

وصف العالم في خطابات مختارة... محمود قادر و محمد فزع و إريك تابيرت  
وصف العالم في خطابات مختارة لرئيس الوزراء العراقي حيدر حول الانتصار على داعش:  
تحليل اسلوبي نقدي

## The Construction of the World Image in Al-Ebadi's Selected Speeches on the Victory Over ISIS: A Critical Stylistic Approach

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### الملخص

في عام ٢٠١٤ ، شن تنظيم الدولة الإسلامية حرباً على القوات العراقية في ثلاث مدن رئيسية: الموصل والأنبار وتكريت. استعاد العراقيون هذه المدن من داعش واحدة تلو الأخرى، وأعلن رئيس الوزراء السابق حيدر العبادي عن النصر في خطابات متلفزة. يحلل هذا العمل وصف العالم تحت سيطرة التنظيم باستخدام نموذج أسلوبي نقدي (Critical Stylistics) واحد، وهو التعددية (Transitivity). تُستخدم الانتقالية كوسيلة لتطبيق الأسلوبية النقدية على بياناتنا. يوضح هذا النموذج كيف يعبر الناس عن فهمهم للعالم من حولهم من خلال تمثيل الإجراءات والأحداث وحالات الوجود. ومع ذلك ،

ليست كل فئات العبور ذات صلة بالتساوي بالتحليل لأن بعضها نادرًا ما يستخدم في البيانات المستخدمة في هذا البحث.

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تطوير نموذج التعددية قابل للتطبيق على بياناتنا العربية (٥١١٣ كلمة) من النموذج الإنجليزي لمساعدتنا على إظهار كيف وصف العالم تحت سيطرة هذا تنظيم في خطابات السيد رئيس الوزراء السابق. لذلك تأتي هذه الدراسة في المرتبة الأولى في تطبيقها للأسلوب النقدي على البيانات العربية.

الوضع العام في البيانات متناقض. من ناحية الوضع غريب ومخيف ومن ناحية أخرى العراقيون متفائلون ومتحكمون في الوضع. تم بناء العراقيين كمحررين في مواجهة داعش الذين يوصفون بالمحتل المعادي.

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**Abstract**

This work attempts to develop a transitivity model to be applicable to six televised Arabic speeches (5.113 words) delivered by the former Iraqi Premier after Iraqi victories over ISIS. We argue that clear-cut boundaries between distinct process types are sometimes fuzzy when dealing with data in Arabic. The use of transitivity choices constructs a text-world (Werth, 1999) with value judgements attached to it, namely that the world is constructed on the binary opposition between the Iraqi actors are the (good) and the implicit patient (ISIS). Also, the Iraqis are given the heroic stance because they are ready to sacrifice for their country. We apply the framework of Critical Stylistics (Jeffries, 2010a) and build on one out of ten textual-conceptual functions of texts as proposed by Critical Stylistics, namely Representing Actions/Events/States, with the aim of deciphering ideological meanings in the speeches of the former Prime Minister.

## 1. Introduction

When wars happen, political leaders give speeches to influence people's understanding of the world. These speeches reflect the speaker's own understanding of the world around them (their point of view) and carry ideological meaning. By ideological meaning we mean value judgements added to the constructed text world (Jeffries, 2015) that could potentially affect the recipients' understanding of the world around them. A way to uncover ideological meaning in these political speeches by a detailed linguistic analysis of the speech texts is the framework of Critical Stylistics (Jeffries, 2010a). Jeffries lists ten textual-conceptual functions of texts, like Naming and Describing entities, and provides recommendations how to analyse their textual realisations, e.g. by looking at semantic choices, nominalisation, pre- and postmodifications of the head noun. Critical Stylistics is a branch of applied linguistics. It emerged with the publication of the book 'Critical Stylistics: The Power of English' (Jeffries, 2010a) and aims to close a gap between textual choices (stylistics) and the study of ideologies, identity, and inequality in texts [Critical Discourse Analysis (Van Dijk, 2001)]. It is an attempt to “assemble the main general functions that a text has in representing realities” (Jeffries, 2010a, p. 1). For a more detailed introduction to the framework, the reader is invited to follow up Jeffries' writings.

In this paper, the framework of Critical Stylistics is used to show how ISIS and the war with against them are constructed as unpleasant, strange and frightening from a perspective of a Muslim leader. We chose Critical Stylistics because it offers a developed theoretical underpinning and a more rigorous methodology (guided by the ten textual-conceptual functions of texts) compared to Critical Discourse Analysis. Critical Stylistics “introduces a set of tools, which,

whilst not complete, are nevertheless more comprehensive than any provided in the literature on Critical Discourse Analysis” (Jeffries, 2010a, p. 1). These tools are used to reveal ideologies projected by the linguistic choices that text producers make: (1) Naming and Describing, (2) Representing actions/state and events, (3) Equating and Contrasting, (4) Enumerating and Exemplifying, (5) Prioritizing, (6) Constructing Time and Space, (7) Negation, (8) Hypothesizing, (9) Assuming and Implying and (10) Presenting Other's Speech and Thought.

In the present work, we attempt to make explicit links between the textual-conceptual function of "Representing actions, states and events" and their formal realisation, that is an analysis of transitivity choices and verb voice. Our analysis follows the order of description, analysis and interpretation. In the description part, we identify features within the text such as the frequency and ratio of one transitivity pattern compared to another. The analysis reveals what the text means to us as readers/hearers (that is the effect the text has on us) based on the identified textual features. When interpreting our findings, we explain the stylistic effect of the text. This will be the beginning for further exploration of the other textual-conceptual functions in these speeches by means of Critical Stylistic in another paper in the future. We argue that ISIS Muslims (from the point of view of the Iraqi speaker) are constructed as leaning towards an extreme end of a constructed morality scale presented in the texts. We also argue that Simpson's et al. (2004, p. 72; 2018, pp. 74-75) model of transitivity is applicable to the analysis of our data with some modifications.

## 2. The Research Problem

This study is the first to apply a Critical Stylistic approach to the data under consideration. The model is invented from English and it is here applied in Arabic. This means we may face difficulties in translatability and thus we need to adjust the model to fit the date.

## 3. The Research Aims and Questions

In this section, we explain our main aim, argument and research questions. Our main aim is to develop a model of Critical Stylistics that can answer the following research questions:

1. How is the world Image constructed in the data?
2. What are the implications and ideologies behind such constructions?
3. To what extent is the Critical Stylistic model applicable to the analysis of the Arabic data under consideration?

## 4. The Research Hypothesis

This work argues that the critical stylistic approach is applicable to the Arabic data with some modifications. The use of this model shows that the world image, defined in this work, is the strange world. In this world, events and other elements are constructed differently from the ordinary world. This world is sometimes called the ideational world or the ideational meaning of the text. To answer these research questions, we concentrate on the description, analysis and interpretation of the texts of the speeches.

## 5. Methodology

In this study, eight speeches are collected, 4513 words, from the website of the Iraqi prime minister's office <https://pmo.iq/pme/>. The data was produced during February 2016 to December 2017. They cover the victories and ongoing fights with ISIS. We analyzed how these victories and fights are referred to, or the transitivity processed

chosen to depict them, and the relationships between the participants in these fights.

After searching for verbs in the data manually, we conducted a second search for verbs in the search bottom of the Microsoft word document. This is to increase the objectivity and replicability of our study. We in searched for Arabic past verb endings such as Taa (ت), Taa (تْ), Yaa (ى), Nuun (نْ). We also looked for what the present tense verb starts with yaa (ى) taa (ت) or nun (ن).

We also identified the dominant kinds of process (transitivity patterns) attributed to the subjects (the Iraqis and to ISIS): material action intention (40%), relational processes (17%), verbalization (10%), supervision (2%), and mental (14%) event (4%). These patterns are arranged in the order of frequency. These percentages are calculated by using this formula:

the percentage of the obtained verbs =  $\text{Frequency} / \text{the total of the verbs} \times 100$

Within each of these patterns, we searched for associated trends (themes). Verbs, which have similar semantic connotations, make one semantic pattern (theme) arranged in the order of frequency.

This helps us to show the effects of choosing one transitivity type over the other in the construction of the themes.

Of the five transitivity patterns, the material action intention is the most frequent, this could mean that the situation is fuller with palpable objects and physical activities than attitudes and feelings. This could have two different effects. The first is an alien world which is different from the ordinary world (Leech & Short, 2007, p. 146) not experienced by humans before. The second is the invitation of empathy from the reader.

## 6. Introduction to Transitivity as a Method of Analysis

Transitivity analysis as being put forward by Simpson (1993) goes beyond an analysis of whether a chosen verb requires none/one/two objects but is concerned with the constructed process type indicated by the verb choice and thus the meaning represented in a clause or sentence. In case of a material action intention processes, for example, transitivity analysis is concerned with the (social) actor and what process the actor undertakes, directed at a goal (Machin & Mayr, 2012). This means that transitivity shows the role of the doer (actor) in a process and its impacts on the recipient of the actions (that is the goal). It also reveals the role of each participant in the process and the way a process happens, which is indicative of a world view and thus of a judgemental process that has ideological meaning. Halliday (1985) treats transitivity as a semantic unit because a change of semantics can change the meaning of the clause. Matu and Lubbe (2007) state that transitivity represents meaning at the level of the clause.

However, our data show examples that need to be analyzed in bigger units than a clause and are seen as points on a scale rather than distinct categories. Certain transitivity choices can be used to hide or highlight responsivity of an agent (Oktar, 2001), or, in other words, "more causality is given to the doer of the action when the process of the sentence is conveyed through action verbs like 'helps'" (!!! INVALID CITATION !!! ).

The identification of transitivity patterns used to represent a group and their actions could help readers/hearers to discover the responsibility of the doers of actions, amplified by recurring transitivity patterns in the text. The decision of who takes the role of actor and who takes the role of patient or goal carries ideological meaning (!!!



INVALID CITATION !!! ). Transitivity analysis can therefore uncover the relationship between participants and how they are constructed in the news (Richardson, 2006). Moreover, it shows how language can be used to encode meaning in processes and relationships between participants in specific circumstances. In stylistics and critical discourse analysis, transitivity choices are regarded as being used by writers/speakers to shape realities or experience of the world (that is the ideational metafunction of language: the representation of the world through language) based on consciousness. Transitivity choices locate the participants in relation to the constructed realities (INVALID CITATION !!! ). Benhima (2016) argues that 'studying transitivity will allow us to reveal the writer's ideology'. Van Dijk (2015), cited in (Hassoon, 2019), argues 'that responsibilities of certain politicians could be deemphasized, embedded or excluded from the structure of the language. By contrast, out-group members are given active roles in clause structure when they are linked with negative actions'. We will show how this works in the political speeches under scrutiny.

According to Halliday (1985), transitivity has three elements: participants, processes and circumstances. The first could be people, things or abstract concepts constructed by noun phrases. They are categorized as doer of the action, called the agent, and participant or to whom the action is been done, called the goal/affected (M. A. Halliday, 1985). The process is constructed by the verb phrase, that is the predicator consisting of one or more words, which is the central element of the clause and the main concern of transitivity analysis (Halliday, Matthiessen, & Matthiessen, 2014). According to Hopper and Thompson (1980), cited in (Hassoon, 2019), 'the normal structure of any transitive action is a volitional actor who acts upon or towards an affected goal' which would be classified as a material action

intention process (Simpson, 1993, p. 89) and in terms of verb voice as active (verb voice). Any change in the order of these components changes in the process and ultimately the meaning of this clause or sentence (Kittilä, 2009).

In this paper, we apply Simpson's (1993; 2018) adaptation of Halliday's (1985) transitivity model. Transitivity refers 'to how the clause represents meaning' (Simpson, 1993, p. 80). Simpson (2018, p. 74) states that "[an] analysis of transitivity therefore probes a clause to find out who are the actors, the acted upon and what processes are involved in that action". He argues that speakers present their perception and experience of the world around them through language (1993, p. 82) which correlate with the ideational as well as the interpersonal function of language (M. A. K. Halliday, 1985). Simpson classifies transitivity patterns according to their ideological effects: Besides Material Action Intention, another material process type is Material Action Event where the actor is inanimate, or Material Action Supervention where the actor has no control over the action.

A different process type identified by Simpson is a Verbalization Process with a Sayer, a Process (usually a verb indicating an utterance) and the verbiage, that is what is being said (Simpson, 1993, p. 90). If people are given a voice and thus the (active) role of a sayer, they are regarded as powerful (Kittilä, 2009).

Simpson's (1993, p. 91) third transitivity category is Mental Processes, for example Mental Process Reaction with a Senser and a Process of a mental reaction to a Phenomenon (e.g. to like or hate sth or sb). A different subcategory is a Mental Process Cognition, again with a Senser, a Process (e.g. to think, to consider) and either a Phenomenon

or Circumstances. The ideological implication of this process type in light of the speeches under scrutiny is the representation of 'Us' reacting with reason and moderation to the negative actions of 'Them', one group reacts to the (negative) action of another group, creating an 'Us' versus 'Them' dichotomy (Van Dijk, 1998).

A fourth transitivity category mentioned by Simpson (1993, p. 91f) is Relational Processes, subdivided into Relational Processes Intensive, Possessive and Circumstantial, all consisting of a Carrier and an Attribute. The ideological implications of these process types are that opinions can be constructed as facts (!!! INVALID CITATION !!!).

After this brief introduction to the model of transitivity analysis employed under the headline of the second textual-conceptual function in Critical Stylistics, namely Representing Actions/Events/States, we present our analysis and show how this categorization of process types facilitates the analysis of the types of processes associated with the Iraqis and ISIS in the data and, furthermore, to identify the goals of their actions.

## **7. The Data Under Scrutiny**

The data we analyze in this study consist of six televised speeches which add up to 5.113 words in total. These speeches were taken from the website of the Iraqi Prime Minister's office <https://pmo.iq/pme/>. They were given during a time period from December 2015 to December 2017 and cover the victories over and ongoing fights against ISIS. We arranged these speeches in a chronological order as follows:

A. Liberation of Ramadi: a speech on Dec 29, 2015.

<https://www.pmo.iq/press2015/28-12-20151.htm>

B. Liberation of Heet: a speech on April 14, 2016.

<https://www.pmo.iq/press2016/14-4-20162.htm>

C. Liberation of Fallujah: a speech on Jun 17, 2016

<https://www.pmo.iq/press2016/17-6-20162.htm>

D. United Sanctions: a speech on Sep 22, 2016

<https://pmo.iq/press2016/22-9-201605.htm>

E. Liberation of Mosul: a speech on Jul 19, 2017

<https://pmo.iq/press2016/١٩-٧-201605.htm>

F. Joint Operation Command: a speech on Sep 25, 2017

<http://www.iraqiembassy.us/node/4230>

For ease of reference, we provide the letter for the relevant speech in the brackets in each of the following examples as indication which speech the example occurred in.

Our main focus of analysis is on how the victories and fights are linguistically constructed. In particular, we examine the transitivity processes chosen to depict the fights and the relationships between the participants in these sentences and thus in the fights.

After searching for verbs in the data manually, we conducted a second search for verbs by using the search function in Microsoft Word to increase the objectivity and replicability of our study. We searched for Arabic past verb endings such as Taa (ت), Taa (ث), Yaa (ي), Nuun (ن).

We also looked for present tense verbs beginning with yaa (ي) taa (ت) or nun(ن). In what follows, we present the findings of our analysis.

### 7.1. Material Action Intention Verbs

One example for a Material Action Intention process in the data is the following where the actors (we, that is the Iraqis) acted intentionally:

Example 1 (D) (all translations are by Ibrahim)

kamā	āntšrnāa	w	ḥarnā	ārāḍy-nā
and	PAST-won-1PL	and	liberated-1PL	lands-1PL
POSS				

we won and liberated our lands.

These processes of winning and liberating have connotations (Louw, 2000) of victory, fight, sacrifice and protection and choosing these verbs instead of others illustrates the worldview (point of view) of the speaker.

In the context of an abundance of Material Actions Intention processes we noticed in the data, the Iraqi military forces are foregrounded as strikingly active in a positive way. This trend is not surprising as it shows how ingrained the attitudes of the Prime Minister are.

The data also show a preference for active verb voice (over passive voice) in the construction of themes. Such preferences closely link the Iraqis to their actions as they are the doers or the actors in transitivity terms and create a feeling of protection and sacrifice.

## 7.1.1. Fight

Although the circumstances are under control and the outcome secured as mentioned, fighting still exists. Verbs with the connotations of fight are the third frequent verbs among all the verbs in the data. The actors in these Material Action Intention processes are the Iraqis and Iraqi forces which includes the speaker, namely the Prime Minister, by means of the possessive pronoun 'our'. The predicators *yqatl* /fight, *daqwa da'esh alhzymh*/ force ISIS taste defeat and *alm'erkh alty ykhwdha*/the battle the Iraqis experience. The goal these Material Actions are directed at is ISIS as in the following example:

Example 4 (A):

ğayšnā            l btl yqātl dā'š    wa    yhzm-hā            wa    yṭārd  
flul-hā

Army-IPL-POSS brave fights ISIS            and    defeats 3PSG and chase  
remnants-3 P POSS

Our brave Army fights ISIS, defeats it and chases its remnants

These verbs indicate a series of changes that ISIS goes through from the beginning (fights) to middle (defeats) and end (chase). This makes winning the fight clear because of the repetition of the same syntactic pattern our brave army+ verb+ ISIS (constructed by object pronoun) and the use of the semantically different verbs. This sentence would have been not just less effective but signals a move towards continuing the fight if the first and third verbs had been put in the opposite order.

The association of the addressees (Iraqis) with victory and ISIS with defeat allows no other possible readings wherein someone else defeated ISIS. This reflects the ideology among the Iraqis that the Iraqis fought ISIS on behalf of the world and won the fight as discussed in the next section.

## Victory

The fight discussed in the previous section resulted in victory which is constructed by twenty-four verbs, mainly *yarbah* and *āntṣrt*/win, are used in the data:

Example 2 (A) :

*āntasar* tum bi eawn allah aleaziz alqadir  
 Won- 2PL with help God Almighty

You won with the help of God Almighty

Example 3 (B):

*Aintasar-* an ā  
 won 1PL

We won

The Iraqis and the speaker are the actors of these processes (winning) while the patient is not explicitly mentioned. The verb win creates a binary opposition between the Iraqis and a perpetrator who is not explicitly mentioned because the verb win implies the existence of a doer and a patient.

The reason for the absence of ISIS as a patient here is difficult to establish, though it may be that the speaker/writer is responding to the horror that s/he imagines people experiencing if they were told directly that it was ISIS who would exist in the fight. Whether or not this squeamishness is indeed the cause behind such an odd sentence, the outcome of hiding the agent is, in contrast, the implication that there could be some unknown agent who is distinct from the addressee.

### 7.1.2. Sacrifice

Another theme in the semantics of verb choices points to a sacrifice Iraq made in order to secure peace and gain victory. This sacrifice is constructed through verbs like *dah*-/sacrifice. In all of the following examples, sacrifice is presented in a to-infinitive form:

Example 5 (C):

Dahat quwwa- tinā min ajl *tahrir* madīnati kum  
 Sacrificed forces 1<sup>ST</sup>P POSS to liberate city 2<sup>ND</sup> P  
 POSS

Our forces sacrificed to liberate your city

Example 6 (F):

Quwwāt īnā alamniaa *dahuu* bi'anfusīhum  
 li'ajal  
 forces 1<sup>ST</sup>P POSS sacrificed themselves to  
 himayat al- muatinin  
 protect DEF- citizens

Our security forces ... sacrificed themselves to protect the citizens

The to-infinitive puts the emphasis on the preference for, or the results of, sacrifice.

Although the process of sacrifice is intentional, a closer examination reveals this is not fully the case. The word (sacrifice) entails "the fact of giving up something in order to get or do something more important" (Turnbull et al., 2010, p. 1338). This means that the Iraqi soldiers sacrifice their lives in order to liberate and assure the safety of the country and thus the Iraqi people. This confirms our overall argument that transitivity choices should rather be treated as a point on a scale than separate categories. Previous studies (!!! INVALID CITATION !!! ) consider transitivity to be mainly a feature of the chosen verb as well as an issue of distinct categories. Nevertheless, we acknowledge that Simpson (1993, p. 88) argues that transitivity "refers generally to how meaning is represented in the clause" and that these foremost "semantic processes" have three components: the process itself, the participants and circumstances. Transitivity therefore pays attention to context and Ibrahim (2018, p.



175) confirmed this with his analysis of texts from the Kurdish language where transitivity is a feature of the verb in its context. We acknowledge that the speeches under scrutiny are given in Arabic and thus a different language than Kurdish. However, with regard to Example 6 we argue that the process of making a sacrifice can be done intentionally and for a reason or purpose or unintentionally but, in fact, can lead to the same result. What distinguishes both is that only in the first case (when done intentionally) it is regarded a sacrifice (where one puts the greater good above personal goals). In Example 6, the purpose of this sacrifice is to protect other Iraqis from ISIS and liberate Iraqi territory.

The use of li'ajal / to signals a relationship of causation. Strictly speaking, it denotes that sacrifice happens because of a danger or threat. Therefore, the head of the government of Iraq in his speech constructs a world where the two actions (to sacrifice and to liberate/protect) are complementary and belong together.

This reflects the ideology in Islam that Muslims sacrifice for their country the Muslim people and their homes as in the verse from the holy Quran ( If We had ordered them to sacrifice their lives or to leave their homes, very few of them would have done it: But if they had done what they were (actually) told, it would have been best for them, and would have gone farthest to strengthen their (faith)Ali (2001) Quran, 4:66). This further reflects the ideology that the Iraqis are Muslims and ISIS is their opponents. This ideology is expanded in the next subsection in the verb protect.

## 7.1.3. Protection

The reason for the sacrifice of the Iraqis discussed in the previous section is explained here:

Example 7 (C):

... al-‘irāqiyyun min kull mḥāfẓāt l‘irāq yḍaḥun bā-  
nfshm mn āḡl ḥmāyt-kum

...Def- Iraqis from all cities Def-Iraq sacrifice-3PL themselves to  
protect-2PL

...the Iraqis from all cities sacrifice themselves in order to protect you

The use of The subjunctive particle *mn āḡl in order to* with the verbal noun (as the English infinitive) form of a verb protect to express the purpose of sacrifice. It indicates an externally conditioned or internally motivated sacrifice. This reiterates the ideology that the Iraqis are ready to sacrifice for their country (discussed in the previous section).

Also, the use of the verbal noun *mn āḡl* he use o ( for your protection) instead of (le yahmukm) to protect you can make protection seem stable, mechanical and precisely defined to make the reader experience protection.

The actors ('the Iraqis from all cities') are placed in a subject position in this clause and this placement stresses the importance of the actors over the process. This shows that the Iraqi protectors and defenders have the will and ability to protect and defend the country which can have the effect of evoking enthusiasm from the addressee of this speech with the aim of them joining in the effort to protect their country.

## 7.2. Liberation and the Metaphorical onstruction of Material Action Intention Processes

In the portrayal of liberation, three cities (Rutbah, Fallujah, and Ramadi) as well as the whole of Iraq are the actors in the processes and thus seem to have become a driving force of a willing activity as in the following examples.

Example 8 (A):

‘ādat                      madinat      l-ramādy ila ḥuḍn      l      ‘rāq  
 PAST-return   city                      Ramadi      to   hug of DEF-Iraq  
 The city of Ramadi has returned to the hug of Iraq.

Example 9 (A):

sa   ta‘ud              kull madina ‘rāqia   ilā ḥuḍn      l-      waṭan  
 FUT-return   every city      Iraq      to   hug      DEF- homeland  
 Every city will return to the homeland hug.

In these sentences, "it is possible to imagine a human actor that has ‘activated‘ the inanimate entity but is no longer present in the scene" (DeLancey, 1991, p. 347). By means of the conceptual metaphor A CITY IS A HUMAN BEING (Examples 8, 9), 'the city of Ramadi' as well as 'every city' are constructed as animate actors who return to the embrace of their mother like the biblical parable of the prodigal son. It also reflects the ideology that the homeland is the warm embrace that contains people and protects them from external aggressions. These examples show that the country was not slow to respond to the return of the city giving its hug to the cities. This response portrays the city and the countries are two complementary elements because a hug cannot be done by one side.

It also reflects the ideology that the homeland is the warm embrace that contains people and protects them from external aggressions. Using a conceptual metaphor helps to construct generic

events with nonspecific (human) actors. These clauses help to develop a picture where inanimate objects appear to have a will of their own. Furthermore, treating cities as humanlike suggests the oneness of the people and their cities. This unity creates a world where the Iraqis and their cities are considered as one thing which is a strong force in the construction of identity and belonging. It depicts patriotism of the Iraqis because, in Iraqi Arabic, love is expressed to a thing when that thing is equated with humans.

The same conceptual understanding is visible in Example 10 where the (human) visual impairment of short-sightedness premodifies the head noun 'visions' which is not just eyesight but metaphorically refers to a human ability to have (political) visions or to imagine things for the future.

Example 10 (D) :

allti            *tyghdy-ha*            l-r'eia            l-qasirah,  
which        nurture-3SG        DEF- visions    DEF-short-sighted  
which short-sighted visions nurture

Those visions, however, become animated by being placed in the head noun slot of the noun phrase functioning as subject and are metaphorically constructed as a nurturer which usually is a role assigned to a female mammal. This way the visions themselves become a nurturer which is a Material Action Intention Process.

### 7.3. Constructing Evil by Means of Material Supervention Processes

The situation is a bit different in Example 11 where, without further context, terrorism can either be perceived as an (evil) human entity on the move or as a Material Action Supervention Process 'where the process just happens' (Simpson, 1993, p. 89) and TERRORISM is

perceived as CANCER that spreads in the body (that is in Iraq) and reaches, for example, the liver (that is a particular Iraqi city).

Example 11 (D):

s- *yasl* l *irhāb*

FUT- reach terrorism

Terrorism will reach

Example 12 (D):

al-aafh l habithah allti *astashrt*

DEF-plight DEF-malignant which spread

The malignant plight which spread

These sentences give the impression that the processes were not induced by any external cause or force. This is odd given that they depict the negative effects brought about by an external cause, namely ISIS this reduced the fear ISIS is causing (see section 2.11).

In addition, the actors (*alafh*/plight, *alirhab*/terrorism and *al'eya alqasrh* short-sighted visions/) are reified and personified because they are used with verb forms indicating material processes (spread, reach and nurture). The reification and personification give independent existence to the actors and thus could distances them from the writer/speaker. This helps the reader/hearer to cope with the actors' brutality which might otherwise be too difficult to bear.

### 7.3. Relational Processes: Aims, Iraqis and Respects

The second frequent transitivity pattern in the data are relational processes which express states of being, thereby showing the relationship between a carrier and an attribute. The carrier is usually the grammatical subject and appears together with a copula verb, the attribute is a subject complement in terms of grammar. Relational processes may be (a) intensive, expressing a descriptive relationship; (b) possessive, expressing a possessive relationship; or (c)

circumstantial, expressing time and place in relationships. In our data, most relational processes are intensive processes.

Returning to the semantic topics of the chosen verbs, we found that the construction of 'Pride' does not fit into the category of Material Action Intention like the others we looked at in the previous section, but rather belongs to two transitivity categories as we will see next.

### 7.3.1. Pride

Pride is the least frequent theme we noticed when analysing the semantics of the verbs used. There are only 10 verbs with connotations of pride. The meaning of these verbs can be interpreted in two ways: they are either Relational Processes Intensive or Mental Processes Cognition/Reaction (Simpson, 1993, p. 91f) in the same Arabic sentence. This does, however, not show in the translation where we use a form of 'to be' (is, am, are, was, were proud or feel-proud). In Example 13, the transitivity process, depending on how we translate the sentence, is either relational ('we are proud') or a Mental Process of Reaction ('we feel pride'):

Example 13 (A&B):

nahnu-	na-ftakhir	ka-	'irāqiyyun
1 <sup>ST</sup> P	COP-proud as		Iraqis
1 <sup>ST</sup> P	feel-proud as		Iraqis

We are proud as Iraqis

We feel pride as Iraqis

In the second alternative ('we feel pride'), the transitivity process is that of a Mental Reaction in that some internal process is being recognized and a feeling is being expressed in reaction to successfully protecting the country and its people. Here, the model of transitivity needs to be altered slightly which brings us back to the argument that Critical Stylistics is applicable to Arabic but with

modifications, and that transitivity appears to be a matter of grades on a scale and not a matter of distinct and separate categories. To the best of our knowledge, no other study has yet described transitivity processes in this way.

The above mentioned two possible interpretations are equally valid for the reader. The dual transitivity process portrays pride as a mental feature of the speaker where pride would not come to an end, while the mental process gives the speaker the mental power used to control the feeling of being proud. It also indicates that feeling proud changes from one form to another. This verb phrase feel pride or are pride indicates that the speaker is pleased about being Iraqis. This verb phrase feel pride or are pride indicates that the speaker is pleased about being Iraqis.

In Arabic, copula verbs (forms of 'to be') are not expressed syntactically in the present tense as in Example 13 but their meaning can only be inferred from context. However, the verb *Yakuun* can be translated as 'to be' and is used to emphasize a fact or a general idea (Tahir, 2009, p. 6) as in Example 14:

Example 14 (D):

daeish	hi	'aduww	un	haqiqi-un	li	l-
muslimin						
ISIS	PRO	enemy	INDEF	true-3PL	to	DEF-
Muslims						

ISIS is a true enemy to Muslims.

Example 15 (A):

fasayakuun	'āmu	2016	bi	mshi'eh	allah
'āmu					
Fut verb (to be)	year	2016	with	will	Good
year					

Example 16

alantisar l nha'ey

victory DEF final

The year of 2016 will be the year of the final victory with the help of God.

Example 17 (F):

hadf uha hemayat l- muatin

aim 3<sup>rd</sup>P POSS protection DEF civilian

Its aim is protecting the civilians

Example 18 (D):

Hadaf unā kana tahreer al-insan

Aim 1<sup>st</sup> P POSS was liberation DEF man

Our aim was liberating the man

Example 19 (C):

al 'irāqiyyun muahadun thda kum

DEF Iraqis united against 2<sup>ND</sup> P POSS

The Iraqis are united against you

In this article, we divide the relational processes into groups according to the grammatical subjects in the examples. The first group includes the speaker and their aims. Then, the speaker is subdivided according to the connotation of the attribute into liberators, protectors, united against ISIS. The second group following from the chosen subjects are respect with the attributes of sacrifice including martyrs, heroes and families:

Example 20 (B):

Tahya le awa'ale hum l mudaya

Respect to Family-PL 3<sup>rd</sup>P Poss DEF sacrificing

Respect is to their sacrificing families.

Example 21 (E):

Tahya le muqatle nā l abtal



respect for fighters 1<sup>st</sup> P POSS DEF brave

Respect is to our brave fighters.

A respect of their sacrificing families

The relational processes show that the protection and liberation aims are an intrinsic feature of the actions of the Iraqi forces as are unity and victory. Furthermore, unity is created between respect and those who sacrificed.

The use of verbless clauses/sentences makes the union between respect and those who sacrificed explicit, it is existentially presupposed and therefore a given fact. This means that unification is true at all times. Therefore, we may not even realize the way in which the speaker has re-arranged our worldview.

### 7.3.2. Sentences with Relational Process Intensive

The intensive process in spoken Arabic is similar to that in English. It includes the carrier, a verb and attribute.

Three sentences in the data include the carriers (our aims) and the attributes (constructed by words like liberation, fighting ISIS and achieving victory). The aim of the speaker is to construct protection, stabilization and fighting. However, the speaker also constructs a time of war as in example 22:

Example 22 (B):

nahnu n'eysh halah min l- tahadi wa l- harb

1<sup>ST</sup>PL live time of DEF- challenge and  
DEF war.

We *live* in a time of challenge and war

Example 23 (C):

ta'eysh- u bi amini w salām  
live-2PL with security and peace

You live in peace and security

The speaker in Example 22 reduces a perceived social distance between him and the reader/hearer by including the speaker and hearer in the first person plural pronoun *nahnu/we*. Such a reduced distance is an explicit appeal for solidarity in times of war. In contrast, in Example 23 the circumstances the addressee finds themselves in are constructed as being safe. We might argue that because of the speaker's suffering, the addressee is safe which implies a cause/impact relationship and constructs the speaker as the one who is to be thanked.

In addition, there are some examples in the data which explicitly indicate the Islamic standpoint of the speaker as in the following examples:

Example 24 (E):

alhamdu	li	allāhi	fadlhu	w	nasrihu
Prais	PRE (to)	God	favour	CONJ	victory

Praise to Allah favor and victory

Example 25 (C):

w	ma	l	nasr	ela	mn 'ndallāhi	'ziz
and	no		victory	but	from	God DEF-

Almighty

There is no victory but from the Almighty Allah

Example 26 (A):

idā kāna	'am	2015	'ām	l-	tahrir	bmashy'a
Allah						
if	To be-PAST	year	2015	year	DEF-	liberation with the
God	will					

If 2015 year was the liberation year,

Examples 24 and 25 create a relationship between God and the victory. In addition, example 25 includes the adverb *bmashy'a AllAh*/with the God will. The use of this adverb instead of the adjective phrase *'am Inasar All/allāh's* will victory gives Allah some but not all the credit and attributes a behavioral quality to Allah's help in relation to gaining victory in 2015. This adverb provides information as to the manner of the victory, namely that it was partially Allah's will and help but also manmade. Furthermore, using this adverb at the end of the sentence makes it the most important element in this sentence.

#### 7.4. Verbalization Processes

Verbalizations are processes of saying. In the data, they are less frequent than other transitivity processes and may create the impression of speech acts. The connotations of these processes illustrate emotional reactions of the speakers as we will see.

##### 7.4.1. Happiness

The data contain some verbalization processes (expressed in the verbiages) that praise and approve of what the Iraqis achieved. These processes include Nbark/congratulate, *nbshr*/augur, *na'eln...nast*/declare... victory and *ahii*/respect as in the example below:

Example 27 (C):

n-bārku            l-kull    'irāqiyn    hādā   l-   āntšār  
1PLcongratulate   to-all-DEF-Iraqis this            DEF-   victory

We congratulate this victory to all Iraqis

Here, the president is the sayer in this verbalization process. The verbalization processes found in the data are expressive speech acts

(Searle, 1975, pp. 59-82). The presence of a speech act and the verbiage itself (or the locution in speech act terminology) present the voice of the Iraqi Prime Minister and reapproves the ideology that the Iraqis defended the world by defeating ISIS discussed in section 7.1.1.

#### 7.4.2. Promise

The data include 17 acts of saying that the speaker and his people will certainly liberate the cities. The verbs used are *wa3dana*/promised followed by *tehryr*/ to liberate. The verb *wa'dnā* /promise in the data is used in past tense form as shown in the following example:

Example ٢8 (C):

wa'dnā                      bi- taḥrir l- flwḡa      w Quwwāt-īnā l- baṭlah  
qad      waft bi- hādā l- wa'd

PAST-Promise-1PL to-Liberate Falluja and Forces-POSS DEF-  
brave have fulfilled DEM DEF- promise

we promised to liberate Falluja and our forces fulfilled this promise.

According to Culpeper et al. (2002, p. 136), "a necessary precondition to making a promise is the ability of the speaker to perform the act anticipated by the promise (i.e. a future action of the speaker)". Therefore, the then Prime Minister and his people (or rather the Iraqi military forces) are presented as having the ability to liberate the cities. This ability is presupposed in the words of the Prime Minister's promise (which is assumed to be sufficiently desirable since the alternatives - being invaded by ISIS and abandoned by the Iraqi government - are even more frightening). The verb liberate creates a binary opposition between the Iraqis and a perpetrator who is not explicitly mentioned because the verb liberate implies the existence of a (good) doer and a (bad) patient.

The effect of this presupposition on the hearers/readers, many of whom will have come across the use of the term 'ISIS' as an Islamic term, may change their negative evaluation of Islam and consider ISIS as an invader of Muslim cities. Among the hearer-/readership may be many non-Muslims who would actually be relieved to hear the Prime Minister of Iraq outcasting ISIS and positively evaluating their defeat (!!! INVALID CITATION !!! ).

#### 7.5. ISIS Acts

In this final part of analysis and before we discuss our findings, we turn from processes that describe actions, events and states of the Iraqis to those attributed to ISIS. The ratio of processes with Iraqis as actors compared to those with ISIS being in an active role is ten to one/10:1. Thus, the actions of ISIS are mentioned less often or, in transitivity terms, ISIS is not often assigned to an active role but is to be found at the receiving end of actions done by others mostly. Processes and states attributed to ISIS include verbs that have semantic connotations of cruelty and crime.

Although active voice is not dominant in the Arabic language, cruelty and crimes (exploding and deporting) are constructed in active voice which is to be regarded a deviation from a norm and thus has a foregrounding effect. Using active voice with ISIS helps to avoid unpleasant questions like why are such acts of violence committed against the Iraqi people. The speaker blames ISIS for the attacks rather than the victims. This contradicts findings by Henley et al. (1995, p. 60) who state that in relation to murder, mostly passive voice is being used (76 %). Using active voice allows the speaker to stress that these atrocities were committed by ISIS and to emphasize the weakness of the victims who had to endure the crimes done to them. The use of active voice creates an active and dynamic scene and the speaker's

attitude against ISIS correlates with a direct attribution of responsibility for the murders to ISIS.

Active voice furthermore creates a clear link between ISIS and their actions and between the (evil) terrorist and the (innocent) victim. It produces a vivid picture of the violence and makes the reader to almost physically feeling it. This means we are presented with an uncontroversial, consistent image of ISIS in the data, with a predominant discourse of ISIS as a terrorist group. As a result, the description of the crimes in active voice enhances a tendency to elicit even greater empathy for the victims.

ISIS is associated with brutal murders. This association is brought about by using verbs which belong to the semantic field of killing (nine instances). The actor and thus perpetrator is ISIS, occurring in the subject position. The goal of the actions are human beings (citizens, Sunna and Shia, Christians and Yezidis, Arab and Kurds, Turkmen Shabak, all Muslims and the civilians in France, Belgium, Germany, America, Russia and other parts of the world).

In the depiction of murder, (human) body parts *l- dma'* the blood and *alr'ews*/the heads are also used to name the victims by means of a metonymic (that is figurative) sense relation between a part and the whole (holonym) as in the following examples:

Example 29 (A):

da'esh allti safakat l- dimā'i  
 ISIS which shed DEF blood  
 ISIS which shed blood

Example 30 (A):

...w qat'a-t l- r'aus  
 ...and chopped-3SG DEF- heads

She chopped heads

The ideological implications of such naming choices for the victims are not easy to grasp, but it is clear that this metonymy only refers to living body parts. Note that there is no tendency to equate victims with their hands (they chopped legs) or eyes (they unpluck the eyes) but that the reference to body parts has the effect of emphasizing those parts which, in Arabic, are functions of life and repeatedly constructed as equivalent to head and blood. We argue that in Arabic, this emphasis on vital body parts may, over time, influence a human being's self-perception to harmonize with the centrality of such functions.

## 8. Discussions

Our data analysis shows processes that could not be grouped adequately in only one of Halliday's or Simpson's categories. This means there are processes that arguably belong in, what we call, the "middle" between two process types.

This study supports Simpson's (2004) claim that total dependence on the criterion of 'intention' when dividing material processes with no full examination of the contextualization makes it impossible to decide whether or not a particular action was done accidentally (Supervention process) or deliberately (Intention process). Thus, the current work supports the finding by Khuzaee (2019) that "the contextual factors affect the intentionality of these material action intention processes of English verbs". However, our study includes processes that are not discussed in any of the above mentioned studies. These processes include the subdivision of the intensive relational processes into: verbal and nominal where the latter is more categorical (see Section 7.3).

Another new subcategorization is that some verbs can be intensive and mental intention in the same Arabic sentence, although this does not show in the translation as the clause can be translated with the verb "to be" or "feel proud" (Example 13).

The analysis of transitivity shows some theoretical points about the categorization of transitivity patterns. It entails that this categorization is subject to variation because of some syntactic, semantic and contextual factors. The categorization results in concluding that individual transitivity categories could not be seen as distinct categories but as points on a scale.

All the speeches in our data begin with the words (translated from Arabic) "In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful." (Ali, 1989), and conclude with "peace be upon you". Clearly, the speaker uses these words to give the impression that he is approaching the listener/reader from an Islamic standpoint. In addition, the adverb *wb'ewn allh* "with the help of Allah" is used six times in the data with positive verbs such as *hryrt*/liberated and *hqqt nṣrā*/won. Therefore, the analyzed data clearly represents the attitudes of Muslims.

This study contradicts the study by Abdulkareem & Qassim (2017) who showed by means of analysing data from the New York Times (NYT) that ISIS is constructed as an actor, actively doing actions, and that their adversaries are mainly passive. In contrast, Rasoulikolmaki & Kaur (2021) argued that ISIS members are out-group participants and are either passive or powerless agents. The actions of these participants were depicted as being trivial and with no importance attached to them. The findings presented in this paper support the work of Al-saedi (2020) to some extent but also contradicts some of his findings. Al-saedi analyzed different newspaper texts whereas we analyzed the Iraqi



Prime Minister's speeches. However, our findings are supported by Hassoon (2019) who states that based on her transitivity analysis results there is an emphasis on the victory of the Iraqi forces. Yet, she treats transitivity as a feature of the semantics of the verb and as one unified category and not as points in a scale as we see it. We also argue based on Van Dijk (2015) that members who are outside a group or not part of a group take active roles in the construction of negative actions.

The findings of our study indicate that the overall picture of how the Iraqi forces and how ISIS are portrayed in different kinds of data is contradictory to some extent. Optimism outweighs pessimism in the data given that we deal with the speeches of a political leader who is supposed to act in the best interest of his people. The verbs and thus process types associated with the Iraqis indicate victory and pride whilst the verbs used with ISIS indicate violence.

The small number of verbalisation processes is remarkable. A low loquacity (a low proportion of verbal process), however, might be expected given that ISIS is a terrorist organization and there should be no negation with it.

There are two reasons for the use of passive verb voice: one is to clearly attribute responsibility for liberation and freedom to the Iraqis and cruelty to ISIS. The use of active voice makes the reader/hearer experience the acts done by the Iraqis and by ISIS. However, the focus is not on the actors alone, but on their actions as well. This supports the findings from the study of current literature on the war on ISIS which explicitly names the actors (!!! INVALID CITATION !!!). For example, descriptions of liberation and sacrifice using active voice may enhance a trend to elicit empathy and think positively about the Iraqis. With ISIS, however, active voice may instead elicit greater contempt and a negative evaluation because their

actions (murders) are perceived negatively. Therefore, it is impossible to imagine a situation in which the murderer is thought of positively. Because every speech begins and ends with an Islamic phrase, this means these evaluations are given from an Islamic perspective.

The processes with Iraqis as actors construct them as liberators and unifiers. Therefore, they are presented in terms of what they are like rather than what they have (possessive relations). However, because active voice constructions are being used with the Iraqis and ISIS alike, there is not just one function of active voice in the discourse about the war against ISIS.

Throughout the data, there are two processes (defeat and hide) that could be interpreted as supervention processes because they happened involuntarily to the actors. Nevertheless we argue that these processes are not fully superventional but rather in the middle between material action intention processes (write or drive) and supervention processes (fall or die). They can be interpreted as partially intentional because the actors perform and initiate these actions under pressure and are thus different from verbs such as "write" and "drive" which are done voluntarily and without any force or pressure. However, because there are only three instances of these verbs (defeat, hide) in the data, it is impossible to generalize our findings.

We acknowledge that our conclusions are still rather tentative because they are based on a particular data set (the speeches of the Iraqi Prime Minister) and are based on analysing just one out of ten textual-conceptual functions of texts, namely Representing Actions, Events, States, from Critical Stylistics (Jeffries, 2010b). We recommend that researchers continue to examine the question of what other textual features contribute to the discursive construction of the world during the war on ISIS.

## 9. Findings

*In the data under scrutiny, we identified the predominant process types (transitivity patterns) attributed to the subjects (the Iraqis and to ISIS). These percentages are counted by the formula mentioned in section 4 (the percentage of the obtained verbs= Frequency/ the total of the verbs x 100):*

- material action intention (40%), and as sub-categories event processes (4%) and supervision processes (2%),
- relational processes (17%),
- mental processes (14%)
- verbalization processes (10%).

Of the six transitivity patterns, material action intention is the most frequent, this could mean that the situation is depicted with more palpable objects and physical activities than attitudes and feelings. This shows the ideology that the world during the fight against ISIS is frightening.

Within each of these patterns, we searched for associated trends (themes). Verbs, which belong to the same semantic field make one semantic pattern (theme) arranged according to frequency. This helps us to show the effects of choosing one transitivity type over the other in the construction of the themes.

In the majority of sentences, we found active verb voice. This could have two different reasons. The first is that the war on ISIS and, even more so, the motivation for erecting a medieval-style caliphate by ISIS are alien to and different from the values and beliefs of our world (Leech and Short 2007, 146) and therefore difficult to understand. The second is to invite the reader to have empathy. Our results indicate that ISIS fighters are depicted by using verbs that have connotations of evil and defeat. The fight against ISIS is therefore justified and the situation is hopeful and controlled. Defeating ISIS is closely tied to the Iraqis' aim to create confidence among themselves and fear among ISIS and to

persuade the audience that defeating ISIS is a justified cause for this war.

In addition, the frequency of material action intention processes associated with the Iraqi forces in comparison to the low percentage of those processes with ISIS as actors suggest that the strength of the speaker (the Iraqi Prime Minister, who represents the Iraqi people) outweighs the atrocity of ISIS.

Also, the event processes with the verb *hug* present homeland as an affectionate human who provides warmth, care and support. Also, the construction of the cities as powerful actors reflects the long ingrained ideology that it is the land that fights against its invaders.

In Arabic, intensive processes are divided into two types: without copula verbs and with copula verbs used for emphasis. Intensive processes with copula verbs include the verb *yakuun*/to be. In these processes, the relation between the carrier and the attribute is categorical, but not presupposed in a way that is expressed in the same but verbless construction. Through the analysis of these processes, we can detect the ideology that a country .The results show that only four verbs are used with passive voice. These verbs relate to liberation and holding ISIS, sometimes implicitly responsible for their crimes. This constructs and ideological binary opposition between the Iraqis and ISIS where the religion of the Iraqis is depicted as Islam but the religion of ISIS remain unspecified. The religion of the Iraqis is uncovered through the ideology that one's sacrifice for their country is a must reflected in section 7.1.2 and 7.1.4. Only four relational processes show a state of being (of ISIS), they construct a categorical unity between ISIS and hostility/terrorism.

## 10. Conclusion

This study has analyzed the linguistic world construction at the time of war against ISIS based on the actions, events and states associated with the Iraqis and with ISIS. Thus, the research questions are answered. The world in the data is constructed as a strange world and a set of ideologies were detected. The first is that the Iraqis are muslims and ISIS is their opponents. The second is that the Iraqis are ready to sacrifice for their country. The data show that the Iraqis are associated with material (represented by material action intention processes) rather than mental processes. The use of more material processes than other types of processes reflects action-packed circumstances in 2014-2016 and could indicate that the war against ISIS is under control.

The study has proved the hypothesis that the Critical Stylistics model is applicable to Arabic data with modifications. One out of the ten textual-conceptual functions listed by Critical Stylistics (Representing, actions, events and states of being) is considered to be rather a matter of degree than a matter of distinct categories, as the boundary between one transitivity category and another is often not clear-cut, at least when dealing with data from the Arabic language

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