

‘Every one of you is now a soldier’: war metaphors in Jordanian official discourse during the COVID-19 pandemic

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In this article, we examine the use of war metaphors in Jordanian official discourse on the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020-21, through an analysis of videos of public statements and media releases made by Jordanian government officials at press conferences and interviews with local media outlets which were disseminated through social media. Against both the linguistic essentialism and the Western-centrism of conventional analyses of (war) metaphors, we demonstrate that Jordanian officials’ framing of Covid-19 as a security threat is not just a function of the rhetorical appeal of militarised discursive responses to the pandemic, but also aligns closely with existing ideologies of the militarisation and securitisation of public life. The mobilisation of metaphor in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic should thus be understood in relation to the specific discourses that pervade the communicative channels through which it is distributed.

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