

Islamophobia Fallacies in the UK Press Headlines

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Abstract

Violating one of the criteria of a good argumentative discourse leads to fallacious conclusions that consequently violate the truth of any proposition. The current study aims at proving the fallacies of Islamophobia that are known as the fear and hatred of Islam and Muslims and reflected on a number of headlines in UK press. As long as press and media are considered the only and the most reliable source of information for people round the world, some of UK press media have a fundamental role in presenting a negative image of Islam and Muslims to the world. Language recently appears to be like weapons in the hand of journalists in order to attack Islam and Muslims starting a war of words towards them. The researchers follow Damer T.E. (2009) as their model to analyze the data by diagnosing the lexical signals that prove fallacy in these headlines. It is found that journalist have no good premises to convince people and prove their linguistic war to Islam and Muslims as being a source of danger and terrorism. They violate the criteria of their argumentative discourse by using false evidence which leads to false conclusion. Finally, it is recommended that the religion of Islam holds a message of love and peace that what is linguistically proved throughout the present study.

Keywords: theory of fallacy, argumentative discourse, Damer, T.E., UK media

Falacias de islamofobia en el Reino Unido Titulares de prensa

La violación de uno de los criterios de un buen discurso argumentativo lleva a conclusiones falaces que, en consecuencia, violan la verdad de cualquier proposición.

El presente estudio tiene como objetivo probar las falacias de la islamofobia que se conocen como el miedo y el odio al Islam y los musulmanes y que se reflejan en varios titulares en la prensa del Reino Unido. Mientras la prensa y los medios se consideren la única y más confiable fuente de información para las personas de todo el mundo, algunos de los medios de prensa del Reino Unido tienen un papel fundamental en la presentación de una imagen negativa del Islam y los musulmanes al mundo. Recientemente, el lenguaje parece ser como armas en la mano de los periodistas para atacar al Islam y a los musulmanes comenzando una guerra de palabras hacia ellos. Los investigadores siguen a Damer T.E. (2009) como su modelo para analizar los datos mediante el diagnóstico de las señales léxicas que prueban la falacia en estos titulares. Se descubre que los periodistas no tienen buenas premisas para convencer a la gente y demostrar que su guerra lingüística al Islam y a los musulmanes es una fuente de peligro y terrorismo. Violan los criterios de su discurso argumentativo al usar evidencia falsa que conduce a una conclusión falsa. Finalmente, se recomienda que la religión del Islam contenga un mensaje de amor y paz que lo que se demuestra lingüísticamente a lo largo del presente estudio.

Palabras clave: teoría de la falacia, discurso argumentativo, Damer, T.E., medios de comunicación del Reino Unido.

Introduction

Muslims have historical roots in Europe that can be traced back to the period when Muslims ruled Spain. Islam came to Europe through army, trade, labor force and scientific research. Then, they invaded Spain and ruled it till 1614 because of the close relationship between Ottoman Empire and Germany in the periods of war and peace (Nielsen, 1992). The first Mosque was built for Muslims when seamen came from Africa and Asia and settled in London. Unfortunately it did not live because of the First World War (Halliday, 1992).

After the First World War, Muslims were invited by the European governments for the purpose of post-war reconstruction that cannot be performed by the native people of Europe. That was the reason behind the immigration of Moroccans, Algerians and Tunisian who joined the civil and defence industries. Then migration of Muslims had been gradually increased more and more (Haliday, 1992).

Today, Muslims are no longer immigrants of the past period. They

are part of multi-faith and multi-cultural modern Britain. Muslims became part of British Muslims Community (Allen, 2006). Nowadays, UK appreciates different cultures and faith-traditions and community. In terms of Nielsen “each religious community, in its institutional form has a unique position in relation to the state” (1999, p.39). Thus, in terms of 2001 census Muslims were everywhere in UK. Their number in England and Wales reached 1,591,126 that shape 3% of the population. It is a remarkable number of people that should be respected in terms of their different faith and community religion (Nielsen, 1999).

After the 11/9 attacks Muslims are accused of being the terrorists that stand behind such attacks. Then a war of words has been started against them to show that Muslims are terrorists and extremists. That was very clear by the job of press and media in Britain. They draw a negative image of Islam and Muslims. The current study hypothesizes that the verbal attack against Muslims embodied by a selected number of headlines in UK press is false. The researchers aim at extracting the fallacies in these headlines and proving that the verbal war against Muslims has neither roots nor evidences. They diagnose different types of fallacies that are branched from lack of reasons and solid evidences to draw false conclusions against Islam religion.

Islamophobia

Jawad (2018) states that there is no bright view to Islam or Muslim can be traced evidently throughout ages in English literature Even if it were, writes Jawad, “it could be shadowy if not overwhelmed by religious and political prejudice.”

Islam was looked at as a “hostile religion and the persistent efforts to extinguish its date from the early times after the rise of Islam” (Jawad, 2018, p. 45). This religion is looked at as a religion of vulgarity and as having the initiative of hostility. The image of Islam has been perverted in the English literature throughout different ages. The name of Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) is distorted “as being worshipped as a god by his followers, referring to him as ‘Mohamet’ to give a linguistic mark of the idol or god; ‘Mamet’” (Alalwan, as cited in Jawad (2018)).

The term Islamophobia stands for two morphemes. The first one “Islam” and the second is a Greek suffix “phobia” that is used to denote nouns with the sense of “fear” (Islamophobia, a definition, 2019). The term is originally used in Great Britain and coined by the Commission on British Muslims in the 1990s. The term has a number of neologisms like “an-

ti-Muslims”, “anti-Islamism”, “hatred of Muslims” etc. It is defined as the fear, hatred, or prejudice against Islam and Muslims because they are regarded as a serious source of terrorism. The term “prejudice” is defined by Allport as “an aversive or hostile attitude towards a person who belongs to a group, simply because he belongs to that group, and is therefore presumed to have objectionable qualities ascribed to that group” (as cited in Muhideen, 2008, p.76). The term of Islamophobia is used for the first time in the early 20th century and regarded as neologism in 1970s. During 1980s and 1990s, the term became more and more important.

In 1997, it reached the public policy prominence when a report presented by the Runnymede Trust’s commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia (CBMI) under the title “Islamophobia: A Challenge for Us All”. In this report they justify the introduction of the term by saying: “anti-Muslim prejudice has grown so considerably and so rabidly in recent years that a new item in the vocabulary is needed”. That is why they define Islamophobia as the “unfounded hostility towards Islam ... to the practical consequence of such hostility in unfair discrimination against Muslim individuals and communities, and to the exclusion of Muslims (as cited in Allen, 2006, p.51). The term then gets greater attention and credibility by a seminar presented in New York 2004 by the UN Secretary General Kofi Annan entitled “Confronting Islamophobia: Education for Tolerance and Understanding” (Muhideen, 2008, p.76).

Islam is always seen as an extremist, terrorist, or fundamentalist religion. 1400 years ago, Islam was spread increasingly to the Europe and started to form a threat to the Christian church and ruling class. Then, the governments of the west started a negative propaganda against Islam and a war of words was initiated against Islam and Muslims without any sympathy.

Thus, the awareness of the term Islamophobia increasingly becomes more prominence after (11 September 2001) attacks and London underground train bombings on (7 July 2005). The world regarded Muslims as criminals and responsible for those attacks. Those events paved the way for Islam hostility, hatred, discrimination and exclusion. Since that time, the term and the concept of “Islamophobia” is reinforced and justified continually years after years by different devilish shapes of Islam. Nowadays, ISIS “Islamic State of Iraq and Syria” has been appeared and entered the world political sphere as the last updated shape of terrorism. Thus, all of the previous false shapes of Islam in Europe have a significant role in justifying the common use of the term and concept of Islamophobia.

The Impact of Media on Islamophobia

The term ‘Islamophobia’ appears in the media up till now written with two inverted comas. This means that the term is still unclearly defined, or to imply that “is merely the figment of a paranoid or politically motivated imagination; or constructed out of a desire to perpetuate a siege mentality and sense of victimhood against Muslims, or to put an end to legitimate criticism, or to engage in lazy abuse” (Richardson: online).

“Putting together the two words of ‘Islam’ and ‘phobia’ seems to be part of how people try to defend their own sentiments about people who practice Islamic traditions and rituals” (Jawad, 2018). This phobia is raised from the fear from Muslims as barbarous, primitive and aggressive people and they are unwanted from an inferiority point of view (Jawad, 2018). Thus, Islam and Muslims are considered as a group with “a social construct within which is created a sense of collectiveness and belonging defined by language, territory, religion and other markers which may draw boundaries around the group to define its members as ‘outsiders,’ ‘strangers’ or ‘others’” (Rattansi, 2007, p. 3).

Media has highly influential and important role in shaping the concept of Islamophobia. The awareness of this term is first raised by the Runnymede Trust report that shows “Islamophobia is an ingredient of all sections of media” (as cited in Allen, 2006, p. 74). Media is regarded as the main source of information and knowledge to people who have little knowledge about Islam and Muslims. So they believe blindly in what media and press say. Media is the only source of knowledge they depend on to glean the image of Islam and Muslims and consequently the concept of Islamophobia. Media and press is responsible for conceptualizing the shape of Islam and Muslims to the world in general and the British in particular. Especially after the (11 September 2001) attacks and London underground train bombings on (7 July 2005) that has a great impact on the war against Islam and Muslims especially those British Muslims who have their own communities in the UK. The hatred and hostility against Islam is increased to start a war of words against Muslims to be seen as problematic, criminal and always under the spotlight (Allen, 2006).

A comparison study is conducted to prove the increased use of the words “Islam” and “Muslims” in UK press before and after the 11/9 attacks. It is proved by a statistical analysis that measures the quantity of the words “Muslims” or “Muslems” in articles presented by UK press from (1 Jan. to 9 Sept. 2001). Then comparing its results to the period from (20 Jun. 2001

to the 19 Jun. 2002) including 9/11 and the post attacks period as shown in the following table:

<i>Newspaper</i>	<i>Numbers of articles before 9/11</i>	<i>Numbers of articles after 9/11</i>	<i>Increase percentage</i>
Guardian	817	2,043	250%
Independent	681	1,556	228%
Times	535	1,486	278%
Daily Mail	202	650	322%
Daily Express	139	305	219%

Table1: the results of increased use of the words “Islam” and “Muslims” in UK press before and after 11/9 attacks (As cited in Allen, C. 2006, p. 76).

The Theory of Fallacy: literature Review

Fallacy is viewed as a vital part of our daily life; people interact with each other and make fallacies in their interaction every where in their daily activities. It is the essence of their daily argumentation. To define fallacy properly, one finds too many view points and inconsistency in making a fully approved definition.

Studying fallacy systematically started with Aristotle and has extended later with the retention of the original Aristotelian list of thirteen types of fallacies. (Van Eemeren, et al, 2009). Aristotle concentrated on fallacies which attempt to refute the opponents’ theses to win the argument (ibid.). He classified fallacy into two main types: those that are dependent on language and independent of language (Van Eemeren, et al, 2009).

The first type, dependent on language, consists of six types; they are namely: equivocation, amphiboly, combination of words, division of words, accent and form of expression (Tindale, 2007). The second type, independent of language, consists of the remaining refutations; they are namely: *secundum quid* (accident), consequent (affirm consequent), non cause (non-cause for the cause), begging the question (circular reasoning), *ignoration elenchi* (appeal to ignorance of refutation) and many questions (Tindale, 2007). The distinction between these two types is problematic. Language dependent fallacies are considered as less problematic to modern scholars than the language independent fallacies. To solve the problem, they decide to consider the accident fallacy as a part of the language independent fallacies (Van Eemeren, et al, 2009).

Many linguists and pragmatists make different approaches to this notion. These approaches are different in looking at fallacy and they are inconsistent in making a comprehensive definition of fallacy.

These approaches have started with Aristotle and extended later with the

retention of the original Aristotelian list of thirteen types of fallacies (Van Eemeren, et al, 2009), passing by Hamblin in his book entitled “Fallacies” in (1970), who studies fallacy from dialectical point of view and in which he initiated the notion of Standard Treatment of fallacies for the first time. He defines fallacy as “an argument that seems to be valid but is not so” (Hamblin, 1970, p. 12).

Walton (1987), on the other hand, marks a radical breakthrough in discussing the notion of fallacy. He deals with the realistic arguments in natural language and he recommends that fallacy should not be treated only from a premise-based perspective.

He pragmatically considers fallacy as any argument that “falls short of some standard correctness” (Walton, 1995, p.23). He looks at fallacy from an argument point of view. He says that fallacy is an argument when it is used in a context of dialogue and further, he identifies certain factors that make certain argument fallacious. In this point, he agrees with Aristotle’s argument of fallacy in one point; the concept of fallacy has “an element of deception on the dialectical level” (Walton, 1995, p. 14).

Among other scholars who has elaborated on the theory of fallacy is Johnson (2000) He provides four criteria for evaluating fallacious arguments; they are: acceptability, truth, relevance and sufficiency. If an argument constitutes a violation of one or more of these criteria or rules, it will then be considered as fallacious:

1- Acceptability: Johnson (2000) states through his definition of acceptability criterion that each element in an argument should be put in a way that the hearer finds it acceptable; otherwise, it cannot achieve a rational persuasion.

2- Truth: Johnson (2000) makes use of this criterion to judge arguments whether they are fallacious or not. It judges the truth vs. falsity of certain utterance and violating it may result in fallaciousness.

3- Relevance: According to Johnson (2000), this criterion can be used to judge fallaciousness of an argument. What kinds of relevance means for Johnson is the propositional relevance to distinguish it from topical relevance and audience relevance.

4- Sufficiency: According to this criterion, enough evidence should be presented to prove the target claim (Johnson, 2000).

Later, Walton (2007) makes a further elaboration on this theory. Fallacy, according to Walton, is a skilful means of intended deception. It is a means of influencing someone to accept something in the argument or claims presented mainly before the fallacious argument.

Further development takes place to this theory when Walton and Godden (2007: 8) suggest that the process of fallacy occurs on three stages:

1-The start-point stage: in which the main topic is presented by the speaker in the form of argument in order to persuade the participant.

2-The argument stage: in which the arguer employ the fallacious argument to reinforce the previous argument in a deliberately manipulative way.

3-The end point stage: in which the role of the participant in evaluating and responding to the fallacious argument comes.

The study of fallacy goes on and it takes many years to appear in new forms and directions and more elaboration has been done until the appearance of Damer (2009). In the following section, Damer's new theory of fallacy will be thoroughly discussed as it will be the model of the analysis of the UK press headlines as far as the study is concerned.

Damer's Theory of Fallacy

Damer, in his book entitled "Attacking Faulty Reasoning: A Practical Guide to Fallacy-Free Arguments," proposes a revolutionary new definition to fallacy. He (2009, p. 51) says fallacy is "a violation of one of the criteria of good argument." He adds that any argument that fails to abide by one or more of the following criteria, it is then fallacious argument:

"A structural flaw in the argument

A premise that is irrelevant to the conclusion

A premise that fails to meet the standards of acceptability

A set of premises that together is insufficient to establish the argument's conclusion

A failure to give an effective rebuttal to the anticipated criticisms of the argument" (Damer, 2009, p. 51)

Damer (2009) concerns himself with the results of violating the criteria of relevance, acceptability and sufficiency but not the truth criterion. Of these fallacies, the researchers choose only the following types that are considered proper for the analysis of data in the present study:

Fallacies that Violate the Relevance Criterion

These types of fallacies violate the relevance criterion of a good argument by using "premises that are irrelevant or make appeals to factors that are irrelevant to the truth or merit of their conclusion. A premise or appeal is irrelevant if its acceptance has no bearing on, provides no evidence for, or has no connection to the merit of the conclusion" (Damer, 2009, p. 92)

These fallacies are divided into two categories:

Fallacies of irrelevant premise, and 2

Fallacies of irrelevant appeal

5.1.1 Fallacies of irrelevant premise

They indicate that there is no connection between the premises and the conclusion. Sometimes called ‘argumentative leaps’ which means that “a huge leap would be required to move from one to the other” (Damer, 2009, p. 92)

This type of fallacy consists of:

- a. Genetic Fallacy: It means “Evaluating a thing in terms of its earlier context and then carrying over that evaluation to the thing in the present, while ignoring relevant changes that may have altered its character in the interim” ((Damer, 2009, p. 93). It is an attempt to overlook the present situation of an idea, person, institution, or practice whether development, regression, or difference and count merely on its origin or genesis.
- b. Rationalization: It means “Using plausible-sounding but usually fake reasons to justify a particular position that is held on other, less respectable grounds” (Damer, 2009, p. 95). It means that the argument’s fake premises are not relevant to the conclusion or have no relationship to the conclusion because they are not the real reasons for the drawn conclusion.
- c. Drawing the Wrong Conclusion: It means “Drawing a conclusion other than the one supported by the evidence presented in the argument” (Damer, 2009, p. 97). It is the fallacy of missing the point of the evidence in which the argumentation conclusion misses the main evidence provided. The arguer evidently draws a wrong conclusion from the premises provided.
- d. Using the Wrong Reasons: It means “Attempting to support a claim with reasons other than the reasons appropriate to the claim” (Damer, 2009, p. 99). It contradicts the fallacy of wrong conclusion. The arguer commits a fallacy of wrong conclusion if he misses the point of his evidence, but he commits the fallacy of wrong reasons if he defends a particular conclusion and uses evidence that does not support the conclusion.

5.1.2 Fallacies of Irrelevant Appeal

The arguer attempts to support a claim by appealing to unauthorized people or to emotional factors, none of which are relevant or support the truth of the claim. This is done by the aim of defending a view emotionally. The most common appeals to emotion are either by “appeals to

the traditional way of doing things, appeals that threaten or force another into accepting a view, appeals that target the self-interest of others, and appeals that try to manipulate others' strong feelings, attitudes, or prejudices as a means of gaining acceptance for an idea or action" (Damer, 2009, p. 102).

This type of fallacy consists of number of argumentations, only the following are chosen as they are proper to the present study:

a. Appeal to Irrelevant Authority: It means "Attempting to support a claim by appealing to the judgment of one who is not an authority in the field, the judgment of an unidentified authority, or the judgment of an authority who is likely to be biased" (Damer, 2009, p. 102). Damer stipulates that this appeal takes place when the speaker attempts to support his/her claim through using appeal of an authorized person in certain field or of an authority which is unjustified or biased.

b. Appeal to Common Opinion: It means "Urging the acceptance of a position simply on the grounds that a large number of people accept it or urging the rejection of a position on the grounds that very few people accept it" (ibid.: 104). To persuade others, the arguer tries to urge others to accept a certain point of view or standpoint on the idea that a great number of people accept it and vice versa. If the majority accepts a particular claim, the result is that they believe it as true.

c. Manipulation of Emotions: It means "Attempting to persuade others to accept a position by exploiting their emotions instead of presenting evidence for the position" (Damer, 2009, p. 111). The argument of manipulation of emotions can be used when the arguer tries to persuade others to accept a claim by appealing to their emotions instead of giving evidence for the claim. Manipulation of emotions violates the criterion of relevance of a good argument which demands that evidence used to defend a conclusion must be relevant to the merit of that conclusion. In the absence of a rational argument for a view, the unthinking acceptance of an idea or action appears on the basis of emotional evidence.

5.2. Fallacies that Violate the Acceptability Criterion

Based on Damer (2009) in his discussion of the fallacious arguments of acceptability, he says that if the arguments use premises that do not comply with the acceptability criteria, then the argument is called fallacious argument of acceptability. This type can be achieved by the following fallacies, each of which uses a premise that fails to meet the conditions of the acceptability criterion:

5.2.1 Fallacies of Linguistic Confusion

This type of fallacy involves some lack of clarity in the meaning of a key word or phrase and linguistically confused. The premises can not be acceptable because the meaning cannot be understood (Damer, 2009).

It indicates that the argument is deficient for having lack of clearness in the meaning of one of their premises. It includes the following arguments: equivocation, ambiguity, misleading accent, argument by innuendo, misuse of a vague expression and distinction without a difference. From this argumentation, the researchers find it suitable to select those which are proper to the present study:

a. **Equivocation:** It means “Directing another person toward an unwarranted conclusion by making a word or phrase employed in two different senses in an argument appear to have the same meaning throughout” (Damer, 2009, p. 121). Fallacious arguments of this type can be realized through an argument that directs the respondent to reach at an unwarranted conclusion. Using a word or a phrase which has two different senses but appears to have the same meaning in one premise can achieve this kind of fallacious argument. The words or phrases in a good argument must retain the same meaning whereas in equivocation, the speaker, intentionally or carelessly, makes a shift in the meaning which leads to draw an unwarranted conclusion (Damer, 2009).

b. **Ambiguity:** It means “Directing another person toward an unwarranted conclusion by presenting a claim or argument that uses a word, phrase, or grammatical construction that can be interpreted in two or more distinctly different ways, without making clear which meaning is intended” (Damer, 2009, p. 123). It is the use of a word, clause or grammatical structure that can be understood in two or more different senses by the hearers without indicating which meaning is intended by the speaker.

d. **Argument by Innuendo:** It means: “Directing another person toward a particular, usually derogatory, conclusion by a skillful choice of words that implicitly suggests but does not assert that conclusion” (Damer, 2009, p. 129). This type of fallacy employs the argument which directs the respondent to reach a certain conclusion by choosing specific words that give the indication that they suggest the conclusion but don’t support it. Argument’s strength lies in the impression created that some masked claim is true although no evidence is presented to support such a view. This fallacious argument is highly employed to attack either people or others’ ideas fiercely when there is little or no evidence to expose as a justification of

the attack or accusation.

e. Misuse of a Vague Expression: It means “Attempting to establish a position by means of a vague expression or drawing an unjustified conclusion as a result of assigning a precise meaning to another’s word or phrase that is imprecise in its meaning or range of application” (Damer, 2009, p. 131). Vague expressions are used normally as part of linguistic style. But they may be misused in two ways: First, when it is a key word in a premise used to draw a conclusion which leads to misunderstanding, thus it is neither accepted nor refuted then the evidence of the claim is damaged; second, when the recipient infers a conclusion totally different from the premise since they do not know the intended meaning.

5.3 Fallacies that Violate the Sufficiency Criterion

Damer (2009) writes that insufficient evidence of an argument leads to wrong conclusion. No evidence, little evidence, biased evidence, and on crucial evidence all may result in fallacious conclusion that is not sufficiently and appropriately supported.

The fallacy that results from violating the criterion of sufficiency is divided into two groups: (1) Fallacies of Missing Evidence; (2) Casual Fallacies (Damer, 2009).

5.3.1 Fallacious Arguments of Missing Evidence

In this type of fallacy, the arguer lacks evidence and truth to support his conclusion. It includes the following types:

a. Insufficient Sample: It means “Drawing a conclusion or generalization from too small a sample of cases” (Damer, 2009, p. 161). Fallacious argument of this type is achieved by the arguer by presenting acceptable and relevant evidence but it is insufficient to reach to the conclusion of his argument because of concealing other’s evidence. It is sometimes called a “hasty generalization” because the arguer makes a conclusion quickly based on a lonely fact.

b. Unrepresentative Data: It means “Drawing a conclusion based on data from an unrepresentative or biased sample” (Damer, 2009, p. 163). The arguer sometimes attempts to reach a conclusion depending on unreliable and unrepresentative data. It is necessary to avoid using data that may be biased. This can occur in three ways: 1- the data collected may be tainted by gatherers violating sufficiency criterion; 2- data collected from only one or few subgroups of the target population especially if this data is collected from a group that has strong positive or negative opinions about the matter; 3- data collected from networks, magazines, newspapers are not much

credence these days (Damer, 2009).

c. **Arguing from Ignorance:** It means “Arguing for the truth (or falsity) of a claim because there is no evidence or proof to the contrary or because of the inability or refusal of an opponent to present convincing evidence to the contrary” (Damer, 2009, p. 165). Damer argues that ignorance is a tactic used by many people positively or negatively. If it is used in the case of positive belief, they suggest that since this belief has not been disproved, thus it is proved to be true. Or if the belief is negatively proposed, they claim that it is false since it has not been proved. This way of arguing claims reflects their ignorance not their lack of knowledge. They don’t have sufficient evidence against that claim (Damer, 2009).

d. **Omission of Key Evidence:** It means “Constructing an argument that fails to include key evidence that is critical to the support of the conclusion” (Damer, 2009, p. 173). In this type of fallacious arguments, the arguer fails to present evidence which is important to prove the conclusion of his argument. Omitting key evidence violates the criterion of sufficiency which is necessary to back up a particular conclusion. The absence of the evidence is not because it is not available but it is simply because it is a failure to supply it.

Argumentative Discourse

Van & Grootendorst describe argumentation as “a verbal, social and a rational activity aimed at convincing a reasonable critic of the acceptability of a standpoint by putting forward a constellation of propositions justifying or refuting the proposition expressed in the standpoint” (2003, p.1).

Van sets his definition in terms of the characteristics of the argumentative discourse. Argumentation is first described as a “verbal activity” that it is represented by linguistic forms. Argumentation is also described as a social activity that depends on the rules followed by people to govern their language. Finally, it is a rational activity that reflects the intellectual considerations people follow in order to accept something reasonably.

Van states that any argumentation should have a standpoint that people always try to prove. They try to convince each other to accept that standpoint in order to achieve the aim of the argument. Van adds that argumentation has two purposes when the “constellation of proposition” is expressed. If the standpoint is positive “it is the case that...” the argumentation is needed to justify the proposition expressed by the standpoint. On the other hand, if the argumentation is negative “it is not the case that...”

the argument is needed to refute the proposition (Van & Grootendorst, 2003, p.2).

The argumentative discourse is also defined by Damer as “a group of statements, one or more of which, the premises, support or provide evidence for another, the conclusion. The premises of an argument are those statements that together constitute the reasons for believing the conclusion to be true” (2009, p.13). Thus, Damer provides parallel view of argumentative discourse with Van accompanied with some differences in their terminology. Both state that the main purpose of any argumentation is to persuade others (readers or listeners) to accept a particular claim or a standpoint that is supported with premises as logical evidence reaching a conclusion (Damer, 2009). Consequently, argumentation has the function of demonstrating the truth or the falsity of a claim. Argumentation should be measured by the aforementioned criteria namely; group of statements that are regarded as premises, supporting evidence and conclusion to convince the receiver (reader or listener). If an argumentation proves its falsity, it will be regarded as a piece of language functions as opinion rather than argumentation. This falsity is regarded as one of the problematic areas in the argumentative discourse because it does not achieve supporting evidence for the claims reaching a false conclusion.

The Model and the Method of the analysis

The types of fallacious arguments mentioned above are selected to be the model of the analysis of the headlines of UK press. Five headlines selected from the British newspapers are to be the data of the analysis. Each headline will be examined to find out what type of fallacy are being used in order to present a distorted image of Islam and Muslims in Britain. At the end, a statistical analysis will be made to find out which type(s) is/are commonly and frequently used by looking at its/their higher frequency.

The Data

Following are five headlines selected from different UK press where there are clear evidences of Islamophobia:

1- UK Mosques Fundraising for Terror. Daily Star Sunday, April 3, 2016

This headline says that all UK Mosques become a center for collecting money to support ISIS, the terrorist organization. The correction comes later that only one group in Bradford collected money for this purpose and not all UK Mosques. The newspaper gives an impression that there is an organized wrongdoing in all UK Mosques while in fact it was

not the actual case.

Such misleading news fall within the “drawing the wrong conclusion” and “using the wrong reasons” fallacy branched from fallacies that violate relation criterion. The news paper doesn’t provide an evidence for drawing such conclusion as well as it tries to support its claims with wrong reasons other than the appropriate one.

RAMADAN TRAIN WRECK Muslim train driver crashed after going without food or drink for 15 hours during Ramadan, The Sun, Saturday, August 20, 2016.

The report of the newspaper says that the train crash happened because the driver was fasting for 15 hours without food or drink during Ramadan while the Rail Accident Investigation Branch (RAIB) refuted this allegation by saying that it is difficult to conclude that the fasting was the main reason in the crash.

Such headline falls within the fallacies of irrelevant appeals, particularly to “Appeal to Irrelevant Authority”. This appeal takes place when the speaker attempts to support his/her claim through using appeal of unauthorized person in certain field or of an authority which is unjustified or biased. The newspaper tries to support the claim that the crash was because of a Muslim fasting driver depending on a judgment issued by an identified authority or a biased authority.

Anger as less than A THIRD of Muslim nations sign up to coalition against ISIS, Express, Nov 18, 2016.

This headline provides the readers that only one third of the Islamic countries are against ISIS, and almost all the rest Islamic countries are supporting ISIS. This inspires the readers that Islam is strongly related and potentially integrated with terrorism.

The fallacy here is in violating the relevance criterion by “using the wrong reasons” in an attempt to support a claim with reasons other than the appropriate reason as well as to “Appeal to Irrelevant Authority”. This appeal takes place when the newspaper attempts to support this claim through using appeal of the UK’s permanent representative to the UN who claimed in a strong worded speech that not all Islamic countries are against ISIS. He an un authorized person in this field of an authority and he is unjustified or biased to release such statement generalizing his private stand point against Islam.

New £5 could be BANNED by religious groups as Bank CAN'T promise they're Halal, Express, Dec 2, 2016.

Religious leaders are considering banning £5 notes from their places of worship after it was revealed they contain traces of animal fat.

The newspaper uses the word 'Halal' to make the reader of the headline that this ban comes only from Muslims in the UK. But when reading the body of the news, the reader will find that not only Muslims who refused this note but other communities. Following is the statement of the Bank of England officials:

"Bank of England bosses could not confirm to Express.co.uk whether the tallow in the notes, which went into circulation in September, were made with animal fat which was Halal, or contained pork, making it a risk for Muslim and Jewish people. The use of animal products also go against strict Hindus and Buddhists, who observe Ahimsa, which means not to injure living things. Hindu leaders are so furious they are even considering banning the use of the notes."

As we see, there are Jewish, Hindus and Buddhists as well as Muslim. But the writer of the headline deliberately uses the word 'halal' to provoke the emotions against Muslims.

This is a fallacy of linguistic confusion, a "Misuse of a Vague Expression" It is an attempting to establish a position by means of a vague expression or drawing an unjustified conclusion as a result of assigning a precise meaning to another's word or phrase that is imprecise in its meaning or range of application.

ISOLATED ISLAM: Muslim Integration Report finds children in one school think 90% of UK is Asian, The Sun, December 4, 2016,

Asian does not necessarily mean Muslim people. Not all Asian people are Muslims. It's blatantly clear the amount of hatred against Muslim in this headline. The newspaper purposely mention in the capital and bold letters the word 'Islam' in the subtitle the word 'Asian' is mentioned in a normal letters. They allegedly say that Muslims are a community in the UK society that is isolated and cut off the rest of the society living in enclaves with their own schools, television channels and rarely leaving their houses. The official figures prove opposite numbers. It appears that in 2011 census, the actual proportion of Muslim in England and Wales at under five percent while Christian is nearly 60 percent.

The fallacious argumentation of missing evidence is clearly obvious hear

in its subdivisions: Arguing from Ignorance and Omission of Key Evidence. The headline provides figures and information haphazardly just for the purpose of provoking hatred against Muslims and to increase racism.

Results and Discussion

The results of the analysis shows that the UK press headlines use the following criteria of fallacy: using the wrong reasons (twice), appeal to irrelevant authority (twice), drawing the wrong conclusion, misuse of a vague expression, arguing from ignorance and omission of key evidence. These fallacy criterion by large are misleading and truth twisting for the readers. The ultimate aim of the newspapers is to evoke racism and elevate the scale of hatred against Islam and Muslims relaying on no solid floor for these allegations but the manipulation of the dominant mood and emotions against Islam as, allegedly, a religion of terrorism.

Conclusion

Of course in such a short research it is impossible to cover hundreds headlines of the UK press showing their bias against Islam even during recent days when a new wave of mass killings of Muslims rages from New Zealand to Holland and other places. The actual and prevailing feelings in the UK is that some consider Muslims as they come from Arabia with their weird region; they come from inferior culture, with a violent religion, a broken society so they are inherently terrors. These fallacious allegations are dominating and they occupy the minds of the majority of UK citizens. It is a hard job and a heavy burden on the shoulders of the Muslims to polish and demolish these stereotypical images of Muslims in Western minds.

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