Reframing (inner) terror: A digital discourse-based approach to evidential repositioning of reader reactions towards visual reframing

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Abstract

The present article claims that the British public opinion's repositioning towards inner terror after the 2017 Westminster attacks was (i) affected by the visual reframing of an original viral press photograph of the attacks targeting a Muslim passerby as an inner terrorist and (ii) linguistically expressed through the use of 'look' object-oriented visual markers of evidentiality in written digital discourse. To support this claim, British readers' commentaries on a selection of online opinion articles reframing inner terror into terror through the use of reframed press photographs will be taken as the corpus of analysis. The ultimate aim of the article is to unveil the British readers' reactions to the reframed photographs of the attacks as linguistically expressed through their use of 'look' object-oriented repositioning strategies of visual evidentiality in order to analyse the repositioning process.

Keywords

Visual framing; Framing; Visual evidentiality; Evidential positioning; Reader reaction; Digital discourse; Terrorism.

1. Introduction and structure of the article

Entman (1993) explains that framing consists of selecting some aspects of the perceived reality and making them more salient in the communicative text (p. 52). This means that framing shapes the perceptions of society and influences citizens' attitudes and behaviours by creating shared perceptions that condition and affect real-life interpretations (**Fahmy** *et al.*, 2014; **Ahmad** *et al.*, 2017; **Fahmy**; **Alkazemi**, 2017; **Kasim** *et al.*, 2018; **Mokhtar**, 2018; **Fadel** *et al.*, 2019). The concept of frames and framing is employed widely across linguistics, social and organisational psychology, policy studies, philosophy, and communication and media studies (e.g., **Matthes**; **Kohring**, 2008; **Nisbet**, 2009; **Fünfgeld**; **McEvoy**, 2011; **Berkhout** *et al.*, 2014; **O'Neill** *et al.*, 2015; **Schäfer**; **O'Neill**, 2017; **Wardekker**; **Lorenz**, 2019).

The use of visual images has significant potential for the framing effort (**Makhortykh**; **Sydorova**, 2017) because images are useful tools for 'framing and articulating ideological messages' (**Messaris**; **Abraham**, 2001, p. 364) and powerful devices for social construction (**Hansen**, 2011; 2015). They present and summarise large amounts of complex information (**Wardekker** *et al.*, 2008; **Schwalbe**; **Dougherty**, 2015), invoke immediate emotional responses and promote engagement

(**Smith**; **Joffe**, 2009; **Schwalbe**; **Dougherty**, 2015), make issues close and meaningful (**Doyle**, 2007; **Manzo**, 2010; **O'Neill**; **Smith**, 2014), and influence policy preferences (**Leiserowitz**, 2006; **Wardekker**; **Lorenz**, 2019), usually reinforcing cultural stereotypes and delivering meanings that are too provocative or controversial for publications to express in words (**Messaris**; **Abraham**, 2001).

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The past decades have seen considerable efforts to refine visual framing analysis (**Messaris**; **Abraham**, 2001; **Rose**, 2001; **Mitchell**, 2005; **Kress**, 2010; **Parry**, 2010; 2011; **Rodríguez**; **Dimitrova**, 2011; **Spiegelhalter** *et al.*, 2011; **Lorenz** *et al.*, 2015). A significant number of studies have approached visual frames with a focus on war conflicts (**Moriarty**; **Shaw**, 1995; **Pfau** *et al.*, 2006; **Fahmy**; **Kim**, 2008; **Fahmy**, 2010; **Parry**, 2010; **Schwalbe**, 2013), social problems (**Heuer** *et al.*, 2011), natural disasters (**Fahmy** *et al.*, 2007; **Borah**, 2009), or the political system (**Coleman**; **Banning**, 2006; **Grabe**; **Bucy**, 2009). However, the multimodal relation between visual reframing and linguistic visual evidential repositioning has remained unexplored to date.

The present study stems from the position that

> "Media frames are persistent patterns of selection, emphasis, and exclusion" (**Gitlin**, 1980, p. 7)

> "in which certain aspects of reality are promoted over alternatives, proffering a favoured visualisation and interpretation of people and events" (**Parry**, 2011, p. 1188).

The basic premise is that image selection first framing terror into inner terror and then reframing inner terror back into terror determines the British public opinion's positioning and repositioning towards Islamic terrorism and its relation with the Muslim community in the United Kingdom after the publication of a selection of photographs on the occasion of the 2017 Westminster attacks.

Specifically, the study takes as the central focus of analysis the British readers' digitally written reactions to the reframing of the press photograph of a passerby who became the target of hard criticism after being captured wearing her hijab on the stage of the 2017 Westminster attacks. Visual framing is thus related to broader issues of linguistic visual evidentiality and positioning theory. More specifically, the study revolves around the idea of visual evidential positioning as articulated by **Domínguez-Romero** (2016; 2017; 2018; 2019; 2020), whereby the British public opinion's positioning towards inner terror is claimed to be (i) affected by the reframing of the original photograph and (ii) linguistically expressed through the use of linguistic markers of 'look' object-oriented visual evidentiality.

The intention is to explore the British public opinion's reaction to the reframing of inner terror back into terror that was carried out in a selection of reframed press photographs published after the Muslim woman made public a press release against those who had targeted her as an inner terrorist. To this end, the British readers' comments to a selection of online opinion articles reframing inner terror back into terror through the use of these reframed press photographs will be taken as the corpus of analysis. The focus will be on the qualitative analysis of the 'look' object-oriented visual, evidential-based repositioning strategies towards inner terror used by the British readers in their written commentaries to the digital articles. Our ultimate aim is to reveal their use of 'look' evidential-based repositioning strategies towards inner terror after their exposure to the reframed press photographs in written digital discourse.

The setting, aims, and research questions precede the theoretical framework and the method of the study, which are described in the next sections of the article. The conclusions follow the analysis of the results.

2. Visual reframing of inner terror: The setting

Muslims comprise the majority of immigrants in most western European countries, including Belgium, Germany, and the Netherlands, with the most significant single component located in the United Kingdom and France. **Scalvini** (2007) explains that a significant reason for

> 'Europe's fear of, and hostility towards, Muslim peoples is the fear and anxiety that comes from closeness' (p. 163).

Sociologist **Cesari** (2004) argues that

> 'there has been an overarching conflation between an Islam perceived as an international political threat and the individual Muslim living in Western societies' that has translated into a sense of Muslims as 'the enemy' (pp. 21-22, 35-37).

In this vein, **Spencer** (2007) explains that the new fear is of the 'inner terrorist' (**McGhee**, 2005, p. 76), the enemy within, impossible to contain. According to **Spencer** (2007, p. 139), the threat has become ontological, and the new fear has been reinforced by public discourse.

> " The multimodal relation between visual reframing and linguistic visual evidential repositioning has remained unexplored to date "

This is the case of Jamie Lorriman's press photograph of the Westminster attacks on the *British Parliament* on March 24, 2017, which sparked an international debate over the attitude of a passerby who became the target of hard criticism after being photographed wearing her hijab on the stage of the facts while using a mobile phone. The photograph impacted public opinion to the extent that the woman published a press release against 'those who cannot see beyond the dress':

> "I'm shocked and totally dismayed at how a picture of me is being circulated on social media. To those individuals who have interpreted and commented on what my thoughts were in that horrific and distressful moment, I would like to say not only have I been devastated by witnessing the aftermath of a shocking and numbing terror attack, I've also had to deal with the shock of finding my picture plastered all over social media by those who could not look beyond my attire, who draw conclusions based on hate and xenophobia.
>
> My thoughts at that moment were one of sadness, fear, and concern. What the image does not show is that I had talked to other witnesses to try and find out what was happening, to see if I could be of any help, even though enough people were at the scene tending to the victims. I then decided to call my family to say that I was fine and was making my way home from work, assisting a lady along the way by helping her get to Waterloo station. My thoughts go out to all the victims and their families. I would like to thank Jamie Lorriman, the photographer who took the picture, for speaking to the media in my defence" (*Tell-MAMA*, 24 March 2017).

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The release soon became as viral as the original photograph and was picked up in numerous digital opinion articles. As an example, Elle Hunt and David Pegg published in *The Guardian* "Woman photographed in hijab on Westminster Bridge responds to online abuse". At the same time, Abe Hawken and Mark Duell signed the article for *The Daily Mail* "'I was devastated by witnessing aftermath of a numbing terror attack': Muslim woman who was vilified for 'walking past Westminster bridge horror' reveals she HAD helped the victims and was phoning her family to let them know she was safe".

Cavan Sieczkowski did likewise for *The Huffington Post*, "Muslim woman targeted by Twitter trolls after London attack speaks out", and Charlotte England and Lucy Pasha-Robinson signed for *The Independent* the article "London attack: Muslim woman photographed on Westminster Bridge during terror incident speaks out". Also, Mann Tanveer published in *Metro* "The truth behind photo of the Muslim woman", which was directly related to "Photographer reveals what was actually happening in photo of 'woman in headscarf walking by dying man'", signed by Chris Kitching and Zahra Mulroy for *The Mirror*.

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These articles were illustrated with reframed versions of the original photograph aimed to reframe inner terror back into terror in order to move British readers to reposition themselves and exonerate the Muslim woman.

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As an example, *The Daily Mail* published the original long-shot photograph that sparked the online debate after trolls targeted the innocent woman on 24 March 2017.

Once the press release was published, this original photograph was immediately followed by a reframed medium shot picture of the woman accompanied by the explanation:

> "The woman was criticised for allegedly appearing indifferent to the attack in London on Wednesday by one social media user –but others leapt to her defence".

Finally, a close-up shot picture of the woman illustrated the written text of the article: 'But people jumped to her defence when a photograph showed that she looked distressed and horrified after walking down Westminster Bridge'.

3. Aims and research questions

This study draws from the premise that the original press photograph published immediately after the 2017 Westminster attacks functioned as a piece of visual-based evidence enhancing indirect and inferential access to the knowledge of the facts. This fact gave rise to a negative positioning of the British public opinion towards a Muslim woman who automatically became the embodiment of inner terror.

This assumption implies a distinction between the casual, indirect, and inferential visual perception based on conjectures that occur when the perceived entity works as a source of deductions and inferences for the perceiver, and the conscious and direct perception –focused on the object of perception and expressed by 'look' object-oriented markers of visual evidentiality– to which the Muslim woman appeals in her press release. The first long-shot picture invited a casual and indirect perception based on conjectures and inferences and generated a negative effect on public opinion before the press release was published. However, the latter medium and close-shot reframed pictures facilitated a conscious and direct perception as well as a deep knowledge of the facts that moved readers to change their minds, reposition themselves, and reframe inner terror back into terror.

The aim of the study is to analyse how the type of visual evidence, or visual framing, impacts the British readers' knowledge of and repositioning towards (inner)terror after being exposed to the press release published by the Muslim woman and the subsequent reframed photographs made public by the British digital periodical press to exonerate her.

This raises the following research questions:

> RQ1: Does visual framing affect visual access to knowledge?

> RQ2: What are the linguistic 'look' object-oriented visual markers of evidentiality used by the British readers as repositioning strategies to reframe inner terror back into terror?

To answer them, the British readers' reactions will be approached through the descriptive analysis of their use of 'look' object-oriented repositioning strategies of visual evidentiality towards terror.

4. Theoretical framework

4.1. Framing: An overview

Framing studies have experienced a long and complex process of evolution since they originated in the 1970s until their current consolidation (**Amadeo**, 2002; **Sádaba-Garraza**, 2008). This process has been structured into three major chronological stages (**Vicente-Mariño**; **López-Rabadán**, 2009):

- The initial stage of formation (1974-1990) was characterised by the appearance of the theory of framing halfway between psychology (**Bateson**, 1972) and microsociology (**Goffman**, 1974). Towards the end of this early stage, framing started to be applied to communication studies (**Tuchman**, 1978; **Gitlin**, 1980), although the first empirical applications were not carried out until the end of the 1980s (**Gamson**; **Modigliani**, 1987; 1989).
- The second stage dates from the beginning of the 1990s (1991-1999) and was characterised by the appearance of the first works that specifically referred to the study of media discourse (**Entman**, 1991, 1993; **Iyengar**, 1991; **Shoemaker**; **Reese**, 1991; **Tankard** *et al.*, 1991; **Gamson**, 1992; **Sádaba**, 2001; **De-Vreese**, 2003). At this time, the debate between the assimilation of framing to the second level of the theory of agenda setting and its conception as a theory with its own entity was controversial (**Scheufele**, 1999; **McCombs**; **Ghanem**, 2001).
- The current stage of consolidation (from the year 2000 until today) is characterised by the appearance of intense research development (**Weaver**, 2007) and important theory and reference-based methodologies (**Scheufele**, 2007; **Matthes**; **Kohring**, 2008). Consensus on the complementarity between the theory of agenda setting and framing has been finally reached to analyse the 'what' and 'how' of communication (**Entman**, 2007; **Tewsbury**; **Scheufele**, 2007; **Van-Gorp**, 2007).

4.2. Visual framing

Visual experience remains the most dominant mode of learning (**Barr**y, 2005). **Spencer** (2007) quotes **Jenks** (1995) to explain that

> "looking, seeing and knowing have become perilously intertwined', rendering our world primarily a '"seen" phenomenon" (pp. 1-2).

His claim comes as no surprise because sight is the most sophisticated of our senses to evolve, as it send[s] more data more quickly and efficiently through the nervous system than any other sense (**Barry**, 2005).

According to **Rodríguez** and **Dimitrova** (2011), images are less intrusive than words and require less cognitive load. Therefore, peripheral rather than central processing may be activated, and audiences may be more likely to accept the visual frame without question (**Rodríguez**; **Dimitrova**, 2011, p. 50). As visuals are processed more quickly than written texts, they produce an immediate emotional response and have a higher degree of memorability, which makes their impact higher (**Parry**, 2010, p. 1189; **Schwalbe**; **Dougherty**, 2015, p. 142). Consequently, visuals are suitable framing devices, instrumental in shaping public opinion by affecting the individual's judgments or evaluations, attitudes, preferences, emotions, decisions, interpretations, and perceptions of facts and circumstances (**Brantner** *et al.*, 2014, p. 525; **Makhortykh**; **Sydorova**, 2017). They are 'capable of not only obscuring issues but [also] of overwhelming facts' (**Wischmann**, 1987, p. 70).

Press photographs are particularly selective visual images, with a single image chosen as 'emblematic' for the news story (**Griffin**, 2004, p. 383), based on decisions relating to aesthetic design, narrative fit, perceived impact, and symbolism (**Parry**, 2011, p. 1189). There is a high level of agreement on the implications of using different camera angles among media workers and film theorists (**Grabe**; **Bucy**, 2009). The presence or manipulation of images shapes attitudes. Either the inclusion of a forceful image or the variance in head angle and gesture of the human subject can impact on critical or positive evaluations of the depicted individual or group (**Domke** *et al.*, 2002; **Petersen**, 2005; **Arpan** *et al.*, 2006).

Journalists routinely apply camera and editing techniques, including varying camera angles, lens movements, or shot selections. The process of communication does not start with recipients viewing the image but with framing; this means with the production of the image and the choices made within that process to present a particular issue in a certain way and highlight or increase the salience of specific aspects (**Wardekker**; **Lorenz**, 2019, p. 275).

Press photographs and their effect on public opinion have been the object of extensive research during the past decade (**Zillman** *et al.*, 1999; **Mesaris**; **Abraham** 2001; **Coleman**; **Banning**, 2006). Specific emphasis on the Arab world can be appreciated in the works by **Muñiz** *et al.*, (2008), who have analysed the visual frames on immigration contained in journalistic photographs and television news images; **López-del-Ramo** *et al.*, (2016), who have addressed the Syrian refugee crisis; or **Parry** (2010), who carried out a visual framing analysis of

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British photography during the 2006 Israel–Lebanon conflict. More specifically, Muslim women have been the object of analysis in the works by **Bowe** *et al.*, (2019), who explore visual framing and stereotyping in the burkini debate (2019); **Bader** (2019), who follows a visual framing approach to analyse pictures of female circumcision in Swiss newspapers; **Dastgeer**; **Gade** (2016), whose focus is on the visual framing of women in the Arab spring; or **Fahmy** (2006), with a focus on picturing Afghan women during and after the fall of the Taliban Regime. However, the multimodal relation between visual reframing and linguistic visual evidential repositioning towards Islamic terrorism that is established in the present article has remained unexplored to date.

4.3. Positioning theory and visual evidentiality

Positioning theory is a social constructionist approach (**Slocum-Bradley**; **Van-Langenhove**, 2003) that began to emerge in the field of gender studies in the 1980s and had widespread applications during the 1990s (**Moghaddam**; **Harré**, 2010). Since the late 1990s, positioning has been seen to allow 'a very natural expansion of scale, from the analysis of person-to-person encounters to the development of interactions between nation-states' (**Harré** *et al.*, 2009, p. 6). It has been followed in education and included in research areas as varied as anthropology (e.g., **Handelman**, 2008), journalism (e.g., **Weizman**, 2008), studies in organisational change (e.g., **Zelle**, 2009), studies in political identity (e.g., **Slocum-Bradley**, 2008), and public relations and strategic communication (e.g., **Wise**; **James**, 2013).

In the current research, positioning theory points to speakers'/writers' identity-building while engaged in conversation, based on 'the principle that not everyone involved in a social episode has equal access to rights and duties; (**Harré**, 2012, p. 193). An act of positioning consists in 'how people use words (and speeches of all kinds) to locate themselves and others' with direct moral implications such as 'that some person or group is located as "trustworthy" or "distrustful", "with us" or "against us", "be saved" or "be eliminated"' (**Moghaddam**; **Harré**, 2010, p. 2). For **Slocum-Bradley** (2010),

"if we understand how we build social reality, we can build more consciously to maintain the norms that promote the ends we profess to desire" (p. 81).

Regarding visual evidentiality, it is worth noting that the verb of perception 'see' occupies a privileged position in the hierarchy of verbs of perception and, consequently, is of great importance not only in terms of frequency of use but also of the capacity to express polysemic and evidential meanings (**Viberg**, 1983; 1984; 2001; **Sweetser**, 1990; **Harm**, 2000; **Whitt**, 2010; 2011).

Gamerschlag and **Petersen** (2012) reveal that the evidential use is characteristic of a subclass of object-oriented perception verbs also known as stimulus subject perception verbs (**Levin**, 1993) or perception verbs based on phenomena (**Viberg**, 2001). Sight, sound, and taste are good examples of this.

The relationship between sight and the linguistic expression of knowledge has been the object of extensive research (**Dundes**, 1972; **Manns**, 1983; **Tyler**, 1984; **Danesi**, 1985; 1990; **Ong**, 1991; **Gallup**; **Cameron**, 1992; **Sjöström**, 1999; **Yu**, 2004; **Lien**, 2005; **Hanegreefs**, 2008). As previously explained, this study explores the British public opinion's reaction towards inner terror after exposure to a selection of reframed press photographs through the linguistic analysis of their use of 'look' visual evidential-based repositioning strategies.

Figure 1. Types of perception verbs. Adapted from **Viberg** (1984; 2001).

5. Corpus description

The present study claims that 'look' object-oriented visual markers of evidentiality are used by British readers to linguistically index repositioning towards inner terror after their exposure to a selection of reframed photographs.

The study addresses two research questions:

RQ1: Does visual framing affect visual access to knowledge?

RQ2: What are the linguistic 'look' object-oriented visual markers of evidentiality used by the British readers as repositioning strategies to reframe inner terror back into terror?

To answer the research questions, the British readers' reactions to the reframed photographs have been explored and described. All of the 'look' object-oriented visual evidential markers retrieved from their written comments to a selection of the digital articles in which the photographs were published have been qualitatively analysed following a descriptive and exploratory linguistic corpus-based approach.

The self-gathered corpus of analysis comprises 155,000 words taken from all of the readers' comments to a selection of six digital newspaper articles that picked up the Muslim woman's press release and published reframed medium and close-up photographs showing her distress:

- "Woman photographed in hijab on Westminster Bridge responds to online abuse", *The Guardian*.
- "'I was devastated by witnessing aftermath of a numbing terror attack': Muslim woman who was vilified for 'walking past Westminster bridge horror' reveals she HAD helped the victims and was phoning her family to let them know she was safe", *Daily Mail*.
- "Muslim woman targeted by Twitter trolls after London attack speaks out", *The Huffington Post*.
- "London attack: Muslim woman photographed on Westminster Bridge during terror incident speaks out", *The Independent*.
- "The truth behind photo of the Muslim woman", *Metro*.
- "Photographer reveals what was actually happening in photo of 'woman in headscarf walking by dying man'", *The Mirror*.

All of the 'look' tokens retrieved from the corpus have been organised and classified manually for the qualitative analysis.

6. Results and analysis

This study has addressed two research questions regarding the British readers' reactions towards the visual reframing of inner terror into terror as linguistically expressed in their written commentaries to a selection of digital opinion articles that picked up the Muslim woman's press release and published reframed medium and close-up photographs showing her distress. The findings of the study for each of the research questions will now be analysed.
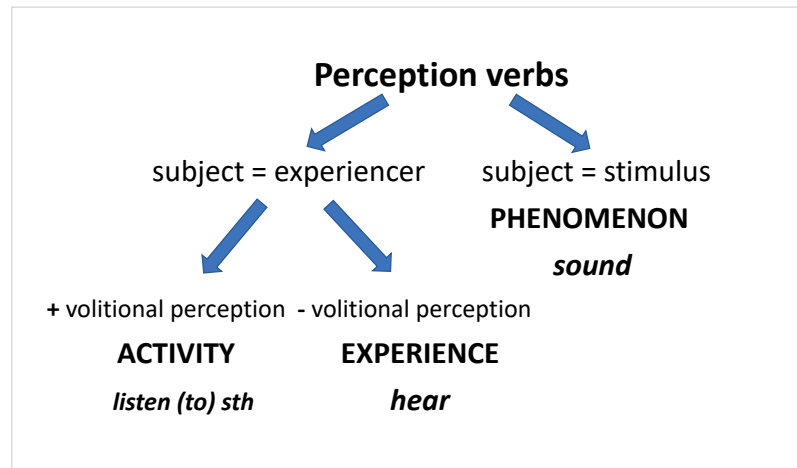
Regarding the first research question (RQ1) about the effect of visual framing on the visual access to knowledge, the analysis of the results reveals that the reframing of the original long-shot photograph, which sparked the online debate after trolls targeted the Muslim woman as an inner terrorist, into medium and close-up photographs showing her distress means a shift from an indirect and inferential to a direct and informed knowledge of the facts.

As the Muslim woman demanded in her press release, once the reframed photographs were published, many readers started urging a direct and conscious perception of the images, pointing to the need to look at the reframed photographs of the woman's face closely, beyond a casual and indirect perception based on the inferences or erroneous conjectures to which her clothes could have given rise at a long distance (examples 1-4). This would guide them to a better knowledge of the facts that is more direct and informed, leading them to change their minds.

1. Have a look at the picture, please.
2. Look at the photo.
3. Take a good look at her face for goodness sake!
4. Hei, look at her face!!

The idea is clear that, if readers look carefully, directly and consciously, and focus their attention on the image of the woman who is the object of their close visual perception, on her face, they develop the ability to see clearly (examples 5 and 6) and to understand (examples 7-9) that the woman is just suffering as any other witness to the events.

5. Look at her face she looks scared and distraught!!!
6. look at her face she looks distraught.
7. I looked beyond what she was wearing and saw a traumatised young woman.
8. Look carefully and you will see she is upset with what she see.
9. Exactly… if people actually look at her face you can see the distress.

As a direct consequence of the press release and the call for attention to a close direct, conscious, and focused gaze on the woman who is the object of perception instead of on the perceiving subjects and their interpretations, the comments of the readers start pointing to a turn to a more positive positioning towards the woman's image. They start to empathise with her, 'which is understandable' (10). She begins to be seen as a member of their group, of the British society affected by the attacks 'as most people would be' (11), just 'like everyone else in the scene' (12), and even as a victim 'The poor woman' (12), 'poor lady' (13) or 'poor woman' (14).

10. I think she looked scared, which is understandable.
11. This lady does look visibly shaken as most people would be.
12. The poor woman looked horrified and scared like everyone else at the scene.
13. …she looks petrified poor lady!!!!
14. She really looked upset poor woman.

Visual reframing leads British readers to a conscious and direct knowledge that implies a deeper understanding of the facts and develops their empathy feelings, thereby guiding them throughout the repositioning process. The ability to experience sharedness, empathy, and sensitivity to the other person's needs and suffering is crucial (**Gilbert**, 2009; **Henriksen**; **Nilsson**, 2017; **May**, 2017). The empirical evidence suggests that we empathise more strongly with others who are similar to ourselves (**Batson**, 2011).

Regarding the second research question (RQ2) about the 'look' object-oriented visual markers of evidentiality used by the British readers as repositioning strategies, a careful analysis of the results of the corpus study reveals that, in most cases, the 'look' object-oriented visual markers of evidentiality take the meanings of 'seem, have the appearance of', and 'see', and are distributed according to the patterns verb of perception + adjective (examples 15-17) and verb of perception + prepositional phrase (examples 18-20).

15. She looks terrified.
16. Poor girl looks terrified.
17. She looks traumatized.
18. The poor girl looks in distress!
19. The woman looks in fear for her life.
20. Poor woman looks on the verge of tears.

Other variants include the use of 'like' + clause (examples 21 and 22).

21. This girl looks like she is crying to me.
22. Looks like she's in state of shock to me.

With a similar meaning, the verb of perception + conjunction + clause distribution pattern is equally frequent (examples 23 and 24).

23. She looks as if she is in shock.
24. I feel sorry for this girl who looks as if she is about to burst into tears.

The resulting distribution patterns correspond to three of the seven complementation patterns of evidential perception verbs established by **Whitt** (2010), namely Type IV: PV + prepositional phrase (PP), Type V: PV + adjective (ADJ), and Type VI: PV + conjunction (CONJ) + clause (C). These results are in line with previous research (**Domínguez-Romero**, 2016) pointing out that most of the instances of object-oriented evidential 'look' in written digital discourse take the meanings of 'seem' and 'seem/appear that' and are primarily distributed according to Whitt's complementation Types IV, V, and VI.

> Inner terror becomes terror as soon as the long-shot picture of the Muslim woman turns into medium or close-up shot pictures that function as a direct source of visual evidence giving rise to in-depth knowledge of the facts, thereby enhancing the British readers' empathy towards the woman

Complementation pattern Type IV (PV + PP [P+NP]) is thus adopted by digital written object-oriented evidential 'look' to express the meaning 'seem, in a manner characteristic of' and 'seem like'. This 'seem, in a manner characteristic of' and 'seem like' meaning is also present under distribution pattern Type V (PV + ADJ). As for 'seem/appear/that', it is evident that this use of digital written 'look' mainly appears under distribution pattern VI (PV + CONJ + C), where 'look' is followed by *as if* + C and *as though* + C.

The results indicate, therefore, that the uses and distribution patterns of the 'look' object-oriented visual markers of evidentiality that function as repositioning strategies in written digital discourse remain constant, taking their usual meanings and following their typical distribution patterns. The fact of being used as repositioning discursive strategies does not alter their habitual behaviour in conventional written digital discourse.

7. Discussion and conclusion

This corpus-based study shows how the call for attention to public opinion towards a conscious and direct gaze affects a change in the focus of perception, which automatically ceases to be in the perceiving subject and its interpretation, in society, to be on the perceived object, on the image of the Muslim woman. This change in the focus of perception leads, in turn, to the repositioning of the British public opinion, as it enhances sympathy and empathy towards the Muslim woman who is the object of perception.

Inner terror becomes terror as soon as the long-shot picture of the Muslim woman turns into medium or close-up shot pictures that function as a direct source of visual evidence giving rise to in-depth knowledge of the facts, thereby enhancing the British readers' empathy towards the woman. Feeling empathy involves working to understand the meanings, functions, and origins of another person's inner world so that one can see it from his or her point of view. Empathy takes effort in a way that sympathy does not (**Gilbert**, 2009, p. 203).

In this vein, the results of the present study conclude that visual reframing affects visual access to knowledge. Medium and close-up reframed photographs of the Muslim woman lead to the British readers' deeper and more direct knowledge of the facts and, consequently, to feelings of empathy and understanding. At the same time, empathy points British readers the way to the repositioning process, as can be appreciated in their written digital commentaries. The Muslim woman stops being seen as an inner terrorist to become a British citizen. Inner terror is reframed back into terror in a multimodal repositioning process as the readers' linguistic reactions are sparked by visual reframing. The repositioning process is linguistically expressed through the readers' use of 'look' object-oriented visual markers of evidentiality in written digital discourse.

To summarise, it is worth noting that RQ1 has been answered as it has been proved that reframing the original long-shot photograph that sparked the online debate after trolls targeted the Muslim woman as an inner terrorist into medium and close-up photographs showing her distress means a shift from indirect and inferential to direct and informed knowledge of the facts. To address RQ2, it has also been proved that the 'look' object-oriented visual markers of evidentiality used by the British readers to index linguistic repositioning towards terror are not different from the 'look' object-oriented visual markers that are conventionally used in written digital discourse.

Specifically, the study has taken as the central focus of analysis the British readers' digitally written reactions to the reframing of a press photograph and has claimed that the British public opinion's positioning towards inner terror is (i) affected by the reframing of an original press photograph and (ii) linguistically expressed through the use of linguistic markers of 'look' object-oriented visual evidentiality.

Joint visual and linguistic approaches are uncommon in framing studies, usually focused on the visual reporting of international news, the analysis of press photography, and the importance of photo selection or the effect of photographs. The multimodal relation between visual reframing and linguistic visual evidential repositioning has remained unexplored to date. To fill this gap, the present study has related visual framing to broader issues of linguistic visual evidentiality and positioning theory, thus contributing to research on visual framing by complementing and reinforcing the results of previous studies on visual framing effects from an evidentiality-based approach to the linguistic analysis of readers' written reactions to visual reframing.

> The results of the present study conclude that visual reframing affects visual access to knowledge

Despite the limitations in terms of sample size, the present study has opened up a research niche that should not be neglected. Further research on the linguistic approach to framing studies is necessary as this means an essential multimodal contribution to this field of research that has remained unstudied to date.

8. References

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