, the actual number of killing is in thousands and by using less number of killed Palestinians, Danny actually wants to de-emphasize Israel's savagery and barbarity in Palestine. Less number of public killings also shows that the intended target of Israel was Hamas. Such linguistics and semantic choices prove Israel right about its narrative that, Israel is just after Hamas and it feels empathy with the Palestinian victims who are being used as human shield.

There is also an uncertainty and *Vagueness* found during analysis in at one place during the answer of the question when host asks Danny about the killing of 62 Palestinians on the Independence Day of Israel. He refuses to believe what actually happened, but after a few seconds he accepts that. This shows the vagueness and uncertainty in Danny's conversation. He says, "*I'm not sure this was the case, the 14th of May there were -, you're right.*" Vagueness strategy is clearly seen to de-emphasize on negative of "us" and emphasize negative of "others".

Danny again denies accepting the responsibility of killing of "*innocent people*". When Danny was asked to answer the question that who forced Palestinians Muslims to fight? He answers that yes Hamas forces people to fight against Israel. He actually disclaims by de-emphasizing the negative in-group and emphasized the negative out-group. By intentionally using the name of Hamas for killing, he wants to de-emphasize barbarity and inhuman behavior. *Disclaimer* strategy can be clearly seen. He also uses *Lexicalization*, *Falsification* and *Number Game* strategies. We can also see the strategy of *Empathy* when he makes false and unrealistic claim that Israel is the well-wisher of Palestinian Muslims. Here he wants to de-emphasize its negativity and put the responsibility of all destruction to out-group. He gives false impression that Israel is right and wants the best for out-group. Danny uses the lexical like we are trying our "*level Best*" to save innocent people. He also uses *National self-glorification*

strategy for positive self-national image by asking that his country uses best strategies for the peace between Palestine and Israel. Here he emphasizes the positive self for the good image of in-group. He tries to reconstruct the narratives about Israeli forces' brutal action on 14th May 2018. He portrays the false image of this incident and tries to save his in-group from criticism from international community.

Blame game is the most common practice in the international politics and both, Israeli officials and Palestinian official always blame each other for the unpleasant incidents. Here Danny is doing the same thing by using *Generalization* and *Presupposition* strategies to blame everything on Palestinian. Danny says "*Palestinian terrorists were hiding behind innocent*". Here he is pointing towards " Hamas" to show the negative face of "others" to mitigate self -negative image. He is associating a militant group to the protestors to justify their killing and to save in-group from the criticism of international community. He repeatedly says that "*Hamas is sending their people*" and by using *Repetition* strategy he actually emphasizes the negative of opposite group. Here repetition strategy is used to show the world that the out -group is responsible for the incident and cause the reason to spread terrorism in Gaza.

#### 4.2 Analysis of Excerpt 2

Israeli always considered Palestinian and Middle Eastern Muslims as a threat to their existence and survival and to de-emphasize their brutalities they always emphasize on Islamic terrorist groups to receive sympathies from the world community and to shape ideology of 'Us' as good and 'Them' as bad. By using the name of Islamic militants like Hamas, Israel always attempts brutal acts in Palestinian territory by killing innocent Muslims. When the host asks about the killing of 1500 Muslims, Danny shifts the topic again to Hamas and uses the discursive strategy of *Victimization* and says "*[they are threat] ... not to the Israeli snipers but certainly to the Israeli kids and babies and women and men who live in their own territory. Hamas is sending their people, it's not just demonstration*". Firstly, here Danny is, by using the name of Hamas, tries to convince the international community that they are just protecting their people and pointing to their version of reality that Palestinian Muslims are threat to the Israeli kids and women. But in reality, the brutalities and using the name of Hamas for face saving is the all-time tactics of Israeli officials. There are instances of *Vagueness* and *Blame Game* to achieve the goals and Danny is playing a victim card to manipulate Palestinian Muslims' image and to show them war-mongers. We can also see the instances of *Disclaimer* strategy where he refuses to admit his wrongdoings and disclaims negative in-group to give positive self- image. Here he is trying to inspire sympathy, glorify in-group and attribute blame and shame to out-group.

Israel never considers Hamas related sources as credible and reliable source but here in the interview we can see that Danny is quoting blogs of Hamas to justify their action and killing of Palestinian people. At the same time, the information of killing innocent Muslims around Gaza strip given by Hamas blogs was utterly denied by Danny. It clearly shows that anything that is serving their stance and their version of reality, they take it and emphasize on it and the information that is going against their reality and ideology, they just deny it and call it fake. Here we can see the use of discursive technique, *Disclaimer*. When the host asks about the reason of direct firing on the doctors and journalist, Danny says, "*I just quote Hamas.*" It's showing how the speaker delegitimizes the rival and shows and acceptance of cruel actions of his group.

There is an extension use of *Actor-Description* and *Falsification* strategies by the speaker. When the host, asks about the killing of 21 years old paramedic, *Razan al Najar*, who was shot to dead while wearing white uniform by Israeli sniper, the speaker tries to justify the killing by referring to false assumption and distorted facts. He says, "*Yes. She was having an incendiary bomb, and there is an investigation by the IDF (Israel Defense Forces), so she was a threat.*" This actor-description strategy to describe the out-group member is giving the chance to prove the in-group right and the action of killing 62 Palestinian justified without any investigation. He attached the idea of threat with it to make his explanation strong.

Danny used *Lexicalization* and *Actor-description* discursive strategies very openly in the interview to represent and to delegitimize the opposite group. Through *lexicalization* he 'selected strong and negative words' strategy is mostly used to emphasize on the bad qualities or negative point of the out-group in order to construct ideologies about that group. He uses words like, "threat", "imminent threat" and "Palestinian terrorist". He also says that the people of Palestine are "human shields" for Hamas terrorist and that they are acting out of Hamas terror. These words and phrases are used to show negative image of Islam in general and Palestinian Muslims in particular. At the same time, he describes his peoples innocent, his country democratic, transparent and a country that protects its people. The speaker used the discursive strategy *Authority* to show the positive image of in-group and to represent negative image of out-group. When the host asks about killing of volunteer paramedic, he again refers back to his own military institution to declare the paramedic a 'threat'. He again talks about the transparent investigation and says "I do trust the Israeli military, I do trust the Israeli Supreme Court which is very much trusted by all the world, Israel is transparent ...". These linguistic choices are instances of *Self-glorification*, *Generalization*, *Pseudo-ignorance* and *Comparison*. All these discursive strategies are creating polarization.

There is an extensive use of *Comparison* and *Polarization* in this discourse. The speaker repeatedly compares his nation and the practices within his nation with the practices of Palestine to show the difference and to glorify in-group. The speaker says| "..... The Israeli Supreme Court which is very much trusted by all the world, Israel is transparent..". Here he is talking about how trustful Israeli court and that they are accountable and responsible for every act they do. It's also highlights the negative image of Palestine and points to the weak and lawless situation in there. It clearly shows the polarization on the basis of "self" and "other". The speaker used discursive strategy *Victimization* to show the in-group members as victim in the hand of out-group members. He again says that, "They are killing and want to kill us". Danny is associating the out-group members with threat again. Such association and linguistic choices have their impact on the decades long Palestinian-Israel conflict and to present Israeli as victim before the world.

Danny uses many instances of *Nation Self-glorification* to create polarization. He says "Israel is a democracy, rule of law..." and the choice of these words is to create polarization between Israel and Palestine. The intent is to tell the world that Palestine is a lawless nation controlled by Hamas, who send 'innocent peoples' to die near Gaza border. He further goes on and says words "Judaism is a way of life is a culture, is a whole civilization". He praises his religion and his government and points to the idea that Hamas is sending their people to die because of their "culture of death". Here he is building contrast and pointing to the idea of Muslim terrorists who are willing to die to enter paradise. Praising his religion and constantly associating Palestinian protestor to Hamas and threat, he is creating polarization.

## 5. Findings and Conclusion

The Critical Discourse Analysis of Danny Ayalan's interview reveals how through their tactful use of language, political leaders change and influence public opinion. In Danny Ayalan's interview, it is observed that Danny wants to give a false picture of Palestine and Palestinian Muslims by calling them terrorists and acting as victim. He has used Muslim stereotypes to distort the image of Islam and at the same time praised his own religion very clearly to show the difference. Through the use of discursive strategies and techniques he tried to construct his version of reality about the out-group. He makes manipulative linguistic choices to give a positive image of Israel in front of international community. During the whole interview, it was observed that to convince host and public, he used different techniques to show his country a 'true democracy', his religion a 'proper way of life' and his people 'innocent'. On the other hand, he used words like 'terrorist', 'human shield', and 'threat' for the people of Palestine to portray their negative image and to distort their narrative.

Danny used specific words and sentences to show that Israel does not want to kill Palestinian Muslims and its intended target is Hamas because Hamas wants to destroy the state of Israel. To give negative other-image he also

used such strategies to convince media that Israel itself is a victim of the incident on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2018. The study deeply analyzed the discursive structure and revealed how Israel always employs Muslim stereotypes to influence the perception of the international community. The finding made it clear that Danny tried to manipulate the image of Palestinian image and their struggle against injustice. Through de-emphasizing his wrong doings around Gaza strip on 14<sup>th</sup> May, he is showing how powerful groups manipulate and distort truth about the powerless groups to serve their interest. This study provides insight into how ideologies and identities are constructed. There is a need to do more such researches to reveal the hidden working of ideologies and manipulative use of language in national and international politics. This study is limited to one interview and more interviews can be included to improve the quality and credibility of the study.

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## Appendix

### 1) Excerpt 1

**Mehdi Hasan:** *Danny Ayalon, on May 14th of this year, the Israeli government celebrated the 70th anniversary of your country's independence at the opening of the new US embassy in Jerusalem, I believe you were there as well, at that event, while over in Gaza on that same day Israeli army snipers killed 62 Palestinians in cold blood, gunned them down in full view of the world's television cameras. How do you justify, can you justify, the killing of unarmed Palestinian protesters, journalists, paramedics, kids?*

**Danny Ayalon:** *Well Mehdi, no one can justify killing innocent people, but I'm not sure this was the case, the 14th of May there were -, you're right, 62 persons were killed, they were pushed by their leaders of the Hamas, who by the way want to destroy the state of Israel, they were using them as human shields as some of them were behind them with bombs, incendiary, Molotov and other things. By the way, the 62, Hamas itself confessed the second day that out of the 62, 50 were active Hamas members. All the rest, well, I mean, we call it in, in a way which I don't like "collateral damage", but we have to look at who is responsible for the death, and the responsible is only Hamas.*

**Mehdi Hasan:** *Here's a question to you; 143 Palestinians at least, and the count keeps changing because Israelis keep killing more, have died since March 30th, since the beginning of the so-called "Great March of Return". Fifteen thousand Palestinians, let's just be clear, 15,000 have been wounded, 4,000 of them according to the United Nations were shot with live ammunition. Are you telling us, are you telling the Oxford Union audience here, the audience at home, that those 15,000 people were all members of Hamas? Seriously?*

**Danny Ayalon:** *Mehdi Hasan, I can look at anyone here in their eyes and say Israel is doing its level best not to kill anyone who is not involved. It's very important to know who is responsible here, because -.*

**Mehdi Hasan:** *Is it not the-, is it not the responsibility of the people pulling the trigger? That's normally how you hold people responsible for someone being killed.*

**Danny Ayalon:** *No. Well -, well -, well, how do you define pulling the trigger?*

**Mehdi Hasan:** *Um -.*

**Danny Ayalon:** *If you have the Hamas people -.*

**Mehdi Hasan:** *A man with a gun -.*

**Danny Ayalon:** *Yeah -.*

**Mehdi Hasan:** *Aims at a child from a 150 metres away and shoots him in the head.*

**Danny Ayalon:** *What about -, what about Palestinian **terrorists** were hiding behind innocent people who are launching rockets. Who are launching rockets!*

**Mehdi Hasan:** *OK, well it -, well it's a simple question. 15,000 wounded, how many of them were either members of Hamas, slash, terrorists?*

**Danny Ayalon:** *I do not know. I know that from the 62 on the 14th of May, 50 were Hamas by their own admission. On the other -.*

**Mehdi Hasan:** *No, we don't know that because there hasn't been an investigation.*

**Danny Ayalon:** *The facts are (overtalking) no -.*

**Mehdi Hasan:** *You got their Hamas membership forms from their bodies? What -, what's the facts?*

**Danny Ayalon:** *No. The facts are -, the facts are that Hamas leadership, sometimes at gunpoint, are sending those poor Hamas -, th -, those poor Gazan people to the borders. Now, [what is this] -.*

## **2) Excerpt 2**

**Mehdi Hasan:** *Let's come back to the -, the shootings here. Even if they were all members of Hamas, even if all 15,000 people are, you do realise that under international law and basic morality you can't shoot people for being members of a group, no matter what group it is. You can only shoot them when they pose an imminent threat to you. Were 15,000 people posing an imminent threat to Israeli snipers?*

**Danny Ayalon:** *Yes, they were. Yes, they were.*

**Mehdi Hasan:** *OK.*

**Danny Ayalon:** *And I'll tell you how, I'll tell you how. First of all, not to the Israeli snipers but certainly to the Israeli kids and babies and women and men who live in their own territory. Hamas is sending their people, it's not just demonstration -.*

**Mehdi Hasan:** *Countless Palestinians at the protest have been interviewed and they said, "We weren't sent by Hamas."*

**Danny Ayalon:** *Just go into the blogs -.*

**Mehdi Hasan:** *But they're all liars, are they?*

**Danny Ayalon:** *Just go to the blogs of Hamas where they say, "The Jews are sons of pigs and sons of dogs, and they have a -."*

**Mehdi Hasan:** *And you're now quoting them as a reliable source, that's my favourite -.*

**Danny Ayalon:** *No!*

**Mehdi Hasan:** *I've interviewed so many Israelis, you're the first to come here and say -.*

**Danny Ayalon:** *No!*

**Mehdi Hasan:** *"My source is Hamas." The first.*

**Danny Ayalon:** *Of course, it is.*

**Danny Ayalon:** Of course, it -.

**Mehdi Hasan:** In 10 years of doing this.

**Danny Ayalon:** Of course, it is.

**Mehdi Hasan:** Wow.

**Danny Ayalon:** Because all you have to do is to see what they say. I -, I just -.

**Mehdi Hasan:** Well no, how about we look at -, how about we look at some facts rather than your -, your kind of dodgy blogs?

**Danny Ayalon:** I just quote Hamas.

**Mehdi Hasan:** Let's -, let me ask you this. Well, look, I'll just quote the people who died and their family members. What threat did Razan al-Najjar, 21-year-old volunteer paramedic who was shot while wearing a white uniform in the chest, a hundred meters away from the fence, what threat did she pose to Israeli snipers?

**Danny Ayalon:** Wait a minute. This is something I really looked into, OK? She -.

**Mehdi Hasan:** I'm glad someone did.

**Danny Ayalon:** Yes. She was having an incendiary bomb, and there is an investigation by the IDF, so she was a threat. But I have another questions for you; why -.

**Mehdi Hasan:** Where's your -, hold on, no, no, before -.

**Danny Ayalon:** Why was she -, why was she going into a-, it's a warzone!

**Mehdi Hasan:** Why? You know why she was going, because you're killing her people and she's a paramedic.

**Mehdi Hasan:** Can you tell me how many Israelis were killed by Palestinian protesters since March the 30th? Simple question.

**Danny Ayalon:** You know, again, I didn't check it but, you know -.

**Mehdi Hasan:** Zero. But you are the ones under threat.

**Danny Ayalon:** No, no, no. I want to a -, why is it that no Israeli was killed? 'Cause the Israeli government, elected democratically, is defending them. Hamas people, not defending the people -.

**Mehdi Hasan:** Palestinians don't get a right to self-defence, do they?

**Danny Ayalon:** No, no, no, they are sending them to die.

**Danny Ayalon:** Listen, it's a culture of death.

*Mehdi Hasan: You keep saying they were sent to their death -*

*Danny Ayalon: Yes.*