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Politicized collective identity of Muslims and Arabs in American media.

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Media are in the unique position to influence public opinion and create and modify the image of in-groups and out-groups within a society as well as between societies. Collective identities may become politicized (Thompson 1995) and it seems that media have more power to politicize certain groups than any other institution. Today, stigmatization of Muslims and Arabs can be found in the media across many countries. However, the United States seems to be in the centre of politicizing these communities. Alazzany (2012) argues that at the beginning of the 1990s Islam replaced the Soviet Union in American culture and became 'the other' for Americans, because every in-group becomes stronger if it can relate to at least one out-group (Stangor 2000).

The present study involves a critical discourse analysis of the language used in reference to the Muslim and Arab communities in the programming of two American television stations, CNN and Fox News. As statistical background for the qualitative analysis, a corpus study representing semantic prosody of the tokens 'Muslim', 'Islam' and 'Arab' is added. It categorises the collocates of the tokens and identifies the type of reports they are most frequently used.

The results of the study indicate that the discourse of American media politicizes and dehumanizes the two aforementioned communities. Linguistic strategies such as repetition, conceptual metaphor creation and generalization are used to politicize the identity and ideology of Muslims and Arabs. The outcome of the study identifies discursive strategies used in American media and establishes a pattern for the misrepresentation of minorities within a cosmopolitan society.

Key words: collective identity, framing, manipulation, media discourse, identity.

Introduction

The media have the power to politicize issues by representing them in ways no other institution can (Thompson 1995: 248). Their range allows them to reach a large audience and due to their authority the message is often not questioned by many of the addressees (Couldry 2002: 51). Many people consider themselves aware of the fact that media have an affect on society. However, they feel that they are personally not influenced by them while other members of society are (Valdivia 2010: 173). This phenomenon is known as the self-enhancement bias (Potter 2004: 224). It seems that when people think they are not influenced by the media they actually are the ones who are affected the most (Hefzallah 2004: 29). The discourse used in the media affects us all. This is one of the reasons why it is worth studying. News discourse is one of the types of media discourse. The present study focuses on the issue how American news channels politicize the identity of Muslims and Arabs, and how they affect the view of those two minorities within the American society.

On September 11th 2001 the United States of America was attacked by terrorists. The country was in shock while the American identity and solidarity were empowered. The conflict between the USA and different terrorist organizations did not start in 2001 though. The February 26th 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center is the most prominent example of a longer history of the conflict. Collective identity focuses on the identity of a specific group of people as a whole. However, not every collective identity is politicized in or by the media.

...[P]oliticization of collective identity and the underlying power struggle unfold as a sequence of politicizing events that gradually transform the group's relationship to its social environment. Typically, this process begins with the awareness of shared grievances. Next, an external enemy is blamed for the group's predicament, and claims for compensation are leveled against this enemy. Unless appropriate compensation is granted, the power struggle continues. If in the course of this struggle the group seeks to win the support of third parties [...]
[C]ollective identity fully politicizes (Simon and Klandermans 2001: 324).

According to Simon and Klandermans (2001), there are three stages that form the backbone of politicizing a collective identity. They are all visible in the conflict between the USA and terrorist organizations. The development of shared grievances is the first stage in the process of politicizing a collective identity. Shared grievances strengthen the in-group identity and create a clearer juxtaposition between the in-group and out-group(s). The grievances between the United States and Muslim and Arab societies can be rooted in such events as the terrorist attacks on American soil, for instance: 9/11, the stance on immigration represented by the Arizona SB1070 anti-immigration law and the dispute over Park 51,

the Muslim community centre which is supposed to be located near Ground Zero in New York City. The American and Arab media are at the core of the politicization process as they are capable of re-identifying collectives. After 9/11 the Muslim and Arab population suffered stigmatization in the media (Alsultany 2012; Esposito and Kalin 2011; Law 2010). The aim of this study is to uncover the means by which the media may shift our understanding of a selected term and change the way someone or something is perceived. This is connected to what Erikson (2005) noticed:

"When the fact of being Muslim trumps all other distinguishing characteristics in the minds of people among whom one lives, it is very likely to have the same effect on one's self. Other ways of identifying one's position in the world -- occupational, national, some other -- begin to pale in significance because of the sheer weight of the anti-Muslim hostility." (Erikson 2005: 358)

The group that was aggrieved and hurt has to blame a specific external enemy for its wrongs in order for that group to become politicized. In the American-Muslim and Arab relations the blame game is omnipresent. The two societies have caused so much harm to one another that the adversarial attributions occur almost on a daily basis in the media via news reports. The terrorist attacks of the 1990s and 9/11 resulted in the formation of a concept of the violent Muslim (Poole and Richardson 2006: 120). Putting the blame on Muslims by the American media created the distinction of Americans as the innocent victims and all Muslims as the villains. At this point it has to be noted that not all Muslims are responsible for terrorist attacks and not all are villains, in fact the group responsible constitutes a very small, yet conspicuous percentage of all Muslims (Khan 2003 :96; Kidwai 2010: 66). By not providing the detailed information about the culprits and describing them simply as Muslims or Arabs the salience of the in-group and out-group distinctions is strengthened. On the other hand, a similar process has been occurring in the Arab media which only enhances the American-Muslim and Arab conflict (Pintak 2006: 194). If a group can relate to a significant out-group, an enemy that can be blamed for numerous deeds it becomes stronger and more bonded (Borgeson 2009: 150; Stangor 2000: 36-38). The media direct the news to audiences, as a result fulfilling the third step of politicizing a collective identity. Involving society by triangulation is achieved because the society is the target of the broadcast media. Millions of people watch the broadcasts every day. Their worldview and conceptualization of many issues can potentially be influenced and changed by media discourse. This is one of the predominant reasons for studying media discourse and describing the discursive strategies that reidentify certain ideologies and communities such as the Muslims and Arabs.

Methodology

The present study follows the guidelines of critical discourse analysis (Wodak 2009). It focuses on two American television stations, CNN and Fox News and analyses their discourse used when discussing stories about Muslims and Arabs. The qualitative study is supplemented by a quantitative semantic prosody analysis (Stewart 2009). This one is based on the Corpus of Contemporary American English. It provides a relevant statistical elaboration of the qualitative part. The semantic prosody study measured the mutual information score (MI) of selected tokens (Muslim, Arab, Islamic) used in the discourse of CNN and Fox News. As a result it presented the most relevant collocates of the tokens chosen. The aim is to analyse the balance in the American media, the type of news dedicated to the Muslims and Arabs

The data include three theoretically neutral words. Their prosody is analysed in the next section. The measured words are: 'Muslim', 'Arab', 'Islamic'. Due to using the corpus of contemporary American English (COCA) it has to be added that the three words are sorted by relevance with a minimum frequency of five. As a result, the final column in the tables below is always at the heart of this analysis. The 'MI' stands for 'mutual information score' and serves as a marker of semantic bonding between the collocates. Usually, any value above 3.0 suggests a strong semantic bonding between the tokens¹. In addition, to analysing the order of the collocates of each token this study also attempts to measure the degree of positive or negative proximity attributed to the tokens chosen. This is done by awarding every positive connotation the value (+1). Every negative one receives the value (-1) and every neutral connotation is marked by the value (0). As a final remark it is noted that this study uses COCA just for finding collocates that are nouns. The tokens selected are polysemious in nature, they create semantic connections with words (collocates) from numerous fields. One of the objectives of this article is to recognise them and compare whether the two television stations link the tokens with collocates from the same or separate fields.

Qualitative study

The qualitative study provides examples of the discursive strategies which lead to the politicization of Muslims and Arabs as well as the stigmatization and identity shift in the media and within the society.

(1) *Muslims hate us but why are they so angry? (The O'Reilly Factor, Sep 17th 2012)*

(2) *Muslims attacked us on 9/11, that is unmistakably correct. I didn't take to you mean that all Muslims attacked us on 9/11 or that all Muslims were terrorists or anything of the kind. I saw that as a simple statement of fact and you used that to support the proposition that perhaps it was therefore inappropriate to build that mosque there..... [M]uslim terrorists attacked us on 9/11 (The O'Reilly Factor, Oct. 19th 2010)*

Example (1) juxtaposes two groups of people: the Americans and the Muslims. Two conclusions can be drawn on the basis of this sentence. Firstly, *we* (Americans) are not Muslims. Secondly, the example clearly indicates a hostile relationship between the two groups. Example (2) presents a set of sentences which collocate the words Muslim and terrorist frequently. By placing those words close to one another the speaker creates conceptual representations (frames) of Muslims (Lakoff 2004). In this case the repetition of the words 'Muslim' and 'terrorist' make the audience think of Muslims as if they all were terrorists. This occurs, even though the speaker in one of the sentences says that not all Muslims are terrorists. However, the context makes the listener attribute the characteristic of a terrorist to Muslims just as Nixon attributed the characteristic of a crook when he said "I am not a crook". That is because by attempting to negate a frame, the frame in question is actually evoked (Lakoff 2004: 3).

- (3) *Not all Muslims are terrorists, all terrorists are Muslim* (Fox & Friends Oct 15, 2010 -Brian Kilmeade)
 (4) Benham: *You need to ask yourself the question why are all terrorists Muslim? Not all Muslims are terrorists, but all terrorists are Muslim, and that's just pretty --* (Anderson Cooper 360; August 11, 2010)
 (5) Cooper: *Well, that's just not completely true because, in fact, the guy who blew up the Oklahoma City --* (Anderson Cooper 360; August 11, 2010)

Suggestions such as the one presented in example (3) have the power to change the identity of Muslims among the members of the audience if they are repeated a substantial number of times. Muslims become directly connotated with terrorists. In reality, though only six percent of terrorist attacks within the period between 1980-2005 in the USA were caused by Muslimsⁱⁱ. In fact, Ballen (2007) shows on the basis of a global study encapsulating polls from Indonesia, Nigeria, Pakistan and Bangladesh that the vast majority of Muslims believe that terrorist attacks can never be justified. Examples (4) and (5) show CNN's host Anderson Cooper interrupting his guest as he makes a false statement. The theory about all terrorists being Muslim is counteracted by the reporter who, properly acts as a moderator and does not allow misinformation on his show. This is one of the key issues that Fox News lacks (Thussu 2007). The reporters conducting interviews tend to engage into the interview taking the role of an interviewee, presenting their own opinion (Hutchby 2011).

- (4) *It's only beginning to come out that they [Occupy Wall Street Movement] are Anti-Semitic, that the Muslim groups are involved.* (Dick Morris on the O'Reilly Factor Oct. 27th 2011)

Example (4) presents a situation in which the frame of the Muslims being violent and untrustworthy. It was used on the O'Reilly Factor as a marker of a leftist movement which stood against the worldview of the station. The negative frame of the Muslims (who had nothing to do with the Occupy Wall Street Movement) is used to present the movement itself in a negative light. What is more, it immediately makes it seem violent in nature and aim at discrediting its postulates.

- (5) [T]he Muslim Brotherhood, vicious, vicious, dangerous people. (The O'Reilly Factor; Feb. 10th 2011)
 (6) [About Egyptians] *The more you back down to savages, the more they are going to attack.* (Ann Coulter, Fox News contributor; Hannity, Sep. 12th 2012).

Examples (5) and (6) represent the strategy of dehumanization of the Muslim (5) and Arab (6) community. They compare the two communities to wild creatures (savages) with animal like characteristics (viciousness). This is a demeaning strategy that to some degree aims at stripping the enemy (the other) from humanity. The enemy then, is more prone to verbal attack because it no longer is seen as an equal human being but an enemy whose significance has been diminished. Because of the fact that the above examples of language use recur on television it seems that they may represent emotional reporting as explained by Lorenzo-Dus (2009: 184-190) and serve as fillers due to lack of additional news to report.

Quantitative study

It is often the case that the words and phrases occurring in a selected utterance or text create positive or negative connotations, even though they themselves are neutral. Moreover, these words may shift the meaning of the whole utterance, text and make it seem either more positive or negative (Kennedy 2005: 235). Linguists have named this phenomenon semantic prosody. The initial steps in researching semantic prosody were made by Sinclair (1987, 1991, 1996) and Louw (1993). The former coined the term the latter developed it by adding the concept of collocates.. Manipulative discourse is often semantically based and focuses on the content of the text (Van Dijk 2006: 376). Hence semantic prosody is an optimal way of implementing discursive manipulation. Moreover, it seems that semantic prosody plays a key role in completing the third step in politicizing a collective identity – in involving the society.

The first token to be analysed is the word Muslim. The word itself is neutral because it simply defines a religious belief, just like Christian or Buddhist. It entails neither hostility nor kindness. Below are the most frequent

collocates of the word Muslim on FOX and CNN.

Table 1 FOX's collocates for 'Muslim'

FOX	WORD	TOT ⁱⁱⁱ	ALL	%	MI
1	BROTHERHOOD [0] ^{iv}	30	38	78.95	10.74
2	OUTREACH [0]	6	40	15.00	8.35
3	EXTREMISTS [-] ^v	7	93	7.53	7.35
4	KILLERS [-]	5	68	7.35	7.32
5	ASSOCIATION [0]	5	218	2.29	5.64
6	WORLD [0]	61	3809	1.60	5.12
7	FAITH [0]	7	453	1.55	5.07
8	TERRORISTS [-]	11	943	1.17	4.66
9	STUDENTS [0]	6	639	0.94	4.35
10	COUNTRIES [0]	7	752	0.93	4.34

On the basis of COCA, FOX often uses the word Muslim in the vicinity of neutrally loaded words. This conclusion is only sound when the context of every single example is not taken into consideration. Without going into such detail though seven out of the top ten collocates for 'Muslim' have a neutral meaning. Three, however, introduce negative emotions into the discourse. When not joined with neutral collocates, 'Muslim' appears often near words such as 'extremists', 'killers', and 'terrorists'. It is worth mentioning that these negative words do not occupy the last positions on the list of the top ten collocates. Two of them are in the top five. In addition, the collocate brotherhood refers to an organisation: the Muslim Brotherhood. Even though, the collocate itself is neutral or even positive 78.95 percent of the time, when FOX uses the word 'brotherhood', it is joined with 'Muslim' creating a rather negative meaning, as the Muslim Brotherhood is viewed as an anti-democratic and anti-semitic movement (Stein 2012: 35-36). The fact that 'brotherhood' is so often used to refer to the Muslim Brotherhood, according to the media a negative movement (Bakker 2013: 169-170), is why the collocate itself is marked as neutral instead of positive.

Table 2. CNN's collocates for 'Muslim'

CNN	WORD	TOT	ALL	%	MI
1	CLERIC [0]	19	107	17.76	9.36
2	FUNDAMENTALISTS [-]	7	55	12.73	8.88
3	RAMADAN [0]	8	88	9.09	8.39
4	EXTREMISTS [-]	9	174	5.17	7.58
5	SUNNI [0]	12	274	4.38	7.34
6	ISLAM [0]	8	309	2.59	6.58
7	MOSQUE [0]	5	265	1.89	6.12
8	MILITANTS [-]	5	269	1.86	6.10
9	POPULATION [0]	21	1175	1.79	6.05
10	CHRISTIANS [0]	5	310	1.61	5.90

In the case of CNN's discourse there are two negatively loaded words and eight neutral ones. There is one striking difference regarding the neutral collocates of the word 'Muslim' that appear in FOX's and CNN's discourse. The former has just one religious token in the top ten (faith), the latter has six. This may suggest that the two television stations use the word 'Muslim' when talking about different issues. CNN focuses more on their religion, perhaps explaining the characteristics of Islam and its relation to Christianity, whereas FOX focuses on other themes including politics (Muslim Brotherhood) and immigrants in the US (including but not limited to Muslim students). It is worth noting that

FOX collocates 'Muslim' with 'killers' and 'terrorists', whereas CNN does not. As a result, the former television station contributes to the creation of the increasingly recognised image of a Muslim terrorist in a more visible way than the latter one. Drawing such comparisons has undoubtedly a negative influence on the way Muslims are perceived. The magnitude of their negative image is most visible in the United States as it is the main area of FOX's broadcast. It is unfair to generalise and describe a whole group of people (Muslims) on the basis of the actions of a few members of that group.

The degree of the negative proximity in the case of the token 'Muslim' is similar in both television stations. For FOX it is (-3) because there are three negative collocates and seven neutral ones bearing the value of (0). In the case of CNN the result is (-3) as well.

'Arab' is the second word to have its prosody studied. This word as well as the former one seem to represent two sides of the same coin. 'Muslim' is a religiously oriented term, whereas 'Arab' is a culturally or geographically oriented term. Despite the fact that the differences between the two are quite significant, they often seem to be used interchangeably (even though not every Muslim is an Arab and not every Arab is Muslim). One of the aims of this study is to see if FOX and CNN attach different collocates to these two tokens. 'Muslim' should have more religious terms as collocates, just like in CNN's discourse. 'Arab' should have more terms connected with politics, society. These are the results for FOX:

Table 3. FOX's collocates for 'Arab'

FOX	WORD	TOT	ALL	%	MI
1	LEAGUE [0]	19	258	7.36	7.52
2	COUNTRIES [0]	22	752	2.93	6.19
3	ALLIES [+] ^{vi}	8	275	2.91	6.18
4	NATIONS [0]	13	507	2.56	6.00
5	WORLD [0]	54	3809	1.42	5.15
6	STREET [0]	10	966	1.04	4.69
7	COMPANY [0]	11	1138	0.97	4.59
8	TV [0]	7	751	0.93	4.54
9	LEADERS [0]	7	761	0.92	4.52
10	TERRORISTS [-]	6	943	0.64	3.99

In general, the token 'Arab' is far less negatively loaded than 'Muslim' in FOX's discourse. There is a positive collocate (allies) a negative one (terrorists) and eight neutral ones. Notably, the same negative connotation (terrorists) appeared in table 1 where the token 'Muslim' was studied. This begins to form a pattern in which FOX attributes this negative collocate to tokens of Mid-Eastern origin. Moreover, there are more collocates connected with politics and society than it was the case with 'Muslim'. In addition, there is not a single collocate referring to religion. There was just one such case in the collocates of 'Muslim' which may mean that FOX is more concerned with the geopolitical situation regarding Muslims and Arabs than the religious aspect. As can be seen in tables 2, 4 and 6 CNN focuses in a large degree on socio-religious issues. This is supported by the fact that there are many collocates referring to either the religious or social sphere. Table 4 presents the results for the same token (Arab), but in CNN's discourse.

Table 4. CNN's collocates for 'Arab'

CNN	WORD	TOT	ALL	%	MI
1	MASSES [0]	21	96	21.88	8.48
2	REGIMES [-]	17	105	16.19	8.05
3	NATIONALISM [-]	9	60	15.00	7.94
4	LEAGUE [0]	67	676	9.91	7.34
5	CAPITALS [0]	5	69	7.25	6.89
6	SUNNI [0]	11	274	4.01	6.04
7	COUNTRIES [0]	118	3015	3.91	6.00
8	GOVERNMENTS [0]	17	524	3.24	5.73

9	SUMMIT [0]	26	870	2.99	5.61
10	NEIGHBORS [0]	16	558	2.87	5.55

Unlike predicted, in this case CNN's collocates are more negative than FOX's. There are two negative collocates and eight neutral of the chosen token, in comparison FOX had one negative, but also one positive. After attributing every positive collocate the value (+1), every negative one the value (-1) and every neutral one the value (0) and calculating the total values of the tokens in tables 3 and 4 the following is concluded. CNN has a generally negative association with the token 'Arab' at the value (-2), whereas FOX with one positive and one negative connotation, has the neutral value of (0). Another unexpected outcome is the fact that CNN attributes more attention to religion than FOX. There are two religious collocates of the token 'Arab' in the top ten. FOX did not have a single one. Nevertheless, when it comes to both television stations 'Muslim' still received far more religious collocates than 'Arab'. In the case of CNN the ratio is six to two.

After the first two tokens one strong conclusion seems to emerge. On the basis of the top ten collocates of each token it can be said that FOX delivers the news focusing mainly on the political aspect, whereas CNN, on the religious one. The four tables above list twenty collocates for each television station. When it comes to CNN eight of them are religious ones (40 percent). In the case of FOX, a total of at least eight can be considered political, this does not include two instances of the collocate 'terrorists' which might be more war related than political in nature.

The next token: 'Islamic' is expected to have rather negative associations as well as several religious ones.

Table 5. FOX's collocates for 'Islamic'

FOX	WORD	TOT	ALL	%	MI
1	FASCISTS [-]	7	12	58.33	10.58
2	FUNDAMENTALISM [-]	5	9	55.56	10.51
3	FUNDAMENTALISTS [-]	6	12	50.00	10.36
4	EXTREMISM [-]	9	45	20.00	9.03
5	MILITANTS [-]	6	33	18.18	8.90
6	JIHADISTS [-]	5	32	15.63	8.68
7	JIHAD [-]	13	84	15.48	8.66
8	EXTREMISTS [-]	8	93	8.60	7.82
9	REVOLUTION [0]	7	133	5.26	7.11
10	STUDIES [0]	5	126	3.97	6.70

Table 5 presents how one word can have almost solely negative collocates. Surprisingly, 'terrorists' were not included in the list of the top ten, this collocate according to COCA, is eleventh on the list. Nevertheless, out of the ten results, eight are negative, most of them strongly. 'Revolution' may be considered a grey area but for this study it is marked as neutral. In FOX's discourse 'Islamic' occurs in the vicinity of words related to war: 'jihad', 'jihadists', 'revolution', 'militants' and political views: 'fascists', 'fundamentalism', 'extremism' etc. The results of CNN's discourse are presented below, in table 6.

Table 6. CNN's collocates for 'Islamic'

CNN	WORD	TOT	ALL	%	MI
1	FUNDAMENTALISM [-]	14	35	40.00	10.76
2	FUNDAMENTALISTS [-]	15	55	27.27	10.21
3	INTERMEDIARIES [0]	5	22	22.73	9.94
4	THINKERS [+]	9	40	22.50	9.93
5	JIHAD [-]	40	214	18.69	9.66
6	MILITANTS [-]	25	269	9.29	8.65
7	EXTREMISM [-]	5	63	7.94	8.42
8	CLERIC [0]	8	107	7.48	8.34

9	EXTREMISTS [-]	11	174	6.32	8.10
10	LIBERATION [+]	7	136	5.15	7.80

CNN's collocates of 'Islamic' are more diversified. There are six negative ones, two neutral ones and two positive ones. All of CNN's negative collocates also appear in table 5 depicting the results for FOX's discourse. The fact that some terms appear in the vicinity of a given word in two (or more) different television stations may suggest the formation of a standardised way of presenting things that are 'Islamic'. In this case further research is needed to reveal whether other television stations also collocate 'Islamic' with the six recurring collocates from tables 5 and 6. If so, these examples may no longer represent just discourse of FOX and CNN respectively, but they might be an indication of how the American media, in general, describe Islamic issues. In addition, CNN, unlike FOX, just as in the two previous cases has a religious collocate in the top ten. This, once again might be an indication that CNN focuses on the religious aspect more than FOX. The greatest contrast between the collocates of 'Islamic' in FOX's and CNN's discourse are the two positive words used by CNN. The instances of 'Islamic thinkers' and 'Islamic liberation' show that it is possible to talk positively about the Islamic culture even focus on education and freedom.

The following calculations are done in the attempt to once again try to estimate the degree of negativity of the chosen token. FOX's discourse included eight negative and zero positive collocates. This means that the degree of negativity equals (-8). CNN's discourse included six negative, three neutral and two positive collocates. The degree of negativity equals (-4). Unlike the previous comparisons of the tokens 'Muslim' and 'Arab' where the difference between the two television stations was not significant, here there finally is a clearly visible distinction in the discourse attributed to the word 'Islamic'. If just the top ten results mentioned in tables 6 and 7 of 'Islamic' are considered, eighty percent of FOX's collocates are marked as negative. CNN's case can be treated from two perspectives. After counting every collocate separately the result shows that sixty percent of the collocates is negative and twenty percent is positive. However, what is suggested in this study is a different method of calculating the degree of negativity of the collocates. The two components [positive (-6) and negative (+2)] are added and the result is expressed as just one value. Therefore, forty percent of CNN's collocates of the chosen token 'Islamic' are negative. FOX's degree of negativity for the token 'Islamic' is twice as high as CNN's.

COCA's results for the search of the token 'Islamic' show that it not only has a lot of negative collocates, but also that they have a very strong semantic bonding the token. This is the only token which is collocated with a word with an MI higher than ten in both CNN's and FOX's discourse. Moreover, there is a total of five words, three for FOX and two for CNN which scored such a high MI result.

Discussion and Conclusions

The following quote explains the reasoning behind this study: "... [A]lthough we clearly must defend our societies better against terrorism, we must not in the process erode the very qualities and values that make our societies worth defending" (Weimann 2008: 82). Living in peace and being aware of the threats are key aims in life. In order to make it possible it is important to decrease the inaccurate terminology used in public discourse. The qualitative part of the present study exposed some of the most frequent strategies used to describe the Arab and Muslim communities in modern-day media. The semantic prosody study presents the frequency levels and degree of semantic bonding between words used to describe Muslims, Arabs and all things and issues relating to the Islamic world. Examples such as the ones found in the qualitative part of the present study show the attitude of the media towards minorities. The media do not avoid conflict, hence worsening the relation between the USA and Muslim and Arab countries and communities living in America (Gudykunst 2003: 283). As mentioned previously the examples in the qualitative study are just the tip of the iceberg and the difficulty in eliminating the frame of the Muslim as a terrorist or the 'vicious Muslims' from public discourse is based on the repetition of those frames in the media. The media serve "*the purpose of the advocates of terror and the War on Terror through endless juxtaposition and repetition sustaining visual and oral linkages between temporally and geographically separate events*" (Hoskins and O'Loughlin 2009: 117). Only through eliminating the repetitions of the frames can the news broadcasters provide more accurate information to the audience. Because of the way Muslims and Arabs are represented in the media as well as politics "*nearly half of Westerners associate Islam with violence and Muslims with terrorists*" (Ballen 2007).

The analysis of the three tokens has shown some unexpected results. FOX did not, as predicted, always attach more negative collocates to the chosen tokens. Actually, when it comes to the three tokens chosen, FOX collocated them with a total of 12 negative words. CNN, on the other hand, with 11. The difference, therefore is minute. If the positive collocates are considered the ratio is as follows: one positive collocate for FOX and two for CNN. Hence, the discursive difference in semantic prosody between the two television stations is not visible when the positive and negative collocates are combined either. The result for FOX is: (-11) and for CNN (-9). This may indicate that even though FOX NEWS is associated with a more hostile attitude towards Arabs and Muslims, statistically the difference is relatively small.

On the basis of the results it is suggested that FOX focuses on political and war terminology. As does CNN. However the latter television station discusses, by comparison to FOX NEWS the religious issues frequently. This

statement has to be examined by a more in-depth analysis of semantic prosody used on the two television stations because choosing three tokens does not allow to draw definitive conclusions. Table 7 presents a count of the collocates relating to the aforementioned categories:

Table 7. Categorized collocates

	War	Politics	Social issues	Religion	Other
FOX	11 (37%)	10 (33%)	3 (10%)	1 (3%)	5 (17%)
CNN	6 (20%)	10 (33%)	4 (13%)	9 (30%)	1 (3%)

As table 7 shows, eleven collocates out of the fifty analysed constitute 37 percent of all the collocates discussed for FOX. War related words were the most frequent collocates in the case of FOX NEWS. In this category FOX includes a higher number of war related words than CNN, almost twice as many. The theme of politics in the news discourse is well balanced at 33% for each station. When it comes to social issues and religion CNN seems to devote more time to those subjects than FOX. The largest discrepancy (27%) is visible in the subject of religion. All in all, the differences between the two stations are not as significant as expected, but still clearly visible. They focus on different areas while delivering the news. FOX, in fact, does attribute slightly more negative collocates than CNN to the tokens chosen. If the war and politics categories were combined as well as social issues and religion the following results would be revealed. 70% of FOX's discourse is either about war or politics and only 13% about social issues and religion. When it comes to CNN, 53% concerns war and politics and 43% social issues and religion. This means that the combined value of war and political related reports is higher than the socio-religious ones. So the very general hierarchy is similar to FOX NEWS. However, the individual categories show that CNN focuses on religious issues far more than its right-wing counterpart. Because of the fact that semantic prosody is involved in such discursive strategies as framing, metaphor creation and generalisation it seems that it is one of the main ways how the media involve the society in politicizing a collective identity.

The process of politization and generalisation of Muslims and Arabs strengthens their position as the main out-group for Americans. They are represented as the main source of threat to the USA since the Soviet Union stopped being America's main concern (Alazzany 2012: 43).

This study treats every negative collocate as equal and attributes all of them the value (-1), however this leaves space for a study that would differentiate between highly negative collocates and slightly negative ones giving them different values i.e. (-3) and (-1), respectively. The distinction between highly negative and slightly negative collocates would be made on the basis of their MI score, for example, the top five collocates would be considered highly negative and the following five slightly negative. An analogical distinction would have to be done for positive collocates.

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- i Source: corpus2.byu.edu/coca/help/display_table_simple_e.asp?h=y
- ii Source: http://www.fbi.gov/stats-services/publications/terrorism-2002-2005/terror02_05#terror_05sum
- iii The acronym TOT stands for the total frequency in all sections in the corpus, selected in the search form or not. Source: corpus2.byu.edu/coca/help/display_table_simple_e.asp?h=y
- iv [0] - for the purpose of this analysis [0] is a marker for a neutral connotation/meaning of a given word when it appears without context.
- v [-] - for the purpose of this analysis [-] is a marker for a negative connotation/meaning of a given word when it appears without context.
- vi [+] - for the purpose of this analysis [+] is a marker for a neutral connotation/meaning of a given word when it appears without context.