

# SEMANTIC DISTORTION OF NETANYAHU’S UN STATEMENT ON TIKTOK AND INSTAGRAM

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## Abstract

This study examines semantic distortion in the reception of political utterances on social media, focusing on Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s statement referring to Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto’s speech during a United Nations session. The statement can be interpreted at the literal level as diplomatic praise acknowledging Indonesia’s strategic position as the country with the largest Muslim population in the world. However, public responses on TikTok and Instagram reveal patterns of meaning reinterpretation and semantic distortion. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, this study analyses user comments collected from official detikcom TikTok and Instagram posts containing excerpts of Netanyahu’s speech. The analysis is grounded in Leech’s theory of meaning, particularly *literal*, *connotative*, and *affective* meanings. The findings indicate that interpretations on both platforms are predominantly shaped by connotative and affective meanings, influenced by emotional responses, ideological orientations, and sensitivities surrounding the Palestine–Israel conflict. Platform-specific characteristics, such as TikTok’s short-form, decontextualized videos and Instagram’s caption-based information delivery, further contribute to meaning distortion. While a small number of users demonstrate literal and corrective interpretations, these are overshadowed by emotionally charged responses. This study highlights how social media dynamics and collective emotions significantly shape public engagement with political discourse, frequently shifting interpretation away from literal meaning and reinforcing patterns of semantic distortion in digital communication.

**Keywords:** *semantic distortion; netanyahu; shift meaning; conotative; affective.*

## 1. Introduction

During a United Nations (UN) session, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu mentioned Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto as an example of the leader from country with most Muslim population in the world. From semantic perspective, Netanyahu’s statement can be interpreted as a form of praise or recognition of Indonesia’s strategic position in global world. However, public responses in social media indicate a significant misinterpretation of the *literal meaning*. These responses suggest that *connotative meaning* plays a major role in

generating different interpretations across the two social media platform, namely TikTok and Instagram. This interpretation is consistent with Leech’s (1981) theory, who argues that connotative and affective meanings can influence the interpretation of an utterance when social context and emotional factors outweigh literal meaning (Yunira et al., 2020).

On TikTok and Instagram, a considerable number of users interpreted the statement as a military threat or a form of provocation indicating Indonesia’s involvement in the Palestine-Israel conflict. This indicates the presence of semantics misinterpretation, in which an utterance that should carry a positive value is instead interpreted negatively and generates emotional reactions (Wulandari et al., 2023). This finding is relevant to be studied through a semantic approach, particularly in exploring how *literal meaning*, *connotative meaning*, *affective meaning*, and *social context* influence public understanding of political utterances. According to Leech (1981), meaning is not simply conceptual but also connotative and affective, and it may shift depending on social background, emotions, and the biases of both speakers and listeners.

Differences in perception between TikTok and Instagram users may reflect variations in how the two platforms frame political utterances. TikTok’s algorithm tends to highlight short video clips without sufficient contextual explanation, which may lead users to adopt negative interpretations due to a lack of complete information. In contrast, Instagram often presents brief narratives through captions, which can also generate ambiguity and make it difficult for users to interpret the utterance literally. As a result, differences in platform characteristics shape how users interpret political utterances, even when the object of the interpretation remains the same.

TikTok appears to apply significant control over circulating information due to the ease with which users can access content on the platform (Bur, R., Ayuningtyas, F., & Muqsith, M. A., 2023). Many users rely on TikTok as a primary source of information, reducing the need to seek information from conventional news websites. As a result, several mainstream media outlets have begun utilizing TikTok as a channel for news dissemination. However, the reliance on short video clips often leads to *meaning distortion*, as complex information is compressed into brief and decontextualized formats.

On the other hand, Instagram remains a relevant social media platform in the contemporary digital landscape. Unlike TikTok, Instagram tends to deliver information in written form through captions. Still, this format also contributes to *meaning distortion*, as observed in this study. The ease of access and flexibility of Instagram make it an effective medium for the rapid and widespread dissemination of information. Similar to TikTok, however, Instagram often

fails to provide comprehensive contextual information.

Furthermore, social dynamics among social media users significantly influence how an utterance is interpreted. The Palestine–Israel issue is a sensitive topic within Indonesian society, causing statements made by political figures from the region to be interpreted through an emotional lens. Geopolitical conflicts spread on social media trigger strong emotional responses, such as anger and anxiety, which shift literal interpretations toward negative, affective based meanings (Susanto, 2025). In addition, social media platforms tend to amplify political framing and polarization, thereby increasing the likelihood of meaning distortion when an utterance is not understood within its full context. Thus, ideological factors, collective emotions, and digital culture collectively reinforce divergent interpretations of Netanyahu’s statement on TikTok and Instagram.

This study aims to analyse semantic shifts in political utterances, focusing on Benjamin Netanyahu’s statement regarding Prabowo Subianto as spread on TikTok and Instagram. The study examines how *literal*, *connotative*, and *affective meanings* are produced and interpreted by users of both platforms, while also considering social factors and platform specific characteristics that contribute to meaning shifts. This research is expected to contribute to semantic studies, particularly in relation to the interpretation of political discourse on social media, and to enhance public critical awareness of the potential for meaning distortion in social media information consumption.

## **2. Methodology**

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach, as it aims to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of meaning shift based on social context, language use, and the dynamics of social media users (Obeyd, 2021). This approach allows the researcher to describe how the public interprets political statements without manipulating variables. The data were collected from comments and posts on TikTok and Instagram containing excerpts from Benjamin Netanyahu’s speech referring to Prabowo Subianto. In addition, secondary data such as news articles, speech transcripts, and relevant semantic literature were used to support the analysis.

Data collection was conducted through online observation and documentation techniques by identifying relevant posts and copying comments related to meaning interpretation. Data selection was based on relevance and the intensity of discussion, such as posts with a high number of comments and comments that reflected divergent interpretations (*literal*, *connotative*, *affective*, and *corrective*). The data collection process continued until data

saturation was reached, that is, when additional data no longer provided new informational variation.

The comments were obtained from the official TikTok and Instagram accounts of detikcom media that featured excerpts from Benjamin Netanyahu’s speech and generated significant public responses. These comments were analysed through qualitative data analysis, including data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. In the initial stage, the researcher selected comments relevant to the primary focus of the study, particularly those containing *literal*, *connotative*, and *affective* interpretations. Subsequently, the data were categorized according to patterns of interpretation and users’ emotional responses. The analysis was conducted interpretatively by linking the findings to theories of connotative and affective meaning, enabling the researcher to understand how meaning shifts are formed in social media discourse.

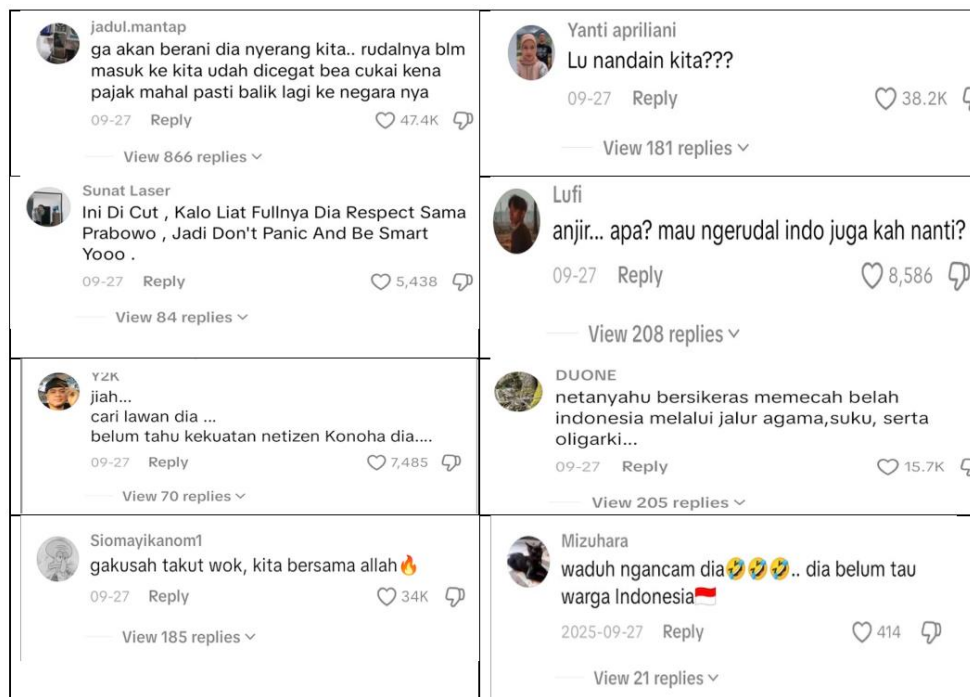
### 3. Result

The misinterpretation refers to the following speech from Benjamin Netanyahu: “And I took note, and I’m sure you did too, of the encouraging words spoken here by the President of Indonesia. This is the country with the largest muslim population of all nations. And it’s also a sign, of what could come”. (*Aku mencatatnya, dan aku yakin kamu juga menyadarinya, kata-kata penyemangat yang diucapkan di sini oleh Presiden Indonesia, ini adalah negara dengan populasi Muslim terbesar di antara semua negara. Dan ini juga merupakan pertanda tentang apa yang bisa terjadi di masa depan*).

This statement refers to an earlier remark made by President Prabowo, who stated:

“We must guarantee statehood for Palestine. But Indonesia also declares that ones Israel recognize the independence and the statehood of Palestine, Indonesia will immediately recognize the state of Israel and we will support all guarantees for the security of Israel”. (*Kita harus menjamin negara Palestina, tetapi Indonesia juga menyatakan bahwa begitu Israel mengakui kemerdekaan dan kenegaraan Palestina, Indonesia akan segera mengakui Negara Israel dan akan mendukung semua jaminan keamanan Israel*).

## Distortion Among TikTok Users



Source: TikTok @detikcom

The data are categorized based on the dominant type of meaning reflected in each comment, namely: (1) Literal Meaning, (6) Connotative–Affective Meaning, and (1) Affective Meaning. Each comment is presented verbatim as originally posted on TikTok.

- **Literal Meaning**

**Data 1** – Account “Sunat Laser”

*“ini di cut, kalo liat fullnya dia respect sama Prabowo, jadi don’t panic and be smart Yooo.”*

- **Connotative–Affective Meaning**

**Data 2** – Account “jadul.mantap”

*“ga akan berani dia nyerang kita.. rudalnya blm masuk ke kita udah dicegat bea cukai kena pajak mahal pasti balik lagi ke negaranya.”*

**Data 3** – Account “Y2K”

*“Jiah... cari lawan dia.... belum tahu kekuatan netizen Konoha dia.....”*

**Data 4** – Account “Yanti apriliani”

*“Lu nandain kita???.”*

**Data 5** – Account “lufi”

*“anjir... apa? mau ngerudal indo juga kah nanti?.”*

**Data 6** – Account “DUONE”

*“Netanyahu bersikeras memecah belah Indonesia melalui jalur agama, suku, serta Oligarki.”*

**Data 7** – Account “Mizuhara”

*“Waduh ngancam dia... dia belum tau warga Indonesia.”*

- **Affective Meaning**

**Data 8** – Account “Siomayikanom1”

*“gakusah takut wok, kita bersama Allah.”*

**Distortion among Instagram Users**



Source: Instagram @detikcom

The following data were collected from Instagram comments responding to Benjamin Netanyahu’s statement mentioning President Prabowo. The comments are categorized based on the dominant type of meaning identified in each response: (2) Literal Meaning and (6) Connotative–Affective Meaning.

- **Literal Meaning**

**Data 9** – Account "Sahara\_senju83"

*"Maksud Netanyahu adalah solusi dua negara yg disampaikan presiden Prabowo menjadi catatan Israel, hal ini tentu menjadikan pertimbangan bagi Israel karena tekanan internasional makin kuat. Kalau Palestina berdiri sebagai negara merdeka harus ada jaminan internasional Palestina tidak melakukan serangan ke Israel, dan Prabowo membuat statement Indonesia siap mengirim 20 ribu TNI pasukan penjaga perdamaian."*

**Data 10** – Account "arkivenindya"

*"Menurut kacamata kalian yg paham maksud dia ke arah mana nih."*

- **Connotative–Affective Meaning**

**Data 11** – Account "RonnySaputra\_"

*"Belum tau dia kalo di sini ada Banser dan Pemuda Pancasila yang siap tegak di garda terdepan untuk berperang."*

**Data 12** – Account "Rezafajarnugraha"

*"Kalem kita punya gas air mata.. keep calm."*

**Data 13** – Account "pudyastanto"

*"Perdukunan Indonesia ora ada yg bisa nyantet dia apa??."*

**Data 14** – Account "ydiiprhtnaa"

*"Hati hati lu Netanyahu dikirim santet."*

**Data 15** – Account "medicaputeri"

*"gausah sok jadi pahlawan, nanti tau-tau ada rudal sampe Indonesia lagi, kalo begitu mau balas pake apa ke sana?."*

**Data 16** – Account "firman\_hps18"

*"Tau-tau roket sampai di Indo."*

## 4. Discussion

### Distortion Among TikTok Users

Based on observations of user comments and interactions on both platforms, TikTok and Instagram emerge as spaces in which Benjamin Netanyahu's statement is equally misinterpreted. Although the statement is literally a form of praise acknowledging Indonesia's strategic position as the country with the largest Muslim population in the world, many TikTok and Instagram users interpret it as a threat, sarcasm, or an indication of political provocation

related to the Palestine– Israel conflict. This distortion of meaning is primarily driven by the strong dominance of *connotative-affective meaning*, in which a neutral utterance is immediately associated with negative motives due to users existing ideological biases toward the figure of Netanyahu. *Affective meaning* also plays a significant role, as collective emotions surrounding humanitarian and geopolitical issues prevent users from processing the utterance literally, leading them instead to interpret it through a lens of antipathy toward Israel.

Platform specific factors further amplify this distortion. TikTok is characterized by short form video content, decontextualized speech excerpts, and the frequent use of provocative captions that are not necessarily informative. TikTok’s algorithm actively promotes content that triggers strong emotional responses due to its high engagement potential. As a result, users are exposed to isolated fragments of Netanyahu’s statement without sufficient contextual explanation, prompting them to fill contextual gaps with personal assumptions. This situation reinforces patterns of negative interpretation that are not grounded in literal meaning but rather in pre-existing emotional associations. Consequently, TikTok illustrates how platform dynamics can intensify the dominance of connotative and affective meanings, a pattern that similarly characterizes users responses on Instagram.

- **Literal Meaning**

1. Comment by the account “Sunat Laser”:

*“ini di cut, kalo liat fullnya dia respect sama Prabowo, jadi don’t panic and be smart Yooo.”*

This comment reveals an interpretation closer to literal and corrective meaning. The user explicitly emphasizes that the video circulating on TikTok presents a shortened version of Benjamin Netanyahu’s statement, leading to contextual distortion. By stating that Netanyahu “respects Prabowo,” the comment seeks to restore the original diplomatic intent of the utterance rather than framing it as a threat or provocation. Although the comment contains an affective element in the form of reassurance (“don’t panic”), this emotion is not negative; instead, it functions as a rationalizing mechanism aimed at countering collective panic. Accordingly, this data demonstrates the dominance of literal meaning reinforced by a corrective function, serving as a counter-narrative to the prevailing negative connotative interpretations commonly found on TikTok.

- **Connotative-Affective Meaning**

1. Comment by the account “jadul.mantap”:

*“ga akan berani dia nyerang kita.. rudalnya blm masuk ke kita udah dicegat bea cukai kena pajak mahal pasti balik lagi ke negaranya.”*

This comment demonstrates that Benjamin Netanyahu’s statement is interpreted primarily through connotative and affective meaning rather than literal meaning. Although Netanyahu’s statement is explicitly diplomatic and laudatory in nature, the TikTok user interprets it as a military threat, as indicated by the use of lexical items such as “nyerang” (attack) and “rudal” (missile). This interpretation reflects a semantic shift from political recognition to a conflict-oriented narrative, triggered by collective emotions and ideological prejudice toward Netanyahu as a political figure. Consequently, this data illustrates the dominance of negative connotative meaning reinforced by affective meaning, in which users’ emotional responses play a more significant role in meaning construction than literal comprehension of the utterance (Leech, 1981).

2. Comment by the account “Y2K”:

*“Jiah... cari lawan dia.... belum tahu kekuatan netizen Konoha dia.....”*

This comment reflects a dominant connotative–affective interpretation characterized by humor and sarcasm. Rather than attempting to interpret Benjamin Netanyahu’s statement literally, the user reconstructs the geopolitical issue into a symbolic joke commonly employed in Indonesian digital culture. The expression “netizen Konoha” functions as a metaphor for collective online power, representing a defensive stance and symbolic resistance toward a political figure associated with the Palestine–Israel conflict. Affectively, the comment conveys mocking and dismissive emotions, indicating that emotional responses outweigh rational or literal interpretations of the political utterance. Thus, this data reinforces that meaning construction is driven by connotative and affective dimensions rather than literal or contextual meaning (Leech, 1981).

3. Comment by the account “Yanti apriliani”:

*“Lu nandain kita???.”*

This comment exhibits a dominant connotative–affective interpretation with a confrontational tone. The utterance suggests that Benjamin Netanyahu’s statement is not

perceived as praise or diplomatic acknowledgment but as a symbolic act implying threat or target identification. Although the literal meaning of Netanyahu’s statement contains no element of threat, this comment demonstrates how associations with the Palestine–Israel conflict generate suspicion and defensive reactions among users. The repeated question marks intensify the emotional tone of tension and anger, indicating that affective meaning overrides rational interpretation. Accordingly, this data reflects negative connotative meaning strengthened by affective responses, in which political discourse is interpreted through emotional and ideological lenses rather than literal meaning (Leech, 1981).

4. Comment by the account “lufi”:

*“anjir... apa? mau ngerudal indo juga kah nanti?”*

This comment reveals an interpretation strongly dominated by connotative–affective meaning with an alarmist tone. The user explicitly associates Benjamin Netanyahu’s statement with the possibility of a military attack on Indonesia, despite the absence of any literal threat in the original utterance. The use of the term “*ngerudal*” (to launch missiles) indicates an extreme semantic shift from diplomatic praise to imagined geopolitical violence. Affectively, the comment is saturated with emotions of shock, fear, and suspicion, driven by collective sentiment surrounding the Palestine–Israel conflict. Thus, this data illustrates that meaning interpretation is guided by negative affective meaning that amplifies connotative threat, while literal meaning is entirely disregarded, consistent with Leech’s (1981) concept of affective meaning dominance in emotionally charged communication.

5. Comment by the account “DUONE”:

*“Netanyahu bersikeras memecah belah Indonesia melalui jalur agama, suku, serta oligarki.”*

This comment demonstrates a dominant connotative interpretation reinforced by affective meaning. The user does not interpret Benjamin Netanyahu’s statement as a diplomatic utterance but rather as a concealed political strategy aimed at creating internal divisions within Indonesia. This interpretation reflects the attribution of motives not explicitly present in the original statement, resulting in a semantic shift from praise to manipulative accusation. Affectively, the comment conveys suspicion and vigilance, closely tied to sensitivities surrounding geopolitics and national identity. Consequently, this data highlights the dominance of ideologically driven negative connotative meaning, in which political discourse is framed through narratives of distrust and conflict rather than literal interpretation (Leech, 1981).

6. Comment by the account “Mizuhara”:

*“Waduh ngancam dia...dia belum tau warga Indonesia.”*

This comment demonstrates an interpretation dominated by connotative–affective meaning with a defensive and confrontational orientation. The user interprets Benjamin Netanyahu’s statement as a form of threat, even though the utterance does not literally contain elements of intimidation or provocation. The phrase “belum tahu warga Indonesia” functions as an expression of collective confidence and symbolic resistance, reflecting an emotional response to the Palestine–Israel geopolitical issue. Affectively, the comment conveys feelings of vigilance and defiance, causing affective meaning to outweigh efforts to understand the diplomatic context of the utterance. Thus, this data illustrates the dominance of negative connotative meaning reinforced by defensive affective meaning, in which political discourse is interpreted through lenses of suspicion and national solidarity rather than its literal meaning (Leech, 1981).

- **Affective Meaning**

Comment by the account “Siomayikanom1”:

*“gakusah takut wok, kita bersama Allah.”*

This comment reflects an interpretation dominated by affective meaning with a religious nuance, rather than by the literal meaning of Benjamin Netanyahu’s statement. The comment does not attempt to interpret the political content of the utterance but instead functions as an expression of collective emotion in the form of moral and spiritual reinforcement. The mentions of “Allah” illustrates how the Palestine–Israel geopolitical issue is framed through religious identity, resulting in an emotional and symbolic response. In this context, connotative meaning emerges as a form of symbolic solidarity and resistance, while literal meaning is entirely neglected. Thus, this data demonstrates the dominance of affective–religious meaning, where political discourse serves as a trigger for collective emotion and identity, aligning with Leech’s (1981) view that affective meaning can override conceptual understanding in emotionally charged contexts.

### **Distortion Among Instagram Users**

The analysis of Instagram comments indicates that interpretations on this platform are also largely dominated by connotative–affective meaning, similar to the pattern observed on

TikTok. Most Instagram users interpret Benjamin Netanyahu’s statement through emotional and ideological frameworks, frequently construing it as political provocation, implicit threat, or symbolic insinuation related to the Palestine–Israel conflict. Although the statement is literally diplomatic and appreciative in nature, users tend to associate it with negative intentions due to pre-existing biases toward Netanyahu and heightened emotional sensitivity surrounding the geopolitical issue. As a result, affective meaning plays a central role in shaping interpretation, causing literal meaning to be marginalized in favour of emotionally charged and ideologically driven readings.

Nevertheless, the Instagram data also reveal the presence of a small number of comments that reflect literal and corrective interpretations, which distinguishes it slightly from TikTok. These comments attempt to restore the original context of the utterance by emphasizing its diplomatic intent or by pointing out that the circulating content represents an edited or incomplete excerpt. This indicates that while connotative–affective interpretations dominate Instagram discourse, they do not entirely eliminate alternative, more rational readings. Therefore, the difference between TikTok and Instagram lies not in the types of meaning produced, but in the degree of dominance of connotative–affective meaning. Platform characteristics, such as longer captions and threaded comment sections, occasionally facilitate corrective responses and contextual clarification, resulting in a more heterogeneous interpretative space compared to TikTok, although still largely shaped by emotional and connotative bias.

- **Literal Meaning**

1. Comment by the account “Sahara\_senju83”:

*“Maksud Netanyahu adalah solusi dua negara yg disampaikan presiden Prabowo menjadi catatan Israel, hal ini tentu menjadikan pertimbangan bagi Israel karena tekanan internasional makin kuat. Kalau Palestina berdiri sebagai negara merdeka harus ada jaminan internasional Palestina tidak melakukan serangan ke Israel, dan Prabowo membuat statement Indonesia siap mengirim 20 ribu TNI pasukan penjaga perdamaian.”*

This comment demonstrates an interpretation dominated by literal meaning, with a higher level of rational elaboration compared to comments found on TikTok. The user interprets Benjamin Netanyahu’s statement as a diplomatic response to President Prabowo’s proposal regarding the two-state solution, rather than as a threat or provocation. Connotative and affective meanings are relatively weak, as the comment attempts to explain the geopolitical

context in an argumentative manner, including references to international pressure, security guarantees, and Indonesia’s role in peacekeeping missions. As a result, this data reflects the dominance of literal meaning with a corrective–interpretative function, in which political discourse is understood through the framework of policy and international relations rather than emotional reaction. This pattern also reflects Instagram’s platform characteristics, which allow users to express longer and more reflective interpretations, thereby minimizing meaning distortion compared to TikTok.

2. Comment by the account “arkivenindya”:

*“Menurut kacamata kalian yg paham maksud dia ke arah mana nih.”*

This comment reflects a tendency toward literal–reflective interpretation. Unlike emotionally charged or speculative comments, the user expresses uncertainty and caution in interpreting Benjamin Netanyahu’s statement. Rather than associating the statement with threat or provocation, the comment opens space for discussion in order to seek a more accurate and contextualized meaning. Affectively, the comment remains relatively neutral and does not display strong negative emotion, allowing affective meaning to remain non-dominant in the interpretative process. Consequently, this data represents an effort to clarify meaning that approaches literal understanding and demonstrates users’ critical awareness of potential meaning distortion in fragmented social media information.

- **Connotative-Affective Meaning**

1. Comment by the account “Ronnysaputra\_”:

*“Belum tau dia kalo di sini ada Banser dan Pemuda Pancasila yang siap tegak di garda terdepan untuk berperang.”*

This comment reflects a dominant connotative–affective interpretation characterized by aggressive and defensive tones. Rather than responding to the literal meaning of Benjamin Netanyahu’s statement, the user constructs a narrative of conflict readiness by invoking civilian organizations as symbols of resistance. Connotatively, the comment frames Indonesia as being under threat and in need of militant defence. Affectively, it conveys collective emotions of confidence and reactive nationalism. As a result, this data illustrates the dominance of connotative meaning reinforced by aggressive affective meaning, in which political discourse is interpreted through imagined conflict and defense rather than diplomatic intent (Leech, 1981).

2. Comment by the account “Rezafajarnugraha”:

*“Kalem kita punya gas air mata.. keep calm.”*

This comment demonstrates a dominant connotative–affective interpretation with a defensivehumorous tone. The utterance is not intended to interpret Benjamin Netanyahu’s statement literally, but rather to serve as an emotional response that alleviates tension through humor and irony. The mention of “tear gas” functions as a symbolic representation of defensive strength in a joking context, reflecting both confidence and an attempt to reassure other users. Affectively, the comment conveys a relaxed and non-panicked emotional stance. Accordingly, this data shows the dominance of connotative meaning reinforced by affective humor, where political discourse becomes a trigger for collective emotional expression rather than an object of literal or contextual understanding (Leech, 1981).

3. Comment by the account “pudyastanto”:

*“Perdukunan Indonesia ora ada yg bisa nyantet dia apa??.”*

This comment reflects a dominant connotative–affective interpretation. The utterance does not attempt to understand the literal meaning of Benjamin Netanyahu’s statement, but instead employs elements of traditional belief as symbolic humor in response to a geopolitical issue. References to “perdukunan” (shamanism) and “nyantet” (casting a curse) function as playful metaphors that downplay perceived threats while expressing emotional tension through satire. Affectively, the comment conveys relaxed and sarcastic emotions, aiming to entertain while reinforcing online solidarity. Therefore, this data highlights the dominance of connotative meaning reinforced by humorous affective meaning, in which political discourse is treated as an object of digital cultural expression rather than literal or contextual interpretation (Leech, 1981).

4. Comment by the account “ydiiprhtnaa”:

*“Hati hati lu Netanyahu dikirim santet.”*

This comment demonstrates a dominant connotative–affective interpretation. The utterance is not intended as a literal interpretation of Benjamin Netanyahu’s statement but as an emotional expression that utilizes local cultural symbols (“santet”) to mock and diminish a political figure associated with the Palestine–Israel conflict. Connotatively, the comment constructs a symbolic, non-literal threat as a form of verbal resistance, while affectively it conveys emotions of ridicule and relief through humor. Consequently, this data illustrates the

dominance of connotative meaning reinforced by humorous–sarcastic affective meaning, where political discourse serves as a catalyst for digital cultural expression and online solidarity rather than literal comprehension (Leech, 1981).

5. Comment by the account “medicaputeri”:

*“gausah sok jadi pahlawan, nanti tau-tau ada rudal sampe Indonesia lagi, kalo begitu mau balas pake apa ke sana?.”*

This comment reflects a dominant connotative–affective interpretation. The user interprets Benjamin Netanyahu’s statement not as diplomatic discourse but as a potential escalation of conflict that could directly impact Indonesia. The reference to “missiles reaching Indonesia” signifies an extreme semantic shift from political praise to imagined military threat. Affectively, the comment expresses fear, anxiety, and skepticism, prompting the user to question Indonesia’s preparedness for conflict. Thus, this data demonstrates the dominance of negative connotative meaning reinforced by affective anxiety, in which political discourse is processed through fear and speculation rather than literal meaning (Leech, 1981).

6. Comment by the account “firman\_hps18”:

*“Tau-tau roket sampai di Indo.”*

This brief comment exhibits a dominant connotative–affective interpretation with an alarmist tone. It represents concern that Benjamin Netanyahu’s statement could lead to military escalation affecting Indonesia, despite the absence of any literal threat in the original utterance. The term “rocket” functions as a symbol of violence and danger, marking a semantic shift from diplomatic praise to imagined attack. Affectively, the use of a sad emoticon reinforces emotions of fear and anxiety. Accordingly, this data highlights the dominance of negative connotative meaning reinforced by affective fear, where interpretation is driven more by emotional response than by literal understanding (Leech, 1981).

## 5. Conclusion

Based on the analysis of data collected from TikTok and Instagram, it can be concluded that Benjamin Netanyahu’s statement, which is literally intended as a form of praise, undergoes a significant shift in meaning when circulated within social media spaces. This semantic shift is primarily driven by the strong influence of *connotative* and *affective meanings* in users’ interpretative processes. Social background, ideological bias, and emotional sentiment toward

the Palestine–Israel issue play a central role in shaping public perception. These findings indicate that the interpretation of political utterances on social media does not rely entirely on literal meaning, but is heavily influenced by emotional associations and the social context carried by the audience. The analysis further demonstrates that both platforms TikTok and Instagram equally contribute to interpretative distortion, with user responses on both platforms largely dominated by *connotative–affective* readings. TikTok, through its algorithmic emphasis on short, emotionally charged video content, facilitates rapid and widespread meaning distortion due to the lack of contextual completeness. However, Instagram also exhibits similar patterns of distortion. Although Instagram provides longer captions and more structured comment sections, these features do not necessarily ensure a more accurate understanding of the utterance. In practice, Instagram users also tend to rely on emotional and ideological associations, resulting in interpretations that favour *connotative–affective* meaning over literal comprehension. Thus, the difference between the two platforms is not categorical, but rather related to the intensity and visibility of emotionally driven interpretations. Overall, this study confirms that differences in public perception are not determined solely by the content of political utterances, but are significantly shaped by mechanisms of information dissemination, modes of presentation, and the structural characteristics of social media platforms. Media context therefore plays a crucial role in meaning construction, highlighting the importance of examining how political discourse is received, interpreted, and potentially misinterpreted in digital environments. If left unaddressed, such patterns of distortion may contribute to widespread public misunderstanding and reinforce social polarization within global political discourse.

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