



A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS RUSSOPHOBIA RHETORIC IN UN SECURITY COUNCIL'S SPEECH BY ANTONY J. BLINKEN

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Abstrak

Tujuan artikel ini adalah untuk mengeksplorasi wacana anti-Rusia Antony John Blinken yang muncul dalam pidato di Dewan Keamanan PBB 2022 pasca invasi Rusia ke Ukraina. Wacana yang dihadirkan oleh Blinken menyiratkan dengan berbagai kebahasaan anti-Rusia, khususnya dari segi keamanan yakni militer. Artikel ini menggunakan model kuadrat ideologis di bawah payung studi wacana kritis dengan menggunakan teori sekuritisasi yang dikombinasikan dengan konsep propaganda. Untuk pengumpulan data, validasi dan penyelidikan linguistik menggunakan aplikasi NVivo 12 Plus dan VOS Viewer. Sumber data yang digunakan adalah kajian literatur melalui e-book, berita, jurnal dari Scopus dan Google Scholar. Temuan menemukan bahwa skema propaganda Blinken dalam pidatonya mencoba untuk menggambarkan Rusia dalam istilah negatif. Terbukti banyak pernyataan yang keluar dari Blinken bersifat mendiskreditkan Rusia dan terkesan menganggap Rusia adalah musuh bersama dengan tindakan invasi ke Ukraina sebagai bahaya laten bersama.

Kata Kunci: Amerika Serikat; Antony J. Blinken; Dewan Keamanan PBB; Rusia; studi wacana kritis; Ukraina

Abstract

The purpose of this article is to explore Antony John Blinken's anti-Russian discourse that appeared in a speech at the 2022 UN Security Council after Russia invaded Ukraine. The discourse presented by Blinken implies various anti-Russian languages, especially in terms of security, namely the military. This study uses an ideological quadratic model under the umbrella of critical discourse studies using securitization theory combined with the concept of propaganda. Data collection, validation, and linguistic investigation are using the NVivo 12 Plus application and VOS Viewer. The data sources are literature studies through ebooks, news, and journals from Scopus and Google Scholar. The findings found that Blinken's propaganda scheme in his speech tried to portray Russia in negative terms. It is evident that many statements issued by Blinken discredit Russia and seem to regard Russia as a common enemy, with the invasion of Ukraine as a common latent danger.

Keywords: Antony J. Blinken; critical discourse studies; Russia; Ukraine; United Nations Security Council; United States

Introduction

This study will discuss the critical discourse analysis of Foreign Minister Antony J. Blinken's speech at the UN Security Council on the response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. It will be better to understand the meaning. According to Hodges, Kuper, & Reeves, discourse analysis is about studying and analyzing the use of language. Because the term is used in many different ways, we have simplified the approaches to discourse analysis into three groups and described how each approach could be used to study one domain: doctor-patient communication about diabetes management. Regardless of approach, various data sources are available to discourse analysts, including transcripts from interviews, focus groups, conversation samples, published literature, media, and web-based materials.

Still referring to the same source, they also explain critical discourse analysis. According to them, researchers in cultural studies, sociology, and philosophy use the term critical discourse analysis to encompass a broader scope that includes all social practices, individuals, and institutions that make it possible or legitimate to understand phenomena in certain ways, and to make certain statements about what is "true". Critical discourse analysis is particularly concerned with power and is rooted in "constructivism." Thus, Foucault's discourse analysis, for example, illustrates how certain discourses "systematically construct social versions of the world." Discourse analysis at this level involves not only the examination of texts and the social use of language but also the study of how institutions exist. Specialized institutions and roles for individuals to play are made possible by ways of thinking and speaking (Hodges, Kuper, & Reeves 2008).

Because they are the basis of research in the health sector, this discussion focuses more on analyzing speeches or speeches by state figures in spreading ideology and their influence through the worldview of the Copenhagen School securitization. Then the author concludes the formulation of the problem that has been obtained to explain the meaning clearly. Having a veto in acting at the United Nations gives the US the authority to take advantage of this situation to represent the West which always echoes peace over its competitors and rivals, namely the East faction represented by Russia.

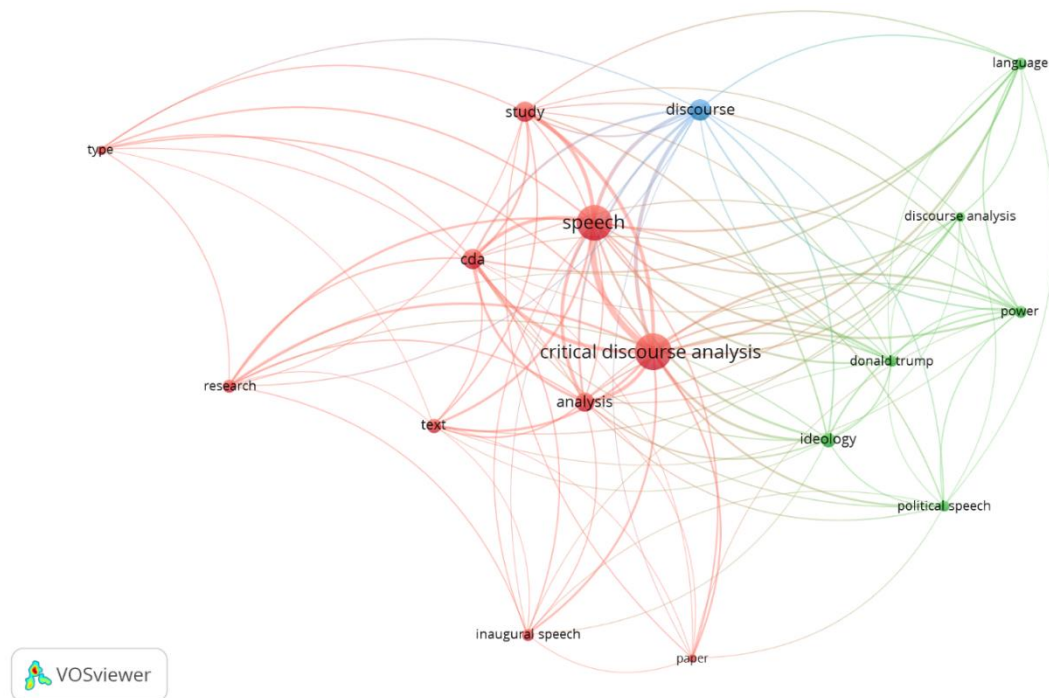
Blinken's speech at the UN security council regarding the issue of Russia's invasion of Ukraine indicated an act of sentiment against his political rival, Russia.

Russophobia is considered a core discourse in Antony J. Blinken's Speech to the UN Security Council. It shows that the US is trying to establish its hegemony in international politics through ideological domination. The purpose of this study is to analyze the content of Antony J. Blinken's speech which is full of sentiment toward Russia for its invasion of Ukraine. Through this research, the question arises, how did the US discuss Russophobia under the pretext of emergency security in the UN Security Council through the speech of the Minister of Foreign Affairs Antony J. Blinken?

Literature Review

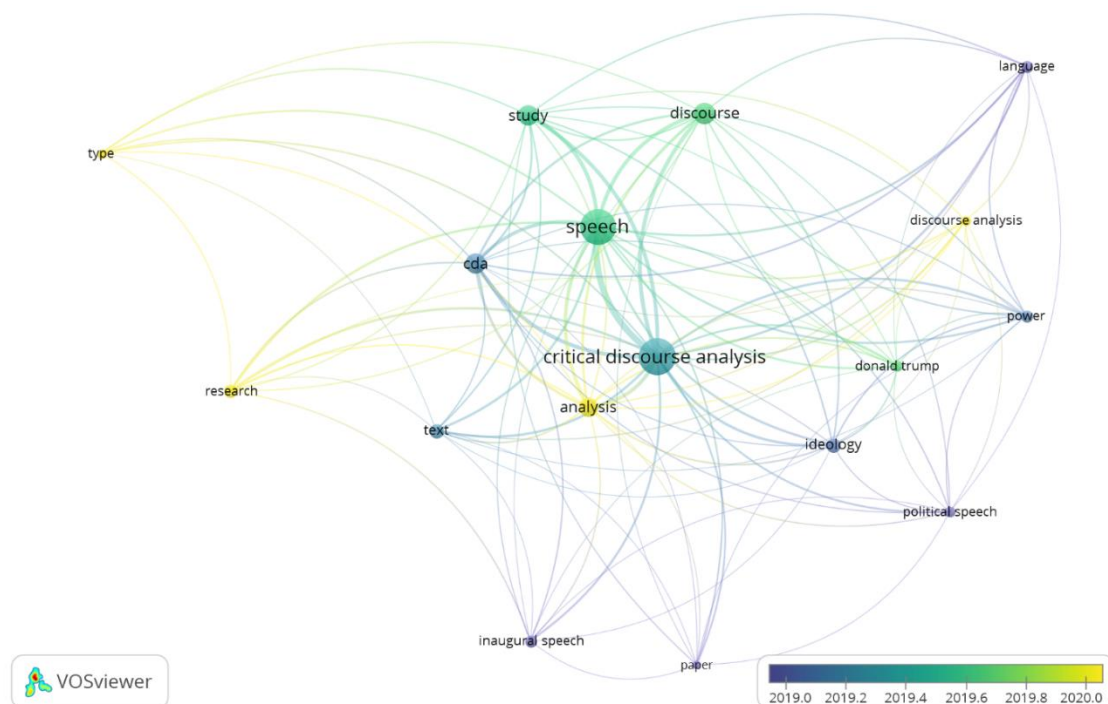
The author uses 73 papers that were analyzed bibliometrically through Publish or Perish with Google Scholar as a reference. With Citation Metrics as follows: Publication Years: 2015-2022; Citation Years: 7 (2015-2022); Total Papers: 73; Citation: 231; Cites/Year: 33.00; Cites/Papers 3.16; Authors Paper: 1.90; h-index: 6; g-index: 13; hI, norm: 6; hI,annual: 0.86; hA-index: 4, with papers with ACC > = 1,2,5,10,20 : 18, 13, 2,0,0. Then narrow down the words with the highest probability of appearing, namely Critical Discourse Analysis and Speech. That is, these two words are always related in any research that discusses these two words. This analysis bibliometrically indicates that the word Critical Discourse Analysis, which was read from the VOS Viewer application with the Network Visualization feature, found 17 items, which consisted of 3 clusters, with 108 links, and a total of 554 links read in the application. That way, there were 3 clusters found, meaning that research on Critical Discourse Analysis when it was visualized with the VOS Viewer application was divided into 3 clusters including the red cluster, meaning the core cluster, then the blue cluster with medium scope, and finally the green cluster with the smallest scope of discussion.

Figure 1 - Image of the Network Visualization Feature of the VOS Viewer Application



The following image is the result of processing the Overlay Visualization feature of the VOS Viewer Application, which brings up three color gradations from dark blue to the youngest color, yellow. This indicates that the discussion in yellow is the latest or the most up-to-date with the last year, 2020. When oriented to discourse analysis, it will be connected to the closest word analysis, followed by Donald Trump, speech, study, power, ideology, political speech, language, text, and day.

Figure 2 - Image of the Overlay Visualization Feature of the VOS Viewer Application



Thus, the author concludes that the novelty of this paper will discuss the speech of the US Deputy Secretary of State, Antony J. Blinken, which is alleged to have major influence on the face of the government of the US President, Joe Biden, in his foreign views on the Russian invasion of Ukraine. In addition, it also led to actions to corner Russia as an enemy of US ideology by spreading the issue of Russophobia through his speech at the UN Security Council as a medium of delivery.

Copenhagen School Securitization Theory

Quoting Buzan, Waever, & Wilde in their book *Security: A Framework for Analysis*, they explain that the study of security is a matter of survival. That is, security studies are not only the scope of state and military issues but also economic, social, political, and environmental issues (Buzan, Waever, & Wilde 1998). According to Caballero & Emmers, securitizing an issue can be divided into three stages: non-political, political, and securitized. Caballero said that an issue will be at a non-political stage when the issue is part of community discussion and has not yet been discussed at the government level (Caballero et al. 2004). On the other hand, if the issue has entered the political process, then at that time, the issue becomes a topic of discussion and negotiations and even debate at the government level. The securitization of a situation occurs when

actors, state or non-state, agree that a threat exists and an emergency measure needs to be taken to address it (Caballero & Emmers 2006).

If you look at what happened in the Russia-Ukraine conflict, the US sees the conflict as a securitized issue. What Blinken did in his speech at the UN headquarters in New York indicates that an issue has entered the realm of securitized problems. This indication can be relevant because Blinken uses the UN security council as a medium to agree on a joint consensus from the countries present to agree on a common threat, namely Russia. From the mutual threat directed at Russia, Blinken then led the opinion for an emergency measure to be carried out to overcome the common danger.

On the other hand, securitization actors can also use speech acts to construct an issue into a security threat and convince and warn the public of the dangers of threats directed at Russia against its invasion of Ukraine. Quoting Trihartono, from the speech act that Blinken has carried out, it is hoped that it will be able to lead public opinion and provide securitization actors with the opportunity to mobilize state power in forming regulations to stop the threat. Thus, this speech act is considered to have a very vital role in determining the success or failure of an object of securitization (Trihartono, Indriastuti, & Nisya, 2020).

Methodology

This research was conducted using a qualitative method because of its comprehensive study of the content, setting of time and place, and the basis that triggered the problem. Therefore, various elements of the ideological quadratic model are used under the umbrella of critical discourse studies. In Khan's writing quoting from Xiang, critical discourse analysis was developed under a critical research paradigm, helpful in analyzing political rhetoric, parliamentary processes, demonstrations, political speeches, and political campaigns such as elections. According to Xiang again, the study of critical discourse is experiencing a popular trend and has become a popular research tool in the modern era based on a language analysis approach embedded in social or political issues (Xiang, 2019). With this statement, Kanwal and Garcia argue that CDS aims to study how power in language through the selection of diction is then used to manipulate people in general (Kanwal & García, 2019). Thus, this study has gained popularity due to its wide application and application across research fields. In addition,

a model like this is a qualitative analytic approach used to describe, illustrate, interpret, and explain how discourse is constructed and legitimized in several contexts.

Due to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the US response emerged through Foreign Minister Blinken as a representation of the NATO stronghold, a rival to Russia in the security and military fields. This method was chosen deliberately for this study because Blinken's speech presented the basis of anti-Russian and anti-Russian rhetoric which had invaded Ukraine under the pretext of military operations to eradicate Neo-Nazis under the leadership of Volodymyr Zelensky who was then about to join the NATO alliance. Blinken delivered this speech at the UN Security Council on February 17 2022, at UN Headquarters in New York City, New York. The researcher obtained the text of the speech through the official website of the US Embassies and Consulates in Indonesia using the link. To verify the speech, we got the video version from YouTube. The data collected from the speech is then divided into four quotations based on specific keywords under various Anti-Russian themes as a broader analysis theme. To make it easier to collect the data, the researcher used the NVivo 12 Plus software. The function of using this software is as a guarantor of data validity for more in-depth analysis.

Finding and Discussion

Data Analysis Using the NVivo 12 Plus Application

In this case, the author analyzed data from Foreign Minister Blinken's speech using the NVivo 12 Plus application by identifying keywords allegedly said to be frequently spoken by Blinken. There are three relevant features of the NVivo 12 Plus application for analysis: Tree-Map, Word-Cloud, and Word-Tree to generate text search queries and frequency of word analysis.

Figure 3: Word Cloud from Antony J. Blinken Speech



When viewed in the Word Cloud in figure 3, it results from an application analysis that describes a collection of words for the entire Blinken speech that is likely to use these words frequently and repeatedly. In picture 3, it is clear that Blinken can lexicalize the events that occurred in the conflict in Europe, illustrating that Russia violated the Minsk agreement by carrying out military aggression against Ukraine. It implies the anti-Russian movement that Blinken echoes with a latent danger to peace and security. Blinken's allegation then continued military activities around the borders of Ukraine and Belarus until they succeeded in occupying Crimea. The call for anti-Russia continued when Blinken said that Russia was committing genocide and ethnic cleansing, which underlined Blinken's inability to consider Russia's aggression against Ukraine a trivial and trivial issue.

Figure 4: Tree-Map of the word "Russia" in Antony J Blinken's Speech



Figure 5: Tree-Map of the word "Ukraine" in Antony J Blinken Speech

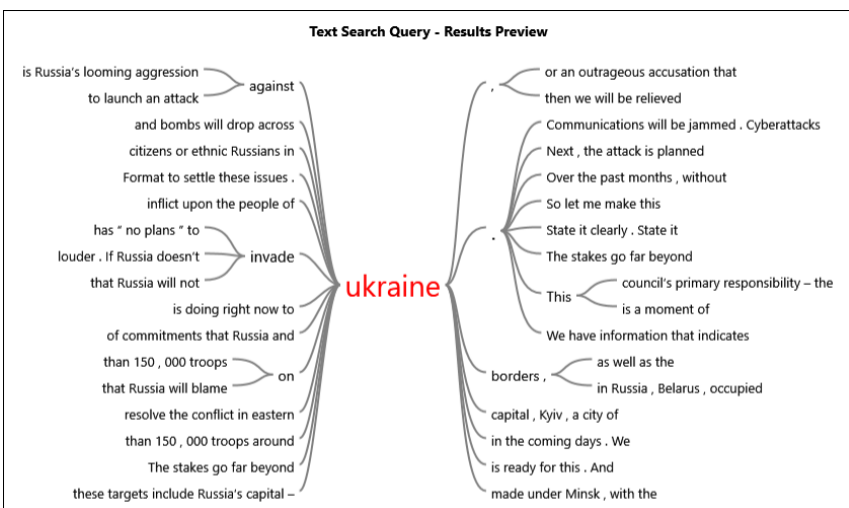


Figure 6: Tree-Map of the word "Government" in Antony J Blinken Speech

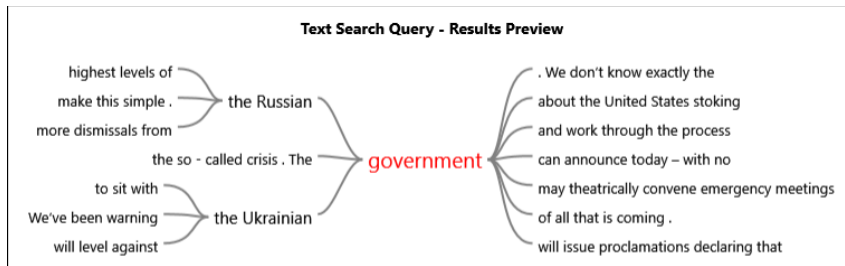


Figure 7: Tree-Map of the word "Security" in Antony J Blinken Speech

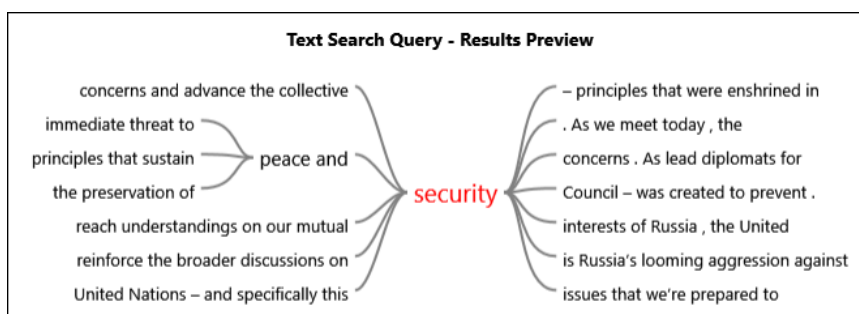


Figure 8: Tree-Map of the word "Council" in Antony J Blinken Speech



In the Tree Map pictures in Figures 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8, Nvivo 12 Plus has processed the speech delivered by Blinken and produced different word trees based on terms often discussed in his speech. In these pictures, we can see the discursive and linguistic features of Blinken's figure of the most frequently used terms. It includes, among others, Russia, Ukraine, the Russian, government, security, council, crisis, and the world. Where are some of the terms easily identified about how Blinken relates to global security threats by presenting Russia as a common enemy and Ukraine as a victim state?

Figure 9: Word Tree from Antony J. Blinken Speech

russia	russian	crisis	allies	peace	ukrainian	choice	people	threat	clear	clearly	comm	comm	comm	conce	conflic		
			attack	plans	united	coming	president	advanc	conve	ethnic	event	februa	forces	implem	indicat		
			government	world													
				diplomac	response	address											
		security	partners														
				informati	state		another	invade	ready	based	diplom	issues	prepa	secret	still	tanks	targets
	ukraine							meeting	resolve	biden							
							borders			discus	justific	preve	sendir	unfol	abar	acce	accu
council		agreemer	minsk	troops					blinken								
					called	nations	steps			discus	level	princ	states	weeks	affed	airc	rall
								capital						aggr	lon	ama	

In the picture of Word Tree in figure 9, we can see that there are related terms that are often used by Blinken including; Russia, Ukraine, Russian, Government, Council, and Security, which was then seen as a Blinken pattern to corner Russia from the security side and make it an object of mutual latent danger. Going deeper, we can see that there are terms such as partners, agreements, Minsk, diplomacy, responses, attacks, plans, and peace, which are Blinken's efforts to promote their country by representing the US as a protective country. Thus, we can say that the US presence is trying to mediate the Russo-Ukrainian conflict while engaging in diplomatic lobbying to advance the Minsk Agreement. Here we also see Blinken's efforts to create a scheme to corner Russia in the eyes of the world security council as a country that does not comply with regulations and is always described as a rowdy country. So Blinken, representing the US, has succeeded in providing a negative reference to Russia in the eyes of the world.

The following is an analysis of the data obtained from Blinken's speech at the UN Security Council using the Ideological Square Model, as discussed earlier. In excerpt 1 of the micro-analysis, Blinken tries to build a common consensus before the UN security council that Russia's attack on Ukraine is an act that harms the world. Blinken's move was very clever when he said, "As we meet today, the most immediate threat to peace and security is Russia's looming aggression against Ukraine." Because by saying that, Blinken directly cornered Russia in front of the UN security council, which Russia is an ideological enemy as well as a rival in the arms race. This dual strategy can ignite the international community to sympathize with the victim country, Ukraine. In addition, Blinken also succeeded in giving verbal attacks in his speech to

emphasize that Russia was indeed a common enemy. It shows in his speech, *"The crisis directly affects every member of this council and every country in the world."* It seems as if the world is forced to see Russia as an antagonistic country with a hobby of conflict so the image of Russia that was built as a rowdy country began to form through the opinion that Blinken expressed in his speech.

Excerpt 2 in the micro-analysis says that the US implies itself as the protector state of the oppressed countries in the world. Especially those who are being hit by conflict or military aggression. This was reinforced when Blinken said, *"We must address what Russia is doing right now to Ukraine."* From this sentence, it should be noted that as the owner of the veto power, the US feels it has more interest in world security and has an interest in interfering in the Ukraine-Russia conflict. This is reinforced by the attitude shown by Ukraine through President Zelensky who desires to bring his country to join the NATO alliance. The US is cursing Russia then continued as Blinken attempted to show the field data he had obtained. By saying, *"Over the past months, without provocation or justification, Russia has amassed more than 150,000 troops around Ukraine's borders, in Russia, Belarus, occupied Crimea."* This shows that the US is trying to portray Russia's arrogance in the security and humanitarian fields.

Furthermore, the US provoked the international community to see the reality of Russia's practice on the ground with the US unilateral claim that Russian troops were not withdrawing from the conflict area but were preparing to carry out their aggression. We can find this in Blinken's speech, *"Russia says it is drawing down those forces. We do not see that happening on the ground. Our information indicates clearly that these forces - including ground troops, aircraft, and ships are preparing to launch an attack against Ukraine in the coming days."* The sentence indicates that Blinken wants to show that Russia will attack Ukraine anytime. Thus the act of attack is not following what the US echoes to promote Western-style world peace.

Excerpt 3 in the micro-analysis of US unilateral claims is also shown in Blinken's speech which reads, *"And conventional attacks are not all that Russia plans to inflict upon the people of Ukraine. We have information that indicates Russia will target specific groups of Ukrainians."* In reality, Russia's alliance with Chechen forces led by President Kadyrov is far from being accused by the US through Blinken.

According to a local news channel, Republika said that the Russian Ambassador made this statement to the United Nations Vasily Nebenzia (Christiyaningsih, 2022). President Putin's statement also reinforced that Ukraine became a cowardly country because it used civilians as human shields for Ukrainian soldiers during the ongoing fighting. In contrast to CNN, a US affiliate said the Russians in the Obukhovychi area were responsible (Bowen, 2022). But that assumption can also be refuted by a Dutch journalist who said Russia often gets slander from the West (Laelani, 2022).

To substantiate the accusations made by the US against Russia, Blinken tried to confirm by saying,

“Now, I am mindful that some have called into question our information, recalling previous instances where intelligence ultimately did not bear out. But let me be clear: I am here today not to start a war but to prevent one. The information I have presented here is validated by what we have seen unfolding in plain sight before our eyes for months.”

Consequently, the US has focused its attention on the allegations against Russia in hopes of reducing its ideological adversary. The statement matured when Blinken tried to show Russia's ugliness by assuming that Russia has always disobeyed its directives as a superpower by considering the instructions given as melodrama and nonsense. This can be seen when Blinken said, *“And remember that while Russia has repeatedly derided our warnings and alarms as melodrama and nonsense, they have been steadily amassing more than 150,000 troops on Ukraine's borders, as well as the capabilities to conduct a massive military assault.”*

Quotation 4, in the micro-analysis, we find that the US tried to provide verbal persuasion against Russia by saying, *“If Russia did not invade Ukraine, then we will be relieved that Russia changed course and proved our predictions wrong. That would be a far better outcome than the course we are currently on. And we will gladly accept any criticism that anyone directs at us.”* This statement indicates that the US provides an opportunity for negotiations or anything to achieve peace goals. Although the attitude of the United States when paying attention to the choice of words seemed friendly and humble, it was important for Blinken, who served as Foreign Minister, to seek votes on the UN security council. Then from all of Blinken's speeches, he found the main axis of the US in the UN security council, namely wanting a diplomatic route to save the face of the US as a world protector country. We can see this in Blinken's words,

"Diplomacy is the only responsible way to resolve this crisis. An essential part of this is through the implementation of the Minsk agreements, the subject of our session today. There are a series of commitments that Russia and Ukraine made under Minsk, with the OSCE and the Normandy Format partners involved as well."

Blinken implies that commitment is the primary key to creating peace based on the Minsk Agreement's implementation. But remember, this is not easy, considering the struggle for influence in the UN security council is very fast, so there will always be tensions up and down the West and East camps.

Discussion

Russophobia

In this study, the author has tried to analyze the Russophobia rhetoric carried out by the US at the UN security council, New York. As we know, the US always wants to look superior on the international stage. It was proven through Blinken's speech indicating that the US is a country with a high peace value. If we examine further, the condition for being superior is that the state must be the hegemon. Therefore, the US through Foreign Minister Blinken has discussed Russophobia at the UN Security Council in the name of peace.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine became a trending topic in international news, and the Brazilian novelist Paulo Coelho commented on the issue. On his Twitter account, Coelho said that the *"Ukraine crisis is a convenient excuse for Russophobia."* Coelho argued that the term crisis for Ukraine became a comfort zone to build a stigma about Russia, leading to sentiment towards Russia, often referred to as Russophobia. Quoting Al Mayadeen, author of the international bestseller "The Alchemist" points out that Coelho added to his tweet about himself having been to Lviv, Kyiv, Odessa, Yalta, and Chernobyl and crossing 10,000 km by train from Moscow to Vladivostok and emphasized with the sentence, *"Yes, there is war: but don't blame the commoners."* As a result, Coelho's tweet produced conflicting responses between criticism and support from netizens (Al Mayadeen Net, 2022).

Quoting a statement from Sergei Mikoyan about Russophobia, *"Russophobia is not a myth, not an invention of the Red-Browns, but a real phenomenon of political thought in the main political think tanks in the West."* This statement indicates that in politics, international Russophobia is not a common issue that can easily disappear at

any time. The term, however, will be deeply embedded for a particular reason to corner Russia in front of the international community. Thus, the argument arises that the period left the West with the illusion that Russia's role was to serve Washington's interests and would remain so in the future (Tsygankov, 2009).

However, Dmitri Medvedev, former Russian President and current Chairman of the Security Council of the Russian Federation, denies this claim. In an interview, he said that the anti-Russian, or Russophobia campaign carried out by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) led by the US was futile, useless, and would not sell well in the eyes of the international community. Quoting the official Russian media, TASS Russian News Agency, Interfax, Sputnik, and Russia Today (RT), on Friday, March 25, 2022, Medvedev said, *“The reason is that the global geopolitical situation has changed. Now, the United States is no longer the ruler of planet earth. The influence of the United States is getting weaker globally”* (Tim Suara Pemred, 2022).

Normandy Format

In his speech, Blinken mentioned the Normandy format in peace efforts between Ukraine and Russia. Therefore, the author briefly explained it. In a conflict, various control measures are made to prevent the conflict escalate, and there are no more prominent victims. So from this assumption, several countries formed contact groups to resolve disputes and tensions in Eastern Ukraine. Ukraine, Russia, France, and Germany formed a contact group called the Normandy Format (Rao, 2022). The Normandy format brings presidents and foreign ministers together to discuss issues in Eastern Ukraine. Normandy format was introduced on June 6, 2014, during a meeting of nations commemorating 70 years since Allied forces landed in France's Normandy. Quoting Manoylo in his writings, the commemoration also brought together Russian President Vladimir Putin and Ukrainian president Petro Poroshenko for the first time since the armed conflict in Eastern Ukraine began. The Normandy format does not involve the United States, the European Union, or any other European countries besides France and Germany. In other words, the Normandy Format does not include any international organizations or international alliances (A.V, 2015).

The presence of France and Germany is considered a critical role that can bring Russia and Ukraine together. Both France and Germany played a role in limiting the

escalation of the conflict. The mediation strategy used to mediate between Russia and Ukraine is in the form of Track One (state-driven diplomacy), which means diplomacy with the state as the leading actor. According to Bohmelt as quoted by Svensson, assessing that this mediation strategy is the most effective, considering that apart from the state having greater authority and more resources, this strategy is regarded as the most effective when combining official and unofficial tracks) (Wallenstein & Svensson, 2014).

The Normandy format has driven the peace process in Eastern Ukraine through several agreements, including the Minsk Treaty I and the Minsk II Treaty. The Minsk I Treaty, which was previously made in September 2014, was challenging to maintain a ceasefire until the conflict escalated again in January 2015. In February 2015, the four countries met and pushed for the signing of the Minsk II Agreement. This agreement was immediately put into effect, especially for a ceasefire. However, the implementation of this agreement was deemed ineffective. Gunfights are still frequent, and victims continue to fall, including civilians. Citing Gromyko and Belov, the Normandy Format then met in Paris, France, in October 2015, then at the Munich Security Conference, Germany, in October 2016. Since 2017, the Normandy Format talks have only been conducted via telecommunications (Gromyko & Belov, 2016). Thus, the end of President Poroshenko's term in May 2019 does not necessarily end the conflict in Eastern Ukraine. Armed conflicts involving the DPR, LPR, and civil society forces in East Ukraine continued until the President of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelensky, took office in 2019. The situation in East Ukraine is quite complex and has become an international issue.

Normandy Format Role

The Normandy format is an ad hoc forum to discuss conflict issues in Eastern Ukraine. The 43 countries that are members are Ukraine, Russia, France, and Germany, so they are also called the Normandy Four. Since their first meeting on the sidelines of the anniversary of the Allied Forces Landing in France, the four countries have held regular meetings between heads of state, including telephone communications and meetings of their foreign ministers (Yekelchyk, 2015). Regarding the discussion of conflict issues, quoting Moore's opinion states that when conflict arises, there are different perceptions

about how to find a way out or in what way. The first response in dealing with conflict is to ignore or avoid it (Webel & Galtung, 2007). However, this response did not resolve the dispute because the conflict continued. The second step could be to negotiate informally, and if it does not work, the next step has two approaches, namely negotiation and mediation (Webel & Galtung, 2007).

Of the four countries in the Normandy format, Ukraine and Russia are the two countries interested in the East Ukraine conflict. Despite other issues, such as Euromaidan demonstrations and Crimea's annexation as the root of the conflict, the two have been at loggerheads since the conflict began. France and Germany tend to take steps to mediate. As mediators, France and Germany have an essential role in the mediation process. According to Horowitz, one of these roles is a facilitator (facilitator), which means that the mediator ensures the continuity of the mediation process, focusing on negotiations rather than strengthening the parties' positions. In addition, another role that is carried out is the opener of negotiation channels (Webel & Galtung, 2007). When dialogue between interested parties is interrupted, in this case, Ukraine and Russia, the mediator intervenes to re-open communication.

The role of facilitator as well as opening the negotiation path was carried out in the Normandy format in several meetings. The meeting that has been held in the Normandy format, on 1. June 6 2014 in Benouville, France. As the first meeting of the series, this meeting marks the beginning of the series. This moment brings together Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko and Russian President Vladimir Putin for the first time since President Poroshenko was elected to the 2014-2019 term (Yekelchuk, 2015). The number of participants who attended the four parties has been agreed upon since the beginning of the year. French President Francois Hollande wrote in his memoirs about an offer of a meeting involving the President of Ukraine, Russia, and the Chancellor of Germany. Subsequent meetings were held in the presence of these representatives. This country's four leaders were in France commemorating the 70th allied landings during World War II; hence the group is called the Normandy Format. This 15-minute meeting resulted in a declarative decision to start peace talks and push for a ceasefire in the first Minsk Agreement. At this initial meeting, the negotiating parties have not disclosed details of the peace process. However, it has generally been agreed to start peace talks to resolve conflicts (Reschuck & Lukashova, 2019).

Minsk Agreement I

Protocol on the results of consultations of the Trilateral Contact Group concerning the joint steps at the implementation of the Peace Plan of the President of Ukraine Petro Poroshenko, and the initiatives of the President of Russia Vladimir Putin' better known as the Minsk Agreement I signed on September 5, 2014, in Minsk, Belarus. The agreement was signed by the Swiss Ambassador to the OSCE Heidi Tavliagini, the Second President of Ukraine Leonid Kuchma, and Ambassador of the Russian Federation Mikhail Zurabov. Representatives of the DPR and LPR, Vladimir Zakharchenko and Igor Plotnitski also signed the agreement. This protocol was designed to follow President Poroshenko's Peace Plan with more or less the same points, especially regarding a ceasefire (Wittke 2019). The Minsk I Agreement was followed by a memorandum signed two weeks later on September 19 2014. This memorandum details the implementation of the ceasefire and the withdrawal of troops from the site of contact. Heavy weapons of more than 100 mm caliber had to be withdrawn from both sides of the front line, *"not less than 15km to create a 30km safe zone"*. This weapons withdrawal is implemented under the supervision of the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine/SMM OSCE (Atland 2020).

Minsk Agreement II

The 'Package of measures for the Implementation of the Minsk Agreements or better known as the Minsk Agreement II was signed on February 12 in Minsk, Belarus. Like the Minsk Treaty I, the Minsk II Agreement was also signed by the Swiss Ambassador to the OSCE Heidi Tavliagini, Second President of Ukraine Leonid Kuchma, and Ambassador of the Russian Federation Mikhail Zurabov. This agreement was also signed by Representatives of the DPR and LPR, namely Vladimir Zakharchenko and Igor Plotnitski (Landwehr, 2019). The main change in the Minsk II Treaty was a ceasefire, significantly reducing casualties. Ukraine and the DPR and LPR militias have said they are withdrawing heavy weapons from the front lines. However, this is only temporary while the OSCE monitoring party is still with them. In negotiating this agreement, Russia urged them to maintain control over the border area with Ukraine. This shows that Russia wants the option of using military force to remain open

(International Crisis Group, 2015). The problem faced then is implementing this agreement because of different perspectives on how this conflict should be resolved. The Russian government continues to narrate the war in Eastern Ukraine as an internal conflict that is Ukraine's domestic problem. From the Ukrainian side, the conflict in the eastern part of the country is perceived as a conflict between countries and even more looks like the annexation of Russia (International Crisis Group, 2015).

OSCE and Trilateral Group

The handling of the conflict in Eastern Ukraine is carried out through mediation between parties under the authority of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). In contrast to the European Union and NATO, the OSCE has the advantage of being recognized by both Ukraine and Russia as having the legitimacy to mediate this conflict (Gawrich, 2014). OSCE is a communication platform with the goal of security in the European region that has three dimensions of approach, namely military politics, economics, and the environment, as well as a humanitarian dimension. These three dimensions are based on the Helsinki Final Act 1975. OSCE is categorized as a security community as a forum or international organization. Deutsch defines a security community as “... *one in which there is a real assurance that the members of that community will not fight each other physically but will settle their disputes in some other way*” (Gawrich, 2014).

Over time and after facing various conflict fields, OSCE has transformed into a security communication organization, which is defined as “... *an international organization which pursues security cooperation and confidence building in military issues*” (Gawrich, 2014). Hopefully, this form of the OSCE organization will overcome the conflict in Eastern Ukraine so that security can be achieved through a framework of cooperation between parties. The OSCE directly contributes to the conflict mediation process in Eastern Ukraine (Haug, 2016). There are two functions of the OSCE instrument in dealing with conflict in Eastern Ukraine, namely the function of mediating high-level dialogue and the part of monitoring (monitoring missions). The OSCE facilitates high-level dialogue mediation under Switzerland's leadership. This country has a good reputation as a neutral country (Gawrich, 2014).

From the results of consultations and meetings between the three parties, namely Ukraine, Russia, and the OSCE and attended by representatives of the DPR and LPR (later called the Trilateral Contact Group), a new Minsk Agreement II was signed on February 12, 2015, to continue the original Minsk Agreement on September 1, 2014. Implemented by the OSCE in the case of East Ukraine carried out by the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM) (Devianti, 2019). On its official website, the OSCE SMM explains the two main principles of this special mission: conflict prevention and resolution. Here is the quote.

“The Mission is being deployed following a request to the OSCE by Ukraine's government and a consensus agreement by all 57 OSCE participating States. The monitors reduce tensions and foster peace, stability, and security. They also help to monitor and support the implementation of all OSCE principles and commitments. This mission was carried out based on a request to the OSCE from the Ukrainian government and the approval of all 57 OSCE member states. These monitors aim to reduce tensions and maintain peace, stability, and security. They also assist in overseeing and supporting the implementation of all OSCE principles and commitments” (Atland, 2020).

Annexation of Crimea

The narrative of Russian intervention brings the conflict perspective to the possibility of external actors. This point of view holds that the conflict in Eastern Ukraine is the result of a series of Russian campaigns that have started since the annexation of Crimea. Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered the Russian military to take Crimea from Ukraine so the world called it Russia's annexation of Crimea. No wonder Blinken's speech alludes to this. Please note that this annexation can be carried out by Russia easily because thousands of Russian troops are already in the Crimean naval base in Sevastopol. According to Mearsheimer, Crimea is also an easy target for Russia because ethnic Russians dominate the population of people in Crimea. Most of them want the disintegration of Ukraine. When the referendum was held on March 16, 2014, the majority vote was won by the Russians, and Crimea immediately became the subject of the Russian Federation (Mearsheimer, 2014).

Quoting from The Moscow Times, Crimea's exit from Ukraine and the support provided by Russia triggered a similar upheaval in Eastern Ukraine. On the other hand, Russia also received sanctions for this annexation. Western countries, especially the United States and the European Union imposed sanctions on Russia. Sanctions were even extended in the defense, financial, and energy sectors until January 31, 2019. The

European Union extended special sanctions on Crimea businesses by banning investments until June 23, 2019. The extension of these sanctions could not be separated from the reason that Russia was considered to be helping separatist militias in Eastern Ukraine (The Moscow Times, 2018).

Western Interests

The conflict in Eastern Ukraine is also considered a result of Western policies. As a result of NATO expansion and European Union integration, as well as the integration of Baltic countries into Euro-Atlantic organizations, this crisis began in the 1990s. In the post-Soviet period, Russia sees all movements or revolutions in the former Soviet Union as Western attempts to weaken its influence. Western scholars such as John Mearsheimer argued that the United States and the European Union should respect Russia's economic, political, and security interests in the territories of the former Soviet Union (Kovalov, 2014).

Mearsheimer in his article *Why the Ukraine Crisis Is the West's Fault: The Liberal Delusions That Provoked Putin* (2016) states that Western policies have added to the fuel waiting to be ignited, namely the expansion of NATO membership, the expansion of the European Union, and the promotion of democracy. This policy penetrated Eastern Europe and touched the countries of the former Soviet Union, including Ukraine. France and Germany are two countries that do not agree with this policy because it can cause instability in the region. Nevertheless, Western policy continues. On June 27, 2014, the European Union and Ukraine finally signed an economic agreement that had been canceled by President Yanukovich seven months earlier. In the same June, NATO stated that the alliance remained open to new members. Directly, NATO assists the Ukrainian government in increasing its military capacities, such as aspects of command and control, logistics, and cyber defense (Mearsheimer, 2014).

Conclusion

Through Blinken's speech, we know that the US has a real effort to promote itself with peace branding which is carried out through its veto right holder status in the UN security council. In the view of the Copenhagen School securitization theory, it indicates that the US is carrying out security-emergence efforts against Ukraine by

spreading the Russophobia virus. This is natural because ideological differences and arms competition are the backgrounds for US actions in international politics. The US is interested in extending its influence in the East by intervening in the Ukraine-Russia conflict. So that the OSCE, which later gave birth to the Trilateral Group, became an easy ride for the US to carry out its mission under the pretext of dialogue and mediation in armed conflicts.

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