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THE FRAMING OF MUSLIMS ON THE SPANISH INTERNET

Abstract

In this work we study the representation of Muslims on the Internet in Spain. After the terrorist attacks in Europe, Islamophobia and Muslimophobia have grown considerably in our society. There is a strong rejection of Muslim groups and individuals, they are perceived not only as different, but also as dangerous and violent. We follow a cognitive linguistics approach using corpus linguistics as a methodology in order to know which concepts are related to Muslims in discourse. We have used three corpora: the Spanish part of the esTenTen corpus, which is a large web corpus intended to give a picture of the Spanish language on the Internet; a Twitter corpus encompassing tweets published by five main political parties in Spain and their candidates in 2015-2016; and a third corpus of articles on the topic “Muslims” from four important digital newspapers (*El País*, *La Vanguardia*, *La Voz de Galicia*, and *ABC*). We examine word co-occurrence patterns of *islámico* (‘Islamic’) and *musulmán* (‘Muslim’) to shed light on the stigmatization of this minority in the online discourse and its frequent presence in negative frames.

Keywords

online discourse, representation, Muslims, stigmatization, corpus linguistics, cognitive linguistics, frames

1 Introduction

In this article, we study the representation of Muslims on the Internet in Spain. After the terrorist attacks in Europe (including Madrid and Barcelona), Islamophobia and Muslimophobia have grown considerably in our society, as pointed out by the Office of

the Spanish Attorney General.¹ However, tracking discriminatory discourses about Muslims and Islam is not easy, firstly because categorization is itself elusive (Cheng 2015). Indeed, discourses mix different elements such as race, nationality, and religion when referring to Muslims and therefore several keywords are necessary to explore extensively such representation. Yet, such a study is necessary given that the detection of stigmatizations has been pointed out by experts as the first step in preventing hate speech (Allport 1962; Adorno et al. 1965; Brown 1995; Blanco et al. 2016; Pérez de la Fuente 2010). Political discourses, mainstream media and social media become sometimes “a vehicle for hateful political beliefs, ideologies and actions” (Kopytowska 2017: 1).

We first review the theoretical framework (Section 1), defining the concept of “hate speech” and explaining why we use Frame Theory and corpus linguistics. Corpora used in this study are described in Section 2 together with a brief description of the socio-historical context and a description of the corpus linguistic methodology we have followed. In Section 3 results are analyzed for the use of the words “Islamic” and “Muslim” (tables are included in Appendix).

2 Theoretical framework

2.1 Hate speech definitions

Hate speech was defined in the Recommendation 97 (20) by the Council of Europe’s Committee of Ministers (1997) as:

all forms of expressions which spread, incite, promote or justify racial hatred, xenophobia, antisemitism or other forms of hatred based on intolerance, including: intolerance expressed by aggressive nationalism and ethnocentrism, discrimination and hostility against minorities, migrants and people of immigrant origin.

The EU “Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA of 28 November 2008 on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law”, is the basis of actions against hate speech in the EU. However, the Framework decision is only referring to punishable conduct as criminal offenses, if such conduct involves race, religion:²

¹ These statements were published in various media, for example: <http://www.europapress.es/sociedad/noticia-fiscalia-general-estado-alerta-progresivo-crecimiento-casos-islamofobia-20160906164139.html>.

² Sexual orientation and gender are not listed in the Council Framework Decision.

- (a) public incitement to violence or hatred directed against a group of persons or a member of such a group defined on the basis of race, colour, descent, religion or belief, or national or ethnic origin;
- (b) the above-mentioned offence when carried out by the public dissemination or distribution of tracts, pictures or other material;
- (c) publicly condoning, denying or grossly trivialising crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes as defined in the Statute of the International Criminal Court (Articles 6, 7 and 8) and crimes defined in Article 6 of the Charter of the International Military Tribunal, when the conduct is carried out in a manner likely to incite violence or hatred against such a group or a member of such a group.

Though we do not expect that the data found in our corpora actually lead to hate crimes (although some literature has suggested it could be so,³ we would like to evaluate the representation of Muslims so as to observe whether it discriminates against this minority. Once we have the results we may be able to fight better such discursive discrimination since the detection of stigmatizations is considered an important step in preventing hate speech.

2.2 Frame theory and corpus linguistics

This paper is anchored in a cognitive linguistics approach, and especially in the frame semantics (Fillmore 1982; Langacker 1991; Huckin 2002), where special relevance is given to lexical selection and framing strategies. We have chosen to research cognitive frames for two main reasons. On the one hand, besides being linguistic models, frames are grounded in our cognitive and epistemological knowledge (Busse 2012). Frames show us how this knowledge has been structured by our previous (linguistic and non-linguistic) experiences (Barsalou 1992). On the other hand, they allow us to analyse large amounts of text in a systematic way. Frequency data are used to make generalizations about patterns of usage and we can make the assumption that these patterns “represent speaker’s knowledge of their language, including the conceptual structures that motivate language” (Glynn 2010: 89). Therefore, we can hypothesize that concepts such as “Islamic” are organized in frames that “govern our thought” and “our everyday functioning” (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 3), and that the frequency patterns we find of lexical co-occurrences provide us with data to identify and describe those frames (Kopytowska 2009: 4).

We can identify frames through the most frequent collocations obtained with corpus linguistics tools (Sketch Engine) with which we explore our data. In short, we followed a Corpus Assisted Discourse Studies (CADS) approach (Baker 2006; Partington et al. 2013). Indeed, we believe that such quantitative/qualitative combination allows to

³ See Leezenberg (2017a, 2017b) for discussion on the performativity of hate speech.

correlate word frequencies and the frame concept. Both quantitative and qualitative analysis, help us to observe and analyze the discursive frames chosen to describe and construct Islam on the Internet in Spanish (Baker et al. 2008). In order to identify these frames and to know which concepts are related to Muslims in discourse, we searched our corpora for the words that co-occur with *islámico* ('Islamic') and *musulmán* ('Muslim'), and all their morphological forms (masculine/feminine as well as singular/plural). With these data, we have carried out qualitative analysis contextualizing the cases and interpreting their uses.

The most frequent collocations point at the frames being constructed in the discourse. To take an example, we will see that the adjective "Islamic" is frequently used with violent concepts such as "terrorism". This indicates a conceptual contiguity between terrorism and Islam, i.e. that terrorism is part of the framing conveyed by the word *islámico* ('Islamic').

We also base our work on the idea that language reflects and sustains social structures (Fairclough 1989; Wodak and Meyer 2016), and understand discourse as a key social practice to the development of social relations and ideologies. From this point of view, we find especially relevant the idea that ideologies involve an "us" vs. "them" polarization (van Dijk 1998), which leads to tense social relationships and even violent reprisals against "them" constructed as an out-group (Allport 1956; van Dijk 2016) and negative attitudes towards the Others (for representation of Muslims see also Awass [1996], Moore et al. [2008], Baker et al. [2012], as well as Baider and Kopytowska, this issue).

Such (mis)representation of *outgroups* can be achieved through different strategies already described in the literature, such as social actors representation (van Leeuwen 1996) and mystification (Schröter and Taylor 2017).

3 Corpora and context

3.1 Data

We have used three corpora, adopting the triangulation of data principle as explained in Wodak (2016). The first corpus is the Spanish part of the Sketch Engine esTenTen corpus (Kilgarriff and Renau 2013). It is a large web corpus that is made up of 2,021,633,644 words from 4,374,128 documents. Sources are varied and include digital newspapers, official documents, blogs, and web pages. It is intended to give a picture of the Spanish language, at least in the written modality, and it provides the most general picture of the Spanish Internet.

The second corpus includes articles from four important newspapers: *El País*, *La Vanguardia*, *La Voz de Galicia*, and *ABC*. It was compiled using WebBootCaT (Baroni et al. 2006), and *árabe* ('Arab'), *musulmán* ('Muslim'), and *islámico* ('Islamic') were used as keywords. This web service produces permutations of the keywords and sends

them to Google, retrieving the first results. It means that the chosen articles are not necessarily the newest, but those ranked in the top by Google, which are supposed to be the most relevant results for the searched terms (Brin and Page 1998). This corpus is made up of 244,348 words from 166 different documents. Therefore, it provides insights into the representation of Muslims in digital media.

The third corpus comprises the tweets published by five main political parties in Spain and their candidates. The corpus was collected from October (2015) to July (2016), nine months when two general elections took place. The parties are Partido Popular (traditional right-wing), Ciudadanos (right-wing), Partido Socialista (traditional left-wing), Podemos (left-wing), and Izquierda Unida (left-wing). Messages are publicly accessible and toll-free in Twitter. This corpus is made up of 2,322,270 words and provides data about the frames used by relevant politicians.

Table 1: Corpora.

Corpus	Contents	Domain	Words
esTenTen corpus	digital newspapers, official documents, blogs, and web pages	General (Spanish Internet)	2,021,633,644
WebBootCaT	<i>El País</i> , <i>La Vanguardia</i> , <i>La Voz de Galicia</i> , and <i>ABC</i>	Digital media	244,348
Twitter	Electoral messages by <i>PP</i> , <i>Cs</i> , <i>PSOE</i> , <i>Podemos</i> , and <i>IU</i>	Electoral Campaign	2,322,270

Before going into the results and their analysis, a necessary contextualization of such results will be provided in the next section.

3.2 Socio-historical context

Islam plays an important role in the history of Spain. Nearly the whole current territory of Spain was conquered in the 8th century by the Umayyad Caliphate, a Muslim presence that remained relevant during the following seven centuries till 1527, when Islam was outlawed in the Kingdom of Aragón.⁴

According to the *Muslim Population Demographic Survey* conducted by the Unión de Comunidades Islámicas de España (UCIDE), there are 1.9 million Muslims in Spain, i.e. the Muslim population in Spain is estimated at 4% of the total population and it is a

⁴ It had already happened in the Kingdom of Castile in 1502, and Jews had been converted or expelled in 1492.

growing number. Of these 42% are Spaniards (22.45% born in Spain), and 1.23% converted to Islam from other beliefs. The rest (58%) are Muslim foreigners living in Spain, mainly coming from Morocco (70%), Pakistan, Algeria, and Nigeria. The cities with the largest Muslim population are Barcelona, Madrid, Ceuta, and Melilla (the two largest cities and the two cities in the north of Africa).

The current Spanish Constitution was approved in 1978 and, since then, Spain is no longer a Catholic State, but a non-confessional one. The Constitution establishes religious freedom as a fundamental right, and the State is obliged to protect it. It was a fundamental step forward in the configuration of Spain's religious policy and also in the recognition of the minorities, especially those with deep historic roots (Muslims, Jews, and Protestants). In the specific case of Muslims, a cooperation agreement was signed in 1992 regulating relevant issues such as Islam's presence in the educational system, the legal protection of mosques, and the legal recognition of imams.⁵ Particularly important was the explicit acknowledgement of the Islamic historical tradition in Spain and of the role of Muslims as part of the Spanish identity. This historical presence will show in the data even though non-Catholic religions as whole are perceived as foreign to the Spanish reality and national identity. In particular for the Muslim community, the words "integration" and "assimilation" are frequently found in discourse related to that community and point at an identity framed as "outgroup".

3.3 Methodology

The analysis of the corpora allows us to have both the general and the political/media use of terms related to Islam. With our largest corpus, the esTenTen corpus, we have followed two strategies in order to know which concepts are in the frame of "Islamic" and "Muslim". Firstly, we have retrieved all words that co-occurred with each of them since concepts frequently collocated should be of the same class. This first strategy helped us to evaluate how these concepts are constructed in our digital texts.

Secondly, we searched the corpus for the nouns that are modified by these two adjectives so as to retrieve the most frequent collocations. These collocations should point at the conceptual frames when the words "Islamic"/"Muslim" are used. The media corpus has been analyzed with a similar methodology, but resting our search to the nouns in collocation with the adjective *islámico*. In both the esTenTen and the media corpus, results have been retrieved using the Sketch Engine platform (Kilgarriff et al 2014) and sorted by their logDice score. LogDice is a statistic measure based on the frequency of the words and that can be used regardless the size of the corpus (Rychlý 2008). It is useful since it reduces the importance of terms with a too high frequency which render invisible

⁵ Law 26/1992 (10/11/1992), *Acuerdo de Cooperación del Estado con la Comisión Islámica de España*: <https://www.boe.es/buscar/pdf/1992/BOE-A-1992-24855-consolidado.pdf>

other less frequent terms. Our approach with the corpus of Twitter is different because there are very few tweets related to the topic we are researching. We find only 9 tweets with *islámico* and 21 with *musulmán*. This small amount allows us to study case by case and regrouping which topics are the most present in these 30 tweets.

4 Results

4.1 Frames in the general (esTenTen) corpus

As we have described, we have analyzed the esTenTen corpus in different steps that will be explained below in three subsections. The first one (4.1.1) details the results of searching the corpus for words that collocate with *islámico/musulmán*. In section 4.1.2 we analyse the most common nouns modified by *islámico*, and in section 4.1.3 we do the same with nouns modified by *musulmán*. Tables with data can be found in Appendix.

4.1.1 Collocations with *islámico* or *musulmán*

Two main frames have been found in these data: culture/religion and history. When we look at the esTenTen corpus for other adjectives collocating with *islámico* (see Table 1 in Appendix), we find that it is frequently used with both cultural and religious concepts. The most common is *árabe* ('Arab'), *árabe e islámico* being a typical collocation, especially in institutional names in academia (e.g. "Department of Arabic and Islamic studies"). We also find different religions such as *judío* ('Jew'), *cristiano* ('Christian'), *mudéjar*, *hebreo* ('Hebrew'), *hindú* ('Hindu'), *budista* ('Buddhist') and *evangélico* ('Evangelical'), and different historical time periods such as *bizantino* ('Byzantine'), *romano* ('roman'), *visigodo* ('Visigoth'), and *medieval* ('Medieval'). These words are connected with two interrelated topics: the Spanish cultural heritage⁶, and the religions.

Indeed as mentioned earlier Islam is a key concept in the history of Spain, and, for instance, the presence of the word *medieval* is a reference to the centuries when it was the main religion in that territory. Its current importance both in Spain and worldwide explains its appearance when other religions are also mentioned.

We found a similar result when we searched the most frequent words collocating with *musulmán* ('Muslim') (Table 2 in Appendix). Most words refer to Spanish history, culture, and religion. There are, however, three meaningful differences. First, we found references to *croata* ('Croatian') and *serbio* ('Serbian'). In the co-text we observed that it

⁶ It explains why words such as *cultura* ('culture') and *universidad* ('university') are also common in its context.

was related to the Yugoslavian war and that Muslims at that time were not identified as *islámicos*. Secondly, the reference to *gitano* ('Gypsy') shows that *musulmán* ('Muslim') is the term chosen when referring to a minority group of that religion. It is also the word chosen when the collocation includes *ateo* ('atheist').

While these differences might not seem relevant considered independently, they will provide important insights into the use of those terms to referring Muslims. As we will show in the next section, though *islámico* and *musulmán* are synonyms, they cannot actually be used alternatively, the former being used in more negative contexts than the latter.

4.1.2 [noun + Adj. *islámico*]

Table 3 (in Appendix) shows the most common nouns modified by the adjective *islámico*. It is here that clear negative frames appear in relation to this concept. We identify three frames. The first and most similar to the one already described is a cultural frame co-constructed by words such as *época* ('time'), *cultura* ('culture'), *arte* ('art'), and *civilización* ('civilization'). In particular, the reference to an *época islámica* ('Islamic times') takes us again to the Medieval times and to Islam's importance in Spanish history.

The second frame is related to terrorism and violence. *Islámico* is a common adjective for *terrorismo* ('terrorism', the term with the highest score in our data) and *terrorista* ('terrorist'), *combatiente* ('fighter'), *extremismo* ('extremism') and *extremista/integrista* ('extremist'/'fundamentalist'), *radicalismo* ('radicalism') and *radical* ('radical'), and *fundamentalismo* ('fundamentalism'). These words connect Islam not only to violence, but also to irrational behavior. Extremists, fundamentalists, and radicals share the feature of acting not in response to reason, but to irrepressible and wild emotions. This is an image of the neighbors from the South, pictured as violent savages which is nothing new in European history, and was already criticized by Edward Said (1978) in his classic work *Orientalism*.

A third frame identified in Table 3 is focused on contemporary politics, with the words *República* ('Republic'), *Magreb* ('Maghreb'), *revolución* ('revolution'), and *resistencia* ('resistance'). We should probably include in this framework the reference to the political organization Hamas, an acronym itself in Arabic of "Islamic Resistance Movement". In fact, when we look closer at the examples of *resistencia islámica*, we find that they mostly make reference to Hamas.

Table 3 includes three names, *velo/pañuelo* ('headscarf') and *yihad* ('jihad'), that refer to the Islamic culture, but that we consider to be at the intersection of the first frame and the second frame because nowadays they are clearly imbued with negative polarity. They are traditional concepts in the Islamic religion, but they have a specific reading in current Western media. The headscarf is a traditional piece of clothing for Muslim women. However, since it makes them so easily identifiable and visually different in the European streets, it is now a very strong symbol, both for the women themselves and for right-wing

Islamophobes. Its value is discussed intensely in both the press (Rosati 2017; Andrés 2017) and the academia (Martínez-Torrón 2009; Ruiz 2011). Though men are mostly arrested as terrorists, women are much more easily identifiable because of the headscarf, so they can be attacked (Dietz 2004; García et al. 2011). Since terrorism is connected with Islam through the second frame, and women are connected with Islam through the use of the veil, these women find themselves framed with extremism and violence.

The term *yihad* has undergone a similar process. From its original meaning in Muslim thought, which is to strive to honor God, it has come to be understood only as a violent struggle against the infidels, which is the meaning adopted by the terrorists. Some dictionaries, such as the *Collins Cobuild for Learners* (2001), define *jihad* only as “a holy war which Islam allows Muslims to fight against those who reject its teachings”. Most Muslims would find this definition rather restrictive, if not plainly offensive.⁷ However, it is very close to the most common meaning it has for non-Muslims because of the frame in which it is usually used. If we search our corpus for concepts that share contexts with *yihad*, what we find is “Hamás”, “brigade”, “martyr”, “Al-Qaeda”, and “war”.

4.1.3 [nouns + adj. *musulmán*]

As for the frames found with the adjective *musulmán* (‘Muslim’), we found that this term does not have the same negative connotation as *islámico*. We have identified two main frames for this adjective: the history of Spain and contemporary society/politics.

Table 4 shows that the history of Spain is again the strongest frame, with words such as *invasión* (‘invasion’), *dominación* (‘domination’), *ocupación* (‘occupation’), *dominio* (‘domain’), *época* (‘time’), *conquista* (‘conquest’), *alquería* (‘farmhouse’), *castillo* (‘castle’), and *fortaleza* (‘fortress’). The first four terms reflect the most common narration of the seven centuries of Muslim kingdoms in Spain, usually narrated as military occupation, which also explains the other terms.

Another frame is related to the contemporary society, where we talk of *religión* (‘religion’), *mujeres* (‘women’), *inmigrante* (‘immigrant’), *mundo* (‘world’), *mezquita* (‘mosque’), *mayoría* (‘majority’), *origen* (‘origin’), *población* (‘population’), *país* (‘country’), *minoría* (‘minority’), *cementerio* (‘cemetery’), and *clérigo* (‘cleric’). In fact, looking at the examples we find two sub-frames, one national and one international. In the latter, we have Muslim countries and the Muslim world.

The most frequent noun in Table 4, *hermanos* (‘brothers’) describes a similar situation to the one described above for Hamás. Its frequency comes indeed from its use in the

⁷ Riay Tatari, President of the Islamic Commission of Spain (CIE), has repeatedly denounced this misuse of the term by journalists. One example of his arguments can be read in the opinion column *Islamofobia y terrorismo* (20/6/2017): <http://www.20minutos.es/opiniones/islamofobia-y-terrorismo-riay-tatary-3069363/>

name *Hermanos musulmanes* (the ‘Muslim Brotherhood’), the transnational Islamist organization founded by Hassan al-Banna.

4.2 “Islamic” in the digital media corpus

4.2.1 General results

We have carried out the analysis of the 863 occurrences of the adjective *islámico* (‘Islamic’) found in our corpus of four very popular digital media in Spain (*El País*, *ABC*, *La voz de Galicia*, and *La Vanguardia*). 73% of cases where the *islámico* (‘Islamic’) adjective appears in the corpus, the frame is related to violence or social conflict. Only in 27% of cases it is used in positive frames associated with culture, social empowerment, freedom, or civil rights.

47% of occurrences are in the expression “Islamic State”, in a frame of terrorist violence. Spanish media had a debate⁸ about the most convenient name for this terrorist group. “ISIS”, “Daesh” and “Islamic State” were the most common options. The term “Daesh” was officially recommended by several institutions such as the Foundation for Urgent Spanish (FUNDEU), an institution devoted to help journalists and translators regarding new terminology. In November 2014, the Spanish government joined an international call for applying the same recommendation and for using “Daesh” instead of “Islamic State”. Two months before, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, Laurent Fabius, had recommended the same to the French political establishment and media.⁹ This recommendation tries to avoid the symbolic, ideological, and political significance of the expression “Islamic State” within the Muslim tradition. Therefore, it was a strategy for fighting against the legitimation of this terrorist organization as the only hegemonic Islamic power. The Spanish Secretary of State for Security explicitly explained this strategy as follows:

The new acronyms and the presentation of the caliphate have an important symbolic, ideological and political meaning in the Muslim tradition. From the very moment that they identify themselves as an Islamic State, they legitimize their organization as the only one in the territory, the hegemonic, all mighty, and different of the rest of terrorist groups. The expression *DAESH* (which in Arabic is phonetically similar to “something to crush”) is a term used by its enemies and it offends the terrorist group. That is why I want to begin my speech by asking to all the experts and the media for their collaboration: let’s stop calling them Islamic State and start using the real name: *DAESH*. (Martínez Vázquez 2014: 2)

⁸ Source: http://www.antena3.com/noticias/mundo/llames-estado-islamico-llamalo-daesh_20141216571e1fd36584a8abb582543a.html

⁹ In France Inter (17/9/2014), <https://www.franceinter.fr/emissions/le-7-9/le-7-9-15-septembre-2014>

Although in this quotation the Secretary of State asks for avoiding the use of the name “Islamic State”, our data clearly show that it has been widely used by the Spanish media. In our corpus, this terrorist organization is called *Estado Islámico* in 405 examples, when *Daesh* only appears in 86 examples. The recommended word appears therefore only in 17% of articles that we have analyzed (28 from 166). The preferred use of *Estado Islámico* in 83% of the articles and 100% of the media represented in the corpus not only helps the legitimization of this terrorist organization, but it also reinforces the negative frame for the Muslim community. We could say that it contributes to the cause of the terrorists twice: legitimizing their claims (accepting them as a state) and affecting the social coexistence (linking Islam to terrorism) (Von Sikorski et al. 2017). In the remaining 53% of cases, “Islamic” modifies the other nouns showed in fig. 5. Half of these references also fit in a frame of violence and/or conflict. To take an example, *fe islámica* (‘Islamic faith’) is understood in the texts as if it were an oxymoron for western modernity, in articles about Muslim lesbians. This polarization is made explicit in (1), where European values are opposed to the Islamic faith.

(1) *Los moderados pretenden tender puentes entre la fe islámica y la sociedad moderna, entre tradición y tecnología y desarrollo.*

[Moderates seek to build bridges between the Islamic faith and the modern society, between tradition and technology and development.]

Another example is the use of the “Islamic headscarf” within a frame of (labour or educational) conflict (75% of the occurrences), with references to this piece of clothing as an impediment to peaceful coexistence. An article with references to the headscarf already shows this frame in its headline *Cuando llevar el velo islámico te deja sin trabajo* (‘When wearing the Islamic headscarf leaves you jobless’), and explains that *mujeres musulmanas residentes en España reivindican que la decisión de usar hiyab no condicione su vida laboral* (‘Muslim women living in Spain claim that the decision to use hijab should not condition their working life’).

As we saw in the general corpus, framing is positive when “Islamic” is used together with “Arabic” in the expression *árabe e islámico*. We have found 20 examples and all of them refer to neutral/positive frames such as business opportunities, critical thinking, innovation, and markets. (2) and (3) are two examples of this positive framing.

(2) *Visiones innovadoras sobre el mundo árabe e islámico.*

[Innovative visions on the Arab and Islamic world.]

(3) *Empresas granadinas conocen las oportunidades de negocio en los mercados del mundo árabe e islámico.* [Companies from Granada know the business opportunities in the markets of the Arab and Islamic world.]

4.3 Frames in the Twitter corpus

One striking conclusion of our research carried out on Twitter (Alcántara-Plá and Ruiz-Sánchez 2017, forthcoming) was that the Twitter discourse of electoral campaigns does not deal with social topics. Topics such as those related to minorities and religions are excluded from the debate. Indeed even though the year 2015 was a year marked by the Syrian refugee crisis, this topic was absent in the tweets published by politicians and political parties. Therefore, it was not surprising for us to find out that the words *islámico* ('Islamic') and *musulmán* ('Muslim') were not frequent in this corpus either. However, the few examples that we found were reactions to terrorist attacks and Islamophobic episodes.

4.3.1 *Islámico* framed in tweets

We have found only 9 tweets (in a corpus of 116,072 tweets) with the word *islámico*. 4 of them, which were published by the right-wing parties C's and PP use it as adjective of *terrorismo islámico* ('Islamic terrorism') as in (4):

- (4) *Albert Rivera pide "cooperar y una estrategia conjunta" contra el terrorismo islámico.*
[Albert Rivera asks for "cooperation and a joint strategy" against Islamic terrorism.] (C's)

Another tweet, citing a declaration of the minister of foreign affairs (PP), connects 'Islamic' with 'terror', although with the intention of unlinking them.

- (5) *García Margallo "Sería muy peligroso intentar identificar la religión islámica con el terror".*
[García Margallo "It would be very dangerous to try to identify the Islamic religion with terrorism."] (PP)

Three tweets are focused on the *Estado Islámico* (one by C's and two by Podemos). As pointed out previously, the expression *Estado Islámico* is preferred to Daesh in our data and is always used within a frame of "terrorism" in the contemporary European societies:

- (6) *Acabamos de presentar vídeo con nuestra hoja de ruta para derrotar al Estado Islámico.*
[We have just presented a video with our roadmap to defeat the Islamic State.] (Podemos)

Finally, we find only one tweet outside of this violent and negative frame. It was published by PSOE and it is an appointment of its candidate:

- (7) *@sanchezcastejon "Reunido con representantes de la comunidad islámica en España".*
[@sanchezcastejon "Meeting with representatives of the Islamic community in Spain".] (PSOE)

4.3.2 *Musulmán* framed in tweets

As was the case with the general corpus, the use of *musulmán* is quite different to *islámico*. We find 21 occurrences and all of them use the term *musulmán* to identify a community. In fact 18 cases are found in the collocation *comunidad musulmana* (‘Muslim community’), two are of *personas musulmanas* (‘Muslim persons’), and one of *mundo musulmán* (‘Muslim world’). Most of these tweets recognize therefore the integration of Muslims as a minority in Spain:

(8) *Con mis mejores deseos a la comunidad musulmana #RamadánMubarak.*
[With best wishes to the Muslim community # RamadanMubarak.]

(9) *Reforzaremos el diálogo con la comunidad musulmana.*
[We will strengthen the dialogue with the Muslim community.]

If tweets (9 by PSOE and one by IU) make a connection between the Muslim community and terrorism, it is to counter the link made with crime and violence and Muslims and denounce the unfairness of such link:

(10) *No van a criminalizar a la comunidad musulmana. Luchamos juntos contra el terrorismo.*
[They will not criminalize the Muslim community. We fight together against terrorism.] (IU)

(11) *Esta barbarie nada tiene que ver con la comunidad musulmana, que se siente indignada por esta masacre.*
[This barbarity has nothing to do with the Muslim community, which is outraged by this massacre.] (PSOE)

(12) *La comunidad musulmana está en la defensa de los valores democráticos y contra el terrorismo.*
[The Muslim community is for the defense of democratic values and against terrorism.] (PSOE)

Some tweets by PSOE recognize also Muslims as victims, both of terrorism (13) and of the Spanish Islamophobia (14 and 15).

(13) *No solo es un ataque a civilización y forma de vida, porque DAESH también ataca al mundo musulmán.*
[It is not only an attack on civilization and way of life, because DAESH also attacks the Muslim world.] (PSOE)

(14) *Un contundente rechazo a ataque a personas musulmanas. El terrorismo se combate con convivencia.*
[A strong refusal to attack Muslim people. Terrorism should be fought with coexistence.] (PSOE)

(15) *Condenamos la acción de Hogar Social Madrid cerca de la mezquita de la M-30 que supone un ataque a las personas musulmanas.*

[We condemn the action by Hogar Social Madrid near the mosque of the M-30, which is an attack to the Muslim people.] (PSOE)

We can briefly summarize the findings of this section in two main points. First, there is a negative framing that links Muslims to terrorism, which is frequent in the three corpora. It is clearly linked to Daesh and to terrorist attacks in Europe. Secondly, this negative framing is referred to with the adjective *islámico*. Though *musulmán* could be understood as a synonym, *musulmán* is used in neutral or positive frames related to culture and contemporary politics/society in all the corpora. In fact, we observed a positive semantic shift when *islámico* appears together with *musulmán* or *árabe*, the framing becoming neutral. This could imply that a cultural and historical frame encourage positive framing. However, there are some words (such as *velo* – ‘headscarf’) that, despite having a cultural meaning, sometimes appear in a negative framing. Further research should investigate the reason for this difference.

5 Final remarks

Our study focused on the representation of Muslims on the Spanish Internet by searching collocations with *islámico* (‘Islamic’) and *musulmán* (‘Muslim’) in different corpora such as the Spanish part of the eSTenTen corpus, the tweets published by five main political parties in Spain and their candidates from October (2015) to July (2016), and the articles on the topic “Muslims” from four widely read online newspapers in Spain.

Our initial hypothesis was that the frequent use of some terms together with these words could give us information about the frames that are being built in discourse. We based our work on the idea that language is a social practice key to the development of social relations and ideologies. From this point of view, we were especially interested in examining the idea of ideologies involved in constructing an “us” vs. “them” polarization. We can summarize the main frames that we have found as follows:

- (1) Culture/ Religion
 - (a) Neutral frame (e.g. Dep. of Arabic and Islamic Studies)
 - (b) Negative frame (e.g. headscarf, Jihad)
- (2) Terrorism (e.g. Islamic terrorist)
- (3) Contemporary Politics/Society
 - (a) National frame (e.g. immigration)
 - (b) International frame (e.g. Islamic World)

Therefore, we can confirm the negative representation of the Muslim minority in Spain in the three studied corpora. The most worrying fact is the predominance of a negative frame associating *islámico* with violent radicalization and terrorism. We have seen that this frame was most often the consequence of using *Estado Islámico* instead of

Daesh as recommended. Hence, it could have been avoided in many cases with using *Daesh* instead of *Estado Islámico*. However, it is a wider problem since *terrorismo* ('terrorism'), *fundamentalismo* ('fundamentalism'), and *terrorista* ('terrorist') appear in Table 3 as three of the five most frequent nouns modified by *islámico* in the general corpus.

A relevant difference that we have found is that *islámico* ('Islamic') is the word used for referring to terrorism and violence, while data show that the words *musulmán* ('Muslim') and *árabe* ('Arab') have a different -and more positive- connotation. We have frequently found them referring to the Muslim community and to its culture and history. In fact, "Islamic" only appears in neutral/positive frames when it collocates either with *árabe* or *musulmán*. Despite this positive or neutral representation of the latter, seeing from a historical and cultural perspective, it is interesting to point out that the Muslim community is always referred to as "them", i.e. as not belonging to the national community and common identity. Its values, rights or demands are not a real subject in the political discourse on Twitter. The main policy makers in Spain refer to Muslims incidentally and never using the voice of people identified as Muslims themselves. In brief, the Muslim community is only mentioned as a reaction to external facts. We have seen it related to terrorist attacks, to outbreaks of Islamophobia, and to the Ramadan. Being the former the most frequent case, Muslims are strongly framed with concepts of violence and threat to the *Us* represented in the discourse. Though the social reality of Muslims in Spain is very complex (Spaniards, immigrants, tourists, refugees, etc.), the discourse we studied in our data is partial and shallow. As a matter of fact, even when Muslims are mentioned as belonging to a common past in Spain, they are pictured only as military invaders ("them" as historical enemies in our territory). When it is a frame of "them" as victims of injustice related to Islamophobia/Muslimophobia, they still are at the other end of the "us" vs. "them" polarization.

As result of our research, we can confirm the stigmatization of this minority in the digital discourse. This also explains the fact that we have found cultural words (such as *velo* or *jihad*) semantically shifting to a negative framing. If the detection of stigmatizations is, as pointed out by experts, the first step in escalating into hate speech and hate crime, online discourse about Muslims in Spain should be considered as worrying.

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Appendix

Table 1: Collocations with *islámico* ('Islamic').

WORD	ENGLISH	FREQ.	SCORE
árabe	Arab	638	11.63
judío	Jew	82	9.34
cristiano	Christian	112	9.07
mudéjar	Mudejar	16	8.27
sharia	Sharia	8	7.65
hebreo	Hebrew	11	7.57
hindú	Hindu	10	7.53
budista	Budist	8	7.31
judaico	Judaic	6	7.21
occidental	Occidental	19	7.2
bizantino	Byzantine	8	7.2
romano	Roman	23	7.15
visigodo	Visigoth	8	7.15
medieval	Medieval	15	7.12
evangélico	Evangelical	7	7.07
oriental	Oriental	18	6.9
hispanico	Hispanic	7	6.86
protestante	Protestant	6	6.71
musulmán	Muslim	11	6.62
católico	Catholic	7	5.97
africano	African	6	5.63
europeo	European	11	3.86

Table 2: Collocations with *musulmán* ('Muslim').

WORD	ENGLISH	FREQ.	SCORE
judío	Jew	403	11.31
cristiano	Christian	600	11.28
árabe	Arab	399	10.73
hindú	Hindu	58	9.39
católico	Catholic	62	8.75
visigodo	Visigoth	35	8.62
romano	Roman	66	8.41
budista	Budist	24	8.18
hebreo	Hebrew	23	7.99
protestante	Protestant	21	7.86
croata	Croatian	19	7.86
occidental	Occidental	24	7.21
evangélico	Evangelic	11	7.01
gitano	Gypsy	12	7.0
ateo	Atheist	12	6.9
bizantino	Byzantine	10	6.84
medieval	Medieval	16	6.82
africano	African	17	6.79
ortodoxo	Orthodox	10	6.77
mudéjar	Mudejar	9	6.73
islámico	Islamic	11	6.62
animistas	Animistic	7	6.56
copto	Coptic	6	6.33
serbio	Serbian	7	6.33
arabes	Arabs	6	6.33

Table 3: Nouns modified by *islámico* ('Islamic').

WORD	ENGLISH	FREQ.	SCORE
terrorismo	Terrorism	715	9.56
velo	Headscarf	508	9.3
fundamentalismo	Fundamentalism	393	8.99
república	Republic	1272	8.93
magreb	Maghreb	309	8.71
terrorista	Terrist	322	8.52
religión	Religion	452	8.46
yihad	Jihad	236	8.32
integrismo	Integrism	202	8.08
revolución	Revolution	503	7.92
fundamentalista	Fundamentalist	175	7.88
extremista	Extremist	156	7.71
radicalismo	Radicalism	130	7.43
integrista	Fundamentalist	121	7.36
mundo	World	1389	7.31
combatiente	Fighter	113	7.16
pañuelo	Scarf	95	6.89
época	Time	286	6.81
resistencia	Resistance	172	6.76
radical	Radical	93	6.76
extremismo	Extremism	79	6.73
cultura	Culture	433	6.55
hamás	Hamas	67	6.51
arte	Art	408	6.5
civilización	Civilization	103	6.49

Table 4: Nouns modified by *musulmán* ('Muslim').

WORD	ENGLISH	FREQ.	SCORE
hermanos	Brothers	1408	10.72
religión	Religion	605	8.9
dominación	Domination	299	8.47
invasión	Invasion	354	8.43
época	Time	577	7.83
mujer	Woman	739	7.39
inmigrante	Immigrant	199	7.37
mundo	World	1340	7.26
hermandad	Brotherhood	123	7.09
mezquita	Mosque	114	7.06
mayoría	Majority	405	7.05
fortaleza	Fort	136	7.04
origen	Origin	411	6.98
reino	Kingdom	144	6.97
población	Population	601	6.92
conquista	Conquest	108	6.86
país	Country	1066	6.85
minoría	Minority	114	6.81
cementerio	Cemetery	95	6.64
España	Spain	229	6.62
castillo	Castle	117	6.6
ocupación	Occupation	134	6.59
clérigo	Cleric	71	6.55
dominio	Domain	205	6.41
alquería	Farmhouse	57	6.27

Table 5: Nouns modified by *islámico* ('Islamic').

WORD	ENGLISH	FREQ.	SCORE
estado	State	405	13.28
mundo	World	40	10.23
ley	Law	27	9.9
centro	Center	20	9.44
comunidad	Community	19	9.3
religión	Religion	16	9.12
feminismo	Feminism	15	9.12
terrorismo	Terrorism	15	9.09
velo	Headscarf	13	8.9
junta	Council	9	8.39
tradición	Tradition	8	8.2
grupo	Group	9	8.16
país	Country	9	8.16
comisión	Commission	7	8.03
consejo	Council	7	8.0
comunidades	Communities	6	7.82
fundamentalismo	Fundamentalism	6	7.81
rito	Rite	6	7.8
calendario	Calendar	5	7.55
pañuelo	Scarf	5	7.55
fe	Faith	5	7.55
califato	Caliphate	5	7.54
pensamiento	Thought	5	7.53
organización	Organization	5	7.47
movimiento	Movement	4	7.18

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