

## **Discourse Analysis of ISIS Ideology Show Cased in Speeches addressing Jordanians**

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### **Abstract**

This study aimed to investigate the existence of ideology in the discourse of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) by examining the linguistic elements of two speeches through video addressing Jordanians. The discourse analysis approaches were adopted, such as the socio-cognitive and ideology theories of Van Dijk, which were considered to sense the manipulation of discourse and find out ISIS's discursive strategies. The study analysed two videos broadcasted on the Internet and social network accounts at a superstructural level, namely, the context, pattern, and topic which uncovered that ISIS carefully took into consideration the political and social context of Jordan to elaborate speeches exploiting Islamic topics and practices familiarly and persuasively. The study concluded that the discursive strategies of ISIS were constructed by glorifying the group members' actions and achievements while de-emphasising the outside group's positivity and delegitimising its authority.

**Keywords:** ISIS, Critical discourse analysis, Ideology, Jordan, Socio-cognition.

### **Introduction**

Even though ISIS is the only structural and ideological successor of Al-Qaeda in Iraq, it was completely changed with the declaration of its establishment in 2014. ISIS has its own ideology which it tried to exploit to achieve its agenda. Ideology refers to beliefs ascribed to an individual or group of individuals for reasons in which practical elements are as prominent as theoretical ones and are not purely epistemic. The examples of change in the ideology of ISIS included an appeal by ISIS to establish an Islamic state on a global scale and the victorious promise of Muslims in the final battle between Christians, Muslims, and Jews in Dabiq (A town in Syria). The Islamic State appropriated the ideology of Al-Qaeda, but it was not the group's primary purpose; Khatib (2015) stated that it was merely a tool to acquire power and money by using social media to publicise itself, intimidate enemies, and recruit members. Her study also listed several components of ISIS's strategy, such as spreading its ideology through media to control the inhabitants of the controlled areas and attract new members in tandem with military work, centralising military strategy in command ship, and responding to urgent incidents.

In addition to using its ideology to cultivate legitimacy, ISIS justified its brutality by referring to its strategically planned goals. Instilling fear in people, spoiling their morals, and weakening the spirit of its

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enemies have been its justification for crucifying, beheading, and shooting that were shown in videos and images on the Internet (Khatib 2015). On the outer side of ISIS's proclaimed state, its ideology is built on considering any country or land not under its state control as the *bilādi l-kufr* (land of infidels), and attacks against its population, except those who pledge allegiance, are justified. "ISIS adoption of the Wahhabi ideology which started in the eighteenth century by the cleric *Mohammed bin Abd Alwahhab* was described as a reform movement of Islam. "*Wahhabism* spread in the Arabian Peninsula and was supported at the end of the eighteenth century by the kingdom of Saudi Arabia" (Wiktorowicz 2006, 207-239). *Wahhabism* was heavily used in the twentieth century to ignite fighters to join the battlefields of *Jihad* in Afghanistan and dismiss the Soviet Union troops from the country. It exemplified exploiting religious movements to fulfil political and military goals. ISIS's main ideological principles were *takfir* (the act of excommunicating other Muslims by declaring them infidels). *Jihad*, slavery, spying, and surveillance were commonly used to spread fear and establish the caliphate. Caliphate is a political-religious state comprising the Muslim community, lands, and peoples under its dominion in the centuries following the death of the Prophet Muhammad (632 CE). "It was ruled by a caliph (Arabic *khalīfah*, "successor"), who held temporal and sometimes a degree of spiritual authority. According to ISIS's theorists, Islam must be cleansed from the inside first, and this cannot be fulfilled unless all Muslims pledge allegiance to ISIS. Any Muslim who refuses to do so is *Murtad* (apostate) and should be fought until s/he repents. At the same time, all non-Muslim *Kuffār* (disbelievers) should be killed for being non-Muslims. Based on these principles, *Jihad* (fighting in the name of Allah) has been incorporated into ISIS's ideology. The brutality represented by the beheading of the captives and the rebirth of slavery, especially women's slavery, is the most apparent violation of Islamic rules of engagement.

To shed light on ISIS's ideology, it is pertinent to know the primary source of its ideology. Instead of being rooted in traditional Islam, ISIS's ideology was derived from three modern sources. The most well-known of the three is *ʿIdāratī l-tawāḥḥuṣh*, (*The Management of Savagery*) by Abu Bakr Al-Naji (a pseudonym), written in the early 2000s. This work is a strategic roadmap for creating an Islamic "state" that is very distinct from the previous jihadist organisations which were established before the emergence of ISIS. This document was widely believed in by ISIS's commanders and fighters (Weiss and Hassan 2015). Al-Naji frequently drew on non-Muslim historians and theorists to justify his theory of Maximum Violence. Two other sources highly regarded and adopted by ISIS's leaders are *Abu Abdullah al-Muhajir's* book "*Muqaddimāh fī Fiqh il-dʿjihād*" *wāl mārroufāh bi fīqhi iddam* (Introduction to the Jurisprudence of Jihad, popularly known as *The Jurisprudence of Blood*) and *al-'Umda fī l'ʿdād al-'Uʿddah* ("*The Essentials of Making Ready [for Jihad]*") (Gerges 2016, 27).

ISIS is an organisation officially designated as a terrorist group by most countries worldwide. This group used text, talk, and other genres of discourse to spread its ideology and attract new combatants to its organisation and adopt its agenda. It continued its inspiration and influence over a vast proportion of youths in different countries of the world. Several studies compared "terrorist rhetoric discourse with its counter-one in western media and politicians' speeches" (Allendorfer and Herring 2015, 1-17; Salazar

2016, 1-2). These studies focused on specific differences and similarities without investigating the linguistic features and structures that made their discursive strategy (Lafrance 2017).

The shortage of linguistic studies on ISIS's discourse delays and restricts the efforts to combating against such a terroristic organisation in the future. This is probably attributed to the short period of the emergence of this organisation. So, this study is an effort which integrates with other fields of linguistic disciplines and even different fields of humanities to fill the gap in the literature and is deemed necessary to understand the discourse as a tool used in social and political control or change. Without detailing all reasons behind the recruitment of more than 30,000 foreigners who joined ISIS by the end of 2015, "the high media profile of ISIS had a high position in the effective power of ISIS" (Jasko et al., 2018). As for Fernandez (2015), "the deft use of propaganda and social media" was a significant reason for the group's success in the recruitment process, which shifted the recruitment efforts from its narrow scope in Iraq and Syria to a worldwide scope throughout the whole world. Therefore, this study attempted to explore ISIS's discursive strategies to construct an overall comprehension of the ideology and figure out the main linguistic characteristics of its discourse. "Van Dijk's theory of ideology and socio-cognitive approach were applied to reveal the linguistic elements employed in ISIS's speeches in question and provide indicators of the ideological use of language.

The significance of the study lies in the fact that it has provided a new analysis of ISIS's ideology as it appeared in its discourse. The reproduction of dominance, legitimating the use of power, and enactment of inequality in society, among other fallacies adopted by ISIS in its discourse, were investigated. The discourse and creator of the ideology itself were critically analysed as elements of ideology. Persuasive techniques employed by ISIS to recruit new members witnessed unprecedented success. To face such manipulation and techniques, solid measures should be developed to build a counter-terrorism model. The overall comprehension of terrorists' discourse and goals can assist in minimising their mortal and chaotic effects. Institutions and organisations concerned with counterterrorism can attentively benefit from the analysis of the discursive strategies embedded in the discourses of such terrorist organisations to fully understand their ideology and train their agents on how to stop or minimise the probable attacks of these organisations. Governments should focus on the content of their counter-terrorism messages as message content could be a significant factor which enables the expansion of counter-terrorism messages (Fernandez 2015). The current study investigated ISIS's discourse directed to Jordan, Jordanian authorities, and Jordanian people. The data collected and processed were limited to two videos on two different occasions in which ISIS directly addressed Jordanians. So, indirect messages to Jordan were not included in this study. These two videos were chosen for the study because they addressed one targeted group, Jordanians; many other videos were available on the Internet, but they were not oriented toward Jordanians only. The analysis of these two videos did not extend to the images and written captions accompanying the speeches. These two speeches were analysed at superstructural, semantic, and syntactic levels.

## Research Questions

Based on the aim of the study, the following research questions were formulated:

Q1- How were the discursive strategies formulated in the messages directed to Jordanians by ISIS?

Q2- What linguistic elements were used in ISIS speeches to construct its discourse ideology?

Q3- How did ISIS manipulate and control the hearts and minds of out-groups?

## Theoretical Background

The Socio-Cognitive Approach (SCA) of van Dijk (2006; 2015; 2016) is an attempt to build a theory of CDA. Linking the triad, society, cognition, and discourse enables the analysts to analyse any discourse comprehensively. According to this approach, discourse is a communicative event that includes conversational interaction, text, talk, and all other components of any communication process, whether semiotics or gestures. The approach can be construed in social actors engaged in a discourse relying on socially shared representations. Chilton (2005) detected a missing part in analysing the external requirements of the discourse, which are context, participants, and subjective experience in discourse. According to Wodak and Meyer (2009), this approach was intended to bridge this gap in considering social cognition. Apart from the social context, which is majorly considered in the SCA, the context in Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA) is historical. Linguistically oriented, a theory of discourse based on "the connection between fields of action, genres, discourses, and texts was considered to be a concern of DHA" (Wodak and Meyer 2009, 1-2).

The concentration of this approach was given to the field of politics to develop conceptual frameworks for political discourse. Reisigl and Wodak (2009) tried to fit linguistic theories into their model of discourse. The use of argumentation and topics related to history were among other elements used by them to theorise their model of discourse. Depending on quantitative analysis, Corpus Linguistics Approach (CLA) provided new linguistic devices to CDA. It is an extension of CDA and can be applied in the backdrop of any approach to support results. In his approach, the Dialectical-Relational Approach (DRA), Fairclough focused on social conflict in the Marxian tradition and tried to detect its linguistic manifestations in elements of dominance, difference, and resistance. According to DRA, every social practice has a semiotic element. Productive activity, the means of production, social relations, social identities, cultural values, consciousness, and semiosis are dialectically related elements to social practice. He defined CDA as "the analysis of the dialectical relationships between semiosis (including language) and other elements of social practices".

According to Van Dijk's Socio-Cognitive Approach (2015), CDA integrated various linguistic theories and approaches to produce a social and discursive process to impose the assumptions made by the more powerful on the less powerful. However, Van Dijk's socio-cognitive approach linked cognitive theories and approaches with linguistics. He claimed that critical discourse studies are critical perspectives, positions, or attitudes within the multidisciplinary approach as they intend to shed light on covert ideologies in social practice. He, therefore, proposed a triangulation of the interrelationship among discourse cognitive domains and society (Van Dijk 2003). This triangulation emphasises the cognitive

phenomena which are connected to the discourse structure and ways in which social inequality, domination, and ideologies occur. The connection between the structure of discourse and society should be scrutinised to uncover the social representations, attitudes, and ideologies of social actors. Van Dijk (2000) pointed out that white group domination leads to social inequality, racism, and domination in certain countries.

Moreover, the top-down model in CDA focuses on a discourse that reveals the typical form of injustice in society. Group members socially share ideologies and control their daily life practices as individuals (personal cognition). Thus, “ideologies are exercised at the individual level and then shared by a group of people, such as in the case of abortion and divorce defenders” (Van Dijk 2013, 175-196). In other words, personal cognition is a fundamental subjective mental representation of events and practices.

“Manipulation is one of the significant notions in critical discourse analysis” (Van Dijk 2006, 159-177). The manipulator tries to “ignore the choice of freedom of the manipulated person by directing him/her to act due to the best interest of the manipulator” (Van Dijk 2006, 159-177). Manipulation, as a discursive strategy, is different from persuasion. While persuasion, as in the case of a teacher in the class, is considered legitimate domination, manipulation exercised by politicians in election campaigns is illegitimate domination. Van Dijk (2006) claimed that manipulation must be analysed as a three-dimensional framework, namely, discourse, society, and cognition. It is socially analysed as a cause of power and abuse resulting from the domination of a group, society, or even several societies. Van Dijk (2006) argued that cognition is shaped at different levels of the society's micro- and macrostructure, targeting the short- and long-term memories to control the minds of its members. At a micro level, individuals' cognition, attitudes, and their relation to society are shaped. In contrast, socially shared cognition, which includes ideologies, values, and attitudes, is constructed at the macro level. Macrostructure determines the relations between the whole society or a group and other societies.

Van Dijk (2006, 159-177) claimed that “Individuals' mental models contribute to forming society's ideology and knowledge. To form such mental representations, manipulation is exercised in text and talk. This approach must be taken integrally without excluding its constituents”. Manipulating socially shared attitudes, beliefs, and ideologies is a discursive strategy aimed at changing these shared attitudes once and on occasions. To achieve this goal, generalisation is used. After the 9/11 attacks, this manipulation strategy was used to address the American citizens, people of America, the free world, and many other social structured groups. The general vocabularies used to imply the holistic and societal benefits of the war against Afghanistan and Iraq and to legitimate the war were well used to “hide their real goals and show them as benefits for "All of us", "the nation" (Van Dijk 2006, 159-177).

Manipulation includes the content of social cognition such as knowledge and the structure of social cognition. Van Dijk (2006) maintained that the "U.S." government and media affect social knowledge through hiding or limiting access to the content of social cognition. The Iraqi mass destruction weapons issue was the apparent example. “Attributions formed by media or government authorities and recalled whenever speaking about terrorism are an example of manipulation of the structure of the social cognition component, which is, in this case, the mental representation of terrorists” (Van Dijk 2006, 159-177).

“Contextual constraints such as lack of knowledge of the recipients of the discourse, the deep-rooted ideologies or attitudes of recipients, the emotional audience, and the source of the power of the speaker or writer are considered when analysing the acceptability of the manipulative discourse” (Van Dijk 2006, 159-177). These contextual constraints may appear as some presuppositions embedded in the discourse structure. According to Van Dijk (2006), some of the presuppositions indicating a manipulative discourse occur when the manipulator asserts the profession high position and legitimacy of its group in discourse while adopting new beliefs and recognition by discrediting the other group. In this study, ISIS’s discourse structure was examined to uncover these presuppositions to prove its manipulative nature. All research and sociologists agreed on the idea that ISIS employed manipulative discourse. Finding an effective way to stop the expansion of the ideology of ISIS was carefully analysed.

In conclusion, socio-cognitive and ideology theories related to the critical discourse studies and the history and ideology of ISIS were investigated. Critical discourse studies aim to disclose the language's ideological usage whenever it is employed to produce or reproduce domination and control in societies. Previous studies on ISIS revealed its radical ideology as an extension of Al-Qaeda organisation with more and more ambitions and establishment of the universal state Caliphate which should be run due to their concepts and rules.

## Methods

This study used speeches which were available on the Internet. Since this study is limited to messages targeting Jordan, two videos broadcasted on the Internet and social networks accounts were analysed. The language used in addressing Jordanians through the two videos was Classical Arabic. The first video, titled "Message to our people [of] (Ma’ān)", released on May 3, 2014, was produced by ʔəl-iṛtiṣæm Media and was 16 minutes and 18 seconds long. The video and its Arabic transcription were downloaded from the website (jihadology) <sup>1</sup>. This release was three months before the leader of ISIS announced the caliphate (*Xilāfah*) in July 2014. The second video, titled "Message to Jordan", released on February 25, 2015, was also produced by ʔəl-iṛtiṣæm Media and downloaded from the website (*jihadology*). It lasted for 9 minutes and 48 seconds. This study transcribed this video into Arabic as the transcription was unavailable on the Internet. This video was released less than a month after the burning of the captured Jordanian pilot, Muath Safi Yousef al-Kasasbeh. He was a Royal Jordanian Air Force pilot who was captured and burned to death by the militant group ISIL after his F-16 fighter aircraft crashed over Syria. His jet crashed near Raqqa, Syria, during the military intervention against ISIS in December 2014.

The choice of two videos released at two different times by ISIS was a privilege in this study since this allows studying two different socio-political contexts. Furthermore, it provided a chance to compare any linguistic development of the use of language by ISIS through two stages of its regime. The first one exemplified the period of the pre-announcement of its state. The second video came about eight months after its formal establishment and less than one month after the killing of the Jordanian pilot. The collected data were analysed quantitatively and qualitatively. Van Dijk (2013) stated that lexical variation

is an explicit and clear way of expressing ideologically based opinions and group-based attitudes. Lexical variants are used to refer to the same group of people, and they serve to emphasise their positive or negative attitudes. Both videos were analysed to investigate the presence of the following linguistic elements and markers in ISIS discourse and their contribution to formulating ISIS ideology.

Collocations were extracted to investigate the effect of word-adjacency used in ISIS ideological discourse. The frequency of collocates could provide an overall comprehension of the topic of the discourse and its ideological implications. For quantitative analysis, the whole corpus was analysed using the following software and websites: The first was **Collocation extract 3.7 software**; this program was further developed from Collocation Test, which can handle only two-word collocations. The second was WordSmith Version 6.0 software.

## Findings and Discussion

### *Context*

Both videos contained a speech delivered by an armed male speaker while sitting in a frosty field surrounded by two other armed men. In the video "Message to Our People of Ma'an", the speaker was introduced under *Al-Akh Alghareeb Al-Ordony* (the Outlander Jordanian brother). In contrast, in the video "Message to Jordan", the speaker was not introduced. In this video, the speaker delivered his speech while the video was displaying scenes of burning the Jordanian pilot alive along with images from war scenes in Iraq and Syria. According to these two videos, ISIS divided the Jordanian community into two groups, members and potential followers of ISIS in Jordan and the opponents of ISIS. The opponents of ISIS included the Jordanian regime with its police and armed forces, the parents of the Jordanian pilot burned by ISIS, and the clerks in Jordan (religious men) who also refused to pledge allegiance to ISIS and issued their philological judgments against ISIS.

Consequently, ISIS released this video urging sympathisers and followers in Ma'an to continue their proclaimed insurgence and fight the Jordanian army and police. In all previous videos until July 2014, speakers and texts of ISIS named their state as Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (Levant). The video "Message to Jordan" came after the people's tremendous denouncement caused by releasing the video of burning the Jordanian pilot alive. ISIS tried, through this video, to remedy the wound it caused. At the same time, it did not want to go back and denounce its decision. The main goal was to justify the burning and reassure their sympathisers in Jordan that they did not commit a crime, but they followed Allah's commands by burning the Jordanian pilot alive. The message was intended to attract the attention of very wide sectors of Jordanians when the speaker addressed Jordanian tribes, especially the big *Bani Hassan* tribes in an attempt to enlist the biggest number of supporters from these big tribes in ISIS. The spatial and time factors of releasing the video were crucial in determining the target group, topic, and pattern.

### *Pattern*

The typical Islamic speeches in both videos were delivered in Classical Arabic and in a style very similar to *ḫutbah* (Friday preach) pattern. The speech started with the most frequently used Islamic

phrase in the Friday' preach 'Bismill æhi ir-rəhmæni ir-rəhi:m' (In the name of Allah the most merciful the most gracious), followed by invoking blessings upon the prophet Mohammad Peace Be Upon Him (PBUH). "I begin in the name of Allah. Praise be to Allah, and May peace and blessings be upon Allah's Prophet who was sent with the sword as a mercy for all creation. May peace and blessings also be upon all his family, wives, companions". Then, the speaker used the phrase "ʔəmmæ Bəʔdu" (as for what proceeds) to attract the attention of the hearers to what he will say. As you listen to this preamble of prayers and words, you realize that this text is a religious text or *χxutbəh*. The ISIS's spokesman used such kind of religious speech to give it more credibility and encourage the followers to believe in of what was said. It was also noticed that the speaker used a classical Arabic style of discourse when he used the initiation letters (*fə, wə*) in his first word of every beginning of speech, where *fə* in Arabic is a conjunction used by the addresser to command the addressee to take instant action in a successive ordered manner, while *wə* was used as an expression of oath to emphasize what the speaker said was true . The following examples illustrate the use of *fə*:

"*fə hadihi risælətun ila...*" (And this is a message to ...)

"*fə ləqəd wəllæhi qætəlna:...*" (And indeed, we swear that we fought those...).

The citation of verses from the Noble Quran was used in the Islamic discourses to support the idea of urging the hearer to follow the orders of Allah. This is the apparent purpose, but in ISIS's speeches, this kind of citation implied the religious reference of the group and the supposition of being authorised by Allah to use verses from the Noble Quran. To produce a coherent text or speech, ISIS's speakers in both videos used pronouns for anaphoric and cataphoric references and lexical cohesion. *ennəho ennið'æm zalləði yəqtulu ʔəbnæʔəkum*, (It is the regime who kills your sons). *ʔantum zalləði:næ təqtulu:nə almuslimi:nə*, (You are who help the regime to kill Muslims)

By using anaphoric and cataphoric references, ISIS identified itself and answered the self-schemata questions related to the group identity. Among these questions were who are us? Who are with us? who can join us? who are our enemies? who are the hidden enemies? and how do we perceive the society we are addressing? Lexical cohesion was used by ISIS's spokesmen to create an atmosphere of a holy war where holy words were repeatedly used. In the video "Message to Our People of Ma'an", the ISIS speaker created an overall coherence of the text when at the beginning, he targeted presumed ISIS members in Ma'an as the primary goal of his speech. Then he moved to other presumed people of "Tawheed" (People believing in one God) in Jordan and all Muslims in Jordan. The speaker tried to refute the claims of Jordan's clergymen against ISIS who accused them of being misguided and astray. In the end, he addressed the Jordanian police and army. The speech ended with referring all the knowledge to Allah and asking Him to bless the prophet Mohammad (PBUH).

### Topic

The topic of the speech, titled "Message to Our People of Ma'an", was an appeal to the audience to join ISIS's *Jihad* arenas and an effort to incite the people of Ma'an to revolt against the Jordanian authorities. This topic was well served through the cohesion elements like conjunction words "*ʔammæ*



*Bəʕdu*” (as for what proceeds), “*həqi:qətən*” (in fact), the use of pronouns and lexical references like “*iχwænunə*” (our brothers), and the use of selected classical Islamic patterns of speech like the beginning with the *basmaləh*, i.e. *Bismi lləhi rahməni il-rahi:m* (By the name of God the Gracious the Merciful) and prayers on the prophet Mohamed PBUH, *wə ʕsələtu ʕla səyidina Muḥəmədin wə ʕla ʔəlihi wə səllim* (Prayers be upon our prophet Mohammad and upon his kinship). In both speeches, the last part of the speech targeted the Jordanian army and police. This indicates that the speaker intended to encourage the Jordanian army and police members to quit their jobs and join ISIS arenas of *Jihad* (fighting for the sake of the God), which was considered the core of ISIS speech. The most preferred used strategy of manipulation was the prototype in which fallacies were provided to persuade or urge the followers to do something. The manipulator resorted to unchallengeable religious sources to get these fallacies, or when an Imām or a *ʕaiχ* (clergyman) asks Muslims to do a certain action using verses from the Noble Quran to persuade them (Van Dijk 2006).

### ***The perspective***

The perspective of ISIS was expressed explicitly and implicitly as well. Explicit expressions describing the evil deeds and implicit implications can be derived from ISIS's speeches in question. According to ISIS's doctrine, it is unarguable that anyone who refuses ISIS's ideology and perspective is a disbeliever or an apostate. But then, explicitness was not always the only choice for ISIS. The speakers in both videos hid their perspectives from the Jordanian tribes. We can say that the speech addressing the Jordanian tribes was neutral, but this was not completely true. In general, the perspective of ISIS toward the out-group and the whole world was explicitly expressed in almost all ISIS's videos. Any territory occupied by ISIS is a land of disbelief and disbelievers.

### **Syntactic analysis**

In Classical Arabic (C.A.), the word order of a grammatical sentence tends to be VSC order (verb, subject, and complement). The agent (subject) of action in Arabic sentences is usually placed after the verb. In ideological discourses, the preference of such order depends on the nature of the actions of in-group and out-group. Topicalization, i.e. positioning an argument, a clause, or phrase at the beginning of the sentence or clause, was used to emphasise the negative actions of the out-group. What matters for the discourse analysts is to figure out the use of word order in any discourse to connect that with self-representation of in-group or polarisation of out-group qualities. Here, the real intention of changing or keeping the original order, as imposed by the grammaticality of the text's language, was detected. In this study's samples, and as expected of ideological discourse, topicalization was used to assert the negative actions of the out-group members and make them appear guilty and responsible for such negative actions, as shown in the following excerpts from both videos:

- (*ʔənnəho ənnið'əəm ʔəlləði ʔəḥkumu ilmuslemi:nə liʕəʔrəti is.sini:n biyieri ʕəriʕəti illəh* )

It is the regime which rules Muslims for tens of years out of Islam laws ....

- (*ʔənnəho ənnið'əəm ʔəlləði ʔəqtulu lmuslemi:nə wə ʔəʕtədi ʕlə ḥurumətehim* )

It is the regime which kills Muslims and violates their sanctities

- (*ʔennəho enniðʕəm ʔəlləði ʔəʕtəqilu ʔəlmudʒəhedi:nə wə ʔəhbesuhum*)

It is the regime which arrests and jails hundreds of *mudʒəhedi:nə* (persons who attest to Almighty God of being One)

- (*ʔennəho enniðʕəm ʔəlləði ʔuhəribu ldʒihædə wəl mudʒəhedi:nə fi kulli məkæn*)

It is the regime that fights *Jihad* and jihadists everywhere.

- (*ʔntumu ʔəlləði:nə təqtəhimu:nə buyu:tə əlmudʒəhedi:nə*)

You (soldiers of regime) who break into houses of *mudʒəhedi:nə*

- (*ʔntumu ʔəlləði:nə təhrusu:nə hudu:də əlyəhu:d*)

- You (soldiers of regime) who guard the boarders of Jewis.

- (*ʔntumu illəði:nə təmnəʕu:nə affəbaəbə wə lmuslemi:nə minə ldʒihædi*)

You (soldiers of regime) who prevent the youths and Muslims from *Jihad*...

- (*ʔəbnukum hələfə ʕʕəli:bi:yi:nə ʕələ ilmuslemi:nə wə dəxələ fi: hılfihem*)

Your son (*Muaath*, the Jordanian pilot) has pledged allegiance to the crusaders over Muslims and involved in their alliance.

- (*ʔennəho huwə lləði ʔətə ili:nə wə tʕərə fəwqə səməʔenə*)

It is him (Jordanian pilot) who came to us and flew over our state's sky....

ISIS employed the emphasis widely to stress the validity of its argumentation as was shown by the different forms of emphasis used by ISIS. One of these is Lexical Emphasis. In Arabic, it means repetition of a word twice or more, which is commonly used in poetry, especially war and pride poetry and in primary Islamic sources (the Noble Quran and Sunnah). The main goal of lexical emphasis is "to emphasise the message's meaning and motivate the listeners by raising their morality to fight" (Nahar 1987, 691-714). This kind of emphasis was widely employed in ISIS's speeches, as illustrated by the following examples:

- *ʔəlasliħəh, ʔəlasliħəh ʔəddəmə ʔəddəmə, ʔəl-hədmə ʔəl-hədmə*

The weapons, the weapons, the blood, the blood, the destruction, the destruction.

- *ʔalləhə, ʔalləhə ayu:hə əlʔəhibbəh biθəbə:ti, ʔalləhə, ʔalləhə bilqitəli*

Allah, Allah Oh beloved with steadiness, Allah, Allah with fight

The speaker urged his audience to fight and kill to cause destruction. This specific lexical emphasis (word repeat) was used in past Muslim battles. In speeches and texts, ISIS employed such a tool to create an ambience of holy war where holy words were repeatedly used. It was used to confirm the meaning of the following sentence and to assure the occurrence of an event. The use of the oath devices, such as "*fə wəlləhi*" and "*ʔəqsemu belləhi*" (to swear to God), is illustrated by the following examples:

- (*fə wəlləhi, ʔənəkum mayyitu:nə*)

And I swear by Allah you will die.

- (*fə wəlləhi lən ʔanfəʕəkum ʔəhədən*)

And I swear by Allah none will benefit you.

- (*ʔəqsemu belləhi, ʔnnənə: nəwə ʔəθərəhə ʕlə lard*)

I swear by Allah, we see its effects on the ground.

- (wəllæhi ʔnnənæ fi: ʔawqin zilæ liqæ:ekum)

I swear by Allah that we are looking forward to meeting you.

The speakers in both videos were trying to create the credibility of their promises. This kind of swearing also aims at terrifying the out-group and using words carrying horror meanings like killing and butchering.

### Semantic analysis

Based on Van Dijk's ideology theory of discourse, it is supposed that ISIS employed micro-semantic structures to serve the overall meanings, which present ISIS's positive qualities and conceal its negatives, emphasising ISIS opponents' negatives, and degrading their positives. The study investigated the maxims of the cooperative principle (Grice 1975) in ISIS's speeches in question. To build cooperative communication, Grice stated that the speaker must observe four maxims: the maxim of quantity, the maxim of quality, the maxim of relation, and the maxim of manner (Grice 1975). For example, when the ISIS's speaker mentioned the behaviour of the Jordanian police and army forces against potential terrorists, he listed the practices of these forces, such as interventions, arrest operations, house inspections, and prison conditions. This description included other detailed speeches and a lot of photos broadcasted synchronically to provide authenticity to the speech.

ISIS used the same strategy when its spokesmen mentioned their members' sacrifices, victories, and suicide operations. To inspire others and raise the morality of its member, ISIS concentrated on its fighters combat and promoted the image of the unbeatable fighter (ʔəd'æfirəh and ʔusu:d (lions)). This was seen when the speaker in "Message to Jordan" talked about the bravery of the Caliphate lions in Syria, Iraq and Sinai. Such kind of detailed information served as an explicit message for the enemies to remember the destiny of those who are against ISIS. The detailed description of ISIS's opponents extended to cursing them and asking for ALLAH's ʔəd'əb (indignation) to befall on them. Praying to ALLAH to free them and bless them has always been reserved for ISIS's members and followers. The low degree of specificity was used to degrade and underestimate the out-group positive deeds on the one hand and reduce the damage and impact of their negative operations. ISIS spokesman in "Message to our People in Ma'an" talked about *Sajida Mubarak Atrous al-Rishawi*, who was a failed suicide bomber. She was convicted of possessing explosives and intending to commit a terrorist act in the 2005 Amman bombings in Jordan, killing 60 people and injuring 115 people. The spokesman described her as a poor woman jailed by the Jordanian regime, *ðəlikə innið'æmu ʔəl-laði: læ ʔəstəhi: ʔən ʔəhbisə ʔimraʔatən maski:nəten* (That regime who is not ashamed of jailing a poor woman), and he intentionally ignored her criminal role in the attacks in which many innocents were killed in the 2005's bombing. This euphemism leads us to understand that the real meaning behind the image was a woman arrested and jailed in Jordanian prisons for nothing. Intended concealment was used here to victimise the in-group members (a woman) and blame the real victims who were the Jordanian authorities, and people in Jordan.

In the argument provided by the speaker about the religious opinion of burning a human being, he provided facts and stories about the permission of burning a human being in general when he said

*zədzəzə kəθi:run minə l-ʕuləməʔi wə l-fuqəhəʔi zistiχdəmə zən-nari kə-ʕuqu:bətin fil-ʔIsləem* (Many philologists and religion scholars allowed the use of fire as punishment in Islam). The speaker continued sweeping generalisations without providing any names of these scholars or their books as evidence of his claims. The use of generalisation in giving the facts violated more than one maxim; the maxim of manner states that the text should be clear and without ambiguities, the maxim of quality states that the text should provide the truth and only the truth, and the maxim of quantity states that the text should give enough information.

The maxim of quality was also violated at different levels of ISIS's speeches. For example, when the spokesmen began their speech with the sentence *wə ʕʕələtu wə ssələmu ʕəla l-məbʕuθi bi-ssayfi rəhmətən li-lʕələmi:nə* (Praying and blessing be upon the Prophet who was sent to the world with the sword as a mercy for the world ); they intentionally aimed at deceiving the hearer whether s/he realised the truth value of this sentence or not. Another example was the stories about the victories of ISIS and the use of generalisation in describing the great achievements of the fighters of ISIS. The hearer cannot confirm the truth value of sentences, which causes a gap in his understanding, which in its turn leads to misguiding and manipulation. Another kind of maxim violation was opting out of the maxim (Grice 1975). The speaker in the video "Message to Jordan" opted out of the quality maxim when he talked about the reactions of the Jordanian authorities to the issue of burning the pilot alive. Intentionally, he said *qəblə ʔən ʔətəhəddəə ʕən rəddəti fiʕli in-niðʕəmi ʔəl-urduni: uri:du ʔən ʔətəkələmə ʕən rəddəti fiʕli rəʕəyə ʔad-dawlatil-isləmiyəh* (Before I talk about the reaction of the Jordanian regime, I want to talk about the ISIS followers' reaction). Here, the speaker opted out of the maxim to avoid giving importance to the reaction of the Jordanian regime. At the same time, according to him, the important issue was the reaction of ISIS followers and sympathisers. As for the violation of the quality maxim here, the speaker intended to lie and assumed that the hearer was ignorant. When a speaker violates a maxim, he intends to mislead (Birner 2012). To conclude, we can say that ISIS deliberately violated the maxims by misguiding the hearers through concealment or detailed information.

Presuppositions related to the world perceived in ISIS's discourse are manifestations of an ongoing conflict between its members and others in this world. To illustrate, in the video "Message to Jordan", the speaker said, *ʔaynəmə yudʒədu ʕirəʕun baynə əl-ħəqqi wəl-bəʕʕili tərə in-niðʕəmə yuhəribu l-ħəqqə*, (Whenever the rightness and falseness fight, you will find the regime fights against the rightness). Apart from the presupposition made by the speaker that his group was the righteous and others (regime) were erroneous, the other presuppositions indicated that the conflict did exist and continued. The importance of supposing such conflict was to urge the potential followers (sympathisers) not to hesitate but join ISIS's fighting arenas. The advice given by the speaker through orders and warnings was another example of presuppositions made by ISIS. Many presuppositions were made by using different speech acts. At the beginning of the speech in the video, "Message to Our People of Ma'an", the speaker said, *ʔənnəhu minə lwədzibi ʔən nənʕəhəkum* (It is our duty to advise you (people of Ma'an)). Then he turned to warn them of the sequences of abandoning the revolution, *lə tədəʕu: həðihi iʕʕuʕlətə tənʕfiʕu ... iðə hədəəə həðə fə innə ʔəhlə məʕənə səyusənu:nə min tʕulmi nniðʕəmi wə bəʕʕihi kəmə hədəəə səbiqən* (Don't let the

spark die out, continue, and if this happens, the people of Ma'an will suffer from the brutality of the regime as happened before). The power exercised on the potential followers of ISIS in Ma'an presupposed ISIS's authority to give advice and issue orders. Such enacting power through presupposition was common in both videos, such as when the speaker called the Jordanian tribes and religious scholars to repent and join ISIS. The presupposition of having all power and all knowledge about life and religion was attributed to ISIS as it refuted religious issues like the stance of clerks and Imams of ISIS, burning the pilot alive, apostasy and disbelief, and the political context in Jordan. The speaker mocked the stances of religious clerks in Jordan and considered himself and his organisation above criticism and rejection. In ISIS's videos in question, many speech acts were used to achieve different goals in the relevant discourse. The most apparent speech act used was giving orders to followers and warning opponents. ISIS urged its members to attack Jordan's army and police but to listen to its decrees and judgments such as *ʔas-silæħa ʔas-silæħa, ʔaddamæ ʔaddamæ, ʔal-hædmæ ʔal-hædmæ wæ ʔlæmu: ʔannæhu læ hællæ ʔillæ biqitæli hæðæ lniðæmu l-mujrimu*“, (The weapon, the weapon, the blood, the blood, the destruction, the destruction, and you know that there is no solution with this criminal regime but to fight it), *læ hællæ ʔillæ bil-dʒihædi, læ hællæ ʔillæ bil-qitæli* (No solution but *Jihad*, no solution but with the fight), *læ tuʔiʔu: ʔæhdæn wæ tuqæddimu: ʔæmræhum fawqæ ʔæmri llæhi wæ ræsu:lihi*, (Don't obey persons and upgrade their judgments over the orders of Allah and his prophet), *Læ tæstæmiʔu: lihaʔulæli ʔal-læði:næ tææku: il-dʒihædæ fi: sæbi:li llæhi*“, (Don't listen to those who left fighting because they want to gain the name of Allah) by not fighting), *ʔunsuru: ʔiʔwænækum fi Ma'æn, læ tætrukuhum*, (Help your brothers in Ma'an, don't abandon them). In different situations, the warnings were also sent to the opponents of ISIS like *tu:bu: qæblæ ʔæn tæqʔæðæ sækæki:nunæ riqæbækum* , (Repent before our knives cut down your necks). It is a warning of being beheaded), *tu:bu: wæ rdʒiʔu: ʔila l-ʔislæmi liʔæn-nækum læstum fi: ʔæzin minæ l-ʔIslam, ʔæntum murtaddi:na wæ sæwfæ naqtulukum* (Repent and come back to Islam as you don't represent Islam. You are apostates and we will kill you).

According to Austin (1962), one of the felicity conditions required for a speech act is the person qualified to perform the speech act like a priest who announces the marriage in the church. This person is authorised to issue the speech act, and these announcements entail the legitimacy of the marriage. In our case, ISIS is presumed to have the authority to order and make judgments on religious scholars and other components of the Jordanian community. In using direct speech acts, ISIS's spokesman tried to market himself as a custodian of religion. By doing this, he violated one of the conditions to fulfil the impact of such speech acts. ISIS expected that the effect of its orders could be a revolt and insurgencies in the Jordanian community. Still, the lack of one or more conditions of the felicity of speech acts decreased the possibility of such attacks and insurgencies. Despite the ISIS's endeavour to legitimise itself through these direct speech acts, it failed to make difference on the ground.

Another semantic notion to be discussed in the semantic analysis of discourses is argumentation. Through arguments, ISIS tried to convince the hearers of its ideology and defend its brutality and barbarism practised against its opponents. Arguments posited by the spokesman of both videos attempted to prove the legitimacy of ISIS and the illegitimacy of other participants in the discourse, particularly, the

Jordanian authorities and the clergymen who oppose ISIS's ideology. Therefore, the spokesman chose a sensitive and problematic matter of Ma'an by invoking past incidents and intriguing a lot of discussion in the Jordanian society. These incidents were highlighted in order to provide evidence of the brutality of the police and army in dealing with demonstrations and public disorder.

According to Doosje et al. (2015), many characteristics are shared by radical groups; one among others is their choice of a grievance in society to delegitimise the current authorities and institutions. These groups seized such grievance in any society to create a state of dissatisfaction and refusal of presumed humiliation in the morale of the targeted group. In the Jordanian context, ISIS tried to "play this role as a saviour of those suffering to start the first phase of radicalising new members" (Doosje et al. 2015, 79-84). This phase was intended to "heighten sensitivity toward grievance in the minds of the individual or target group and affect them psychologically in an attempt to make them embrace ISIS's ideology and then drive them to move to the following phases of allegiance and action" (Doosje et al. 2015, 79-84). Several manipulative arguments were posited in both speeches. The exemplified superiority of ISIS in its claims of possessing all the knowledge and legitimacy of its deeds justified its recourse to violence and destructive forces.

### **Socio-cognitive Discourse analysis**

Van Dijk (1996, 2006, 2015, and 2016) adopted a triangular relationship strategy to analyse the discourse cognitively. "Shared ideologies, attitudes, and knowledge are constructed in society's cognition through the cognitive process" (Van Dijk 2016, 758-760). This process includes "forming mental models or representations that control society's daily activities. Social cognition is positioned as a mediate interface between discourse and society" (Van Dijk 2016, 758-760). According to Van Dijk, the effect of discourse on the cognitive process is interchangeable; discourse contributes to formulating ideologies and mental representations, and it is affected by the pre-constructed ones. As the current study adopted Van Dijk's Ideology Theory, it was inevitable to analyse the speeches of ISIS according to the Socio-cognitive Approach to figure out the effect of ISIS discourse in constructing mental representations consistent with its ideology, and what strategies were used to achieve such goal. As the interchangeability effect of the discourse was explained above, the impact of ISIS's ideology on the speeches in question was also analysed. In other words, mental representations appeared or were constructed in ISIS's discourse. ISIS tried to form a group or groups that refuse the authority of the Jordanian regime and the authority of clergy men who oppose ISIS's ideology. In order to fulfil its goal, ISIS addressed groups like Jordanian tribes, Muslims in Jordan, and the people of Ma'an by activating their long-term memory and their social cognition to delegitimise Jordanian authorities.

### **Conclusion**

The linguistic analysis of our study samples provided a clear image of ISIS's ideology as it appeared in its discourse or affected its discourse to be consistent with this ideology. ISIS employed linguistic elements at different sentence and text levels to elaborate argumentations and propositions to convey its message. However, ISIS, alongside the regular usage of linguistic elements, manipulated these elements

and text structures to achieve its ideological goals. The superstructural analysis of the two videos showed that ISIS regrouped participants of the discourse into two main groups: the followers and opponents. The followers group included potential followers and sympathisers, like people of Ma'an.

Meanwhile, the group's enemies are Jordanian authorities, police and armed forces, and clergy men in Jordan who opposed ISIS ideology. According to this classification, ISIS identified the ideological schema of its group as it determined the enemies and potential members of ISIS. ISIS took real considerations regarding the pattern, context, perspective, and their relatedness to Jordanian society. Religious patterns expressed by Classical Arabic (C.A.) gave ISIS's speeches an Islamic flavour. The use of C.A., alongside its literary and rhetoric styles, was likely to block a complete understanding of ISIS's speeches and provide a room for manipulation. Ideological classification of society with a manipulated use of traditional Islamic patterns and classical Arabic language dyed ISIS's discourse to be the most apparent characteristic of this discourse. At a syntactic level, ISIS used topicalization and lexical emphasis to concentrate on out-group negatives and glorify its members' achievements.

The study concluded that ISIS built its ideological discursive strategies by choosing familiar linguistic elements to formulate persuasive and affective speeches, considering the Jordanian community's socio-cognitive situation. The socio-cognitive analysis of ISIS's speeches revealed that these speeches were affected by pre-constructed mental representations. It tried to construct a new state of unequal and unjust common sense as the socio-cognitive approach positioned the social cognition between the discourse and society.

Although the study mentioned the structure of society and discussed several linguistic features used in the speeches tailored to the Jordanian society, there were a few limitations of the present study. The study failed to address the socio-cultural or political orientations of Jordanian society. Future studies need to mention the traits of the Jordanian society managed by ISIS to reinforce the success of the discursive strategies used by this organization.

There is a need to construct a micro-social cognition of individuals in the targeted group through ISIS's exploitation of historical and religious events that justify its members' behaviours and defend its ideology. The study indicates that ISIS manipulated the socio-cognitive structure to construct cognition in the society, where the state of conflict was the rule and peace, and tolerance was the exception, not vice-versa. At the same time, it boosted the most delicate and sensitive issues in society to create an ambience of dissatisfaction and injustice in society. It is deemed helpful for any counterterrorist narrative to contain a high level of personalisation and humanisation intensively. It turned out to be lethal in texts meant for radicalising the audience through invoking a particular religious ideology, although manipulation in many texts can cause social discrimination.

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## عرض لتحليل الخطاب في أيديولوجية داعش في الخطاب الموجهة للأردنيين

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### الملخص

هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى التحقق من وجود الفكر في خطاب الدولة الإسلامية في العراق والشام (داعش) من خلال فحص العناصر اللغوية لخطابين بثتا من خلال فيديو يخاطب به الأردنيين. تبنت الدراسة مناهج تحليل الخطاب مثل النظريات الاجتماعية المعرفية والأيديولوجية لفان ديك والتي تم اعتبارها كوسيلة لكشف التلاعب في الخطاب ومعرفة الاستراتيجيات الخطابية الاستطراذية لداعش. أظهرت نتائج الدراسة أن كلاً من مقاطع الفيديو التي تم تحليلها على مستوى البنية الفوقية مثل السياق والنمط والموضوع أن داعش قد أخذت بعين الاعتبار السياق السياسي والاجتماعي للأردن لتوجيه خطابات تستغل الموضوعات والأنماط الإسلامية بطريقة مألوفة ومقنعة . وخلصت الدراسة إلى أن الاستراتيجيات الخطابية الاستطراذية لداعش بُنيت على تمجيد أفعال أعضاء الجماعة وإنجازاتهم مع التقليل من إيجابية المجموعة المناوئة لها ونزع الشرعية عن سلطتها. الكلمات المفتاحية: داعش، تحليل الخطاب النقدي، الأيديولوجيا، الأردن، الاعتراف المجتمعي.



## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> *jihadology.com*

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