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Racism in social media: A Critical Discourse Analysis of YouTube Comments

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Keywords: racism, social media, YouTube	Social media plays a role in forming a digital public space that can accommodate all groups, classes, races, or groups to communicate freely, without boundaries, and opens up greater opportunities to reach more interests such as political, economic, cultural, religious, and ethnic. This study explores fundamental difficulties in researching social media texts from a discourse analytic viewpoint. It gives a rationale and framework for analyzing social media conversation based on Critical Discourse Analysis. The study aims to understand how individuals use racism to express themselves on YouTube, one of the most popular websites. The research aimed to determine (1) the types of racism used in YouTube comments and
DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.210 93/ijeltal.v7i2.1307	(2) what racism as critical discourses implies. The observation led to the selection of four racist remarks from a YouTube video, which were subsequently evaluated in three phases: textual analysis (description), processing analysis (interpretation), and social analysis (explanation). YouTube comments contain every racist speech outlined by Neubeck and Glasberg (Personal and Institutional racism).
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1. Introduction

Discourse and racism-related multidisciplinary are frequently reflected in majority group members' attitudes toward minority groups. Racist discourses may be found not just in social interaction but also in textbooks, news stories, political debates, academic activity, and work settings (loanide, 2015; Joseph-Salisbury, 2020; Matamoros-Fernández & Farkas, 2021; Palmer & Jang, 2005; van Dijk, 2018)

Technology has expanded the scope of language usage. In the past, people could only exchange information face-to-face or by mail; today, we can communicate our ideas in various ways (Basri & Paramma, 2019; Ruben et al., 202 1). Indeed, the world has changed drastically since the advent of the internet and numerous electronic devices. Distance is no longer a barrier to the interactive connection between people worldwide. With a smartphone, we can chat with someone far away or share our ideas with others. With the internet, it is simple to publish content in a variety of formats.

With the advancement of information technology media, access to information from around the world is now readily available and can be obtained from any location. This convenience is supported by the power of social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and other digital technology products that have significantly changed the social life of a pluralistic society (Wilding, 2018). These social media play a role in forming a digital public space that can accommodate all groups, classes, races, or groups to communicate freely, without boundaries, and opens up greater opportunities to reach more interests such as political, economic, cultural, religious, and ethnic (Basri et al., 2022; Berger, 2006; Ehondor & Edosomwan, 2021; Fauzan, 2022).

Furthermore, information technology provides us with various options for information media from around the world, one of which is video-sourced media. The YouTube platform is one of the innovations that is currently visited by many netizens around the world. According to (Snelson, 2011) and (comScore, 2022) Internet Traffic Statistics, YouTube is the most frequently accessed video website. YouTube has garnered meteoric popularity as an online video-sharing service since its inception in 2005. YouTube is one of the most well-known websites on the internet, which gives us access to information on any topic we choose. With a huge of visitors, this platform can provide massive and fast information transactions. Additionally, YouTube's anonymous comment rooms that allow visitors to respond to video content have become notorious for trolling, flaming, and online harassment often expressed through forms of racist, Islamophobic, and misogynistic language (Strangelove, 2010).

Mainstream media coverage of the YouTube website characterizes its commentary culture as toxic, rejecting fair or helpful dialogue (Fauzan et al., 2014; Kavada, 2012; Salminen et al., 2020). The portrayal of YouTube as an uncontrolled and hostile environment exemplifies how social media platforms are viewed as the opposite of politeness online (Foxman & Wolf, 2013). However, this approach fails to understand how racism manifests online via social media. Theorists such as (Gilroy, 2012) and (Nakamura & Chow-White, 2013) point out that the internet has become a forum for passionate public discourse and expression around race. In addition, the media must be treated seriously as a source of neoteric racism. In addition, several scientific investigations are in the comments section of YouTube. Despite this place has a bad connotation, commenting remains an important way to engage on YouTube (Schultes et al., 2013).

The study of the concerns addressed necessitates an interdisciplinary approach, including many humanities and social science fields. One of the appealing aspects of discourse analysis is its capacity to incorporate such a multidisciplinary approach, as well as in the similarly multidisciplinary study of ethnic or racial prejudice, discrimination, and racism (Abduh et al., 2020; Shafa, 2022). However, the most significant contribution of discourse analysis occurs at the micro level of social activities involved in the enactment and reproduction of racism.

Racist discourse and practices on social media represent a vital area of research in societal life. Even though social media has provided features that are able to filter content that is sensitive and disturbs the privacy of users who are included in matters of racism, the number of racist content continues to increase (Santoso, 2018). With the increasing number of races and racism appearing on various social media platforms, especially YouTube, it is time to review scientific research that examines the development of the discourse on the issue of racism.

Analyzing racism in social media is to find how society utilizes the common figure of speech more unrestrictedly. The comments on YouTube deserve to be an object of analysis as they could represent the racism used in social media. Starting from the racist expressions theory (Neubeck & Glasberg, 2004), this article critically analyze the racist expression and figurative language used freely by netizens. The study seeks to address two research questions: (1) what are the types of racism used in YouTube comments? and (2) what do the racism comments on YouTube as critical discourses imply?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Racism

Racism can refer to different treatment of individuals under equal or comparable circumstances. Racial discrimination refers to group-based unequal and unfair treatment and denial of rights (Peyton & Huber, 2021). Terr (2009) defines racism as any act by an individual, organization, institution, or custom that attributes undesirable biological, psychological, social, or cultural characteristics to a person based on their race or nationality. (Bizumic & Duckitt, 2012) added that several studies use the term racism to refer to preferences for certain ethnic groups (cultural identity), fear of outsiders (xenophobia), rejection of racial relations (ethnic marriage), and generalizations about certain groups of individuals (stereotypes). Nonetheless, it deals with the individual's identity, biology, and physical perspectives. These ideas would develop into social inequality, racial brutality, segregation, and possibly genocide. In short, racism "consists of distrusting and even looking down on those with different physical and cultural characteristics (Gee & Ford, 2011).

Racism is not limited to groups of individuals who endure discrimination based on their race. In addition, it might manifest through habits or attitudes, such as stereotypical jokes, or severe conduct, such as terrorism, directed towards those of a different religion. Racism can be directly experienced through jokes, images, violence, harassment, and discrimination from other individuals or organizations (Schutte, 2011; Sheridan, 2006).

In addition, Bizumic & Duckitt (2012) identifies six types of racism. They are: (a) racist propaganda - signs, symbols, and images; (b) encouragement of racist behavior; (c) physical attack and abuse; (d) unwillingness to collaborate with others based on their skin color, religion, or language; (e) threats of verbal abuse, including insulting words and ridiculing stereotypes; and (f) institutional racism, which frequently affects or marginalizes less dominant ethnic and racial groups.

2.2 Racist Expression

According to Neubeck and Glasberg (2004), there are two types of racist expressions. The first type is individual or small-group expressions of personal racism. It is evidence of bigotry or prejudices towards the inferior. It can manifest as stereotyping based on purported racial distinctions, racial insults, discriminatory treatment, harassment, and even threats or acts of violence. Another type of racism is institutional racism, which refers to a social system designed to complete specific tasks or fulfill necessary societal. According to Elias and Paradies (2021), institutional racism contributes to the development of racism through laws and institutions that distribute resources and ideas that affect our [people's] perceptions of ourselves and others. In addition, de Silva et al. (2007) et al. argue that institutional racism is the expression of racism in social systems and institutions, such as the social, economic,

educational, and political sectors or discriminatory laws. It may be a combination of policies, practices, or processes rooted in bureaucratic institutions that result in the systematic mistreatment of specific categories of individuals. This results in racial stratification and inequities in employment, housing, education, health care, governance, and other areas.

In short, racism, in which groups and individuals believe that one race is superior to other races, is a fundamental problem still faced by society in this era of globalization. This is often considered a trivial matter, giving rise to negative attitudes beyond stereotypes, prejudice, gender, and age, even basic matters such as culture and religion.

2.3 YouTube

Current information technology enables us to access information from across the country. The internet, one of the most incredible innovations of the contemporary era, has made this possible. YouTube is one of the most well-known websites on the internet, which provides us access to information on any topic we choose.

YouTube is a website that allows people to show videos they have made on the internet. The website is a very popular social media since it always invites people from all over the world to freely give their written comments on the issues or events presented by the videos. Being one of the world's most visited websites, it seems to have become a "battlefield" of arguments, particularly for the videos presenting hot issues. Despite the number of hoaxes it may have exhibited, it is inevitable that the internet is another area of language usage in modern society (Snelson, 2011).

(DeCesare, 2014) mentions that YouTube was established in California, the United States of America, in 2005. Employing the technology of Adobe Flash Video and HTML5, it displays various videos made by the users." Me at the Zoo" was the first video uploaded to the website. The very short video was made by Yakov Lapitsky, one of the first employees of YouTube. In October 2006, the website was taken over by Google. No one ever thought it would be the world's most wanted videos sharing website. Today, it is one of the websites with the biggest number of visitors worldwide.

According to (DeCesare, 2014), YouTube has several features that make it a popular choice for finding videos. Videos may be posted for an indefinite period of time. The post distinguishes YouTube from other applications with minimal duration requirements, such as Instagram and Snapchat. To limit security, YouTube has a system that begins to function correctly to prohibit uploading any satanic or unlawful content and requires users to answer verification questions. As is the case elsewhere, YouTube offers users an income if they post movies to the site and receive at least 1000 views. Further, the offline system is a new feature on YouTube that allows viewers to watch videos. They may now easily watch their videos offline thanks to this method; earlier, users had first to download the videos. Furthermore, the new users have basic editor access to modify the video. The choices are trimming films, applying colour filters, or including animations.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

Qualitative research is applied as a research design with a Critical Discourse Analysis study approach. Discourse analysis in this study is also part of the practice that does not only

represent the world but signifies the world and forms and constructs the world in terms of meaning (Locke, 2004). This study purposively determines news uploads from the YouTube channel "The Young Turks" entitled 'Trump Wants to Kill Muslims with Pig Blood.' This video was chosen as the data source because it contains hate comments and racist remarks. The videos highlight critical issues and identify racist comments based on the data available in the comments.

3.2 Data Source

The data of the study is a rhetorical statement by Donald Trump over his anti-Muslim statement. The data source comes from netizen comments posted on a video uploaded on "The Young Turks" YouTube channel entitled "Trump Wants to Kill Muslims with Pig Blood." The video documentation and comments are publicly accessible via "The Young Turks" YouTube channel. This video was selected as the source of data because it contained comments including hateful and racial language. The video recognizes racist remarks based on the data provided in the comment column and illustrates major flaws.

3.3 Data Analysis

According to (Fairclough, 1989, 1995), the Discourse Analysis dimensions may be analyzed in three phases, beginning with Textual Analysis (Description), Processing Analysis (Interpretation), and Social Analysis (Explanation). In the first phase, Textual Analysis (Description), the data were interpreted according to the standard for semantic interpretation, with the researcher attempting to evaluate the data based on simple linguistic factors. This study completes this phase by analyzing the language of YouTube video comments. The second phase, Processing Analysis (Interpretation), is interpreting the text linked with discourse practice as integral components of the topics addressed in the videos. In this phase, the researcher correlates the analysis results with supporting theories in order to determine the expressions conveyed by the displayed data. The last phase, Social Analysis (Explanation), aims to link the interpretation results carried out in the first and second stages. At this phase, The data were viewed as critical discourses connected to the related realities outside of YouTube.

In analyzing the racist statement, the data used in this study are racist expressions by Neubeck and Glasberg (2004). In this analysis, the author explains the relationship between the data obtained to analyze words, phrases, or sentences that contain racist words used by visitor comments on the video on YouTube entitled 'Trump Wants to Kill Muslims with Pig Blood.' In the end, the data collected determine the effect of racism on using the racist statement in the comment.

4. Findings and Discussion

The following are the comments extracted from YouTube which contain racist expressions, a type of racism in which an idea is entirely structured or organized in a concept through logical reasoning;

Table 1: Extract 1

You're **Moslem,** and you **hate** Christians and Americans

The comment in the above extract implies racism through the use of the words *Moslem, Christian*, and *American*. Considering racist expressions (Neubeck & Glasberg, 2004), we can see that the expression belongs to Personal Racism. In terms of Textual Analysis, "you're Moslem" shows the person who is a Moslem, and the word "hate" refers to a dislike feeling to the word "Christians". In terms of Processing Analysis, the structure of the text used in the discourse, as described in the above textual analysis, is dominated by passive sentences to describe a case in the news and show that these particular subject sentences are victims and perpetrators. In terms of Social Analysis, these terms are used in the text or the spread of this discourse. Social media has the advantage over electronic media such as television. It is different from television that it is supported by a picture (visual) that complements the news, and social media have more influence and extends stronger and faster than the other media. From the practical side of social discourse, this story was written with a religious background that Muslims and Christians are both often involved even repeated conflict. This sentence also implies the opinion about the generalization of one thing. He tried to generalize one person to a group because not all the Moslem hate Christians and Americans.

Table 2: Extract 2	
Logan Von Wolfy	
Black people are becoming terrorists.	

The extract above implies racism through the use of the words "Black people". Considering racist expressions (Neubeck & Glasberg, 2004), we can see that the expression belongs to Institutional Racism. In terms of the Textual Analysis, the word "nigger" means people who have a black skin color. This refers to the black race being African. The word "becoming terrorists" showed that black people are regarded as a terrorist in general. Regarding Processing Analysis, this comment appears to be related to the video that preaches Trump's speech that advocates against black people. In the video, Trump repeatedly passed the things that imply the separation between white and black people. In terms of Social Analysis, it refers to the conflict between black-white has become a problem for a long time in America. White people identified with educated people and good manners. While Blacks are always identified with the nation of uneducated, barbarian, criminal, and left behind. The things that make them easily identified as a terrorist are destructive to the country. In fact, the elimination of the apartheid system has been applied in the United States. For example, now there are a lot of black people who have become a leader in America who is able to show their existence regardless of skin color.

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Table 3: Extract 3

Sergio Olivares

blacks are not **Americans** they come from **Africa** they should go back to their land

In the above extract, we can see racism through the use of the words *Black people*. Considering racist expressions (Neubeck & Glasberg, 2004), we can see that the expression belongs to institutional racism. In terms of Textual Analysis, the word "black people" means people who have a black skin color. This refers to the black race being African. In terms of Processing Analysis, this comment appears to be related to the video that preaches Trump's speech that advocates against black people. In the video, Trump repeatedly passed the things that imply the separation between white and black people. In terms of Social Analysis, it refers to the conflict between black-white has become a problem for a long time in America. White people identified with educated people and good manners. While Blacks are always identified with the nation of uneducated, barbarian, criminal, and left behind. The things that make them easily identified as a terrorist are destructive to the country. The elimination of the apartheid system has been applied in the United States. For example, now there are a lot of black people who have become a leader in America who is able to show their existence regardless of skin color.

Table 4: Extract 4

Joe Hoe

White people have no sympathy for other races. They're a bunch of lying animals

The comment in the above extract implies racism through the use of the words white people. Considering racist expressions (Neubeck & Glasberg, 2004), we can see that the expression belongs to Institutional Racism. Textual Analysis reveals that "white people" is a racial classification specifier for persons of Europid descent, with the precise implications dependent on context. The present usage of "white people" or "white race" as a vast group of (mostly European) populations in contrast to "black," American Indian (also referred to as "red"), "colored," or "non-white" dates back to the 17th century. In terms of Processing Analysis, the structure of the text used in the discourse, as described in the above textual analysis, is the word "white people" to show white people who support Trump. In the video, Trump plainly showed the domination of whites over the blacks of America. This makes the user offended and makes comments that seem to drop the white people to dub their pets. Contextually, the terminology employed in the text or the dissemination of this discourse demonstrate that social media have an edge over electronic media such as television. It is different from television, which is supported by a picture (visual) that complements the news. Social media have more influence and grow stronger and faster than other media. From the practical side of social discourse, this story was written with a skin-color background between black Americans and white Americans. Comments above indicate that the association of the white race and the black race has not shown any common ground. This condition has been Indonesian Journal of English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics, 7(1), 2022

one of the factors fragmentations of the American state. Caucasians demonstrated their superiority and considered Blacks illegal immigrants who tried to occupy their territory.

5. Conclusion

Racism is how ethnic minority groups experience discrimination because of the racism inherent in society's structure. Discrimination is a form of racism that dominates the negative treatment of white people towards people of color and the negative stigma associated with a belief. Racism is carried out by depriving people of human rights and treating someone as inferior to the majority.

The video aired on "The Young Turks" YouTube channel entitled "Trump Wants to Kill Muslims with Pig Blood" contains controversy that could offend religious groups. Even though the information in this news has not been proven to be true, it provoked many viewers' responses, so they also participated in commenting on this video.

The results show that the use of metaphors as part of a strategy to attract readers' attention exists on a social media called YouTube. The data contained in the YouTube comments column is included in the concept of racist expression put forward by (Neubeck & Glasberg, 2004) where there is personal racism and institutional racism. These racist comments are considered critical discourse because they respond to critical issues presented by YouTube videos.

Based on the phases in crisis discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1995), the data in this study can be concluded in three parts: textually, interpretatively, and socially. Not all racist statements are well-structured *textually*. The substance and intent of the racist statements vary when *interpreted*. Racist statements differ in tone *socially*.

Research on the use of racism is not new, but it never becomes obsolete. The fact that racism appears not just in literary works but also in everyday dialogue has significantly widened the scope of our studies in this area. Therefore, studies on social media would be encouraged.

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