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Paper:

Lorenzo-Dus, N. & Macdonald, S. (2018). Othering the West in the online Jihadist propaganda magazines Inspire and Dabiq. *Journal of Language Aggression and Conflict*, 6(1), 79-106.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1075/jlac.00004.lor>

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Title: Othering the West in the Online Jihadist Propaganda Magazines *Inspire* and *Dabiq*

Abstract

This paper examines how the jihadist terrorist groups Al Qaeda and the so-called Islamic State discursively construct ‘the West’ as an alien, aberrant ‘other’ in their respective online propaganda magazines *Inspire* and *Dabiq* over a 5 year period (2010-2015). The analysis integrates insights from the field of Terrorism Studies into a Corpus Assisted Discourse Studies approach, working centrally with the notions of othering and conventionalised impoliteness. Our findings reveal not only that othering is a key discursive process in the groups’ online propaganda machinery but that it is discursively realised via homogenisation, suppression (stereotyping) and pejoration strategies. The latter are further examined via the notion of conventional impoliteness. Pointed criticism emerges as the most frequent conventionalised impoliteness strategy in both magazines. Threats, condescensions and exclusion strategies are also saliently used, albeit with different relative frequencies within each magazine. The findings show the value of Discourse Analysis to research into (jihadist) terrorism, including the possibility of drawing upon its findings to develop tailored counter-messages to those advanced by (jihadist) terrorist groups.

Key words

Jihad, online propaganda magazines, Al Qaeda, Islamic State, *Inspire*, *Dabiq*, conventionalised impoliteness, othering.

Title: Othering the West in the Online Jihadist Propaganda Magazines *Inspire* and *Dabiq*

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Authors' Bionotes

Nuria Lorenzo-Dus is Professor of Applied Linguistics at Swansea University, where she also founded the Language Research Centre. She has published extensively in media discourse analysis, especially broadcast and digital contexts, and sociolinguistics. Her books include *Television Talk* (2009), *Spanish at Work: Analysing Institutional Discourse across the Spanish-Speaking World* (2010, editor and author) and *Real Talk* (2013, with Garcés-Conejos Blitvich, editors and authors), all published by Palgrave Macmillan. Professor Lorenzo-Dus has received research funding from the UK's Arts and Humanities Research Council, the Economic and Social Research Council, the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council and The Leverhulme Trust. She has held visiting scholarships in Europe, the Americas and New Zealand.

Stuart Macdonald is Professor of Law at Swansea University, UK, where he also co-directs the University's CHERISH Digital Economy Centre (www.cherish-de.uk) and the multidisciplinary Cyberterrorism Project (<http://www.cyberterrorism-project.org/>). Professor Macdonald is author of *Text, Cases and Materials on Criminal Law* (Pearson, 2015) and co-editor of *Violent Extremism Online: New Perspectives on Terrorism and the Internet*

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Othering the West in the Online Jihadist Propaganda Magazines *Inspire* and *Dabiq*

1. Introduction

Jihadist terrorist groups operate within a sophisticated Information Operations (IO) architecture that is based on glocalised dissemination of their messages via multiple media platforms, ranging from billboards and short communiqués to online videos and magazines. Argumentatively, their IO are characterised by polarisation, whereby they consistently represent themselves and their enemies in, respectively, an extremely positive and negative light (Ingram 2015a, 2016; Lorenzo-Dus et al 2017). These communications are more than words: they are key weapons with which, in the words of former United States President Barack Obama, jihadist terrorist groups “incite people to violence.”¹ In the aftermath of physical attacks, the magazines seek to glorify the attackers and encourage others to emulate them. For example, Al Qaeda has consistently used its own online magazine – *Inspire* – to justify the group’s shifting stance on a range of issues, including the effectiveness of peaceful protests as a method for change following the Arab Spring of 2011 (Holbrock 2012). And the first issue of *Dabiq*, the online magazine published by the so-called Islamic State (IS), proudly declared a newly established Caliphate and has been used since to document the group’s self-claimed identity as a messianic organisation rather than a mere rival to Al Qaeda (Kaplan and Costa 2015).

Given the above, the principal aim of this study is to examine a specific aspect of jihadist terrorist groups’ IO, namely negative representations of ‘the West’, in the online propaganda

¹ The White House (2015) “Remarks by the President in Closing of the Summit on Countering Violent Extremism” - <https://www-whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2015/02/18/remarks-president-closing-summit-countering-violent-extremism> (last accessed September 2017).

magazines of two such groups: Al Qaeda and IS. To do so, we draw upon the notion of ‘othering’, focusing on the discourse strategies through which othering processes were carried forward in a total of 22 issues of *Inspire* and *Dabiq* that were published between 1st January 2010 and 30th June 2015.

Our focus is justified by the fact that Al Qaeda and IS are locked in a war of attrition against ‘the West’, which they attribute to their jihadist ideology. Jihadism is based upon a modified version of the Islamic idea of *da’wa*. Traditional Islamic *da’wa* means the initial call to Islam by Muhammad, which in modern terms translates as peaceful missionary work in converting non-believers to Islam. In contrast, jihadism believes that a new call for *da’wa* must be given to Muslims to take up jihad against the ‘non-believing’ world and that anyone not answering this call may be justly killed. Jihadists also believe that God has no partners, which makes secular rule incompatible with jihadism, and Western democracies – in turn – the enemy of those who follow jihadism (Habeck 2006). At the same time, it is important to emphasise that terrorist groups that self-identify as jihadist – such as Al Qaeda and IS – are far from homogenous. For instance, Al Qaeda has prioritised attacking the ‘far enemy’ (‘the West’), from which building a Caliphate will follow. In contrast, in the time period examined by our study, IS took the Caliphate as a reality and, whilst attacking ‘the West’ was still a priority, the group was more interested in expanding its presence and influence in Arab countries surrounding Iraq that did not seem to follow IS’s version of jihadism - the so-called ‘near enemy’ (Habeck 2006; Stern and Berger 2015; Weimann 2017).

By examining othering of ‘the West’ in *Dabiq* and *Inspire*, a further contribution of our study is to bring into fruitful dialogue the Discourse Analysis (DA) and Terrorism Studies (TS) literature on jihadism (Lorenzo-Dus et al 2017). In both academic fields, such research has primarily examined public institutions’ constructions of terrorists’ discourse (see, e.g., Lazar and Lazar 2007; Becker 2008; Baker 2010), rather than the language used by jihadists

themselves. In the case of DA, there is a considerable body of work on the language used by other types of terrorist group operating in Europe and the US (e.g. Bowden 2008; Brindle and MacMillan 2017; Reisigl and Wodak 2001; Duffy 2003; Simon-Vandenberg 2008; Testa and Samstrong 2009). To our knowledge, only a handful of studies have examined the actual discourse produced by jihadist terrorist groups. These have identified emotive imagery/symbolism (Matusitz and Olufowote 2016) and rhetorical themes of morality, social proof, inspiration and appeals to religion (Prentice et al 2012) as some of the key discursive components of the groups' IO architecture. As for the TS literature, the study of jihadists' messages has drawn largely upon Content Analysis methods (e.g., Chertoff 2008; Stout 2009; Stern and Berger 2015; Novenario 2016; Ingram 2015a/b, 2016). Linguistic analysis of jihadist terrorists' IO thus remains an under-researched though important area – one in which we believe the fields of TS and DA can usefully inform each other.

The article is structured as follows. In Section 2 we briefly describe the IO architecture of jihadist terrorist groups, focusing on the online magazines *Inspire* and *Dabiq*. Section 3 introduces the concept of 'othering' and describes the linguistic strategies via which individuals and/or groups may be relegated to the status of 'other'. In Section 4 we explain the study's methodology: the corpus we examined, the procedures we applied to collecting and analysing it, and the framework that informed the analysis. Section 5 reports and discusses the most salient linguistic strategies used in *Dabiq* and *Inspire* for othering 'the West', namely homogenisation, suppression and pejoration. In Section 6, and drawing upon our findings, we discuss the role that DA can play in both identifying specific strategies used within jihadist IO architecture and suggesting potential counter-strategies to those produced within such an architecture.

2. The Information Operations Architecture of Jihadist Terrorist Groups – a Focus on the Online Propaganda Magazines *Dabiq* and *Inspire*

Jihadist terrorist groups' discursive-ideological war against 'the West' is fought through a tri-tiered IO architecture that comprises a broad membership / supporter base, provincial information offices (known as *wiyalat*) and central media units. The groups' members and supporters disseminate their official communiqués – whether central or local – primarily via social media platforms, on which they have previously managed to gain considerable influence (Berger and Morgan 2015; Mair 2017). Provincial information offices tend to disseminate communiqués that focus on localised issues via local platforms like posters, billboards and public events. And central media units mainly release messages that seek to raise the groups' profile via online platforms, including propaganda magazines such as *Dabiq*, *Inspire*, *Azan* (group: Afghan Taliban), *Gaidi Mtaani* (group: Al Shabaab) and *Jihad Recollections* (group: Al Qaeda, forerunner to *Inspire*).

In a series of Content Analysis studies of jihadist terrorist groups' IO architecture, Ingram (2014, 2015a/b, 2016) shows how, across media platforms, these groups seek to influence supporters and enemies by synergistically drawing upon “pragmatic and perceptual factors” in their messages. Pragmatic factors include references to stability, security and livelihoods, which the groups use both to promote their politico-military campaigns and to denigrate the politico-military efforts of their enemies, that is, their ‘inability’ to provide stability, security and livelihoods. These factors thus seek to leverage “logic of consequence” decision-making processes: rational choice-making derived from cost-benefit analyses of alternatives (March and Heath 1994). Perceptual factors, for their part, seek to leverage “logic of appropriateness” decision making processes: choices made according to one's identity (March and Heath 1994). As regards *Dabiq* and *Inspire*, Ingram (2016) argues that they differ in the relative frequency with which their authors deploy pragmatic and perceptual factors in their articles.

Whereas articles in *Inspire* rely heavily on identity-choice appeals, articles in *Dabiq* tend to balance identity and rational appeals.

In another Content Analysis study of *Dabiq* and *Inspire*, Novenario (2016) shows how both magazines deploy the same set of persuasion ‘strategies’ – namely, attrition, intimidation, provocation, spoiling and outbidding – but in different proportions.² *Inspire* favours attrition, that is, the use of messages that seek to convince the enemy that Al Qaeda is capable and willing to inflict a high cost if specific Western policies continue to be enforced. In contrast, *Dabiq* favours a combination of intimidation and outbidding strategies. The former seek to prove the weaknesses of enemy governments, and to highlight IS’ victories in battle and its ability to destroy their enemies’ culture. The latter seek to draw readers away from rival terrorist groups by stating IS’ greater fidelity to Islam and commitment to fight ‘the West’.

3. Othering: From Social Processes to Textual Realisations

Othering designates a discursive process whereby individuals or social groups are represented so as to render them both as radically different to the individuals or social groups doing the othering (the in-group) and as deviant / distant – i.e., as “incompatible strangers” (Baumann, 1991, 66). The term has an extensive history in a number of disciplines, especially in Social Theory, where it has been primarily examined in the context of Western-Oriental relations and where Edward Said’s “clash of civilizations” thesis (1997, 2003) has proved highly influential.

For Said, the West has consistently othered large parts of Asia, and particularly the Muslim Arab countries of the Middle East, by engaging in “generalising, irresponsible depictions of Islam to an extent not known in relation to any other group on earth” (Said 1997, xvi). Such depictions, collectively labelled “Orientalism” (Said 2003, 1), position Western society as

² Novenario (2016) uses the term strategy in a non-discursive / linguistic sense to refer to the groups’ “drivers”, or intentions, as stated in the magazines.

having advanced beyond Christianity and, in marked contrast, Islamic countries as being “mired in religion, primitivity, and backwardness” (Said 2003, 10). A similar othering process, but in the opposite direction, is known as “Occidentalism”, whereby it is ‘the West’ that is consistently othered on different grounds, including arrogance and lack of humanity (see, e.g., Buruma and Margalit 2004; Sims 2012). Such polarised/polarising representations of individuals and/or groups lay at the heart of othering processes that result in increased hostility between the affected individuals / groups (Said 2003).

Polarisation has also received a fair amount of academic attention. In the field of (Critical) DA, Van Dijk’s (1998) socio-cognitive theorisation of social group formation is a notable case in point. According to this author, the main social function of ideologies is to categorise and protect groups, which makes group ideologies a key part of evaluative processes of in-group and out-group (us versus them) representation. These processes operate according to four discursive strategies that collectively comprise an “ideological square”, namely:

1. Emphasize our good properties / actions
2. Emphasize their bad properties / actions
3. Mitigate our bad properties / actions
4. Mitigate their good properties / actions.

Strategies 2 and 4 are “theying” (Coupland 2010) strategies that discursively construct the out-group as markedly opposed to the we (or in- group) and as deviant.

Informed by a comprehensive review of the DA literature on othering, Coupland (2010) identifies five strategies through which othering / theying processes are realised in discourse, namely homogenisation, suppression/silencing, displaying liberalism, subverting tolerance, and pejoration. These strategies are not fully distinct – social meanings attributed through

them are “achieved contextually and often implicitly”. This, Coupland (2010, 246) rightly argues, calls for caution against “investing too heavily in a unitary concept of ‘othering’ as a social or discursive process.”

Homogenisation designates the use of discourse that denies individuals their individuality, often by resorting to social stereotyping. Karim (1997,155), for instance, notes that European / Northern media discourses have repeatedly stereotyped Muslims, often through ethnic group labels such as ‘Muslim fundamentalist’ and ‘Islamic radical’ that, in their proliferation, have become short-hand cultural referents through which Muslims as a whole are constructed as deviant from a presupposed European / Northern “norm” of “uncommitted and non-threatening Christians.” Blommaert and Verschueren (1998, 117) refer to this as linguistic homogenisation, or “homogeneism”: a discourse practice that “abnormalises the presence of foreigners while normalising the autochthonous population’s negative reactions to their presence.” Homogenisation is regularly used beyond ethnic or religious identities, such as social stereotyping of the elderly in some media contexts as decaying, frail and incompetent (Coupland and Coupland 1999).

Suppression and silencing refer to strategies of restricted and zero representation, respectively. Suppression is linked to homogenisation in as much as it relies on drawing upon a limited set of features of the othered group – a set that suits the othering group’s own agendas and priorities. An instance of suppression, discussed by Talbot (2000), was limiting the representation of women in advertising in the middle years of the twentieth century to the domestic sphere. Zero representation can also contribute to minoritising and othering certain social groups by making them literally invisible in texts, as in the case of elderly people not featuring in many genres of print journalism (Coupland 2010).

Pejoration concerns the use of discourse in order to construct other individuals and groups in a highly negative light. The evaluative loading of the labels and attributes used in pejoration is always context specific, which makes it “impossible to read degrees of pejorativeness from linguistic forms.” (Coupland 2010, 250-251). As we discuss in Section 4, pejoration may be further interrogated via the notion of linguistic impoliteness.

Otherring is also discursively realised when individuals or groups pretend to uphold ‘liberal’ orientations towards those they seek to other. A classic example here is a racist representation accompanied by a personal disclaimer, such as ‘I’m not racist but...’ (see Van Dijk 1999). Such insincere displays of liberalism allow language users both to (try to) protect their own public image – or face (in the sense of Goffman 1967) – whilst also producing othering attributions or representations (Coupland 2010).

Tolerance subversion refers to “discursive work [that] shows that liberalism is over – idealistic or naïve or dull or outmoded” (Coupland 2010, 253). Humour is a widely used strategy for subverting tolerance in discourse. For instance, parodic representations of the language styles of minority racial groups, such as Ebonics (Black English), can be used to undermine the case for those groups’ language styles to be regarded as suitable for public discourse, even in the face of legal resolutions that grant the status of legitimate languages to Ebonics (Rickford 1991).

Each of the five othering strategies identified by Coupland (2010) has social exclusion, minoritisation and discriminatory effects for those being represented through them. Importantly, the strategies also have positive effects for the in-/ othering groups, whose internal cohesion may increase as a result of becoming textually exalted through marked contrast with the out-/ othered group. In the remainder of this article, we examine the main

discourse strategies via which othering is realised in the magazines *Dabiq* and *Inspire*, with a focus on the othered / out-group – ‘the West’. First, though, we describe our methodology.

4. Methodology

4.1 Corpus

The corpus for this study is part of a larger dataset comprising all the issues of five online jihadist magazines published during a six-and-a-half year period (see Table 1) and collected within an inter-disciplinary research project into online jihadist narratives.³

Table 1: The Online Jihadist Narratives Corpus and, in Shaded Rows, the Corpus for this Study.

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015 ⁴	Total
<i>Azan</i> (group: Afghan Taliban)					4	2		6
<i>Dabiq</i> (group: Daesh)						6	3	9
<i>Gaidi Mtaani</i> (group: Al Shabaab)				2	2	2	1	7
<i>Inspire</i> (group: Al Qaeda)		4	4	1	2	2		13
<i>Jihad Recollections</i> (group: Al Qaeda, forerunner to <i>Inspire</i>)	4							4
Total	4	4	4	3	8	12	4	39

Although a significant proportion of *Gaidi Mtaani* was written in the Swahili language, the other magazines were written in English and only contained a small proportion of Arabic

³ The project was co-directed by the authors of this paper. An online report with key findings can be accessed at <http://www.cyberterrorism-project.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/CTP-2015-Report-Nov-03.pdf>.

⁴ From 1st January till 30th June 2015.

language terms, principally proper nouns from Arabic contexts (e.g. Muhammed) and Islam-related terms. All the magazines contained a variety of items, including general articles, editorials, step-by-step instructions (for example, for making explosives), statements, creative works, interviews of jihadist leaders and eulogies.⁵ In the present study, we examine all of the items found in all of the issues (n= 22) of *Dabiq* and *Inspire* within the data collection period. As shown in Table 2, this totalled a corpus of 487,568 words and 2,479 images.⁶

Table 2: The *Dabiq* and *Inspire* textual and visual corpus

	<i>Dabiq</i>		<i>Inspire</i>	
	Number of words	Number of images	Number of words	Number of images
Issue 1	9,807	63	25,474	208
Issue 2	11,654	83	28,484	154
Issue 3	13,106	65	3,862	53
Issue 4	19,320	89	25,759	146
Issue 5	11,979	58	33,506	130
Issue 6	26,282	72	20,662	137
Issue 7	33,214	97	6,377	45
Issue 8	28,138	92	24,975	167
Issue 9	30,236	141	31,901	111
Issue 10	-	-	21,076	136
Issue 11	-	-	13,305	67
Issue 12	-	-	29,497	84

⁵ For a break-down of these sections in terms of frequency across all the magazines see Macdonald et al (forthcoming).

⁶ Although clearly relevant to the study of othering, space precludes an analysis of the images found in the corpus. This can be found in Macdonald and Lorenzo-Dus (under review).

Issue 13	-	-	38,954	281
Total	183,736	760	303,832	1719

We selected *Dabiq* and *Inspire* for our study of othering of ‘the West’ because, in addition to being published by arguably the two jihadist terrorist groups receiving the highest media attention in Western contexts, *Dabiq* and *Inspire* collate material from different affiliates and media types in their respective groups. They therefore constitute “the most comprehensive, cohesive, and comparable view of the narratives that these two groups seek to propagate at particular points in time.” (Novenario 2016, 953-4).

4.2. Framework

Our study adopted a Corpus-Assisted Discourse Studies (CADS) approach, which has proven felicitous for understanding the main representational discourses around a wide range of social topics and groups across (digital) media (see Baker (2015) for an overview). As its name indicates, CADS works at the interface of Corpus Linguistics methods and DA theories and concepts. It follows a “serendipitous journey” (Partington 2009, 286), whereby research is empirically designed in order to test pre-assumptions through corpus-based analyses of actual texts. In our case, knowledge of jihadist terrorist groups’ synergistic use of perceptual and pragmatic factors, and jihadists’ stance towards ‘the West’, informed the initial stages of the Corpus Linguistics analysis, the findings of which were treated as an initial “ ‘map’ ... pinpointing areas of interest for a subsequent close analysis” (Baker et al 2008, 28). This, in turn, drew upon qualitative examination of representational strategies for othering (Coupland 2010). Within these, the pejoration strategy was further analysed through the notion of conventionalised impoliteness (Culpeper 2011).

Informed by the results of a comprehensive, mixed-methods study including corpus and survey techniques, Culpeper (2011, 254) defines impoliteness as “a negative attitude towards

specific behaviours occurring in specific contexts” – an attitude that is “sustained by expectations, desires and / or beliefs about social organisation, including, in particular, how one person’s or a group’s identities are mediated by others in interaction.” He further identifies a set of impoliteness strategies that are conventionalised in English, that is to say, “regularly occurring bundles of language or non-verbal signs” in which “context-specific impoliteness effects are conventionalised” (Culpeper 2011,153, see also Culpeper et al 2017). These are listed in Table 3:⁷

Table 3 – Conventionalised impoliteness (Source: Culpeper, 2011, 254; see also 135-136).

Conceptual orientation	Some impoliteness strategies	Some impoliteness formulae
Face (any type)	<i>Insults</i> : producing or perceiving a display of low values for some target.	Insults (personalized negative vocatives, personalised negative assertions, personalised negative references, personalised third-person negative references in the hearing of the target).
	<i>Pointed criticism / complaint</i> : producing or perceiving a display of low values for some target.	Pointed criticisms / complaints. Negative expressives (e.g. curses, ill-wishes). Unpalatable questions and / or presuppositions.

⁷ Culpeper (2011, 255) stresses that the strategies and formulae listed “arose from [his] data” and therefore cannot be taken as an exhaustive list of all possible strategies / formulae. He also identifies (and examines) implicit ways of “doing impoliteness” in interaction (see Culpeper 2011 – chapter 5).

Association rights	<i>Exclusion</i> (including failure to include and disassociation): Producing or perceiving a display of infringement or inclusion.	
Equity rights	<i>Patronising behaviour</i> : producing or perceiving a display of power that infringes an understood power hierarchy.	Condescensions. Message enforcers. Dismissals. Silencers.
	<i>Failure to reciprocate</i> : producing or perceiving a display of infringement of the reciprocity norm.	Threats.
	<i>Encroachment</i> : Producing or perceiving a display of infringement of personal space (literal or metaphorical).	
	<i>Taboo behaviours</i> : producing or perceiving a display of behaviours considered emotionally repugnant.	

The link between impoliteness strategies and disaffiliation processes conducive to othering has been empirically proven in digital environments, specifically YouTube posts (see Garcés-Conejos Blitvich et al 2013). In the context considered in our study, the in-group may use different conventionalised impoliteness formulae in order to:

- produce negative attitudes towards ‘the West’ as the out- / othered group’s values (face orientation strategies) – be it via insults or pointed criticisms /complaints;

- exclude those belonging to ‘the West’ as perceived members of the out- / othered group, from whom the in-group may thus explicitly disaffiliate (association rights strategies);
- treat those belonging to the out-group, ‘the West’, unfairly (equity rights strategies) by violating power hierarchies, reciprocity or personal space norms, or by referring to behaviours of ‘the West’ that, in the eyes of the in-group, are repugnant (taboo behaviours).

4.3. Procedure

Our study took the following analytic steps:

- 1) We downloaded all the jihadist magazine issues from the Internet as PDF files, converting them into .txt file format and ‘cleaning’ them ready for Corpus Linguistics software analysis.⁸
- 2) We identified all references to ‘the West’ in *Dabiq* and *Inspire* via a search for all the occurrences of ‘west*’, that is, the word ‘west’ and all its morphological variants.
- 3) We extracted the expanded concordance lines for the occurrences identified in step 2), manually disambiguating them, and discarding those that were not relevant (e.g., references to countries containing the word ‘west’ such as ‘West Africa’).
- 4) We manually coded all the instances of ‘west*’ resulting from step 3 in terms of
 - a) Their extra-linguistic referent;
 - b) Their containing (or otherwise) one or more of Coupland’s (2010) representational strategies of othering and of Culpeper’s (2011) conventionalised impoliteness strategies and formulae. Regarding the latter, we made the decision to code as insults

⁸ In the United Kingdom, possession of jihadist terrorist groups’ magazines – including *Inspire* and *Dabiq* – without reasonable excuse breaches anti-terrorism laws (Terrorism Act 2000, section 58). Therefore, ethics procedures were followed prior to commencement of the research, including notifying relevant authorities.

negative references addressed as second person pronouns or vocatives, and as pointed criticism / complaint negative references addressed as third person pronouns or nouns. This was in acknowledgment of both the “potential for leakage between” the insults and pointed criticism /complaint impoliteness types (Culpeper et al 2017) and the impracticality of applying Culpeper’s (2011) criterion for differentiating between the two strategies *in physical contexts* to the digital context of the online magazines.⁹

Coding was conducted by the two authors of this study and a research assistant. Differences of interpretation were resolved through discussion.

5. Results

5.1 *The West: An Othered Group in Dabiq and Inspire*

Table 4 shows the number of instances that ‘the West’ was mentioned in *Dabiq* and *Inspire*, and the percentage of those that either contained or did not contain othering.

Table 4: (Non-) Othering ‘the West’ in *Dabiq* and *Inspire*

	<i>Dabiq</i> (n=106)	<i>Inspire</i> (n=402)
Instances of ‘the West’ containing othering	78 (73.58%)	369 (91.79%)
Instances of ‘the West’ not containing othering	28 (26.42%)	33 (8.21%)

The percentages of instances of ‘the West’ containing othering strategies were considerably higher (73.58%, *Dabiq*; 91.79%, *Inspire*) than those where othering was not present (26.42%,

⁹ Culpeper (2011) states that insults directly target the addressee’s face, whereas pointed criticism denigrates in the hearing of the target a phenomenon in which the target has invested face.

Dabiq; 8.21%, *Inspire*). The latter largely consisted of references to geographical locations or places of origin, as examples (1a) and (1b) illustrate:

(1a) The Muslims in the West will quickly find themselves between one of two choices [*Dabiq*]

(1b) In its latest effort to reach Western audiences, Al Qaeda has released... [*Inspire*]

As for instances of ‘the West’ containing othering strategies, these were not only quantitatively prevalent in both magazines but more frequent in *Inspire* (91.79%) than in *Dabiq* (73.58%). This may be explained in two, complementary ways. Firstly, as noted in Section 1, Al Qaeda prioritises the far over the near enemy, with a specific focus on ‘the West’. In contrast, IS treats every other group as an enemy, including rival jihadist groups – ‘the West’ is just one more group to be othered, in other words. Secondly, IS places an emphasis on offering a positive, alternative narrative – an “alternative to the status quo, not just criticism of it” (Winter, 2017,15). Such a narrative includes repeated calls to Muslims living in ‘the West’ to move to the Caliphate, of which geographical uses of ‘the West’ identified within the non-othering of ‘the West’ coding were part.

5.2. Othering ‘the West’ in *Dabiq* and *Inspire*

In this section we report the comparative frequencies of use of Culpeper’s (2010) othering strategies in the corpus. We also discuss, drawing upon a range of illustrative examples, how the magazines’ use of these strategies contributed to constructing ‘the West’ as a deviant, alien other, against which the in-group, in its entirety or constituent aspects / groups / individuals therein, could construct its own identity positively.

Three othering strategies were used in *Inspire* and *Dabiq*, namely: homogenising (Section 5.2.1), suppression (Section 5.2.2) and pejoration (Section 5.2.3). No instances of the displaying liberalism othering strategy were identified in the corpus, which reflects these

groups' fundamental opposition to liberal values. More unexpectedly, no instances of the subverting tolerance othering strategy were identified either. Nor were any additional strategies found.

5.2.1. Homogenising 'the West'

Both magazines used 'the West' as a catch-all term for a range of extra-linguistic entities, the frequency of use of which is schematically shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Extra-linguistic Referents for 'the West' in *Dabiq* (n= 78) and *Inspire* (n=369)

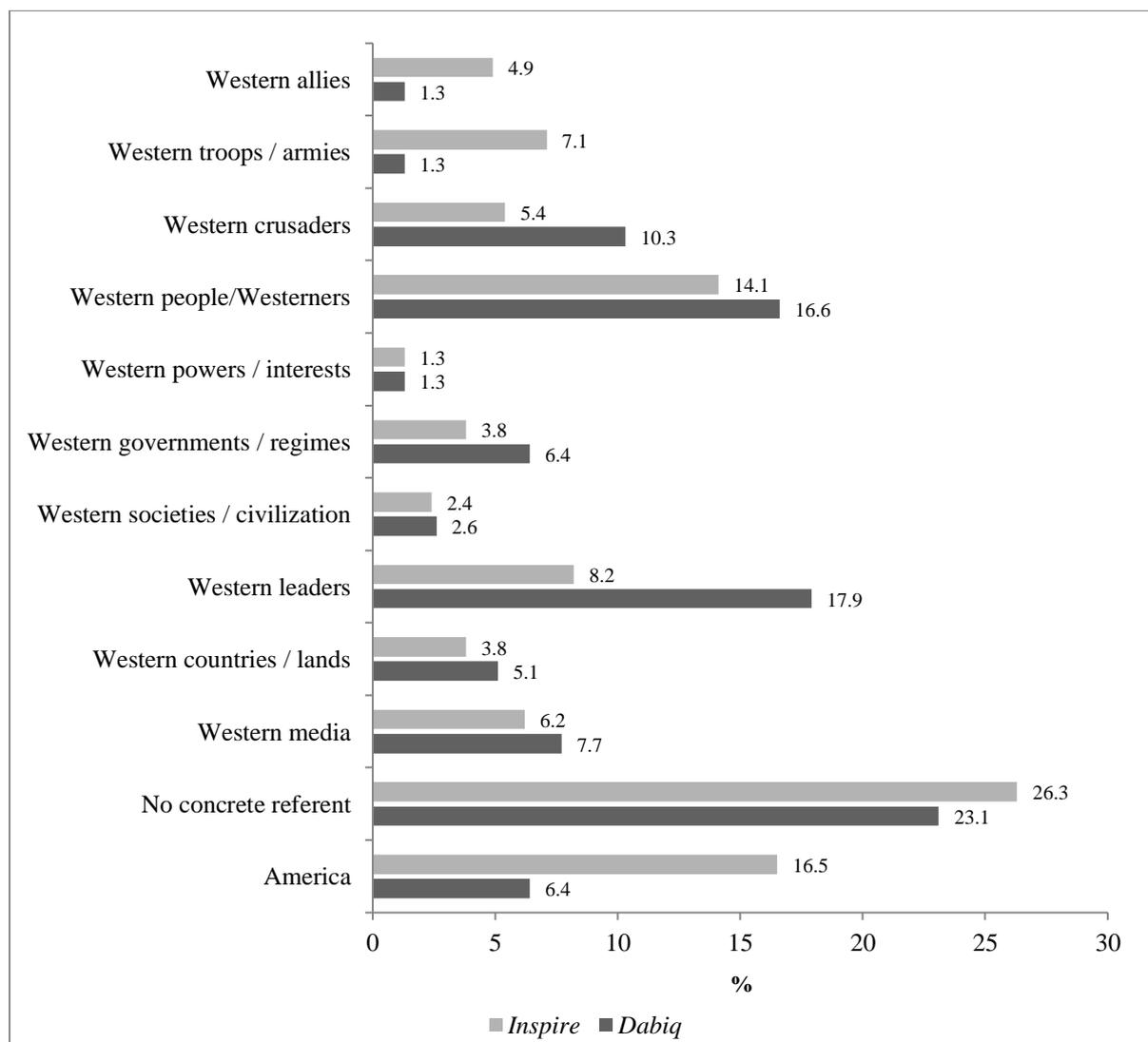


Figure 1 reveals two principal differences between the two magazines regarding the relative frequency of use of different extra-linguistic referents, namely more frequent references to America, Western troops / armies and Western allies in *Inspire* than in *Dabiq* (see examples (2a) and (2b)) and, conversely, more frequent references to Western leaders and crusaders in *Dabiq* than in *Inspire* (see example (3)). These findings reflect Al Qaeda's focus on nation-state level policies and, in contrast, IS' more personalised focus on Western leaders. *Inspire*'s focus on American and Israeli foreign policy is further evident in its reoccurring section 'Hear the World' (see Lemieux et al 2014).

(2a) America will never, if the West refrains from attacking us, enjoy security [...]

[*Inspire*]

(2b) Opposition to Western imperialism [...] that is imposed on the Muslim world by military force [*Inspire*]

(3) And after centuries of Western conflict with Persia and Russia, we find that two Western leaders – Bush and Obama – are determined to do everything possible to strengthen Persian and Russian influence in the Middle East [*Dabiq*]

Figure 1 also reveals a number of similarities between the two magazines. Firstly, both magazines subsumed under the label 'the West' the same varying entities – twelve different extra-linguistic referents altogether. Secondly, the most frequent extra-linguistic referents for 'the West' were the most generic ones in both magazines, namely an absence of a concrete referent (23.1% *Dabiq*; 26.3% *Inspire* – see illustrative examples (4a) and (4b)) and generic referents for people, that is, terms that do not specify identity traits (e.g. profession, ethnicity, religion), such as "Westerners", "many in the West", "Western people" (16.6% *Dabiq*; 14.1% *Inspire* – see illustrative examples (5a)/(5b)).

(4a) If the West completely failed to spot the emergence of the Islamic State...

[*Dabiq*]

(4b) The West has been plundering our wealth for centuries... [*Inspire*]

(5a) As uncomfortable as it may be for many in the West, there's little reason why the State shouldn't be considered a country. [*Dabiq*]

(5b) ...there certainly is a trend amongst Western people in general where living a difficult life opens the can of complaints. [*Inspire*]

5.2.2. Silencing and suppressing 'the West'

'The West' was not one of the most frequently referenced concepts in our corpus – for instance, the frequency of use of words related to the in-groups, such as religious terms, was much higher in both magazines than that reported for 'the West' (see Lorenzo-Dus et al 2017). Whilst not a silenced concept, 'the West' was systematically suppressed in both magazines, that is, it was consistently represented through a limited set of evaluative attributes, namely: immorality, violence and arrogance (see Figure 2). These attributes are commonly used stereotypes within Occidentalist discourses (see Buruma and Margalit 2004).

Figure 2: Evaluative Attributes for 'the West' in *Dabiq* (n= 78) and *Inspire* (n=369)¹⁰

¹⁰ The miscellaneous category refers to a set of evaluative attributes that were individually used <5% in the respective magazines, such as greed, corruption and fanaticism.

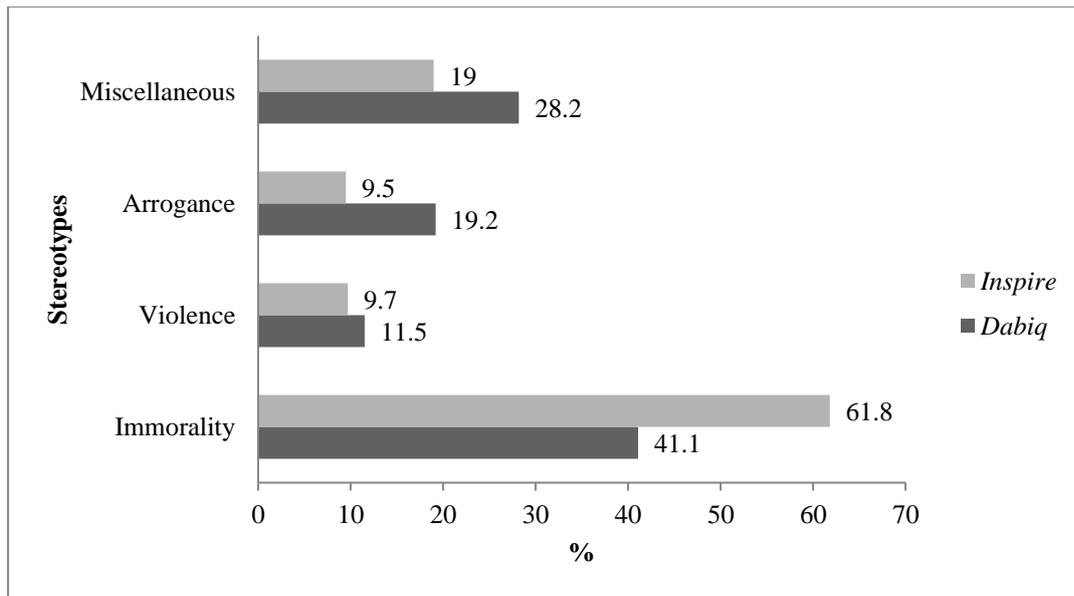


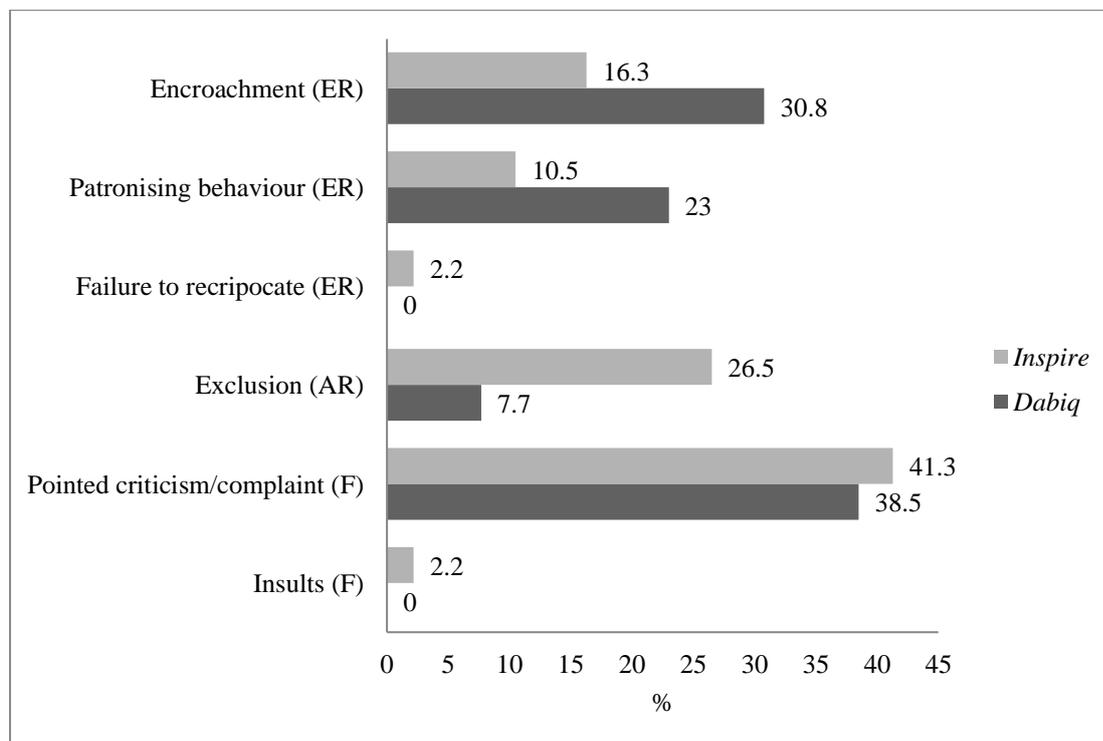
Figure 2 shows that there were some differences in the relative frequency of use of the three stereotypical traits associated with ‘the West’ in *Dabiq* and *Inspire*. Immorality was used comparatively more frequently in *Inspire* (61.8%) than in *Dabiq* (41.1%) and, conversely, arrogance was used more frequently in *Dabiq* (19.2%) than in *Inspire* (9.5%). Overall, however, the key point that emerges from Figure 2 is that both magazines othered ‘the West’ by suppressing certain evaluative discourses and relying instead on the same limited set of negative stereotypes. This is consistent with Sivek’s finding that “*Inspire* discusses the enemy little beyond describing injustices and violence done to Muslims, resulting in a thin portrait of those whom Al Qaeda fights” (2013, 16). In both *Inspire* and *Dabiq* the principal trait that was attributed to ‘the West’ was immorality. Emphasising the personal and obligatory nature of the call to jihad (Macdonald 2016), the magazines contrast ‘good’ or ‘true’ Muslims – who heed the call to jihad – with ‘bad’ Muslims – who by their inaction become complicit in the immorality of ‘the West’. The suppressing and homogenisation strategies were thus used in a mutually reinforcing way. Through their combined, recurrent use, *Dabiq* and *Inspire* constructed ‘the West’ as an un-nuanced entity, one reduced to one principal (immorality) and two supporting (violence and arrogance) negative stereotypes. As

Sivek explains, this contributes to a wider superhero narrative which enhances the magazine’s “ability to move prospective jihadis into the acceptance stage of the self-radicalization process” (2013, 17).

5.2.3 Pejoration

In this section, we report and explain how the othering strategy of pejoration was realised in the data by means of conventionalised impoliteness (see Section 4.2 – Table 3). Figure 3 shows the percentage of use of conventionalised impoliteness strategies in *Dabiq* and *Inspire*. No instances of the ‘taboo behaviour’ strategy were identified in either magazine, hence it not being included. The abbreviations (ER), (AR) and (F) are used to indicate the impoliteness conceptual orientation within which these strategies are located in Culpeper’s (2010) work , respectively ‘Equity Rights’, ‘Association Rights’ and ‘Face’.

Figure 3: Use of Conventionalised Impoliteness Strategies in *Dabiq* (n= 78) and *Inspire* (n=369).



As Figure 3 reveals, although both magazines oriented their impoliteness work towards face, association rights and equity rights, there were differences in the frequency of use of the impoliteness strategies within each of these broad conceptual orientations. In the case of impoliteness conceptually oriented towards face, the ‘insults’ strategy was much less frequent than the ‘pointed criticism / complaint’ strategy: 0% (*Dabiq*); 2.2% (*Inspire*) and 38.5% (*Dabiq*); 41.3% (*Inspire*), respectively. As for impoliteness conceptually oriented towards association rights, the ‘failure to reciprocate’ strategy was considerably less frequently used (0% (*Dabiq*); 2.2% (*Inspire*)) than the other strategies in that category, namely ‘encroachment’ (30.8% (*Dabiq*); 16.3% (*Inspire*)) and ‘patronising behaviour’ (23% (*Dabiq*); 10.5% (*Inspire*)). In the case of impoliteness conceptually oriented towards association rights, the frequency of use of its only strategy – ‘exclusion’ – was much higher in *Inspire* (26.5%) than in *Dabiq* (7.7%). Exclusion was mainly realised through the use of statements that identified behaviour or beliefs in ‘the West’ as being in direct opposition to the two groups’ actions or values, especially regarding religion, as examples (6a) and (6b) illustrate.

(6a) There is a tendency in the West to view Al Qaeda as a straightforward terrorist organisation, whose only goal is to wreak havoc. I think it is a mistake to think that way. Al Qaeda wants to provide... [*Inspire*]

(6b) ...the West has always held Islam and Muslims in contempt. Just look at western literature and to the portrayal of Muslims in the western media [...] Allah says the Jews and the Christians will not be pleased with you [5:54]. Therefore you should not be concerned about what the disbelievers think of you but you should be concerned what Allah, his Messenger, and the believers think of you. [*Inspire*]

Let us consider in some more detail the comparative use of other impoliteness strategies in the corpus, commencing with those oriented towards face, that is, ‘insults’ and ‘pointed

criticism/complaint'. The low frequency of use of insults (including vis-à-vis pointed criticism/complaint) may in part be attributable to genre conventions: articles were the most frequent type of item in *Dabiq* and *Inspire*. Some of these reported events, that is, they were 'news articles'. Others explained particular religious concepts, that is, they were 'theological articles'. In both article types, authors thus tended to use a scholarly or journalistic voice, as examples (7a) and (7b) illustrate, which did not entail the use of insulting interpellations.

(7a) A major crusader think tank – The Carnegie Endowment – wrote on '24 March 2015', 'The West currently sees the Nusra Front as a threat. But Nusra's pragmatism and ongoing evolution means it could become an ally in the fight [...]' [*Dabiq*]

(7b) The West has publicly stated its support for the revolution of the masses. But do they really mean it? Or is it because they do not realise the reality of what is happening? [*Inspire*]

In (7a) a direct quotation is used to present one side of the argument – that by the Carnegie Endowment, which is described as 'a major crusader think tank' – before putting forward the in-group's counter-argument. Note the sentence-initial adversative conjunction 'but' in 'But Nusra's pragmatism and ongoing evolution means it could become an ally in the fight...'. A similar two-side argumentative structure is used in (7b), although *Inspire*'s counter-perspective is here expressed by means of two consecutive rhetorical questions: 'do they really mean it? Or is it because they do not realise the reality of what is happening?'. Use of quotations (see also example (6b)) and two (or multiple) side argumentation are features of academic discourse also shared with journalistic principles of evidentiality (use of sources) and objectivity (see, e.g., Hyland 2000). Use of (rhetorical) questions, rather than accusatory statements, is also a typical feature of media interviews (Clayman and Heritage 2002)

‘Pointed criticism/complaint’, for its part, was the most frequently used conventionalised impoliteness strategy in the two magazines, displaying similar percentages of use in *Dabiq* (38.5%) and *Inspire* (41.3%). The strategy was mainly realised via third person negative references (Examples (8a) and (8b)) and, less commonly, challenging or unpalatable questions (Examples (7b) above and also (9a) and (9b)).

(8a) Allah’s ruling and adherence to His guidance, bi idhnillāh, that will protect the Muslims from treading the same rotten course that the West has chosen to pursue. [*Dabiq*]

(8b) But the West is hiding behind a nigab of human rights, civil liberties, women’s rights, gender equality and other rallying slogans while in practice it is being imperialistic, intolerant, chauvinistic and discriminating against the Muslim population of Western countries. [*Inspire*]

(9a) ...why are Muslims getting angrier and angrier about how the West arrogantly pushes and shoves? [*Dabiq*]

(9b) Since when did the West have a good image of Islam and Muslims to start with? [*Inspire*]

It is important to note that the frequencies of use of this conventionalised impoliteness strategy in our corpus are considerably higher than those identified for it in other contexts in which impoliteness has also been found to feature saliently. Kleinke and Bös (2015), for example, found pointed criticism to be the most frequent type of conventionalised impoliteness in the BBC’s online forum *Have Your Say* (21%). In contrast, with a 47% frequency of use, insults were by far the most frequent conventionalised impoliteness strategy in Culpeper et al’s (2017) legal context of England and Wales Crown Prosecution Service

records of trial transcripts, with pointed criticism not featuring at all. The discrepancy in these findings may be partly due to the differences in the contexts examined. In the case of magazines, members of the othered group are not their main target readership. Instead, the magazines rely on identity choice messaging: they seek to persuade potential recruits, trying to get them to disaffiliate from ‘the West’.

Let us consider, finally, the use of impoliteness strategies with an orientation towards equity rights, i.e., ‘patronising behaviour’, ‘encroachment’ and ‘failure to reciprocate’. As shown in Figure 3, both magazines used the first two of these strategies more than the third one. This suggests the groups’ concern, when orienting their impoliteness work towards association rights, with projecting an image of superior power over ‘the West’ (‘patronising behaviour’) and / or intimidating strength (‘threats’).

Although both magazines used these two impoliteness strategies, there were salient differences regarding their actual frequencies of use. *Dabiq*’s use of the ‘patronising behaviour’ strategy – at 23% - was not only the second most frequent strategy in that magazine but also doubled its frequency of use in *Inspire* (10.5%). This suggests that displaying superiority through belittling the ‘other’ may be a particular concern for IS.

The ‘patronising behaviour’ impoliteness strategy was mainly realised via the impoliteness formula of ‘condescension’, a common theme being ‘the West’s’ unpreparedness and failure to see the ‘obvious’ superiority of the in-group. Example (10) illustrates this:

(10) The West and its allies have, once again, been caught completely by surprise ...
the West completely failed to spot the emergence of the Islamic State... [*Dabiq*]

In (10) use of the emphatic adverbials “completely” and “once again” convey the statement’s condescending stance. The latter is further emphasised through punctuation: the use of

commas around it. Condescension comes therefore not from ‘the West’ inability to identify the emergence of the Islamic State, but from it being “completely” and repeatedly (“once again”) unable to do so, which is represented as a failure.

Finally, use of the ‘encroachment’ impoliteness strategy was more frequent than that of the ‘patronising behaviour’ impoliteness strategy in both magazines. In *Inspire*, the respective percentages were 16.3% and 10.5%. In *Dabiq*, their percentages of use were respectively 30.8% and 23%.

Although the ‘encroachment’ strategy was the second and third most frequently used impoliteness strategy in, respectively, *Dabiq* and *Inspire*, the actual percentages of use were very different – *Dabiq*’s (30.8%) was almost double that of *Inspire*’s (16.3%).

Threats were the main impoliteness formula for the realisation of the ‘encroachment’ strategy. Together with insults, threats are typical of coercive impoliteness, that is, of “impoliteness that seeks a realignment of values between the producer and the target such that the producer benefits or has their current benefits reinforced or protected” (Culpeper 2011: 252). Culpeper’s notion of coercive impoliteness is in part informed by Tedeschi and Felson’s (1994) social psychology model of aggression, within which coercive action seeks to impose harm on a target or force his / her compliance. Importantly, Culpeper et al (2017) highlight that coercive action is:

about using impoliteness to reduce the target’s relative symbolic power (Bourdieu 1991), thereby boosting the speaker’s symbolic benefits (which in turn may lead in the future to material benefits).

Moreover, the realignment of values sought through coercive impoliteness may be seen by those who use it as “a matter of re-balancing things, or redressing a grievance” (Culpeper et

al 2017), which resonates with Tedeshi and Felson's (1994, 218) notion of "distributive justice", i.e., a "fair allocation of benefits, a fair distribution of responsibilities, and recognition of performance or effort."

The above kind of realignment is directly relevant to the context of jihadist propaganda, including the magazines our study considered. Both *Inspire* and *Dabiq* seek to impress the need for remedial action by depicting a crisis facing Muslims. Lemieux et al (2014, 365) note how *Inspire* uses both personal and social motivational elements to urge readers that "the danger to Islam looms large and therefore requires immediate retaliatory action", whilst Kirke (2015, 288) explains that "[t]he deictic center (the *Umma*) is quite literally surrounded by a rapidly encroaching and wholly illegitimate oppressive force that seeks to undermine, pollute, and ultimately destroy all that the reader holds dear". The only means of redemption is "jihad (understood solely in militant terms)" (Braniff and Moghadam 2011, 44). One frequent means by which *Dabiq* asserts the urgency of this call is warning that the Day of Judgment is not distant, but approaching (Macdonald 2017). Indeed, the very title *Dabiq* is a reference to a town in northern Syria where, it is said, a great battle will take place between Muslims and the 'crusaders' that will mark the beginning of the end of the world.

In our data, threats were constructed as a legitimate way to redress wrong-doing on the part of 'the West', as examples (11a) and (11b) illustrate.

(11a) And Allah is all encompassing and knowing [Almā'idad: 54]. It's Western governments' heavy handed tactics that generate the growing anger that will reduce Western nations to ashes... [*Dabiq*]

(11b) Because they are practicing a "right" that is defended by the law, they have the backing of the entire Western political system. This would make the attacking of any

Western target legal from an Islamic viewpoint. The entire Western world is staunchly protecting and promoting the defamation of Muhammad. [*Inspire*]

Both conditional and non-conditional threats were used in the two magazines. In the former, the threat is embedded within an implicated or explicated statement that it may dissipate, in this case, were ‘the West’ to change its *modus operandi*. In contrast, non-conditional threats state a commitment to harm someone / a group, here, ‘the West’, in the future without offering the opportunity for correcting the behaviour that led to the threat (see Culpeper et al 2017; also Martínez-Cabrera 2009).

Conditional threats were used less frequently in *Dabiq* and *Inspire* than non-conditional threats. *Inspire* made more use of conditional threats than *Dabiq*, perhaps reflecting Al Qaeda’s focus on the foreign policy of ‘the West’. Consider example (12):

(12) ... when its [Soviet Union] leaders promised they would not interfere in the political upheavals in Eastern Europe, and kept their promise. Otherwise, be forewarned that any further Western attempts at sabotaging the uprising and moulding them to your liking will result in a backlash which will make you regret the day you put your hands where they didn’t. [*Inspire*]

In (12) *Inspire* offers the example of a state not under threat as a result of ‘non-interference’, contrasting it to the threat of ‘backlash which will make you regret...’ as a response to ‘further Western attempts at sabotaging...’. Importantly, a contrast is also constructed here between those who keep their promises (the in-group) and those who do not (the out-group). Members of ‘the West as the out-group are thus positioned as the ones to blame – and to regret Al Qaeda’s reaction (‘backlash’). Reacting with violence to broken promises is different to initiating violent action. In the logic of reasoning constructed within these threats

(both conditional and, as we discuss next, non-conditional), such violent reaction or ‘backlash’ is a ‘fair’ or ‘just’ course of action.

Examples (13a) - (13d) are illustrative of the use of non-conditional threats in the two magazines.

(13a) ... and all that the West will be able to do is to anxiously await the next round of slaughter and then issue the same tired, clichéd statements in condemnation.

[*Dabiq*]

(13b) Perhaps once there was a chance that an attack inside the West or on Western borders by the Islamic State could be averted through negotiations, but no longer.

[*Dabiq*]

(13c) The West has started this war and it will turn colossal. The West is awakening a sleeping giant. We, by the will of Allah, will not back down from the defence of our beloved. We will fight for him, we will instigate... [*Inspire*]

(13d) The West has been plundering our wealth for centuries. Now it is the time for payback. In Sha’Allah, the chickens will come home to roost. [*Inspire*]

As explained above, both *Inspire* and *Dabiq* depicted a crisis facing Muslims, the only response to which was considered to require militant jihad. In both magazines, the issuance of threats against the West – both conditional and non-conditional, but particularly the latter – was used to compel readers to respond to this call, thus drawing on threats’ perlocutionary effect of intimidation. Ingram (2016, 474) describes how, in *Dabiq*, readers are plunged into a bi-polar world, one that is portrayed as being involved in a “cosmic war and on the verge of End Times”, and thus requiring that “Sunnis choose between the forces of good or evil. Through this lens, becoming a foreign fighter or lone wolf terrorist is obligatory for any true

Sunni”. For her part, Winter (2015, 30-31) states that *Dabiq* draws upon urgency and religio-political arguments in order to legitimate “the imperative to act – whether the ‘act’ in question is joining, disseminating propaganda, or carrying out an attack” Similarly, throughout *Inspire* “the reader is warned about the danger posed by fellow Muslims who fail to heed the ‘true’ interpretations of Islam and encouraged to respond to global injustices perpetrated by the crusaders.” (Kirke 2015, 295). Indeed, a Content Analysis study of the first fourteen issues of *Inspire* found that a consistent theme was “call to arms”, with every issue containing a moderately to severely pervasive call to violent jihad (Droogan and Peattie 2016).

6. Conclusion

There is increasing recognition of the importance of countering the messages expounded by jihadist terrorist groups (see, for example, United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/70/291), many of which target ‘the West’. Since some early attempts proved counter-productive (Katz 2014), commentators have emphasised that consideration must be given to the content of the message, the target audience, the medium, the messenger and the dissemination strategy (see, e.g., Zeiger 2016). In addition to these questions of what, who and where, our study shows the significance of examining *how* these groups’ ideologies of hate towards ‘the West’ are constructed, focusing on the specific textual strategies that the groups’ online jihadist magazines employ in order to construct ‘the West’ as an aberrant, distant ‘other’. Here the field of Discourse Analysis has much to offer to the field of Terrorism Studies. Studies of jihadist narratives from the latter have largely employed Content Analysis methodologies. These studies have deepened understanding of the messages advanced by jihadist terrorist groups, and identified organizational weaknesses, including, for example, personality types who have come to “realize that life in the Islamic State is less blissful than they had expected” (Colas 2017, 179). Whilst these insights are

valuable in designing the objectives and message of counter-messaging campaigns, the insights offered by DA enable the development of tailored linguistic strategies that may be deployed in the construction of these campaigns. Halverson et al (2011) suggest, for example, that counter-messaging should avoid reinforcement of jihadist messages - such as references to acting unjustly and binary constructions - by, for instance, referring to American Muslims in order to challenge jihadists' polarised construction of America and Islam. Our study has shown such polarised in-group / out-group representations to be used extensively in *Dabiq* and *Inspire* when seeking to other 'the West'. The othering strategies saliently used in these magazines – homogenisation, suppression and pejoration – are at the heart of IS and Al Qaeda's identity-choice appeals (Ingram 2015a). In-group identity, out-group identity, crisis and solution constructs are mobilised discursively in these magazines – these help construct the in-group as both the champion of Sunni Muslims and the only source of solution for the perceived crisis. Their crisis is in turn discursively attributed to 'the West' – the evil other, who is regularly homogenised, suppressed through negative stereotyping and subjected to frequent pejoration in both magazines.

As regards homogenisation of 'the West', our results have shown a preference in both magazines for the use of generic referents, but also the more frequent references to America and Western military in *Inspire* than in *Dabiq*, and, in contrast, more frequent references to Western leadership in *Dabiq* than in *Inspire*.

Regarding suppression strategies, our analysis has revealed that both groups tend to represent 'the West' through a limited set of stereotypes (immorality, violence and arrogance), favouring -especially *Inspire* - immorality over any other attributes.

As for pejoration, our analysis of conventionalised impoliteness strategies has shown that both magazines threatened 'the West's' face, association rights, and equity rights. It has also

highlighted similarities and differences in the frequency of use of the impoliteness strategies within these three broad conceptual orientations. Similarities primarily concern (i) the ‘pointed criticism/complaint’ strategy (face orientation), which was the most frequently used strategy in *Inspire* and *Dabiq*, and (ii) very low frequencies (or no instances) of use for the taboo, insults and failure to reciprocate strategies. Differences mainly concern (iii) more frequent use of encroachment and patronising behaviour (equity rights orientation) in *Dabiq* than in *Inspire* and (iv) more frequent use of exclusion (association rights orientation) in *Inspire* than in *Dabiq*.

Having identified and described the use of these othering strategies in *Dabiq* and *Inspire*, we may tentatively suggest counter-messages that, for instance, show a wider set of traits of ‘the West’, thus seeking to counter the suppression strategy. Similarly, counter-messages that describe commonalities across groups and religions may be used to try to counter exclusion strategies based on heightened difference. And, although it may not be easy to identify a counter-message to the groups’ use of encroachment strategies, what seems clear is that counter-messages should avoid reciprocating the use of threats identified in the data.

This article has shown the value of Discourse Analysis research into the narratives of jihadist terrorist groups. The need for further work of this type is clear. In particular, there is a pressing need to advance understanding of the linguistic strategies used to construct a further in-group / out-group dichotomy: the ‘true’, or ‘good’, Muslim, versus the ‘bad’ Muslim (hypocrite / apostate). This further example of othering from within the pages of *Inspire* and *Dabiq* is repeatedly used in conjunction with both magazines’ othering of ‘the West’ to reinforce their calls to Jihad: the ‘good’, or ‘true’ Muslim will respond to the call, whilst the ‘bad’ Muslim, by failing to respond, will become complicit in the immoral actions of ‘the West’. It is essential not only that counter-messages respond to this discursive strategy, but also that they do so in an informed manner. By providing this empirical grounding, DA will

play an important role in enhancing the effectiveness of global efforts to counter violent extremist propaganda.

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