

Coding Messages from al-Qa'ida Leaders for Reference, Target, and Persuasive Approaches

Deborah A. Cai
University of Maryland

We are currently content analyzing fifty-two transcribed print and video messages from al Qa'ida leaders for various features, including the changing references throughout the message, the intensity of the language, and the persuasive tactics. This talk will focus on the process and challenges of coding these messages for quantitative analysis, which often are lengthy, frequently shift in focus, and use excessive hyperbole to deliver messages that are directed at accomplishing multiple goals. The goal of the project is to understand patterns and shifts that emerge over time in the type of language and tactics used in these messages.