


News framing in the promotion of fear: Media coverage of the terrorist attacks of November 13, 2015, in Paris and November 22, 2016, in Brussels

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Abstract

The framing of the news associated with terrorism has been investigated as an academic subject in different areas of the social sciences. By applying interpretative schemes, the media classify and interpret the information that reaches us on a daily basis. They influence audience perceptions of terrorism by highlighting, devaluing or omitting certain issues and subjects. This article focuses on the issue news framing associated with terrorism, first identifying the prevalent frames evidenced in news coverage in Portugal of terrorist attacks in Europe. Secondly, the article discusses how the prevalent frames adopted, identified in the research, enable the feeling of fear of terrorist attacks.

Keywords: Content analysis, framing, media, fear, terrorism.

Introduction

This article results from and is based on a doctoral research, and its ultimate aim is to support a relationship between terrorism and the media.

The literature review carried out was centered on three core concepts Fear, Terrorism and Framing, and resulted in a critical analysis that highlights the symbiotic relationship between terrorism and the media, from which the emotion of fear emerges (Giroux, 2006; Koskela, 2010; Altheide, 2017).

Qualitative content analysis, combined with a framing analysis, stands out as the main empirical analysis methodology in the research carried out. This article focuses on the application of this methodology and the results of the research.

The various parts of the article are detailed below.

Firstly, we will try to explain the methodology adopted in the research, namely the case studies considered, identifying the news corpus adopted and the research questions chosen.

Then, in the second step, we will highlight the prevalent news frames recognized in the content analysis carried out.

In a third step, we will analyze the prevailing frames by journalistic sector, namely television, press, radio and digital media.

Fourthly, we will identify the prevailing frames in each of the media outlets considered, from the four journalistic sectors mentioned.

Next, we will exemplify the prevalent frames recognized in the news content analyzed.

The sixth and last step will discuss the results, analyzing how the recognized frames enable the fear of terrorist attacks.

Methodology

The case studies analyzed in the research refer to the terrorist attacks in Paris on November 13, 2015 and the terrorist attacks in Brussels on March 22, 2016, perpetrated by ISIS.

The time frame used to identify the corpus of news analysis begins on November 13, 2015, when the Paris terrorist attacks took place, and ends on July 31, 2016, roughly four months after the Brussels attacks (March 22, 2016).

The research questions that underpin the framing analysis, resulting from a qualitative content analysis of the selected news corpus, are: (1) Which news frames are prevalent in the Portuguese media pieces and articles that make up the analysis corpus? (2) How do these frames, as used journalistic discourse, enable a narrative associated with the risk and fear of terrorist attacks in Portugal?

The aforementioned corpus of news analyzed is made up of a total of 1,125 pieces and articles from television, radio, press and digital media.

With regard to the television sector, it should be clarified that the study carried out included an analysis of the three 8 p.m. evening news programs on the three Portuguese generalist channels: *SIC* (private channel), *RTP 1* (state channel) and *TVI* (private channel). *SIC's Jornal da Noite*, *RTP 1's Telejornal* and *TVI's Jornal das 8* were considered.

In the press sector, the news media considered were: *Público*, *Diário de Notícias*, *Jornal de Notícias*, *i* and *Correio da Manhã*. These newspapers were chosen for analysis because they are all dailies.

With regard to the radio sector, it should be pointed out that the study carried out involved the analysis of three 6 p.m. evening newscasts from three national radio stations: *Antena 1* (a state-owned broadcaster with national coverage), *Rádio Renascença* (a private broadcaster with national coverage) and *TSF* (a private broadcaster with national coverage).

Finally, in the digital media sector, the following news media were considered: *Expresso Online*, *Público Online*, *SIC Notícias Online*, *Sol Online* and *TVI24 Online*. All the digital media analyzed belong to private groups. Convenience sampling was used to identify the news corpus to be adopted for this sector. The digital sector is characterized by the rapid production and dissemination of news content, with frequent updates, many of which are poorly developed, and where access to the total archive of publications is practically impossible.

The analysis involved coding previously identified news items from the four abovementioned sectors. In the news coding process, a code book and an analysis grid were used, specifically designed for the current investigation.

In our content analysis, we identified and analyzed the prevailing frames in the identified news corpus. It should be clarified that we only considered the frame that was evident in each of the pieces and articles in the corpus. Each piece and news article analyzed corresponded to a single frame in evidence.

After carrying out the content analysis, we analyzed how the prevalent frames recognized enable a narrative associated with the risk and fear of terrorist attacks in Portugal.

Prevalent frames recognized in content analysis

As a result of the analysis and coding of the pieces and news articles under consideration, we distinguished ten prevalent frames, which we named and are characterized below.

Likewise, we identified a set of four frames which, although not prevalent, will be highlighted in this section due to the relevance of their inclusion in the study.

"Portugal insecure"

Reference in the corpus of news analysis to latent insecurity and a risk of terrorist attacks in Portugal.

"Fight against terrorism"

Identification in the corpus of news analysis of security and counter-terrorism measures adopted and to be adopted by Portugal, the countries of the European Union and other allies. Identification of European Union security and counterterrorism standards.

"Islam"

Identification in the corpus of news analysis of the comments and position of the Islamic community in Portugal on the terrorist attacks under analysis. It also identifies the way in which the Portuguese community, from the most diverse backgrounds, namely political, religious, academic and the media, has disassociated itself from a label that associates Islam with terrorism.

"Explosions and blood"

Identification in the corpus of news analysis of descriptive, visual and audio content referring to terrorist attacks, highlighting images and sounds associated with violence, such as corpses, blood, screams, gunshots and explosions. Similarly, descriptive textual content is displayed, detailing the violent action associated with terrorist acts.

"Threats of attacks on Portugal and Europe"

Reference in the corpus of news analysis to threats, made by ISIS or other terrorist organizations, of terrorist attacks to be carried out in Portugal and Europe.

"Islamophobia"

Identification in the corpus of news analysis of Islamophobic references, aversion to Islam or what is Islamic, due to the terrorist attacks in Paris and Brussels.

"Compatriot victims and heroes"

Identification in the corpus of news analysis of testimonies from Portuguese people or Portuguese descendants, tourists or residents, who experienced the attacks in the cities involved in the terrorist attacks.

"Fear"

Identification in the corpus of news analysis of references to fear as an emotion which was prevalent in the population as a result of the terrorist attacks. This recognition, which appears in the media, comes from interlocutors from different quarters, namely: political, religious, academic, the media and the community in general.

"Dead, wounded and missing from the attacks"

Identification in the corpus of news analysis of references to the dead and injured resulting from the terrorist attacks. These references come in the form of identifying the number of dead and injured, photographs of the victims and descriptions of them. Likewise, the testimonies of the injured themselves or of relatives and acquaintances of the dead are taken into account.

"Executioners of the attacks"

Identification in the corpus of news analysis of references to the perpetrators of terrorist attacks. These references appear, in particular, through photographs of the terrorists, physical and behavioral descriptions, recognition of their family origins and coexistence, education, criminal record and connotations with terrorist practices, among others.

As mentioned above, four frames are included in the analysis:

"Islamic radicals"

Association in the corpus of news analysis of Islam, as a religion, with terrorism and of Islamic with terrorist. Explicit or implicit generalization that all Islam is radical and defends the practice of terrorism.

"Terrorist immigrants or refugees"

In the corpus of news analysis, immigrants or refugees from Arab nations are associated with ISIS terrorists and the terrorist attacks in Paris and Brussels.

"Foreign fighters"

Reference in the corpus of news analysis to citizens of Western origin or with close cultural ties to them, namely Europeans, North Americans and Australians, who join the ranks of ISIS fighters.

"Portuguese terrorists"

Reference in the corpus of news analysis to citizens of Portuguese origin or with Portuguese ancestry who are part of the ranks of ISIS fighters.

Prevailing frames by news sector

Looking at the prevailing frames by journalistic sector (television, press, radio and digital media), and concerning the analysis of the Paris and Brussels attacks, we can say that the "Fight against terrorism" frame, followed by the "Dead, wounded and missing from the attacks" frame are dominant in the content analysis carried out. In addition to these two frames, eight others stood out: "Compatriot victims and heroes"; "Executioners of the attacks"; "Fear"; "Threats of attacks on Portugal and Europe"; "Portugal insecure"; "Explosions and blood"; "Islamophobia"; and "Islam".

Tables 1 and 2 show the frames identified in the four sectors under analysis.

Table 1: Frames identified by sector in the coverage of the Paris attacks

Frames	TV (N)	Press (N)	Radio (N)	Digital (N)	Total (N)
Portuguese terrorists	20	18	4	0	42
Portugal insecure	15	16	9	0	40
Fight against terrorism	153	87	46	13	299
Islam	15	13	1	1	30
Explosions and blood	28	10	0	0	38
Threats of attacks on Portugal and Europe	27	20	10	2	59
Compatriot victims and heroes	47	24	14	1	86
Fear	51	26	8	0	85
Dead, wounded and missing from the attacks	75	14	17	5	111
Executioners of the attacks	24	21	5	4	54

Table 2: Frames identified by sector in the coverage of the Brussels attacks

Frames	TV (N)	Press (N)	Radio (N)	Digital (N)	Total (N)
Terrorist immigrants or refugees	3	8	3	1	15
Portugal insecure	20	10	4	0	34
Fight against terrorism	58	41	33	26	158
Islam	7	7	3	1	18
Explosions and blood	15	4	0	4	23
Threats of attacks on Portugal and Europe	13	8	9	2	32
Islamophobia	10	14	4	1	29
Compatriot victims and heroes	20	21	4	11	56
Fear	6	14	7	2	29
Dead, wounded and missing from the attacks	49	15	6	19	89
Executioners of the attacks	29	19	9	13	61

Table 3 lists these 10 prevalent frames, ordering them by their totals, from the most to the least adopted, by the attacks analyzed.

Table 3: Absolute values for the adoption of the 10 prevalent frames

Frames	Attacks	Attacks	Total
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	Paris (N)	Brussels (N)	(N)
Fight against terrorism	299	158	457
Dead, wounded and missing from the attacks	111	89	200
Compatriot victims and heroes	86	56	142
Executioners of the attacks	54	61	115
Fear	85	29	114
Threats of attacks on Portugal and Europe	59	32	91
Portugal insecure	40	34	74
Explosions and blood	38	23	61
Islamophobia	23	29	52
Islam	30	18	48

The ten prevalent news frames listed in table 3 were recognized considering the absolute values of their adoption. The "Fight against terrorism" frame was the most adopted in the news content analyzed, and stands out as the most prevalent frame in 457 news pieces and articles considered.

After recognizing the ten most prevalent frames in the news pieces and articles analyzed, we determined the positioning of the frames by the frequency of their adoption, considering the Paris and Brussels attacks. Table 4 is enlightening in distinguishing and ordering the news framing priorities adopted in the coverage of the Paris and Brussels attacks.

Table 4: Positioning of frames by terrorist attacks (top 10)

Ranking	News frames attacks Paris	News frames attacks Brussels
1 ^o	Fight against terrorism	Fight against terrorism
2 ^o	Dead, wounded and missing from the attacks	Dead, wounded and missing from the attacks
3 ^o	Compatriot victims and heroes	Executioners of the attacks
4 ^o	Fear	Compatriot victims and heroes
5 ^o	Threats of attacks on Portugal and Europe	Portugal insecure
6 ^o	Executioners of the attacks	Threats of attacks on Portugal and Europe
7 ^o	Portuguese terrorists	Islamophobia / Fear
8 ^o	Portugal insecure	Explosions and blood
9 ^o	Explosions and blood	Islam
10 ^o	Islam	Terrorist immigrants or refugees

The table above lists, in descending order, the frames adopted that were evident in the news coverage of the Paris and Brussels attacks by the four sectors considered.

In terms of frequency of adoption, the two frames that simultaneously occupy the top positions in the news pieces and articles analyzed from the Paris and Brussels attacks are "Fight against terrorism" and "Dead, wounded and missing from the attacks". Still in evidence, and in third place among the frames highlighted in the four sectors, is the frame "Compatriot victims and heroes" in the coverage of the Paris attacks. Also in third position, but referring to the Brussels attacks, comes the frame "Executioners of the attacks". The "Fear" frame appears in fourth position, referring to the coverage of the Paris attacks. In the same position, regarding coverage of the Brussels attacks, comes the frame "Compatriot victims and heroes". In fifth position of the dominant frames in the four sectors analyzed is the frame "Threats of attacks in Portugal and Europe" in the coverage of the Paris attacks and "Portugal insecure" in the coverage of the Brussels attacks. In sixth place in the ranking of news frames that stood out in the coverage of the Paris attacks was "Executioners of the attacks". In the same position, but referring to the Brussels attacks, the frame "Threats

of attacks on Portugal and Europe" stands out. In seventh position, regarding the Paris attacks, comes the frame "Portuguese terrorists". At the same time, in seventh position, referring to the coverage of the Brussels attacks, there are two frames: "Islamophobia" and "Fear". The frame "Portugal insecure" is in eighth place in the ranking, referring to coverage of the Paris attacks. The frame "Explosions and blood" holds the same position in relation to the Brussels attacks. In ninth position, the frame "Explosions and blood" appears again, concerning the Paris attacks. Similarly, in ninth position, but referring to the Brussels attacks, is the frame "Islam". In the last positions, in the coverage of the Paris attacks, we identified the already referenced frame "Islam", and in the coverage of the Brussels attacks, the frame not yet mentioned in this list, "Terrorist immigrants or refugees".

Prevalent frames in journalistic sectors

Frames identified as prevalent in television newscasts

With regard to the news programs that reported on the Paris attacks, we identified the "Fight against terrorism" frame as the most prevalent on the three television channels analyzed. The following frames are highlighted in the three newscasts: *SIC*'s is that of "Fear", while *RTP 1* and *TVI*'s is "Deaths, injuries and missing from the attacks".

With regard to the news coverage of the Brussels attacks, we note that the "Fight against terrorism" frame is prevalent in the *SIC* and *RTP 1* newscasts. On *TVI*, the dominant frame is "Dead, wounded and missing from the attacks". The following frames stand out in the three newscasts: in *SIC* "Dead, wounded and missing from the attacks", in *RTP 1*, similarly, the frames "Portugal insecure" and "Dead, wounded and missing from the attacks" and in *TVI*, similarly, the frames "Executioners of the attacks" and "Compatriot victims and heroes".

Frames identified as prevalent in daily newspapers

In relation to the news articles that reported on the Paris attacks, we identified the "Fight against terrorism" frame as the most prevalent in the five newspapers analyzed. The following frames were identified in the articles analyzed: "Fear" in *Público* and *Diário de Notícias*; "Compatriot victims and heroes" in *Jornal de Notícias*; "Terrorist immigrants or refugees" and "Executioners of the attacks" in *i*; and "Portuguese terrorists", "Threats of attacks on Portugal and Europe" and "Compatriot victims and heroes" in *Correio da Manhã*.

With regard to the news coverage of the Brussels attacks, we note that the "Fight against terrorism" frame is equally dominant in the five newspapers analyzed. In the *Jornal de Notícias* articles, the predominance is equal between this frame and "Executioners of the attacks". The following frames stand out in the articles analyzed: in *Público*, "Executioners of the attacks"; in *Diário de Notícias*, "Islamic radicals"; and in *Jornal de Notícias*, *i* and *Correio da Manhã* "Compatriot victims and heroes".

Frames identified as prevalent in radio newscasts

With regard to the newscasts that reported on the Paris attacks, the "Fight against terrorism" frame is recognized as the most prevalent in the newscasts of the three radio stations analyzed. The following frames

are highlighted in the three newscasts: *Antena 1*'s is "Threats of attacks on Portugal and Europe", *Rádio Renascença* has "Deaths, injuries and missing from the attacks" and on *TSF* it is "Compatriot victims and heroes".

With regard to the news coverage of the Brussels attacks, we highlight the prevalence of the "Fight against terrorism" frame on all three stations. The frames that stand out next in the three newscasts are: on *Antena 1*, "Executioners of the attacks", on *Rádio Renascença*, "Compatriot victims and heroes", and finally, on *TSF*, the frame "Fear".

Frames identified as prevalent in digital media

With regard to the news articles that reported on the Paris attacks, once again we identified the "Fight against terrorism" frame as the most prevalent in the five digital newspapers investigated. The next most common frame in all the newspapers is "Deaths, injuries and missing from the attacks".

As far as news coverage of the Brussels attacks is concerned, we would point out that the "Fight against terrorism" frame is equally dominant in four of the five digital media analyzed. Only on *SIC Notícias Online*, and by a tiny margin, is the predominant frame "Deaths, injuries and missing from the attacks". In the *Expresso Online* articles, the predominance is equal between the frames "Fight against terrorism" and "Executioners of the attacks". The frames that stand out in the articles analyzed are: in *Expresso Online*, "Executioners of the attacks"; in *Público Online*, in equal measure, the frames "Terrorist immigrants or refugees", "Foreign fighters", "Threats of attacks on Portugal and Europe", "Islamophobia", "Fear" and "Dead, wounded and missing from the attacks"; on *SIC Notícias Online*, similarly, the frames "Fight against terrorism" and "Executioners of the attacks"; on *Sol Online*, "Dead, wounded and missing from the attacks"; and on *TVI 24 Online*, "Compatriot victims and heroes".

Examples of prevalent frames in the news content analyzed

Using the journalistic material examined in the content analysis, we selected and analyzed some examples of the pieces and news articles studied, which support and are connoted with each of the ten prevalent frames identified.

"Fight against terrorism"

As an example of this frame, we considered a television news piece from the *RTP 1 Telejornal* on November 16, 2015.

The TV piece, which lasts 2 minutes and 35 seconds, begins by mentioning the G20 summit to be held in Turkey, with the aim of consolidating an international coalition to fight ISIS. The news piece then features French President François Hollande addressing the French parliamentary assembly. After the French anthem is sung, the president declares that: "France is at war" and that "the terrorists will not destroy the Republic, because it is the Republic that will destroy them". The following chyron appears as a footnote to the reported images: "Response to terror".

The news piece goes on to refer to the French air force bombing the city of Raqqa in Syria and the deployment of the Charles de Gaulle aircraft carrier to the eastern Mediterranean Sea.

At the end of the piece, the topic of the G20 Summit is taken up again, where US president Barack Obama and Russian president Vladimir Putin declared their support for the coalition fighting ISIS.

"Dead, wounded and missing from the attacks"

An example of this frame, is a television news piece from *SIC's Jornal da Noite* on November 15, 2015.

The TV piece, which lasts 6 minutes and 20 seconds, is presented by the anchor journalist as "a film of the massacre of the Paris attacks".

The piece begins by listing the nationalities of the victims of the attacks, showing photographs of their social media profiles. At this point, a non-diegetic sound composition begins, with piano music in the background, which will accompany the entire news report, with the aim of bringing greater depth and emotion to it.

The news piece goes on to show victims of the attacks lying in the street, next to *Le Bataclan*, being rescued. People are heard screaming for medical help. When analyzing the "Explosions and blood" frame, we will once again consider the victim, namely through descriptive content that explores the violent action, whether visually, textually or sonically.

Following on from the same news item, there are reports of the Paris attacks from surviving victims.

It should be noted that in all the news programs analyzed, from the three television channels considered, there is a daily tally of the dead and wounded victims of terrorist attacks.

"Compatriot victims and heroes"

We took a newspaper article from *Diário de Notícias* on November 15, 2015, as an example of the frame for analysis. Its title is: "A Portuguese-French woman and an Alentejo man among the dead in Paris".

The article in question takes up an entire page of the newspaper and is headed by an illustration, which refers to the theme of the attacks, with a character dressed in a traditional French costume, crying.

The article begins by mentioning that there were two fatalities of Portuguese origin, describing both of them, with greater emphasis on the cab driver who was killed near the French national stadium while transporting fans to the France - Germany soccer match. Following the same news item, there are references to the Alentejo origins of the fatal victim and testimonies from family members about him.

The article concludes by saying that there are still unidentified bodies at *Le Bataclan*, and that there may be more Portuguese victims.

"Executioners of the attacks"

As an example of the frame under analysis, we considered a news article from the *Jornal de Notícias* on March 24, 2016, entitled: "Faces and connections of the Belgian cell".

The article under study takes up half a page of the newspaper and uses a schematic infographic to expose, the close and family relationships between the terrorists involved in the Brussels attacks. It also highlights the links between the protagonists of the French and Belgian cells involved in the attacks in the two cities.

The aforementioned infographic shows the profile of the perpetrators of these attacks, with photographs of them, nationality, age and roles in the terrorist operations. The same infographic also clarifies whether the terrorists in question are dead, have been captured by the police or are on the run.

"Fear"

As an example of the frame identified as "Fear", we considered an article from *Jornal de Notícias*, published on November 15, 2015, entitled: "A city 'without light' after the state of siege".

The article in question takes up an entire page of the newspaper and is headed by an image of an armed military man standing next to the Eiffel Tower. Next to it, a photograph of the face of the person of Portuguese descent who died at *Le Bataclan*.

The article begins by saying that "the pain, fear and prayers of parisians are beginning to give way to revolt and a desire for revenge".

Following on from the same report are statements from Parisians who say that: "today, yes, there is still fear, but we are not going to let the terrorists kill our freedom".

The article also mentions two Portuguese immigrants in Paris who reported their experience of armed police and military occupying the streets after the events. According to one of the interviewees: "there was a lot of fear that there would be more terrorists on the loose".

In relation to the adoption of the frame called "Fear", different news contents are analyzed, which show this feeling as prevalent among the population after the attacks in Paris and Brussels. Journalists, politicians, religious leaders and the population in general refer to the emotion of fear, using the terminology itself to characterize the prevailing feeling.

"Threats of attacks on Portugal and Europe"

As an example of the frame "Threats of attacks on Portugal and Europe", we analyzed a television news piece from *SIC's Jornal da Noite* on April 1, 2016.

The television piece, which lasts 3 minutes and 5 seconds, opens with the following chyron in the footer: "Daesh threatens Portugal", and a statement from the anchor journalist, reporting that surveillance at national airports has been stepped up, but that the attack alert level remains unchanged.

The news piece goes on to point out that Portugal is being threatened by ISIS for the second time in two months, and is being referred to as an enemy of radical Islamic groups.

Following on from the same news item are statements from the minister of justice and the minister of internal affairs. The former stresses that "the authorities are investigating the real risk of the threat". She also states that Portugal is facing the same risk as any other country, but warns that the world has changed and that it is important to be alert. For her part, the minister of internal affairs argues: "the threat has to be taken seriously, we need to adopt a long-term strategy that focuses on prevention".

Finally, the analyzed piece mentions the 2015 Annual Internal Security Report, referring to the evolution of the terrorist threat, with the attraction of Portuguese extremists to the ranks of ISIS.

"Portugal insecure"

We took a TV news piece from *TVI's Jornal das 8*, on March 23, 2016, as an example to analyze the "Portugal insecure" frame.

The piece, which lasts 3 minutes and 54 seconds, starts the evening news. The anchor journalist introduces it as "an ongoing alert in Lisbon". The same journalist mentions that traffic has been cut off on Avenida da República in Lisbon, and that the Entrecampos metro and train stations have been closed. A chyron appears at the bottom: "Alert in Lisbon", which will be present throughout the news piece.

The piece goes live to the reporter at the scene, who describes the situation for approximately 3 minutes, reporting the existence of a suspicious package on the road and the presence of a strong police apparatus, controlling traffic access and the movement of the population. The reporter shows the operations of the Public Security Police (PSP) detection dog teams at the scene.

The clip ends, but is resumed in the second part of the newscast, where the same chyron "Alert in Lisbon" and the presence of PSP officers at the scene is shown for about two minutes.

The following day (March 24, 2016), at the end of the *Jornal das 8* newscast, the anchor journalist reported that after the controlled detonation of the package, it was found that its contents posed no danger.

The frame designated as "Portugal insecure" is closely related to the frame mentioned above, "Threats of attacks on Portugal and Europe". As we have seen, the perception of insecurity often comes from the communication of an actual threat.

"Explosions and blood"

As an example of the "Explosions and blood" frame, we considered a news article from *Correio da Manhã* on November 16, 2015, entitled: "I pretended to be dead for over an hour". This news article takes up one page of the newspaper and its predominant frame is the description and exposition of descriptive, textual and visual content about the attack on *Le Bataclan*.

Featured in the news is a picture of the inside of the concert hall, *Le Bataclan*, showing the piled-up bodies of the victims of the attack. The photograph, which takes up approximately half of the story, shows mutilated bodies and blood on the ground.

The textual content is equally disturbing, with detailed testimonies from the surviving victims of the attack. As an example, some of the quotes present: "dozens of people were killed in front of me, pools of blood filled the floor" or "people in wheelchairs, next to the stage, were the first to be slaughtered" or even "I had never seen a dead person and I had to lie down in the middle of several dead people".

With regard to the frame designated as "Explosions and blood", various approaches to the subject were considered in the news analyzed, namely descriptive, visual, audio and textual content referring to the terrorist attacks, detailing the violent action.

"Islamophobia"

As an example of the "Islamophobia" frame, we considered an article from *Diário de Notícias* on November 17, 2015, entitled: "We're all in deep shit, the Muslims".

The article takes up one page of the newspaper and its central theme is the Islamophobia witnessed and experienced by Muslims in Paris after the attacks.

An initial statement from a young Muslim said: "Now there is no one who believes that Islam is not a religion of war. We Muslims are all in deep shit".

The article continues with statements from a Muslim woman, president of the association *Franco Algériens Républicains Rassemblés*, claiming that she "created the association so that the French would not fall into an Islamophobic psychosis". She ends her statement, still referring to Muslims, by saying that: "we are going to live through very difficult times".

The article ends by reporting episodes of persecution and aggression against Muslims in Paris.

With regard to the frame designated as "Islamophobia", various approaches to the subject were considered in the news stories analyzed, namely references to the aversion or prejudice towards Islam that emerged after the attacks.

"Islam"

As an example of the "Islam" frame, we considered an article from *Diário de Notícias* on November 16, 2015, entitled: "The atmosphere in Portugal is very good. There is friendship". The article takes up one page of the newspaper.

The headline, "Muslims in Portugal condemn terrorist acts in Paris and stress they have nothing to do with Islam", includes statements from Muslims living in Portugal.

A first testimony shows that "the Portuguese people and the Muslims are well integrated. There have always been no problems between them".

The article continues with statements along the same lines by Abdool Vakil, president of the Islamic community in Lisbon, who argues that "our Portuguese way of being is to integrate those who come from outside, unlike what happens in France, where immigrants don't feel that the host society is theirs".

The report concludes by mentioning that Muslim leaders in Lisbon joined the tributes to the victims of the Paris attacks at the Belém Tower, arguing that "ISIS has nothing to do with Islam".

When identifying the frame known as "Islam", certain news content is taken into account, namely whether the Islamic community in Portugal has been able to comment on and position itself in the face of the terrorist attacks, or even whether the non-Islamic Portuguese community, from the most diverse sectors of society, disassociates itself from the label that associates Islam with terrorism.

Frames that enable fear of terrorist attacks – Results and discussion

Having answered the first research question by identifying the prevalent frames in the journalistic pieces and articles that make up the corpus of analysis, we must now answer the second research question and identify how the ten prevalent frames used in journalistic discourse enable a narrative associated with the risk and fear of terrorist attacks in Portugal.

Thus, modern Western society is currently facing a constant and widespread climate of fear, in different dimensions and with an international scope, in relation to pandemics, immigration, and terrorism, among others (Robin, 2004; Pain & Smith, 2008; Furedi, 2018).

Frank Furedi (2018), focusing on fear studies, associates the media with the spread of fear, asking: Who are the instigators of fear? What role does the media play in promoting fear?

In turn, Corey Robin (2004) identifies the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, as the main factor in the promotion of studies associated with fear in the social sciences.

Robin (2004) and Furedi (2005) also argue that the 2001 attacks and the ensuing conflict with organizations that defend ultra-radical Islam, such as al Qaeda, are the source of the current fear of terrorism.

After identifying the ten prevalent frames in the pieces and articles we analyzed, we then carried out an analysis of these frames as the central part of the narrative associated with the risk and fear of terrorist attacks in Portugal.

We began our analysis of the ten prevalent frames, focusing our discussion first on the "Fear" frame, as the central thematic approach of the research. We reiterate what has already been said, arguing that the "Fear" frame is sustained and comes essentially from the frames "Threats of attacks on Portugal and Europe", "Portugal insecure", "Explosions and blood" and "Executioners of the attacks".

The five frames mentioned above, including "Fear", are closely linked and will therefore be analyzed first. The first prevalent frame to be analyzed, "Fear", appears in the content analysis carried out on the news corpus considered, and comes from and is essentially associated with an alleged risk of insecurity in Europe, which includes Portugal. The unpredictability, coordination, scale and consequences of the terrorist attacks, coupled with the flight of some of the perpetrators and repeated threats of attacks on Europe by ISIS, have fostered a feeling of widespread fear, communicated by the media. The news coverage focuses mainly on Paris and Brussels, reporting experiences and the prevailing feeling of fear, through testimonies from the population.

As mentioned above, the different media outlets analyzed used the expression "fear" across the board in their news coverage of the attacks under study, to characterize the feeling that prevails among the population. The content analysis carried out on the various media outlets reveals that the terminology is used by journalists, politicians, religious leaders and the population in general. Fear, referenced in the accounts and testimonies of victims, the injured and their families, becomes a dominant feeling in news coverage. As Glassner (1999, 2018) and Pain and Smith (2008) argue, fear is understood and apprehended as real for some of us and virtually real for most of us.

David Altheide (2013) also theorizes about the media's "Discourse of Fear" concerning terrorism, highlighting a series of assessments. In this way, he emphasizes that this discourse is closely associated with the media's entertainment format, namely news activity (Altheide, 2013). He goes further and argues that the media intentionally distort the reporting of certain events in order to influence the opinions and decisions of the public (Altheide, 2016). In order to do this, according to the author, they do not need to use an explicit argument supported by deception or fallacy, but simply orient their communication strategies towards a specific framing, reporting certain events to the detriment of others, valuing either the concealment or the repetition of facts, and using tragic visual resources, with the ultimate aim of arousing exacerbated emotions in the public (Altheide, 2016).

The content and framing analysis carried out on the news corpus considered recognizes and shares some of the opinions identified above by David Altheide (2016). In this sense, we can highlight:

- (1) The framing seen in the pieces and articles analyzed, where the "Fear" frame stands out as, widely adopted and communicated as a prevailing feeling among the population. We also highlight the prevalent frames "Threats of attacks on Portugal and Europe", "Portugal insecure" and "Executioners of the attacks", associated with a narrative of imminent risk of attacks in Portugal and on the European continent. These last three frames are included in the list of the ten most prevalent and will be discussed below. Altheide (2016), as shown above, argues that there is a media communication strategy for a specific framing associated with risk and fear;
- (2) The valorization of news coverage of attacks in Western society. On November 12, 2015, the day before the Paris attacks, there was a terrorist attack in Beirut, perpetrated by ISIS, which claimed 43 lives. The timeframe considered in identifying the corpus of news analysis for the research begins on November 13, 2015, the day of the Paris terrorist attacks, one day after the Beirut attacks, and ends on July 31, 2016. The

content analysis carried out on all the television and radio media considered reveals that there was not a single piece of news reporting on the Beirut attacks during the time period mentioned. Rita Colistra (2012) proposes the concept of *agenda cutting*, associated with *agenda setting*, which includes keeping a certain theme or subject off the media agenda (Colistra, 2012, p. 100). Rachel Pain (2009), referring to the new geopolitics of fear, references Mythen and Walklate (2006), arguing that terrorist attacks in the West receive continuous and disproportionate attention due to their political and socio-cultural usefulness. Altheide (2016), as shown above, points out that the media report on certain events to the detriment of others, either by hiding or repeating facts;

(3) Repetition of tragic visual content. Still with regard to the news framing found in the pieces and articles analyzed, we would highlight the "Explosions and blood" frame. This frame is listed among the ten most prevalent and will be discussed later in this analysis. Altheide (2016), as shown above, mentions the media's use of tragic visuals, with the ultimate aim of arousing heightened emotions in the public.

Fear, as a global phenomenon, described in this way by Koskela (2010), does not come about through the personal experiences of individuals, but through the experiences of others, supported by narratives promoted by interpersonal conversations and the media (Koskela, 2010). As an example of the appropriation of the "Fear" frame, we can report the comment of the anchor journalist of *Telejornal (RTP 1)*, on November 18, 2015, mentioning: "fear is installed throughout Europe".

We believe that the threat of terrorist attacks in Europe, particularly in Portugal, and the risk of insecurity, conveyed by various media, through journalists and guest commentators makes it possible to create fear in the population.

Altheide (2017) points out that the media exert a unique influence on public life, reporting daily threats and risks to audiences. On the other hand, he says, "the media are the most important source of information and social control, in that they make fear our life, our language and our point of view" (Altheide, 2017, p. 2). Again by way of example, researcher Felipe Pathé Duarte, in an interview with *Diário de Notícias* (November 14, 2015) and referring to the French Muslim population (4 million inhabitants), justifies the police's inability to control the attacks in this way: "...in such a large sample of potential jihadists, it is impossible to control everything and everyone". We believe that these arguments used by the aforementioned researcher and member of OSCOT¹, foster a misperception of risk and ultimately create a feeling of fear.

The second prevalent frame, called "Threats of attacks on Portugal and Europe", was adopted by the media following the communication of terrorist threats to various European countries by ISIS. The aforementioned threats of attacks are given prominence in the news in various pieces and articles, highlighting the target nations (e.g., France), the target facilities or entities (e.g., nuclear power stations), the target protagonists (e.g., the French president François Hollande) and the methods of action (e.g., incitement to act by the so-called "lone wolves").

The third prevalent frame, entitled "Portugal insecure", emphasizes the current insecurity and risk of a terrorist attack in Portugal. The combination of different frames recognized in the content analysis makes it possible for the "Portugal insecure" frame to emerge. In this way, we can highlight: the threats of attacks on Portugal by ISIS, identified in the frame "Threats of attacks on Portugal and Europe" and the existence of a terrorist of Portuguese origin (Ismaël Omar Mostefai), the protagonist in the Paris attacks, identified in

¹ Observatory on Security, Organized Crime and Terrorism.

the frame "Executioners of the attacks". As shown above, the frames associated with a narrative of risk enable a narrative of fear of terrorist attacks in Portugal and Europe.

Having referenced the frames "Threats of attacks on Portugal and Europe" and "Portugal insecure", which enable and sustain the "Fear" frame, we distinguished a fourth frame, called "Explosions and blood".

This fourth prevalent frame, as mentioned above, favors descriptive, visual, sound and textual content referring to the terrorist attacks, detailing the violent action, highlighting images and/or sounds associated with violence, such as corpses, blood, screams, gunshots, and explosions. Altheide (2020) argues that the media, on the one hand, produce and communicate informative content in a rigorous and ethical manner, while on the other hand, they adopt an entertainment-oriented approach, valuing dramatic content and framing (Altheide, 2020). According to Altheide (2020), the informative content shown last contributes to a misperception of risk and a generalized feeling of fear in audiences (Altheide, 2020).

The adoption by the media of certain frames in the coverage of terrorist attacks has occasionally led to reports to the Regulatory Authority for the Media² (ERC), which have resulted in deliberations by this body (Estêvão & Espanha, 2021). In an investigation into reports to the ERC regarding news coverage of terrorist attacks and their respective deliberations, Estêvão and Espanha (2021) recognize a set of prevalent frames in the news stories targeted. Some of the frames identified in the aforementioned research, associated with risk and fear, are evident in the current research. We highlight the aforementioned "Explosions and blood" frame, from the investigation associated with the reports to the ERC (Estêvão & Espanha, 2021), as predominant in all the pieces analyzed in the two authors' investigation. The adoption of the aforementioned frame in the news pieces in question was the subject of reasoned and condemnatory decisions by the ERC, as it was associated with a fear-mongering narrative, with clear sensationalist and audience-getting objectives (Altheide, 2021; Estêvão & Espanha, 2021).

The fifth prevalent frame to be analyzed focuses on the perpetrators of terrorist attacks. The "Executioners of the attacks" frame explores the profile of the terrorists involved, deceased, captured and on the run, with the dissemination of their photographs, physical and behavioral descriptions, family and social background, education, criminal record, among other data.

The content analysis carried out on the media in question shows that the national media highlighted the Portuguese-born terrorist, Ismaél Omar Mostefai, who blew himself up at *Le Bataclan*. In addition to the news coverage of the victims and "heroes" of Portuguese origin, in this case there were also several pieces and news articles with testimonies from neighbors and acquaintances of the terrorist's mother in the Portuguese town of Póvoa do Lanhoso.

Still regarding the profile of the perpetrators of the attacks, the media often highlight religious motivations for terrorist acts with the perpetrators, often being associated with the Islamic religion. The content analysis carried out also identified that some of the media associate the perpetrators of the terrorist attacks, with Syrian refugees who were arriving in Europe at the time.

In her study, Martini (2018) refers to various frames in the media that explain the motivations that lead young women to join ISIS. The content analysis carried out identifies the same motivations associated with the profiles of the perpetrators of the Paris and Brussels attacks in some news pieces and articles. A first motivation, identified and shared with the study by the aforementioned author (Martini, 2018), supports the argument of the search for adventure and liberation, associated with the incorporation of young terrorists

² <https://www.erc.pt/en/>

into ISIS. A second identified motivation, shared with the study by Martini (2018), associates young people's affiliation with ISIS with personal traumas.

The sixth prevalent frame to address is the one called "Deaths, injuries and missing from the attacks". From the very first moment, during the Paris and Brussels attacks, and in the days that followed, the television and radio media reported and broadcast the events live. The press, in turn, covered the events on a daily basis. The content analysis carried out on the media from the four sectors identified: a permanent tally of the dead and injured; the testimonies and accounts of victims and relatives; the images of dead and injured victims; and the subsequent tributes to those who die in the attacks.

Following the analysis of the ten prevalent frames, we identified the "Compatriot victims and heroes" frame. As the media began to recognize the dead and wounded resulting from the Paris and Brussels attacks, another frame emerged, across all sectors, but with greater emphasis in some media. The "Compatriot victims and heroes" frame appears shortly after the start of the accounting and possible recognition of the dead and injured victims of the attacks, and focuses on the recognition of the Portuguese who experienced the attacks, as direct victims, residents or tourists in the cities involved. As early as November 14, 2015, there were two cases of appropriation of this frame. The vast majority of the media outlets considered, from all four sectors, gave prominence to the Portuguese doorwoman who welcomed and saved dozens of injured people from the attack on *Le Bataclan* in her apartment in Paris. Similarly, the two fatal victims of the Paris attacks, of Portuguese origin, are highlighted in the news. The Portuguese emigrant cab driver who was killed near the *Stade de France* and the Portuguese-French woman who was killed inside *Le Bataclan*. In several of the pieces and articles analyzed, dedicated to these two cases, there are testimonies about the victims from family members and friends in Portugal.

The media's appropriation of frames such as "Compatriot victims and heroes" shows that terrorism, and in turn the fear of terrorism, is a global phenomenon. Koskela (2010) argues that the attacks in the USA (September 11, 2001), and the attacks that followed them in Madrid (March 11, 2004) and London (July 7, 2005), marked a decisive change in the definition of fear. Local threats have been replaced by, or at least combined with, global threats (Koskela, 2010).

Furedi (2007) and Koskela (2010) emphasize that the social production of fear of terrorism does not occur through an individual's personal experiences, but through the experiences of others, provided and promoted by interpersonal conversations and through the media.

As shown by the two previous authors (Furedi, 2007; Koskela, 2010), the fear of terrorism as a global phenomenon is largely the result of the role of the media. The adoption of frames such as "Compatriot victims and heroes" strengthens the thesis of global terrorism, in different countries, with victims from different origins, namely Portuguese, and with terrorists, also from different origins, namely Portuguese.

An eighth prevalent news frame, identified in the content and framing analysis considered, is entitled "Fight against terrorism". This frame, adopted by the media, recognizes the security and counter-terrorism measures adopted by the countries of the European Union (EU) and other allies.

These measures came about as a government response to the terrorist attacks and the perception of risk arising from threats of new attacks from ISIS. The risk and fear of terrorism, highlighted by the media, makes it possible for governments to respond concretely in order to combat terrorism, consolidating order and stability in society (Hobbes, 1651 (1949)).

The counter-terrorism narrative, recognized in the "Fight against terrorism" frame, identifies government measures that enable police action in EU and allied countries. Also with a view to combating terrorism, the EU encourages the adoption of internal EU policies to deter new terrorist attacks. In France in 2018, as in the USA in 2001, an anti-terrorism law was passed which allowed for increased surveillance, giving police forces and secret services greater powers. This law, contested and compared by many to the US Patriot Act, is touted by French President Emmanuel Macron as a fundamental tool in the fight against terrorism.

Furedi (2005), referring to the Patriot Act, highlights its implications for civil rights, revealing a governmental political agenda that values domination through fear.

Benjamin K. Smith, Michael Stohl and Musa al-Gharbi (2018) analyze the extremism of journalistic discourse regarding terrorist attacks and the implications for the anti-terrorist policies which countries adopt. This study shows that after the attacks at Paris (2015) and Brussels (2016), the highest levels of fear and anxiety since the attacks of September 11, 2001 were identified among the North American population.

Altheide (2017) argues that the "discourse of fear", conveyed in the media coverage of the terrorist attacks, is closely linked to a "politics of fear", with the purpose of defining a narrative based on the spread of risks and threats, imposing prompt protective action on the part of political decision-makers (Altheide, 2017).

Furedi (2005, 2018) argues that the "politics of fear" involves the political class consciously manipulating people's anxieties in order to achieve their governmental and political goals. The author goes on to argue that fear is seen as an important resource for winning over voters and promoting political agendas (Furedi, 2005, 2018). The news frame "Fight against terrorism" is associated with a "politics of fear", applied by governments, which in turn is supported by a "discourse of fear", essentially disseminated by the media.

Glassner ends the introduction to the most recent edition of *The Culture of Fear: Why Americans Are Afraid of the Wrong Things* (2018) by quoting the following headline from *Time* magazine: "No President Has Spread Fear Like Donald Trump"³ (Glassner, 2018, p. xviii).

The "Islamophobia" frame emerges as the ninth most prevalent frame to be addressed, and is analyzed by virtue of the terrorist attacks considered.

It should be noted that the "Islamophobia" frame is prevalent in the content and framing analysis carried out, emphasizing an underlying aversion or fear of Islam or what is Islamic.

Salman Sayyid (2014), conceptualizes Islamophobia as "a form of racialized governmentality. It is more than prejudice or ignorance, it is a series of interventions and classifications that affect the well-being of populations designated as Muslim" (Sayyid, 2014, p. 19).

Edward Said (1978) argues that Islam is portrayed in the media as consisting of an undifferentiated crowd of oil suppliers holding scimitars⁴ or as an irrational and violent religion that subjugates women (Said, 1978). The content analysis carried out on the media considered shows that the "Islamophobia" frame was more prevalent in the news coverage of the Brussels attacks. Table 4 shows that the "Islamophobia" frame was the seventh most prevalent in the coverage of the Brussels attacks, along with the "Fear" frame. Table 4 also shows that the same "Islamophobia" frame was not in the ten most prevalent frames in the news coverage of the Paris attacks.

One explanation for the greater prevalence of the "Islamophobia" frame in the coverage of the Brussels attacks is that there were several demonstrations in Brussels. Two of these demonstrations were organized

³ Time magazine, February 9, 2017.

⁴ Sword with a wide, curved blade.

by Belgian far-right parties against Islam and another demonstration was organized by the civil community against Islamophobia.

The tenth and final prevalent news frame identified in the content and framing analysis considered is entitled "Islam". This frame includes the airtime and space given to the Islamic and Muslim community in Portugal to interpret and position themselves in the face of the terrorist attacks under analysis. Likewise, this frame takes into account the presence in the media of the non-Islamic Portuguese community from the most different quarters, namely political, religious, academic and the media, in the disassociation that associates Islam with terrorism.

The content analysis carried out in the research highlights some examples of pieces and articles that use the frame "Islam". In these, the presence of television and press testimonies by some members of the Muslim community in Portugal is notable. In particular, the imam of Lisbon's Central Mosque, Sheik David Munir, and Abdool Vakil, leader of the Islamic community in Lisbon. Both statements seek to disassociate Islam from the terrorist attacks, safeguarding Islam as a religion of peace. The same investigation also shows a representative example of the position of the Portuguese Catholic Church, via the Cardinal-Patriarch of Lisbon, Manuel Clemente, dissociating the Islamic religion from terrorist acts.

The media's adoption of the "Islam" frame is important, as identified, as a way of combating Islamophobia. We believe, however, that the "Islam" frame should not be included in a context of episodic news coverage, but of thematic news coverage. Episodic coverage is based on isolated episodes, with no recourse to contextualization. Thematic coverage, on the other hand, considers the event in a broad context, associating it with other episodes and protagonists and, seek an understanding of it, considering social, political, cultural and economic aspects (Iyengar, 1991; Iyengar & Simon, 1993; Papacharissi & De Fatima Oliveira, 2008; Olsson & Ihlen, 2018).

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