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The role of stylistic features in constructing representations of Muslims and France in English online news about terrorism in France

Ashley Riggs

Abstract

Part of a larger study on style and cultural representation in the online news of three European countries, this article examines a corpus of news articles from the online versions of *The Guardian* and *The Telegraph* about the terrorist attack that took place in Nice, France in July 2016. Specifically, modality, use of the term 'jihad', and treatment of 'integration' and of Muslims are analyzed, and instances of alliteration and metaphor observed, to determine how these elements contribute to shaping journalistic representation of the event, Muslims and French society more generally. Preliminary findings suggest that both English news sources sometimes use modality to give suppositions a patina of fact, but that the *Telegraph* uses 'reportedly' and 'alleged(ly)' more often. In addition, the *Guardian* journalists sometimes misuse the term 'jihad' and its derivatives, despite the clear indications about this term which are provided in the editorial guidelines, while this does not occur in the *Telegraph* articles. The news sources also address the topics of integration and Muslims in diverging ways which in turn lead to distinct portrayals of French society. These differences may be tied to the political affiliations of the sources or to journalist identity, and merit further research.

Keywords: style; online news; Muslims; cultural translation; cultural representation; terrorism

'It is every bit as important that we combat racism, fear and prejudice as it is that we combat terrorism'

~ Trade Union Congress 2006¹

Introduction

This article is part of a larger project on translation and cultural representation, motivated in part by the issues raised in the epigraph above. The integral study examines online news from the United

Kingdom, Spain and the French-speaking part of Switzerland. This article will present the rationale, methodology and some early findings from the analysis of the English corpus: online articles from *The Guardian* and *The Telegraph* which report on the terrorist attack that took place in Nice, France on July 14, 2016.

Today, news addressing terrorist events frequently includes discussion of Muslims and integration, and often also incorporates revealing attitudes toward the city, region or country where the events occurred. Treatment of these issues in the English press, including when France is the topic, is shaped in large part by the contexts in which the news is generated, and read. Therefore I will begin with a short discussion of these contexts, in particular with respect to attitudes toward integration. Then, the intersections between translation studies and journalism are discussed, in particular the notion of cultural translation. There follows a discussion of the conflation of terrorism with Islam or Muslims in journalistic reporting. Then, the corpus and methodology are briefly presented. The discussion of results looks at the use of the term ‘jihad’ and its derivatives, the way modality (‘the property by which a proposition is qualified as possible, impossible, necessary, or contingent’ (*OED* online, 2017)) functions in the news texts, and their treatment of ‘integration’ and Muslims. The article ends with preliminary conclusions about the two news sources studied and also raises the key issue of the role of journalist identity, which warrants further research.

Integration

Integration is a central issue in France and the United Kingdom and often comes to the fore in political and media discourse when terrorist attacks occur. It has multiple and conflicting definitions, yet the term is employed often and as if everyone knows and agrees upon its meaning. Piquer Martí (2015), also referring to Daniel Wagman (2006, p. 209), warns of the ambiguous meaning and frequent misuse of the term *integración* in the Spanish context; the issues she raises are also valid for Europe generally.

In many cases, the concept includes the idea that for immigrants to be able to ‘integrate’, they have to alter their behavior and their values in order to acquire other values that are considered ‘superior’, that is, those of the host society (‘ours’). (Piquer Martí, 2015, p. 150)²

In the UK, the concept of integration has long been inextricably tied to a policy of multiculturalism – even though it is currently questioned by many, especially in conservative circles – while in France, it is closely connected to a notion of French identity which itself relies on *laïcité*: the secularity of the State (see, for example, Doyle, 2011; Vaarakallio, 2010). The value placed on multiculturalism in the UK is reflected in the previous coalition government’s conception of integration provided by a House of Commons parliamentary report (Women and Equalities Committee, 2016). It stipulates that policy should ‘focus[] on what we have in common rather than our differences’, ensure that ‘[p]eople of all

backgrounds have the opportunities to take part, be heard and take decisions in local and national life', and provide '[a] robust response to threats, whether discrimination, extremism or disorder, that deepen division and increase tensions' (p. 9).

The same report, however, formulates strong concerns about the current UK government's integration policy, which is inextricably bound up with counter-terrorism efforts and especially with tackling extremism. It encourages racial profiling and discrimination, in particular against Muslims or those perceived as Muslim.

We do not underestimate the challenges the Government faces in tackling extremism, but the conflation of integration with counter-extremism has exacerbated inequalities experienced by Muslims. The Government needs to tackle the disadvantages faced by Muslims in their own right, not through the lens of counter-extremism (p. 5).

As Lee Jarvis, a key author on UK counter-terrorism and security policy and editor of *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, has noted, 'counter-radicalisation policy [...] in the British case relies heavily on claims around fundamental or mainstream "British values"'.³ This term, like 'integration', is used frequently, particularly on the right, but not defined. Like the current tendency to conflate integration and counter-terrorism measures, it poses a challenge to multiculturalism. It suggests that there are 'others' who fall outside the realm of 'Britishness' (also undefined) and who are assumed to not share those 'values'. Moreover, as the term 'values' is morally focused, it claims superiority over those judged un-British while also intimating that they are a potential threat, since they do not share 'our' moral code.

Following this very brief discussion of the contexts involved, let us now consider how this study is related to the broader discipline of Translation Studies.

Journalism and cultural translation

Translation Studies no longer conceives of translation predominantly as interlingual transfer and allows for conceptualizing translation as *the transfer of culture*. The burgeoning sub-discipline of news translation has played an important role in enlarging the definition (Bielsa, 2007; Bielsa & Bassnett, 2009; Bielsa & Hughes, 2009; Conway, 2005, 2012a, 2015; Davier, 2013, 2015, 2017; Schäffner, 2012; Schäffner & Bassnett, 2010; Valdeón, 2017, 2010; Van Doorslaer, 2009, 2010a, 2010b, 2012), and in tracing the linguistic and cultural influences of cross-cultural communication (see, for example, Brownlie, 2010; Conway, 2012b; Davier, 2013, 2015, 2017; Hernández Guerrero, 2010; McLaughlin, 2011; Muñoz-Calvo & Buesa-Gómez, 2010; Valdeón, 2007). In her analysis of English-language newspaper reporting on the 2007 French elections, Brownlie (2010, p. 32) uses 'translation' in part to

mean ‘explaining and communicating events from one cultural and political sphere to another’. Conway’s (2012b) study of a Canadian website that presented stories about Muslim women, academics dealing with issues of secularism or immigrant communities, and an advocacy group, published in the series *Derrière le voile* by Radio-Canada, understands ‘these stories as acts of *cultural translation*’ (p. 1001; emphasis in the original).

Thus, the role of translation in its contemporary, broader sense (which also makes it essential) is to “provid[e] the means for the articulation of cultures and intercultural interchange” (Sousa Ribeiro, 2004). What, then, is culture? The *Oxford English Dictionary* online (2017) defines culture as ‘[t]he distinctive ideas, customs, social behaviour, products, or way of life of a particular nation, society, people, or period. [...]’ Culture is what *distinguishes* one group from another. Does this mean that it naturally engages in othering? That we are othering if we use it? Because of the roles and processes involved, I think not, as I shall now briefly discuss.

It is true that the title of the present article itself suggests two binaries: Muslim/non-Muslim and Britain/France. Each ‘half’ might be considered to represent a different culture, at least on *some* parameter(s) of the definition. To what extent are they different, to what extent can they relate to each other? Enter the translator, enter the journalist. D’hulst et al. (2014, p. 1255) place both within the category of cultural mediator, that is, ‘a person active across linguistic, artistic and geographical borders and as the carrier of cultural transfers’. I understand journalists to be intercultural mediators upon whom it is incumbent to ‘optimize communication between cultures’ (Chesterman, 1995, p. 149). This also means enabling contact between ‘different cultures [...] in such a way as to provide for mutual intelligibility, without having to sacrifice difference in the interest of blind assimilation’ (Sousa Ribeiro, 2004).

However, some would argue that this is more easily said than done. As Valdeón (2009, p. 149; also quoted in van Doorslaer, 2012, p. 1051) observes, journalistic reporting is ‘heavily influenced [...] by the national narratives of the writers, which permeate the events themselves and offer domestic perspectives of European and world issues [...]’. Indeed, articles are necessarily shaped by journalists’ backgrounds, experiences, and worldviews, as well as multiple external factors including information sources, time pressures, ‘the editorial conventions and policies of the media, [...] the expectations of the readership’ (Valdeón, 2017, p. 7), ‘real world developments, cultural norms’, the political leanings of the newspaper and ‘each side’s skills at frame promotion’ (Canel, 2012, p. 221). At the same time, the media are expected to act as guarantors of ‘the right to true, just and contextualized information’ (Piquer Martí, 2015, p. 138). As we will see below, the guidelines set out for journalists convey the same message. Importantly for the present study, this right ‘also extends to citizens who belong to

minority cultures such as, in this case, Muslims' (p. 138). The aim here is to explore certain stylistic characteristics and how they contribute to (mis)representing a specific group or society.

Needless to say, online news content appears with images and other visual media which play an enormous role in the reading experience. While discussion of these features is beyond the scope of this article, they will be addressed in the larger research project.

Journalism, terrorism, and the conflation with Islam

The global presence of terrorism in contemporary society and the related debates on immigration, integration, security, (counter)terrorism, Islam and Muslims make the present study highly topical. The attacks of 11 September 2001 generated a wealth of scholarship in these areas. Scholarly and journalistic works alike also affirm that the 9/11 attacks were a kind of watershed moment leading to the normalization of anti-Muslim discourse in the social, political and media arenas (see, for example, Ahmed & Matthes, 2017; Bielsa & Hughes, 2009; Birkenstein, Froula, & Randell, 2010; Burchardt & Michalowski, 2015; Fiddian-Qasmiyeh & Qasmiyeh, 2010; Ogan, Willnat, Pennington, & Bashir, 2014). The propensity of 'media discourse' in particular to construct meanings and identities of Muslims as the "others" in liberal societies' (Ahmed & Matthes, 2017, p. 235) has become more pronounced. The British media is even being held responsible for rising prejudice and hate crime against Muslims (Versi, 2016a). These negative views and actions are apparently widespread: A YouGov poll of British adults found that those who believe 'there is a fundamental clash between Islam and the values of British society' ranged from 44% to 59% between January 2015 and June 2017.⁴ A survey of UK school children conducted by the charity Show Racism the Red Card in 2015 found that 35% of respondents 'agreed or partly agreed' with the statement 'Muslims are taking over England', and estimated the percentage of Muslims in the UK population to be 36%, whereas the 2011 census showed this figure to be under 5%.⁵ Statistics from the Metropolitan Police⁶ show that islamophobic hate crime is very prevalent.

Moreover, according to Fiddian-Qasmiyeh and Qasmiyeh (2010, p. 310), 'religion has increasingly become a tool used by the media and politicians as a common denominator underlying new policies and the trans/formation of public opinion' in the UK and in Europe more generally. In the media, 'Muslim migrants', in particular, 'are largely presented as a threat to *national culture*', whatever that might mean (Ahmed & Matthes, 2017, p. 234, my emphasis; they also refer to Hussain, 2007). 'Most have found these media stances to obstruct societal integration of Muslim immigrants' (Ahmed & Matthes, 2017, p. 234). In sum, the media participates in a discourse of 'Us' *versus* 'Them' that contributes to the polarization of communities and societies. If we observe in detail how journalistic language contributes to such a stance, we can perhaps learn how to counter it.

Style in online news

Federici has called specifically for the kind of news study I propose, highlighting ‘the lack of a breadth of studies focusing on key stylistic features of online news.’⁷ The present study and the larger project will contribute to closing this gap while also building bridges between literary and non-literary analysis. My approach is inspired in part by the close analysis of style characteristic of translation criticism (Boase-Beier, 2006; Hewson, 2011). Scholars including Brownlie (2010), Munday (2007), O’Halloran (2010) and Simpson (1993) have demonstrated the validity of studying monolingual corpora in part through stylistic analysis, even with non-literary texts, while Boase-Beier (2006) has shown how close consideration of style can aid in the actual translation of both literary and non-literary texts. Brownlie (2010, p. 53) identifies the ‘use and explanation of French phrases’ by journalists as ‘a stylistic characteristic’. According to O’Halloran (2010, p. 100), even in ‘hard news’, the stylistic element of ‘metaphors can be ideologically significant’ and ‘influence how people think about’ events (my emphasis). In my analyses so far, not only lexical choice but also connotation, anaphora and cataphora, aspect and modality, metaphor, alliteration and assonance, repetition and interpellation have already proven relevant.

One might ask what stylistic analysis brings to this kind of study over and above discourse analysis, which is often used in such cases. In fact, ‘discourse analysis’ means different things to different scholars and, according to some definitions, stylistic analysis is a subset of it: ‘discourse analysts also use concepts (e.g. cohesion, coherence, speech act, genre, style, rhetorical purpose, transitivity) that have their origin in other sub-disciplines of Applied Linguistics, such as text linguistics, pragmatics, stylistics, rhetorics’ (Schäffner, 2013, p. 48). Specifically stylistic features of news and particularly *combinations* of these features have been under-researched up to now.

The Corpus

The monolingual corpus comprises a sampling of online articles from *The Guardian/The Observer* (TG) and *The Telegraph* (DT). These sources were chosen because they represent contrasting parts of the political spectrum, have roughly comparable readership statistics (Ofcom, 2017) and are not tabloids. The time frame for the articles is 15 to 18 July 2016: the day after the terrorist attack in Nice took place, and the following few days. This was done (1) to limit the corpus to a manageable size; (2) because a first dip in the number of news items occurred after 18 July; and (3) to avoid a distinct news cycle about a later attack on 26 July 2016. Because the corpus has been constructed according to these thematic and temporal criteria, it qualifies as ‘comparable’ (Kenny, 2001; Olohan, 2004). I do recognize, however, that *The Telegraph* content, unlike *The Guardian’s*, is behind a paywall and that this could

affect both reader characteristics and journalistic content to some degree. The validity of the premise of comparability could be tested with further research.

The Guardian

This online news source was chosen because it represents a center-left viewpoint.

The Guardian has established principles and guidelines to which those producing the news are to adhere. *The Guardian's* Editorial Code⁸ cites the Editor's Code established by the Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO). Among the instructions related to accuracy are (1) '[t]he Press must take care not to publish inaccurate, misleading or distorted information, including pictures [...]'; and (2) '[t]he Press, whilst free to be partisan, must distinguish clearly between comment, conjecture and fact.'

The Style Guide⁹ also addresses potentially contentious terms. For example, definitions are given for, and distinctions made between, 'jihad', 'jihadi' and 'jihadists'. The document indicates that the noun 'jihad' is '[u]sed by Muslims to describe three different kinds of struggle: an individual's internal struggle to live out the Muslim faith as well as possible; the struggle to build a good Muslim society; and the struggle to defend Islam, with force if necessary'. 'Jihadi' is a noun or adjective which journalists should '[o]nly use [...] in the most general sense to apply to a Muslim pursuing jihad, *in particular the first two kinds of struggle*. If referring to the third struggle, jihadist is preferable [...]' (my emphasis). The final term is defined as a noun or adjective referring to

[a] person who believes in jihadism, ie, the fundamentalist pursuit of *violent* jihads to defend the Islamic faith. It can be used to refer to members of formal organisations, such as Islamic State or al-Qaida, as well as those who are not. For example, the Charlie Hebdo killers or Woolwich murderers would be referred to as jihadist terrorists. (my emphasis)

Finally, the document stipulates that '[i]t is essential that an agreed code be honoured not only to the letter but in the full spirit.' The below analysis will show that this is not always the case in practice.

The Telegraph

This online news source was chosen because it is conservative. As mentioned above, *The Telegraph's* material is behind a paywall.

The Telegraph, like *The Guardian*, provides its journalists with guidelines based on The Editor's Code,¹⁰ albeit in much briefer form, indicating that 'The Editors' Code of Practice administered by the Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO) stipulates that the press must take care not to publish inaccurate, misleading or distorted information.' In its style book,¹¹ there is no entry for 'jihad' or any derivative.

The following table provides basic content analysis of the corpus used for this article.

<<< Insert Table 1 here >>>

Methodology

According to Zhang et al. (Zhang, Pan, Chen, & Luo, 2015, p. 228), '[s]tudies on media translation [tend to] pay more attention to extralinguistic factors, in particular the issue[s] of power, ideology, and [the context of] translation in news media' than to discursive strategies. The full context of newsmaking and journalists' activities is not examined in-depth here; it is a flourishing area within news translation in which substantial research is being done (see Introduction).

Studies that constitute exceptions to the prevailing focus on extralinguistic factors often concentrate on one specific aspect of language (for instance, metaphor (for example, Bazzi, 2014; Schäffner, 2014), neologism (Gallardo San Salvador, 2012) or lexical borrowing (le Poder, 2012)), or examine discourse types or positions of authority through analyses of reported speech in the news (see, for example, Baumgarten & Gagnon, 2008; Davier, 2013, 2017; Muñoz-Calvo & Buesa-Gómez, 2010; Schäffner & Bassnett, 2010). My focus on other aspects of journalists' language contributes to filling a gap in current research.

All of the articles in the corpus were selected from the "News" section of the sources' websites. As is evident from the content, however, they do not qualify solely as "hard news", but rather as a combination of news- and news analysis-type articles. Coming under the 'News' section clearly does not equate with providing totally objective information.

The decision to leave reported speech out of my analysis and concentrate on the journalists' own discourse affected corpus selection: texts about the attack were omitted if they contained too many quotes or were under 300 words. A final remark on the corpus concerns the dates of publication. While there are few TG articles from 17 and 18 July 2016, this is partly due to what appeared in the relevant search, and partly to a discrepancy in date indications between the search results and the date indicated online, rather than from any deliberate pre-selection.

I used the qualitative data analysis software QDA Miner for this study. Textual elements were coded in an iterative process of category definition and attribution within the broader categories of lexis, grammar, syntax and rhetorical devices, and under themes such as 'French society' or 'attitudes of/to Muslims'.

Results

The articles tend to set up an opposition between the victim – the Western “us” – and the violent, threatening “them”, who are typically Isis, affiliates, or specific attackers.¹² France is repeatedly thematized: placed in the subject position and often followed by passive constructions. References to Isis, the specific attacker or other negative elements, on the other hand, are coupled most frequently with active constructions.

‘Jihad’

Table 2 indicates the frequency with which the term ‘jihad’ or derivatives appeared in *Guardian* and *Telegraph* articles, instances of usage which clearly did not correspond to *Guardian* guidelines (see discussion above),¹³ and the articles in which these instances appear. The *Telegraph* articles were examined in terms of the *Guardian* guidelines as well because the *Telegraph* provides no instructions in relation to the term. Table 2 shows that non-corresponding instances *only* appeared in the *Guardian*, and consistently across articles from that subcorpus (in 8 out of the 13 articles), despite the detailed definitions and distinctions provided by the self-same news source; Table 3 presents the details of the textual segments containing these occurrences.

<<< Insert Table 2 here >>>

<<< Insert Table 3 here >>>

The term ‘jihad’ and its derivatives are used so frequently in contemporary discourse that they have become ‘buzzwords’. Employed without definitions in news texts, they are apparently assumed to be ‘understood’. Yet my results suggest that they are sometimes both misunderstood and misrepresented. In particular, the press often capitalizes on them in order to feed a discourse of fear. The result is three-fold: (1) ‘The press has converted “jihad” and related notions ‘into a synonym of Islamic terrorist’ (Piquer Martí, 2015, p. 149). (2) This is one way the press contributes to negative views about Islam, Muslims and even those *seen* to be Muslim. (3) Muslim communities, not only on the receiving end of the prejudice but also witnessing, in the press, aspects of their religion being instrumentalized, conflated with violence or, at the least, over-simplified or otherwise misrepresented, are more likely to distance themselves from what is clearly a hostile environment.

Modality

Modality (defined in the Introduction) is often carried by verbs but can also be conveyed by other categories of words (examples include ‘apparently’, ‘maybe’, ‘likelihood’ and ‘certain’). In Davier’s comparative news study of an English-language and a French-language corpus (2009, p. 78), which also examined modality, she observed that the law governing English media was stricter than that in France, Switzerland or the U.S. This, coupled with recent laws protecting intelligence bodies and a slate of anti-

terror laws, might suggest that when reporting on terrorist attacks, English journalists ‘may take more precautions’ (Davier, 2009, p. 79) in divulging information and in the language used. Indeed, Davier found that journalists writing for *The Guardian* on the terror-related event in question in her study used considerably more markers of modality than their French counterparts (p. 79). Below are some preliminary data on modality from my *monolingual* corpus:

<<< Insert Table 4 here >>>

The *Telegraph* employs modality more frequently than the *Guardian*. This is all the more true since it has a greater tendency to employ multiple modal words within the same phrase. But this does not tell us a lot, given that modality can express aspects as divergent as certainty and doubt. What kinds of modality prevail here?

Both sets of news articles use markers of uncertainty about twice as frequently as markers of certainty. There are two tendencies in particular, however, that are worthy of note. First, with regard to the particular examples of uncertainty, ‘reportedly’ and ‘alleged(ly)’, which allow the user to distance him- or herself from the information or avoid asserting it is factual, there are just two instances of ‘reportedly’ and no instances of “alleged(ly)” across all the *Guardian* articles, whereas one or both appear, and often multiple times, in five different *Telegraph* articles:

<<< Insert Table 5 here >>>

The second tendency is related to the ways in which the news sources *combine* modal words, including by merging uncertainty with certainty. The following paragraph from the *Guardian* is a particularly telling example of this. By closely aligning “if” constructions and other modal elements, such passages come to *frame the hypothetical as fact*. Let us examine the way this phenomenon plays out in TG2. First, note the bolded words below:

There are various **possibilities**. Lahouaiej-Bouhlel **may** be a genuine loner and suffering serious mental illness. His act **may** have no ideological element at all. This, however[,] **seems unlikely**. A second **possibility** is that, already angry and violent, he was inspired, **if** not directed, to commit his attack by Isis or extremist Islamic militancy more generally. [...] this **would** indicate the continuing power of the group's ideology. In this case it is **almost certain** he **will** have some contacts with others involved in hardline Islamic activism in Nice [...] This scenario is more alarming, **suggesting the possibility** of more attacks to come.

The modal phrase ‘seems unlikely’ discounts the conjectures preceding it. The second possibility, on the contrary, is given a patina of fact through the lasting focus upon it and through an accumulation of journalistic choices largely relying on modality. The phrase ‘if not directed’ insinuates that it is actually

very likely the perpetrator *was* directed by Isis, although this has not been proven. (The same type of construction occurs in TG1, written by the same journalist.) With ‘this would indicate’, we are momentarily back in the realm of the hypothetical; however, we quickly shift from ‘this case’ to ‘it *is*’ (no doubt there) almost certain’ as well as ‘will’, all of which move us back toward the realm of certainty and fact. Despite the return to the notions of ‘scenario’ and ‘possibility’, the final message insinuates forcefully that more attacks *will* come.

There are numerous instances of both conjecture in the absence of fact, and this kind of portrayal of the hypothetical as fact, in both sets of articles, although the *Telegraph* appears to use the latter in more concise segments, that is, phrases or sentences rather than paragraphs, which may make the effect less pervasive. Two examples, from DT22 and DT18, respectively, are “If **so**, this event provides further **proof** of France's acute vulnerability to Islamist terrorism” and “the **fact** that the key suspect in last night's attack was, **as far as we understand**, a French-Tunisian petty criminal known to the police **indicates** the French authorities **need to** improve their methods of monitoring **potential** Islamist terrorists.” The latter is particularly insidious in that it seems to suggest a) a direct link between petty criminality and terrorism and b) that petty criminals should be subject to surveillance.

Representing French society: ‘Integration’ and ‘Muslims’

In her study of news dispatches, Davier (2015) observed that these texts often introduced ‘so-called “background” paragraphs’ (p. 541) which contextualize the place(s) and event(s) being discussed. The ways in which this material is selected and incorporated ‘can shed a new light on’ (p. 541) the topic and story that precede it.

In my corpus, such paragraphs predominantly appear in the TG articles; DT7 is a notable exception DT7 (see below). While there is much to say about the segments describing French society in this corpus, I will limit myself to the treatment of two notions: ‘integration’, a problematic term as discussed above, and ‘Muslims’, and briefly highlight use of two resolutely stylistic elements, alliteration and metaphor. Let us first consider the frequencies of the terms and any derivative forms in the corpus:

<<< Insert Table 6 here >>>

While criticism of French policies is frequent throughout the corpus, the messages of the *Guardian* and the *Telegraph* are different; this, I argue, turns around divergent treatment of the notions of ‘integration’ and of ‘Muslim’. The two terms appear most in TG1, DT7 and DT26, with ‘Muslim’ occurring significantly more often in DT7 and DT26 than anywhere else in the corpus. TG1, having stated early in the commentary on French society that ‘France has a history of Islamic extremism reaching back decades’, gives more space to ‘grave problems within France itself’, also referenced in

TG4 as 'society's ills [...] and what was termed France's "social and ethnic apartheid"' (unattributed quote). Among the internal problems of France, TG1 highlights the marginalization of certain groups which can, it is suggested, make them more prone to becoming involved in terrorism. DT7 and DT26, both of which would qualify as "news analysis" texts, treat the issues very differently than the *Guardian*. To briefly address DT26, while the journalist ostensibly presents two sides by discussing the positions of two "experts", a strong net message of his text is that religion is behind terrorist attacks. The headline could not put it more clearly: "How religion can drive someone to slaughter his fellow citizens – and believe they deserve it."

DT7 is written by a French foreign correspondent who emphasizes her French identity in the text through such indexicals as 'here', 'we French', etc. The text lashes out at the kind of rhetoric employed in TG1. Indeed, while failings in 'integration' efforts and the bitterness left by the Algerian war are mentioned, albeit much more briefly than in TG1, blame is laid squarely at the door of (1) Isis and other extremist groups who work to radicalize Muslims in France, (2) 'imams' operating within the country and in particular in 'jails', which are predominantly occupied by 'Muslim men' and, more or less indirectly, (3) all Muslim men. Through use of thematization and an active construction, the message is that France was overwhelmed, not responsible: 'Radicalisation came to France in waves'.

Here, a metaphorical reference to water is also used. The water metaphor is one of two types Piquer Martí (2015) identifies which are employed in the news to qualify Muslims as a threat: 'natural disaster' metaphors evoking chaos or the uncontrollable through wave- and water-related imagery. Moreover, the French journalist explicitly links Muslim identity and violence: 'Recall [...] that Nice has the dubious distinction' – here as throughout the corpus, alliteration is employed to emphasize something *negative* – as 'the French city that sent the most volunteers to fight in Syria and Iraq: more than 120 young Muslim men [...]'.

Moreover, the journalist employs an argument frequently used against specifically Muslim immigrants. First, vehemently criticizing those who intimate that 'we [the French] "parked" [their term, not hers] Muslim immigrants into banlieue "ghettoes" and treated them appallingly', she claims that the problem must lie with them, as 'in the Fifties and Sixties, Portuguese and Spanish immigrants moved into social housing and integrated into French society without complaint.' For her, Muslim immigrants are more 'other' and cause more problems. When she does make concessions, it is to prove her point all the more: 'If many do integrate, Muslim men still disproportionately people French prisons'. Again, negativity is highlighted through alliteration; the verbal use of 'people' also suggests the journalist is writing in L2. In addition, in a move reminiscent of a would-be feminist perspective that criticizes Islam and Muslims on the basis of the belief that they subjugate women, she

distinguishes between the successes of *female* Muslims in French society – which she celebrates but also attributes to a desire ‘to escape the overbearing domination of their fathers and brothers’ – and the failures of Muslim men. Furthermore, ‘domination’ is presupposed by the definite article, insinuating that it is always present in these family relationships and that all Muslim men subjugate women. This is a frequent argument against the faith, employed, for example, in support of the burqa ban in France (the garment had already been mentioned earlier in the article).

Given who is to blame – extremists from elsewhere, imams and Muslims – we have a clear enactment of the ‘us/them’ dichotomy. In contrast, the TG1 article subtly observes that an (obsessive? misguided?) focus on secularity is perhaps part of France’s problem and interrogates the notion of ‘integration’ *à la française*: ‘the French policy of ‘assimilation’ rather than multi-cultural integration into the supposedly secular republic’ [sic] (the modal ‘supposedly’ allows distancing and criticism) ‘has, critics say, created fertile ground for polarization.’ The British journalist thus positions his country’s approach to ‘integration’ as superior to the French insistence on assimilation to a resolutely French identity which, whatever else it might mean, is supposed to be *laïque*.

These findings also raise the important question of the role of the journalist’s identity (see below). Therefore I end this section by highlighting an interesting choice made by another French foreign correspondent, this time in *The Guardian* (TG3). She ends her article with a quotation from Albert Camus, not only a renowned French author but one who wrote on the Algerian war and its implications for France. A translation of Camus’s phrase from *Actuelles III: Chroniques algériennes (1939-1958)* (1958) evoking ‘*les nocces sanglantes du terrorisme et de la répression*’, features in the final sentence: ‘Voices of reason and moderation will be drowned out – *the bloody wedding of repression and terrorism*, as Albert Camus once called it’ (my emphasis). The journalist’s preceding sentence includes the kind of water metaphor already discussed, while Camus’s original phrase contains another metaphor whose rhetorical effect is achieved through a surprising juxtaposition. The translation, in contrast, is awkward. The choice of “marriage”, as in Arthur Goldhammer’s translation in *The Algerian Chronicles* (‘the bloody marriage of repression and terrorism’ (1958/2013, p. 146)), one of whose meanings is abstract, is more fitting than the concrete ‘wedding’. British readers might not see the highly relevant link made with Algeria – especially since Camus is not contextualized for them. This and the translation choice itself could contribute to creating a distance between the reader and the culture in question.

Conclusions

While some conclusions drawn here are still provisional, the corpus is of a reasonable and representative size given the specific event and very short time period covered. While some results

are thus far attributable only to a given text or author, rather than to a specific news source, political affiliation or difference between the two sources, the methodology chosen and the resulting analysis flag effects which, if they prove common in a larger corpus, could demonstrate that journalists' stylistic choices participate in cultural misrepresentation and contribute to a discourse of fear which also 'others' Muslims and portrays them as a threat – issues which would therefore need to be addressed.

Uses of modality

Both sets of articles show a tendency to combine hypothetical constructions with other forms of modality which may give suppositions a patina of fact, although this may be more pervasive in the *Guardian*. Moreover, as we have seen, such language can contribute to cultivating a discourse of fear before the nature or extent of threats, or indeed, the facts, are known. The *Telegraph* articles instead show a preference for 'alleged(ly)' and 'reportedly' and their derivatives. These terms maintain a level of uncertainty when the facts or the veracity of a source are not known, thus distinguishing between conjecture and fact (recall the *Guardian* guidelines). Use of 'alleged(ly)' is also a kind of protection, given the legal weight it carries. It may be that *The Guardian*, in an effort to 'sell' because its news is free, is more suggestive and sensationalistic. One can nevertheless question the effects of such a move if they feed a kind of fear which also fuels dangerous tensions and divisions. One can also question the wisdom of including information which is not verified, especially if done in conjunction with other linguistic and stylistic choices that foment fear and distrust of certain groups.

Reporting on Muslims and 'integration': politics as usual?

The early findings on the treatment of Muslims and 'integration' seem to suggest divergences along political lines. While both the *Guardian* and *Telegraph* texts criticize the French government's policies and actions, the *Guardian* articles contextualize more, including by detailing what are seen as underlying causes of terrorism: internal societal problems, including the marginalization and alienation of certain groups, which may eventually lead them into violence. This aligns with a socio-political stance more typical of the center-left which values the social role of the State and multiculturalism, including acceptance of different religions. In TG1, that policy is in fact explicitly held up as preferable to France's 'integration' policies, which aspire to a 'Frenchness' closely intertwined with secularity. In contrast, the DT7 and DT26 articles contextualize less, criticize viewpoints similar to those represented in the *Guardian* and representative of the center-left's, and resolutely blame external forces, religion and/or Muslim men in France for the violence the country has experienced.

A case of journalist identity?

The DT7 article presents the interesting case of a French foreign correspondent who writes in English for *The Telegraph*. Given that she explicitly aligns herself with a perspective critical of (male) Muslims

and emphasizes her French identity, her English readership might infer that her views represent those of French society. Further research could look at how writings of other French foreign correspondents working for *The Telegraph* write on these issues to see if they reflect a political line, and compare their work with texts by *Guardian* French foreign correspondents, as well as British journalists from both sources.

In the TG article featuring the translated quote from *Camus*, the ‘Frenchness’ of the writer comes through in a different way and also provides an interesting example of interlingual translation. Instances of this kind of phenomenon in the corpus, especially as it involves L1 to L2 translation, merit further attention. More generally, while the journalist misuses ‘jihadi’ once, she does not otherwise misrepresent Islam, directly criticize Muslims or portray them as a threatening group. Nevertheless, the language she uses tends to sensationalize the violence endured by France, thereby emphasizing the nation’s victim status, which might indirectly participate in ‘othering’. Again, more research is needed to investigate how journalist identity, news sources’ editorial conventions and political leanings, and stylistic elements may interact to translate culture.

The present study also suggests other fascinating directions for further research, including the way the *constellation* of ‘related link’ online texts proposed to someone reading about a certain theme or event, such as a terror attack, portrays France and Muslims or (re)presents certain (political) views; differences between news content that is or is not behind a paywall; or the way that the combination of text and image represents French society or Muslims to readers in the UK.

Guidelines

Finally, as we have seen, guidelines exist but are clearly not always followed or enforced. More needs to be done in this area so that journalism fulfills its responsibilities. Although it is not always possible or necessary for news to be impartial, it is essential, in the current climate and with the fast and broad spread of online news, that it avoid exacerbating tensions, prejudices, and divisive dichotomies. We must not forget that these, like terrorism, are a real threat.

Notes

1. <https://www.tuc.org.uk/research-analysis/reports/congress-decisions-2006>. Quoted in a report by the Muslim Council of Britain (Versi, 2016b).

2. Translations of content originally appearing in Spanish and French are my own.

3. https://theconversation.com/counter-terrorism-policies-play-an-important-role-in-shaping-a-national-identity-narrative-conversation-with-lee-jarvis-88680?utm_source=twitter&utm_medium=twitterbutton

4. <https://yougov.co.uk/news/2016/02/19/tracker-islam-and-british-values/>

5. <http://www.theredcard.org/news/2015/05/20/perception-vs-reality-young-peoples-perceptions-of-society-lead-to-concerns-about-the-potential-development-of-prejudice>

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6. <https://www.met.police.uk/stats-and-data/hate-crime-dashboard/>
 7. Centre for Translation Studies (CenTraS) seminar, 2013: <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/centras/translation-news-and-events/centras-seminars-stylistics-and-the-study-of-translated-online-news>
 8. <https://www.theguardian.com/info/2015/aug/05/the-guardians-editorial-code>
 9. <https://www.theguardian.com/guardian-observer-style-guide>
 10. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/about-us/editorial-and-commercial-guidelines/>
 11. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/topics/about-us/style-book/1435316/Telegraph-style-book-Jj.html>
 12. Davier (2009, pp. 81–82) observed a similar phenomenon.
 13. Any instances where this was uncertain are not included in the list.

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Corpus (listed by code)

The Guardian (all retrieved from www.theguardian.com)

- TG1. Burke, J. (2016, 15 July). Why does France keep getting attacked?
- TG2. Burke, J. (2016, 17 July). Police and academics search Nice attacker's history for a motive.
- TG3. Nougayrède, N. (2016, 16 July). As horror strikes again, all eyes are on how France reacts.
- TG4. Chrisafis, A. (2016, 17 July). François Hollande pleads for unity amid anger over Nice attack.
- TG9. Rawlinson, K., Chrisafis, A., & Dodd, V. (2016, 15 July). From Charlie Hebdo to Bastille Day: France reels after new deadly attack.
- TG10. Chrisafis, A., & Dehghan, S. K. (2016, 15 July). 84 dead after truck rams Bastille Day crowd in Nice.
- TG11. Fischer, S. (2016, 15 July). 'My daughters saw bodies. Lots of them': witnesses recall Nice truck attack.
- TG12. Burke, J. (2016, 15 July). France attack: use of truck in Nice demonstrates evolving nature of threat.
- TG13. Chrisafis, A., Fischer, S., & Rice-Oxley, M. (2016, 15 July). France stunned after truck attacker kills 84 on Bastille Day in Nice.
- TG14. Chrisafis, A. (2016, 15 July). Nice attack is a crisis for presidency of François Hollande.
- TG15. Stephen, C. (2016, 16 July). Nice attack bewilders Mohamed Lahouaiej-Bouhlel's relatives.
- TG16. Jones, S., Chrisafis, A., & Davies, C. (2016, 16 July). Nice truck attack: Islamic State claims responsibility.
- TGObs17. Doward, J. (2016, 16 July). Tourism will not give in to terror, but the industry faces a rethink.

The Telegraph (all retrieved from www.telegraph.co.uk)

- DT5. Farmer, B. (2016, 15 July). Nice terror attack: Europe 'faces summer of copycat attacks'.
- DT6. Boyle, D., Morgan, T., Chazan, D., Turner, C., Willgress, L., Allen, P., . . . Millward, D. (2016, 16 July). Nice attack: Truck driver who killed 84 named - the news as it unfolded on Friday, July 15.
- DT7. Moutet, A.-E. (2016, 17 July). Bataclan brought us together - but this attack in Nice will drive a wedge into France.
- DT8. Morgan, T., Turner, C., Willgress, L., & Allen, P. (2016, 18 July). Mourners spit and throw rubbish on 'hate memorial' at spot Bastille Day terrorist was killed.
- DT18. Coughlin, C. (2016, 15 July). The Nice terror attack shows just how easy it is to commit an atrocity – and how hard it is to stop one.

- DT19. Mendick, R. (2016, 15 July). How the terror in Nice unfolded: Driver told police he was delivering ice creams - but instead delivered murder on a massive scale.
- DT20. Blair, D. (2016, 15 July). The crumb of comfort from the Nice attack is that even terrorists who plot alone can be stopped.
- DT21. Blair, D. (2016, 15 July). Analysis: Nice truck attack shows France's acute vulnerability to terrorism.
- DT22. Barrett, R. (2016, 16 July). The best defence against terrorism is to show that it does not work as a way of changing government policy or public perception.
- DT23. Samuel, H., & Morgan, T. (2016, 18 July). Who is the Nice terror attack suspect? Everything we know so far about Mohamed Lahouaiej Bouhlel.
- DT24. Samuel, H., Chazan, D., Turner, C., & Willgress, L. (2016, 18 July). French PM booed at Nice tribute for victims of terror attack.
- DT25. Henderson, B., & Sabur, R. (2016, 18 July). Nice terrorist attack on Bastille Day: everything we know so far on Monday.
- DT26. Meleagrou-Hitchens, Alexander. (2016, 15 July). How religion can drive someone to slaughter his fellow citizens – and believe they deserve it.
- DT27. Stanley, T. (2016, 15 July). The Nice terror attack is why Donald Trump might win.

Table 1. Corpus content analysis

News source	Number of articles	Number of words	Percentage of corpus
The <i>Guardian</i> (TG)	13	13,558	49%
The <i>Telegraph</i> (DT)	14	14,294	51%
Total	27	27,852	

Table 2 Occurrences of ‘jihad’ or derivative terms, and instances which do not correspond to *Guardian* guidelines

News source	Number of occurrences	Instances clearly not corresponding to guidelines	Where such instances appear
TG	12	9	TG1, 2, 3, 4, 9, 14, 15, 17
DT	15	0	-

Table 3 Examples of usage of 'jihad' or derivative terms which clearly do not correspond to *Guardian* guidelines

Case	Term	Relevant textual segment	Fits Code
TG1	Jihadi	jihadi strategic thinking, which encourages extremists to use violence to destabilise states or nations to allow their eventual conquest.	No
TG2	Jihadi operation	The use of a vehicle, the target, and the fact that the attack took place on the highly symbolic Bastille Day all suggest a jihadi operation.	No
TG3	Jihadi	Now, even without any link to Isis yet evident, jihadi terrorism has taken on a new face: the wild rampage of a truck on a touristy, festive Mediterranean shoreline.	No
TG4	Jihadis	More than 230 people have been killed in attacks claimed by jihadis in France since the start of 2015 [...]	No
TG9	Jihadi	Initial details suggested a tactic that jihadi propaganda has suggested for several years, with a vehicle ploughing into a crowd.	No
TG14	Jihadi	In recent months France was already seen by its head of internal intelligence as the country most under threat from jihadi terrorism.	No
TG15	Jihadi	Father of truck driver who committed atrocity said he was violent as a boy but showed no jihadi tendencies	No
TG15	Jihadi	But he insisted the teenager had shown no jihadi tendencies [...]	No
TG17	Jihadis	[...] the Côte d'Azur has earned itself a new, unwelcome reputation: as a breeding ground for jihadis .	No

Table 4. Number of occurrences of markers of modality across the corpus

Modality	TG	DT
Total	106	129
Percentage	45% of all occurrences	55% of all occurrences

Table 5. Occurrences of ‘reportedly’ and ‘alleged(ly)’ across the corpus

Modality	TG1	TG17	DT5	DT6	DT7	DT8	DT23
Reportedly	1	1	1	2	0	1	3
Alleged(ly)	0	0	0	1	1	1	0

Table 6. Number of occurrences of 'Muslim', 'integration', or derivative forms

	TG1	TG2	TG3	TG4	TG17	
'Muslim'	2	1	1	1	1	
'Integration'	3	0	1	1	0	
	DT7	DT8	DT21	DT25	DT26	DT27
'Muslim'	11	1	2	1	7	3
'Integration'	4	0	0	0	2	0