

Abstract

The study investigates the cognitive strategies Ayaan Hirsi Ali applies to manipulate her readers' cognition through her *Infidel* (2007) to produce Islamophobic accounts. To achieve that, the study links the three notions of Islamophobia, language and cognition to each other. When taking the constructive nature of language into account, the negative image of Islam and Muslims is conceived through language. The study applies Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to theorize cognitive manipulation in discourse. More specifically, the study selects van Dijk's Sociocognitive Approach (SCA) to reveal how readers' cognitions are manipulated through discourse. To conduct the process of producing stereotypes, the study applies Paul Danler's *Lexical Semantic Bipolarity* in parallel to van Dijk's *Positive Self-Presentation and Negative Other-Presentation* as well as *Argumentation-Conclusion Pattern*. The study's main questions are four: Which argumentative strategies Ali applies to manipulate Short Term Memory (STM), Long Term Memory (LTM) and Social cognition within the *Third Degree of Polarization* (TDP), *Second Degree of Polarization* (SDP), and *First Degree of Polarization* (FDP) respectively? What are the main linguistic tools Ali uses to achieve cognitive manipulation? and To what extent Ali gives the same negative stereotypes adopted by the neo-Orientalists in her autobiography? The study concludes that Ali exploits contextual and structural causes of Islamophobia to produce and inculcate Islamophobic sentiments and attitudes to the hearts of the Westerns. Ali holds direct and indirect polarizing and generalizing comparisons between Islam and the West to emphasize Islam's inferiority to the superior West. For the contextual causes, Ali accuses Islam as being misogynist, gynophobic, backward, and terrorist. For the structural causes, Ali bases her arguments on a negative stereotypical Orientalist legacy which entails the superiority of the West over Islam.

Keywords: *Islamophobia, Ayaan Hirsi Ali, Infidel, Orientalism, neo-Orientalism, Clash of Civilizations, ideology, CDA, manipulation, cognition, polarization, generalization.*