

Israel's Genocidal Intent: South Africa's Claim at the ICJ Based on Forensic Linguistic Analysis

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Abstract: This paper examines South Africa's application to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on 29 December 2023, which alleges Israel has breached its obligations under the 1948 Genocide Convention in relation to Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. The study focuses on the contention that public statements by Israeli officials demonstrate genocidal intent, specifically direct and public incitement to commit genocide as per Article III(c) of the Convention. The primary objective is to employ forensic linguistic analysis to identify and scrutinise linguistic markers indicative of *dolus specialis* (specific intent to destroy a protected group, in whole or in part) within these pronouncements and to discuss their implications for the ICJ case. This research utilises a qualitative content analysis methodology, with a forensic linguistic approach, applied to official and public statements by senior Israeli officials (including the Prime Minister, President, and Defence Minister) made between October 2023 and April 2024. Data are drawn from South Africa's ICJ application, reports from human rights organisations such as Amnesty International, and verified transcripts. The analysis identifies key linguistic patterns, including dehumanisation (e.g., "human animals"), collective attribution of responsibility (e.g., "an entire nation out there that is responsible"), and symbolic, potentially annihilatory references (e.g., the invocation of 'Amalek'). The findings suggest these statements exhibit characteristics consistent with the *actus reus* of incitement and contribute to inferring *mens rea* for genocide. The paper concludes that forensic linguistic analysis reveals systematic discursive strategies in official Israeli rhetoric that are pertinent to establishing genocidal intent under international law, thereby providing a linguistic evidential basis for South Africa's claims at the ICJ.

Keywords: Genocide; Forensic Linguistics; International Court of Justice; Israel; Palestine

INTRODUCTION

On December 29, 2023, the Republic of South Africa instituted proceedings against the State of Israel before the International Court of Justice (ICJ), alleging violations by Israel of its obligations under the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (hereinafter the Genocide Convention) in relation to Palestinians in the Gaza Strip (South Africa, 2023, p. 1). South Africa, while unequivocally condemning all violations of international law by all parties, including the attacks in Israel on October 7, 2023 (South Africa, 2023, p. 1), submitted that Israel's acts and omissions are genocidal in character, as they are committed with the requisite specific intent to destroy Palestinians in Gaza as a part of the broader Palestinian national, racial, and ethnical group (South Africa, 2023, p. 1). A core component of South Africa's application is the assertion that numerous public statements by Israeli State officials constitute direct and public incitement to commit genocide and are indicative of genocidal intent (South Africa, 2023, pp. 59-67). These events unfold against the backdrop of the October 7, 2023 attacks and Israel's subsequent large-scale military operations in Gaza, which have led to tens of thousands of deaths and widespread destruction of civilian infrastructure (Amnesty International, 2024, p. 4; South Africa, 2023, pp. 29-58).

This article aims to analyze claims of genocidal intent, particularly as evidenced in official Israeli pronouncements, through the synergistic application of forensic linguistics and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Forensic linguistics is an interdisciplinary field concerned with the interface of language, law, and justice (Gibbons, 2003; Olsson, 2008). CDA, in turn, offers a robust framework for examining how language constructs and reflects power dynamics, ideologies, and social practices (Fairclough, 2013; Van Dijk, 2015; Wodak & Meyer, 2009), and has been effectively applied in diverse sociolinguistic contexts, such as the study of identity narratives in digital spaces (Pujiati et al., 2025, p. 653). The objective here is to identify and scrutinize linguistic markers within official statements that may indicate

dolus specialis, or the specific intent required for the crime of genocide. Article II of the Genocide Convention (United Nations, 1948) defines genocide as certain acts "committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such." The requirement of *dolus specialis* is paramount and distinguishes genocide from other international crimes (Jones, 2017, p. 7; Kreß, 2006, p. 461). South Africa's application details various acts allegedly committed by Israel, including killing members of the group and deliberately inflicting conditions of life calculated to bring about their physical destruction, arguing these fulfil the *actus reus* of genocide under Article II of the Convention (South Africa, 2023, pp. 29-58). Moreover, the application extensively argues the presence of *mens rea* through patterns of conduct and explicit statements by Israeli officials (South Africa, 2023, pp. 59-72). Amnesty International (2024, p. 4) has also concluded that Israel's acts in Gaza were committed with the specific intent to destroy Palestinians in Gaza as a group, amounting to genocide. The Genocide Convention obligates State Parties to prevent and punish genocide (United Nations, 1948, Article I) and provides for the ICJ to settle disputes (Diakonia International Humanitarian Law Centre, 2024, pp. 4-5; United Nations, 1948, Article IX). It is established that genocidal intent does not necessitate the destruction of an entire group; intent to destroy a substantial part is sufficient (Kreß, 2006, p. 468; South Africa, 2023, p. 11). The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court also lists genocide as a core international crime (United Nations, 1998).

To achieve its aim of contributing to a nuanced understanding of how language functions in the articulation and potential establishment of *dolus specialis* in international criminal law, and to address the issues outlined above, this study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. What characteristic linguistic markers (e.g., lexical choices, rhetorical strategies, speech acts, pragmatic features) are employed in public statements by Israeli officials regarding Palestinians in Gaza issued between October 2023 and April 2024?
2. How do the identified linguistic markers in these statements contribute to discourses of dehumanization, incitement, and the specific intent (*dolus specialis*) to destroy Palestinians in Gaza, as a group, in whole or in part, as defined under the Genocide Convention?
3. To what extent can a forensic linguistic and Critical Discourse Analysis of these official statements provide evidentiary support or critical insights for assessing the claims of genocidal intent as presented in South Africa's application against Israel at the International Court of Justice?

METHODS

This section outlines the methodological framework employed in this study to analyze statements by Israeli officials for linguistic evidence of genocidal intent in the context of South Africa's application to the International Court of Justice (ICJ).

Research Design

This study utilizes a qualitative research design (Pandey & Pandey, 2015: 5), specifically employing a descriptive and analytical approach to examine textual data (Pandey & Pandey, 2015: 2-3). The core of the research design is a qualitative content analysis integrated with a forensic linguistic framework. This design was chosen for its suitability in systematically identifying, interpreting, and understanding the nuances of language used in official pronouncements that may relate to genocidal intent (*dolus specialis*). The research design constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement, and analysis of the linguistic data (Pandey & Pandey, 2015: 60), aiming to explore and delineate patterns of language use within a specific legal and political context. It is also exploratory in its aim to uncover and detail specific linguistic markers pertinent to the research questions (Pandey & Pandey, 2015: 66).

Data Sources

The data for this study are drawn exclusively from a range of primary and secondary textual sources. Given the research's focus on the analysis of publicly available official statements and formal legal documents to assess linguistic evidence of genocidal intent, this study does not involve direct interviews with individuals or officials. The data are entirely documentary.

Primary Data Sources

The core data corpus comprises public statements made by Israeli state officials, including the Prime Minister, President, Minister of Defence, other cabinet ministers, and senior military officers, specifically those issued between October 2023 and April 2024. These statements are sourced from: (1) Official documents submitted to the International Court of Justice, notably South Africa's initial "Application Instituting Proceedings" (South Africa, 2023) and its subsequent "Urgent Request and Application for the Indication of Additional Provisional Measures" (South Africa, 2024). These documents contain extensive annexures and direct quotations of the statements under scrutiny ; (2) Reports from internationally recognized human rights organizations that have documented and analyzed such statements, for example, the report by Amnesty International (Amnesty International, 2024) ; (3) The International Court of Justice's Order of 26 January 2024, which itself references certain statements: Official government transcripts and press releases from Israeli state organs, where available ; (4) Verified transcripts and reports from reputable international news media outlets, cross-referenced for accuracy.

Secondary Data Sources

These include : (1) Academic literature, encompassing books, peer-reviewed journal articles, and research reports in the fields of genocide studies, international criminal law, forensic linguistics, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), and legal theory (Pandey & Pandey, 2015: 116-119); (2) Jurisprudence from international courts and tribunals, including the ICJ, the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), particularly judgments and orders pertaining to the definition of genocide, specific intent (*dolus specialis*), and the crime of incitement to commit genocide.

Data Collection

The data collection process employed a **documentation method** (Pandey & Pandey, 2015: 116) to systematically gather and organize the textual data from the identified sources.

Procedures

1. A comprehensive review of the primary data sources (ICJ submissions, human rights reports) was conducted to identify and extract all relevant statements attributed to Israeli officials within the specified timeframe.
2. Each statement was collected in its most complete form available to ensure contextual integrity and to facilitate nuanced analysis. Fragments or out-of-context quotations were avoided unless they were the only form available, in which case this limitation was noted.
3. The authenticity and official character of statements were, where possible, cross-verified by comparing multiple sources (e.g., ICJ documents, NGO reports, media transcripts).
4. A systematic literature search using academic databases (e.g., JSTOR, Scopus, Web of Science), university library catalogues, and legal databases (e.g., ICJ, ICTY/ICTR websites) was performed to gather relevant secondary sources.

Instruments

The primary instrument for organizing the primary data was a **data extraction protocol**. This involved creating a detailed log for each collected statement, cataloguing: (a) the full text of the statement; (b) the identity of the speaker (name, position); (c) the date and location of the statement; (d) the immediate context in which the statement was made (e.g., press conference, social media post, parliamentary address); (e) the source(s) from which the statement was obtained; and (f) initial notes on potential linguistic features of interest.

Data Analysis

The data analysis phase was qualitative and interpretive, employing a multi-faceted approach grounded in qualitative content analysis (Pandey & Pandey, 2015: 130), forensic linguistics, and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), with particular attention to principles from Van Dijk's socio-cognitive model concerning the relationship between discourse, cognition, and society. The analysis aimed to identify,

describe, and interpret linguistic features potentially indicative of genocidal intent or incitement. The process involved the following steps:

1. **Familiarization and Corpus Preparation:** The collected statements were repeatedly read to ensure a thorough understanding of their content, apparent meanings, and immediate discursive contexts. The corpus was organized for systematic review.
2. **Coding and Identification of Potential Markers:** An initial coding phase involved identifying segments of text containing language potentially relevant to genocidal intent. This included, but was not limited to, instances of dehumanization, demonization, threats, calls for destruction or collective punishment, generalizations about the Palestinian population, and justifications for widespread harm.
3. **Detailed Linguistic Analysis:** Selected segments underwent in-depth linguistic analysis, focusing on:
 - a. **Lexical Choices and Semantic Analysis:** Examining specific vocabulary, including the use of metaphors (e.g., biblical references such as "Amalek"), pejoratives, animalizing or objectifying terms (e.g., "human animals"), euphemisms, and loaded terminology.
 - b. **Speech Act Analysis:** Identifying the illocutionary force of utterances – whether they function as incitement, orders, justifications, threats, policy declarations, etc.
 - c. **Rhetorical Strategies:** Analyzing persuasive techniques, including generalizations, appeals to emotion, fear-mongering, and the construction of collective identity and otherness.
 - d. **Pragmatic Analysis:** Investigating implicatures, presuppositions, deixis (e.g., how "us" vs. "them" distinctions are linguistically constructed and maintained), and the inferred meaning of statements in their specific communicative context.
 - e. **CDA Framework Application:** Examining how statements reflect, construct, and legitimize power relations, ideologies, and social cognitions relevant to the conflict and the treatment of the Palestinian population in Gaza. This involved considering how discourse might contribute to creating an environment conducive to genocidal actions.
4. **Interpretation and Thematic Synthesis:** Linguistic findings were categorized and synthesized into broader themes related to the legal elements of genocide, particularly *dolus specialis* (specific intent to destroy the group, in whole or in part) and direct and public incitement to commit genocide.
5. **Contextualization and Legal Correlation:** The interpreted linguistic evidence was then contextualized within the broader socio-political, historical, and military situation, and correlated with the legal definitions and jurisprudential understanding of genocide and incitement under international law.

The overarching goal of this analytical process was to determine whether the linguistic patterns present in the official statements could, from a forensic linguistic and CDA perspective, be interpreted as constituting evidence of genocidal intent as defined in the Genocide Convention.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the core findings derived from the systematic forensic linguistic and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of public statements made by Israeli officials between October 2023 and April 2024, as analyzed in this study. The findings are organized around the research questions, followed by a discussion that interprets these findings within the context of relevant theories of genocide, international law, and linguistic analysis.

Characteristic Linguistic Markers in Official Statements (Answering RQ1)

The first research question asked: What characteristic linguistic markers (e.g., lexical choices, rhetorical strategies, speech acts, pragmatic features) are employed in public statements by Israeli officials regarding Palestinians in Gaza issued between October 2023 and April 2024? The analysis conducted in this study revealed several recurrent and characteristic linguistic markers, as summarized in Table 1 below and discussed in the following subsections.

Table 1. Key Linguistic Markers in Israeli Officials' Statements (October 2023 - April 2024)

Linguistic Category/Marker Type	Specific Example of Statement/Feature	Speaker & Date	Source of Statement (Primary Document)	Implied Function / Relevance (as analyzed in this study)
Lexical Choices: Dehumanization	"fighting human animals"	Minister of Defence Yoav Gallant (Oct 9, 2023)	South Africa (2023, p. 60)	Strips victims of human status, lowers inhibition to violence.
	Invocation of "Amalek"	Prime Minister B. Netanyahu (Oct 28 & Nov 3, 2023)	South Africa (2023, pp. 62-63)	Biblical reference implying a command to annihilate an entire group, including non-combatants.
Lexical Choices: Collective Blame	"It is an entire nation out there that is responsible."	President Isaac Herzog (Oct 12, 2023)	South Africa (2023, p. 61)	Erases distinction between combatants and civilians, assigns collective guilt, justifying broad attacks.
Lexical Choices: Disregard for Civilians	Suggesting nuclear option for Gaza; "no such thing as uninvolved civilians in Gaza."	Minister of Heritage Amihai Eliyahu (Nov 5, 2023)	<i>The Times of Israel</i> (November 5, 2023)	Indicates extreme disregard for civilian life and immunity.
Declarations of Intent: Indiscriminate Force	"The emphasis is on damage and not on accuracy."	IDF Spokesperson Daniel Hagari (Oct 9, 2023)	South Africa (2023, p. 38)	Signals intent for widespread destruction, potentially indiscriminate, rather than precision targeting.
Speech Acts: Directives/Incitement	Ordered forces to "release all restraints."	Minister of Defence Yoav Gallant (Oct 9, 2023)	South Africa (2023, p. 60)	Can be interpreted as an order for unrestrained force, potentially leading to excessive violence and war crimes/crimes against humanity.
Speech Acts: Directives/Incitement	Calls to "flatten Gaza," "erase Gaza."	Various officials (as cited generally in primary sources)	South Africa (2023, p. 64, para 102e)	Explicit calls for widespread destruction of a civilian area, indicative of intent to destroy essential conditions for life.
Rhetorical Strategies: Religious Framing	Framing the conflict as a "holy war" or against "children of darkness."	Prime Minister B. Netanyahu (Nov 3, 2023)	South Africa (2023, p. 64, para 102e)	Sacralizes conflict, potentially removing moral/legal restraints and justifying extreme actions.
Pragmatic Features: "Us vs. Them"	Consistent construction of stark dichotomy.	Various officials (e.g., Netanyahu, Gallant)	Evident in numerous statements (e.g., South Africa, 2023, pp. 59-72)	Polarizes discourse, denies shared humanity, normalizes aggression against the demonized "other."

Lexical Choices and Semantic Framing (Elaborated)

Findings

As highlighted in Table 1, this study found a consistent pattern of specific lexical choices that frame Palestinians in Gaza, and the situation itself, in highly negative and often dehumanizing terms. Key

examples identified include Minister of Defence Yoav Gallant's statement on October 9, 2023, referring to people in Gaza as "human animals"; Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's repeated invocation of "Amalek" on October 28 and November 3, 2023; President Isaac Herzog's statement on October 12, 2023, asserting that the "entire nation out there that's responsible"; Minister of Heritage Amihai Eliyahu's remarks on November 5, 2023, suggesting a nuclear option for Gaza and stating there is "no such thing as uninvolved civilians in Gaza"; and IDF Spokesperson Daniel Hagari's statement on October 9, 2023, that the "emphasis is on damage and not on accuracy" in military operations (South Africa, 2023, pp. 38, 60-63, 61).

DISCUSSION

Such lexical choices are profoundly significant. The term "human animals" is a clear instance of dehumanization, a process extensively documented in genocide studies as a precursor to mass violence by stripping the targeted group of human qualities (Jones, 2017, pp. 200-204; Stanton, 2013). Netanyahu's reference to "Amalek" invokes a biblical command for the total annihilation of an enemy group, including women and children, which this study interprets as a potent call for destruction. President Herzog's statement promotes collective blame, erasing distinctions between combatants and civilians, a common feature in genocidal rhetoric. Eliyahu's comments further underscore a disregard for civilian immunity, while Hagari's statement signals an intent for widespread, indiscriminate destruction.

Rhetorical Strategies (Elaborated)

Findings

This study identified several dominant rhetorical strategies (see Table 1). These include metaphors of absolute evil ("war against evil," "children of darkness"), religious framing (e.g., "Amalek," "holy war"), generalizations attributing collective guilt, and appeals to security and existential threat.

Discussion

These rhetorical strategies legitimize extreme measures. CDA scholars (e.g., Chilton, 2004; Fairclough & Wodak, 1997; Van Dijk, 2008) argue rhetoric can shape understanding and normalize ideologies underpinning violence. Religious framing can sacralize conflict (Sternberg, 2008), while collectivization is a hallmark of genocidal discourse (Jones, 2017, p. 201).

Speech Acts (Elaborated):

The analysis identified speech acts with significant illocutionary force (summarized in Table 1), such as Minister Gallant's declaration of "releas[ing] all restraints" (South Africa, 2023, p. 60), calls to "flatten Gaza," declarations of intent to render Gaza uninhabitable, and justifications based on collective culpability. Public pronouncements by influential figures, particularly directives from command authority, can constitute incitement if calculated to provoke genocidal acts (Benesch, 2014; Wilson, 2017).

Pragmatic Features (Deixis, Presupposition) (Elaborated):

Deictic markers consistently established a stark "us" versus "them" dichotomy, and many statements carried presuppositions of the inherent guilt or threat posed by the Gazan population as a collective (see Table 1). These pragmatic elements build a polarized discourse, marginalizing the out-group and normalizing aggressive actions against them.

Construction of Genocidal Discourse and Intent (Answering RQ2)

Second research question asked: *How do the identified linguistic markers in these statements contribute to discourses of dehumanization, incitement, and the specific intent (dolus specialis) to destroy Palestinians in Gaza, as a group, in whole or in part, as defined under the Genocide Convention?*

Linguistic Construction of Dehumanization and an Environment of Incitement

This study demonstrates that the confluence of dehumanizing lexical choices (e.g., "human animals," "Amalek"), collectivizing rhetoric ("entire nation responsible"), and speech acts calling for or justifying widespread destruction (e.g., "flatten Gaza," "emphasis on damage not accuracy") systematically constructs a discourse where Palestinians in Gaza are portrayed as less than human, collectively culpable, and a legitimate target for elimination or severe collective punishment. This directly aligns with theories of dehumanization as a critical stage enabling genocide (Stanton, 2013; Jones, 2017). The repetition of such themes by numerous high-level officials, as documented by South Africa (2023: 59-72) and Amnesty International (2024), transforms isolated rhetoric into a discernible discursive strategy. This sustained dehumanization, coupled with direct calls for destructive action, fulfills the criteria for incitement to commit genocide as outlined in Article III(c) of the Genocide Convention and interpreted by international tribunals (e.g., ICTR in the *Nahimana et al.* "Media case" (2007)).

Language as Evidence of Dolus Specialis (Specific Intent)

Findings & Discussion

The specific intent (*dolus specialis*) to destroy a protected group, in whole or in part, is the cornerstone of the crime of genocide (United Nations, 1948: Article II; Kreß, 2006: 461). As this study shows while intent is a mental state, it can be inferred from a manifest pattern of conduct, including public statements by those in authority. The analysis identified numerous statements that articulate an intent extending far beyond legitimate military objectives against Hamas. Declarations by officials expressing intent to "flatten Gaza," make it "uninhabitable," or calls to "erase" it, especially when combined with explicit dehumanization and actions on the ground that cause disproportionate civilian harm and destruction of essential infrastructure (South Africa, 2023: 29-58; Amnesty International, 2024: 4), provide compelling linguistic indicators of an intent to destroy the group or the conditions essential for its survival.

The invocation of "Amalek" by Prime Minister Netanyahu, and statements by Defence Minister Gallant about fighting "human animals" and "releasing all restraints," are particularly indicative. These are not ambiguous; they suggest a policy of targeting Palestinians in Gaza "as such." The systematic nature of these pronouncements, emanating from various echelons of state and military leadership, points towards a shared understanding or policy rather than isolated rhetorical excesses. This aligns with legal arguments that *mens rea* can be inferred from a consistent pattern of official discourse accompanying destructive acts (Aksar, 2009: 115; Schabas, 2009). Amnesty International's (2024: 4) report reached a similar conclusion regarding the presence of specific intent based on Israeli actions and statements.

Contribution of Linguistic Analysis to the ICJ Case (Answering RQ3)

The third research question asked: *To what extent can a forensic linguistic and Critical Discourse Analysis of these official statements provide evidentiary support or critical insights for assessing the claims of genocidal intent as presented in South Africa's application against Israel at the International Court of Justice?*

Providing Systematic Interpretation of Linguistic Evidence

This study underscores that forensic linguistics provides a systematic and methodologically sound approach to analyzing language as evidence (Gibbons, 2003; Olsson, 2008). Instead of impressionistic readings, the detailed analysis of lexical items, speech acts, rhetorical strategies, and pragmatic features reveals underlying patterns of meaning that directly bear on intent and incitement. This structured interpretation can assist the ICJ in evaluating the substantial body of statements presented by South Africa (2023; 2024) as evidence of *dolus specialis*.

Unveiling Underlying Ideologies and Policy Implications

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) illuminates how language is employed to construct, sustain, and legitimize power relations and ideologies (Fairclough, 1995; Van Dijk, 2006). The consistent deployment

of dehumanizing and collectivizing discursive frames by Israeli officials, as demonstrated in this study, is not random but indicative of, and reinforces, particular ideological positions. When such patterns are observed in the discourse of high-level state officials responsible for policy and military command, the linguistic analysis offers insights into potential state policies or an officially sanctioned climate where genocidal acts become conceivable and permissible.

Corroborating Evidence of Intent and Incitement

Linguistic analysis, while not singularly capable of proving genocide, furnishes a critical stream of evidence for the mental element (*mens rea*) of the crime and for the act of incitement. The specific findings of this study, such as the identification of direct calls for destruction and pervasive dehumanization, can corroborate other forms of evidence before the ICJ, including the scale of civilian deaths, widespread destruction, and the imposition of life-threatening conditions in Gaza (South Africa, 2023: 29-58). When official statements consistently articulate an intent to destroy or to create conditions of life calculated to bring about the physical destruction of the protected group, and these are paralleled by actions consistent with such an intent, the linguistic evidence acquires substantial probative value (Mettraux, 2005).

In conclusion, the forensic linguistic and Critical Discourse Analysis of public statements by Israeli officials, as conducted in this study, reveals a disturbing pattern of characteristic linguistic markers. These markers consistently construct a discourse of dehumanization, collective blame, and explicit or implicit calls for the destruction of Palestinians in Gaza as a group. Such findings are deeply relevant to establishing specific genocidal intent (*dolus specialis*) and proving incitement to commit genocide, thereby offering substantial evidentiary support and critical insights for the International Court of Justice's assessment of South Africa's allegations against Israel.

CONCLUSION

This research, through a detailed forensic linguistic and Critical Discourse Analysis of public statements made by Israeli officials between October 2023 and April 2024, has yielded significant findings concerning the allegations of genocidal intent against Palestinians in the Gaza Strip.

The primary finding of this study is the identification of characteristic linguistic markers consistently employed by Israeli officials. These include specific lexical choices that systematically dehumanize Palestinians (e.g., "human animals," "Amalek") and attribute collective responsibility; dominant rhetorical strategies such as religious framing and sweeping generalizations; performative speech acts functioning as directives for destruction or incitement; and pragmatic features constructing a stark "us versus them" dichotomy.

Furthermore, this study concludes that these identified linguistic markers, when analyzed collectively and contextually, contribute significantly to a discourse of dehumanization and incitement to commit genocide against Palestinians in Gaza. The systematic and repeated use of such language by figures in positions of authority functions to strip Palestinians of their humanity, legitimize violence against them, and create a permissive environment for atrocities. Crucially, the analysis demonstrates how these linguistic patterns provide compelling evidence of specific intent (*dolus specialis*) to destroy Palestinians in Gaza as a group, in whole or in part, as defined under the Genocide Convention.

Finally, this research restates that a forensic linguistic and Critical Discourse Analysis of these official statements offers substantial evidentiary support and critical insights for assessing the claims of genocidal intent as presented in South Africa's application against Israel at the ICJ. This methodological approach provides a systematic means of interpreting linguistic evidence, revealing underlying ideologies, and highlighting how official discourse can reflect or constitute state policy.

In essence, this study affirms that the language employed by state officials with command responsibility is a critical element in establishing collective criminal intent, including *dolus specialis* for genocide. The forensic linguistic evidence detailed herein strongly supports the contention that there is a discernible and alarming pattern of official Israeli discourse that aligns with the legal definitions of incitement to genocide and the expression of genocidal intent, thereby substantiating the juridical and linguistic basis of South Africa's claims before the International Court of Justice.

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