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The Representation of ISIS and Iraqi Forces in Al Jazeera Arabic News Reports

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Abstract

In recent years, the world has witnessed a number of changes that have influenced the international relations and clearly reflected on most areas of life such as politics, economy, poverty, security, and the war on terror. The media whether broadcast, print, or social become an important element in evaluating the overall capacity of any country or state. In actual fact, Al Jazeera played a vital role in the positive representation of ISIS and the negative representation of Iraqi forces. By means of critical discourse analysis, this research found out that Al Jazeera ideologically concealed the negative acts of ISIS, while at the same time, highlighted the negative acts of Iraqi forces.

Keywords: CDA; propaganda; ideology; AL Jazeera; ISIS

La representación del ISIS y las fuerzas iraquíes en los informes de noticias árabes de Al Jazeera

Resumen: En los últimos años, el mundo ha sido testigo de una serie de cambios que han influido en las relaciones internacionales y se han reflejado claramente en la mayoría de las áreas de la vida, como la política, la economía, la pobreza, la seguridad y la guerra contra el terrorismo. Los medios, ya sean de transmisión, impresos o sociales, se convierten en un elemento importante para evaluar la capacidad general de cualquier país o estado. De hecho, Al Jazeera jugó un papel vital en la representación positiva de ISIS y la representación negativa de las fuerzas iraquíes. Mediante el análisis crítico del discurso, esta investigación descubrió que Al Jazeera ocultaba ideológicamente los actos negativos del ISIS, al mismo tiempo, destacaba los actos negativos de las fuerzas iraquíes.

Palabras clave: CDA; propaganda; ideología; AL Jazeera; ISIS

1. Introduction

Since 2003, terrorism has become one of the biggest challenges for innocent Iraqis. Terrorism has emerged as an extraordinary phenomenon which violently knocked the doors of Iraqi people and changed their unified society into smaller- sectarian ones fighting and killing one another without any purpose or a cause. Iraq has lost hundreds thousands of its innocent people due to the uncounted and outrageous terrorist acts.

Borum (2004) demonstrates that terrorism is concerned with acts of violence intentionally and ideologically used to achieve political, economic, and religious interests. Neumann (2008) defines terrorism as a form of violence which can be used by any person or group and for any kind of motive.

In the summer of 2014, the group which was known as 'ISIS' (the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria) controlled large parts of northern and western Iraq including the cities of Mosul, Fallujah, and Tikrit.

What concerns the media is that the news should always be presented in a biased manner. Therefore, the media resort to manipulation and deception in order to mislead and persuade readers and listeners for political and ideological interests. The media play a dangerous

role in people's lives, not only in transferring news and events, but also in framing and determining the interests, feelings, and beliefs of the public. Hence, the media manipulation becomes like a psychological warfare which is used against ordinary people to create greater amount of negative effect on their minds. The black media are one of the most dangerous means that target human minds; where they start distorting the information in order to attract people's attention to non-existent reality, just an illusion. Then, the media embody this illusion and make it real to the public for ideological purposes. AL Jazeera is one of many news channels which has practised and is still practising media manipulation and distortion starting from the 'Arab Spring' uprisings in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Syria to the Iraqi war with ISIS groups (Van Dijk, 1988; Yehia, 2011; Fornaciari, 2011; Quackenbush, 2013).

There has been limited research on Gulf and Arab media ideology and manipulation of the image of Iraqi forces. Therefore, this study aims at finding out how Al Jazeera manipulates the truth of ISIS by means of critical discourse analysis.

The approach followed in the study is critical discourse analysis (henceforth CDA) serves as an analytical framework to critically analyse the selected news reports from AL Jazeera news channel. The selected reports which concern the Iraqi violence crisis are taken from the periods of 2014 to 2017. The article is limited to the critical discourse analysis of the representation of ISIS groups in AL Jazeera (10) selected news reports.

The study investigates how the media can distort and manipulate the truth on one hand, and persuade and deceive lay people on the other, to achieve certain interests. The study also examines the role of ideology in the representation of the crisis and how AL Jazeera uses ideology and power relations for the interests of ISIS groups.

2. Review of Literature

CDA is considered as a major field in linguistics. It is a clearly shared perspective on doing linguistics, semiotic or discourse analysis (Van

Dijk, 1993).

The main task of CDA is to inspect the linguistic discursive dimension of social and cultural phenomena and processes of change. Many areas such as mass communication, identity, democracy, racism, economy, and politics are covered and studied under CDA (Jorgensen and Philips, 2002).

CDA job is to extract manipulation and ideology from texts which are kept below the surface and make them explicit to people (Fowler, 1991).

Hart (2010) adds that CDA has the best tools that can make instances of ideology and manipulation clear to people. In this case, people are equipped by new critical awareness.

CDA is considered as a type of discourse analytical research that basically sheds light on the way in which text and talk manipulate, reproduce, and resist social power abuse, dominance, and inequality in the social and political context. Then, the job of critical discourse analysts comes to explain, interpret, and resist social inequality and power abuse (Van Dijk, 2001).

CDA is substantially concerned with the discursive conditions, components and consequences of power abuse by powerful groups and institutions. It investigates and studies forms of access and control over texts and talk. In addition to this, CDA focuses on studying the discursive strategies of mined control. CDA also examines how discourse works and functions in the society, especially forms of power, hegemony, and ideology and how such forms are expressed and reproduced in written and spoken discourses (Van Dijk, 1995a).

Icke (1999) argues that the few (politicians, institutions, media owners) have dominance and power over and direct the world. Consequently, this indicates that people should always remain in ignorance and in conflicts with themselves. Therefore, those in power are always keen to keep people away from the truth.

Van Dijk (2000) demonstrates that ideology plays a vital role in the positive representation of certain groups and the negative representation of others. The discourse of SELF or US (positive and good) and the image of OTHERS or THEM (negative and bad) are always used in political and media discourse. In other words, the in-group mem-

bers are always represented in a positive way, while the out-group members are always represented in a negative way. Generally, the overall strategy of discourse works as follows:

- Say positive things about US.
- Say negative things about THEM.
- Do not say negative things about US.
- Do not say positive things about THEM.

According to Ball et al (2014), ideology carries four functions for people who hold it:

1. Explanatory

This function refers to the ideology that presents an explanation about the main reasons of the social, political, and economic conditions, especially in times of crisis. During these times, people try to search for an explanation for what is happening in a frantic way such as seeking about the main reasons of wars, depression, unemployment, or why some people are poor and others are rich.

2. Evaluative

Ideologies are used to provide standards for assessing social conditions. After all, there is a clear difference between clarifying the main reasons why certain things are happening and determining whether those things are positive or negative. Is this war evil? Are some other wars morally justifiable? Can racial and sectarian conflict be avoided or such conflicts are inevitable.

3. Orientative

This function provides an orientation and a sense of who are they? To which race, nation, sex, they belong. Since people need their identity and location, ideology gives them help to gain a sense of where they are, who they are, and how they fit in a complex world.

4. Programmatic

The last function of ideology gives its followers instructions about what to do and how to do it. It presents a programmatic function through displaying a general program of social and political action. Political ideologies are similar to doctors. As doctors always attempt to give their patients good quality of medicine for interests, politicians also eager to prescribe remedies for sick societies and provide good programs and plans for the healthy ones. All of this is done for

certain interests.

Shultz and Godson (1984) illustrate that the term 'disinformation' is often used deliberately by politicians and media to hide the truth from people, or make them believe something they (politicians) favour. The term means false and incomplete information that is conveyed to a specific individual, group, or country for ideological, manipulative, and persuasive purposes.

Jowett and O'Donnell (2012) explain the main ideological goals of propaganda as follows:

1. Concealed Purpose

Politicians and media owners do not tell their audience that they are persuaders and manipulators, but rather they want to promote, persuade, and encourage people to believe in their own interests or those of an organisation, or a country they support. Such propagandists do not give their audience a primary concern and do not even believe in the message that they are sending.

2. Concealed Identity

Propagandists always seek to conceal their identities in order to achieve their desired interests and goals. When the propagandists reveal their identities, they will introduce a gift to their opponents and this might even negatively influence their desired objectives.

3. Control of Information Flow

Controlling of information flow is crucial for the propagandists and they always attempt to have the complete control over the flow of information in order to deceive and manipulate the minds of their audience to accomplish their objectives and influence the public perception. The propagandists control the flow of information in different ways such as using fragmented information, withholding information, presenting information in juxtaposition, distorting information, and manufacturing information. They also control the information through controlling the media and releasing distorted information from credible sources.

4. The Management of Public Opinion

One of the jobs of the propagandists is to influence the public opinion for their interests and this cannot be done without management. Therefore, the propagandists should make sure that the public opin-

ion works for their side. In this sense, the propagandists use all kinds of persuasion, manipulation of minds, and deception to achieve such goal.

5. The Manipulation of Behaviour

The goal of propaganda is to manipulate behaviour. In other words, the propagandists attempt to control or play upon by artful, unfair, or insidious means to their own advantage and interests. Propaganda thus replaces the truth with deception. One forms of manipulating behaviour is affective (emotional) reactions to people and events such as yelling for political candidate and expressing a sense of pride when the national anthem is sung.

3. Methodology

The sample size used in the analysis are made up of (10) reports on the Iraqi violence crisis in 2014 up to 2017. The reports are taken from AL Jazeera Arabic news channel in Qatar. I translated the reports into English, and then analysed them according to Van Leeuwen's (1996) framework of social actors, Van Dijk's (1991) racism and the press, Van Dijk's (2006) politics, ideology, and discourse, and Van Dijk's (1995b) ideological discourse analysis. Van Leeuwen's (1996) critical framework of the representation of social actors is crucial in showing the way actions and participants are presented on one hand and it can be invested to dismantle the ideologies of language users especially in political and media discourse on the other. The important thing that is needed to be known about Van Leeuwen's (1996) framework is that it deals with the participants and the way they are represented in written and spoken discourses. Sources and quotations are only taken from Van Dijk's (1991) because they are crucial for this study to see how Al Jazeera uses sources, who are the sayers?, what do they say about ISIS and Iraqi forces?, and what types of quotations (direct or indirect) Al Jazeera use in the reports. Van Dijk's (1995b, 2006) are also important for this study since it deals with different ideological discourse strategies that can be invested by media and politicians for persuasive and manipulative purposes. The reasons for choosing the Arabic data of AL Jazeera in Arabic rather than directly analyzing the English data in AL Jazeera English are that previous studies have demonstrated that the English version

of AL Jazeera is completely different from its Arabic one. In other words, AL Jazeera English has its own audience and editorial policy that are different from those of AL Jazeera in Arabic (Yehia, 2011; Fornaciari, 2011). AL Jazeera in Arabic is widely viewed by the Arab countries because they both use the same language. In addition to this, most of the countries surrounding Iraq are from Arab-Sunni Muslims or such countries have Sunni majorities except Iran which has Shia majorities. The reports are taken from four main battles between Iraqi forces and ISIS. The battles are arranged chronologically as follows: the battle of Ramadi (21 Nov, 2014-17 May, 2015), the battle of Tikrit (1th-31th of March, 2015), the battle of Fallujah (23 May, 2016-26 Jun, 2016), and the battle of Mosul (16 Oct, 2016-10 July, 2017). The reports are chosen from these battles because these battles are the longest and bloodiest battles between Iraqi forces and ISIS groups. The reports were obtained from the main website of the channel. AL Jazeera website is: ([http:// www.AL Jazeera. com](http://www.ALJazeera.com)). The researcher has chosen the period of 2014, which is the beginning of the crisis up to the year of 2017 which is the end of the crisis. In 2017, the city of Mosul has been taken back by the Iraqi forces.

The researcher adopted Van Leeuwen's (1996) *The Representation of Social Actors* because this critical and analytical framework is crucial for the following study since it can critically illustrate the ideology of AL Jazeera and the ways it represents the social actors namely, ISIS and Iraqi forces. After carefully reading the (10) selected reports for the analysis, I found that AL Jazeera focused on three important categories namely inclusion, exclusion, and role allocation. AL Jazeera profusely used these categories in all the (10) selected reports; therefore, I decided to use these categories from Van Leeuwen's critical and analytical framework. In addition to Van Leeuwen's selected framework, seven useful strategies are also selected from Van Dijk's (1991), (1995b), and (2006) respectively.

1. Deletion

The category of deleting is sub-divided into two strategies namely, inclusion and exclusion. Social actors or participants can either be included or excluded in the discourse. According to Van Leeuwen (1996), media owners and politicians often include and exclude so-

cial actors or underrepresent them for a purpose. This purpose is ideological in nature as Van Leeuwen (1996) states “to suit their interests and purposes in relation to the readers for whom they are intended (38).” The inclusion of some social actors in certain texts and at the same time excluding others can play an ideological and manipulative role in the positive representation of certain actors and the negative representation of others. In other words, the discourse of US and THEM will be clear in these two strategies: we are the good and the positive, while they are the bad and the negative.

2. Rearrangement

Davari and Moini (2016) illustrate that the roles which social actors play have an important part in the work of multiple critical studies. Representations can reallocate roles to the involved participants. Some of them are activated and some others are passivized for also ideological purposes. Questions such as (who are represented as actors (agents) and who are patients (goals) in a certain action or event?) are very important. Thus, the media use active and passive forms to:

Say positive things about our allies

Say negative things about their enemies

Mitigate the responsibility of our allies

Highlight the responsibility of their enemies

3. Hyperbole

Politicians and media use hyperbole to exaggerate. They deliberately do this to emphasise something, to add humour, to gain attention, interests, or achieve political aim (Van Dijk, 1995b). For example, ‘he shot off like a rocket when I told him you were here’ indicates high rapidity of action (Cruse, 2006: 80).

4. Compassion Move

This strategy shows sympathy for (the weak) or innocent civilians by the wrong policies or actions of others to achieve political interests (Van Dijk, 1995b).

5. Negative Comparison

This type of strategy is used to emphasise the bad actions and qualities of others to achieve key gains and interests (Van Dijk, 1995b).

6. Blaming the Victim

Politicians and media make use of this strategy through reversing the blame by attributing it to the opponent (Van Dijk, 1991).

7. Contrast and Division

This strategy is used by politicians (opponents) those who are incompatible about crucial problems or specific situations. It is often found in election campaigns. Politicians always present themselves as “good”, while their opponents are “bad” (Van Dijk, 1991).

8. Number game

Politicians and media resort to use numbers and statistics in order to persuasively achieve credibility and objectivity (Van Dijk, 2006).

9. Example/Illustration

A powerful tool in discourse is to give concrete examples, often in the form of short story illustrating an important issue or problem for the speakers’ interests. As a matter of fact, concrete stories are better memorized than abstract ones and also have more emotional impact on the audience (Van Dijk, 2006).

4. Data Analysis

This section includes the analysis of the selected reports and the results arrived at from the analysis. The reports are analysed according to Van Leeuwen’s (1996) framework of social actors, Van Dijk’s (1991) choice of sources and quotations, and Van Dijk’s (1995, 2006). The chosen strategies are counted and then analysed statistically. Some selected quotations taken from the selected reports are analysed qualitatively because a mixed method of both quantitative and qualitative analysis is preferable. The reports are taken from AL Jazeera Arabic. The numbers and percentages of the participants in the reports are counted and discussed. The focus of this study is concerned with the two main protagonists, namely ISIS and Iraqi forces. In order to have a successful analysis and to discover how AL Jazeera represents ISIS and Iraqi forces, ISIS as a participant includes all ISIS related words such as Islamic State, the State, the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, and important figures and leaders such as Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. Iraqi forces as a participant includes all Iraqi forces related words such as Iraqi security forces, Militias, and political, religious, and military figures.

Table (1): Inclusion and exclusion of Iraqi forces and ISIS in AL Jazeera reports

Participants		Included %		Excluded %	
		No.	Percent.	No.	Percent.
Iraqi Forces	Good	0	0%	23	26%
	Bad	144	56%	0	0%
ISIS	Good	111	44%	0	0%
	Bad	4	2%	67	74%

AL Jazeera practices different kinds of manipulation through using ideological discourse strategies that play a crucial role in the positive representation of ISIS groups and the negative representation of the Iraqi forces. Table (1) above clearly shows that AL Jazeera uses and gets benefit from inclusion and exclusion strategies for the interests of ISIS and at the same time used them against the interests of the Iraqi forces. The good image of Iraqi forces has never been included in AL Jazeera reports. Iraqi forces (as good and positive participants) are always excluded or suppressed. Suppression is the act of preventing something from being seen or expressed; the conscious intentional exclusion from consciousness of a thought or feeling. Undoubtedly, AL Jazeera deliberately suppressed the good image of the Iraqi forces and emphasised their bad and negative one. Their good activities such as unlocking the besieged areas, rescuing and aiding the civilians from ISIS grip, and clearing the bombed (mined) streets (Arango, 2017; Wehelie, 2017) were suppressed, while their bad activities such as the thoughtless (random) bombing on the Sunni areas, stealing and expropriation of civilians properties and furniture, and their unjustified killing of Sunnis were always included in a clear and coherent way without any vagueness or confusion as shown in the following quotations: (Witnesses explained in 2014 that militias belong to the popular mobilization committed major crimes by burning houses and destroying agricultural fields and prevent the Sunni community from returning to their homes. The conference of

the tribes of Diyala province (northeast of Baghdad) accused personnel of the popular mobilization to destroy a hundred mosques in the province in 2014, Iraqi Sunni parties, human rights groups and international bodies led by the United Nations have accused the popular mobilization of committing sectarian crimes against Sunni civilians between 2014 and 2016, ranging from torture to enforced disappearances, killing of civilians and prisoners under torture and looting of cities and towns before burning and blowing up thousands of homes and shops, Artilleries and missile rockets bombarded neighbourhood areas such as Alshurtah , Aljaghefi, Aljolan , Aldhbatt, Nazaal and Alrisalah in the city center and warplanes bombarded areas belonging to the State Organization in Al-askari and Al-sanayi neighborhoods east of Falluja).

Contrarily, ISIS, as a participant (social actor), was always included in a very good and positive way. Although the entire world agreed that “ISIS” is a group of terrorists, AL Jazeera never admitted this fact and refused to describe them as terrorists in all of its reports, on the contrary, it called them as Islamic State, fighters, militants, and State organization. According to AL Jazeera, ISIS members are good and are defending the Sunni cities from the attacks of the Iraqi Shiite forces. Their crimes against civilians, beheadings of innocent citizens, suicide bombers, extortions, taxation, and besieging (Ashraph, 2019; Frantzman, 2019) have never been mentioned by AL Jazeera. In other words, AL Jazeera suppressed most if not all of ISIS’s negative acts in the areas they controlled. In all of the analysed reports, AL Jazeera only mentioned one negative act done by ISIS which is the use of civilians as human shields.

Table (2): Role allocation in AL Jazeera reports

Participants	Activation		Passivation	
	No.	Percent.	No.	Percent.
Iraqi Forces	167	44%	0	0%
ISIS	133	35%	41	100%
Sunni Civilians	43	11%	0	0%
National Organization	37	10%	0	0%

In terms of role allocation, AL Jazeera also used activation and passivation strategies ideologically and positively for ISIS and it used them negatively against Iraqi forces. Table (2) clearly showed that AL Jazeera gave emphasis to activation rather than passivation when the news was related to Iraqi forces. Iraqi forces news stories were presented in a clear and coherent way. Iraqi forces and militias are presented as powerful actors (agents) on Sunni innocent civilians. They are presented as criminals and killers doing sectarian cleansing in the Sunni areas. The prominent image of Iraqi forces (militias) is that of criminals doing heinous crimes and massacres against innocent people. They are also presented as thieves stealing people's properties and furniture and send them to their Shiite places by large vehicles. The word "militias" has a negative sense of lawlessness, disobedience, and chaos, not controlled by law or the government. AL Jazeera deliberately described the Iraqi forces as militias and presented them in a more negative way. In most of the analysed reports, AL Jazeera emphasized the idea that all Iraqi forces are from the Shia and Iran which represents all the Shia as their ally, while the people in Ramadi, Fallujah, Mosul, and ISIS included with them are Sunnis. The Shia were always bad and negative in AL Jazeera news stories: they dominate, marginalize, mistreat, and kill the Sunnis (The correspondent of the German magazine Der Spiegel Ali Arkady accompanied the Iraqi forces to cover the battles in Mosul, but he was shocked by violations documented by field testimonies of raping women and the killing and torturing civilians, turning himself as a witness added to dozens of international human rights reports). The civilians in the besieged areas were always presented as innocent victims to the crimes of the Shiite militias supported by Iran. In terms of their battles with ISIS, Iraqi forces were often presented as weak agents escaping, fleeing, and running from the fighters of the Islamic State. In other words, the Iraqi forces were described as losing, suffering, and failing to achieve key gains in the battles because of the fierce resistance of according to AL Jazeera the fighters of the "Islamic State". AL Jazeera mentions the losses of the Iraqi forces in their battles against ISIS terrorists in a clear and coherent way without any vagueness, while it refuses to mention the losses of ISIS (About 80 Iraqi government and militia

members have been killed and 100 wounded in fighting with the Islamic state, Iraqi military and medical sources said, while the losses of the other side is not known, Iraqi security sources said that more than fifty members from the army, police forces, and tribal men were killed and dozens wounded in bombings in several areas of Ramadi and Fallujah and the island of Baghdadi, The security forces withdrew from the army and police completely from the city of Ramadi,” Colonel Ramadi police spokesman Jabbar al-Asafi said, adding that they “pulled out ... towards Nukhayb” in the south of Anbar).

ISIS members were presented as powerful agents storming and entering cities, casting out and killing tens of Iraqi security forces and wounding hundreds others, winning battles, getting control of many tanks and armed vehicles heavily loaded with weapons and using them against the Iraqi forces. ISIS’s violations of human rights were not mentioned or in other words always pasivated. Their crimes, taxation, beheadings, and massacres were completely hidden in most of AL Jazeera reports.

The prominent image of Sunni people was that of victims of the Shiite militias. The Shiite militias were presented as powerful agents killing more Sunnis, doing sectarian cleansing, and stealing people’s property. The Sunnis were always presented as suffering agents, suffering from pain, the pain that is caused by injury, illness, loss, and hungry due to the thoughtless acts and behaviour of irregular or uncontrolled militias (Medical sources reported the fall of six civilians killed by one family in an aerial and artillery bombardment by the Iraqi army targeted neighborhoods in Fallujah, In August 2014, the popular mobilization militia killed about 70 worshipers and wounded dozens more during Friday prayers at Musab ibn Omair Mosque in Diyala province. Prior to that, there were numerous violent acts, particularly in Baquba and Maqdadiya.”).

In terms of national organizations, AL Jazeera used national organizations ideologically against the Iraqi forces. They were presented as powerful agents condemning, criticizing, the negative acts of Iraqi forces and their sectarian killing of innocent Sunni people. What was shocking was that AL Jazeera never mentioned what these national and human right organizations have said against ISIS and about their

crimes (Iraqi Sunni parties, human rights groups and international bodies led by the United Nations have accused the popular mobilization of committing sectarian crimes against Sunni civilians between 2014 and 2016, ranging from torture to enforced disappearances, killing of civilians and prisoners under torture and looting of cities and towns before burning and blowing up thousands of homes and shops).

Al Jazeera also used sources and quotations to positively represent ISIS on one hand and negatively represent Iraqi forces on the other. It used biased sources to ideologically highlight the wrong decisions and crimes of Iraqi security forces as shown in the following quotations:

(1) The great and rapid collapse of the military and security forces in the city of Mosul suggests a deliberate shortcoming, governor Najaifi said.

(2) About 80 Iraqi government and militia members have been killed and 100 wounded in fighting with the Islamic state, Iraqi military and medical sources said, while the losses of the other side is not known.

(3) The military and strategic expert Colonel Hatem Karim al-Falahi pointed out that the Iraqi forces, which have a very large numerical abundance, made a big mistake in the preliminary bombing on Fallujah in the past days, considering it was a waste of effort and caused unjustified losses among civilians.

(4) The expert on Islamic groups, Hassan Abu Haniyeh, stresses that the battle of Fallujah will be different for the State organization, especially as the city is populated and all calls for the exit of civilians through safe corridors have no credibility due to past experiences and sectarian killings.

(5) Medical sources reported the fall of six civilians killed by one family in an aerial and artillery bombardment by the Iraqi army targeted neighborhoods in Fallujah.

(6) Secretary-General of the group of forces rejecting the Iranian intervention Abdul Razzaq al-Shammari, what he called a re-scenario of destruction that occurred in the provinces of Diyala and Salahuddin Fallujah. Al-Shammari said the militias involved in the attack on

the city of Fallujah were raising sectarian slogans.

(7) Iraqi security sources said that more than fifty members from the army, police forces, and tribal men were killed and dozens wounded in bombings in several areas of Ramadi and Fallujah and the island of Baghdad.

(8) “The Anbar headquarter has been cleared,” said Mohannad Himmour, a spokesman and adviser to Anbar province governor Suhaib al-Rawi.

(9) “The security forces withdrew from the army and police completely from the city of Ramadi,” Colonel Ramadi police spokesman Jabbar al-Asafi said, adding that they “pulled out ... towards Nukhayb” in the south of Anbar.

(10) A military source confirmed on Saturday that forty members of the army and militias killed during “suicide” led by the Islamic State on military sites in Fallujah.

(11) “The organization has very sad and credible reports of abuses by Iraqi men and boys at the hands of groups working with Iraqi security forces after fleeing Fallujah,” United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Zaid bin Raad said in a June 7, 2016 statement.

(12) In May 2016, the Association of Muslim Scholars in Iraq strongly condemned the burning of two mosques in the town of Karma. The organization said in a statement that the operation “came in the implementation of sectarian directives under direct orders from Iran.”

(13) At least 15 Iraqi soldiers were killed in a suicide car bomb attack on their rally in the Musheirfa area, northwest of Mosul, Amaq Agency of the Islamic State Organization said.

(14) At least 15 Iraqi troops were killed and others injured when a car bomb targeted them in the outskirts of the Musheirefah region, Amaq Agency of the Islamic State Organization said.

The above quotations showed how Al Jazeera used biased sources and used them as primary definers of the situation. Al Jazeera used ambiguous sources such as Iraqi sources, security sources, and medical sources especially when the events belong to the heavy losses of Iraqi sources in their fight against ISIS or what Al Jazeera calls “the Islamic State”. AL Jazeera deployed political and military figures

that showed bias to ISIS. Most of the political and military experts that AL Jazeera quote were not neutral. On the contrary, they showed hostility to the Iraqi government in general and Iraqi security forces in particular. Another important point was that AL Jazeera always used Amaq News Agency. It largely depended on the news of this agency to tell good news stories about ISIS victories and achievements against Iraqi forces. Amaq News Agency is the official channel of ISIS. Its main task was to broadcast ISIS's propaganda and all the political and military news of ISIS all the time.

(15) "Iraqi military and medical sources said that about 80 Iraqi government forces and its supported militias were killed and 100 others wounded in fighting with the organization of the Islamic state, while the losses of the other side are unknown."

(16) "The Iraqi forces refused the story of the Amaq agency and eye-witnesses as the government denied the coalition bombing of the Bab al-Jadid neighbourhood about two months ago, in which nearly 700 civilians victims died, most of them killed under the rubble".

(17) "The Amaq agency said the number of people killed in an air strike on a school in the suburb of "July 17" in the western side of Mosul, reached more than one hundred people, while the military information cell of the Iraqi government denied that civilians among the dead."

(18) "The correspondent of the German magazine Der Spiegel Ali Arkady accompanied the Iraqi forces to cover the battles in Mosul, but he was shocked by violations documented by field testimonies of raping women and the killing and torturing civilians, turning himself as a witness added to dozens of international human rights reports."

(19) "Despite the fact that the Iraqi elite forces received training, and legal compact fighting to be called the Golden Division, Arkady was a witness to their violations throughout the months of the battle, asserting that they were not individual practices as the Iraqi government has described continuously. But happened in a wide scale with the knowledge of Iraqi commands and American Forces. Arkady, a documentary filmmaker and reporter, talks of federal and emergency police competing to win a beautiful woman's house after

that they tell stories of their crimes against women in that area and that house.”

(20) “Witnesses explained in 2014 that militias belong to the popular mobilization committed major crimes by burning houses and destroying agricultural fields and prevent the Sunni community from returning to their homes. The conference of the tribes of Diyala province (northeast of Baghdad) accused personnel of the popular mobilization to destroy a hundred mosques in the province in 2014.”

(21) “In August 2014, the popular mobilization militia killed about 70 worshipers and wounded dozens more during Friday prayers at Musab ibn Omair Mosque in Diyala province. Prior to that, there were numerous violent acts, particularly in Baquba and Maqadidiya.”

(22) “Sources of the tribal mobilization and eyewitnesses reported that the Popular mobilization Militia blew up the Great Mosque of Karma and burned the office of citizenship and civil status in the center of Karma. As well as the mosque of Ibrahim al-Hassoun was burned in the Al-Rashad area east of the town.”

(23) “Iraqi Sunni parties, human rights groups and international bodies led by the United Nations have accused the popular mobilization of committing sectarian crimes against Sunni civilians between 2014 and 2016, ranging from torture to enforced disappearances, killing of civilians and prisoners under torture and looting of cities and towns before burning and blowing up thousands of homes and shops.”

(24) “Artilleries and missile rockets bombarded neighbourhood areas such as Alshurtah , Aljaghefi, Aljolan , Aldhbatt, Nazaal and Al-risalah in the city center and warplanes bombarded areas belonging to the State Organization in Al-askari and Al-sanayi neighborhoods east of Falluja.”

The aforementioned quotations are full of hyperboles, compassion move, negative comparisons, blaming, contrast and division, number game and examples and illustrations. AL Jazeera used all of these discourse strategies ideologically for no other purposes than to whitening the face of ISIS groups and at the same time criminalizing the face of Iraqi forces.

Al Jazeera presents ISIS as a very powerful organisation that has

killed 80 members from the Iraqi troops and the militias that support them and wounded 100 others. The numbers contain too much exaggeration or in other words hyperbole. Hyperbole is another discourse strategy that is used widely in the media to hyperbolize the positive things of the in-group and the negative things of the out-group. Hyperbole and number game strategies are widely used by Al Jazeera since such strategies serve as the best tools of persuasion and manipulation. Al Jazeera used and changed numbers and information supported by hyperbolic expressions in a skilful way to represent ISIS positively and Iraqi forces negatively. The losses of Iraqi security forces are described in a clear and coherent way with numbers and statistics, while the losses of ISIS are never mentioned. The Iraqi forces are described as losing, suffering, and failing to achieve key gains in Fallujah battle because of the fierce resistance of according to Aljazeera the fighters of the "Islamic State". Aljazeera refuses to mention the losses of the ISIS terrorists as shown in this excerpt 'while the losses of the other side are unknown'. Al Jazeera suppressed the losses of ISIS whether in members or ammunition. Al Jazeera reports are free from numbers and statistics that illustrate the losses of ISIS. There is a sense or tendency from Al Jazeera to cause or push people to believe in the big lie that ISIS is good and positive. Hyperbolic number game is used against Iraqi forces as in quotation (16) in which 700 civilians died by airstrike, the airstrike on a school in the western side of Mosul which killed more than one hundred people in quotation (17), destroying a hundred mosques in Diyala province in quotation (20), and killing (70) worshippers and wounded dozens more in a mosque in Diyala in addition to these crimes, there are numerous violent acts in Baquba and Maqdadia. ISIS crimes of killing and beheading of innocent people have never been mentioned in Al Jazeera reports.

In terms of examples and illustrations, through the above quotations, anyone can figure out that Al Jazeera loves to tell good stories about ISIS and at the same time it is eager to tell bad stories about the Iraqi forces. Telling stories supported by concrete examples and illustrations can have great effects on the audience. This is what Al Jazeera attempts to achieve: to raise the strong emotions and reactions of

people and agitate the public opinion against the Iraqi forces. Al Jazeera is very skilful in choosing stories that are related to the crimes committed by Iraqi forces and the popular mobilization forces or what Al Jazeera calls “Shiite militias”. Al Jazeera picks concrete examples and illustrations when it talks about the violence of the Iraqi forces against the people in the besieged areas. The purpose behind such bad stories is ideological and manipulative in nature. Concrete examples such as the bombing of the Bab al-Jadid neighbourhood in quotation (16), destroying hundred mosques in Diyala province in quotation (20), killing (70) civilians at Musab ibn Omair Mosque in Diyala province in quotation (21), blowing up the Great Mosque of Karma and burning the office of citizenship and civil status in the center of Karma and the mosque of Ibrahim al-Hassoun in the Al-Rashad area east of the town in quotation (22), and bombarding neighbourhood areas such as Alshurtah , Aljaghefi, Aljolan , Aldh-batt, Nazaal and Alrisalah in the city centre of Fallujah in quotation (24), are bad and negative concrete actions committed by Iraqi forces. Naming a real thing or action with more contextual details especially when it is related to Iraqi forces is better than giving a general idea. Al Jazeera always gives more contextual details supported by concrete examples when the news story is related to the negative acts of Iraqi forces. One cannot find any bad news story related to ISIS violent acts in Al Jazeera reports.

In terms of compassion move, negative comparisons, blaming, and contrast and division, Al Jazeera also used them for ideological purposes. Al Jazeera always shows sympathy for the innocent Sunni people that are marginalised and humiliated by the atrocities of the Shiite militias. The Iraqi forces are always associated with violence and hate, violence on and hate to the innocent Sunnis. Al Jazeera language is very emotional, angry, and sad for the marginalisation of the Sunni people by the Shiite militias. According to Al Jazeera, the Iraqi forces are associated with different acts of violence ranging from raping women, killing and torturing civilians to burning houses, destroying agricultural fields, preventing the Sunni people from returning to their homes, committing sectarian crimes against the Sunnis, and stealing their properties before burning their homes. Al

Jazeera is very skilful in the choice of lexis and phrases. The phrase “raping women” is very effective and dramatic. The word “rape” denotatively means “unlawful sexual activity and usually sexual intercourse carried out forcibly or under threat of injury against the will usually of a female”. In Arabic culture, raping is very sensitive issue and a red line that one cannot cross. It is related to one’s honour and reputation. If raping happens, one’s reputation will be damaged and destroyed. By accusing them of raping, Al Jazeera attempts to agitate the Iraqi and especially the Sunnis people against the Iraqi forces since raping is unacceptable. What is ironic is that Al Jazeera never mentioned the raping of many women by ISIS members especially the Yazidis. Nadia Murad is clear evidence that shows the truth of ISIS. Al Jazeera language also is full of blames and negative comparisons. In other words, the discourse of US and THEM is clear in all the reports. The discourse of US is always positive and good. ISIS are represented as good and positive storming cities, casting off Iraqi forces from Sunnis cities, killing tens and wounding hundreds of Iraqi security forces and militias. The discourse of THEM is represented by the Iraqi forces. The discourse of THEM is always negative and bad. According to AL Jazeera, Iraqi forces are very bad. They are described as torturing and killing innocent people, destroying their mosques, burning their homes and fields, raping their women, stealing their properties and furniture. What is ironic here is that Al Jazeera never mentioned the crimes and atrocities made by ISIS groups against Iraqi civilians starting from the Yazidis and Christians in Sinjar mountain to the Sunnis in Mosul, Anbar, and Salah-elddin provinces, to COB Speicher base crime and the destroying of several sites and archaeological sculptures in Iraq and even in Syria including those included in UNESCO’s World Heritage. ISIS also destroyed several mosques such as the prophet Younis Mosque in Mosul as well as the prophet Shith Mosque. In addition to these crimes, ISIS destroyed several churches and temples, the Mosul Museum in Iraq and the city of Palmyra in Syria (See Rashid International report: The Intentional Destruction of Cultural Heritage in Iraq as a Violation of Human Rights; Cockburn, 2017). What is striking is that Al Jazeera never mentioned these crimes, instead it suppressed them while

it highlights the crimes committed by Iraqi forces.

5. Conclusions

AL Jazeera news reports were free from the victories of Iraqi forces and at the same time the reports were full of ISIS victories and resistance. The positive representation of ISIS and the negative representation of Iraqi security forces were very clear in all of the reports. The chosen strategies namely, inclusion, exclusion, activation, passivation, sources and quotations were used ideologically for ISIS benefits and against the Iraqi forces. ISIS members were always presented as good and positive fighting and resisting the attacks of the Shiite militias and the illegal forces of the Shiite government. Their crimes have been hidden or suppressed. On the contrary, Iraqi forces were presented as negative and bad killing Sunni innocent people, mistreating them, stealing their furniture and property. Their victories were suppressed or passivated. Sunni people were presented as victims of the Shiite militias and sectarianism. National organizations were presented as powerful agents condemning and criticizing the behaviour and acts of the Iraqi militias against the Sunnis.

The seven other discourse strategies namely, hyperboles, compassion move, negative comparisons, blaming, contrast and division, number game and examples and illustrations are also used ideologically by AL Jazeera to positively represent ISIS and negatively represent the Iraqi forces. In most of AL Jazeera reports, ISIS positive acts are mentioned with hyperboles and examples and illustrations. Their victories over Iraqi forces and their storming and controlling of cities and towns are clearly mentioned through giving examples and illustrations with hyperbolic tones. In most of its reports, AL Jazeera is so sympathetic towards the innocent Sunnis who are suffering from and torturing under the hands of the Shiite militias. Blaming the victim is also another ideological strategy used by AL Jazeera. AL Jazeera always puts the blames on Iraqi forces. Their thoughtless bombing, uncontrolled forces and militias, and killing and torturing innocent Sunni civilians are clearly mentioned in the reports. Comparison and division and contrast strategies are also used clearly in AL Jazeera reports. In other words, the discourse of US (ISIS are good and positive) and the discourse of THEM (Iraqi forces are bad

and negative) are obviously used in most of AL Jazeera news reports.

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