

How is Islam Portrayed in Western Media? A Critical Discourse Analysis Perspective

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Abstract

This study tries to critically unravel the way Islam is represented in western discourse through establishing the relationship between language and ideology, the forms it takes and its potential effect. To that end, headlines from widely circulated print media of the west including the Independent, the New York Times, the Herald Tribune, and The Times from January 1, 2008 to December 30, 2012 were selected and Islam and Muslim reproductions were studied therein. This study was carried out using a synthesis of Edward Said's notion of "Orientalism" and Van Dijk's notion of "ideological square", characterized by "positive self-presentation" and a simultaneous "negative other presentation". The analysis demonstrated that Islam is repetitively stereotyped and Muslims are negatively represented, both through various types of linguistic choices selected and via special construction of the headlines. The educational implications of critical discourse analysis in general and the present study in particular are discussed in relation to teaching, learning and translating the English language.

Keywords: ideology; stereotype; discourse; CDA; ideological square; orientalism

"Since the time of Homer every European, in what he could say about the Orient, was a racist, an imperialist, and almost totally ethnocentric." (Said, 1978, p. 204)

Language plays a crucial role in whatever knowledge human beings possess and influences the way people perceive the world around them. Reath (1998) asserted that language is one of the pivotal means in which "attitudes towards groups can be constructed, maintained or challenged" (p.54). This functional instrument "is given to the individual by the society in which he or she lives." It is a key instrument in socialization, and the means whereby society forms and permeates the individual's consciousness" (Hodge & Kress, 1993, p.1).

According to Bloor and Bloor (2007), 'much social practice in a complex modern society is institutionalized' (p. 5). If we look at the highly structured organizations that hold most power and that control the way we live and influence the way we think, we can see that language is an integral part of that control. In the same way, Fowler (1991) asserts that some texts have a direct role in shaping attitudes and ideas within a specific society.

Linguists' interest in discourse in recent times is gradually shifting from the traditional focus on the linguistic structure of text to how texts figure in the social process. An understanding of grammar, morphology, semantics, and phonology of a text does not necessarily constitute understanding of the text. The rhetorical intent, the coherence and the worldview that the author and receptor bring to the text are equally essential (Kaplan, 1990). Language, therefore, is no longer seen as merely reflecting our reality, but as central to creating reality. Our

words are never neutral, they carry the power that reflects the interests of those who speak or write (Fiske, 1994).

It has been argued that media studies for the most part, largely prior to the last decade, have not taken into account the important role of language in studying media in general and media discourse in particular (Boyd- Barret , 1994,pp.22). Boyd- Barret (1994) identifies two 'critical' and 'intellectual' sources for the analysis of media in mass media education: the interpretative tradition primarily focuses on analyzing the text; the social science tradition places the main emphases on the context. The main concern for Body-Barrett, however, is the fact that neither tradition takes a systematic and analytical account of language in their analysis (ibid).

According to Boyd-Barrett (1994), the interpretive tradition's analysis of media is based on texts. In this approach, "there may or may not be an attempt to relate the meaning of a text to features of the world beyond that text, but where it occurs it is in the text itself that evidence is sought" (p.23).

Whereas the interpretive tradition in print media studies is said to be text- based, although it excludes linguistic features at micro level, the social science tradition is context- based (p.23). According to Boyd- Barrett, social science researchers in media studies have been reluctant to search for meanings of texts for they believe "meanings of texts are not fixed within texts, but are the product of the interrelationship between texts and their different reads" (Boyd- Barrett,1994,p.24).

Overall, Boyd- Barrett's message is clear: a systematic analysis of language, the medium with which the media, the press in particular, communicates and through which it creates meanings and gets messages across, has generally been absent from media education and studies. Since this study aims at examining the discourse of media, it is necessary to lay out a framework that provides not only the basis for understanding language but also its production and consumption dimensions. The framework that meets such demands is critical discourse analysis (CDA).

Critical Discourse Analysis

According to van Dijk (1998a), CDA is a field that is concerned with studying and analyzing written and spoken texts to reveal the discursive source of power, dominance, inequality and bias. It examines how these discursive sources are maintained and reproduced within specific social, political, and historical contexts. Likewise, Fairclough (1993) defines CDA as follows:

Discourse analysis aims to systematically explore often opaque relationships of causality and determination between (a) discursive practices, events and texts, and (b) wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes; to investigate how such practices, events and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggles over power; and to explore how the opacity of these relationships between discourse and society is itself a factor securing power and hegemony(p. 135).

Young and Harrison (2004) suggests that there are three main strands of work in CDA. One strand includes work by Fairclough (1989), Fowler (1991), Fowler et al. (1979), Hodge and Kress (1993), and is firmly grounded in linguistic analysis. A second strand, in which van Dijk's work is central, focuses on the "socio-cognitive aspects of analysis" and "macro- structure of texts" (Young and Harrison, 2004, pp. 3-4). The third strand involves work by Wodak and the Vienna School, in which a "discourse- historical approach" is taken (Wodak, 2002, p.5). Among the scholars who contributed to the development of CDA, Wodak, Fairclough and van Dijk are the most referenced and quoted in critical studies of media discourse. In alignment with the

purpose of the paper, we are just explaining the van Dijk's view. Because for Van Dijk (1997), CDA needs to be differentiated from other forms of linguistic analysis:

If we want to explain what discourse is all about, it would be insufficient to merely analyze its internal structures, the actions being accomplished, or the cognitive operations involved in language use. We need to account for the fact that discourse as social action is being engaged in within a framework of understanding, communication and interaction which is part of broader socio-cultural structures and processes.... Critical scholars of discourse do not merely observe such linkages between discourse and social structures, but aim to be agents of change, and do so in solidarity with those who need such change most (pp. 21,23).

Van Dijk's Critical Discourse Analysis

In van Dijk's view, other linguistic approaches fall short by their inability or unwillingness to relate discourse to its broader socio-cultural context. Discourse analysts who fail to do this will fail in the project of explaining the nature of discourse. The strength of CDA is its orientation to making discourse analysis socially and politically relevant (Kress, 1995, cited in Young and Harrison, 2004, p.2), concerning linguistic knowledge to forms of social action.

His approach for analyzing ideologies has three parts: social analysis, cognitive analysis, and discourse analysis (1995, p.30). Whereas the social analysis pertains to examining the "overall societal structures"(the context), the discourse analysis is primarily text based (syntax, lexicon, local semantics, topics, schematic structures, etc). In this sense, van Dijk's approach incorporates the two traditional approaches in media education: interpretive (text based) and social tradition (context based), into one analytical framework for analyzing media discourse. However, what noticeably distinguishes van Dijk's approach from other approaches in CDA is another feature of his approach: cognitive analysis.

For Van Dijk, it is the sociocognition, social cognition and personal cognition that mediate between society and discourse. He defines social cognition as "the system of mental representations and processes of group members" (p.18). In this sense, for van Dijk "ideologies ...are the overall, abstract mental systems that organize ... socially shared attitudes" (p.18). Ideologies, thus, "indirectly influence the personal cognition of group members" in their act of comprehension of discourse among other actions and interactions (p. 19).He calls the mental representation of individuals during such social actions and interactions "models". For him, "models control how people act, speak or write, or how they understand the social practices of others"(p.2). Of crucial importance here is that, according to van Dijk, mental representations "are often articulated along 'US' versus 'THEM' dimensions, in which speakers of one group will generally tend to present themselves or their own group in positive terms, and other groups in negative terms" (p.22).

Furthermore, van Dijk (1995) perceives discourse analysis as ideology analysis. His notion of an "ideological square" is characterized by "a positive self - presentation and negative other – presentation" and is observable across all linguistic dimensions of a text from the lexicon and syntactic structures, the meanings of sentences and the coherence relations between sentences, as well as the broader pragmatic-directed and functional concerns of the text (Richardson, 2004). This "conceptual tool" appears also to net in the "hidden meaning of discourse", such as "presupposition, implicature and entailment"(p. 55).

Analyzing and making explicit this contrastive dimension of US versus THEM has been central to most of van Dijk's research and writings (1988, 1991, 1993, 1995, 1998a, 1998b). He believes that one who desires to make transparent such an ideological dichotomy in discourse needs to analyze discourse in the following way (1998b, pp.61-63):

1. Examining the context of the discourse: historical, political or social background of a conflict and its main participants
2. Analyzing groups, power relations and conflicts involved
3. Identifying positive and negative opinions about US versus THEM
4. Making explicit the presupposed and the implied
5. Examining all formal structure: lexical choice and syntactic structure, in a way that helps to (de)emphasize polarized group opinions.

Principles of Critical Discourse Analysis

Fairclough and Wodak (1997, pp.271-280) list a set of principles for critical discourse analysis which is as follows:

1. Social and political issues are constructed and reflected in discourse;
2. Power relations are negotiated and performed through discourse;
3. Discourse both reflects and reproduces social relations;
4. Ideologies are produced and reflected in the use of discourse.

Ideology

This part of the study is aimed to give a very general overview of the concept of ideology in media studies and the researcher's definition of ideology in this research.

Ideology is defined as 'the study of ideas' and the concept was first introduced by Karl Marx with a complicated and rich history which refers to culture, political ideas, economic views, and to more idiosyncratic characteristics such as 'self and identity' (as cited in Richardson, 2007, p. 134). A Marxist perspective on the ideological language in use maintains that in every social formation it is the ideas of the ruling class that are dominant (ibid). It means that "the ruling ideas are by and large compatible with or at least do not openly confront the ideas or interests of the ruling class"(ibid).

Following Van Dijk, the basic sense of ideology is simply the system of ideas, beliefs, values, attitudes and categories by reference to which a person, a group or a society perceives, comprehends and interprets the world. In this sense, ideologies are representations of who we are, what we stand for, what our values are and what our relationships with others are. More accurately, an ideology is a self-serving schema for the representation of us and them as social groups, and reflects the fundamental social, economic, political or cultural interests of, and conflicts between us and them (Van Dijk, 1998, pp.1-3, my emphasis).

According to Van Dijk, a theory of ideology should be multidisciplinary. In this sense, Van Dijk's approach to ideology can be located in a conceptual and interdisciplinary triangle that relates cognition, society, and discourse. Primarily, ideologies are considered as some kinds of 'system of ideas' and hence occupy a place in the symbolic field of thought and belief, that is, in 'cognition'. Besides that, ideologies are clearly social and mostly (though not always) associated with group interests, conflicts or struggles. In this respect, "ideologies are both cognitive and social" (198, p. 5). They may serve to legitimize or to resist power or dominance, or they may represent social problems and contradictions.

Elsewhere, elaborating on the scope and functions of his concept of ideology, and further distinguishing this kind of ideology from the other global or neutral one, Fairclough (1989) contends,

Discourse practices are ideologically invested in so far as they contribute to sustaining or undermining power relations. Relations of power may in principle be affected by discursive practices in any type of discourse, even in scientific and theoretical discourse...This does not,

however, imply that all discourse is irredeemably ideological. Ideologies arise in class societies characterized by relations of domination, and in so far as human beings are capable of transcending such societies they are capable of transcending ideology. I do not therefore accept the view of 'ideology in general' as a form of social cement which is inseparable from the society itself. (p. 82)

The concept of ideology, as mentioned above, can be associated with language use. It means that ideologies are typically expressed and reproduced in and through language. The primary functions of ideologies in a society, such as concealment, manipulation, and so forth, are mostly discursive social practices. Of course, this does not mean that ideologies are expressed only by language, but it seems obvious that language use, among other social practices, plays a significant role in the reproduction of ideologies (Van Dijk, 1998, p.5).

Therefore, if we want to know what ideologies are, how they work, and how they are created, changed and reproduced, we need to examine their discursive manifestations for the fact that discursive practices are embedded in social structures, which are mostly constructed, validated, naturalized, evaluated and legitimized in and through language, i.e. discourse. This implies that discourse is needed and used by different social groups in the contexts of acquisition, argumentation, ideological conflict and persuasion as well as those of conveying ideologies to other in- group members defending them against or concealing them from out- group members (Van Dijk, 1998, p.6).

Thus, discourse performs a specific role in the reproduction of ideologies. In the context of this discussion, ideologies can be defined simply as 'the basis of social representations shared by members of a social group' (Van Dijk, 1998, p. 8). More specifically, an ideology is a self serving schema and a shared framework of social practices of groups and their members, and that functions as a means of regulating social practices constructed as discourse. The present study, drawing on the work of Van Dijk (1998) to theorize the relations between discourse and ideology with reference to media discourse, aims to investigate how "us" and "them" are represented in the discourse of Western print media.

Orientalism

According to Said (1978), Orientalism is the accumulative body of (Western) knowledge, institutions and political/ economic policies which simultaneously assume and construct the orient as different, separate and 'OTHER'. In some of the stronger texts this develops to the point that the orient is assumed to be the antithesis of the Occident, or the west, wherein 'THEY' is represented as the negation of 'US' (p.2)

An important characteristic of Orientalist discourse is its reliance on binary language (Said, 1978). For Said, Orientalism, as a style of thought, is a dichotomous Western worldview based on "an ontological and epistemological distinction" between the so-called Orient and the West (p.2).

In addition to using a dichotomous language, Orientalism uses an essentialist discourse, universalizing certain traits and characteristics to the Orient and the Islamic world (Said, 1978). Said considers the numerous writers, novelists, journalists, philosophers, political theorists, historians, economists, and imperial administrators, who have accepted the basic Oriental/ Occidental distinction as the foundation for their work concerning the Orient, as Orientalists.

The notion of dividing the globe into dichotomous categories originates from a *structuralist* view of language (Saussure, 1959). Saussure argues that the universal structuring principle in all human language is that of binary oppositions. Language, viewed as a totally and as a social construction, is formed by the meanings assigned to objects and by those objects'

relationship to their opposites, for example, black versus white, man versus woman, and so on. Objects are understood as to what they are not. Therefore, a dichotomous system governs the formation of language, and the numerous possibilities of meaning are restricted. News, narratives are primarily based on binary signs, reducing reality to discrete, dichotomous facts. It is argued that binary language and the tendency to define the world in terms of opposite provide the sociocultural foundation of ideology.

Similarly, Said (1978) argues that the process of identity formation and maintenance in every culture entails the existence of "another, different and competing alter ego" (p.331). Said argues that, in the process of Western self- presentation, orientalism is constructed as the west's alter ego. The binary vocabulary of the Orientalism includes West versus East, despotism versus democracy, cruelty versus fair treatment, irrational versus rational, and cunning versus trust. By the absolute fixing of the meaning of the Orient, Orientalism functions as a Foucaultian discourse of power and domination (Said, 1978).

Said (1978) examines Orientalism via Foucault's notion of discourse. In doing so, he attempts to illustrate how power operates through discourse, how power produces knowledge and therefore how knowledge about the 'Orient' is itself an index of social power relations. In the words of Foucault (1979, p.57), "there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations."

Said's critique of orientalism therefore develops along another mutually supporting lines in accordance with this knowledge/ power nexus. Orientalism should be considered a " style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction between ' the Orient' and (most of the time' 'the Occident'(Said, 1978, p.2). In short, when people think about the East they embark with an already fixed idea that the orient is different; that THEY are different from US. This contracting discourse may, of course, take many forms but they are largely reducible to two, gender specific types: the xenophobic, which fixate on threatening or repellent characteristics; and the xenophilic, which fixate on attractive elements of the other (Said, 1978, p.3)

Xenophobic Orientalist representations (e.g. despotic leaders, fundamentalism, and terrorism) demean, degrade and, ultimately, demonize Eastern men while the xenophilic varieties (e.g. the harem and veiling) sensualise, passives and exoticise eastern women and both modes of Orientalist representational discourse objectify and stereotype the vast diversity of social life in countries and societies geographically east of the Mediterranean Sea (ibid).

Thus, knowledge of Orientalist scholarship, past and present, is the key to understand the context and the significance of contemporary representations of Islam and Muslims across a wide range of social / political discourse, including journalism and other mass-communicated media as well as more ' academic research.

As early as the twelfth century, although many European writers "had acquired a sufficient knowledge of Islam to understand its principle features... their understanding was vitiated by a polemical desire to distort the religion" (Masfie, 2002,p. 42). However, Martin (1995) believes that the rise of orientalism as a profession may be dated from the fourth quarter of the eighteenth century. It has shown that prior to the Christian Crusades and occupation of the ' Holy Lands', Christian polemics were firmly rooted in attacking Muslim Beliefs rather than Muslim people. Such polemics attempted to illustrate the heretical, immoral and irrational nature of Islam, usually in the form of attacks on the structure and style of The Quran, as opposed to arguing for the subjugation of Muslims (as cited in Richardson, 2004, p.8).

Over time, and drawing strength from the way in which successive authors shared prejudices and conclusions, the " Christian scholars and Polemicists created and accepted canon,

a constituted body of belief about Islam, which identified a 'real truth', substantially different from what Muslims actually believed" (Macfie, 2002, pp. 42-43). Of course, prejudicial polemics directed toward Islam (as opposed to supporting the subjugation, domination, or exclusion of Muslims) have continued to be written and published during and since this time (Richardson, 2004, p. 10). Amongst more directly personal attacks on the prophet in his 'Fanatismeou Mahomet le Prophet', Voltire wrote that Islam is based upon Mohammed's boasting "of being rapt to heaven and of having received there part of this unintelligible book which affronts common sense on every page"(ibid).

One of the key interpretive assumptions of Orientalist writing during, and indeed since, this imperial period of scholarship, has been "the static nature of Arab- Muslim society"(Richardson, 2004, p. 10). Contributing in part to this view of Arab- Muslim society was the (inter-) textual and citational nature of Orientalism, a method whereby specific historic examples are drawn upon to make hasty, overly strong or 'part for whole' generalizations about contemporary Muslim individuals and societies (ibid).

News media is something to which "members of more powerful social groups and institutions, and especially their leaders (the elites) have more or less exclusive access" (van Dijk, 1998a, p. 5). Scholars, including Said (1978, 1994, 1997), Sardar (1999), and Karim (2000), argue that orientalism is the dominant ideology of Western relations with the Islamic world. Orientalism employs a realistic narrative, which assumes a distinct social and cultural reality about the Orient, discovered by the efforts of Orientalists and assumed to be true: a reality that is different from its counterpart, the west (Said, 1994).

Said (1978) accuses media of skewing information and manipulating its audience to serve own purpose and maintain ideology in its dominance. Because of the important role of media in shaping and manipulating perceptions about the East in general and Muslims and Islam in particular, this study focuses on the print media of the west to unfold the issue further.

Methodology

"For me, words are a form of action, capable of influencing change". (Ingrid Bengis)

Data Selection and Sampling

The data for this paper is comprised of news stories from four newspapers: the Independent, The New York Times, the Herald Tribune, and the Times newspapers from January1, 2008 to December 30, 2012. These newspapers are selected for a number of reasons. First, all of them are considered elite newspapers and are among the largest media outlets in the United States and Britain and in terms of circulation and ranking, all are among the top ten newspapers published in their countries. Second, they are leading newspapers with regard to the coverage of international news and views, and drawing readers from around the world. There are so many news stories and articles published in the aforementioned newspapers on Islam and Muslims during the period mentioned above but, selected articles included the term Islam or Muslims in their headlines. And it is necessary to mention that we have just chosen some of those headlines not all of them. Another important factor regarding data selection is that the researchers were only interested in headlines and articles not editorials or opinion letters. These latter pieces of information require a different approach of analysis because they are different in schemata and genre type.

The data selection is illustrated in the following table:

Table1.*The Selected Headlines*

Paper	New York Times	The Times	The Independent Times	Herald Tribune
Total number of headlines	10	14	10	12

Research Objectives and Hypothesis

This paper investigates the function of language as a social practice in itself and as constituting other social practices such as media discourse. As discussed earlier, people encode their world views into language and this study aims at making these opaque ideologies and world views transparent by employing a theoretical framework and a practical analysis of language. This is done through a linguistic investigation with the aim of exploring these ideologies by focusing on language.

Based on these objectives, the researchers' hypothesis is that Islam and Muslims may be misrepresented in the western media. Recurrent stereotyping and negative reporting in their coverage of Islam and Muslims are due to the various types of linguistic choice. The content of such headlines has a significant impact on the overall impression they leave behind.

Method of Analysis

According to Fairclough (1995), "it is not possible to 'read off' ideologies from the text" (p. 71). The adaptation of a method of analysis is essential in CDA. The method of analysis which is adopted here is a combination of analytical tools and approaches practiced by CDA practitioners and stems from the researcher's goal in the beginning to answer the question posed in this paper.

In this paper, the researchers apply CDA under the theoretical leadership of Van Dijk and Said- Van Dijk's notion of 'ideological square' and Said's notion of 'orientalism' –since, "Van Dijk's 'ideological square' explains the dichotomous character of the prevailing discourse in societies" (Richardson, 2004, p. 65) and according to Martin- Rojo (1995) the reporting of Islam and Muslims "is founded upon a structuring of presuppositions, themes and arguments indicative of Van Dijk's ideological square" (as cited in Richardson, 2004, p. 66).

In the present analysis, the researchers focus on discourse features such as lexical choice, collocation, and presupposition to illustrate further how analysis through related tools contribute to a broader picture and how the notion of 'an ideological square' and 'oriental' themes manifest in western discourse to make ideologies in discourse more transparent.

Furthermore, to explore the research question, which asked whether the portrayal of Islam and Muslims in the four newspapers reflected elements of orientalism, the researchers consider whether and which of the eight Orientalist themes, "first categorized by Alatom (1997), serves as the premises for the assumptions made and the arguments advanced in newspapers" (as cited in Izadi&Saghaye- Biria, 2007, p. 150). To do so, the researchers analyze the naming choices and lexical choices that each of the headlines may have used as means for the construction of Orientalist descriptions of us (i.e., the West) versus them (i.e., Muslims).

Findings and Discussion

"That people are suddenly more interested in Islam could be a positive development, but if the knowledge that is produced only reinforces an Orientalist perspective then this will be an opportunity lost".(Poole, 2002,p.3)

In this part, the representation of Islam and Muslims has been analyzed according to the lexical choice, presupposition, collocation and the Orientalist themes in the headlines. Further, the interpretation of the findings has been discussed for sixteen headlines randomly selected. So identifying the dichotomous character (US vs. THEM) of the headlines, the structuring of presuppositions, Oriental themes and arguments indicative of division/ separation and rejection of Muslims which results in placing a negative social value on Islam and Muslims is the focus of this section. (Number of each headline is given. For a list and dates of the headlines see Appendix.)

Headline1: Faith and Terrorism in the Muslim World

In this headline there is a world which is called Muslim world. This world which belongs to them is different from our world in that there is terrorism there. Here, **Muslims** are stereotyped as a nation, a world, which is **a threat** because of their faith and terrorism.

Headline2: How my eyes were opened to the barbarity of Islam? Is it racist to condemn fanaticism?

Here, the **barbarity of Islam** is taken for granted. The definite article ' the' indicates the familiarity of this barbarity. Further, in the next line the world Islam is substituted with ' fanaticism' that suggest the equality of these two words without any difference. Moreover, the existence of fanaticism is not questioned, but the question presupposes the **equality of Islam and Fanaticism**. One's answer to the question, either yes or no, just confirms the existence of fanaticism which is equal to Islam.

Headline3:Has Islamic terrorism arrived on Maldives?

In the headline, Islam collocates with **terrorism**. The existence of Islamic terrorism is taken for granted and to answer with either yes or no just confirms the presupposed Islamic terrorism. This headline considers Islam as a kind of **threat** and when it arrives a place brings terror and violence.

Headline4: Female Pakistani minister shot dead for ' breaking Islamic dress code'

The headline foregrounds the death of a female. This irrational Islam shoots females who break the Islamic dress code. There is sexual discrimination, and irrational Islamic rules suppress women and shoot them whenever they break the Islamic dress code. It is presupposed the Islamic countries are male dominated and the dichotomy between us and them is the dichotomy between **us** (west) vs. **them** (Muslim men **not** women).

Headline5: Muslim panel to advice on rights and wrongs of veil

The first it presupposes that there are some wrongs of the veil which must be advised on. The veil has become a sign of subordination of women and the discrimination practiced against them. This term is used to contribute to the dichotomous character (us vs. them) in which women as a part of US are supposed by the males (THEM) in their societies and their veil is the sign of this suppression and backwardness.

Headline6: Anti- radical Islam reporter killed in south Russia

Here Islam is collocated with ' Radical' and ' kill'. This negative terms show the **'irrationality'** of Islam that kills whoever is opposed to it. There is not enough information

about the reasons or the circumstances in which the act of killing has occurred except that if one is not in agreement with this 'radical Islam', she /he is in danger and is threatened to be killed.

Headline7: The suicide of reason: Radical Islam's threat to the West

In the present headline, Islam is collocated with 'suicide', 'radical' and 'threat'. Here, 'the suicide of reason' indicates the irrationality of Islam. It also explicitly speaks of the threat of such Islam to the west. The dichotomy between "us"(West) and "them"(Islam) is the other important characteristic of this headline.

Headline8: Carey backs Pope Issues warning on ' violent' Islam

Here, the phrase ' **warning on violent Islam**' speaks of a potential threat- a violent danger. This kind of Islam that a Christian correspondent backs Pope when speaking about is not an ordinary one. It is violent, but where is the better one? Maybe Christianity (Us) is that utopian and peaceful religion which is against the violent Islam (Them).

Headline9: How radical Islam turned a schoolboy into a terrorist

Here, there is a process in which radical Islam turns an innocent schoolboy into a devil, a terrorist. This radical Islam is a real threat because it can turn the schoolboys, just schoolboys and not schoolgirls, into terrorists.

Headline10: Islam overtakes Catholicism as world's largest religion

Here the population of ' Us' is compared with 'Them'. Although this article seems neutral, but it is like a Warning to the Christian world; 'They' are becoming more than ' Us' in number.

Headline 11: Trinidadian Islamic group threatens to use chemical and biological weapons

An Islamic group ' threatens to use biological and chemical weapons'. The circumstances and the reasons are not important. The only important thing is the Islamic nature of the Threat.

Headline12: Comedy shows plays on Danes' fears of Islam and terrorism

Islam and Terrorism are considered the same by this headline. 'Danes' fears are because of two parallel things – Islam and terrorism. The frightening nature of Islam as a permanent **threat** to the west always causes terror and fear in people.

Headline13: Does Islam fit with our law? Is a clash of civilizations looming?

The dichotomy of 'Us' versus ' them' is quite evident in this headline. The first question is somehow answered by the writer in the following question. It is presupposed that Islam is quite different and is a different civilization and the only concern of the headline is the time of this clash which is about to happen.

Headline14: Fear of Islamic state in Bangladesh grows after bombers target courts

It indicates that the main reason for the growing fear is Islam. It is taken for granted that the **bombers** are Muslims and this threat is the reason for the growing fear among the people. It is also important that the word' fear' is immediately followed by the word 'Islamic'.

Headline15: How Islam has been corrupted

It is not important to see if Islam is corrupted or not, but how it has been corrupted is of importance. The headline **presupposes** the corruption of Islam and if one wants to know how it has been corrupted he / she must accept the corruption.

Headline16: Britain ' faces Islamic terrorism for generations'

Here, Islam collocates with **terrorism**. It is not a new phenomenon but it is ' for generations' that Islamic terrorism has **threatened** Britain, but if one looks back at history he/ she can realize who has been a source of terror in other countries and has colonized other nations for generations.

All the selected headlines have been analyzed in the same manner and the findings of this section are summarized in table 2 and 3. The themes of *Islam as threat and irrationality* have the highest number of instances in the number of instances in the headlines that were studied. Moreover, *backwardness and Christians vs. Muslims* are among the most repeated themes in the headlines.

Among the negative words collocating *Islam and Muslims*, in the selected headlines, *are radical, fundamentalist/ism, terrorist/ism, violent, extremist/ism, kill, war, threat, fear, corruption, and barbarity*. The term veil is also significant in the articles on Muslim women. The frequency of these terms is summarized in the following table.

Table 2. *Orientalist Themes: Total Numbers and Percentages in the Independent (I), The herald Tribune (HT), the Times (T) and the New York Times (NYT).*

Orientalist Theme	I	HT	T	NYT	% of total
Inferiority	1	0	1	0	4.34
Backwardness	1	2	2	2	15.21
Irrationality	2	3	4	4	28.26
Submissiveness	0	0	0	0	0
Islam as threat	5	4	4	4	36.95
Christians/ Jews vs. Muslims	1	1	3	1	13.4
Strangeness	0	0	0	0	0
Untrustworthiness	0	0	0	1	2.17
Total No. of Headlines	10	10	14	12	

Table 3. *Words Collocating with the Terms Islam and Muslims in the Selected Headlines*

Words collocating Islam/ Muslim	I	HT	T		Total
Radical	3	4	3	2	12
Corruption	1	0	0	1	2
Fundamentalist/ism	0	0	0	1	1
Terrorist/ism	2	2	3	2	9
Barbarity/ Violent	2	0	1	1	4
Extremist/ism, Fanatic/ism	0	0	1	1	2

Kill/War	1	0	1	1	3
Threat/Fear	2	0	3	0	5
Dead/ Death	0	1	0	2	3
Veil	1	1	1	0	3
Total	12	6	13	11	44

Conclusion

"There is an unquestioned assumption that Islam can be characterized limitlessly by means of handful of recklessly general and repeatedly deployed clichés". (Said, 1978, p. 230)

Analysis of the headlines and a careful examination of the lexical and structural choices revealed that Islam and Muslims were misrepresented. This representation tends to emphasize stereotypes and cast an unfavorable light over Muslims and Islam. The image of Muslims as social deviants and security threats is being regenerated against the backdrop of the 'war on terror'. Heightened security concerns have made the Muslims community an easy target for an extra-ordinary level of media scrutiny.

These Western broadsheets in the selected data divide and reject Muslims via a three part process: first they identify a 'space' – which can be social or mental or physical (etc.) - and rhetorically separate it from 'our own' space; second, they explain the workings or composition of this space in contrast to 'our own'; and third Western printed media place a negative social value on both this space and its compositions. These are, in turn, processes of: separation; differentiation; and negativisation. Again, these 'stages' often occur simultaneously given that it is impossible to separate without differentiating and that value judgments are often implicit in the very process of naming and describing. At the time of the study, the key implicit approach used to place negative value onto 'Muslim social space' drew on notions of: civility; modernity; a linear and universal notion of 'social progress'; and the inferior position of the identified 'Muslim space' in comparison to 'ours'.

More specifically, broadsheet representations of Islam and Muslims predominantly argue that Muslims are 'homogenous', 'separate', 'inferior', 'the enemy', (etc.) and can be regarded as 'Islam phobic'. Accordingly, western broadsheet newspapers predominantly reframe Muslim cultural differences as cultural deviance and, increasingly it seems, as cultural threat. The findings of this paper shows that, today, Orientalist depictions of Muslim countries and their cultural and political issues concentrate around the idea that Islam is a source of threat. The themes of Islam as a threat and Oriental irrationality have the highest number of instances in the selected data that were studied.

In the discourse of the four papers, the concept of the West versus Islam defines the demarcation between us and them. This is a clear example of the operation of the ideological square, which partly involves emphasizing 'their' bad properties/ actions.

One of the main implications of his research as Fairclough (1989,p.4) said, is "a contribution to the general raising of consciousness of exploitative social relation, through focusing upon language" and analyzing it critically which do not allow us to be a lay person, unsuspecting and credulous in the community. This research can assist students, in their critical thinking activities, and one of the goals of this research is to take care of the different stages of educational levels and integrate them into a pattern for teaching and learning critical thinking and ultimately 'self-actualization' and 'evaluation'. On a broader perspective, the findings of this paper can be applied

to the other disciplines since these cognitive capacities are necessary for the comprehension and analysis in other fields, too.

Another implication of a CDA of this type is to ask readers to be conscious of different aspects of text production such as the writer's sociopolitical background, the historical setting, and the cultural overtones. "These parameters are the essential ingredients of critical thinking and self-actualization as the ultimate goal of all educational enterprises"(Reichenbach,2001,p. 19).

CDA can be used as powerful device for deconstructing the texts to come up with their intended ideologies. It is a methodological approach for those involved in socio- cultural studies. Also, it can be a theory for finding the manners in which the attitudes, political powers and identities cause sociolinguistic variations in different communities.

To wind up the argument on the implications of the present study, one cannot help discussing the effects of CDA on translation studies and practices. The act of translation is not an exclusively linguistic enterprise; the translator must attend to political, social and ideological backgrounds of the writer to be able to render a message from the source to target language. Due to the fact that translation encompasses the close link between language and culture, CDA researchers aim to accurately analyzing the translated rendition to see how much the ideology of the writer is visible in the translated text, and to what extent cultural points affect the process of translation.

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Appendix1: Selected Headlines

1. Independent.co.uk

Muslim panel to advice on rights and wrongs of veil

By David Barrett and Joe Churcher

July19, 2008

2. Independent.co.uk

Anti- radical Islam reporter killed in south Russia

By Shanon Hail

September 3, 2008

3. Independent. Co.uk

The Suicide of Reason: Radical Islam's threat to the West

By: Lee Harris

August 31, 2008

4. Independent.co.uk

How radical Islam turned a schoolboy into a terrorist

By: Adam Fresco

November 7, 2008

5. Independent.co.uk

Islam overtakes Catholicism as world's largest religion

By: Richard Owen

March 31, 2009

6. Independent.co.uk

Our British laws are there to protect Muslim women

By: Justin Huggler, Asia Correspondent

November 30, 2009

7. Independent.co.uk

Muslim terror suspect tries to assassinate Danish cartoonist

By: David Randal

January 3, 2010

8. Independent.co.uk

How Islam has been corrupted

By: John Pulmer

March 17, 2011

9. Independent.co.uk

Threat of homegrown Islamist Terrorism

By: Jhon Palmer

September 30, 2011

10. Independent.co.uk

Radical Muslim cleric Abu Hamza and terrorists

By: Jerome Taylor

September 24, 2012

11. The Times

BBC is too scared of Islam

Ben Elton

April 2, 2008

12. The Times

Does Islam fit with our law? Is a clash of civilizations looming?

Ian Edge and Robin Griffiths- Jones

February 5, 2008

13. The Times

Is time to take a stand against Islam and Sharia?

Maryam Namazie

March 12, 2009

14. The Times

Sex, violence, the trouble with Islam and why we need our Christian roots

Paul Flintoff

October 7, 2009

15. The Times

Multiculturalism has fanned the flames of Islamic extremism

Kenan Malik

July 16.2010

16. The Times

Muslim women to curb terror

Marie Woolf

January6, 2011

17. The Times

Behind the veil: the online diary of a British Muslim women

Na'ima B. Robert

February 25, 2011

18. The Times

Radical Islam taking advantages of Christianity's decline, says bishop

Hollye Blades

March 7, 2011

19. The Times

Rediscovering a kinder, gentler Islam

John Tagilabue

October 21, 2011

20. The Times

Comedy shows plays on Dane's fears of Islam and terrorism

November, 28, 2011

John Tagilabue

21. The Times

Muslims and terrorists in the world

Pat Hurst

May 28, 2012

22. The Times

Man thought to be behind anti-Muslim film is arrested

Brook Barns

September 8, 2012

23. The Times

Cardinal causes uproar with "Muslim scare "video

Noam Oleary

October 16, 2012

24. The Times

Buddhist monks in protest over Muslim aid

Mark Dunn

October 16, 2012

25. The New York Times

Faith and Terrorism in the Muslim world

Kenneth M. Pollack

April6, 2008

26. The New York Times

How my eyes were opened to the barbarity of Islam

Is it racist to condemn fanaticism?

Phyllis Chesler

August 19, 2008

27. New York Times

For Muslim women in Europe, a medical road back to virginity

Elaine Sciolino

June 14, 2009

28. New York Times

Modernizing Islam, Abolish tipping, Curbing corruption

February 5, 2010

29. New York Times

Has Islamic terrorism rearrived on Maldives?

Philip Sherwell

October 2, 2010

30. New York Times

Islam: a symbol of the differences between East and West

Lorraine All

March11, 2011

31. New York Times

Is Islam Obstacle to Democracy?

October8, 2011

32. New York Times

Tapping into More Moderate Islam

Didi Kristen

October 9, 2012

33. New York Times

The sin of sowing Hatred Islam

Rick Jacobs

September 9, 2012

34. The New York Times

The Muslim world can't have both ways: Islam and Political life

Roger Cohen

September 9, 2012

35. International Herald Tribune

Afghan student sentenced to die for humiliating Islam

The Associated press

January 23, 2008

36. International Herald Tribune

Islam needs democracy

The Associated press

April 10, 2008

37. International Herald Tribune

Birthday parties against Islam says top Saudi cleric

Reuters 21, 2008

38. International Herald Tribune

Ex- radical turns to Islam of tolerance

Jane Perlez

June 1, 2009

39. International Herald Tribune

'Heavy Metal Islam': Muslim youth and a lot of idealism

Howard Hampton

July 5, 2009

40. International Herald Tribune

Islam's best, brightest and increasingly radical

Hassan M. Fattah

March 6, 2010

41. International Herald Tribune

Jihadism's roots in political Islam: Terrorism in Europe

Bassam Tibi

August 30, 2010

42. International Herald Tribune

Indonesian Islam's softer hard line

Seth Mydanes

June 28, 2011

43. International Herald Tribune

Resisting the Tehran regime; Support for the Latin Mass; Violence in Islam

The Associated press

February 11, 2011

44. International Herald Tribune

Protesters condemn Islam

Alex David

August 23, 2012

45. International Herald Tribune

He is my brother- why angry Muslim youth are protesting in Sydney

Mohammad Tabaa

September 18, 2012

46. International Herald Tribune

The incredible Muslim Hulk proves to be no friend of Islam either

November 1, 2012