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The Electronic Intifada

A Systemic Functional Analysis of Websites

Promoting Boycotts towards Israel

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<p>Pro gradu -tutkielmassa analysoidaan kuutta Israelin boikotointiin kannustavaa nettisivua. Tutkielman tavoitteena on selvittää, millaisia ryhmiä nettisivuilla esiintyy ja millaisia toimijuuksia näille ryhmille annetaan. Tutkielmassa hyödynnetään kriittisen diskurssianalyysin teoriaa. Analyysin työkaluna on M.A.K. Hallidayn transitiivisuusanalyysi, jonka avulla teksteissä esiintyvät verbit jaotellaan neljään eri ryhmään. Tutkielma selvittää, mikä verbiryhmä on kunkin nettisivuilla esitetyn ryhmän yleisin, ja tällä tavalla tuottaa tietoa siitä, kuvataanko ryhmät olevina, puhuvina, ajattelevina ja tuntevina vai tekevinä yksikköinä. Tämä taas auttaa hahmottamaan sitä, miten ryhmiä kuvataan toimijoina.</p> <p>Nettisivuilta nousee esiin neljä eri ryhmää, joiden toimia nettisivuilla kuvataan. Ensimmäinen ryhmä koostuu Israelin valtiosta, hallituksesta, poliitikoista, armeijasta ja kansalaisista sekä Israelin tukijoista. Toinen ryhmä pitää sisällään nettisivujen kirjoittajat, aktivistit ja protestoijat, jotka ajavat taloudellisia ja poliittisia sanktioita Israelille. Tähän ryhmään kuuluvat myös erinäiset ihmisryhmät ja yksilöt, joiden koettiin sivustoilla tukevan nettisivujen kirjoittajien agendaa tai muutoin osoittavan solidaarisuutta palestiinalaisia kohtaan. Kolmannessa ryhmässä ovat palestiinalaiset ja Palestiinalaisalueet sekä Palestiinan poliittiset ryhmittymät. Neljäs ryhmä on lukija, jota puhutellaan nettisivuilla.</p> <p>Tutkimuksesta selviää, että nettisivujen teksteissä lukijaa pyydetään mukaan toimintaan ja häntä kehoitetaan tutustumaan Israelin ja Palestiinan välisen konfliktin taustoihin, osoittamaan solidaarisuutta ja seisomaan, kirjaimellisesti ja vertauskuvallisesti, boikotteja ajavien ryhmittymien joukossa. Tutkimus erittelee näin nettisivujen kirjoittajien erilaisia keinoja mobilisoida nettisivuja lukeva yksilö osaksi boikotointiliikettä myös internetin ulkopuolella.</p> <p>Tutkimus osoittaa, että boikotteihin kehoittavien nettisivujen tekijöinä esiintyy pääasiallisesti kaksi ryhmää. Toinen tekijäryhmä on Israel ja siihen liitetyt henkilöt ja yritykset, ja sen vastavoimana esiintyvät nettisivujen kirjoittajat sekä heidän tukijansa. Verbiprosessien subjektien analysointi paljasti, että tekijät olivat harvoin yksilöitä ja useimmiten valtioita, yrityksiä ja nimeämättömiä liikkeitä tai ihmismassoja. Tutkimus osoittaa myös nettisivujen kirjoittajien monimutkaisen suhteen israelilaisiin tukijoihinsa sekä palestiinalaiseen Hamas-järjestöön.</p> <p>Tutkimuksesta käy ilmi, että nettisivujen tarkoitus on esitellä boikotointiliikkeen toimintaa ja houkutella lukija osallistumaan boikotointiin erilaisin keinoin. Tutkimus osoittaa myös, että nettisivut pyrkivät tarjoamaan väkivallattoman vaihtoehdon Palestiinan ja Israelin välisen konfliktin ratkaisuun.</p>			
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1.Introduction

The boycotting of Israel began before the state of Israel was born and continues to date. This paper studies six websites or blogs promoting boycotts, divestments and sanctions directed towards Israel and towards companies considered in the websites to be acting in accordance with Israel. The purpose is to find out how these websites are constructed, who is given agency and how events and occurrences are described.

What began as a decision by the British Mandate after the Second World War to distribute an area of land to Jewish people from all over the world started a chain of events leading to political unrest to this day. Palestinians and Israelis both claim rights to the same land and areas, and the areas are now occupied with second and third generation citizens, all claiming their rights to their land. Two intifadas and constant violent uprisings, attacks and other acts of violence have been seen by both sides.

Studying the boycotting movement is important, because the movement offers a unique non-violent method of conflict resolution and a non-violent outlet to change in an area where violence has, for generations, been the only option to if not solve the conflict, gain retribution and revenge from previous violent acts. This heinous circle of violent revenge is not optimal to anyone and while efforts to solve the conflict have lasted for decades, no solution is in sight. The boycotting movement is one of the methods to seek resolution to the conflict and because it occurs online, consists of text, attempts to be revolutionary and concerns power, it is an excellent source of data to study a specific point of view of the conflict by analyzing language.

In order to work towards building a non-violent future in the area, we first must understand the realms of reality of those affected by the conflict, as well as those who want to be a part of a lasting solution to the problems and injustices in the area. The boycotting movement targets everyone and calls for a global sense of solidarity directed towards Palestinians suffering under Israeli rule. The movement is not only about Israeli citizens and Palestinians, as people are involved globally, and global involvement is further sought.

This study links to Critical Discourse Analysis (or CDA) studies, focusing on power relations of different participants presented in the websites. The underlying principle within the study is that language presents and represents experiences and world views, but also constructs them. By studying a certain text we can gain insight on the writer's perspective of the world. The questions we need to ask is who is present in these websites and what they are described doing. Key concepts are introduced drawing from Norman Fairclough's (2001) notions of language as representation and language as a method of creating social connections. Notions and theories of another important figure in CDA, Theun van Dijk (1993), are also introduced. This study seeks to find out information about the way reality is constructed in these websites by analyzing how texts are constructed within this specific discourse. As this study is concerned with the way language represents and constructs reality, attention is given to specific terms and categorizations used within this paper as well.

To conduct this study, six websites have been chosen, all of which inform about the current situation and occurrences in Palestine-Israel area and explain and how the readers should boycott Israel or companies associated with Israel. The areas of focus in these websites vary, but what all the websites have in common is that they want the reader of their website or blog to engage in their boycott of Israel and countries and companies associated with Israel. The purpose behind the boycotts is to gain rights to Palestinians and raise attention towards the situation in Palestinian areas.

The purpose of this paper is to see how participants in either Palestine-Israel conflict or in the BDS movement are presented. This study analyzes the roles of participants found in the websites in a clause-specific level by using the tools of systemic functional linguistics, or SFL. Four categories of participants were found from these websites: the writers of the websites and other BDS movement activists, Israel and its perceived allies, Palestine and Palestinians and lastly, the reader. Beyond this, we can find individuals, institutions, companies and states with a varying level of engagement in the matters presented in the websites. By studying the roles of different participants we can begin to understand the construction of the realities of the writers. This study analyzes the roles of the participants presented in these websites in order to find out what kind of purposes and identities are given to each participant. Through this we can gain information of how

positions of power are constructed and how realities are presented as existing in these websites and in the minds of the writers of the websites.

The reason to categorize and study each Subject type separately is to find out, who exists in the websites and which groups are presented the most. However, it is not enough to find out who exists unless we find out what they are *doing* and how they are *described*, which is why we also focus on verb processes. Thus, in addition to a categorization made based on each participant as Subject, all verb processes were categorized into four different process types based on their function.

In order to study verb processes, this paper looks at the reality of the websites from a frame of four quarters which are being, doing, saying and feeling or thinking. In this paper, these are realized as relational, material, verbal and mental processes according to transitivity analysis coined by M.A.K Halliday (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004:215). The analysis section of the paper seeks to find out how participants are distributed between process types, in other words, who is doing what in the reality of the websites.

These four processes give us different types of information on how the writers of the websites present and describe those participants who they see as existing in the reality surrounding the topic of the Palestine-Israel conflict and the BDS movement. By focusing on relational processes, we find out how the participants are described as being or existing. Secondly, by focusing on mental processes, we find out if there are groups whose internal and psychological conditions are described more than their actions or sayings. Thirdly, by focusing on verb processes, we find out who is given a voice in the websites. Fourthly, by focusing on material processes, processes of doing, we see which groups are described as performing physical actions in the world. By disregarding Subjects and only studying verb processes we lose the ability to find out how verb process frequencies and types differ within each group. Disregarding verbs and focusing solely on Subject frequencies, we lose the ability to differentiate between functions given to each Subject. This is why attention is paid to Subjects and verb processes in specific.

The research questions for this paper are as follows:

1. Which Subjects have the highest appearance frequency, which Subjects have the lowest appearance frequency, and what is the relative distribution of Subjects?
2. What are the functions of different process types, and how are they distributed between participants as Subjects?
3. Analyzing how verb processes are divided between Subjects in these websites, what kind of information can we gather of the way reality is constructed in these websites?

Section 2 introduces a brief history of the boycotting movement, followed by a discussion on political blogging and political online activism. The data for the analysis is presented in section 3. Section 4 introduces the selection method of Subjects and processes and presents the method of analysis for the paper. The results of the analysis are presented in section 5, where each participant is presented under the four processes. Section 6 discusses the findings and links the study under the continuance of emerging studies of political blogs which wish to mobilize masses into taking action. The link between online political involvement and offline political involvement is also discussed in section 6, and the ways these types of websites create movement in real life by creating movement online is reviewed. Lastly, the implications of the emergence of these types of websites and their positive and negative aspects are discussed.

2. Background

2.1 Boycotting

Monroe Friedman (1999:183) describes boycotting as “an attempt by one or more parties to achieve certain objectives by urging individual consumers to refrain from making selected purchases in the marketplace”. Boycotting has been proven a successful method of action to achieve political goals via urging to restrict consumption. The Montgomery Bus Boycott, the Salt boycott organized by Gandhi and the boycott staged by the British towards Barclays Bank in an effort to be a part of ending the apartheid in South Africa are inspiring examples of the power of boycotting when successful. What all of these boycotts have in common is that they were designed to be used as political weapons against an oppressive or unfair government or regime and succeeded in their goals. The boycott now under research has undoubtedly been inspired by the success of previous boycott leaders, in specific, the boycott to end apartheid in South Africa, with which many pro-Palestinians draw parallels with the situation currently between Israel and Palestine.

The roots of the Israel boycott stretch to before Israel was officially born. In 1948 the Arab League started their boycott of Israeli companies and goods and has maintained it since. The boycott bans Arab League members of business contracts with Israeli citizens or nation, and the secondary boycott extends this ban to all entities world-wide that have business with Israel. The boycott bans companies from doing business with parties found in their “blacklist”. In his report for Congressional Research Service, Martin A. Weiss (2013:2) stated that while the boycott does not hold economic significance to either the nations of the Arab League or to the state of Israel, its symbolic significance still remains.

Individuals and groups supporting the boycotts on Israel are not in agreement with how to approach and solve problems of the Palestine-Israel-conflict, but essentially share some common objectives. The goals include end of Israel occupation in West Bank and Gaza strip and giving rights to Palestinian refugees and Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel. Many root for Palestine to be fully recognized as a nation and returning Palestinians land which once belonged to Palestinians. As a means to achieve these goals individuals and

groups push for boycotts of institutions, individuals, Israeli companies or companies currently having some connection with a corporation in Israel. Most boycotts tend to be economic ones, but some are pushing for cultural and academic boycotts as well.

The most important contemporary agent for driving boycotts of Israel is the Palestinian “Boycott, Divestment, Sanction” (BDS) -movement. This is a global campaign initiated by Palestinian civil society in 2005. The goal of the members of the movement, as stated in the host website www.bdsmovement.net, is to end Israeli occupation and dismantle the wall set up in the area to divide Israeli and Palestinian citizens, recognize the rights of Arab-Palestinian citizens in Israel and protect Palestinian refugees. The movement drives boycotting Israeli products and companies as well as sporting, cultural and academic institutions. The drivers of the movement seek to ensure companies complying with Israel are not financed and call for sanctions for Israel. The members also seek to inform and educate other people of the Palestine-Israel conflict and of the movement itself.

Ariel Peled (2014:753) describes the BDS movement as “combining the goals of the Arab League, the method of the African National Congress, and the rhetoric of Apartheid”. Most of the websites mention or include information of the BDS movement, but even without specific mention of it, all the websites mention driving towards boycotts of Israel in some form.

2.2 What is (political) blogging?

The websites under study have the characteristics of blogs: they are interactive, post in chronological order, include RSS feeds and have room for comments. To Bruce Brown (2009:29) a blog is a “web site where short entries or “posts” are displayed in reverse chronological order”. Mortensen and Walker (2002:249) define them as “frequently updated websites, usually personal, with commentary and links”. According to Jill Rettberg (2008:21), we may define blogs formally, as blogs are too large in subject matter and content. Blogs often share features in layout, timestamps, post titles, blog roll and “about” page, and as Rettberg (2008:21) states, a blog, at its simplest, includes entries in reverse chronological order.

Since these websites fit the description of blog, they can be characterized as belonging to Web 2.0. “Web 2.0” is a term with an unclear origin but according to Tannen and Trester (2013:229) was coined by Tim O’Reilly in 2004. The most important feature separating “Web 2.0” from “Web 1.0” is the way information is contributed and shared (Herring, 2011:1). Tannen and Trester (2013:229) note that Web 2.0 is about writing and sharing information peer-to-peer in a conversational manner, contradicting it to Web 1.0, which is characterized as a static place, where the user is expected to read but not engage. In Web1.0 the reader is expected to take on information as given through the form of advertising or lecturing, instead of relying on word of mouth information and conversations.

Evan William, co-founder of Blogger.com, gives three essential features to blogging: frequency, brevity and personality¹. While the first two deal with the formal qualities of blogging, the third one is a question of style and context (Rettberg, 2008:21). When studying blogging language, many scholars (Gill, Nowson and Oberlander, 2009:18, Eastment, 2005:358) define blogs as an individual’s outlets to their own thoughts, feelings, issues or daily occurrences. Since one of the defining features of blogs is that they are personal, we can assume the texts in question will show a personal, thus subjective, point of view of the world. As Rettberg (2008:22) notes, blogs also have a social aspect, encouraging readers to leave comments and share content in other forums. Thus, in addition to the texts under question being first-person, subjective accounts, they are also interactive in nature, calling for engagement from the reader.

Blogs differ from private online journals by the fact that they are public, even when the readership may be inclusive (Rettberg, 2008:21). Blogs exist to be read, and bloggers speak to be heard. As Kim, Zheng and Gupta (2011:1761-1762) note, blogs are a way to express one’s identity and alongside the accounts of thoughts and feelings, identities are also demonstrated in style and form. Thus it is not only in the content of the blogs from which we can gather information of the aspects of the writers’ identities. Information of the aspects of identities is also found in style and form, and by studying these as well as the content, we can find out more of who the writers are in relation to the world and how the writers see the world.

¹ <http://www.shoutmeloud.com/difference-between-blog-vs-website.html>

While blogs have existed for nearly two decades, political blogs seem to be a more recent phenomenon, more specifically emerging post-9/11, when Americans needed outlets for their feelings after the terrorist attacks and platforms for sharing information not available in mainstream media (Scott, 2004:3). Political blogging can be seen as either a form of political participation or a form of political expression (Wallsten, 2005:1). As political participation means actions which have the purpose of influencing the way social goods and values are distributed (Rosenstore and Hansen, 1993:4), these blogs are clearly a form of political participation.

The rise of political blogs has been astounding (Perlmutter, 2008:19). Perlmutter (ibid.) describes political blogging “a new opportunity for reinvigorating politics and political communication”. While blogs are seemingly uncensored, unmediated and uncontrolled, the writers still edit themselves, may censor comments and choose their point of views (Perlmutter, 2008:19-20). As KhosraviNik and Zia (2014:757) note, internet communication is both inter-personal and mass communication, and the tendencies of interactive digital media challenge our core assumptions of media language, including the notions of audience and representation. As new notions of power have emerged with the new interactive tendencies digital media brings forth, the very notion of “media” is now challenged (KhosraviNik and Zia, 2014:756).

2.3 Political online activism

The relationship between political efficacy and online political participation has been found controversial. Some state their relationship is not significant (Bimber, 2001:64, Boulianne, 2009:194). Some (Brunsting and Postmes, 2002:550) claim their relationship correlates heavily. This latter school of thought sees a strong link between using Internet for political purposes and being politically active offline. Several studies note political activism online may mobilize such youth which would not otherwise have political participation opportunities (Kruikemeier, van Noort, Vliegenthart and de Vreese, 2013:915).

As some scholars note (Sandoval-Almazan and Gil-Garcia 2014:365), participation in politics via the usage of information technology is by no means a new invention. What is new is the form this political online participation takes. While the extent of the ability of social media to mobilize masses is still under debate, scholars do agree that political steps taken online have a real impact on political outcomes offline (Merle, El-Khory and Rahimi, 2015:21, Bashri, Netzley and Greiner, 2015:26, Harlow, 2015:73). A study regarding the role of Facebook in the 2011 Tunisian revolution (Marzouki, Skandrani-Marzouki, Béjaoui, Hammoudi and Bellaj, 2012:241) found that Facebook functioned as a media platform, and its role was informational and political. In their study, Facebook was perceived as a “catalyst that accelerated the Tunisian revolution” and that the speed of the evolution of the revolution would have been much slower without this “social networking platform” (ibid.). Although these websites are different from Facebook to some extent, they both function as social networking platforms. Since social networking platforms have shown they can mobilize power, the websites in question can similarly have a real impact on the outcome of the political crisis in Palestine-Israel area.

To consider how realities are constructed and presented in these blogs, we must also consider who the audience of these blogs is. Joseph Graph (2006:2-3) notes that of blog readers in general, only approximately nine per cent read political blogs. He notes that political blog readers tend to use blogs as alternatives to mainstream media, with which the blog readers do not agree with. Blog readers are also more likely to “place themselves at the end of political spectrum” and have strong views of social issues (ibid.). Political blog readers tend to read only a few political blogs and they tend to be very strong in their opinions. Political blog readers also often respond to queries to participate (Graph, 2006:4). From this we can draw a picture of a reader who is likely to engage and respond to the blog texts, as well as have strong opinions on the matter, be it for or against the cause. Thus, the writers need not persuade the readers of the importance of the *matter* (Palestine-Israel conflict), but that their view is the correct one and furthermore, that their method (to boycott) will be successful.

2.4 Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

Discourse analysis as a term has no single definition and different researchers define it differently. Some see discourse analysis as simply a study of language or a “study of talk and texts” (Wetherell, Taylor and Yeates, 2001:1). The analysis of discourse is the analysis of language in use, and studying what language is used for (Brown and Yule, 1983:5).

Some scholars view discourse analysis as the analysis of the content of the language being used, while others focus more on the structure of language (Gee, 1999:8). For the purposes of this paper, it is important to focus on the structure and on how the structure makes meanings in specific contexts. With discourse analysis, we analyze the language used in the text in order to understand the ways social meanings are made in text (Fairclough, 2001:19). Discourse analysis focuses in the ways meanings are constructed and what the role of these constructions is in social life (Martin and Rose, 2010:2).

To some, discourse analysis is descriptive, as they seek to gain information of how language works, whereas to some, discourse analysis is inherently critical, going beyond the description of the language and into the explanation of the language. This explanation seeks to understand the link between the text produced and the world in which it is produced (Gee, 1999:9). An important aim setting CDA apart from traditional discourse analysis is its efforts to explain rather than describe discourse structures. These explanations seek to give us information on the properties of social interaction (van Dijk, 2001:353-354).

Critical Discourse Analysis is a type of discourse analysis, and like discourse analysis, the term is used differently by different scholars. Van Dijk describes CDA as not so much a direction or school of thought but a method of offering different perspectives in order to theorize, analyze and apply findings (van Dijk, 2001:353-354). CDA doesn't have a unitary theoretical framework, but mostly different directions of CDA are united in asking questions “about the way specific discourse structures are deployed in the reproduction of social dominance” (van Dijk, 2001:353-354).

Critical Discourse Analysis is not without its own criticism. Some of the problems include the habit of CDA theorists to use small amounts of data to explain large sociological realities, making assumptions from calculations without considering their larger meaning

-contexts, giving commentaries instead of explanations and “assigning” ideological significance (Eggins, 1994:21, Hutchby and Woffitt, 2008:209). As an attempt to escape the previous problems of CDA, Bartlett argues that linking linguistic features as accurately as possible to relations of power in discourse is essential. This link between linguistic features and relations of power in discourse ensures an analysis is meaningful (Bartlett, 2004:69). Bartlett also notes we must quantify the linguistic units of analysis in order to conduct meaningful sociological analysis (Bartlett, 2004:70).

2.4.1 CDA and Power

Because of the intrigue to understand and explain, critical discourse analysis often concerns political, institutional or social issues (Gee, 1999:9). CDA is often concerned with issues such as construction and distribution of power and analyzing identities and races (van Dijk, 1993, Teo, 2000, Wodak and Chilton, 2005, Wodak and Meyer, 2001). CDA is especially helpful when discussing social problems, power relations and links between texts and society (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997:271). Critical Discourse Analysis has also been adopted as a tool to analyze political online discourse (Bolte and Yuen 2014, KhosraviNik and Zia, 2014). Van Dijk notes CDA is usually identified by its topic, as CDA is interested in power (abuse) and the way dominance and inequality are asserted in social and political contexts. The goal of CDA goes beyond analyzing language and attempts to “understand, expose and ultimately resist social inequality” (van Dijk, 2001:352).

CDA focuses on the relations of power and dominance in our society (van Dijk, 2001:352). The notion of power can be explained through the notion of control, meaning the amount of power a group has is dependent on how much the group is able to control someone’s mind and actions (ibid.). Controlling people’s minds allows the controller to produce a hegemony on a discourse. Recipients tend to accept “beliefs, knowledge and opinions” if they see the source of the message to be authoritative, trustworthy or credible (van Dijk, 2001:357). This means that in order to persuade an audience, it is productive to present oneself as a trustworthy, authoritative and credible figure or present the people interviewed or presented as supporters in this manner. However, van Dijk (ibid.) notes the ability to “mind control” only exists, if the recipients’ pre-existing beliefs and opinions are consistent with the given message.

Critical Discourse Analysis is important for this study, because as stated by van Dijk (2001:355), our minds control our actions, and being able to influence someone's mind via knowledge or opinions means being able to control their actions, in this case, manipulate or persuade. Van Dijk (2001:356) mentions politics, media and science as specific forms of discourse which he notes function as "power resources". Social media and the growth in the ability to create a space online is blurring the line between those holding and utilizing power, and those being impacted by power. If a person with loyal listeners can be considered to be in a position of power, then anyone has the ability to be, in principle, powerful. In light of the discussion of the political and social importance of blogs, political blogs can be considered "power resources", and their ability and potential to influence political opinion and participation must be acknowledged. Studying these websites as power resources is important because the writers hold power over the readers and have the ability to impact the minds and ultimately the actions of the readers.

2.4.2. Presupposed knowledge

Presupposed knowledge refers to the assumed "common ground" or "general knowledge" of readers and text producers (Fairclough, 2001:127). The attribution to reader's textual experience via presuppositions can be both manipulative and sincere. Presuppositions can be ideological, when "what they assume has the character of common sense in the service of power" (Fairclough 2001:154). In these instances, by utilizing presuppositions the writers are able to attribute to readers textual experience in a vague way. This is a device of power which the boycotting websites have, regardless of whether the writers of the websites are aware of it or not. This is because by omission of previous historical or contemporary facts from both sides the websites can create a presupposed intertextual knowledge in line with their own ideological discourse. It is important to carry the notion of presupposed knowledge throughout the analysis, particularly since often there can be no linguistic evidence of omission, as the text is simply not there. And, since the presuppositions are not there, they are more difficult, if not impossible, to reject.

As the texts address the reader but do not state in specific who the reader is expected to be, some information of the intended audience can be gained through analysis of the text in relation to its context and the reality within which it exists. The concept of presupposed knowledge is presented because it enables us to make tentative suggestions for

explanations to certain findings, which are presented in more detail in section 5. More specifically, presupposed knowledge could possibly explain why there is a lack of certain participants, and an abundance of other participants and verbs.

An example of presupposed knowledge is presented in excerpt (1). In this example, Bolivia's president Evo Morales is reported as calling Israel a terrorist state and as expressing solidarity with Palestinians and Gazans. In these sentences, the new information is not that Palestinians and Gazans are beleaguered, besieged and suffering, but that Morales expresses solidarity with Palestinians and Gazans. Thus in this instance, the lack of Palestinians as Subject does not mean that Palestinians are not mentioned in the text, it means that their suffering is presented as presupposed knowledge within the text.

(1) Bolivia's Evo Morales calls Israel a "terrorist state" He expressed solidarity with beleaguered Palestinians and besieged, suffering Gazans. [1]

2.4.3 Performing CDA

Discourse is more than "an incidental manifestation of social activity" (Martin and Rose, 2010:1). For this reason it is not only social aspects, but also the way in which social aspects are constructed in text, that are under review. In order to conduct discourse analysis, we must find out the writer's motivations for writing the text, the intended audience of the text, the language used in the text and the sociocultural context in which the text was produced (Fairclough, 2001:23).

In Norman Fairclough's model of CDA, there are three stages in Critical Discourse Analysis: description of text, interpretation of relationship between text and interaction, and the explanation of the relation between interaction and social context. (Fairclough, 1992:110). In this paper, we are interested in the third stage, the explanation of the relation between interaction and social context. This means this paper looks at the texts within their political context while bearing in mind the unequal distribution of voice as power. Voice as power in this instance means that while the social context is the situation in the Palestine-Israel area, the specific context is also the online environment, and those holding the power to speak are those writing the texts. They utilize a specific angle and construct knowledge within their social context. This interaction occurring between the

writers and the readers of the texts is thus looked upon from the social contexts of the internet as well as the Palestine-Israel area.

In the process of performing CDA, we find three different levels from which we can study text: the experiential, relational and expressive levels. (Fairclough, 1992:110). The experiential level is about contents, knowledge and beliefs, the relational level is about (social) relations and the expressive level is about subjects and social identities (Fairclough, 1992:110). Fairclough draws on the elements of Halliday's model of metafunctions of grammar, which are presented in section 2.5 of this paper. Where Halliday is concerned of (meta)functions, Fairclough discusses three types of meaning: action, representation and identification. In relation to Halliday's metafunctions, action describes the interpersonal metafunction, representation describes the ideational metafunction and identification describes the interpersonal metafunction. This paper is concerned with the expressive level, parallel to Halliday's ideational metafunction. From CDA, we draw a parallel to Halliday's system of transitivity. By looking at patterns of transitivity we can see the cultural, political and ideological factors which are expressed in a particular text (Fairclough 1992:181). The interest in transitivity analysis stems from the idea that the choices an individual language user makes in transitivity system give us information on how the writer sees the world. Transitivity, as it is concerned with the mental picture a writer has of the world, belongs to the ideational function (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004:309). Transitivity focuses on who acts, and who is acted upon (ibid.).

As the writers of the websites are describing the reality as they see it, they are also constructing it, as language both represents and creates its user's knowledge, identity, beliefs and attitudes (Fairclough, 2001:3). As language maps the experiences readers have of the world (Halliday and Matthiessen, 1999: ix), mapping the ways speakers represent their world by using language, we can access the realms of their consciousness (Bartlett, 2004:71). We can look at meanings as the mixture of ways of saying, doing and being. According to Gee (1999:8), to say something is to inform, to do something is to act and to express one's identity is to be. This interpretation can be conceptualized with the means of transitivity analysis, where relational processes represent being, verbal processes represent informing and material processes represent acts. Because we want to find out who is present in these websites and what their role in the created reality is, transitivity analysis fits the purpose of the analysis. As each verb process carries a meaning, these

meanings construct the essence of their Subject. Transitivity analysis, by revealing the mental pictures of the writers, reveals to us how Subjects are seen by presenting us information of their actions and thoughts by the verb processes given to them.

2.5 Systemic Functional Linguistics

The framework for the analysis of language in this paper stems from systemic functional linguistics (or SFL), as its abilities to capture the complexity of language fit the purposes of this paper. In SFL, we can look at the three levels of language, or the three *functions* of language in social contexts. Looking at the levels of language, or *strata*, we focus on grammar, discourse and social context. Looking at the functions of language, or *metafunctions*, we are studying the ways in which language can be used to build and maintain social relationships, represent experiences and organize text in a meaningful way (Martin and Rose, 2010:3).

One of the most important concepts of modern linguistics is that of the multifunctional principle: that “each clause serves several different functions at the same time” (Fawcett, 2007:44). Within the same words, each clause combines different meanings, each serving a different function. The way language is structured allows three kinds of meanings to be made simultaneously: ideational meanings, interpersonal meanings and textual meanings (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004:310). These three generalized meanings, or functions, Halliday calls metafunctions: the *interpersonal*, *textual* and *ideational* metafunction. (Halliday and Webster, 2009:94). The interpersonal metafunction is concerned of the stance, attitude and social distance of speakers or writers and gives us information on how the writer establishes and maintains social connections via language. The textual metafunction studies how the text is organized internally and interacts with itself, organizing the text in a manner that makes it communicably effective (Halliday and Webster, 2009:5).

To conduct the transitivity analysis, this paper focuses on the third metafunction, the *ideational metafunction*, which carries the experiential meaning of the clause. The clause as a means of representing patterns of experience makes up the ideational function (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004:640). Thus the third grammatical function of a clause is to express the “reflective, experiential aspect of meaning”, and this is named the system

of transitivity (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004:170). The reason to focus on this function is that ideational metafunctions reveal information about the expressive reality of language users (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004:640). Section 4.3 explains the process of conducting transitivity analysis in detail.

To approach language in a functional manner means asking how people use language, and how language users structure language for use. We also ask what the different types of meanings made by language are and how language is organized in order to make these meanings (Eggins, 1994:3). All systemic linguists share an interest in language as a social semiotic, and there are four theoretical claims of language shared by all systemic linguists (Eggins, 1994:3). These are that language is *functional*, its function is to *make meanings*, these meanings are influenced by the *social and cultural context in which they are exchanged* and lastly that the process of language using is *semiotic* (Eggins, 1994:3). These four claims, those that language is functional, semantic, contextual and semiotic combine into what can be described a *functional semiotic approach* to language (ibid.).

Halliday argues that language is inherently organized in a functional manner, and this organization sets up the grammatical structure, the form, of language (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004:31). According to Halliday, functions of linguistic structures are based on social structures (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004). As social structures base functions of linguistic structures, revealing these linguistic structures in a systematic manner enables us to reveal social structures. CDA and SFL agree that that language is socially constructed, has an impact and is affecting and affected by society (Young and Harrison, 2004:64). Both CDA and SFL also claim events influence the context in which they occur and that this has an effect on the language. These study branches agree that their emphasis is on “cultural and historical aspects of *meaning*” (Young and Harrison, 2004:64).

In this paper, we look at Subjects and verbs, because they reveal the information most vital to us: who is present, and what they are described doing. Utilizing the transitivity analysis method gives us a way to categorize these findings in a manner that concurs with SFL continuance. Moreover, it gives us information of how different groups are presented in general, who is presented as performing actions, who is presented as having a voice and who is presented as thinking or feeling. The categorization into these four verb types enables us to make generalizations of how the writers of the websites see the participant involved in either the Palestine-Israel conflict or in the BDS movement.

3. Data

There were six webpages studied in this paper, with the total number of words being approximately 16400. All of the data was gathered on the same day, 11th October 2015. Only first pages were analyzed. Website names, and URL's are presented in Table 1. The number after the website name is used in example excerpts from text, where the corresponding number is placed after the example text in brackets.

Some of the webpages were constructed using a blog template, which means that some items which were collected were a part of the blog platform, not the blog itself. In specific, these were words such as "post comment" or "view more". These were excluded from the analysis, because they were not written by the writers of the websites but appeared automatically.

Table 1. Website names, corresponding number used in examples and URL's

Name	Number	URL
BoycottIsraelToday	1	https://boycottisraeltoday.wordpress.com/
BDSMovement	2	http://www.bdsmovement.net/
BoycottIsrael	3	boycottisrael.info
Inminds	4	inminds.com
IPSC	5	www.ipsc.ie
Boycottisrael UK	6	boycottisrael.co.uk

Table 2 presents information about the focus of the websites and where the websites are located in, if this is mentioned on the website.

Table 2. Website information

	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]
Where maintained	N/A	N/A	N/A	UK	Ireland	UK
Focus	News of conflict	News of conflict	BDS/Events	Events to come	General	Past events, progress made
Part of BDS movement	N/A	Yes	Yes	N/A	Yes	Yes

The largest amount of data was collected from the first website in question, BoycottIsraelToday. This is partly because this website did not have specific sections but instead all of the text was written on the first page. This was because the website was in a blog form, where it is common to have all content on the first page. This website in question was mostly devoted to sharing news about current events which have to do with the Palestine-Israel conflict. The second webpage under study is BDS movement's original website. It was focused on sharing news and statements. The third website is called BoycottIsrael. This website shares information of the BDS movement and informs of upcoming events regarding the boycotts.

Number four in table 1 was a website a Britain-based website called Inminds. This website had the second largest amount of text. Inminds focuses on giving information concerning upcoming boycotts and pickets. The fifth website, IPSC, is an Ireland based website. On its first page, it includes an "about us" chapter, news section, information about upcoming events and current campaigns, which is why it can be described as giving general information of the BDS movement and upcoming events. The sixth website,

BoycottIsrael UK, as the name suggests, is Britain-based. It is focused on informing of events held and progress made by the activists in the case of boycotting Israel.

The second website under study, www.bdsmovement.net, is the official Palestinian BDS movement's website. Three of the websites to the BDS in their introductions or tagline. All of the pages were active during the time of data gathering and included interactive contents such as twitter live feed, comment sections and a link to Facebook page.

For the purposes of this study it was important that the websites under study would be the ones normally emerging when the issue of boycotting Israel is googled. By selecting the websites emerging most likely, we can find out how the issues are presented to someone perhaps finding this information for the first time, as up to 90 percent of Google search engine users click on the links in the first page (Chitika, 2013:7). The data was found by typing in "boycott Israel" and selecting the first results found, excluding paid ads. It is also likely the first results found were the most-read websites, as this is the manner in which Google search engine algorithms operate.

Google algorithms also take into account the nation and area of the owner of the IP that is searching for information, which means people from different regions get different results with different IP addresses. However, as the websites chosen are from a wide selection of different countries and still display very similar results, we can assume the regions of the website writers do not have a significant impact on the content of the website. Thus a reader from any other area and IP address is likely to receive similar content even if the specific websites suggested by Google would differ to some extent.

4. Methods

4.1 Selection of processes and Subjects

This paper studies how human Subjects are presented in the websites under study. In this paper “human Subject” is used to separate between “non-human Subjects”, which means a Subject which is not human or does not consist of humans. These include words such as “report”, “steer” and “missile”. Entities consisting of people, such as “military”, “government” or “company”, were included as human participants. States and areas like “Israel”, “Palestine” and “Gaza” were also considered human participants because they were described as acting, talking and feeling like humans, and they consist of humans.

For the purposes of this paper, “Subject” refers to the participant in the Subject position, meaning the actor of the sentence before the process verb. There were four Subject categories distinguished, which were Israel and its allies, BDS activists and their allies, Palestine and Palestinians and lastly, the reader. BDS and its allies and Israel both consist of two groups, the core group (BDS activists and Israel), and the ally group.

This paper intends to find out how the websites present participants in Palestine-Israel conflict and in the BDS movement. In this context *participant* under study refers to either participants in the Palestine-Israel conflict or participants in the BDS movement. This is not to be confused with the way Halliday (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004:175) uses participant to refer to any and all Subjects in processes. Instead, participant refers in this case to participants in the conflict or in the movement. “Participant groups” or “participants” are the four groups found in the websites relevant in relation to either the Palestine-Israel conflict or the BDS movement.

Some human Subjects were excluded from the analysis, although they were presented in the websites. These Subjects were excluded, because they were not participants in either the conflict or the BDS movement, and where thus not a part of the analysis. The category was small and usually described background information or functioned as a source or a point of comparison. The subjects did not have a part in the conflict but served to set the stage or were described as outside viewers. There were 32 cases in which there was a human Subject, but it was not included in any of the four categories. In most cases, these

were people who were referred to when giving background information, but their standing on either the conflict or the movement was not presented. Human Subjects which were excluded were store clerks or staff (2), security staff (3) or police (4). On some occasions they were nations in general as a comparison to Israel (5). Some passive forms were found, where there was no human Subject as the Subject of the process verb under review (6).

(2) **A spokesman** for the supermarket said the move was not politically motivated and not connected to the Gaza conflict. [6]

(3) **security staff** were seen pulling down shutters to [...] [6]

(4) **the police** was present but did not try [1]

(5) No **other nations** approach their unprincipled history from inception. [1]

(6) Fire **is seen** as a Palestinian man walks amidst the remains of a tower building housing offices

With imperative forms, the Subject is naturally not visible [7]. On these occasions, the process was regarded to belong to the reader category, since the reader is addressed.

(7) join us on 24th April 2015 to protest their London performance [4]

During the analysis process, 63 verb processes out of the total of 557 were taken out of the analysis. This included the “meta” category, which consisted of words post/posted, sign in/out, tag/tagged, view, click, follow, create (a blog) and join (a posting list). All of these can be found in any website as a platform feature, and are thus not added by the writers themselves. All text written by the author of the website was included in the analysis as it can be considered intentional on the part of the writers, whereas metatext appears automatically and thus it is not a linguistic choice by the writer.

4.2 Naming Subjects and the issue

It is critical that when studying language utilizing CDA the person studying the language is aware of their own role in the society in which the analysis occurs and of the fact that scholarly discourse both influences and is influenced by social structure (van Dijk, 2011:353). This is why it is important that this paper explains how the Subjects and the issues are named in this paper. This study agrees with the notion that language structures and effects reality as much as reality structures language and that specific words have an impact on the way realities are constructed. In order to ensure that this study does not misuse terms and nouns to misinterpret or manipulate reality, it is important to establish and make visible the specific word choices made and categorizations used.

The problematic situation with terms is especially important to note as this study concerns the Palestine-Israel conflict. This is because the habit of naming is one of the ways identities and places are negotiated within the area and the Palestine-Israel crisis (Peteet, 2005:153). The legal standing, international status, mandate and authority of Palestine are all under debate (Brownson, 2014:22, Koek and Power, 2015:51). The status of Palestine in relation to the United Nations and implicit statehood remains complex and under discussion (Vidmar, 2013:19). In public discussion, Hamas is referred to as a political party, a political way of living or being, or as a terrorist organization that is widely attacked and condemned (López 2008:42). Terms and naming both reveal standings toward Palestine and are used to construct these standings. In this paper, the situation occurring in the Palestine-Israel area will be referred to as the Palestine-Israel conflict. This paper also uses the terms “issue” or “occurrence” when the subject was not the conflict in general, but the text referred to a specific occurrence.

4.2.1 The BDS category

The BDS category consists of people who agree with the mission of the BDS movement. Two groups within this category were distinguished, *BDS activists* and *BDS allies*. For the categorization of Subjects, Palestinians were considered a separate group, even though the BDS movement itself was coined by Palestinians and largely consists of Palestinians. This is because there was an interest to see how Palestinian areas and

Palestinians were presented beyond as members of the BDS movement, and especially as citizens and civilians.

The *BDS activist* group includes picketers, protestors, activists and the writers of the websites, often referring to themselves as “we”. It cannot be stated that there are only two forces at play here, the BDS movement set up in 2005 by Palestinian civil organizations and “Israel” as an entity. Rather, we must see the BDS movement both as the culmination of a general sense of having to act and as the beginning of a wide dispersal in the methods of action. What follows is that even those websites which do not specifically mention being a part of the BDS movement or being supporters of the movement were included in the BDS activist category. They were referred to as *BDS activists* because even though not all websites introduce the BDS movement explicitly, their goals are the same as those of the BDS movement: to boycott, divest and sanction Israel and its allies.

The BDS allies group includes people who can be seen as allies, meaning groups and individuals who are sympathetic towards the cause. Someone who fits in the BDS category is thus anyone who agrees with the premise of the activists (Israel being in the wrong, Palestine deserving justice, at its simplest) and anyone who is doing something to aid this cause. The allies-group consisted of celebrities, writers and artists as well as political figures who have made statements or decisions in accordance with the beliefs the core activists have, but are not actively working towards the cause. Anyone who agrees with the boycott and sympathizes towards the Palestinians is essentially both an ally and part of the movement. A distinction was made between BDS allies and BDS activists in order to be able to discuss the core activists and the writers in more detail. In other occasions, the two groups, BDS activists and BDS allies were generally referred to as the BDS group or the BDS category.

4.2.2 The Israel category

The Israel category consisted of two groups: *Israel* and *allies of Israel*. The first category included “Israel”, meaning the nation of Israel in general and people responsible for its actions, most often the government. It also included IDF which is the Israeli army, Israeli citizens, Israelis as tourists and Israeli politicians. One category was Israeli citizens who supported the BDS cause and the activists and those Israeli citizens who were activists

within the BDS movement themselves. In these cases, they were categorized both in the Israeli-group and in the BDS activists or BDS allies group. This is why on occasions there seems to be more processes sub-categorized than there was in total.

The other group, *Israeli ally*, consisted of people, groups and companies either working in collaboration with Israel or supporting Israel otherwise. A Subject was interpreted an Israeli ally if the website presented the Subject as an ally and gave them agency as a supporter of Israel. Most common allies of Israel were America as a nation and some important British politicians. Vague global groups such as “world elites”, “world leaders” and Westerners who do not “take responsibility” were also introduced as allies, based on the content of their actions and thoughts. Besides nations and politicians, the *Israel allies* group consisted of companies working with Israel or politicians supporting Israel. In this study, an ally of Israel is defined as someone who is presented in the websites as silently or vocally approving or endorsing Israel’s actions.

4.3 Transitivity processes and analysis

From a functional linguistic point of view, transitivity means the way the mental picture of the writer is expressed to the world. For the purposes of this paper, the key notion of transitivity is that any clause could have been stated differently, and that the choices made within the clause represent the world view of the writer. To study transitivity is to study how meanings are represented in clauses (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004:175). There are three components in the transitivity process:

- (i) the process itself
- (ii) the participants of the process
- (iii) the circumstances associated with the processes.

The first component, the process itself, is realized by a verbal group. Participants of the process are usually realized by nominal groups. Circumstances are realized either by adverbial groups or prepositional phrase or phases (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004:176). Processes link to the kind of event or state being described, participant describes the

entities involved, and circumstances explain the why, when and how of the situations. This paper focuses on participants and processes, because we seek to find out information of the frequencies of each participant, and of the activities these participants are described in taking part of. Thus in this study only the first components of transitivity analysis, that is, the participants and the process, are taken into consideration. Furthermore, of participants, only human Subjects were analyzed. The first components, the process types, can be divided into three, four or six categories. The process types are usually divided into four categories, which are as follows:

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| 1. Material processes: | processes of doing: run, eat, kick |
| 2. Mental processes: | processes of sensing: feel, taste, regret |
| 3. Relational processes: | processes of being; X is Y |
| 4. Verbal processes: | processes of saying; yell, argue, ask |

All of the processes were first identified in texts and divided into four of the existing categories: material, mental, relational and verbal. The two remaining categories are behavioral and existential processes. Behavioral processes are processes of psychological or cognitive behavior (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004:248). Existential processes are the representation of something existing or happening, usually constructed with a “there is”-structure. (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004:256). Generally speaking, the existential structure has no representational function or human participants, as it is realized by a There is- structure (ibid.). For this reason, existential processes were excluded from the analysis. Behavioral processes are considered to be in the border of material and mental processes (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004:248). As their name suggests, they are processes describing behavior. Behavioral process presents psychological conditions, which is why they are in this paper regarded as belonging to the mental processes. There are in general some instances where behavioral processes cannot be considered to belong within mental processes and must be considered as their own category, but in the texts under review, no such instance occurred. Example (8) presents the verb process *mourn*, which can be considered behavior. However, as it presents the internal psychological emotions of the Subject, it was categorized under mental processes.

(8) We **mourn** the deaths of hundreds of innocent people, including children. [1]

All active verb phrases which had one of the four participants as Subjects were included. Both independent clauses and subordinate clauses were included in the analysis. Only finite verbs were included in the analysis. Example (9) presents a sentence in which two finite verbs were included in the analysis and one non-finite verb was excluded.

(9) **Palestinians** [Subject] **have suffered** [finite verb, included in analysis] from Israeli repression and human rights abuse for over 60 years, during which time **governments** [Subject] all over the world **have allowed** [finite verb, included in analysis] Israel **to act** [non-finite verb, not included in analysis] with impunity.

Material processes describe physical actions in the real world. The vast majority of transitivity processes in the websites fell under the category of material processes. The Subject under study in material processes is the first participant of the clause, which Halliday named *Actor* (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004:179). Actor is thus the one performing the action of a material process. The other participant possibly found in a material process is called *Goal*. Goal is that which is affected by the action, the material process. The third component is the material process itself. We might also find a component named *scope*, that which is affected by the action. The fifth component of a material process sentence is *attribute*, the quality ascribed to an entity. The sixth possible component is *the client*, for whom the action occurs. The seventh possible component is the *recipient*, the receiver (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004:180). The first participant, called *Actor*, and the material verbal *process* were included in the analysis. Example (10) presents usual components in sentences which describe material processes.

(10) Every 60 hours [circumstance] **Israel** [**Actor**] **kills** [**process**] one Palestinian child [Goal] for the last 14 years! [Circumstance] [4]

Mental processes (11) describe affection, cognition (thoughts) and perception (seeing, sensing). In mental processes the Subject is referred to as *Senser*. Mental processes also include a mental verb process and might include a *phenomenon*, that, which is being sensed, thought of or appreciated (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004:197). Example (11) below presents a mental process. The selection process of Sensers regarded institutions, companies and stores as anthropomorphized non-human entities. These entities were clearly given human characterizations, and the websites in general emphasize that

institutions and politics in general consist of individuals, and these individuals within those institutions are the ones feeling the effects of actions directed towards these institutions. Mental processes were divided into three categories according to Halliday's classification: perception (seeing, hearing), cognition (thinking, knowing, understanding), and affection (feeling, liking and hating). Sensors and mental verb processes were included in the analysis.

(11) **Palestinians [Senser] have suffered [process]** from Israeli repression and human rights abuse [phenomenon] for over 60 years [circumstance]

Verbal processes (12) include a *Sayer*, an *addressee* and the *verbiage* (what the Subjects say). (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004:253). The Sayer and verb process were included in the analysis.

(12) 2 months after (Circumstance) **Israel (Sayer) agreed (process)** to allow family visits in return for an end to hunger strikes (verbiage)

Relational processes (13) express attributes or possessions. Relational processes which describe an entity have a *Carrier* as their Subject and an *Attribute* as the description of the entity, the Carrier. In relational processes in which an entity is being equated with another, the Subject is called *Token* and the other description is called *Value*. (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004:211). Both Carriers and Tokens were taken into the analysis, and their Attributes and Values were analyzed.

(13) With or without new “nation-state” law (circumstance) **Israel (Token) is (process) a settler-colonial apartheid state (value)**

For the purposes of this paper, Actors, Sensors, Sayers, Carriers and Tokens are all referred to as Subjects, when it is not relevant to specify what the specific process is. Subject is thus an umbrella term referring to the participant doing, feeling, being, sensing or saying, in other words it is the noun which appears before the verb process.

5. Results

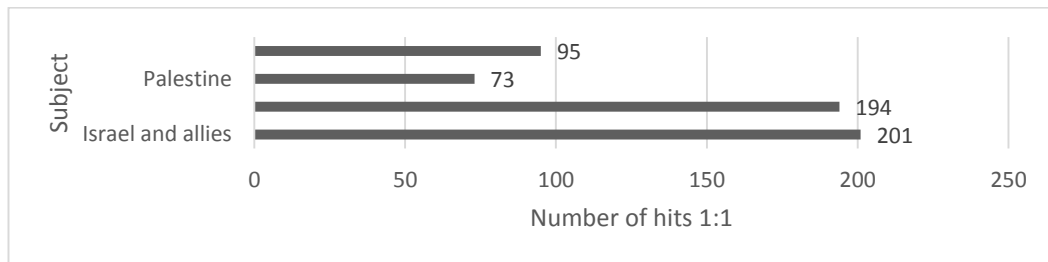
The first research question was as follows:

1. Which Subjects have the highest appearance frequency, which Subjects have the lowest appearance frequency, and what is the relative distribution of Subjects?

Distribution of participants as Subjects in all processes is presented in figure 3. The Subjects were categorized as “Reader”, “Palestine”, “BDS and allies” and “Israel and allies”. Based on figure 3 we can see that in these websites, the person or people doing, saying, being, feeling or sensing is mostly either Israel or its allies or BDS or its allies. The main focus of the websites was on discussing Israel’s operations and organizations, firms and individuals linked to Israel. The websites also focused largely on discussing, describing and promoting the BDS movement and its activists, which explains the high frequency of the BDS and its allies group. It is thus these two groups that are mostly present in the websites, and other participants in these websites are presented either as taking the side of the activists or taking Israel’s side. Based on the lack of Palestine and Palestinians as Subjects when compared to BDS group or Israel group, we can see Palestinians as citizens are not presented as active participants often.

Figure 3 shows that Israel and its allies were the most common Subject, as Israel or its allies were the Subject in any process type on 201 occasions. This Subject group was closely followed by BDS and allies, with 194 individual hits. Palestine was the Subject on 73 occasions. Reader was the Subject on 95 occasions. The total number of all processes by Subject is 563, which is 16 hits more than the total number of processes. This is because there were instances where one Subject was categorized as belonging to two Subject categories, namely occasions, where an Israeli citizen was presented as a BDS ally, thus belonging to both categories.

Figure 3. Distribution of all processes by Subject



The second research question was as follows:

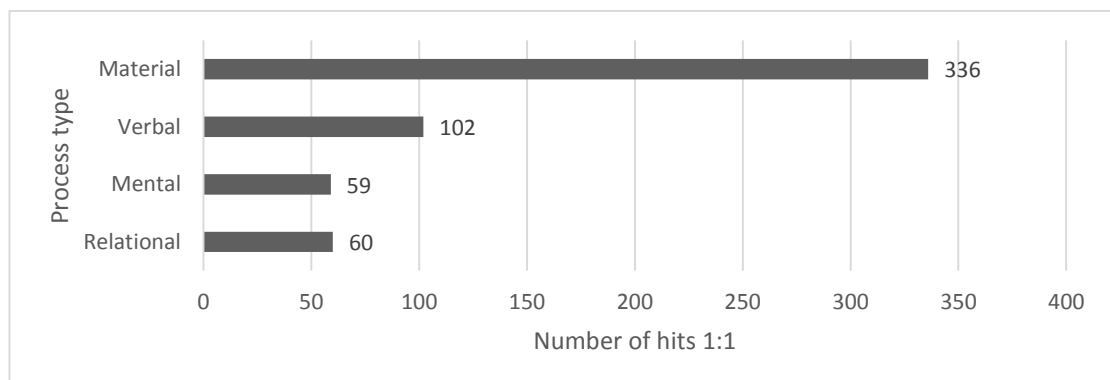
2. What are the functions of different process types, and how are they distributed between participants as Subjects?

To find out how process types were distributed between Subjects, a transitivity analysis was conducted. All sentences including one of the four Subjects under review were collected and all their verb processes were categorized into one of the four process types. Figure 2 presents a general overview of the distribution of process types. The numbers presented in figure 2 present individual hits. There were 547 hits in total. These hits thus comprise of instances, where one of the four process types were found with one of the participants as Subject.

Material processes were the most common, with 336 individual hits. Material processes were over three times more common than the second popular processes, which were the verbal processes. Material processes were more than five times more popular than the least common processes, which were mental processes. When it came to material processes, Israel and the BDS movement activists were mostly the Subject. When Palestinians were visible as Subjects, they were found in material processes as victims of Israel's occupation. Verbal processes were the second most common, with 102 hits. Verbal processes were used to explain what the BDS wants, to invite readers to the movement and report of Israel's operations. Thus processes of doing were most likely presented in these websites, followed by processes of saying.

Relational processes were the third most common with 60 individual hits. Relational processes were used to describe each participant and to “set up” the world in question before making demands or accusations. Mental processes were least frequent but their usage was the most versatile. Alongside verbal processes, mental processes were used to explain what the BDS activists want and convey Israel’s fear of the BDS movement. They were also used to express sympathy towards Palestinians and to convey Israel’s fear of the BDS movement. Thus, each process had its own unique function in the websites, and each participant was given different verb processes according to these functions. In the following sections the results are presented process by process, and in each section, the Subjects are discussed in more detail.

Figure 2. Distribution of process types total



5.1 Relational processes

In the websites under study, the functions of relational processes are to describe nations, events and operations. Israel’s relational processes are focused on describing Israel’s illegal activities. BDS’s relational processes describe the BDS movement and its participants. Palestine’s few relational processes are descriptions of suffering in Palestinian areas. Israel and BDS categories received approximately the same amount of relational processes. However, the BDS activists and allies were more likely to receive identifying relational processes. With Israel’s relational processes the focus was on

Israel’s fears, as well as emphasis on the global factors of the crisis. With BDS’s relational processes, both allies and activists were discussed and presented.

The analysis revealed the most common relational process verb to be “is”. This was used to ascribe attributives or identify groups. The questions we seek to answer with the analysis of relational processes is how do attributes and values differ based on who is *Carrier* or *Token*. Table 3 presents relational processes distributed by subject. Israel or Israel’s allies were the Subject on 30 occasions. The participants of the BDS movement were the Subject on 18 occasions. Palestine was the Subject on 12 occasions.

Table 3. Relational processes distributed by Subject.

Subject	Israel and ally	BDS people and allies	Palestine	Total
Number of hits	30	18	12	60
% of hits	50%	30%	20%	

5.1.1 Israel relational

Many different types allies of Israel were found as Subjects in relational processes: five Americans and one British politician, two business companies and a celebrity artist. The rest, (15 cases) had Israeli citizens, politicians, military or government or nation as Subject. What follows is a closer look on how Israel in itself is described. One of the questions this paper seeks to answer is how Israel is described and represented. One way to study this is to look only at the noun phrase *Israel* as *Carrier* or *Token* to see how identifying and attributive processes were distributed. Thus what follows is a description of those 15 instances where Israel was either *Carrier* or *Token* of a relational process. The focus is on what the *Attributes* and *Values* are, in other words how Israel is described as “being” in these websites.

On three occasions, Israel was the token of an attributive process together with *America* (14), (15), (16). Linking them together may make accepting, for example Israel as *guilty of virtually every crime imaginable* (14) difficult for an American reader, because this would require accepting that the same attributives define America as well. There is no general “anti-American” message in these websites, and other nations are usually described in a positive light, as pro-BDS politicians, celebrities and cities are presented. There are only a few occasions where a state besides Israel is shown in a negative light, and in the majority of these, the state is America.

(14) They (America and Israel) **are** guilty of virtually every high crime imaginable and then some [1]

(15) They (America and Israel) **remain** unaccountable [1]

(16) America and Israel far and away **have** the world's worst human rights records [1]

On one occasion, the Carrier was *the Israeli state and its ruthless methods* (17). This heavy noun phrase describes the Israeli state's methods as *ruthless* and depicts the state and the alleged ruthless methods as inseparable. The website treats the claim of ruthless methods as presupposed knowledge. It is also considering the fact that they are *here to stay* presupposed, common knowledge. The new information here is that it may be a *prototype of our collective global future*. This is one of the occasions in which there are efforts to make the conflict between Israel and Palestine into a global conflict by making Israel a global threat.

(17) Not only **are** the Israeli state and its ruthless methods here to stay they could also be, very frighteningly, a prototype of our collective global future. [1]

The rest of the attributive processes were given only to *Israel* without anything else attached to it as Subject. Four of these had *is* as their relational process, one had *seems* and one *remains*. Israel is *terrified* (18), which is a feeling usually felt by a human, not a nation. Israel is also *deeply apprehensive about the increasing numbers of American Jews who vocally oppose its policies* (20). It is again not clarified in specific *who* is apprehensive. In (21) it is stated Israel is *free to commit crimes of war, against humanity and genocide with impunity*. The statement thus consists of three attributives, three crimes Israel is *free* to do. The main focus, the nominal closest to the relational process of being, is *free*, furthermore, *free to commit*. The focus of the sentence is thus

not Israel committing *crimes of war*, [crimes] *against humanity* and *genocide*, but the fact that it is able to do so freely, without impunity. Stating these as presupposed knowledge shifts the focus from Israel actually committing these crimes (which is here stated factually) to the fact that it is *free* to do so without impunity. This shifts the blame from Israel committing these crimes to anyone who is not punishing Israel. The party guilty of granting this impunity is not visible in this specific sentence, but in the earlier sentence in the text they were described to as *world leaders*. By emphasizing the powerfulness of the counterpart, the BDS underlines the importance of the existence of the BDS movement and the fact that the BDS movement seeks, above all else, justice.

(18) Israel **seems** as terrified by the “exponential” growth of the Palestinian-led Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (or B.D.S.) movement as it [1]

(19) Israel **remains** the only country on earth that does not recognize its own nationality [1]

(20) Israel **is** deeply apprehensive about the increasing number of American Jews who vocally oppose its policies — especially those who [1]

(21) Israel **is** free to commit crimes of war, against humanity and genocide with impunity. [1]

What is noteworthy is the lack of identifying processes in relation to Israel. As one of the objectives, or rather, the main objective of these websites is to promote boycotts to Israel, it was assumed there would be an interest towards describing what Israel is in order to vindicate the boycotts. Moreover, it was expected that there would be large emphasis on the negative aspects of Israel’s characteristics. The latter expectation was hypothesized because in order to give reasons to boycotts, the activists would naturally have to give *negative* characterizations of Israel, not positive ones. One reason for this could be that the writers assume the reader is beforehand familiar with the topic, thus the negative aspects of Israel and its actions is assumed common ground or *presupposed knowledge*.

There were only two cases of identifying processes with Israel as a Token. The first one introduces Israel as *a lawless, racist, apartheid, rogue terror state* (22). There are quite many characteristics given to Israel in this one short sentence, none of them which are positive. However, Israel is defined as “state”, something which is not visible in attributive processes, but found in both the identifying processes (22), (23). As there were no more identifying relational processes, it can be argued to some extent, that the websites

already assume the reader is aware of what Israel is (like), and that this characterization of the writers of the websites is assumed to correspond with the characterization of Israel the reader has in mind.

(22) Israel **is** a lawless, racist, apartheid, rogue terror. [1]

(23) Israel **may** well **be** a model state that global elites want to establish to control the world. [1]

5.1.2 BDS relational

There were 18 relational processes found from the category describing the protestors and their allies, with *we*, *group* or *groups* were mostly Carriers or Tokens. Allies from around the world were introduced, including, for example, an international *security journalist* (29), a village in County Galway (24), a community in Clarksfield and a Spanish singer (25). There seems to be no link between these ascribed allies to each other. However, in two instances of “allies”, the websites had included the information that the people or group in accordance with the goals of the BDS movement had been the first in their category to do something the BDS activist favored (26), (27). This complies with the general standard of news, where something is interesting or important because it is “a first”. This is also a method to celebrate a win and hint that while these very different Subjects may be the first in their fields, more are to come.

(24) Kinvara, a village in County Galway, **has become** the first community in Ireland to unite against Israel’s military action in Gaza. [1]

(25) Marianna **becomes** first singer in Spain to cancel concerts

Relational processes were divided equally between attributives and identifying processes, as there were 8 attributive and 8 identifying verbs. There was also no difference in the way the attributives and identifying processes were divided between the *BDS activists* group and the *BDS allies* group. Attributive verbs were usually used to describe the group’s participation or presence in events or to describe feelings of *honor* or *surprise* (26), (27).

(26) Chief Mandla Mandela, South African MP and grandson of Nelson Mandela, and Lebanese musician Marcel Khalife **were** among those that participated [Attribute]

(27) we **are** honoured to have national treasure [5]

First-person plural *we* followed by the relational verb *are* was used to describe the activists (28) or the occurrences in Palestine three times. An identifying relational process was found also in (29), when a journalist was introduced.

(28) We **are** an independent, non-party political organization run by volunteers all committed to a just and sustainable peace in the Middle East. [5]

(29) Dr. Nafeez Ahmed **is** an international security journalist and academic [1]

5.1.3 Palestine relational

Most relational processes with Palestinians as Subjects are reports from Israel's side. There are only a few occasions where the BDS activists themselves discuss Palestinian citizens by utilizing relational processes, and in all these instances, the citizens mentioned are former or current prisoners. There are no characterizations of Palestinians as activists or as heroes, and no other stories besides the stories of hunger strikers are presented.

To see how Palestine and Palestinians were discussed, both Palestine and Gaza as areas were taken into consideration. Compared to the 13 times "Israel" was the Subject of a relational process, Palestine and Gaza with only 3 relational processes are receiving very little attention as "being" something. These relational processes related to Palestine and Gaza give a good overview of how the area is seen by the eyes of the people working towards the boycott. Both Gaza and Palestine in general are described as victims of an action by Israel. In the websites, Gaza was described as *besieged* (30) and parts of it *laying in ruins* (32), and Palestine was described as *remaining occupied* (31). It is understood by the context that the perpetrator of the occupation(s) is Israel (31), (32), since Israel in fact occupies these areas. Palestine is not occupied or besieged spontaneously by itself, but by Israel. Thus even when Subjects in relational processes, Palestine and Gaza are still the objects of something done to them by Israel. By focusing on Palestine as the participant in a relational process and leaving Israel out of the sentence the sentences

emphasize how things are *happening* to Palestine, whether Palestine tries to stop them or not. It is possible the involvement (or guilt) of Israel is left out as it is considered general knowledge, but not mentioning Israel is a method of emphasizing the victim qualities of occupants of Gaza regime.

(30) Gaza **is** besieged, [1]

(31) Palestine **remains** occupied [1]

(32) parts of Gaza **lie** in ruins [1]

There were some instances where Israel's allies were referred to as they were discussing Palestinians, making Palestinians the Subject of these relational processes. Thus (33) and (34) present representations of Palestinians, but the opinions are not those of the writers, but of Israel's allies. The reason behind reporting these statements could be to increase feelings of solidarity towards Palestinians.

(33) 'You're dead, you deserve to be dead – you started it': Joan Rivers in astonishing attack on 'stupid' Palestinians [6]

(34) palestinians who didn't leave their homes are idiots [1]

Besides these, there are six instances of discussing Palestinians. These are reports of current or former Palestinian prisoners, and the focus is on their hunger strikes (35). The duration and implications of their hunger strike are discussed in detail. A freed former prisoner is described as *former hunger striker* and it is emphasized that he had been caged without charge or trial. Because of this, it seems both the prisoners and the writers of the website consider hunger strikes an important method for change while in imprisonment. Hunger striking also fits the agenda of "boycotting", as the prisoners are literally boycotting the food given to them by the IDF. In these specific instances, the reasons behind their imprisonment are not discussed, although it is mentioned the individuals imprisoned have not been charged or put to trial.

(35) Palestinian former hunger striker Ayman Al-Tabeeh **is** finally free after being caged in Israel's G4S secured dungeon at Ofer for two and half years without charge or trial. [4]

5.2 Mental processes

The functions of mental processes were to explain BDS's demands to Israel, introduce the reader to Palestinian suffering and present Israel's fears towards the BDS movement. In mental processes BDS movement and the writers of the websites explain what they demand and wish will happen in the Palestine region, and what they demand Israel do before the boycotts can end. Israel's mental processes describe Israel's fear towards the BDS movement. In mental processes Israel is also told, what it should do. Palestinian mental processes focus around Palestinian suffering, and some of BDS group's mental processes express solidarity towards this suffering. Reader's mental processes are mainly concerned with introducing the reader to the BDS movement.

Table 4 presents the distribution of mental processes by Subject. In the processes of sensing, feeling and understanding, nearly half the processes had the BDS category as Subject. Compared to relational processes, where the amount was one third and to material processes, where the amount is one fourth, the amount of mental processes of BDS group is very high. Given that the total amount of the BDS group and Israel group as Subjects was nearly equal, it is noteworthy that in mental processes, the amount of BDS as Subject is higher than the amount of Israel as Subject. This means that the majority of processes describing thinking or feeling are given to BDS activists and allies: in the realm of reality of the websites, it is the BDS group that thinks or feels the most. In these websites, mental processes are used to describe one's own feelings and thoughts, as well as the feelings and thoughts of like-minded people.

Table 4. Distribution of mental processes by Subject

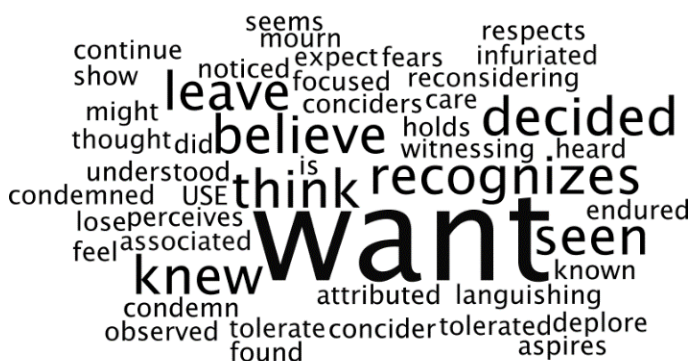
Subject	Israel and ally	BDS people and allies	Palestine	Reader	Total
No. of hits	22	33	1	3	59
% of hits	37.5%	55.9%	1.6%	5%	

This was the category where Palestine was the subject on least occasions (only 1). As this process group, alongside verbal process group, does not present Palestinians besides a few exceptions, a conclusion can be made that in these websites, Palestinians are not described as thinking, feeling or saying.

The Reader was a Subject on three occasions. The low frequency is logical given the purpose of mental processes: to describe thinking, feeling or understanding. As the writers cannot know of the internal psychological conditions of the readers, they are not presented in the websites either.

Figure 4 presents the word cloud of mental process verbs. The word cloud presents all verbs and does not differentiate between Subjects. The most common mental process verb was “want”. This was used by the BDS activists to describe what they hope and demand from Israel. Studying the word cloud, we can see the mental processes were used by the BDS activists to tell the world, what they want. Furthermore, these websites in general exist partly for this specific reason, to tell the world what the writers *want*. This is one of those “goings-ons” we seek to identify, when conducting transitivity analysis. As one of the purposes of this paper is to find out how process types are distributed between Subjects, we will now proceed to a more detailed description of how mental processes presented in figure 4 are distributed between Subjects.

Figure 4. Word cloud of mental process verbs



5.2.1 Israel mental

Many of Israel's mental processes highlighted Israel's fear towards the BDS movement or the activists working for the movement. Israel is characterized as "feeling" vulnerable in face of the BDS movement (36), "seeming" terrified of BDS (37) and "perceiving" Jewish people against Israel's policies a threat (38). There is a notable juxtaposition in between BDS activists and Israel. As exemplified in (36), the negative aspects of Israel (nuclear power) and the positive aspects of the BDS movement (nonviolence, human rights) are emphasized. The usage of a mental process characterizing Israel as insecure and vulnerable nation emphasize Israel's lack of perceptiveness as well as BDS's own perceived power it holds in relation to Israel.

(36) Why should Israel, a nuclear power with strong economy **feel** so vulnerable to a nonviolent human rights movement? [1]

(36) These days, Israel **seems** as terrified by the "exponential" growth of the Palestinian-led Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (or B.D.S.) movement as it [1]

(38) It [Israel] also **perceives** as a profound threat the rising dissent among prominent Jewish figures who reject its tendency to speak on their behalf, challenge its claim to be the "national home" of all Jews, or raise the inherent conflict between its ethno-religious self-definition and its claim to democracy [1]

In addition to characterizing Israel as a fearful nation, mental processes of Israel and its allies were often introduced relation to the hopes that the writers of the websites have. Boycotts should happen until Israel complies with BDS's demands, and a part of these demands come in the form of recognition (39), (40) and respect towards human rights or international laws (41).

(39) Nonviolent punitive measures should continue until Israel **recognizes** Palestinian rights to self-determination; [1]

(40) boycott should happen until Israel **recognizes** East Jerusalem as Palestine's exclusive capital within June 1967 borders; and [1]

(41) boycott should happen until Israel **respects** international laws, norms and standards [1]

When it came to Israel's allies, cognitive mental processes were introduced to show either the allies as being hesitant towards Israel (42) or express wishes the allies reconsider their position (43). In these instances it is implied allies of Israel are its allies because they

have not considered the facts and moral aspects sufficiently: their support for Israel stems from a lack of thinking, not necessarily a lack of moral. When discussing Israel's allies, we are given names of states, not their individual politicians or any other public figures. In (42), the Subject is vague, perhaps on purpose: *growing numbers of officials and other figures* does not mention the country of these officials, nor what the other figures are. Thus the amount could be large and the officials and "other figures" could be important ones. A reality is created were BDS is constantly gathering momentum. As the figures are reported as reconsidering their support to Israel, they are currently allies of Israel, but even the fact they are reconsidering "justice" may make them future allies of BDS. This Subject is in a metaphorical tipping scale, and there seems to be hope that after reconsideration they will realize Israel's actions are (no longer) justified. In example (43) the aspiration that America, Britain and France "think twice" implies their agreement to act as Israel's allies may be a consequence of the lack of throughout thinking: the mental process used implies that if the allies use more consideration they will realize they have been wrong.

(42) While most governments support Israel, growing numbers of officials and other figures in them **are reconsidering** what's no longer justified. [1]

(43) All we can hope for is that america, britain and france **think** twice before they spends trillions of their tax payers' money in following the Yinon Plan to fight ruinous, foreign wars imposed upon them by The Lobby. [1]

One of Israel's allies was referred to as "global elites" (44). *Global elites* are not explained any further and their identity thus remains open. The mental process presented is an aspiration towards establishing Israel as a model state. When global elites are presented as allies of Israel, they fall within the "out group" category. They are presented as wanting to "control the world", posing a threat to individual's liberties. Supporting Israel is a gateway to a less free life. This is a means of emphasizing the juxtaposition between BDS as a small, but growing "nonviolent human rights movement" (as presented in example 36) driven by a sense of justice, and large global elites which do not have individual's best interests in their mind.

(44) Israel may well be a model state that global elites **want** to establish to control the world in the days to come. [1]

5.2.2 BDS mental

Most commonly BDS's mental processes were used to describe what the BDS activists wish Israel would do (45), or to describe what it does not want Israel do (46). This explains the high frequency of the verb "want", as was visible in the world cloud figure 4 in 5.2. BDS mental processes also consisted of BDS activists and the website writers observations of occurrences in Palestine and activities in the campaign (47). Thus the functions of the mental processes of the BDS activists and allies were to describe the group's own activities as well as their likes, dislikes and feelings towards Israel. BDS group had the largest amount of mental processes. This means it is important to emphasize own group's thoughts, perceptions and feelings.

(45) We **believe** Israel should increase its [domestic] use of natural gas by 2020 and should not export gas [1]

(46) we **don't want** any Israeli goods [1]

(47) I **noticed** three weeks ago that we were seeing an unusual spike in traffic, but there hadn't been any articles written about the app or Israel campaigns," said Ivan Pardo, speaking to Forbes. " [1]

Many of the Subjects in this category were described as "we". *We* referred to the writers of the websites and the protestors whose actions the writers were describing, but also included the option for the reader to join the group. By using the first plural neither exclusively nor inclusively in mental processes, as well as using present tense, the reader was able to join the group by sharing the feelings felt. If you *mourn* (48) or *deplore* (49) like *we* do, then you belong to the "in group". In (50), the mental process of "witnessing" can be read as either literal or metaphorical, depending on interpretation of who "we" are. This example has two features which were often found in relation to BDS activist category in all the processes. First of all, it relies to an "expect" in referring information from but does not explain who the referred person is. Secondly, it seems deliberately ambiguous as to who "we" are, which is especially important in declaratives like these (50). Is "we" the people living in Gaza or the people of Palestine? Or does it refer to the activists or perhaps even to humanity in general, including the reader into the first-person plural "we"? In this specific case the interpretation lies in the interpretation of the verb used. If we take it "witnessing" means literally (eye)witness accounts, then "we" means

people living and working in Palestine, more specifically in Gaza. If “we” is excluded to mean “we the people of the world”, it becomes metaphorical, but still factual. *We are witnessing* engages the reader, the new-found witness, far more than stating “there is a massacre”, which would distance the reader from the occurrence.

(48) We **mourn** the deaths of hundreds of innocent people, including children. [1]

(49) We **deplore** the Israeli government’s military crackdown in the West Bank that led to its lethal, military onslaught on the people of Gaza. [1]

(50) Norman Finklestein, in 2012 demonstrated that in Gaza we **are witnessing** a massacre and not a war.[1]

5.2.3 Palestine mental

There was only one sentence where Palestinians were the Sensors in mental processes (51). Here, again, Palestinians are presented only as sufferers. Sentences such as these were expected to be found in these websites in large amounts, but it turned out the focus was not on the suffering of the Palestinians. This is an interesting finding especially in relation to the high amount of mentions of Israel as Sensor in mental processes. Palestinians are not presented as feeling or thinking, thus they are not able, in these websites, to present their own feelings of the occupation and of the movement. Perhaps it is considered presupposed knowledge that Palestinians are suffering, but it is clear that interviewing Palestinians and presenting their mental anguish is not one of the methods used to persuade the reader to engage in the boycott.

(51) Friday 17th April is Palestinian Prisoners Day, a day of solidarity with the 6500 Palestinian men, women and children who **are languishing** in Israeli dungeons [4]

5.2.4 Reader mental

There were three instances of addressing the reader, with the intent to engage the reader to join the boycotts. The mental processes were “you might have heard”, “may leave you” (regarded as mental process because it explain the expected inner psychological condition of the reader) and “might expect”, thus all had modal verbs to introduce the mental process as a possibility. In (52) the reader’s position is in the beginning as a non-dependent clause. This is then followed with the Subject of *practically every human rights organization*. The clause ends with a lengthy phenomenon of condemning Israel's discrimination against Palestinian citizens and regular military attacks on those Palestinians who are not citizens. This usage of presupposed knowledge is used as a way to get the reader to agree with the message. The reader is addressed directly and the presupposition in the addressing implies the reader is already familiar with the situation. These statements, *Israel’s discrimination against Palestinian citizens* and *regular military attacks* are within the sentence, presented as common knowledge. The reader is expected to know these facts beforehand and accept them to be true, regard them as common knowledge.

(52) As you might have **heard** practically every human rights organization in the world has condemned Israel's discrimination against Palestinian citizens and regular military attacks on those Palestinians who are not citizens [3]

5.3 Verbal processes

In the websites, the main function of the verbal processes is to report of Israel’s actions and of BDS movement’s activities. Israel’s verbal processes were largely reports of Israel’s operations, and BDS’s verbal processes are reports of the movement’s operations. Palestine’s few verbal processes also revolve around the BDS movement. The reader is urged to take action and join the BDS movement. Thus the focus was heavily on the BDS movement.

The reader the Subject on 19 occasions, and in all of these the reader was addressed in imperative forms. It was thus suggested or demanded that the reader performs the verbal process attached to them. Palestine was the subject of a verbal process only once, thus Palestine does not have an active voice in these websites.

Table 5. Subjects by verbal processes

Subject	Israel and ally	BDS people and allies	Palestine	Reader	Total
No. of hits	25	55	3	19	102
% of hits	24,5%	53,9%	2,9%	18,6%	

5.3.1 Israel verbal

Most of Israel's verbal processes were the word *say*, which is a very neutral method of reporting. *Say* or *said* was found eight times, *claim* or *claimed* twice and all the other verbal processes once. In Israel's verb processes, with the selection of specific words as verb types, the writers of the websites are merging their own opinions to the reports of Israel and their allies. Many of the verbs hint that the statement is either false or at least should be doubted. This was done especially by using the verb "claim", which implies the statement may not be true.

There are many different Subjects within the Israeli and allies-category. Israeli businessmen (53), politicians and celebrities, military commanders, the Prime Minister (54) and the Defense Minister (55) are all given a voice. These voices are mostly used to discuss either the BDS movement or Palestine's policies. In (53), we see *Israeli businessmen expressing fears* that the boycott campaign may have negative effects towards their business. These *Israeli businessmen* are not interviewed or mentioned again, and the fears they express are not explained further. In (54) we are given the information that BDS is *declared* a strategic threat. To *declare* is much more official and

a grander gesture than *saying*. Both of these reports strengthen the idea that Israel and its citizens see the BDS movement as a threat and fear it.

(53) Israeli businessmen **expressed** fears that the European campaign to boycott Israeli products could widen after a sharp decline in exports. [1]

(54) Last June, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu **declared** B.D.S a strategic threat [1]

Example (55) presents a report discussing the beginning of an assault project. Statements like these, informing us of Israel's military movements, were found often. *Operation Protective Edge* received much attention and was discussed both by lengthy direct quotes coming from the Defence Minister as well as discussions by the writer of the website. This proves one of the general missions of the websites is to report of the policies of Israel.

(55) Israeli defence minister and former Israeli Defence Force (IDF) chief of staff Moshe Ya'alon **announced** that Operation Protective Edge marks the beginning of a protracted assault on Hamas. [1]

Claim (56) is made by a company in collaboration with Israel which BDS wants to boycott. The verb process is the very last word in the sentence and found in a dependent clause. The verb process is thus not the focus of the sentence, but refers to something the firm has said. The IT infrastructure is reported to *create a better future for everyone*, which they in fact do claim¹.

(56) Ask them how the IT infrastructure they provide to the Israeli military which forms the backbone of their entire war machine helps "create a better future for everyone" as they **claim**. [4]

From HP website

(57) And it's just one part of a big week of activities intended to drive creative thinking, conversation, debate and, ultimately, solutions that contribute to HP Living Progress, our framework for thinking about how we do business to create a better future for everyone through our actions and innovations.

Thus, the BDS activists are in fact quoting HP correctly from their website. *Which forms the backbone of their entire war machine* is the interpretation of BDS, to which they have linked the quote, to provide discrepancy between the claim *to create a better future* (57) and the claim they are making *which forms the backbone of their entire war machine*. The word choice *claims* highlights this discrepancy. The first definition of the word “claim” in Merriam-Webster dictionary is: “to say that (something) is true when some people may say it is not true”. The definition of say is “to use your voice to express (something) with words”. The word “say” does not, thus, come inherently with the evaluation of how factual the statement is, but “claim” does. Using the verb process “claim” implies the statement reported is not necessarily factual according to the person reporting the statement.

In (58), the term *claim* is again used to imply the statement referred to is not factual in the opinion of the writer of the clause. In this occasion, *our name* refers to a coalition of Jewish people in Britain against what they refer to as Israel’s slaughter. It can thus be expected the *Jews in Britain* in question would belong to the *British Jews* presented. However they are presenting the Board of Deputies in a negative light and disputing the claims the Board makes about being against Israeli violence. Thus the *claim* is used to highlight the lack of ownership to their voice inside the Jewish British community. *Claim* (58) also disputes the message of the Board of Deputies.

(58) Jews in Britain against Genocide demonstrated outside the offices of the Board of Deputies of British Jews. The Board of Deputies **claims** to speak in our name when it lobbies in defence of Israeli violence.

The verb *invoke* is also found in a dependent clause and is followed directly with *despite*, again contesting the claim (59). Thus the verb processes *invoke*, similarly to *claim*, is found in contexts which immediately strive to dispute the claims made.

(59) To underscore the “existential” danger that B.D.S. poses, Israel and its lobby groups often **invoke** the smear of anti-Semitism, despite the unequivocal, consistent position of the movement against all forms of racism, including anti-Semitism [1]

5.3.2 BDS verbal

Demand (60-62) and *call* (63), (64) were the most common verbal processes all tenses included. Neither of them was found when Israel was the subject. This means in these texts, Israel's role is not to demand or call, but only to be the object of calls and demands. Besides call and demand, most common verb processes of BDS category were "say", "claim", "condemn" and "urge". "Claim", "condemn" and "criticize" can be seen as negative in tone. "Call", "demand" and "urge" have a suggestive tone in them, and can be seen as "requests". Thus criticism, requests and suggestions were all voiced. All of the verb processes were used to present criticism towards Israel and make demands relating to the BDS movement and Israel's actions.

Most cases of *demand* and *call* were found in one particular website within the same chapter. This means they could well be the style of one specific writer, but they are in line with the general tone of the texts in all the websites. All the cases in which demand and call were found begin with the call to "join" the activists, but it is not expected the reader knows the details of each protest.

The definition of "demand" is "a forceful statement in which you say that something must be done or given to you". Another common verb which could have been alternatively used is "ask", with the definition (in this context) of "to tell someone in the form of a question that you want to be given something or that you want something to happen". The difference between ask and demand is thus between "what you want" and "what you *must have*", latter of which one is *forcefully* said. The decision to use *demand* adds a layer of aggressiveness and urgency compared to "ask". The demands of BDS activists include freedom and release of child prisoners, justice for tortured prisoners and that companies end their collaboration with Israel.

(60) as we **demand** the immediate release of 15 years old Palestinian school boy Khaled al-Sheikh and 18 years old Palestinian journalism student Lina Khattab

(61) **demand** justice for Arafat Jaradat on 2nd Anniversary of his murder at the hands of Israeli torturers at Israel's G4S secured Megiddo prison

(62) as we **demand** G4S end its complicity in Israel's crimes against Palestinian prisoners, in particular torture of children

In half the occasions *call* was used as a verb process, the verb was used in the sense we can define it as "to speak of or address by a specified name", meaning, used a certain name

of something (63), (64). In this case, Israel, Israel's operations were called a massacre or genocide, and Israel was called a terrorist state. We are introduced to the Brazilian president *condemning what she calls Israel's massacre* (63) as well as to the Turkish prime minister calling *Israel's operation genocide* (64). This gives impact to the definition of Israel as a terrorist state or conducting a massacre or genocide, as these are political people with political power. Using their voice as means to deliver the message of what Israel is or does adds authority and functions as a source.

(63) Brazilian president condemned what she **called** Israel's massacre [1]

(64) Turkish prime minister **called** Israel's operation genocide [1]

The other six times *call* was used in its other definition; call forth as in evoke, or "to command or request to come or be present" (65), (66), (67). This *call* can be understood as an invite to join.

(62) B.D.S **calls** for ending Israel's 1967 occupation... [1]

(63) Growing numbers of people of conscience **call** upon international civil society organizations and (supporters everywhere) to impose broad boycotts... [1]

(64) We **call** on our global partners in the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement (BDS) fo [2]

5.3.3 Palestine verbal

There are no verbal processes where a Palestinian as a civilian voices anything, either discussing their own situation or the conflict in general. All these reports are left to the writers of the websites. Palestinians or a coalition in Palestine were Sayers in verbal processes only on three occasions (65), (66), (67). Two of these concern establishing the BDS movement, thus the focus of the verbiage remains in the BDS movement, not in Palestinian citizens.

(65) In 2005, Palestinian civil society **issued** a call for a campaign of boycotts, divestment and sanctions (BDS) against Israel until it complies with international law and Palestinian rights [2]

(66) In 2005, Palestinian civil society **issued** a call for a campaign of boycotts, divestment and sanctions [2]

On one occasion, Hamas was the Sayer in a verbal process (67). In this instance, Hamas is condemning PA's deal, thus criticizing the actions of PA. PA refers to Palestinian (National) Authority, a self-governing body within Gaza, controlled by Fatah at the time of writing. This example proves Hamas is unsatisfied with at least some actions made by Palestinian authorities. The relationship between Hamas and the BDS movement and the Palestinian civil society is not made clear in the websites.

(67) Earlier this year, Hamas **condemned** a PA deal to purchase \$1.2 billion worth of gas from Israel Leviathan field over a 20 year period once the field starts producing

5.3.4 Reader verbal

There was a high amount of occurrences of the Reader as a Subject in verbal processes compared to relational processes, where there was none, and mental processes, where there were only three. All the verbal processes were in imperative mood. How the reader should use their voice is in accordance with how the BDS movement is using theirs.

The reader was asked or told to spread the word of the website and urge others to "act for justice" (68), share information and ask others to boycott (69). They were also urged to talk about the movement, refuse to stay silent about injustice, tell artists to boycott Israel, demand freedom for different individuals viewed as innocent and generally say "no" to apartheid. *Demand* (70) was the most common verb process, followed by *ask* (69). The function of *demand* as verbal process is to add urgency and aggressiveness to the request. By asking readers to "demand" instead of "ask", the writers are emphasizing the importance and urgency of the issue and the importance of the reader's engagement to the issue.

(68) Urge others to act for justice [1]

(69) ask your members to boycott Israeli [1]

(70) Demand Arrest Of War Criminal Netanyahu! [4]

The material processes of Palestine described largely suffering. Where Palestine was the Subject, the emphasis was on describing Palestinian prisoners and their conditions in prisons. As material processes were the only ones where Palestinians were visible in large numbers, a conclusion can be made that Palestinians are not generally visible in these websites and when they are, they are victims.

As visible from figure 6, the most common verb in this category was join. This verb was used mostly to persuade the reader to engage in activities advertised in the websites. Table 6 presents distribution of material processes with only human participants, 336 in total. Israel and its allies was the most common Subject group in this category. Israel and its allies made up 36 per cent of all material processes. The second largest group was BDS activists and allies, who were the Subject on 24 per cent of the occasions. The third largest group was the reader as Subject, which made up 22 per cent of all material processes. The smallest group was Palestine and Palestinians, making up 17 per cent. This was the category in which Subjects were most equally divided in frequencies.

Table 6. Material processes by Subject type

Subject	Israel and ally	BDS people and allies	Palestine	Reader	Total
No. of hits	124	82	57	73	336
% of hits	36,2%	24,4%	16,6%	21,7%	

5.4.1 Israel material

There were four general topics where Israel was the Subject of material processes. Firstly, Israel's general policies and the area's future was discussed. Secondly, there was a high frequency of presenting Israel's actions towards Palestine in specific. Thirdly, Israelis who support the BDS movement were presented. Fourthly, the writers of the websites present their ideas of what they think Israel should or must do.

The way in which Israel is presented as Subject in material processes largely represents the way in which Israel is presented in the websites in general. Israel is characterized as an insecure, vulnerable nation which keeps committing immoral or criminal acts such as waging a genocidal war, denying Palestinians of their rights and stealing energy resources from other countries. It is heavily emphasized that Israel continues to commit these acts without being punished. BDS activists demand both that Israel stop these acts, and that it be punished for committing them.

In nearly a fourth of Israel's material processes, we are given information on what the writers see Israel should do or must do. No reasons as to *why* Israel and its officials should be prosecuted and comply with the demands of BDS are presented. Thus, the reasons are considered presupposed knowledge and it is expected the reader is, at least to some extent, familiar with the wrongdoings of Israel, and in agreement with BDS's demands. Examples of occasions in which what Israel should or must do can be found in (71), (72) and (73).

(71) Nonviolent punitive measures **should continue** until Israel:

(72) **Ends** its illegal occupation unconditionally;

ends Gaza's siege unconditionally;

(73) Culpable Israeli officials **must be punished** to the full extent of the law. [1]

Examples of Israeli citizens supporting BDS are presented in (74), (75) and (76). The first two examples present Palestinians, Jews and citizens of Israel "side by side" in fighting towards the cause. Grouping the Subjects this way switch the two binary oppositions from Israel–Palestine to "for the cause" – "against they cause". The core group attempts to steer away from the idea that the common denominator of the core activists is that they are Palestinians, and instead enforces the notion that they are driven together by their involvement to the cause and to justice. The BDS movement seeks affirmation (and attempts to escape from allegations of anti-Zionism, perhaps) by introducing Jewish people or citizens of Israel *against Israel*. The material process *joins* refers to the *Palestinian call against Israel* (75), (75). In these instances, it is not determined or specified what Israel as a singular noun is, but the criticism is still directed towards *Israel*, not Israel's policies, leaders or the army, for instance. As for (76), the Subject of *Jews* serves to emphasize the fact that for the boycotters, the issue is not one of religion or race, and that people of all religions may join the boycott, and are already doing so.

(74) Palestinians, Jews, citizens of Israel **join** the Palestinian call for a BDS campaign against Israel

(75) We, Palestinians, Jews, citizens of Israel **join** the Palestinian call for a BDS campaign against Israel

(76) Jews **demonstrate** by Prof Louise Bethlehem of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

What is visible in material processes is that one of the purposes of these websites is to give information of Israel's policies in general. Of the material processes in which Israel as a singular noun was the Subject, 11 instances discussed Israel's policies and future (77) and (78). These were sections from larger contexts, where Israel's gas supplies and pending energy crisis were discussed. It was seen these supplies are found in disputed borders and may in fact belong to Syria, Lebanon, Gaza or Cyprus instead, focusing mostly on the areas seen as belonging to Palestine.

(77) with the depletion of Israel's domestic gas supplies accelerating, and without an imminent rise in Egyptian gas imports, Israel **could face** a power crisis in the next few years [1]

(78) for Israel to **maintain** its regional superiority, it must fragment its surrounding Arab states into smaller units. [1]

In ten instances where Israel was the Subject were material processes, the action was directed towards Palestine (79), (80). These sentences were originally expected to be found in much higher numbers. A high occurrence rate of sentences such as these was expected beforehand, because these types of sentences are the ones which explain *why* the reader should begin to boycott Israel. According to the websites, Israel *wages a genocidal war* (79) and is killing Palestinian children. Israel is also *denying Palestinians the right to see their families in prison* (80), and launches offensives.

(79)For many decades, Israel **waged** genocidal war against millions of defenseless Palestinians with impunity. [1]

(80) In contravention of Article 116 of the Fourth Geneva Convention Israelis **denying** Palestinian families the right to visit their loved ones in prison [4]

5.4.2 BDS material

In BDS movement's material processes, the Subject was often "people", "activist" or "protestor". "We" was also used often, both as including and as excluding the reader. The focus was on describing past and future events regarding the BDS movement. Protests which were to come were advertised and protests which had occurred were reported.

In BDS movement's material processes, *people* were the Subject on 18 cases, with different specifications, such as amount of people or an adjective describing them. *Protestors* or *activists* were the Subject on eight occasions. *Ordinary people* or *some people* were described as boycotting or protesting. There were 21 cases of "we" or the writers forms of writer's addressing to themselves. In 32 cases, the Subject was an ally. Three cases had the writer in first-person *I* as the Subject. Thus similarly to the case of Israel and its allies, there were more occurrences of the allies than they were of the core group, in this case, the BDS activists.

Table 7. Distribution of material processes per Subject in BDS category

Ally	32
We, the writers	21
People	18
protestor, activist	8
I	3

When the Subject was "we", the material processes were *setting up*, *hosting*, *writing* (81), *campaigning* and *lobbying*. The "we" Subject also had one case of *picketing* and one case of *protesting*. Most of the material processes of this group thus refer to practical activities which have to do with maintaining the movement. When the discussion is surrounding this practical maintaining or giving information about future events which are not protesting or picketing, the "we" seems to be inclusive (81). Example (81) is a part of series of letters sent to different people the writes consider co-working with Israel, after

which the content was published in the website. It seems the inclusiveness of the “we” is dependent on the action of the group. The practical measures are maintained by the “insiders”, and exclusive “we” is used when the group calls others to join events of protests (82).

(81) We **write** to you as citizens of Israel who actively oppose our successive governments' policies of belligerent occupation, colonialism, ethnic cleansing...

(82) as we **proceed** down Old Bond Street on a rolling protest stopping at the businesses of the main peddlers of Israeli blood diamonds... [4]

The topics were mostly the same when the Subject was *protestor* or *activist* and when it was *people* or *ordinary people*. On some instances, the material processes of the activists and protestors were showing more action than those material processes, in which “people” were involved. When Subjects were referred to as “activists” or “protestors”: they were described as *disrupting*, *closing down a supermarket*, *occupying areas*, *laying down*, *protesting* and *blocking the morning traffic* (83). “People” also staged a die-in and protested, but they were also described as *holding sings* (84) and *participating*, in which cases they are shown less passive as when they are described as activists or protestors.

(83) toronto activists **block** morning traffic outside the Israeli consulate [6]

(84) Over 40 people staged a die-in while many others held large signs reading [6]

It seems to be important to stress the number or the quality of people involved (88). The smallest presented number was 40, given it is unclear how many “many” is, and at largest it went up to *millions* (85). As for quality, the *people* were described as *ordinary people committed for equity and justice*, *people from all backgrounds and beliefs*, *from across the world*, *many young people*, *intellectuals and individuals*. It seems important to stress four factors. First of all the amount of people (85) and secondly, the fact that they are ordinary (opposed to perhaps that they would be devoted activist). Thirdly, it is important to stress the fact that they are from different backgrounds, different parts of the world, different religion (86). Fourthly despite differences in their background, they are all similar and united in that they share one important nominator that brings them together.

This factor is usually a sense of solidarity with Palestinians (86), sense of justice, intelligence or (good) education.

(85) As millions of people around the world demonstrated in support of Palestine last Saturday [1]

(86) an international day of the oppressed when people from all backgrounds and beliefs, from across the world come together united in solidarity with Palestine [4]

5.4.3 Palestine material

The majority of processes where Palestine or a Palestinian was the Subject were material processes. When Palestine was the Subject, the focus was on describing Palestinian suffering. Killing, torturing, abducting and caging Palestinians was mostly discussed. The Subjects include prisoners, “entire families”, children, teenagers and Palestinians in general. Hamas and PA were also mentioned. There was emphasis on the innocence of the Palestinians, as well as on the fact that those caged or tortured had not been prosecuted and are currently treated inhumanely in prisons. There were only three instances in which Palestinians or Palestinian civil society was described as doing something positive, or in general doing anything to help solve their own situation. In these instances, they were reported as creating or joining the BDS movement. Thus even when Palestinians are shown as active agents doing something to improve their own situation, it is still presented only through the BDS movement.

Figure 7. Word cloud of material processes with Palestine as Subject



As can be seen from figure 7, the world is dim when it is presented through the eyes of Palestinians. Where Israel “works”, “pushes”, “pursues” and “destroys”, Palestinians feel the effects. The most common material process found was *caged* (8 times), followed with *abducted* (four times), *tortured* (four times) and *killed* (three times).

Many of the sentences where Palestine was the Subject focus on the innocence of the victims (87), (88). They also focus on the fact that the capture was illegal or the conditions in the prisons are inhuman. Or, rather than prisons, Palestinians are caged and tortured in *dungeons* (89) and *torture dens*.

(87) These include the five Hares Boys who **have been tortured** and caged by Israel for 2 years for a crime that didn't even happen; [4]

(88) Five Palestinian children **have been tortured** and caged by Israel for 2 years for a crime that didn't even happen. [4]

(89) Of Arafat Jaradat **tortured** To Death In G4S Secured Israeli Dungeon [4]

The verb *freed* marks the only positive story where a Palestinian as an individual was the Subject of a material process (90). This was in context of inviting readers to new protests and the picketers viewed this a personal victory, thanking everyone who had been protesting on behalf of this person. The form is similar to the other sentences describing Palestinians: the Subject is in fact the target to whom something is occurring. Israel is not freeing Al-Tabeeh but rather, Ayman Al-Tabeeh is *freed*. This could be either to emphasize the victory or to minimize the role of Israel in doing something positive. The latter can perhaps be disputed on the grounds that in occasions where Palestinians were *caged*, *abducted* or *tortured*, Israel was not necessarily visible either, as Israel's participation (or fault) is presupposed knowledge. Thus if it is not important to emphasize Israel's agency behind bad things, with the same logic it may not be important to mitigate its agency behind good things either.

(90) Ayman Al-Tabeeh **freed** after being caged for 2.5 years without charge or trial [4]

The other two positive instances concern the BDS movement. The Subject is a *coalition of 171 Palestinian Civil Society organizations* (91). The forming of the BDS movement is usually described to have occurred by the Palestinian Civil Society organizations in general, without the detail of the amount. This marks a unique case then, where the Palestinian civil society or its organizations are given agency and they are marked as a subject of active “doing”, instead of something having done *to* them, as in most cases.

(91) In July 2005, a coalition of 171 Palestinian Civil Society organizations **created** the Global BDS movement for “Boycott, Divestment and Sanction [1]

Palestinians are also “joining” (92) the Palestinian call for a BDS campaign. During the analysis process Palestinians were considered BDS campaign allies by proxy, because the campaign originated from Palestine and is concerned over the rights of Palestinians. But the material process of “join” moves a Palestinian from by proxy ally to an activist. Not all Palestinians are in a position to boycott, divest or sanction Israel, as this would be difficult in practice. In these cases, becoming active in the campaign means spreading the message of it to other countries and its consumers. The definition of “activist”, thus in these websites may not be “someone who is doing something concrete, actively and offline”. Instead, an activist can be described as “someone who agrees with the message of the BDS movement and is sharing it to others online”.

(92) Palestinians, Jews, citizens of Israel **join** the Palestinian call for a BDS campaign against Israel [1]

5.4.4 Reader material

The reader was asked to join the activists in protesting and boycotting Israel and people and companies associated with it. The verb “boycott” was usually used more generally and directed towards Israel, where “protest” was usually used in more specific contexts.

There were 73 material processes, where reader was the Subject. An overwhelming amount of 24 instances had the verb *join* as the verb process (93), (94). These were all invitations or requests to literally join the group of people at question by meeting them at a specific physical location. The activities to which the reader was requested to join were mostly referred to as protests or vigils, but in some occasions the request was simply to *join us*, without details of what type of gathering was in question. Most of the events concerned freeing prisoners or granting rights to prisoners (93), and some of them had to do with protesting certain companies (94).

(93) **join** protest outside G4S HQ to demand freedom for Fathia Khanfar [4]

(94) **join** us ask Hewlett Packard MD - Why is HP supporting war crimes in Gaza? [4]

The second most common verb used to request something from the readers was *protest*. While there were some occasions with *protest* used in relation to the conditions and rights of prisoners, most occasions dealt with protesting cultural events. The reader was asked to protest a football match (95), a film festival (96) and Israel’s cultural ambassador.

(95) **protest** Maccabi Tel Aviv vs Chelsea Football Match [4]

(96) **protest** Apartheid Israel Sponsored Film Festival [4]

Whereas the targets of protests were very specific, the verb *boycott* was used more generally. There were three occasions where the reader was asked to boycott Israel (97), without further details, and two occasions where the reader was asked to boycott Israeli products (98).

(97) **Boycott** Israel: Now More Than Ever [1]

(98) **Boycott** Israeli companies’ goods and services as well as international companies “involved in Israel’s human rights violations”. [1]

6. Conclusion

Before answering the last research question, we will revisit the conclusions of the findings to previous research questions. This paper studied how participants as Subjects were distributed in these websites and how process types were distributed between the Subjects. By analyzing Subjects and participants, five reasons for the existence of the websites emerged, and these reasons were typically found within different participants' processes.

The first reason for the existence of these websites is to describe the BDS movement and their activities. This occurs when the BDS group is the Subject, and its processes are relational, verbal and material. The second purpose of these websites is to provide information of the actions of Israel and those considered Israel's allies by the writers of the websites. They also present Israel's standing in relation to the BDS movement. These are manifested as relational, verbal and material processes, where Israel is the Subject.

Thirdly, the websites describe Palestinian suffering, and on these occasions, Palestinians are the Subjects and the process is relational or material. In mental processes, BDS activists are also presented as feeling solidarity towards Palestinians. The fourth reason for these websites to exist is to invite the reader to join the movement and the boycott. Nearly all of reader's processes are focused on giving the reader information of the movement and urging the reader to join the movement, and the reader's processes are mental, verbal and material. Thus the reader's function in this websites is to become involved in the movement. The fifth reason for the existence of the websites is to describe demands towards Israel and its allies. In these occasions, mental and material processes are used, and both BDS group and Israel group is the Subject. The reason *why* people should boycott Israel is not presented very often. Thus the reason to boycott seems self-evident, or assumed common "presupposed knowledge" between the writers and the reader.

When it came to four of the topics, which were descriptions of Israel, BDS movement, Palestine and Palestinians and calls for reader engagement, all participants were the mostly Subjects of their corresponding topics. In all these occasions, relational, material and verbal processes were all used. The only instances where this tendency was not in place regards was the fifth topic, the demands the BDS movement has for Israel. On these

occasions in the websites, both Israel and BDS groups are Subjects, and the processes are mental and material. It seems thus, that these demands break the power balance between these groups and in the realm of future possibilities, both Israel and BDS are Subjects. The demands thus decipher the separation of participants into their own topic groups, and create similar functions to Israel and BDS as Subjects.

Now that we have summarized the findings, we will discuss the third research question, which was as follows:

3. Analyzing how verb processes are divided between Subjects in these websites, what kind of information can we gather of the way reality is constructed in these websites?

Language is inherently organized in a functional manner, and linguistic structures are based on social structures (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004:61). This means language both impacts and is impacted by society. In this specific context, we can reveal the social reality of the writers based on the systematic functional analysis of the language utilized. The finding that each topic is presented by its own participant reveals to us the reality of the websites is largely polarized. In the reality of these websites, there is a strong juxtaposition between what is seen as the opposing forces: the BDS movement and its activists, and Israel. In the websites, there was emphasis on the large size and economic resources of the opposing group, Israel, and its allies. It was also important to emphasize the fact that the BDS movement and their allies work from foundations of solidarity and justice. Especially when these two characteristics, being driven by money and being driven by a sense of justice, were juxtaposed, it became evident the BDS movement presents itself as an underdog, a David in a story where Israel is Goliath.

Israeli citizens obscure the analysis, as they are Israeli citizens, yet they also belong to the other group in question, the side of the activist. Their role as a bridge builder is thus important. Where they were found, the opposition between Israel and BDS movement was blurred. Israeli citizens or Jewish people appeared in material processes on the activist's side as allies. Where in other occasions it is made clear the BDS movement is *against Israel*, in these occasions the Israeli citizens were warmly welcomed to join the movement and also appeared side by side with Palestinians and other activists. We are not given information on who within Israel should feel the effects of the boycott. It is also

not mentioned, if all activists wish to even include these Israeli citizens within the boycotts. Given the history of conflicts and mistrust between Palestinians and Israelis, it cannot be automatically assumed that even if an Israeli wished to express solidarity towards Palestinians that Palestinians would accept this open-handed.

6.1 Where is Palestine?

There was a general lack of Palestine or Palestinians as Subjects in any of the processes. Moreover, Palestinians as citizens and civilians, not prisoners, were not found as Subjects. Palestinians were found only in material processes, and in these occasions they were reported as suffering prisoners, never active members of the civil society. In these occasions names and ages, as well as nouns such as “innocent” and “victim” as well as emphasis on the young age of the people in question were mentioned. This is a way of emphasizing the human attributes of Palestinians. With Israel, the non-human, institutional or impersonal qualities of Israelis or Israel were often emphasized, and names were rarely used.

Only found once in mental processes and three times in verbal processes, it seems Palestinians are not shown feeling or speaking in these websites. Palestinians are not presented as individual citizens, nor is the state “Palestine” a Subject very often. Naturally Palestinians are visible in the form of the BDS movement, since the BDS comprises of Palestinian civil organizations.

“Palestinian civil society” is mentioned on several occasions, whereas Israel is only referred to as a “state”. To a reader, this might serve as a reminder of the fact that Palestine still lacks the diplomatic status of a state (Brownson, 2014:22, Koek and Power, 2015:51). The lack of Palestinian voices and Palestinian actors as civilians or citizens could be a point of departure for future studies.

Hamas and PA as political organizations were discussed on a few occasions, and Hamas is once the Subject of a verbal process. In these websites, the relationship between BDS movement and Hamas seems complicated. Although negative actions of Palestinians are rarely mentioned, the few occasions cover and condemn Hamas’ civil attacks. These occasions were however immediately compared to the small amount of civil casualties caused by Hamas to much greater amounts of civil casualties caused by IDF. As reported

by The Guardian and widely quoted in the websites, “Both [attacks] are obviously reprehensible, but Israel’s capacity to inflict destruction is simply far greater”².

Some writers see it would be important for Palestine’s policy makers to include Hamas in its discussions and not eat away its legitimacy. However, any attacks towards civilians are strongly condemned. It seems thus, that the complex standing and possible legitimacy of Hamas is discussed and constructed in the websites very similarly than it is discussed in other media. On one hand, nonviolence is one of the key factors of the movement but on the other hand, minimizing the importance of Hamas eats away the possibility of representation of Palestinians when they support Hamas but still condemn civil attacks.

6.2 Involving the reader

Political blogs are challenging the notions of power of media as they have been understood. One of the most important features is the new way of interactivity (KhosraviNik and Zia, 2014:756). Because individuals have the abilities to influence politics, they can now mobilize the masses to whom they are directing their messages (Harlow, 2015:73). The writers of these websites intend to be trustworthy and credible, which enables them to have their readers to accept their beliefs (van Dijk, 2001:375). In this way, they function as power sources, attempting to produce a hegemony on the way the Palestine-Israel conflict and BDS movement's involvement is presented and discussed.

The reader was seldom visible and addressed as “you”. Instead, the fact that something was addressed to the reader became evident from the imperative verb form used. As reader existence was implied, their solidarity towards Palestinians and the BDS movement was implied and expected as well. There was never any assumptions that the reader could be against the cause. At most it was assumed the reader might not yet have clear insight of the occurrences in Palestine-Israel region but once they did it was assumed the reader would agree with the mission of the websites. From the point of view of the writers of the websites, the readers are assumed future allies. As political blog readers in general tend to have strong political opinions and views on social matters (Graph,

² <http://www.theguardian.com/environment/earth-insight/2014/jul/09/israel-war-gaza-palestine-natural-gas-energy-crisis>

2006:4), the writers need not persuade the readers of the fact what the topic in general is important. Instead, the main task is to give information of how the reader can get involved in the movement. As political blog readers tend to respond to queries to participate (Graph, 2006:4), the websites can be seen to perform political actions, invite the reader and have the reader perform political actions as well.

There was a general lack of individual human participants, who would have been presented by name or otherwise referenced to or introduced. Instead the Subjects were often states, areas, institutions, organizations or companies. Israel was most likely presented as a state and its individuals were often only referred to as “government officials”. When human attributes and names of individual people were presented, they were either of the BDS group or the Palestine group. This is a method of making the BDS group more relatable to the reader and having the reader feel a sense of solidarity with the writers.

With BDS activists, there was a tendency to emphasize the protestors who came from different backgrounds, ethnicities and religions. This might be a way of making it easier for the reader to identify with the group, despite the reader’s own background, ethnicity or religion. In order to persuade people who are normally not politically active or consider themselves activists, the group presents “ordinary people” involved in the movement. It also seems essential to show the cause is not local, but again, global. This is supported by the constant reminders of “peoples of the world” or people in the thousands and millions showing up to protests. When the writers of a website formed a nation or area-specific sub-group, their target seemed often to be the people of the area nearby. This can be assumed because of the high number of requests to join protests near the area or to write to one’s local politician, assumed to be within the same political system to the writers.

6.3 Limitations and problems

This first limitation of the study is that it only included first pages of websites, and studying other sections would have provided more information. The current amount of data was a compromise between having a sufficient amount of data to make conclusions from the data but have it small enough to include room for interpretation in the paper.

The webpages varied greatly in length and consequently, a different number of examples from each website could be drawn. The websites differed from each other also in their topics and their methods of giving information. The processes within the websites varied according to what the topic of each given discussion was. When the focus was on future boycotting and protesting events, it is natural to find mentions of the groups and activists themselves. Similarly, if the focus is on presenting information on companies the writers of the websites found “guilty” of collaborating with Israel, this explains the high amount of occurrences of Israel’s allies as Subjects in material processes.

However, there was a variety of issues the websites had in common. All the websites emphasized the actions of the BDS community and engaged the reader to join in. All the websites displayed Israel as the Subject of material processes nearly as often or as often as the BDS category in material processes. Palestine and Palestinians were largely lacking in all processes compared to Israel, the BDS category and the reader. In no website was the amount of Palestine or Palestinians as Subject more than 20 per cent of all Subjects.

Some sections in the websites, such as tagline or “about” sections seemed to have been in place for a long time, whereas some sections, including news and other current events, were often updated. The news sections are updated as the world spins, yet the basic explanations behind the movement stay the same. The websites become more active when something occurs in the area. The data was gathered from these pages during the same day, a day which was relatively normal in the Palestine and Israel area. During the writing of this conclusion, we are possibly starting to see a third wave of violence in this area, but the implications of this are yet unknown. These websites exist to be read and surely gather more readers when Palestine-Israel conflict returns to headlines.

The study included only human participants and states, and only as Subjects. Extending the study to cover all events and occurrences, even when Subjects are non-living would produce more information of the events and occurrences themselves. The focus of this study was on specific participant Subjects instead of events in the area, which is why not all verb processes were included. Given these websites change and renew, covering current situations, it would be interesting to repeat the study after some time to find out if world events or changes in the Middle Eastern conflict or even more specifically, Palestine-Israel conflict, change the way Subjects are presented.

Although this study did not include comments, a quick scan of them revealed only like-minded people seem to visit or at least comment on the websites. During the time the websites have been under review none of them have suffered visible cyber-attacks, spam or trolling. This seems to indicate the websites exist in their own reality, free of the need for dialogue in regular, traditional media. They are also seemingly free of people who think differently than the writers, since the comment sections, when reviewed, revealed no negative comments. While out of scope for this study, reviewing the comment sections in more detail would reveal more information on the relationship between the website writers and their readers and possibly give more information about the identity and identification process of the readers.

6.4 Looking forward

The Palestine-Israel conflict is unique, but so is every conflict. Combining future likelihood of global political unrest to the emergence of social networking platforms, it is likely that these type of websites will continue to emerge in the future. And while freedom, anonymity and ability to connect are amongst the greatest things we can achieve with internet, the emergence of boycotting websites poses issues as well. The theoretical issues could be threats or calls for violence in boycotting websites. In these websites they were not visible, and in these websites the largest issues seemed to emerge from the lack of dialogue and lack of objectivity within these websites. So far, it seems boycotting websites pose no threat of violence to the nation or instance against whom they are boycotting. The websites under study were all written in good taste, following the written and unwritten rules of “netiquette”: no names or addresses of perpetrators are ever given, no threats are ever made. Israelis are not called names, mocked or ridiculed. The stress is on the activities of the government, not Israel’s citizens.

The movement includes Palestinians and Israelis working side by side against the institution, government or military they see as unfair. The websites also never suggest or urge into violence, taking justice into one’s own hand, revenge or threats of any kind, even implied. They seek justice in non-violent, even non-active forms; by boycotting, picketing, protesting (non-violently). The writers are giving their readers possibilities to

affect change without having to do much, or at best, anything at all. Boycotting, as in not purchasing, does not require one to do anything, but to leave something undone. Sharing messages and tweets in social media, “liking” pages or sharing them takes less than a second.

“Clicktivism”, however, is not without its problems. Politics, civil rights issues, causes and communities can be built, negotiated and reinforced online. This does not change the need for offline involvement. Regardless of how many people “like” a page, the situation in Palestine-Israel area will not change before actions occur. Similarly, an individual boycotting decision will go unnoticed and a boycott needs to be significantly large in order to have effect. Movement offline, on the other hand, such as gathering large amounts of people together, gains attention to the cause and might lead to real impacts. Die-ins, protests and vigils are presented because they gather attention to the cause and to the movement. While there was importance in staging a protest, holding signs and shouting, the crucial factor was that people showed up. When something occurs off-line and it gathers people, it is much more effective than gathering those people together online. This is why most of the processes targeted to the reader consisted of demands (or requests) for the reader to join a protest which was to occur.

These websites present two realities, underlining the juxtaposition between Israel and the activists as well as the juxtaposition between of world leaders and ordinary people. The first reality is the one currently ongoing at large. In this reality everyone in high positions is aware of the conflict, but no one has the insight or willingness to change things. The other reality is emerging on the side: the reality in which ordinary people take a stand and try to have an impact in the resolution of the conflict. This reality is shown in the websites as emerging slowly, but steadily and inevitably. These measures would offer non-violent, social ways to have an effect on the conflict. As the Palestine-Israel conflict continues with no solution in sight, hopefully nonviolent measures continue to emerge and gain momentum. The writers of these websites are presenting themselves as a changing power, a voice and an alternative to a situation that seems impossible to solve. This, it seems, is where their power lies, and this is why it is possible the next intifada will in fact be the electronic one.

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