

## **Discourse Analysis of Minorities' problems in Mosul**

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#### **Abstract**

This paper utilization talk examination to examine the phonetic components utilized in how two separate daily papers give an account of a certain occasion in Iraq. This paper will address the inquiry of what etymological structures are utilized in the two news stories to impact the view of the audience and develop a subsequent public opinion related to the issue.

The two websites are distributed in nations that hold restricting perspectives about the legislature in Iraq and the dissents occurring on its boulevards. This paper utilizes systems for talk examination through the utilization of dialect that has been made use in distinctive news sources to decipher how the slant, predisposition and loyalties of the daily paper are constantly passed on to the reader.

The representation in the Al Jazeera is essentially inclined and ventures components, for example, ISIS and the abominations and brutalities they have directed in territories of Iraq, for example, Mosul in a less vocal way.

Then again, the Tehran Times uses a ton of references that delineate a fairly retaliatory technique by attempting to uncover the shortcomings in the scope of the occasions of ISIS instead of creating a tone of their own which is basically for the Shia populace in Iraq.

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### **1.Introduction**

Discourse analysis is a strategy for discriminatingly examining talk or content to recognize and translate how dialect has been utilized to pass on force connections among the people and gatherings being examined. Discourse analysis utilizes an assortment of systems to study the force connections as communicated through the utilization of phonetic components and structures. Besides, the pretended by the social and verifiable setting additionally influences how specific discourse related to an issue is deciphered. The linguistic components utilized within mulling over talk incorporate the route in which vocabulary or words are utilized to impart certain intentions over others. Likewise, the significance of specific occasions or on-screen characters is passed on by their specific position in the general structure and plan of different components of the talk.

This paper will discuss a common story that appears in two different newspapers which influences the political colour attributed to the two stories. The story is about the atrocities being conducted in the Mosul areas of Iraq by the radical extremist organization known as ISIS (Islamic State in Iraq and Syria).

#### **1.1. Problem Statement**

During the course of this discussion we will be addressing the linguistic structures that have been employed in two different stories directed and written to present two different perceptions and perspectives to the audience.

### **1.2. Research Objectives and Methodology**

Some of the key objectives that will be obtained from the study will comprise of

- Determining lexical choice influences and how the perceptions are molded by different stories
- Understanding how the macrostructure elements are used to project the main argument and angle both stories in terms of the tone that they need to project.
- Identifying the main themes that have been presented by both articles and the way they have been presented.

The two stories that have been selected for the course of this discussion reflect some of the integral components and elements regarding the regional developments that have taken place in Iraq over the past couple of months. These developments are anticipated to have global repercussions, and hence the two news sources that have been selected for this purpose include Al Jazeera and Fars News Agency. The choice of these news sources have been made based on the varying perceptions that both these sources have regarding the activities of ISIS which are being conducted in Iraq especially in reference to Muslim minorities as well as other religious minorities.

For the fulfillment and effectively achieving the research objectives of the study, the methods employed will include lexical cohesion, macrostructure analysis and thematic analysis will be employed. This will include naming strategies that will be used to identify the labeling and the associated perceptions that are developed in regards to the different people, governments and non-state actors that are involved in the news article. In addition to this another important aspect that will be highlighted in the study will include the usage of linguistic tools and devices and the image that the usage of such tone intends to project regarding the entire event and the people involved in it. Moreover, it will also be a comprehensible manifestation of the political affiliations and loyalties that are provided an extension through employing the tone and language which may be beneficial for concerned stakeholders. It is a common perception gaining popularity all around the world that ISIS is an ally or a proxy militia created by Saudi Arabia and this will easily be reflected by the news story and article published by Al Jazeera, whereas, the victims of the atrocities conducted by ISIS in Iraq and mostly on Shia Muslims and Christian minorities of Mosul have been projected sympathetically by Fars.

The technique of lexical cohesion will be used to see how the actors and other players involved have been named in both stories. This will be helpful for us in determining which news sources have portrayed actors in positive and where they have been projected in a negative manner. The nature of projection and the names that have been provided to people involved in these events play a pivotal role in framing the perceptions and the subsequent opinions that people will form regarding the people involved in these events. The actors which can be identified as oppressors or victims will be dealt individually in each story with the help of the names that have been provided to them in the stories.

When it comes to analyzing and thoroughly understanding the approach and the nature of the argument the technique of macrostructure analysis will be employed. Analysis will be made based on the headings, explanations, narrative tone and approach in argument building to interpret the story and the respective political inclination of the story.

The use of thematic analysis will be useful in understanding and developing an approach through which the themes associated with both stories can be understood. This will be helpful in pinpointing and highlighting areas that are used to project specific themes to the people reading the story.

## 2.Literature Review

This area talks about the exploration on media discourse analysis that has as of now been led and will help in the investigation of the chose writings for this paper. Discriminating Discourse Analysis is a famously utilized technique for discourse analysis within the media. Taking into account the Foucauldian idea of learning being power, the talk investigation technique investigates how social and political issues are developed in media talk to sustain or impact power connections Van Leeuwen (2009).

Dialect assumes a basic part in empowering recognitions to be affected through the utilization of lexical components, sentence structure and structure. Such utilization of phonetic terms in media talk influences how certain people or gatherings in the public eye are seen in connection to different gatherings or people (Van Leeuwen, 2009). This system is valuable in the discourse of political news stories as the force relations and in addition the slants of the news maker are reflected in the talk.

Lexical examination is one of the techniques that will be utilized within this paper. Matheson (2005) depicts how the technique has been utilized as a part of talk examination of media writings. As per Matheson (2005), the guideline of lexical decision can help to distinguish the certain associations that the wellspring of content is attempting to make. He utilizes the term lexical decision to clarify that the verifiable suspicions and inclination of the content could be deciphered by taking a gander at the vocabulary that could have been utilized as a part of the content contrasted and vocabulary that is inevitably utilized and habitually rehashed all through the content.

Machin and Mayr (2012) examine different techniques that will be utilized to break down the writings in this paper. These are called discourse acts and picture acts. Discourse acts allude to the incorporation of cited or reworded articulations made by an individual although picture acts allude to the utilization of specific photos or pictures in the content. Machin and Mayr (2012) state that discourse and picture acts could be broke down as far as disposition frameworks. As it were, discourse or picture acts can pass on whether the plan is to state actualities, make an appeal, pose a question or issue an order.

Couldry (2000) portrays an alternate helpful procedure of media talk investigation that will be utilized within this paper. This method is called naming and alludes to the path in which media realizes its 'differential typical force (p. 50).' Naming includes the utilization of names to creating realities about the social world. Naming influences the level of trust that the audience rests in the medium through which data is gotten. Media can impact the view of certainties by utilizing positive or negative terms amid the naming methodology. The act of naming by the maker of the media story impacts which individual, association or gathering the audience in the end sympathizes with. The utilization of things in the two articles will be contemplated to focus the certain presumptions and how they are liable to impact the audience.

An alternate helpful procedure in media talk investigation is macrostructure examination. Van Dijk (2012) depicts the utility of macrostructure discourse in media talk as it helps the elucidation and recognizable proof of bigger parts of the talk while naming and lexical union help the investigation of lower-level structures. This strategy helps in understanding the progressive diagram that structures the structure for the talk. The method demonstrates supportive in surveying the soundness of the content, for example, distinguishing proof of features, leads, early on sentences, illustrative sentences and closing sentences (p. 600).

A standout amongst the most valuable systems of talk examination that will likewise be utilized in this paper is topical dissection. This system supplements other macro-level systematic techniques, for example, macrostructure discourse as it focuses on distinguishing the significant subjects in the talk and how they are masterminded to make a specific impact on the audience (Smith and Bell, 2007). Bryman (2008, p. 580) distinguishes a few strategies utilized as a part of topical discourse of talk. These incorporate redundancies, allegories and

analogies, moves, etymological connectors and missing information. These components will be dissected in the talk discourse of the two writings.

Marston (2004) focuses to different parts of media talk which are utilized to present certain perspectives about the referents. One of these viewpoints is presupposition. By recognizing the presuppositions in the talk it is conceivable to recognize what is displayed as uncontroversial actuality and what may be named practical judgment skills. An alternate example is the utilization of negative lexicalization where there is a wealth of redundant terms in the news talk which case there is an endeavor to qualify certain terms utilized within the talk (Marston, 2004, p.87). Features have been esteemed as especially fruitful justification for the utilization of negative lexicalization. Breaking down which terms have been utilized with negative qualifiers instead of those with nonpartisan or positive qualifiers helps in distinguishing the heading in which the news maker longings to arrange the audience. Consequently, this technique will be utilized to dissect the features of the two news stories in this paper.

Transitivity is an alternate helpful technique utilized in media talk examination. Bazzi (2009) especially clarifies how the strategy could be utilized to decipher how creators or editors of news stories in the Arab media utilize linguistic use and different components of the transitivity framework to relegate accuse or obligation to specific people or gatherings in a clash. It includes investigating how dynamic and aloof voice is utilized within the content and additionally the kind of office and nominalization is utilized in the talk.

Opposition is the system utilized as a part of talk examination which contemplates the path in which etymological components are utilized to fortify the human inclination to distinguish people and gatherings as paired contrary energies. This impact is made by the utilization of syntactic structures and lexical things, for example, either... or, none, of these...

The affected country Iraq has been witnessing clashes between different Muslims sects such as Shia and Sunni since the fall of the Saddam regime. It has been estimated that the number of people in Iraq that have lost their lives in the sectarian and ethnic clashes by far and wide surpasses those that were killed by US bombardment. The controversial rise of the ISIS which was first limited to Syria has also gained ground and established its base in Iraq in areas such as Mosul. With ISIS controlling majority areas of Mosul as well as adjoining areas a new wave of sectarian clashes have gained momentum in the country. Moreover, an atrocity are not just limited to Shia Muslims by the pre-dominantly Sunni group, but has also extended to Christians and other religious minorities who have been told to leave the city. The ISIS radical group enjoys support from the Sunni-majority Gulf member states such as Saudi Arabia while the protestors have their sympathizers in Shia-majority Iran.

As activities and brutalities of ISIS have expanded into different regions across Iraq, discourse analysis through the nature of language employed and words used by different Arabic as well as non-Arabic sources regarding them have come out in the open. The development of the different events has been reported in regional as well as international newspapers. The Iranian news agency *Fars News Agency* has been reporting the ways in which ISIS has been fulfilling its journalistic responsibilities, whereas, *Al Jazeera* has been covering events in a far more detailed and effective manner (Black, 2014). The proposed study will apply methods of discourse analysis to explore the connotations of the words and sentence structure that have been employed to discuss this event in the two newspapers.

In the areas of Syria where ISIS have established their control, they have set up courts, schools and other services. It has been reported by the *Tehran Times* that in Raqqa the ISIS even started a consumer protection authority to supervise whether food standards are being followed in an Islamic way or not (Hawramy, 2014).

It is precisely because of their pursuance of these violent and merciless due to which they have also been disowned by their parent organization Al-Qaeda who dubs them as too extreme and are 'in no way connected to them' (HRW, 2014) which was published by *Tehran Times* but not by any Arabic news source such as *Al Jazeera*.

In the aftermath of the US led 2003 invasion of Iraq, influential neoconservative US officials mainly Dick Cheney and Paul Wolfowitz pioneered a half-brained plan to re-engineer the map of the Middle East by dividing it along sectarian lines. The three autonomous cantons would comprise of Sunnis, Kurds and Shiites. The scheme was first disclosed in a report published by a US private intelligence firm Stratfor which was later published in *Al-Monitor* (Nafeez, 2014).

Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri-al-Maliki has rightly accused the governments of Saudi Arabia and Qatar for being responsible for sponsoring and financially supporting the jihadists of ISIS, ever since the start of the Syrian civil war (Mercier, 2014). The medieval policy of divide and rule comes in really handy in the Middle East since it has always been easy to create differences among people by labeling others as heretics, and this very sentiment of religious and sectarian divide determines the loyalty of states towards each other.

### 3.Data Analysis:

After going through the discourse and the respective approaches that have been adopted by media outlets and organizations of both countries, it is now important to analyze these approaches from the perspective of each state, their foreign policies and indirect external influences. Each of these components plays an important part in the formulation of organizational policies that are implemented and followed by different media outlets and the way they cover an event and present it to the general public, which in turn forms their core opinion regarding the entire issue.

However, before moving into further tiers of analysis a fundamental level understanding required which is a pre-requisite for comprehending the regional politics of the Middle East are the sectarian influences exercised by each state. The loyalties of states in the Middle East are overwhelmingly influenced by their religious beliefs. States sharing similar religious beliefs work in mutual interest of each other due to which the divide between the alliances formed between states and their governments is quite distinct and the interests of the stakeholder present in the form of different state actors is quite prominent in the analysis of the reports that have been published in the media sources of *Al Jazeera* and *Fars New Agency* (Madhai, 2014).

In the *Al-Jazeera* the headline reads ‘Saudi Arabia: Don't blame it all on the Islamic State’. The headline conveys a rather biased and one-sided view and perspective of the event involving the ISIS and the atrocities that they are conducting in areas of Iraq. Furthermore, the headline also implies that the nature of content found in the article will strictly be restricted to the Saudi version and their opinion regarding the event, instead of providing an in depth and unbiased and neutral situation and condition regarding the events that have taken place in Iraq. On the other hand, the headline published in *Fars* reads ‘*Objection to Arab media coverage of Iraq*’. The headline basically implies retaliation and a rather defensive approach towards the perception which is being established by mainstream Arab media regarding the situation and condition going on in Iraq and the atrocities which are being conducted by the militants of ISIS in areas of Mosul.

Also, it very clearly establishes the fact that the tone and style of language applied will be filled with criticism towards Arab media channels and at the same time will also provide a cover-up to the statements by Iranian officials that may have been sensationalized by Arab media as an attempt to disintegrate the country. The nature of headlines that have been published and used by both articles of these news sources intend to imply confusion among the reader. Headline by *Al-Jazeera* shows that it is mainly Iran and its government that are making it difficult for Iraq to handle their internal security apparatus, whereas, headline by *Fars* shows that since the nature of coverage being provided by the Arab media is fallacious and filled with flaws they are not credible anymore.

The way in which the position of Saudi Arabia has been mentioned and described in both stories deserves some attention as well. In the case of *Al-Jazeera*, the article describes and sheds light on the events taking place in Iraq by the ISIS solely from Saudi perspective. The

news source and the language that it employs underline the fact that Al Jazeera acts as the media wing of Saudi foreign policy.

This can easily be manifested from a couple of places from the article. *'The problem, as per the Saudi view, originates from the fact that any effort to form an Iraqi government must be negotiated in Tehran, rather than Baghdad'*. The sentence very clearly signifies the perspective of Saudi government rather than providing a neutral aspect and dimension to the problem which is going on in Iraq.

However, if the reader makes an attempt to understand the meaning of this statement by reading between the lines he will be able to comprehend the fact that Saudi Arabia blames Iran for all the political chaos happening in Iraq since the Shia governed state has overwhelmingly been involved in the domestic politics of Iraq. On the flip side the language that has been used by Fars is describing the Saudi version of this story shifts the responsibility of all the menace and fracturing of the political system in Iraq on Saudi Arabia. *'The recent parliamentary elections' failure to change the balance of power against Maliki disappointed countries such as Saudi Arabia*. Another interesting feature regarding the two stories that need to be outlined here is the use of photographic images and the respective impressions and perceptions that they create on the reader.

Multiple images and videos have been published by *Al-Jazeera* in which the main photo is of the Iraqi army. However, the description of the photo which has been provided is quite interesting. It states, *'Iraq's multi-ethnic, multi-religious society cannot rely on a government that exclusively represents the interests of one component over all others'*. The caption of the photograph once again highlights and provides an impression to the reader that since there are many ethnicities and societal fragments of people present in Iraq, the government of the country must ensure that the interests of all groups are safeguarded, and not just a single segment of the population which is pro-Iran.

In addition to this the position taken in the article on ISIS is quite skeptic. In a video documentary which is present in the article it has been titled as *'Islamic Caliphate': Blessing or Threat'*. Another aspect that can be mentioned here regarding the title mentioned for the video documentary that Al-Jazeera does not state or mention the brutalities of ISIS at any place throughout the article. Even when naming the documentary they have been named as the Islamic Caliphate, rather than as a group of 'militants' or 'terrorists'. On the other hand the English version of the article which has been published by Al-Monitor contains a single photograph in which a militant is shown holding the flag of ISIS in Mosul.

It is important to state here that the kind of linguistics applied plays an extremely important role in inculcating a perception or developing a perspective regarding groups, people and the activities they are engaged in. For example for a mainstream channel like *Al-Jazeera* which is watched and read not just in Arab but the whole world nowhere makes use of the word 'terrorists', 'militants' or 'extremists' in the article related to the ISIS. Instead in many of the reports and articles that have been published on *Al-Jazeera* make use of the term 'tribes' or 'Iraqi Sunnis' by providing a rather sectarian angle to the entire situation (Karami, 2014).

In some of the contributions made by bloggers and writers of Al-Jazeera intend to develop an opinion that removes or sidelines the role of Saudi Arabia in creating and leading this entire situation, and instead tries to shift all rubble towards the West, mainly the US and its European allies.

The report which was published by *Fars* new agency has outlined some places where the nature of reporting done by Arab media outlets depict a completely different type of image and picture of the entire crisis that the people of Iraq are confronted with and the incidents that have taken place in cities such as Mosul and the reactionary strategy of the Iraqi government towards the atrocities that have been conducted by ISIS in these places (Fars, 2014). One of the generalized reactions and approaches used by Arab media in portraying the

situation has been in the form of intentionally inciting a feeling of violence in Iraq and dividing the country along the lines of sects.

The tactic which has come in handy is through one-sided reporting of events. For example Al-Jazeera has been providing ample time and coverage to events in which Sunni Muslims have been killed or have been affected. Moreover, since the very first day of its coverage of events Al Jazeera referred and tried to mold the issue on sectarian grounds by dividing the issue along the lines of 'Sunni' and 'Shias'.

A major impression that Al Jazeera intends to provide is in the form of developing sympathy and affectionate behavior towards ISIS and the way they are conducting their practices in Iraq and Mosul in particular. The nature of disinformation and non-professional reporting can further be justified from the fact that Al Jazeera in the article has been representing the militants belonging to ISIS with the words such as '*mere nomads*'. At some places online journalists writing for Al Jazeera at some places have actually referred to the militants of ISIS with words such as '*arab revolutionaries*.' (Albogami, 2014)

The subject line used by Al Jazeera and other media outlets use words such as "*The revolutionaries were nomadic way of Baghdad ...*" another perspective which is being developed and inculcated by Arabic media is by intentionally invoking and defaming the government of Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri-al Maliki (Fars, 2014).

This is being done by referring to the military and forces fighting for Iraq against these terrorists as *Maliki's militia*. This is accompanied with the development of a perception that it is Maliki's forces that are fighting against a group of Sunni nomad revolutionaries, and hence all bloodshed and violence currently taking place in Iraq and Mosul is basically an outcome of the militant oriented policies being followed by Maliki. This kind of perception is further being cemented and enforced through the use of linguistics such as '*Maliki's militia*' (Fars, 2014).

Moreover, another prominent perspective that has been observed in the coverage of Mosul incident and terrorist activities conducted by ISIS in Iraq by Al Jazeera has been in the form of projecting the issue along sectarian lines as a divide between the Sunnis and Shias of Iraq by making claims about the intervention of Iran in the shaping of the national and foreign policies of Iraq. The issue which is pre-dominantly political in nature has been presented along sectarian lines in order to further aggravate and provoke emotional responses regarding the entire situation and develop a positive public opinion regarding the activities of ISIS at the same time by dubbing Iran and Iraqi Shias as heretics and it is religious permissible to kill them.

Moreover, since the time when events and activities of ISIS began to gain momentum in Iraq, there has been immense coverage on issues and topics based on the disintegration of the Iraqi state especially after ISIS militants were able to take control and besiege the city of Mosul without facing much resistance. Al Jazeera has been busy discussing topics and raising concerns regarding the fleetingly existent writ of the state and Maliki's government (Karami, 2014).

The Iranian media outlets such as Fars assailed Arabic language media for covering and presenting the crisis in a manner in Mosul that reveals hostility towards the Iraqi government. It is important to mention that Iranian media sources and outlets and the coverage being provided by these media sources is basically in the form of defense strategy to cover-up for the administrative flaws and loopholes present in the Iraqi government and also for the misreporting by Arabic mainstream media. Iranian media sources Fars News Agency have been proactively engaged in their counterstrategy of correcting and providing a rather balanced and unbiased picture of the events that are actually taking place in Iraq and areas such as Mosul.

In a report that was published by Fars News Agency actually exposed and uncovered the facts that were being concealed from people regarding the terrorist activities of ISIS in Mosul and other areas. It also provided a better and clearer perspective regarding the ways in which

Arabic media has been involved in shifting the direction and alignment from political to sectarian lines as a war that has been waged by the ISIS against the Shias of Iraq by the Sunnis since the former are heretics and by killing them they are fulfilling a religious obligation (Fars, 2014).

However, apart from the counterstrategy of media coverage Iranian media has been quite vocal in terms of condemning the attacks that have been launched by ISIS for demolishing and desecrating shrines of religious personalities and icons all of which are of immense prestige, sanctity and significance to all Muslims from all around the world. A major concern due to which the attitude of Iran is justified is the fact that a place like Iraq is known for the shrines and tombs of religious personalities which are considered as highly sacred to Shia Muslims.

Also, there are many shrines present in Iran that brings thousands of Muslims from all over the world in the country. The series of attacks on churches and Muslim shrines launched by ISIS can proliferate in Iran as well which will take this religious cum sectarian war to a whole new level. It has been precisely due to these issues that Iran is confronted with that the Iranian media has been condemning attacks of ISIS and also thinking upon ways through which Iranian forces and military can take a step forward by directly intervening in Iraq and offer military assistance to Iraqi forces and other proxies that have been done by arming them to fight the rising terror of ISIS in areas such as Mosul. Interestingly, it is important to state here that Al Jazeera did not cover as much events of ISIS in which they demolished different shrines of religious personalities as it was covered by Iranian news sources such as Fars.

### 3.1. Lexical Cohesion

The use of lexical cohesion in both news sources and the articles published in them provided some interesting revelations which are important to have a look at. In *Al-Jazeera* the lexical analysis provides a comprehensible manifestation of the fact that the news source in its article acts as the spokesperson for the Saudi government. At many places within the article condemnations regarding the activities that are being carried out by ISIS in Iraq and especially in areas of Mosul have been discussed by providing references to Saudi intelligence chiefs as well as ministers.

At the same time Iraqi government and the involvement of Iran in the internal political structuring of Iraq through playing religious and sectarian card is also a prominent feature of the article which can easily be observed. On the other hand lexical analysis conducted by *Fars News* which was later published in other Iranian news sources such as *Al-Monitor* as well is also worth having a look at. The approach that has been applied by the news source is purely retaliatory. It does not intend to blame or raise awareness among readers through enlightening them with any new facts and figures, but tries to expose and highlight the loopholes and anomalies that are being done by mainstream Arabic channels in the form of providing a sectarian outlook to the entire situation, presenting ISIS terrorists as nomads and revolutionaries in some cases and intentionally initiating a defamation campaign against the sitting Iraqi government and Prime Minister Nouri-al-Malik.

The pattern of counter attacking holds Saudi Arabia squarely responsible for orchestrating and engineering crisis within Iraq that can lead to the disintegration of the state either on religious or ethnic grounds. Here, the statement is further enforced by the fact that recent parliamentary changes in Iraq that bought Maliki into power ‘disappointed Saudi Arabia’.

### 3.2. Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis basically provides a difference in the text in the sources of the two articles and the respective themes that they intend to project with it. The story published in *Al-Jazeera* mainly talks about the condition and political instability going in Iraq from a Saudi perspective and hold Iran as being the key actor behind perpetrating the chaos, incitement and destruction which is being carried out in Iraq and its areas such as Mosul. Moreover, the article at various places accentuates upon the fact that the policies being pursued by Iran are



pre-dominantly sectarian in nature and this will be extremely harmful for Iraq in times to come. In rather subtle words the story also provides a message to Iran to sideline itself from intervening in the internal politics of Iraq as it will only result in the deterioration of the overall regional situation.

On the other hand the story published by *Fars* turns the tables into a completely opposite direction by stating that mainstream media is misreporting information and stating false and fallacious facts regarding the situation going on in Iraq. It shifts the blame and hold Saudi Arabia responsible for provoking extremism in the country by funding the ISIS militarily as well as financially. The article also brings in the fact that since Saudi Arab is not contended with the election results of Iraq which bought Maliki into power, they have initiated a mass level propaganda and defamation campaign to sabotage developments in Iraq by projecting a message that the disintegration of Iraq by the ISIS is inevitable. In the case of Al Jazeera, Iran is projected as the main player behind capitalizing the situation through 'sectarian politics backed by Iranian Prime Minister which the Sunni tribes have been revolting against'.

*Fars* takes a rather defensive approach by simply answering the criticisms and defending the Iranian side by stating that the fatwa issued by the supreme religious leader of Iran was not to provoke further chaos in Iraq, but was 'for the unity and greater security of Iraq'.

### 3.3. Macrostructure Analysis

When analyzing the stories from macrostructure level, it can easily be stated that both stories provide only their sides of the story without moving into any further details and perspectives from different sides and stakeholders. The macro-structure of *Al Jazeera* provides the projection of the events taking place in Iraq and Mosul and the activities of ISIS from a Saudi context and perspective. It does not contain a single sentence that can be helpful in providing a balanced or other side of the issue or perspective. Even the allegations that have been made on Iran in the article have not been referenced or extracted from any prominent source or authenticated from an official representative.

Similar is the macro-structure analysis of *Fars*. Once again there has been a biased view of the problem by stating the faults and glitches present in the ways in which mainstream Arabic media is representing the issues and problems of Iraq. Like Al-Jazeera, *Fars* also follows a similar pattern of single handedly blaming Saudi Arabia for all problems happening in Iraq and the mentor and brainchild behind the formation of ISIS. Hence, overall, it can be stated that the macro-structure of both articles is not well balanced and only provide a single perspective of the entire issue.

### 4. Conclusion

From the above discussion it can be understood that the coverage of media outlets that were selected for the course of this discussion mainly correspond and are in line with the political affiliations and interests of their respective countries. The coverage of the activities of ISIS in Mosul by Al-Jazeera is quite biased and intends to cover-up for the acts of terrorism that they have conducted in Iraq by explaining and clarifying Saudi position on it.

On the other hand *Fars* coverage of the event cannot be referred to as completely unbiased since it also projects and conveys one side of the story only by pointing out the faults and anomalies in the coverage of events by ISIS, but it can still be referred to as partially fair since it does have the audacity of calling a terrorist by referring it to as 'terrorist' something which was not found in the case of Al-Jazeera. The techniques of lexical cohesion, macrostructure analysis and thematic analysis do show that these components have an overwhelming effect on shaping the discourse related to any event.

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## Appendix

Appendix I: Story Published in Al Jazeera

Online: 09 July 2014

### **Saudi Arabia: Don't blame it all on the Islamic State**

Pundits continue to speculate about the role Saudi Arabia plays in the escalating crisis in Iraq. Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki seeks the assistance of his main benefactors, Iran and the US, to battle against the Sunni rebellion. But in the decision-making circles of Saudi Arabia, the consensus is that the problem is rooted in the practice of allowing neighbouring Iran to wield inordinate influence in forming a government in Baghdad.

For Saudi Arabia, the turmoil in both Iraq and Syria is viewed from the same prism. Riyadh opposes any attempts at lumping all actors in Iraq in a single basket, in this case, the Islamic State group, formerly known as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant.

The problem, as per the Saudi view, originates from the fact that any effort to form an Iraqi government must be negotiated in Tehran, rather than Baghdad. For Iran to be able to maintain influence over Baghdad - and have all Iraqi politicians undertake a political pilgrimage to Tehran - it must continue to rely on theologically extremist recruitment techniques as well as some Shia actors and Shia militias.

The sense of sectarian identity must be very high in order for this Iranian strategy to work. Otherwise, why would Shia Muslims exclusively rally around Shia actors and militias? In order to maintain this strong sense of identity, a global atmosphere of conflict and instability must be prevalent. Thus, crises are the source of Iranian diplomatic capital.

### **Fragmented Iraq**

Saudi Arabia's position has never wavered in this regard. What Iraq needs is the formation of a real participatory government, which includes all Iraqis irrespective of sect or ethnicity.

Iraq's multi-ethnic, multi-religious society cannot rely on a government that exclusively represents the interests of one component over all others. This results in pushing the country's marginalised communities further back to their own religious and ethnic identities. The end result is a fragmented Iraq, with a fragile illusion of a political process, waiting for the tiniest spark to explode.

Inside Story - 'Islamic caliphate': Blessing or threat?

What has aggravated matters is the international community's inaction in Syria. This apathetic approach has left legitimate Syrian rebels exposed and defenceless in the face of extremism.

Over time, this extremism will grow, metastasise and have a spillover effect, as it did in Iraq. Saudi Arabia has long argued that the Free Syrian Army or the FSA was capable of defending the Syrian people against the regime's mass bombardments if only they were given adequate assistance and support.

The extremist forces maintain that Western policies - as well as Iran's sectarian policies - seek to establish a new Sykes-Picot agreement, with the West on one side of the drafting table, and the Iranians on the other, negotiating the division of Syria and Iraq once again. The worsening situation in Syria and Iraq makes it hard to refute such claims.

An empowered FSA would discredit such discourse. It would offer the war-weary Syrian people a safe alternative to bombardment by the regime or an extremist take over.

### **Many actors, one basket?**

Moreover, Saudi Arabia has in the past expressed the view that it is unhelpful to lump all actors in the Iraqi crisis in one basket. As Saudi Prince Turki bin Faisal al-Saud, former head of Saudi intelligence, told CNN on July 2: "The problem is more than [Islamic State group]."

Riyadh has repeatedly expressed frustration over the West's inability to fully comprehend the region. For Saudi Arabia, superficial, ready-made analyses and canned solutions only aggravate the problem.

**Check out our complete coverage of the crisis in Iraq** Ever since the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, residual Baath party members have been active in resisting the invaders. Despite some **media reports**, there has been little evidence that the Baath party, under the leadership of the ex-vice president of the old regime, Izzat Ibrahim al-Douri, has made any alliance with other resistance groups. However, there are indications that the Baath party is at least coordinating its activities with other actors in the current uprising. The Naqshbandi army, led by Douri, has **called upon** the Iraqi people "to be unified, to embrace their valiant resistance, and to hold their national, nationalist, and Islamic forces so as to sweep this political process".

Moreover, for the past 13 months, Sunni tribes have been revolting against the sectarian policies of the Iranian-backed prime minister. Indeed, **Sunni tribal leaders** have been meeting in the capital of the autonomous Kurdish region, Erbil, to pledge their commitment to support the Sunni uprising.

Let us examine the obvious evidence. First, 20,000 Islamic State members cannot realistically capture a territory larger than the country of Jordan in a matter of days. Second, it is clear that professional military tactics have been used, as opposed to conventional guerrilla tactics. Third, the language of the rebels' statements implies the involvement of several actors in the uprising. One statement, for example, which came out after the **fall of Mosul**, insisted on the protection of churches as well as the inclusion of those who have worked in Maliki's police forces. Also, it insisted on an active role for tribal leaders. This is not how the Islamic State would be expected to write a statement.

Reducing the crisis to the Islamic State group is to ignore the policies of the past eight years that Maliki has pursued, as well as the socio-economic factors that have fuelled the current situation.

### **Another Battle of Karbala?**

There is no doubt that Maliki - as well as Iran - will contrive to pin the current crisis entirely on the Islamic State group. On the one hand, such a position amplifies the global atmosphere of conflict and instability, which escalates the identity divide. As such, Maliki rallies all Shia Muslims around him, and Iran continues to take advantage of the wide pool for recruitment. This also explains why the Iraqi prime minister insists in his speeches that this war is akin to the seventh century war between Hussein ibn Ali, Prophet Mohammed's grandson and Yazid I, the Umayyad caliph. The decisive showdown has a central place in Shia Muslim history.

It also explains why the Secretary General of the Council of Guardians in Iran, Mohsen Rezaie told CNN Arabic that he was **calling on Shia Muslims** to mobilise for another Battle of Karbala.

Saudi Arabia's King Abdullah ibn Abdilaziz **denounced** the Islamic State group as a terrorist organisation last month, and the group is said to **pose a security threat** to Saudi Arabia. But there is no indication that Saudi Arabia will get involved militarily in Iraq. It will limit its efforts to encouraging all parties to sit together and form a unity government, which can represent the interests of all Iraqis, thus isolating the Islamic State group from the aggrieved as well as marginalised components of Iraqi society.

However, this current crisis benefits Saudi Arabia in two ways. First, it depletes Iranian capital as well as that of its allies. Second, resolving the crisis requires Iran to give up part of its influence over President Bashar al-Assad in Syria and Maliki in Iraq. In this respect, resolving the current situation must be done within a comprehensive framework, which would include both Syria and Iraq.

Next, a unity government, or a government that represents the interests of all Iraqis, will inevitably require Maliki's departure, the reduction of Iranian influence in Iraq, as well as combating extremism in Syria. That means strengthening the FSA, and as a consequence, weakening the regime of Assad, Iran's man in Damascus.

Indeed, Iran's influence in the region which has been stable and on the offensive for the past three decades, is now on the defensive. It is fighting for the survival of its allies in the region. How Saudi Arabia might react to this challenge is yet to be seen.

## **Appendix II: Article Published in Fars**

Online: June 2014, retrieved from Al-Monitor

### **Fars News objects to Arab media coverage of Iraq**

An Iranian news agency listed six ways in which the Arabic-language media is misrepresenting the crisis in Iraq that reveal hostility toward the Iraqi government. The list by Fars News Agency, which has close ties to the Revolutionary Guard Corps, reveals some of Iran's concerns and the positions of the Iranian right toward the crisis in Iraq, especially on speculation about US-Iran cooperation on Iraq. The article also reveals Iran's concerns regarding sectarianism in the region and the attempts of some officials and media outlets to downplay sectarianism and highlight the issue of terrorism.

Since the Islamic State of Iraq and al Sham (ISIS) took over parts of north and west Iraq, the Al-Qaeda offshoot has altered the **balance of power** within Iraq and threatened to advance to Baghdad. Iran's political closeness to the central government in Baghdad, its overall influence in Iraq and memories of an eight-year war fought against former leader Saddam Hussein has put Iran's political elite and western border guards on alert.

According to article, Al-Arabiya, Al Jazeera, BBC Arabic, Sky News and other Arabic-language print and television media in the Persian **Gulf** are engaged in a kind of psychological warfare by misrepresenting the events in Iraq. While most of the media outlets named above are government-funded, the article made a point of identifying which ones are funded by Saudi Arabia.

The first issue the article noted with the Arabic-language media was the use of the terms "tribes" and "Iraq's Sunnis" instead of ISIS. For instance, Al-Arabiya reported that "Tribal revolutionaries are on their way to Baghdad." At the same time, these media organizations will refer to "Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki's forces" or "Maliki's militias" instead of "Iraqi forces."

The second point was the exaggeration of the ISIS advance in certain parts of Iraq. Some Arabic-language publications, such as Sky News, reported that Iraq's largest oil refinery in the town of Baiji had been taken over by ISIS. While there have been conflicting reports about Baiji, these outlets continuously report on the advances by ISIS.

The article also criticized newspapers such as Asharq Al-Awsat for stating that leading cleric Ayatollah Ali Sistani's fatwa would increase sectarianism, whereas his fatwa was for the defense of Iraq. They accused these media organizations of creating differences by making the crisis a Shiite-Sunni issue rather than one of terrorism that even many Sunnis are fighting against.

These media outlets, according the article, have been attempting to portray Maliki as Iran's guy in Baghdad and highlighting Iran's interference in the country. The article stated that exaggerating Iran's presence in Iraq gives an excuse for ISIS to attack Iran.

The fifth point, perhaps the most revealing, concerned speculation that the United States and Iran would cooperate in Iraq. Al Jazeera asked, "Would Iran work with the Great Satan?" and Al-Arabiya claimed, "American drones next to Iran's Quds Force ..." The article

described these claims as political disinformation meant to portray Iran as the enemy of Sunnis and the United States as the enemy of Islam, collaborating against Iraq's Sunnis.

The sixth point was the promotion of disintegration of Iraq or changing the structure of power of the central government. The article read that the recent parliamentary elections' failure to change the balance of power against Maliki disappointed countries such as Saudi Arabia.

As a news agency, Fars News' English-language page is a scaled-down but much **more** ideological site that at times publishes dubious reports. Its Persian-language site offers timely and mostly accurate reports from across the country. Still, the Persian side is not without its political leanings. For instance, articles refer to the 2009 post-election protests with the politically charged term "sedition," whereas media organizations more sympathetic to the protests refer to the highly sensitive issue as "the events" of 2009.