

**“Localisation” and the “Arab Spring”:
A Critical Discourse Analysis of
Translation-Mediated Arabic News Articles on the
Unrest in the Arabic-Speaking World
(The Case of Robert Fisk and Al Jazeera)**

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By:

Samir Khidir

School of Translation and Interpretation (STI), Faculty of Arts

University of Ottawa

Ottawa, Ontario

Supervised by:

Professor Luise von Flotow

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**“Pity the nation divided into fragments,
each fragment deeming itself a nation.”**

Khalil Gibran - The Garden of the Prophet (1931)

ABSTRACT

This study is a critical analysis of translation-mediated Arabic news items on the “Arab Spring”. It explores the influence of social, historical, political, localic, and socio-ideological aspects of news translation via certain media agendas, by applying Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and qualitative descriptive methods in the analysis of the localised news items, interviews with translators, and a corpus of comments by the Arabic-speaking readership. The data analysed in this case study comprise a four-year (2010-2014) collection of news items that were localised by *Al Jazeera* and published on its website, as well as readers’ commentaries on said localisations, and interviews with two of *Al Jazeera*’s translators. Making use of this rich source of data, this study aims at finding answers for the questions: Are there discernible patterns in the translated texts? If so, how and for what purpose are they produced and re-produced through localisation in *Al Jazeera*’s translation-mediated Arabic news articles? Whose interests are served and whose interests are annulled by the reproduction and localisation processes? The three sets of data were thematically coded; then their most salient points and arguments were analysed. The localised news items were examined for clues to the localisation techniques, ideologies, and the agenda(s) of *Al Jazeera*. The readers’ comments were probed for the influence that the localised news items had on *Al Jazeera*’s target readership, and were examined to find out which of *Al Jazeera*’s ideologies resonate with which readers to form *Al Jazeera*’s target locale(s). The analysis of the interviews with *Al Jazeera*’s translators was undertaken with the aim of delineating the tasks of these translators, specifically to see to what extent journalism and translation meld, as suggested in much of the research done so far on translating news items. The tripartite analysis has provided a more comprehensive understanding of the processes involved in the production of translation-mediated news items as well as their effect on the readership. It also suggests relatively new insights into viewing the term localisation as a good alternative to *acculturation* in accounting for news translation. Within the umbrella of the *social turn* in translation studies (TS), this study suggests that current approaches to studying news translation question large-scale concepts such as *culture* and *acculturation*, and proposes they be replaced with the small-scale concepts of *locale* and *localisation*. Hence, this study suggests using localisation to extract and understand the underlying particulars of the processes involved in producing translation-mediated news items. The results of the analysis show that *Al Jazeera* ostensibly promulgates three major ideologies: anti-regimism, Islamism, and pan-Arabism and embeds these ideologies in the messages it delivers to its target locales through the localised news items. The study concludes that *Al Jazeera*’s localisation techniques reflect the viewpoints of its benefactor the State of Qatar whose goal is to create a solipsistic identity that distinguishes it from its immediate rivalling neighbours within a dichotomy of the *Same* and the *Other*. These localisation techniques are driven by motives associated with the sociopolitical and sociohistorical circumstances of the founding of the State of Qatar and *Al Jazeera*.

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Keywords: *Localisation, locale, translation-mediated news items, acculturation, Descriptive Translation Studies, critical discourse analysis, netnography, media agenda, mainstreamism, Islamism, pan-Arabism.*

RÉSUMÉ

La présente étude est une analyse critique de traductions d'articles de nouvelles arabes à propos du « Printemps arabe ». Elle explore l'influence de facteurs sociaux, historiques, politiques, de localisation et socio-idéologiques sur la traduction des nouvelles, en fonction des objectifs des médias, en se servant de l'analyse critique du discours (ACD) et des méthodes qualitatives et descriptives pour étudier des articles de nouvelles localisés, des entrevues avec des traducteurs et un corpus de commentaires du lectorat arabophone. Les données utilisées incluent une banque d'articles (publiés entre 2010 et 2014) localisés par *Al Jazeera* et publiés sur son site web, ainsi que les commentaires des lecteurs sur les localisations en question et des entrevues avec deux des traducteurs d'*Al Jazeera*. Au moyen de ce vaste ensemble de données, la présente étude vise à déterminer : s'il y a des tendances notables dans les textes traduits; si c'est le cas, comment et pourquoi sont-elles répétées dans tant d'articles arabes traduits et localisés par *Al Jazeera*; et, finalement, de qui le processus de reproduction et de localisation sert-il les intérêts, et à qui est-il nuisible? Les trois ensembles de données ont été triés par thème, puis leurs arguments et aspects les plus frappants ont été analysés. Les articles de nouvelles localisés ont été étudiés afin de découvrir les techniques de localisation, les penchants idéologiques et les objectifs d'*Al Jazeera*. Les commentaires des lecteurs ont été dépouillés afin de déterminer l'influence des articles localisés sur les lecteurs-cibles d'*Al Jazeera*, ce qui nous permet d'identifier le ou les environnement(s) local(aux) visé(s). L'analyse des entrevues avec les traducteurs d'*Al Jazeera* a été entreprise afin de délimiter leurs tâches, dans le but spécifique de découvrir jusqu'à quel point le journalisme et la traduction s'entremêlent, comme le suggère la majeure partie de la recherche actuelle sur la traduction des articles de nouvelles. Cette analyse en trois parties permet une compréhension plus complète des processus impliqués dans la production de traductions d'articles de nouvelles, ainsi que de leurs effets sur les lecteurs. Elle offre également des pistes relativement nouvelles en ce qui a trait à envisager le terme *localisation* comme solution viable afin de remplacer celui d'*acculturation* dans le contexte de la traduction des nouvelles. S'insérant dans le cadre du *tournant social* en traductologie, la présente étude suggère que les approches actuelles relatives à la traduction des nouvelles remettent en question la validité de concepts englobants comme la *culture* et l'*acculturation*, et propose de remplacer ceux-ci par des concepts plus restreints comme l'*environnement local* et la *localisation*. C'est pourquoi la présente étude avance l'idée d'utiliser la localisation pour trouver et comprendre les aspects importants des processus impliqués dans la production de traductions d'articles de nouvelles. Les résultats de l'analyse démontrent qu'*Al Jazeera* semble faire la promotion de trois idéologies principales (l'anti-régimisme, l'islamisme et le panarabisme) qui sont insérées dans les messages transmis à ses environnements locaux cibles par le truchement des articles de nouvelles localisés. Ces observations nous permettent de conclure que les techniques de localisation d'*Al Jazeera* reflètent le point de vue de son bienfaiteur, l'État du Qatar, qui a pour objectif de se créer une identité solipsiste lui permettant de se distinguer de ses rivaux dans son voisinage immédiat à l'aide d'une dichotomie entre le *Soi* et l'*Autre*. Ces techniques de localisation sont motivées par les circonstances sociopolitiques et sociohistoriques entourant la fondation de l'État du Qatar et d'*Al Jazeera*.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CBC	Canadian Broadcasting Corporation
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
DA	Discourse Analysis
DTS	Descriptive Translation Studies
GCC	Gulf Co-operation Council
L-Example	Localised Example
MBC	Middle East Broadcasting Center Group
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
M-Example	Monolingual Example
NDP	New Democratic Party
SL	Source Language
ST	Source Text
TL	Target Language
TS	Translation Studies
TT	Target Text
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION, THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND OTHER PRELIMINARIES

The present study focuses on and problematises news translation in the context of the upheaval of revolutionary change and its influence on media discourse, specifically brought about by the Arab Spring. In late 2010 and early 2011, the unexpected happened in the Arabic-speaking world. The peoples of certain parts of this world revolted against the autocratic regimes that controlled (with iron fists and for decades) every aspect of life, including the media. The revolts in this world became collectively known as the Arab Spring. They provided news media around the world with an unlimited source of news which naturally necessitated news translation from and into Arabic. The media discourse and translational practices of one particular news outlet, namely *Al Jazeera* (a major web-based pan-Arab news outlet), have been arousing attention from the perspective of news translation research and otherwise. Former US Secretary of State and presidential candidate Hillary Clinton highlights the role of *Al Jazeera*'s discourse during the Arab Spring (as a phenomenon of sociopolitical change) by remarking that “Al Jazeera has been the leader in that they are literally changing people’s minds and attitudes. And like it or hate it, it is really effective!” (MacNicol 2011).

At times of sociopolitical instability, invisible ideologies that have leached into the subconscious of public opinion through media discourses as common sense become questionable. The Arab Spring has destabilised the meanings of sociopolitical signs such as large-scale *cultural* ideologies. When such signs become unstable, powerful invisible ideologies that underlie them become visible. Accordingly, media discourses that set out to constitute peoples’ identities or their perceptions of the world provide an interesting field of research that aims to examine the conditions of text re-production (translation) and text reception. If this understanding is correct then Critical Discourse Analysis (henceforth CDA) will make it possible to explore a number of issues around the translation of news items in a time of political upheaval and instability (the Arab Spring), and will include a focus on exploring the elements that control the discourse of translated news items – which is one of the aims of this study.

CDA is used in this case study to investigate techniques used by *Al Jazeera* for the translation of news items. These seem to combine peculiar-to-*Al Jazeera* factors that may be contextual (institutional routines, agents involved, news outlet's agenda, etc.), and extra-contextual (sociohistorical, sociopolitical, socioeconomic, etc.) – besides the usual textual ones that are encountered when translating between different languages such as English and Arabic. These peculiar factors play an essential role in distinguishing *Al Jazeera*'s media discourse in its context of the Arabic-speaking world and its immediate regional context from perhaps other media outlets elsewhere. The purpose in focusing this research project around news translation on *Al Jazeera*'s practices in this regard is to shed light on the importance of studying individual news outlets and their translation norms rather than using an all-inclusive research approach that disregards the idiosyncratic factors behind the *localisation* of news items.

Localisation (from locale) is endorsed in this study as the most appropriate to describe the processes that pertain to translation-mediated news re-production and reception. Localisation is viewed here as an all-encompassing set of processes undertaken by news outlets for the purpose of reproducing foreign news; it starts with in-gatekeeping news items (primarily the selection of texts for translation) and ends with out-gatekeeping, the selection of the information included in the final version of the published translation-mediated news item (see 2.7-2.7.1). Localisation transcends the conventional concepts of translation (see Pym 2004, p. 4). Localised news items shall be viewed as multidimensional units of discourse which have forms (translation-mediated texts with linguistic features), and functions (as acts of purported communication). The process of localisation involved in re-producing news items shall be viewed as a social practice undertaken within a locale (the news outlet) in order to address (a) certain locale(s) – the target medium. It will be argued that locales stand for small-scale groups of people who are not necessarily bound by geographical borders (due to the influence of the cyberspace) and are joined (sometimes temporarily) by interests or opinions which are space and time sensitive. Such understandings of localisation and locale eschew the large-scale homogeneity-implying *cultural* approaches to news translation and zoom in on idiosyncratic differences of localic norms (Toury 1995, p. 54) that actually delineate societies, especially in the Arabic-speaking world and in light of the Arab Spring as a revolutionary/sociopolitical change which has had a massive influence on changing the meaning of signs.

In Chapter One, the theoretical framework emphasises that this study assumes a deconstructionist/critical functional descriptive qualitative approach to translation-mediated news items and their surroundings (within the paradigm shift of Descriptive Translation Studies (henceforth DTS)). This framework will advocate that the concept and label of localisation be applied to account for news translation as carried out by mainstreamist news outlets such as *Al Jazeera*. The theoretical framework will review how translation theory and translation research approaches evolved until they arrived at the aforementioned paradigm shift manifested in Toury's Norms Theory (Toury 1980, 1985, 1995). This theory parts ways with the (mostly prescriptive) equivalence approach to translation research and advocates studying translation from a descriptive perspective. It orientates translation research towards describing the norms of the target medium, and thus diminishing the focus on the source medium or the source text (henceforth ST), and it eschews translation-confining value-judgements which are based on a comparison between the ST and target text (henceforth TT). The norms descriptive approach accounts for news translation as an intentional social practice and describes the regularities within which this kind of translation functions. In addition, it puts most of the terminology utilised in describing localisation processes into perspective. For example, the notion of "in-gatekeeping" can be seen as part of the overarching "preliminary norms" which account for the selection of the texts to be localised – as described by the subcategory of "translation policy". The notion of "out-gatekeeping" is part of the "operational norms" whose subcategory of "matricial norms" account for selecting the information to be circulated in the news item through "omissions, additions, changes of location and manipulations of segmentation" (Toury 1995, p. 57). The fact that localised news items are considered intentional social acts of communication necessitates using CDA to analyse the agents' intentions, and the social, political, power relations, and other elements that influence localisers, as well as the framing aspects of the localised event. Chapter One concludes by highlighting reasons that led to the Arab Spring (which is the Event that the study of localisation tackles here) and providing an overview of the emergence of the expression of the "Arab Spring" as an indicator of news translation borrowing.

News translation, as a relatively new field of study in TS, has been receiving more attention in the last two decades. In Chapter Two, the review of literature will examine labels, research hypotheses, methodologies, analysis results, and research conclusions that have been

undertaken and published in this field. This chapter addresses how a localisation theory (Orengo 2005) may apply to the translation of news items. It aims at answering the question why localisation may be a more suitable term to describe the processes involved in news translation than other terms that have been used. It also discusses the ideologies that control media discourse and the production of news items. Through this review of relevant research on news translation, attention will be drawn to the fact that most of the current research that adopts a DTS perspective to news translation still addresses this subject from the angle of the target *culture*, assuming the existence of *cultural* norms and thus, suggesting expressions such as *acculturation* to label news translation processes. In one way or another, this kind of research relies on (and promotes) generalised *cultural* stereotypes that are generated by the discourse of mainstreamist media outlets among other producers of such stereotypes. Usage of expressions such as *Arab World* and *Western World*, for instance, in news translation research are illustrative examples of these stereotypical generalisations. The reasons behind these terminology choices will be put into perspective when the reasons for choosing localisation rather than *acculturation*, and mainstreamism are discussed in sections 2.7.1 and 2.8 respectively towards the end of Chapter Two (alternatives for these terms are suggested and justified in 1.3) .

Chapter Three tackles the research methodology which logically flows from the theoretical framework, hypotheses, and research questions. As a descriptive approach of TS, the norms model requires that a researcher/an analyst become familiar with the set of norms recognised to encase the target medium's translational behaviour by "studying a corpus of authentic translations and identifying regular patterns of translation, including types of strategies that are typically opted for by the translators and the audience represented in that corpus" (Baker 1998, p. 164). Accordingly, the three datasets of this case study comprise a corpus of STs and their translation-mediated news items (the TTs), a corpus of readership comments on these translation-mediated news items, and interviews with translators. The focus of analysis of the texts and the readership comments was narrowed down by choosing a particular time frame (between December 2010 and December 2014), a specific Event (the Arab Spring), and specific sources for the analysed texts – the articles of Robert Fisk and their translations/localisations in *Al Jazeera*. In order to provide a comprehensive catalyst for the target medium orientation of the case study, two of *Al Jazeera*'s translators were interviewed. One of the aims of this thesis is to

critically analyse the causative relationship between the multifunctional localisation mediation carried out by a particular news outlet and the recontextualisation of the newly created (translated) news items in the multidimensional milieu of a specific locale. Therefore, the ontology informing the analysis methodology of this thesis employs the CDA model of descriptive critique and analysis. This CDA approach (i.e. how it will be used and its tenets) will be explicated in this chapter. A thematic coding procedure is used in this chapter in order to identify and account for underlying ideologies in the three datasets with the aim of finding out “What do the themes reveal about the data sources?” A description of “netnography” (its features and shortcomings) is also provided in order to explain how it will be used as an in-between analysis tool to facilitate coding the web-based readership comments thematically and analysing them. The analysis of data using both CDA and thematic coding will explain the multilayered aspects of localising news items as a complex social and communicative practice. The methodology accounts for the three sets of data at different levels of descriptions. These levels include the thematic properties of the data, their contextual elements, the extra-contextual factors of their production (including norms), and their reception and interpretation by the readership. This multi-level approach to describing and analysing the data makes it possible to understand the implications in texts and to identify the localisation techniques that led to implying them, as well as the sociohistorical, sociopolitical, institutional, socioeconomic conditions that underlie their production.

Chapter Four provides a description of the themes that can be observed in this study’s three sets of data: micro dataset (specifically *Al Jazeera*’s texts), the dataset of the interviews with *Al Jazeera* translators, and the dataset of *Al Jazeera* readership comments. A discussion of the broader discursive initial ideologies/themes, and the latent theme/ideology that underlies them will be carried out in this chapter. An attempt will be made to map the thematic codes found in the group of themes that can be either deduced or induced from the data. The aim of the thematic coding procedure is to see if there is a main overarching “latent ideology” or “latent theme” (Boyatzis 1998, p. 16) in these datasets, and then see how other manifest ideologies/themes relate to it. A distinct feature of latent themes is that they capture “the underlying aspects of the phenomenon under investigation” (ibid) which is an important aspect in any CDA research that investigates underlying messages and their ideologies. The discussions

in this chapter will explain how a main ideology/a latent theme can lend meaning to the manifest ideologies and vice versa. The most recurrent themes in the datasets will be laid down through examining this whole-part/part-whole relationship between the themes.

Chapter Five will aim at investigating *Al Jazeera*'s localisation techniques and linking them to the objectives of *Al Jazeera*'s benefactor. It will start with examining the discursive localisation techniques of *Al Jazeera* – with representative examples taken from *Al Jazeera*'s translated-into-Arabic news items that are compared to their STs and then analysed. The focus will be on thoroughly and critically analysing the localisation practices of *Al Jazeera*, such as the selection of the news items to be translated, and indirect speech whereby techniques such as re-organisation, omission, addition, and the imposition of certain localisms and terminology are inflicted on the translated texts. This will be tackled with the aim of answering the research questions of the study. Fairclough (2008, p. 68) notes that “CDA is *critical* in the sense that it aims to show non-obvious ways in which language [...] is involved in social relations of power and domination”. Therefore, and for the purpose of answering the research questions, CDA will be employed to fathom the reasons behind the practices that lead to the final form and content of the localised news items. Based on this critical descriptive approach, translation (and by extension localisation) is considered as a social practice or activity, and just like any other social practice extra-contextual factors have to be studied to fully understand it. Wodak and Reisigl (2001, p. 383) suggest that one of the most distinguishing features of CDA is that it attempts “to transcend the pure linguistic dimension and to include [...] the historical, political, sociological, and/or psychological dimension in the analysis and interpretation of a specific discursive occasion.” Close-up observations of these factors have rarely been substantiated by studies of news translation. *Al Jazeera*'s localised news items are not only analysed on the basis of the texts' visible and enumerable elements or the factors that affect their production by the immediate media practitioners; they are also analysed as discourses of sociopolitical practice with extra-contextual underlying motives and agendas. Given the fact that text analysis alone cannot provide an in-depth understanding of the reasons behind *Al Jazeera*'s localisation techniques, this study addresses other dimensions such as the motives of *Al Jazeera* and its benefactor as factors that influence media discourse. A major point in this chapter is the discussion of how news translation challenges key concepts in TS. Localised news items

represent a promising area to investigate (by using CDA) because it can reveal the different ideologies and interests which underlie news translation as a social practice.

The present study explores text manipulation carried out via localisation in the quest for a localic identity (on the part of *Al Jazeera*'s benefactor) through the dichotomy of Sameness and Otherness. In *Al Jazeera*'s specific case, such a quest for identity is explored in the localisation techniques that aim to deliver specific messages through the localised news items. CDA draws attention to factors such as the sociopolitical agenda of those who manipulate texts in the process of their localisation. These factors create the contexts that affect (consciously or subconsciously) the decisions and options of a localiser, and the structure of a localised text. According to this sociology-oriented analytical model, economic competition and sociopolitical conflict – among other factors – underpin the sociological and sociopolitical structures of locales. Keeping this in mind, localisation seems to be one of the methods through which powerful decision-makers (such as politicians), or news platforms (such as *Al Jazeera*) can penetrate the structures of communication in certain locales in order to keep pace with drastic sociopolitical changes such as those that the Arabic-speaking world is witnessing today because of the Arab Spring. Therefore, CDA explores how localisation can be seen as neither a spontaneous nor a neutral phenomenon. Localisation may reflect conscious and subconscious choices which sometimes indicate a specific ideological position. Within this general understanding of the influence of extra-contextual sociopolitical factors, localisation can play an important role in the attempts to modify social behaviour. To understand and examine this situation, it is necessary for the researcher to use an analytical approach that shifts the attention to localisation as a social discourse system and combines it with other discourses in that system for the purpose of identifying “the ideological configurations [...] which [...] link and unite the very different discourses circulating in society in equally recurrent and socially regulated forms” (Brisset 2010, p. 76). As mapped by CDA, this understanding of localisation builds its premise on the principle that communication is a founding element of society as it (communication) intervenes in the formation and construction of identity (Hermans 2007, p. 113). By relying on the concepts of norms, localisation and CDA, the intention is to sketch an empirical picture of the reasons behind the localisation of news items in *Al Jazeera* and the sociopolitical extra-contexts within which this localisation takes place. Further, these concepts will also be employed to show in what

manner the sociopolitical regularities of, for instance, mainstream news platforms are either engaged in, defied, or challenged when news items are localised.

1.1 Rationale and Purpose

Most of the research that tackles news translation has been undertaken in stable political conditions where there is no immediate political violent disturbance that affects the meaning of the sign. Volosinov (1973) argues that

the inner dialectic quality of the sign comes out fully in the open in times of social crises or revolutionary changes. In the ordinary conditions of life, the contradiction embedded in every ideological sign cannot emerge fully because the ideological sign in an established, dominant ideology is always somewhat reactionary and tries, as it were, to stabilize the preceding factor in the dialectical flux of the social generative process, so accentuating yesterday's truth as to make it appear today's. (p. 24)

The fact that the Arabic-speaking world has been going through a period of revolutionary upheaval (the Arab Spring) makes this study of localisation (in this context of sociopolitical change) highly important to shed light on how the meaning of the translated sign is generated around or about violent ideology-shaping events which are taking place simultaneously. From a semiotics perspective, the expression “sign” in Volosinov quote can be understood as a linguistic unit (a text or a news item) or a social behaviour (translation and/or localisation). Evidence from the Arab Spring (whose upheaval has shown how fragmented the Arabic-speaking world is) may prove that the conventional large scale *cultural* approaches of the research on news translation are not always applicable at times of extreme political change. This vision may justify the importance of studying news translation on the contemporary events of the Arab Spring which can most likely provide empirical evidence on the significance of studying news translation within contexts of small-scale locales rather than large-scale *cultures*.

DTS is inherently target audience oriented. However, most of the reviewed literature on news translation does not fathom the influence of the translation-mediated news items on the readership of the target medium. Therefore, this case study aims at providing another vantage point to news translation through bridging this gap in information with the analysis of readership comments on web-based news items along interviews with translators and analysis of localised texts into Arabic. The recent developments in media technologies (such as the introduction of news websites) have caused a revolution in news production and reception in the Arabic-speaking world. The Anglophone library lacks empirical research on the factors that

contemporarily affect translated news production in the Arabic-speaking world, especially that some of the totalitarian regimes that used to control and censor the circulation of translated news items have been toppled during the Arab Spring. Finally, devising a theoretical framework that is built on the Norms Theory (taken out of its orientation of studying the translation of literary texts) within the framework of localisation in order to critically analyse (through using CDA) localised texts (of the journalistic genre) provides a new descriptive/critical viewpoint of news translation that sheds light on the agendas of the localisers and their benefactors that distinguishes this study from perhaps other works on the translation of news items.

1.2 Theoretical Framework

The translational orientation of this study necessitates explaining its theoretical stance in regard to the concept of translation in general and news localisation in particular. This study adopts the view that translation (and by extension localisation) is a localic practice that is better described within the spatiotemporal constitutive contextual and/or extra-contextual “regularities” (Baker 1998, p. 163) (such as interests, opinions, ideologies, history etc.) of its locale. Therefore, and by adopting a DTS-oriented and norm-based theory of translation, this study will have recourse to the theoretical affiliations of the Norms Theory (as Toury proposed it in his 1980 work: “In Search of a Theory of Translation”, and later on improved it; see Toury 1985, 1995, 1998, 2000) to construct its theoretical framework. It should be noted, however, that there is no one perfect theoretical framework for carrying out descriptive research or indeed an apotheosis method of research analysis. One of the aims of a researcher, while initiating a research project, is to find or devise a theoretical framework which can assist in answering the research questions and verifying the phenomenon (i.e. localisation) being studied.

A good understanding of norms and locales contributes to the functionalist, descriptive and critical theoretical framework of studying the localisation of news items and the analysis of localised news items that will follow. This study’s theoretical framework is devised in order to account for the complexities of the processes that constitute localisation and the factors of the sociopolitical and historical environments within which these processes are undertaken. In the following segments of this study, an attempt will be made to map the theoretical framework through discussing the evolution and validity of the target-orientation in Translation Studies (henceforth TS) as a paradigm shift culminated by the target-oriented Norms Theory in

comparison with the general perceptions of translation which were dominant prior to it. The goal is to set the scene for the discussions in the chapters and sections to follow as those discussions will rely heavily on the concepts of translation in question.

1.2.1 Contextual and Extra-Contextual Norms

Contextual and extra-contextual elements of the target locale prove important to account for when discussing almost any type of translation. This study is descriptive in nature, which necessitates relying on a concept that adopts a functional descriptive approach. The notion of “norms” is a key concept which underlies descriptive research of translated texts as it takes into consideration contextual and extra-contextual elements that could identify a locale. However, introducing contextual elements in TS cannot be attributed to only the norms theory or its predecessor the polysystem theory. Since the second half of the 20th century, a structural linguistics-oriented model, whose quest is seeking *equivalence*¹ in translation, dominated a considerable amount of the literature on translation theory and research methodology, and replaced the text-based “fidelity” concept (Hermans 1996, p. 1) whose arguments were primarily concerned with determining to which language/text/ (the source or the target) the translator should be fidel. Within this model of equivalence, Nida was, perhaps, among the first to account for *context* in association with the target medium (Nida 1959, p. 14). In his translational approach, Nida associated context with time, space, and societal perception of the world as factors affecting the produced translation (ibid, pp. 14-18). However, the prescriptive nature of Nida’s work and its affiliation with specialised religious texts, probably, caused his and other scholars’ contributions (in this model) to be overlooked by scholars who have advocated the descriptive model. From late 1960s onwards, the domination of the equivalence model was challenged and somewhat reduced to the turn of a special-case assumption for Skopos Theory (Nord 1997), a basic model of reference in DTS (Toury 1985 & 1995, Chesterman 1998), and a blueprint in Holmes’s models and methods (Holmes 1988) – especially if the latter is compared with Nida’s notion of “kernels”, (Nida 1964, p. 68), which proposes the existence of underlying structures that map surface structures.

¹ Equivalence-based theories did exist prior to this period.

From the early 1970s onwards, a tendency towards replacing prescriptive linguistic approaches with descriptive research approaches emerged. Even-Zohar is amongst the first scholars to indulge in this effort by building on the “system” and “polysystem” (henceforth PS) notions which can be traced back to Russian Formalist thinking (Hermans 1999, p.104; Brisset 2010, p. 70). Even-Zohar – to whom the credit of developing and refining these notions is attributed (Even-Zohar 1978, 1979, 1990, 1997, 2002) – further them by proposing that an aspect of *culture* should be studied through a dynamic functional and relational model of PS – which includes, among other elements, the multiple layers of the *cultural* structure besides the spatiotemporal factors (Even-Zohar 1997, pp. 17-18). Even-Zohar’s PS analysed sets of relations in literature and language, but gradually shifted towards a more complex analysis of multiple (which justifies the poly- in polysystem) *cultural* systems. According to Even-Zohar (1990), PS is

a semiotic system [...] a heterogeneous, open structure. It is, therefore, very rarely a uni-system but is, necessarily, a polysystem-a multiple system, a system of various systems which intersect with each other and partly overlap, using concurrently different options, yet functioning as one structured whole, whose members are interdependent. (p. 11)

PS is multidimensional and has the latency to accommodate a classification of factors or elements of *culture* into groups based on similarities of structure or origin and according to their presumed natural relationships established in the realm of literary translation and *cultural* relationships (Lianeri 2001). Hermans (1999, p.42) discusses the issue of power relations implicit in *cultural* relationships by suggesting that the key idea of PS is that there is a continual repositioning of genres in relation to each other, or (in his own words) “a continual struggle for power between various interest groups”, which implies the dynamicity of the conventions/norms as they change in response to this struggle of power which is, in turn, context-dependent and extra-context-dependent. Although they share the interest of making comparisons between ST and TT, Nida’s linguistic model and PS are basically different concerning their methodology as the former is a prescriptive approach whose largest unit of analysis is an individual text (where *cultural* differences are accounted for at the lexical level); while the latter is a descriptive approach that aims at the analysis of large bodies of texts in *cultural* and historical contexts.

Even-Zohar may be attributed with being one of the first translation scholars to free TS from text-bounding elements and initiating what has become to be known as the *cultural* turn in TS. Even-Zohar suggests that “A very basic aspect of polysystem theory is the rejection of value judgements of culture and culture products” (Sales Salvador 2002, p. 5). Yet, Even-Zohar’s PS is

criticised (Bassnett 1998, p. 127, Hermans 1999, p. 109) for passing value judgements on the literatures that he describes as “peripheral” or “weak” (Even-Zohar 1990, p. 47). Though PS was developed by Even-Zohar while addressing the domains of language and literary production associating the status of literary systems with the status of the *cultures* in which they are oriented or which they aim to access, it has, also, been criticised for overlooking the micro-levelled social aspects that encompass PS and affect it. Even-Zohar (2005) describes his project as having

a major goal, and a workable task for the Polysystem theory, to deal with the particular conditions under which a certain culture may be interfered with by another culture, as a result of which repertoires are transferred from one polysystem to another. (p.9)

Consequently, sociologist Bourdieu frequently criticises PS for handling literature or literary production at the macro-level of *culture* without considering the aspects of its social/localic context. Bourdieu (1993) argues that

It is not possible, even in the case of the scientific field and the most advanced sciences, to make the cultural order [épistémè] a sort of autonomous, transcendent sphere, capable of developing in accordance with its own laws. The same criticism applies to [...] the interpretation put forward by Itamar Even-Zohar in his theory of the ‘literary polysystem’ [...] these theoreticians of cultural semiology or culturology are forced to seek in the literary system itself the principle of its dynamics (p. 33)

At the centre of Bourdieu’s argument is the idea that PS (specifically its large-scale *cultural*-orientation) tackles a product which is produced in a specific locale or society while using a macro-level of an altogether too general and too abstract level (the level of large-scale *cultures*) that neglects the social/localic context. As a sociologist, Bourdieu critiques (especially in the last two lines of the above quote) the *culturalists*’ endeavours to seek in *culture* (rather than in society) the influential factors that shape the meaning of signs. Wolf (2012, pp. 134-135) maintains that Bourdieu “stresses that social life cannot be understood as the aggregate of individual behavior, nor can social practice be seen as determined by supra-individual “structures”. Thus, exceptions that mark a deviation from the norms of a society, or macro-structures (such as *cultures*) that overlook idiosyncratic social practices of a society may not provide a study of translation-mediated news items with solid grounds for research that concludes with reflective results. This is a theoretical argument or a stance that this study upholds (see 2.7.1). It can be said, however, that PS gave birth to DTS and to its most prominent contribution, namely Gideon Toury’s concept of “norms” and the research methodology which he has advocated within DTS. The norms model differs from PS in that the former offers a functional approach to translation criticism which is heavily target medium oriented and advocates – though overlooked

by a considerable number of the *cultural*-orientation advocates in TS – the existence of micro-levelled societal norms rather than just *cultural* ones.

Towards the end of the 1970s, Toury (whose PhD was supervised by Even-Zohar (Pym 2010, p. 9)) introduced the notion of descriptive “norms” (Toury 1980). In a refined version of his 1980 work, Toury (1995) notes that:

Sociologists and social psychologists have long regarded norms as the translation of general values or ideas shared by a community [...] into performance instructions appropriate for and applicable to particular situations, specifying what is prescribed and forbidden as well as what is tolerated and permitted in a certain behavioural dimension. (pp. 54-55)

Toury’s tendency towards narrowing down the large-scale perception of *cultural* norms to micro-levelled societal ones, especially that he is referring to the sociologists’ understanding of norms, is worthy of notice. Furthermore, Toury (1995, p. 69) remarks “idiosyncrasies (which, in their extreme, constitute groups-of-one) often manifest themselves as personal ways of realizing [more] general attitudes rather than deviations in a completely unexpected direction”; therefore, other “types of constraints may even be redefined in terms of norms: rules as ‘[more] objective’, idiosyncrasies as ‘[more] subjective [or: less inter-subjective]’ norms” (ibid, p. 54). What Toury suggests here is important in understanding the concept of a locale as it is discussed in section 2.7.1 The implication that locales can be a small group of people opens the door for understanding that mainstreamist news agencies, such as *Al Jazeera*, can be a locale in its own right that competes with other locales for certain capitals through the dissemination of (in Toury’s words) “idiosyncrasies” that may acquire public consent by the power of repetition practiced by media.

The Norms Theory focuses on understanding translation as a product, i.e. it is target-medium oriented, and functions within the behaviourist framework. It attempts to account for “translational behaviour” within this behaviourist context of norms (Toury 1995, p. 65). Toury (1995, p. 55) defines norms as “criteria according to which actual instances of behavior” like localisation/translation, are evaluated “in situations which allow for different kinds of behavior, on the additional condition that selection among them be non-random”. Behaviour, however, is perhaps better identified within its micro-levelled localic context rather than the macro-levelled *cultural* one (see 2.8). Such a view contributes to a better understanding of the descriptive orientation of DTS within the current social turn in TS. Most of the researchers, who follow Toury’s steps, consider translation a social behaviour (a societal behaviour of communication or a social practice) which is characterised and described in accordance with regularities that the bulk

of translators implicitly or explicitly follow and consider at a given moment in a particular locale. Chesterman (1998, p. 92) furthers this inclination by suggesting that “norms by definition are social, they express social notions of correctness. They are intersubjective if they are anything”. “Social notions of correctness” can perhaps rightfully be considered as the blueprints of ideologies that govern the localisation of news items in the prospective locale.

Within this social construct, localisation is viewed here as an activity of communication or a social practice that is tackled in accordance with agendas of: the media institution – as in the case of *Al Jazeera* – that may localise news items or the idiosyncratic/subjective (political or otherwise) stances of the localiser or the patron, or the ideologies of the readership in the targeted medium/society/locale, or all of the above. These ideologies or stances are interactive and spatiotemporally sensitive. Toury (1995) maintains that

Norms are the key concept and focal point in any attempt to account for the social relevance of activities, because their existence, and the wide range of situations they apply to (with the conformity this implies), are the main factors ensuring the establishment and retention of social order. (p. 55)

Toury highlights another key characteristic of norms (as a social behaviour) by suggesting that there is a “social relevance of activities” according to which norms influence other social behaviours and get influenced by them as well. By analogy, and since localisation is regarded as a social behaviour, localisation practices can modulate other social behaviours and be modulated by them.

Norms are presented by Toury as part of his tripartite model: system-norm-performance (Toury 1980, p. 49). In this tripartite model, norms operate as the intermediating factor acting between the “system of potential equivalence” and the “actual performance” (ibid, p. 50). According to Toury (1995, pp. 56-61), norms interfere in all levels of decision making processes, thus they can be classified into three major categories:

- Initial norms where a translator may subject him-/herself either to the original text, with the norms it has realized, or to the norms active in the target medium.
- Preliminary norms comprise two interconnected considerations: “translation policy” which “refers to those factors that govern the choice of text-types, or even of individual texts, to be imported through translation into a particular culture/language at a particular point in time”, and “directness of translation” which are considerations that “involve the threshold of tolerance for translating from languages other than the ultimate source language”.

- Operational norms may be conceived of as regularities directing the decisions made during the act of translation itself.

Toury (ibid) sub-classifies operational norms into:

- Matricial norms which may govern
the degree of fullness of translation, its location in the text (or the form of actual distribution), as well as the textual segmentation. The extent to which omissions, additions, changes of location and manipulations of segmentation are referred to in the translated texts (or around them) may also be determined by norms, even though the one can very well occur without the other; and
- Textual-linguistic norms which “govern the selection of material to formulate the target text in, or replace the original textual and linguistic material with” (ibid).

An intriguing refinement of Toury’s classification of norms can be found in the works of Chesterman (1998, p. 92, 1997, pp. 64-70; 1993, pp. 8-9) who classifies them (norms) into two major categories: “expectancy norms” and “professional norms”. These two types of norms have special bearings on localising news items as they highlight two major factors to which news agencies and localisers pay much attention, namely the needs of the audience (readership expectancies) and the practices (whether mainstreamism-oriented (see 2.8), or neutral – if any) which are dominant in a certain medium of journalism. According to Chesterman (1998, p. 92) “Expectancy norms are the expectations of the target readership and the client etc., and the professional norms explain the translator’s tendency to take account of these expectancy norms”. The upcoming discussions and analyses will shed more light on which of the above norms are more operative than the others in localisation, what factors affect them in news media, and who acts in accordance with them and for what purpose. It is believed that considering translations in relation to the target systems or the target norms was a paradigm shift in TS. Hermans (1995, p. 217) maintains that the concept of norms ultimately gives priority to the TT, rather than the ST, and has therefore effectively replaced equivalence as the operative term in TS.

Just like any other theory of translation, the Norms Theory has been criticised for its shortcomings. Despite the fact that Toury’s Norms Theory is target-oriented, Toury does not pay too much attention to the important role of the readership expectations in the construction of norms. On the other hand, Chesterman tosses a hint to that clients and readership expectations are the same. Though they highlight the role of the readership expectations, Chesterman’s expectancy norms overlook the fact that prospective readership and the client/patrons are not

necessarily the same – notice that Chesterman uses the coordinating conjunction “and” not “or” when he says “the expectations of the target readership and the client”. This is not always the case especially when we talk about news translation where the clients can be the benefactors/patrons of the news agency who have their own ideologies which they wish to pass on, through localised news items, to the readership who probably sit on the other end of the ideologies spectrum with their own interest-motivated interpretations and expectations of ideologies. The expectancy norms of the clients/patrons may interfere with the expectancy norms of the readership – if not even formulate them as we will see in the discussion of mainstreamism – yet they cannot be considered always similar.

Another dialectic issue with this Theory is its descriptive-prescriptive dichotomy. Chesterman (1997, p. 54) says that “Norms are here understood not to be orders or prescriptions which are issued by a superior to a subordinate [...] but rather descriptive of particular practices within a given community”. This is not always true in some news outlets’ settings. For instance, Robert Fisk notes that his disapproval of censorship policies practiced by Rupert Murdoch (the media tycoon) the new owner of *The Times* caused him to resign from his job at this news outlet and decide to work for *The Independent* instead (Fisk 2003, p. 334). Several journalists of *Al Jazeera* resigned from this news outlet for similar reasons (Altuwaijri 2013, see 5.2.1 for more examples). Localisers may follow certain dictated prescriptive norms (sometimes extemporaneous) as ordered by the patrons/clients. These patrons/clients can be individuals with political or economic influence, governments, editorial policy-makers in news agencies, etc. Being aware of the fact that the term “norms” is suggestive, Toury reiterates the descriptive orientation of his theory in his works (Toury 1995; 1985; 1980; 1978) in order to distance his norms from being understood as prescriptive instructions for translating. He notes that “norms are a category of descriptive analysis and not, as the term might imply, a prescriptive set of options which are thought by the analyst or scholar to be desirable” (Toury 1980, p. 51 and p.55). Toury’s reference to the contemporaneous occurrence of mainstream norms, remnants of previous ones and rudiments of new ones reveals his awareness that norms are constantly subject to changes (Toury 1995, pp. 62-63). This implies that the theoretical frameworks that indulge Toury’s Norms Theory have to be adjusted to meet the analysis requirements and peculiarities of (for instance) news localisation – especially because the norms model was basically designed to account for

literary texts not journalistic ones – despite Toury’s claims that his literary translation analysis model applies “not to this specific type of translation alone, but to translation in general” (Toury 1980, p. 7). Unlike the translation and publication of literary texts, however, the circulation of translation-mediated news items has more immediate spatiotemporal restrictions that pose certain challenges for the processes involved in their production for which the norms model does not account. In addition, Toury’s model “is well anchored in the European tradition [...] The dynamic functionalist framework of Descriptive Translation Studies was partly an extension of the Russian tradition of European linguistics” (Simeoni 2008, pp. 329-330). The corpus of this study includes Arabic translation-mediated news items collected from an Arabic news media with its own relevant social, historical and sociopolitical settings which differentiate it from European traditions. Some translation scholars challenge Toury’s descriptive approach (as he notes “properly descriptive [analyses] refrain from value judgements” (Toury 1995, p. 2)) by suggesting that “value judgements cannot be avoided” (Venuti 1998, p. 28).

It should be noted here, however, that value judgements can be avoided depending on the angle from which localised texts are viewed. A study, such as the current one, that investigates what is beyond the texts rather than focussing on only the texts can avoid such judgements. Baker (1998) argues that DTS stipulates an:

explicit refusal to make a priori statements about what translation is, what it should be, or what kinds of relationship a translated text should have with its original; an insistence on examining all translation-related issues historically, in terms of the conditions which operate in the receiving culture at any point in time; and an interest in extending the context of research beyond the examination of translated texts. (p. 163)

This approach to translation research generally represents the current trend in TS. It also represents the stance that this study holds with regard to value judgements on localised texts. In other words, this study overlooks elementary undergraduate translation-classroom questions such as What is a good or a bad translation?, or Why is translation good or bad?, and rather investigates the reasons behind making a translation-mediated news item has the form and content that it has and for what ends regardless of whether it is a “good” or a “bad” translation, especially that such adjectives are subjective ones in the first place. Another important aspect about DTS, as Baker mentions in her quote above, is that it abandons the traditional comparative approach to translation whereby STs and TTs are compared to each other for the purpose of determining the accuracy of translation. This is a particularly useful perspective in tackling news translation

research since “Often with news translation, there is no source text, as we have long understood the concept” (Conway 2015b, p. 251). Translation-mediated news items (as a constituent of the media discourse) have been and will always be subjective (in the wider sense of subjectivity that includes news agencies’ agendas) whereby recurrent omissions, additions, and paraphrasing are deliberate and spontaneous alike – as we will see in the analysed examples of *Al Jazeera* in Chapter Five. Gadamer (1996, pp. 407-408) suggests “Quand, dans notre traduction, nous voulons souligner un trait du texte original qui nous semble particulièrement important, nous ne pouvons le faire qu’aux dépens d’autres traits ou au prix de leur élimination” (see also Toury’s “matricial norms” above). In other words, comparative translation studies will only state the obvious. Works of other TS scholars such as Venuti’s (1995) “The Translator’s Invisibility: A History of Translation”, and Bassnett and Bush’s (2006) “The Translator as Writer” further this trend in DTS by suggesting that a translation can be studied or described as a new text in its own right without referring to the original text (Baker 1998, p. 163) which is an idea that contributes to considering the translator as a “writer” – not only a conduit through which the text passes (Bassnett and Bush 2006, Venuti 1995). Essentially, this devised DTS research model on translation-mediated news items is embraced in this study. Such an approach will facilitate the analysis of the translational interaction in media through putting this interaction in its target norms framework where translation-mediated news items are often adapted in a way that reflects the news outlet’s agendas, ideologies and latent/subliminal themes/messages rather than those of the ST author. Therefore, little attention (in comparison with the target medium) will be paid to the source medium’s contextual or extra-contextual elements of producing the STs unless these prove to be exceptionally relevant to their TT counterparts.

Norms act in a locale as a descriptive criteria or modellings of proper or applicable social behaviour or social action which has an influence on its societal products. Locales are perceived to exist and perhaps identify themselves in accordance with these norms and in contrast with the norms of other locales. Localisation is viewed here from this theoretical perspective. Localisation (as an extended form of translation) is perceived and contextualised as a social action or behaviour. Localisational norms are then realised as cognitively accepted regularities that rest on shared multi-layered localic values. Broadly speaking, the choices that are made during the process of localisation, and consequently shape the localised news item in a news outlet, rest on

such norms. Localisation is regarded from this theoretical perspective where it (localisation) is handled by news outlets – such as *Al Jazeera* – in a manner that converts social order into social re-order that serves specific interests.

1.3 Researcher's Positionality

An attempt to clarify the researcher's sociopolitical stances and their bearings on the issues discussed in this study as well as the terminology choices will be made in this section. The understanding of the “positionality of the researcher” in academic research and the connection between this understanding and CDA will also be explained through a rapid review of the relevant literature. Cook et al. (2005) suggest that

academic and other knowledges are always situated, always produced by positioned actors [...] working up/on/through all kinds of research relations(hips). All these make a huge difference to what exactly gets done by whom, how and where it's done, how it's turned into a finished product, for whom. Thus [...] writing about academic knowledge as a relational process rather than a straightforward thing might highlight the politics of knowledge in academic research [...] make it possible for researchers (and their audiences) to see and make all kinds of, often unexpected, politically progressive connections (p. 16)

One significant point in the above quote is that the presentation of knowledge in academic research is – in one way or another – a reflection of the researcher's positionality. The researcher's positionality includes his/her social or political/sociopolitical (or otherwise) stances to which they adhere and which they ought to declare and proclaim (be responsible for) when tackling research. Haraway (1988, p. 587) suggests that “Positioning implies responsibility for our enabling practices”. These are important aspects of research that aim at explaining the angles from which the researcher is approaching his/her object of study. Accordingly, a researcher is not a conduit of knowledge but rather a prism through which knowledge is explained, analysed or presented to the readers of the research. Figure 1 highlights “the role of positionality and the situated nature of all (academic) knowledge” (Cook et al., 2005, p. 18) where the researcher can be seen as a mediator in whose words texts are negotiated and through whom the object of study is presented. This presentation is not expected to be impartial. Cook et al., (2005, p. 22) suggest that “researchers' identities and practices make a big difference. They can't hover above the nitty-gritty power relations of everyday life. Research can only emerge out of them. Tainted by them. Reproducing them. Perhaps. Wealth. 'Race'. Nationality. Class. Gender. Sexuality. Age.” Haraway (1991, p. 177) argues that these identities draw on concepts such as “self/Other,

mind/body, culture/nature, male/female, civilised/primitive, reality/appearance, whole/part, agent/resource, maker/made, active/passive, right/wrong, truth/illusion, total/partial, God/man". Therefore, according to works on positionality, researchers are recommended against conducting their research while thinking of an academic research realm of "abstract reason and will" (Whatmore 1997, p. 38).

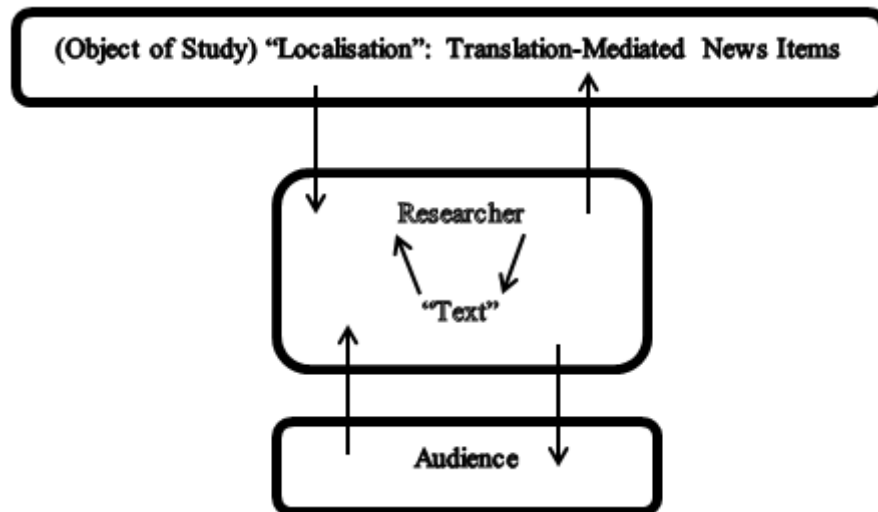


Figure 1. Position of the researcher in academic research (adapted from Cook et al (2005, p. 18))

It has been mentioned above that this study adopts a deconstructionist/critical approach to studying translation-mediated news items. This approach assumes that said items are used as part of media discourse. Among the best tools to critique media discourse is CDA (van Dijk 1988, p. 17). One of the aims of CDA is to disambiguate discourses that enhance the dominance of one social/political group, social class, or nation over others. This disambiguation takes the form of a "critical" analysis through which the analyst highlights his/her own stances with regard to the object of study. Van Dijk. (1993) suggests that:

critical discourse analysts (should) take an explicit sociopolitical stance: they spell out their point of view, perspective, principles and aims, both within their discipline and within society at large [...] their work is admittedly and ultimately political. Their hope, if occasionally illusory, is change through critical understanding. Their perspective, if possible, that of those who suffer most from dominance and inequality. (pp. 252-253; see also Fairclough 1996, p. 52)

Explicitly stating the sociopolitical stances of critical discourse analysts caused CDA to be primarily criticised for propagating the political views of critical discourse analysts, researchers, or scholars, extending not only critique of the power relations and social order but adopting a political agenda of transformation. CDA's orientation (the argument goes) leaves the critical interpretations, assumed by the critical discourse analyst (as well as sociopolitical stances

expressed by researchers' positions), open to controversy. Hammersley (1997, pp. 242-245) argues that if this is the case, then there is no specific reason for readers to accept CDA's political interpretations of discourse more than any other. However, such contention can perhaps be raised against any other research analytical framework that adopts a critical analysis approach. Critiques require having recourse to a certain set of ethics – be they academic or societal – and ethics, broadly speaking, are subjective.

CDA is conceived by the author of this study to seek a holistic approach to discourse critique that can answer questions about why localisation (see 2.7) is undertaken within a sociopolitical context which may comprise different locales, localisers, prevalent norms, institutions, and discourse features that play roles in the production and consumption of localised texts (see Chapter 5). Therefore, the critical aspect of CDA is significantly integral in a CDA research approach. It is in fact why CDA came into existence – the critical aspect distinguishes it from Discourse Analysis. CDA investigates deliberate techniques that localisers normally use to interfere in the recontextualisation of the STs' ideologies, especially when such interference has a bearing on causing social relations of domination or power to be institutionalised, asseverated, or altered by manipulating localised texts. The manipulation of texts through an appeal to certain ideologies that serve the interests of a certain political group – for instance – enables the creation of unequal power relations through media discourse. The way that *Al Jazeera's* discourse portrays the upheaval caused by the Arab Spring protests (and later civil wars) makes an enthralling case study of power relations in media discourse whereby localisation is used as a strategy to cause the balance of power tilt for the benefit of *Al Jazeera's* benefactor. CDA takes a special interest in scrutinising the strategies of using media discourse to transform power relations. Wodak & Meyer (2009, p. 10) maintain that “CDA aims to investigate critically social inequality as it is expressed, constituted, legitimized, and so on, by language use (or in discourse)”. CDA, then, presumes the existence of social inequality that comes into existence through self-serving language use. Van Dijk (1986, p. 4) suggests that critiquing discourse starts from studying “prevailing social problems [...] and critically analyses those in power, those who are responsible, and those who have the means and the opportunity to solve such problems”. Van Dijk takes the discussion from the abstract level of language use to the concrete level of language users – in our case localisers. The agent(s) who can bring forth such problematic inequality

through language may have the authority or the means to constitute and legitimise it as well. This perspective of CDA is characterised by being “agency-structure dialectic” (Fairclough 2008, p. 69). Fairclough suggests that “Agents [localisers]² act in fields that have pre-determined structural properties and constraints [norms]³, yet also enjoy a certain amount of freedom (more or less, depending on particular contexts [sociopolitical change]⁴) to change the structural properties of the field [power relations in locales]⁵”. This concept is, then, based on the sociological system that, according to Bourdieu (1985, pp. 201-202), governs fields of social production. As per Bourdieu (ibid.), this sociological system entails a conflict between the members of a certain field over a *capital*. This capital can be an actual (material) capital, and it can also be a symbolic capital expressed in the acceptance or legitimacy which the readership grants a localised text – for instance – that could result in integrating its (the localised text’s) ideology in the discourse of the prospective locale. CDA does not restrict its critique to explicit meanings of localised news items, but conceptually and methodically associates these textual constructions to their pertinent sociopolitical context. Such a critical perspective enables a researcher of translation studies to observe and describe actions or behaviours that take place outside the translated text yet affect its transfer into the target locale. In other words, CDA approaches bring under the microscope of critique the influence of the sociopolitical and socioideological agendas of those who manipulate discourse through the influential media techniques of news translation/localisation.

In concordance with the above approaches of positionality and CDA, the author of this study identifies himself as a male Mesopotamian/Arab and a practicing Muslim who lived most of his life (up to the time of writing this study) in the Arabic-speaking world. The author also assumes, as part of the research methodology, that news media (with perhaps few exceptions) resort to overt or covert bias techniques to introduce their own perspectives of events, ideologies, agendas, etc., whereas supposedly presenting news in the manner that the readership desires (see 2.8). Media discourse is perhaps not as influential if it was ever imagined as neutral. It rather becomes powerful when it reinforces the agendas of powerful agents. Such an approach might be

² Emphasis added by the author of this dissertation.

³ Emphasis added by the author of this dissertation.

⁴ Emphasis added by the author of this dissertation.

⁵ Emphasis added by the author of this dissertation.

unconventional in academic research, but researchers should not remain neutral when the establishment (be it a governing regime or a news media) takes advantage of certain ideologies (that pertain to faith or ethnology) and endorses them in a self-serving manner that abrasively disregards the suffering of people. Van Dijk (1993, pp. 252-253) maintains that critical discourse analysts should aim their critique at

the power elites that enact, sustain, legitimate, condone or ignore social inequality and injustice. That is, one of the criteria of their work is solidarity with those who need it most [...] Their critique of discourse implies a political critique of those responsible for its perversion in the reproduction of dominance and inequality.

Researchers are part of the few that can advocate positive change or at least point out faulty societal practices using the influential academic forum. This position in regard to media agendas, however, should not be interpreted to mean that the discussions will be intentionally partial. It is merely stating the fact that any discussion of a topic that involves description or analysis “is not- and cannot be-neutral” (Van Dijk 1993, p. 270)⁶, while bearing in mind the caveat that: a systematic and a methodological approach, of perhaps the highest academic and ethical standards, will be dominant and present throughout this work. It should also be reiterated that CDA as an analysis method is not conducted to make value judgements on the accuracy of the translations but rather to critically analyse them in order to answer the research questions.

Bearing the identity(ies) of the author in mind and in order to best present the adopted localisational approach, the power and potential political dimensions associated with the choices of certain expressions (such as “Arab World”, “Islamism”, “West/Western” etc.) have been questioned and accurate alternatives have been suggested and used throughout this study. In concordance with the localisational approach (which basically argues for studying news translation as targeting small-scale locales not large-scale *cultures*, see 2.7-2.7.1) to news translation, the expression “Arabic-speaking world” has been used instead of the commonly used “Arab World” because the expression “Arab World” has been mostly and indifferently foisted as a blanket label to refer to a mosaic of non-Arab indigenous ethnicities and languages that have (for thousands of years) constituted the peoples who inhabit the geographical stretch of regions in the Middle East and North Africa (henceforth MENA), notably members of the Arab League

⁶ Cook et al (2005, p. 22) argue that when a researcher undertakes academic or otherwise research “it’s impossible to be impartial”.

(see Map 1). The expression Arab World stereotypically generalises the Arab ethnicity and assumes the existence of *cultural* homogeneity accordingly. It disregards and marginalises non-Arab indigenous ethnicities such as Kurds, Turks, Berbers, etc., that live inside (and outside) the member states of the Arab League (see Map 1). Similarly, the expressions “West” and “Western” are generally (not always) used to indiscriminately describe *Western* governments, *Western* media, *Western* societies, *Western culture*, etc., or to refer to past and present colonial powers (including US) and their respective mainstreamist media outlets. The generalisation of such terms implies a cultural homogeneity amongst populations or countries



Map1. Countries of the Arab League which proclaim Arabic as the official language.

normally covered by the expressions *West* or *Western*. This premise is hypothetical if not problematic. The *West* does not behave as a homogenous unit. Besides, the term *West* refers to a geographical stretch of land that comprise a demographic hybridity with languages such as German, French, Italian, Spanish, etc. that the author of this study does not master. Therefore, and from a translational perspective, statements that refer to mainstreamism in *Western* news media platforms are not verifiable. In some of the literature that has been reviewed the expression Anglo-Saxon is used to refer to the media and demography of North America implying the existence of a homogenous Anglo-Saxon media *culture*. Anglo-Saxon is a “term used historically to describe any member of the Germanic peoples who, from the 5th century to the time of the Norman Conquest (1066), inhabited and ruled territories that are today part of

England and Wales” (Encyclopaedia Britannica, Anglo-Saxon). Demographically and technically, (North) Americans (and by extension North American media) cannot be entirely described as Anglo-Saxon. Because of these limitations to the use of terms such as *West*, *Western*, and *Anglo-Saxon*⁷, these expressions have been replaced with the expression Anglo-American. The expression Anglo-American is used to signify that the media sources for this study’s English data are essentially English (from UK) news outlets, and American news outlets. The former represents the European tradition of journalism, while the latter represents the American tradition of journalism (cf. Bassnett 2005, p. 124).

On another note, it is important to differentiate between Muslim, Islam and Islamic on the one hand, and Islamist on the other. Broadly speaking, a Muslim is an adherent to Islam as a faith, who does not necessarily have any political affiliations or trends. Islamic is an adjective that denotatively modifies nouns to ascribe them an Islamic character without necessarily associating them with politics, e.g. Islamic art, Islamic architecture, Islamic country, etc. Islamist (though might refer to a scholar (Muslim or non-Muslim) who is knowledgeable in Islamic studies) became recently known to refer to a far-right or radical individual, a group of people, an ideology, a movement, etc. that utilises Islam for political purpose(s), e.g. Islamist militias, Islamist fundamentalists, Islamist politicians, Islamists, etc. (see Demant 2006) – but not Islamist country. Interestingly, some politicians started to realise the difference between Islamic/Muslim on the one hand and Islamist on the other. During the Democratic presidential debate on November 14, 2015 (one day after the terrorist attacks of November 13, 2015 in Paris), former Democratic presidential candidate and Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, refused to use the expression “radical Islam” and declared, “We are at war with violent extremism” while implying that those who referred to radical Islam were saying “we are somehow against Islam”. She added

I think we’re at war with jihadists [...] I think that you can talk about Islamists, who clearly are also jihadists [...] We are at war with people who use their religion for purposes of power and oppression. And, yes, we are at war with those people, but I don’t want us to be painting with too broad a brush (Hanchett 2015, Przybyla 2015).

The ideology of Islamists is concordantly termed “Islamism” even though some mainstream media terms this ideology “Islamism” or “political Islamism”. The expression “Islamism”

⁷ In some cases, *West*, *Western*, and *Anglo-Saxon* are italicised or put in quotation marks to highlight other writers’ usage of them.

(though commonly used to represent ideology(ies) of far-right or radical Islamists such as the ISIS terrorists) failed to dissociate these ideologies from Islam. Therefore, it has been replaced by the expression “Islamism”⁸ (Islamist+ism) in order to avoid the association (suggested by the derivation of Islam+ism from Islam) between the terrorist actions (such as those committed by ISIS) and Islam. This contested association is not only common among laymen but also among published writers. For instance, Gilad Atzmon⁹ argues in an interview on @21WIRE radio station that “Islamism” is an integral part of Islam. The generalisation implied by such an association paints the faith of over a billion peaceful Muslims with the broad brush of terrorism. A distinction between Islam as a faith and Islamist ideology (i.e. Islamism) must always be drawn. On a relevant spin of this faith aspect, the author adopts the view that faith and the state should be separate and that faith should never be used to mislead public opinion by media outlets.

1.4 Research Questions

The sociopolitical unrest that has dazzled most of the Arabic-speaking world and some other parts of the world since late 2010 instigated a burst of production in the sociopolitical discourse of Arabic and non-Arabic news media. Making use of this rich source of data, this study aims at finding answers for the following questions:

- How and for what purpose are certain patterns of discourse reproduced through localisation in *Al Jazeera*’s translation-mediated Arabic news articles?
- Whose interests are served and whose interests are annulled by the localisation processes?

It is hoped that this study will contribute new insights by addressing the following subset of questions as well:

- To what extent is localisation a better term to describe the processes involved in translating and circulating news items than other terms such as acculturation?

⁸ Islamism has been widely used in social media outlets and other media outlets since 2008. See, for instance: (a) <https://twitter.com/banksterslayer/status/679991388981694464> ; (b) <http://www.prem-rawat-talk.org/cgi-bin/anyboard.cgi/nonrawat?cmd=get&cG=2343138303&zu=3234313632&v=2&gV=1&p=> ; (c) <https://twitter.com/search?f=tweets&vertical=default&q=Islamism%20%22Islamism%22%20Islamism&l=en&src=typd> .

⁹ Gilad Atzmon is a British/Israeli writer, political activist, novelist, and jazz saxophonist. The interview in question took place on December 24, 2015 after he published his 2015 book: “A to Zion: The Definitive Israeli Lexicon”.

- What are the norms that govern *Al Jazeera*'s localisation of English news articles into Arabic and what values are given to them in order to address the intended locale(s)?
- How is localisation, as an integral part of the media discourse, is used in the dichotomy of Sameness vs. Otherness?

1.5 The Studied Event: The Arab Spring

History teems with examples of revolutions which were the result of governments' failure to meet the needs of the people. For many decades, and with few exceptions, the populations of many parts of the Arabic-speaking world have been living in very difficult economic, political, and social conditions in their respective countries. These conditions can be summed up as follows:

1. Unemployment:

Some parts of the Arabic-speaking world has a long history of suffering from economic hardships and bad administration of human resources that have resulted in high rates of unemployment. The United Nations' Arab Human Development Report (2009, p. 5) states that "In some Arab countries, more than half of the population lives in hunger and want, with no means to look after their families or safeguard their own quality of life". It is perhaps safe to say that the Arab Spring could not have collected the momentum that it had without the long-standing discontent over low living standards and unemployment. Unemployed youth formed the majority of the protestors that massed the streets throughout the Arab Springs (Gardner 2011, Khoury 2011). The UN International Labour Office's (ILO) 2010 report on the unemployment situation in MENA states that, with a total average of 48.7%, the levels of

unemployment among Arab youth is the highest in the world [...] Young people's risk of unemployment is four times higher than that for adults; in Egypt this figure is six times bigger. Significant levels of under-employment and poverty persist: the absence of employment opportunities in the formal sector and underemployment often push individuals into the informal economy, which is large. The lack of high-quality jobs means that more than four out of ten people working in the MENA countries in 2009 had a vulnerable job, working either as own-account workers or as unpaid contributing family workers (p. 7)

In quite few countries of MENA, university graduates who were unemployed or worked with minimal wages as waiters in cafés, cashiers in local food shops, taxi drivers, and flower, fruit and vegetables vendors on the streets, etc. struggled to survive and to provide for their families. The massive demographic increase in the population made the situation even more complicated. The

United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office Report (2012) maintains that “The MENA region faces the combined challenge of rapidly growing young populations, rising prices and unemployment [...] the region’s population more than doubled between 1975 and 2005 to 314 million” (United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office Report 2012, p. 13). Most of the regimes of the Arab Spring countries failed to seek successful remedies for the chronic unemployment issue. In fact, these regimes are reputed to have furthered the deterioration of the unemployment situation through practices including bribery and cronyism. Fisher (2011) suggests that in Tunisia the unemployment problem had worsened to the point that a Tunisian “couldn’t get a job without some connection to Ben Ali’s family or party”. This is a further reason why these regimes were sitting on a ticking bomb of unemployed youth whose devastating ramifications they neglected until it exploded.

2. Social Injustice and Political Suppression:

The United Nations’ Arab Human Development Report (2004) warned at the time of its issue that

Arabs are increasingly excluded from determining their own future [...] The enormous gap that separates today’s reality and what many in the region hope for, is a source of widespread frustration and despair among Arabs about their countries’ prospects for a peaceful transition to societies enjoying freedom and good governance. Moreover, persisting tendencies in Arab social structures could well lead to spiralling social, economic, and political crises. Each further stage of crisis would impose itself as a new reality, producing injustices eventually beyond control. The Arab world is at a decisive point that does not admit compromise or complacency (p. 1)

Despite this forewarning of the upcoming upheaval, the governments of some MENA countries continued the practices of the police-states they had become with minimal attention (if any) to social justice of any kind. This top-down negligence encouraged front-line public sector employees, such as individuals in the police force for instance, to feel that they were above the law, since no officials brought them to justice. At will enforcement of law became systematic in some countries. Fisher (2011) maintains that Tunisian police officers treated markets as

their personal picnic grounds, taking bagfuls of fruit without so much as a nod toward payment. The cops took visible pleasure in subjecting the vendors to one indignity after another – fining them, confiscating their scales, even ordering them to carry their stolen fruit to the cops’ cars [...] And the uniformed police took to demanding graft with brazen abandon.

Political freedoms in most parts of MENA suffered/suffer the same kind of injustice that social freedoms underwent/undergo. Fisher (2011) adds that “The secret police kept close tabs on ordinary Tunisians”. This was/is the case in so many parts of the Arabic-speaking world. In Libya, for instance, political parties were banned to the point that forming political parties or

being a member of a political party was considered an act of treason. Gaddafi's slogan "من تحزب خان" (Who joins a (political) party is a traitor) was circulated on postal stamps (see Image 1) and written in green¹⁰ paint on private buildings. It was a grim reminder of the ban on political parties enforced by "Prohibition of Political Parties Act Number 71 of 1972" (Schiller 2009, p. 163).



Image 1. Libyan postal stamp that dates back to the Gaddafi era¹¹

Political parties are still prohibited in other parts of the Arabic-speaking world. Salih (2014, p. 97) remarks that

The organization of political parties is prohibited by the constitution in Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE. In Bahrain, political parties are prohibited, but there are de facto political organizations called 'political societies' that contest elections, although they operate without a legal framework [...] Similarly, in Kuwait, such political organizations are called 'political factions' (not political parties) and are organized according to philosophical trends, religious sects or clans.

Such political suppression backfired when the protests of the Arab Spring began. Though some banned or underground-active political parties, unions, or activist groups backed up and later joined the protestors, the protests were essentially spontaneous. There were no political or ideological leaders instructing the protestors. There was no specific "body" for the regimes to arrest in order to suppress the followers.

3. Corruption of the Ruling Juntas:

¹⁰ Green is the colour that Gadhafi selected to represent his ideological book "The Green Book" (where said statement can be found), the Libyan flag, any stamp or seal on paper work or letterhead. The gates and window frames of government offices, universities and any other state-run property were painted green.

¹¹ Image was taken by the author of this dissertation during teaching time in Libya that extended from 1999-2006.

The fact that the rulers of the Arab Spring countries were dictators who led their countries into economic and political stagnation seems to have been exacerbated by their own corruption as well as that of their families and their cronies. Sarkar (2014, p. 6) suggests that “In Egypt, new business elites collaborated with the regime to amass fortunes unimaginable to the majority of the population surviving on \$2 a day. In Tunisia, no investment deal was closed without a kick-back to the ruling family”. This corruption impoverished the people throughout the years these rulers spent in power; illegally enriching themselves with the countries’ resources. Holding power for decades, these rulers amassed fortunes that no government official (regardless how high his/her salary) can collect. For instance:

- *Forbes* reports that Colonel Gadhafi of Libya (42 years in power) “salted away more than US\$200 billion” (Durgy 2011)



Image 2. Colonel Moammar Gadhafi former ruler of Libya (1969-2011)
(Image labeled for reuse with modification by Google Images)

- According to *Forbes*, Air Chief Marshal Mubarak of Egypt (30 years in power) has a personal wealth of US\$70 billion (O’Connor 2011)



Image 3. Air Chief Marshal Mohammad Hosni Mubarak former President of Egypt (1981-2011)
(Image labeled for reuse with modification by Google Images)

- UN experts claim that the personal wealth of Yemen’s former president Marshal Ali Abdullah Saleh (over 33 years in power) is US\$30-62 billion (BBC 2015)



Image 4. Marshal Ali Abdullah Saleh former President of Yemen (1978-2012)
(Image labeled for reuse with modification by Google Images)

- *The Telegraph* reports that General Ben Ali of Tunisia who seized power for 23 years has a personal wealth of US\$5 billion (Freeman 2011)



Image 5. General Zine El Abidine Ben Ali former President of Tunisia (1987–2011)
(Image labeled for reuse with modification by Google Images)

- The poorest of the dictators of the Arab Spring countries is Bashar al-Assad of Syria who has amassed a personal wealth of over US\$1.4 billion (Inman 2012). But Bashar (who *inherited the presidency* of Syria from his father General Hafez al-Assad) has been in power for only 15 years during the last six of which Syria has been living a civil war.



Image 6. Bashar Al-Assad President of Syria (2000-)
(Image labeled for reuse with modification by Google Images)

Economic adversities can perhaps be endured by the people if they were equally felt by leaders and followers alike. But this was not the situation in the countries of the Arab Spring

where the gap between the ruler and the ruled in particular and between the haves and the have-nots in general was becoming wider than ever which at the end led the people to revolt.

1.5.2 How Did the Arab Spring Begin?

In late 2010, and against the above economic and sociopolitical conditions in the Arabic-speaking world, the Arab Spring dramatically began in Tunisia. Fahim (2011), Day (2011), Fisher (2011) and Toumi (2011) provide relatively similar accounts of the tragic incident that sparked the Tunisian Arab Spring:

- The Date: December 17, 2010
- The Characters:
 - Mohammad Bouazizi (Image 7), a 26-year-old vegetable seller – The Victim



Image 7. Self-immolated Mohammad Bouazizi
(Image labeled for reuse with modification by Google Images)

- Fadia Hamdi (Image 8), a 34-year-old policewoman/municipality agent – The Perpetrator



Image 8. Tunisian policewoman/municipality agent Fadia Hamdi
(Image labeled for reuse with modification by Google Images)

- The Location: the landlocked small town of Sidi Bouzid which is located at the centre of Tunisia

- The Act: Bouazizi was humiliated publicly, by Hamdi after an altercation between the two with regard to the former refusing to pay a “10 Tunisian Dinars (US\$6.86) fine” (Toumi 2011) for selling vegetables and fruits off his cart without having a permit. Following the altercation, Hamdi is said to have taken a basket of apples from Bouazizi’s fruit cart to her car and when she came back to take another one Bouazizi blocked her way to prevent her from so doing. Consequently, she confiscated his weighing scales after slapping him in the face in front of about “50 witnesses” (Day 2011, Fisher 2011). Extremely humiliated, Bouazizi went to the local municipality building to report the offence. Because his complaint was against a municipality agent, Bouazizi’s complaint was dismissed and he was forced to leave the building. According to Bouazizi’s sister “He became hysterical and in a highly deplorable act of hopelessness, went to the nearest petrol station, bought some gasoline, poured it on his body and set himself ablaze” (Fahim 2011).

By the time he passed away at the hospital burns unit on January 4, 2011, Bouazizi had virtually set Tunisia on fire. The ensuing protests that began in Sidi Bouzid on December 18, 2010, soon spread to neighbouring towns. The small crowd of protestors that massed in front of Sidi Bouzid’s municipality building to protest specifically the municipality agents’ treatment of vendors (that caused Bouazizi to burn himself alive) had become larger in other Tunisian cities with a higher bar of demands such as justice, employment, the resignation of government officials, and the prosecution of the corrupt ones. On January 13, 2011, when the protests reached Tunisia’s Hammamet Mediterranean hamlet (where Ben Ali and his large extended family have built vast beachfront mansions) Ben Ali addressed the protestors in a televised speech: “I am telling you I understand you, yes, I understand you [...] And I decided: total freedom for the media with all its channels and no shutting down Internet sites and rejecting any form of monitoring of it” (Kirkpatrick 2011), then he reiterated a pledge he made when he came to power in the coup of 1987 by saying: “No presidency for life” (ibid). But it was too late. The implicit confession of the mistakes that Ben Ali’s regime committed over 23 years in power did not convince the Tunisian people that those mistakes were mendable. The protests became fiercer after the above speech. On January 14, 2011, 74-year-old Ben Ali fled the country for Saudi Arabia. In less than a month after ousting Ben Ali, the pro-democratic protests that started

in Tunisia spread like fire in dry hay to the rest of the Arabic-speaking world. In a domino effect manner, the autocratic regimes of Egypt, Libya, and Yemen (in this order) fell down with the head of the regime either forced to step down (as in Egypt and Yemen) or killed (as in Libya) – while the Syrian regime still fights for its existence. The “après moi, le deluge” bungled actions of the regimes (during the Arab Spring) added up to the build-up of reasons that lead to the Event (the Arab Spring). These actions combined obliterated trust between the Establishment (and its pro-regimist media) and the peoples. On the other hand, it boosted the credibility of one media outlet’s narratives, namely *Al Jazeera*’s, which has always criticised the Tunisian and other autocratic regimes in the Arabic-speaking world.

As radical as the changes that this Event brought about, one can only expect that existing ideologies have been altered or even replaced with different ones that can be associated with these changes. There is probably no better illustrative example to tentatively explain how revolutionary change can alter the meaning of a sign than the expression that has been used to trademark the Event in question in the Arabic-speaking world – i.e. “Arab Spring”. The way that this Event was labelled, why it was labelled as the “Arab Spring”, and how it is used in Anglophone and Arabophone media attests to the importance of studying how the meaning of a sign changes at times of turmoil within the field of news translation.

1.6 The “Arab Spring” Expression:

Anglo-American media outlets have been occasionally referring to the sociopolitical and economic conditions in the Arabic-speaking world prior to the Arab Spring events. *The Economist*, for instance, was among the few news outlets to dedicate its summer issue of July 23, 2009 to the conditions of the Arabic-speaking world with its front cover reading “waking from its sleep” (The Economist January 9, 2009). In this article, the Arabic-speaking world is portrayed as a group of hibernating societies that need to wake up and catch up with the rest of the democracies around the world (see also Whitaker 2009) – if this world can handle democracy (Skidelsky 2011). The events of the Arab Spring, however, portrayed a different image of this world and offered news outlets (inside and outside MENA) a source of abundant daily (if not hourly) hard news material and news analysis. The Event soon acquired international importance. Therefore, and despite the fact that the Arab Spring is essentially an affair of the Arabic-speaking world, usage of the expression “Arab Spring” came from a non-Arabic news

outlet. *Al Jazeera* and *Al Arabiya* (both Arabophone news outlets) referred to the Event in question in the Arabic-speaking world at its beginning as: unrest, demonstrations, protests, pro-democratic protests, revolution, uprising, awakening, Jasmine Revolution (in reference to the Tunisian unrest), the Lotus Revolution (in reference to the Egyptian unrest), etc., but never as the Arab Spring until non-Arabic news outlets did so.

On January 17, 2011, the earliest positive reference to this Event (in non-Arabophone media) appeared in Roger Cohen's "The Arab Gdansk" in *The New York Times*. In this article Cohen (2011) refers sympathetically to the protests in Tunisia by stating

Is Tunis the Arab Gdansk? Big things start small. In Poland, the firing in 1980 of Anna Walentynowicz, a shipyard worker, led to strikes and the formation of the grassroots Solidarity movement that set in motion the unraveling of the Soviet empire.

It is worth noting, however, that the expression Arab Spring was used in Anglophone media once before the Event of 2010. It first appeared on March 2, 2003 in one of *The New York Times* articles, namely "Dreaming of Democracy" by George Packer reporting on protests that broke in Lebanon that year. However, to favourably nickname the Tunisian protests (as well as the ones that followed in the rest of the Arabic-speaking world) that took place in MENA from specifically late 2010 onwards, the expression "Arab Spring" was first used on January 6, 2011 in a *Foreign Policy*'s article headlined "Obama's 'Arab Spring'?" In this article, columnist Marc Lynch referred to the ongoing "clashes through a diverse array of Arab states – Tunisia, Jordan, Kuwait, Egypt" (Lynch 2011). On January 14, 2011, it appeared in *The Christian Science Monitor*'s "Arab spring? Or Arab winter?" which reports on Ben Ali's fleeing Tunisia and forewarns the other dictators by stating

Arab spring? Or Arab winter? That choice is now before the autocratic rulers in the Middle East and North Africa as they nervously watch a popular uprising oust a repressive leader in one of the smallest – but most stable – countries of the region, Tunisia. (The Monitor's Editorial Board 2011)

Using the word "Spring" in this expression to metaphorically refer to optimistic periods of political renewal and transformation draws, perhaps, on the analogy of the "Prague Spring" of political liberalisation in Czechoslovakia in 1968 and its positive connotations in the Anglo-American media that dates back to the Cold War era when the *Western* bloc and the *Eastern* bloc respective media used to seize every opportunity of sociopolitical unrest to ideologise it in a manner that unfavourably portrays the other bloc. The Arab Spring expression plugged into calls for "democracy", "renewal" and "awakening" that some Anglo-American media outlets as well

as *Al Jazeera* – in particular – have been circulating some time before the events of 2010 onwards.

On March 11, 2011, *Al Arabiya* Arabic news website adopted the translation (الربيع العربي) */ar'abeeul arabi/* (Tahiri 2011) of aforesaid expression, and *Al Jazeera* followed suit on March 24, 2011 (*Al Jazeera*, March 24, 2011) – more than two months after its first use in an Anglophone news outlet. The Arab Spring expression is loaded with connotative meanings. News outlets in the Arabic-speaking world are aware of those connotations, specifically the positive ones. It is interesting to see how the Arab Spring (as a linguistic sign and as a construct) has been interpreted in Arabophone media. Cognisant of the positive connotations, *Al Arabiya* attaches “so-called” to the expression Arab Spring (which quite often marks its belittling use of the expression) while reporting on it. This reflects a discernible uncertainty, regarding the implications of the Arab Spring Event on the part of *Al Arabiya*. This uncertainty can be understood within the context of how sociopolitical change highlights a specific meaning of the sign to this outlet’s benefactor. *Al Arabiya* is owned and funded by the government of Saudi Arabia; it tends to reflect the point of view of the Saudi government. This government’s points of view on the Arab Spring were not favourable. The Saudi regime viewed the democracy-promising Springs as a threat to its hereditary monarchy system which grants the Saudi King absolute unlimited powers. Therefore, *Al Arabiya* was mostly reporting on the Event through its own Saudi reporters/writers, or through *re-circulating* news items from also Saudi-owned *Asharq Al-Awsat* whose reporters/writers are on the Saudi payroll. Its translation-mediated news items on the Arab Spring are considerably less than those of *Al Jazeera* (see Table 1 and Table 2 in 3.1.1.1). In stark contrast to *Al Arabiya*’s stance, *Al Jazeera* uses the Arab spring freely and favourably. *Al Jazeera*’s stance can also be traced to its benefactor’s agenda. *Al Jazeera* is owned by the State of Qatar that sees a rival in Saudi Arabia (see 5.2). Rudoren (2012) notes that Qatar is relatively secure in the sense that it did not view the pro-democracy protests of the Arab Spring as a threat to its political stability. This short review of the emergence of the Arab Spring expression (as it refers to the studied sociopolitical Event) shows how the positive meaning associated with an expression can be borrowed through news translation then likely be adapted to serve the agendas of the news outlets’ benefactors. It also tentatively alludes to the idea that the

same sign can be attributed different localic interpretations in different media contexts even though these contexts may apparently seem to be belonging to the same *culture*.

In this chapter, the rationale and the purpose of carrying out this case study and the research questions (that the rest of this work will attempt to answer) have been stated. The researcher's positionality explained the sociopolitical stances and the background of the author of the study. Some of the terminologies which will recurrently be used throughout this study have been explained in the researcher's positionality section. Highlighting the associations of the terminology in question is important to explain the localisational approach of this study to news translation, which primarily proposes studying news translation while taking into consideration the possibility that what motivates news translation are micro localic interests not macro *cultural* ideologies. The devised theoretical framework put said micro localic interests in their perspective of the Norms Theory. This framework also explained the current target-orientation translational trends of research in TS and pointed out that a descriptive critical approach (that eschews value judgements on translations accuracy) to news translation can better account for aspects of localic idiosyncrasies in the processes involved in news translation. The Event being studied has been alluded to and the reasons behind it have been elucidated. This chapter then concluded with a rapid review of the emergence of the term "Arab Spring". It has been explained in this review that the Arab Spring is an Anglo-American media construct that found its way into wide circulation in the world media of the Arabic-speaking discourse through localisation. The references that have been made to the influence of the news outlets' patrons (in the review of the emergence of the term Arab Spring) will be further discussed in the next chapter along other important issues that have been only touched upon above.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This review of literature aims at exploring the bulk of works on news translation and assessing their research orientations. It highlights the labels that the researchers advocate to describe news translation and the processes involved in it. These labels along with the methodologies and the findings of the reviewed works are critiqued. This is done while bearing in mind the aim of adopting an appropriate approach and label to describe news translation and its relevant processes in the study. This chapter will conclude with suggesting adopting a localisational approach to news translation that proposes using the term “locale” to replace the term “culture” in order to pave the way for using the term “localisation”. Reasons for this suggestion are given in section 2.7.

This review of literature has been divided and discussed thematically. It shows that there is perhaps no field of translation where the processes of text translation and text localisation intertwine more than in media when international news items are translated and re-produced. This can basically be attributed to the fact that in text translation and text production the lines between the needs of the news outlets and prospective audience gets in most cases very blurry. This is a common feature that most of the works in this review of literature share whether the analyses’ orientation was textual or contextual/extra-textual. This review will show that there is a considerable confusion with regard to the labels that are used to describe and encompass the processes and operations endemically involved in news translation and news production.

As far as news translation research is concerned, the review hereafter acknowledges all the contributions of pertinent research and admits that there is no one size fits all research methodology. Therefore, and with almost every research adopting a relatively different perspective of viewing news translation, reviewing the bulk of the dishevelled literature proved to be a thorny task, specifically as regards to their thematic organisation. The issue became more complicated with the abundance of evidence for and against the utilised labels and the results of the studies. These factors shall be reflected in the following segments. Since the theoretical framework of this study is mapped by the functionalist approach to translation, the following

review will focus on works that emphasise elements beyond and over the text that, yet, affect the text production.

2.1 Labels and Processes

Depending on their translational theoretical orientation, and research analysis methodology, researchers use different yet related labels to identify news translation and news production, and their relevant processes and operations. The review of the literature on news translation will start by reiterating the point that research on news translation generally teems with labels which are in some cases reflective and in other cases discursive, confusing and perhaps misnomic. Cases in point are: “transediting” (Stetting, 1989), “gatekeeping” (Vuorinen 1995), “acculturation” (Bassnett, 2005), “localisation” (Orengo 2005), “reframing” (Baker 2007), “appropriation” (Valdeón 2008), “recontextualisation” (Fairclough 2008), “adaptation” (Lü et al 2012), etc. The multiplicity of the labels seems to highlight factors that play a role in news translation and surpass those of mere linguistic transformations. Consequently, these factors emphasise – for instance – the significance of the norms of the target locale, the needs of the receptors/receivers/target audience, the patron/client, power-relations and ideological constraints, and institutional routines.

The processes of news translation and news production are so intertwined that they urged Stetting (1989) to coin “transediting” to refer to the fact that a “certain amount of editing has always been included in the translation task” (Stetting 1989, p. 371). Other researchers have followed suit (see Hursti (2001), Holland (2006), and Cheesman and Nohl (2010)). Vuorinen (1995) introduces “gatekeeping” to refer to factors that control the amount of information maintained while translating and producing news (see also Cheesman and Nohl (2010)). Bassnett (2005) suggests “acculturation” in reference to the target orientation of news translation and production. Orengo (2005) suggests “localisation”, which is probably the most appropriate choice to encompass the operative processes of news translation, the target locale, the production and marketing of news production. Baker (2007) suggests “reframing” with reference to power-relations effective in news production. Valdeón (2008) proposes “appropriation” to account for the changes inflicted in text production to meet the needs of the receivers in a certain medium – i.e. the internet. In brief, all the works that have been reviewed show that some sort of transmutation takes place before the final version of the translated news items gets to its

receivers and that this kind of transmutation is deliberately carried out to serve a certain purpose such the news agency's agenda, the alignment with the norms of the society, propagating particular ideologies, etc.

In most cases, the different labels used for news translation by researchers can be attributed to the complexities of the processes involved in news translation and production. The following lists of techniques or strategies which are captured by the labels listed above reveal why these are intrinsically confusing: Stetting (1989) suggests: adaptation, shortening, making the text idiomatic, cleaning up, extracting, changing, removing, and adding; Vuorinen (1995) suggests: deletion, addition, substitution, and reorganization; Bani (2006) suggests: cutting, explaining, generalising, and substituting; Hursti (2001) suggests: reorganisation, deletion, addition, and substitution; Baker (2006) suggests: selective appropriation, ambiguity, and labelling; Kang (2007) suggests: omission, addition, generalisation, particularisation, and re-perspectivisation. The noticeable issue in the reviewed works is that there is no agreement on which label should be categorised as a process/a technique of news translation and which label should be used to name news translation. Some researchers tend to use a certain expression as a blanket term that encompasses the entire processes and techniques involved in news translation, while other researchers use the same expression as a single technique among others under a different blanket term. Bassnett (2005), and as abundant and as confusing as these expressions are, suggests that we still need another. She maintains that "the processes of textual manipulation that take place inter- and intra-lingually suggest that we might need a new term altogether" (Bassnett 2005, p. 130).

Although the reviewed works on news translation are sometimes highly theoretical and based on fragile and generic hypotheses, proffering labels may stimulate researchers to rethink the complexities involved in news translation and to reconsider outdated opinions about news translation. Pym (2010, p. 109) states that "the practice of translation exceeds its theory, thus requiring an ongoing empirical attitude". Hence, discussing the suitability of the labels may have no point without being supported by an empirical investigation of the role that translation plays at the macro and micro levels of producing translated news items. The following review will be organised in terms of the main features of the works and cross-referenced whenever necessary in order to show similarities and differences amongst them.

2.2 Text-based Research

News translation and news production encompass sociopolitical, sociocultural, and textual processes that entail adaptations. These adaptations are better seen in text-based research on news translation even though this kind of research is neither intended to describe the processes involved nor to describe the motives behind them. The research in this regard is tackled through textual comparisons of news items in one language (the source language, henceforth SL) with those of another (target language, henceforth TL). This kind of research tends to pass value judgements on the quality of the translations while essentially accounting for textual components of the ST and the TT. Cases in point are: Valdeón (2005), Holland (2006), McLaughlin (2011), Zhang (2011), and Kadhim and Kader (2010). Kadhim and Kader (2010), for instance, hold comparisons between *BBC English* political news items and their Arabic translations. Their aim is to ascertain how stylistic and syntactic transformations influence the quality of the translated news items. As structural linguists, they utilise componential analysis as their toolkit in carrying out the analysis. They identify differences which they categorise as overtranslation, undertranslation, replacement translation, incorrect translation, or ambiguous translation. Their comments on the samples are more focussed on issues that pertain to Arabic syntax (maintaining that the Arabic translations are more coherent and understandable) with tertiary hints to sociopolitical or ideological factors. Their conclusions include rather traditional references to the reasons behind such transformational differences. However, Kadhim and Kader (2010, p. 45) suggest that “the ideological perspective, the culture, the political make up, the Arabic grammar and the sociolinguistic idiosyncrasies of the Arab target readers” could be reasons for aforesaid differences. In this quote, one cannot help but notice the reference to the expression “target readers”. This is significant as a contextual factor that determines the form and content of the product.

Other text-based research disregards the target audience as a determining factor in its conclusions. This kind of research tends to conclude that no adaptation processes were carried out, and that translators rely on literal renderings of the STs. Valdeón (2005) carried out his text-based research by comparing news articles from *CNN* to their translated counterparts in *CNN en Español* website. His analysis highlights variances in the syntactic structures such as

passivisation and transitivity, in textual structures such as in the headlines, and in word choice. In his conclusions, Valdeón (2005) notes

Nevertheless, it is obvious that *CNN* never took into account the specificity of the Spanish-speaking target groups: the news items in the Spanish editions were first and foremost translations, rather than texts specifically conceived or targeted for native readers of Spanish [...] There was some inconsistency in the degree of sensitivity translators showed towards the audience (p. 265)

Valdeón suggests that the reason behind such variation in sensitivity is that the English ST was already written by Latin-Americans. Schäffner (2012, pp. 870-871) refers to Valdeón's work by suggesting that since his analysis is "predominantly text-based, his reflection about reasons for the translation strategies are at best hypotheses".

In general, works that pertain to text-based news translation do not show much interest in the labels used to designate news translation. Hence, they do not tend to problematise the concept of translation. The interest of the researchers in most cases is not the theory of translation but its applications. They sometimes rely on traditional approaches (such as the 'equivalence' model) to translation, as well as more recent ones such as CDA. Holland (2006) compares STs and TTs, employing some analysis techniques of CDA. In his case study, Holland analyses a speech delivered in Indonesian by the President of Indonesia. He compares the Indonesian speech with its English translations as they were published in Anglo-American media outlets such as the *BBC* online website, the print version of *The Guardian*, and the *CNN* voiceover. He illustrates the discrepancies between the original speech and its translations and attributes the existence of these discrepancies to the endemic disposition of translation to meet the different needs of the receivers. As his analysis tool was CDA, he aspires to show that his work "serve[s] to establish '[Re]Statements in English' as a potentially useful focus for research in translation and in discourse analysis" (Holland 2006, p. 249). Even though Holland does not problematise the concept of translation, he concludes by suggesting that aforementioned discrepancies "raise fundamental questions about the nature of translational 'equivalence'" (ibid, p. 250). Regardless of the hypothetical conclusions of Valdeón (2005), the marginal reference in Kadhim and Kader (2010), and Holland's (2006) tendency not to problematise translation, the attention that these three pay to the needs of the target audience (which can be related to Chesterman (1998, p. 92) "expectancy norms") shows that even researchers (with interests in text-based analysis) are becoming more aware of the importance of the target medium/locale.

2.3 Intertwined Processes

Over twenty years ago, and as the functionalist approach to translation started acquiring more solid ground, more attention (in text-based research) was paid to contextual elements of translation. Text-based studies of news translation showed more interest in the discussion of the determining factors of the processes involved in news translation. They brought in terms like “transediting” and “gatekeeping” to address factors which are beyond and above the process of mere text transformation yet affect news translation in one way or another. This kind of attention to the contextual elements that affect translation was promising. However, the manner in which labels such as ‘transediting’ and ‘gatekeeping’ have been used to describe forenamed contextual elements was somewhat unsatisfactory, especially in works where the distinctive lines between translating and editing (consequently between the translator and the journalist) became blurry. Examples in this regard are Stetting (1989), Hursti (2001), Valdeón (2005), Cheesman and Nohl (2010), Aktan and Nohl (2010), Chen (2007 & 2011); Van Doorslaer (2009 & 2010), and Van Rooyen (2013). As far as news translation is concerned, “transediting” is perhaps one of the earliest labels coined by Stetting (1989) to address and encompass the aforementioned contextual transformation processes involved in translating news texts. Stetting asserts that a “certain amount of editing has always been included in the translation task” (Stetting 1989, p. 371), and that her emphasis is “on the needs of the translation receivers” (ibid, p. 373). Although Stetting’s article does not address news translation per se (Stetting discusses translation in general), it marks the beginning of TS’s interest in the contextual transmutation processes involved in news translation and news production. She suggests a list of five cases where transediting is practised where only one of them is related to the journalistic genre, namely: “Journalists drawing on material in other languages for writing their own texts” (Stetting 1989, p. 374). Stetting then terms “transediting” “re-writing” and suggests

“Re-writing” takes place at different levels between editing and translating. Journalists often have to draw on material in other languages [...] Here foreign-language competence is often a high priority, because international orientation is a necessity, and journalists will naturally work through a great deal of foreign material in order to process some of the information into articles in their own language. In other cases, articles are bought and simply translated with a relevant amount of editing to suit the new group of receivers, this sometimes being performed by the same person in one process (ibid).

The two quotes above are the only instances where Stetting uses the term “transediting” with reference to news translation. However, they are important to discuss as they mapped the

theoretical framework for transediting which those who wrote on it later followed as a model. Stetting does not mention translators. She refers to journalists, in both instances, as the ones who tackle the task of translating. This is a conclusion that other researchers who adopted transediting as a model reiterated. It is likely that anyone who reads Stetting's article, especially her statement about the needs of the *translation receivers* (Stetting 1989, p. 373), expects her to make a reference to functionalist theories of translation which are essentially target-oriented. However, no such mention is made. Notwithstanding, in Stetting's second quote important points to be highlighted are her mention of the "new group of the receivers", and the fact that editing is tackled in order to meet their needs. As far as news translation is concerned, Stetting's work shows a shift from researching textual elements to TL contextual, societal, and localic ones.

Transediting seems like a widely exercised practice that enhances the invisibility of the translators in the press. Although the practices of translating and editing are separated and done by translators and editors respectively in *Al Jazeera*, for instance, translators' names do not show when the translated news items are published. In some press agencies it has become more of a given that translating and transediting are one, which is an issue that some researchers do not contest or argue, even though Stetting herself distinguishes between the two (Stetting 1989, p. 371). Hemmungs Wirtén (1998) explains that the line between translator and editor is blurred, and that "translators edit and editors translate – and this is what the process of transediting involves" (1998, p. 126). In addition, Van Rooyen (2013, p. 500) claims that "bulletin producers [...] end up editing and translating (transediting) stories before these stories have been edited (and therefore screened and chosen) by the main news desk" (Emphasis is added by Van Rooyen). Valdeón (2008, p. 303) states, at the beginning of his article, that "Journalists may be acting as translators, editors or both rather than as reporters of news events". Van Doorslaer (2009) maintains the same position as he confirms the dominance of transediting in the Dutch-language and the French-language press in Belgium (2009, p. 90). His quantitative data analysis and the methodology of his research, which was mainly tackled by interviewing journalists, cast some shadow on his findings. One expects a researcher who carries out a field study about news translation in a press agency to attempt to interview the translators as well as the journalists; however, Van Doorslaer did not mention that he made such an attempt, he did not justify the

reason why he did not, and he did not mention the non-existence of translators – in case they do not.

On the other hand, Bielsa and Bassnett (2009, pp. 63-64) do not adopt Stetting's "somewhat artificial concept of transediting" and favour using "news translation to point to this particular combination between editing and translating". Bielsa and Bassnett who carried out their research by interviewing "journalists" at *Agence France Presse* (AFP) and *Inter Press Service* (IPS), and by sending online questionnaires to "journalists" at AFP, IPS and *Reuters*, conclude their study by suggesting that news editors – though not formally designated as "translators" – possess the skills needed to produce translations, which is in fact the premise of Stetting's transediting. These two researchers did not interview nor send online questionnaires to translators who work for the press agencies in question and they did not explain why not. Moreover, neither Bielsa and Bassnett nor the other researchers address the question: what do those journalists or editors do when the press coverage is of an event in a language that they do not know? It should be noted that some scholars are aware of the difference between editing and translating. Hursti (2001), who advocates the use of "transediting", gives two different definitions for news translation and editing. For Hursti (2001, p. 2), news translation is "that part of the news production process which involves translating into another language those parts of the original message that are considered newsworthy in the receiving cultural environment", while editing is "that part of the news production process which involves transforming the language or the structure of the original message by using such text-surgical methods as deletion, addition, substitution and reorganization". If seen as a continuum of the processes of localising news items, Hursti's above conclusions seem very interesting.

As text-based news translation research has progressed, it has begun to include contextual elements of news translation. More details with new terms are being used to describe the relevant processes and relate them to those elements. Hursti (2001), whose article's focus is on textual transformations in translating international news from *Reuters* to the *Finnish News Agency*, starts by defining transediting as

the composite term used to refer to work done in the realm of 'practical texts,' such as news items, in which both the processes, editing and translating, are not only very much present but also equally important and closely intertwined (p. 2).

He points out certain linguistic transformations as the essential processes in news production adaptations. He proposes that the processes of addition, deletion, substitution, and reorganisation

are among the main linguistic operations of news transformation which are pursued to meet the contextual, power-relations, sociocultural, and organisational environments in which news translation takes place. Hursti reflects on the text selection criteria and suggests that news items are not only chosen because they “are culturally acceptable but also on whether they are culturally desirable” (ibid, p. 3). He then generalises by suggesting that news selection, transformation and transfer are operations inherent in transediting and that: “Transediting and gatekeeping [are] two faces of the same coin” (ibid). As such the two terms, according to Hursti, are utilised to control the foreign news flow.

Not all works that build on transediting agree with Hursti’s view that transediting and gatekeeping are two faces of the same coin. Other works adopt the concept of transediting but distinguish it from gatekeeping. Vuorinen (1995) is perhaps one of the first researchers to write on news translation using the concept of “gatekeeping” to describe the “process of controlling the flow of information into and through communication channels” (Vuorinen 1995, p. 161). He suggests that gatekeeping operations such as deletion, addition, substitution, or reorganization of translated texts are intended “to produce functionally adequate target texts for a given use” (ibid, p. 170). In their comprehensive analysis (which covered the 2008 US Presidential Elections on the BBC World Service websites, and compared the English ST with its Arabic, Persian, Tamil and Turkish versions), Cheesman and Nohl (2010) differentiate between transediting and gatekeeping. According to them, gatekeeping is an operation that precedes translation. This is an important point. It significantly differentiates their work from that of Hursti where the lines between news selection, transformation and transfer, transediting, and gatekeeping are blurry. Cheesman and Nohl define gatekeeping as referring “to what and in which sequential order things are put into a report” (Cheesman and Nohl 2010, p. 3).

Since gatekeeping for Vuorinen and for Cheesman and Nohl is a multi-tasking device that controls the *selection of news items* and *the information to be reported*, it would have been useful to differentiate between what has been called in this study “in-gatekeeping” (selection of the to-be-translated news items) and “out-gatekeeping” (selection of the information published in the product/translation-mediated news item) (see 5.1.1). An interesting addition by Cheesman and Nohl is their position vis-à-vis transediting as they suggest that it “denotes (semantic) changes within the selected and reorganized text which occur during translation” (ibid). Their

understanding seems more acceptable than considering transediting and translation as the same process. This understanding points out the premise behind Stetting's proffering the term transediting in the first place, which is to highlight that "certain amount of editing has always been included in the translation task" (Stetting 1989, p. 371). The points that Cheesman and Nohl's differentiation highlight are important because they show us that contextual manipulation and power-relations influence the production of news items.

2.4 Patrons/Clients and Power-relations

Most of the works reviewed so far, as well as those which will be reviewed below, confirm the idea of texts being censored in a manner that accommodates the patrons'/clients' purposes (cf the reference to the difference between the expectancy norms of clients and the expectancy norms of the readership that has been made in section 1.5). Slattery et al (2007, p. 538) state that "Historical interpretation is particularly volatile. Texts are regularly castigated and occasionally banned. Historical analysis varies from text-to-text, nation-to-nation [...] This occurs in all countries of the world – including democracies". In news translation and news production this censorship has different names and takes different forms but perhaps similar respective ends.

The practices in press institutions seep into the produced news items that the prospective receivers consume. These products are manufactured by translation and news production processes conducted in the media institutions. The research of Shojaei and Laheghi (2012) was carried out in a totalitarian polity context, namely The Islamic Republic of Iran. They compare samples of English news texts from the *Wall Street Journal* to their counterpart Farsi translations as published in *Jaam-e-Jam* newspaper. Shojaei and Laheghi (2012, p. 2537) note "that Jaam-e-Jam is a Persian government-dependant newspaper obliging its translators and staff work and write in favor of the Iranian government and at the same time against some western and American states"[sic]. In one of its online edition articles, *The Guardian* (September 3, 2012) reports that

When Bahrain's foreign minister, Sheikh Khaled bin Ahmed al-Khalifa, went to Tehran for a summit of the Non-Aligned Movement last week despite tensions with Iran, he did not expect to return home red faced. In translating the speech made by the Egyptian president, Iran's state television simply altered some words, replacing "Syria" with "Bahrain" when Mohamed Morsi was referring to the country in connection with the events sweeping across the Arab world.

The Guardian's quote supports Shojaei and Laheghi's explicit reference to the fact that translators in *Jaam-e-Jam* do not work in a free press context. However, according to the researchers, work organisation and tasks distribution (especially in relation to the selection of the to-be-translated news items and pre-publishing editing processes) is coordinated in a manner that excludes translators from taking part in the abovementioned selection and pre-publishing editing processes (cf Bani 2006 below). Baker (1998, p. 107) states that "individuals and institutions have applied their particular beliefs to the production of certain effects in translation". The examples that Shojaei & Laheghi present and discuss (through textual analysis and CDA's lexicalisation tool) show that intentional changes in the word order of sentences, or even changing the order of sentences in a paragraph sometimes incurred in the translated news items. Shojaei & Laheghi (2012, p. 2539) conclude that "These conscious and purposeful shifts are imposed on the translators by some control factors which may be some governments, political parties or publishers, etc. or even it might be a personal ideology of the person himself". They do not elaborate on the intended influence on the receivers which perhaps lies behind such changes. It is noticeable that the researchers avoid pointing fingers in their conclusions. Even this last quote has evasive expressions with passive voice constructions, notably: "some control factors which may be some governments" (ibid). In totalitarian polities, not only the translation and publication of news items are controlled but also academic research as well.

In her work that employs CDA analyses to study news articles on North Korea from *The Newsweek* and their translations into Korean for the Korean edition *Newsweek Hankuk Pan*, Kang (2007, p. 221) maintains that portions of the original text are "lifted from their original setting, re-perspectivized, differently foregrounded, blended with other voices and relocated in a new setting". She describes news translation as an "instance of entextualisation" (ibid) in which information is selected, reduced, supplemented, reorganized, and transformed. Kang suggests that such translation techniques cause the formation of diverse depictions of North Korea and South Korea which are not to the benefit of North Korea. This manipulation, according to Cheesman and Nohl (2010), is also seen through *BBC World's* attempts to globalise their news stories through adaptation to an assumed "world public". Valdeón (2008), who critically analyses news reports from *BBC World* and their translation in the online *BBC Mundo*, confirms the findings of Cheesman and Nohl. Unlike his 2005 work, Valdeón's 2008 contribution goes

beyond the mere linguistic analysis of the texts. He addresses the power-relations and the ideological motives behind the selection of news items and their translation techniques. Like Cheesman and Nohl, Valdeón maintains that the *BBC World*'s perception of the world is attuned to the target audience. He argues that this attunement "accentuates an ethnocentric view of the world whereby Anglophone news is given prominence at the expense of other more international news" (Valdeón 2008, p. 303). Aktan and Nohl (2010) label this kind of news globalisation "international trans-editing".

Not all the manipulation processes of news translation and news production are manufactured in order to adjust the political ideologies of target public opinion. Bani (2006) extends her research analysis to account for the reactions of the readers whom the Italian newspaper *Internazionale* targets. Despite the fact that she did not analyse the actual reactions of the readership, through their comments for instance, the attention that Bani pays to the receivers' reactions (as an extra-contextual factor that affects news translation and news production) is an involving addition to the research on news translation. Most of the works that tackle news translation mention the target medium as a factor that influences the form and content of the news production but almost none investigate the receivers' reactions. Bani (2006) concludes her article claiming that

One of the most important aims of *Internazionale*, as for any other newspaper, is to be read and to be read with pleasure. The editorial board cannot afford to make translation choices that would complicate the reader's task and in this sense the resulting reading activity must be almost effortless, with the reader comfortably seated in an armchair (p. 44)

The readership in Bani's case represents the receivers of the end product. The product has to please them; therefore, the adaptations done to the translated news items and the produced news items are done in favour of the controlling factor – i.e. the clients. In short, news items, in this case (and in most of the other cases), are products which are subject to the "market" rules of offer and demand – as localisation suggests.

Baker (2006) makes an appealing attempt to explore the power-relations factor in news texts and their translation into other languages. She falls back on narrative theories. Her perspective is that narratives are "public and personal stories that we subscribe to and that guide our behaviour" (Baker 2006, p. 19). She maintains that the larger concept of "framing" implies an active participation in the construction of reality (Baker 2006, p. 106). Baker begins her discussions of the concept of "framing" by discussing the powerful tools (such as selective

appropriation and labelling) that news writers and news translators utilise. Selective appropriation, according to Baker, pertains to the choices made by translators as regards textual material “realized in patterns of omission and addition designed to suppress, accentuate or elaborate particular aspects of a narrative” (ibid, p. 114). She adds that selective appropriation does not only address choosing which information to include while translating and producing the news item and which to drop, but also the setting or the frame in which this information is placed. Therefore, news translations and produced news items utilise naming/labelling besides visual effects (images, caricatures, etc.) to create the intended images in the mind of the prospective readers. Gambier (2006, p. 12) agrees with this disposition in the context of press translation and suggests that reframing processes constitutes “reconstruction of a constructed reality”.

2.5 Institutional Routines

It has been pointed out above that the term transediting portrays the tasks of the translators as part of those of the journalists. Notwithstanding, not all studies assume the same position. Some works which were obviously undertaken without having in mind the hypothesis that translation and transediting are the same or without premeditating that journalists can assume the tasks of the translators, point out that some news agencies or media institutions have a professional and organised manner of tackling news translation in particular. The present research on *Al Jazeera* and the interviews that have been conducted with *Al Jazeera*’s translators support this premise (see 3.1.2-3.1.2.3). Bani (2006) is also a case in point. Bani’s study was carried out in a free press context – the Italian weekly *Internazionale*. According to Bani (2006) – whose research analysis comprises news items translated into Italian – to-be-translated news items are selected with no interference from the translators. She maintains

Once selected, the original text is sent to the translator who works away from the editorial office to create the actual translation [...] Once completed, the translation goes back to the editorial office and is considered a draft revised by several figures. First, an editor who checks the target text against the source text (target translation – source text); secondly, another editor proofreads exclusively the Italian version (translation); thirdly, a copy editor, who takes care of where the translation will be inserted inside the newspaper (translation – translations); finally, the director (translation – translations) (Bani 2006, pp. 40-41).

Bani’s case study highlights that work organisation and task distribution in the Italian weekly *Internazionale* (a free press context) can be similar to the work organisation and task distribution

highlighted by Shojaei and Laheghi (2012) in the Iranian *Jaam-e-Jam* (not a free press context) especially in regard to the selection of the to-be-translated news items and pre-publishing editing processes. Bani explores the techniques used in manipulating the texts and suggests that they include techniques such as reorganizing the text fully, cutting, changing the paragraph structure, altering the syntax according to editorial stylistic norms or inserting explanations where they are believed to be necessary. She suggests that translations are modified by the editorial board “according to the needs of the target medium” (Bani 2006, p. 41).

In his study of the English edition of *El País*, Frías Arnés (2005) (as quoted by Schäffner (2012, p. 873)) comments on the objectives, editorial policy, tasks, work routines and resources in producing the texts. He suggests an institutional organisation of work similar to the one that Bani (2006) mentions. He maintains that professional translators are employed to do some of the translations; journalists in the local office are responsible for editing and revising the texts. Kang (2007) shares Bani’s and Frías Arnés’s findings in regard to how news translation is tackled in press institutions. She refers to translating, revising, and editing as separate processes as she identifies them in her case study (Kang 2007, p. 222). She asserts that translation in news translation is an institutional practice and as such it is subject to institutional conditions and values. Kang denotes the complexity of the procedures that underpin news translation and news production at the Korean edition *Newsweek Hankuk Pan*. She elaborates by claiming that these procedures include news selection by individuals other than translators, translators who translate the selected texts, proofreaders of the translated texts, and top checkers that make decisions vis-à-vis pre-publishing editing (ibid). News translation, according to Kang, is a collective effort and that translation-mediated news items are the “result of the collaborative work of people assuming different roles and engaged in language transfer, cultural adaptation, proofreading, revising, naturalizing, editing and other textual processes that are carried out repeatedly and cyclically” (Kang 2007, p. 238). This is particularly important for this study as the initial research, in which translators from *Al Jazeera* were interviewed, shows similar systematic work.

2.6 Target Orientation/Target “Culture”

It has been mentioned several times above that a kinship to the expectation norms (i.e. target orientation) has been signalled in most of the studies that adopt functionalist approaches (within DTS) to understanding news translation. These approaches account for the target

medium and its norms rather than focussing on STs. Schäffner (2012, p. 874), for instance, maintains that “all studies of news translation (or press translation)” have revealed that the processes involved are very complex and that texts are adapted to suit “the target audience needs and/or the patrons and their agendas”. Target oriented research on news translation generally draws on the hypothesis that there is a target *culture* audience for whose needs the translated news production is designed and transmuted.

Relevant examples are found in Bassnett (2005), and Bielsa and Bassnett (2009). Bassnett (2005) initiates her article by asking to what extent texts should be “acculturated”. Her hypothesis is that news translations should be *acculturated*, not whether *acculturation* is a suitable label for news translation. Bassnett’s work makes use of her own previous germane works that argue for, and other theoretical works that argue for and against the term acculturation. Bassnett compares the process of acculturating news items to the processes of simultaneous interpretation where communication takes precedence over ultimate accuracy or aesthetic values with “the objective to represent that text to a specific audience, on their terms” (Bassnett 2005, p. 124). Such a view of news translation is basically functionalist and expresses an interesting awareness of the needs of the target medium “audience”. While embracing the target *culture* orientation, Bassnett (2005, p. 130) concludes her research by stating: “What we can see, however, is that regardless of terminological distinction, the prevailing norm in news translation is that of acculturation”. As Bassnett (2005) refers to “norms” in her above quote (which brings to mind Toury’s works), it is instructive to reiterate that Toury (unlike perhaps Bassnett) distinguishes between macro-level norms and micro-level ones (see 1.5.1).

In a study carried out in 2009, Bielsa and Bassnett maintain that “Information that passes between cultures through news agencies is not only ‘translated’ in the interlingual sense, it is reshaped, edited, synthesized and transformed for the consumption of a new set of readers” (Bielsa and Bassnett 2009, p. 2). Bielsa and Bassnett list a number of the processes (reshaping, editing, synthesizing, and transforming) which occur in the re-production of translation-mediated news items. It is most likely that by saying “not only translated [...] it is edited, synthesized and transformed” they refer to two main issues: a distinction between the tasks of translators and the tasks of the other staff (such as editors) in a news agency on the one hand, and a continuum of the processes that a translation-mediated news item goes through before it reaches the readership.

In other words, though the final product might not be the direct product of translators, all the above processes are considered part of the localisation of a translation-mediated news item. However, the phrase that has been underlined in the above quote brings to the attention an inherent problematic issue with target-*culture*-oriented research. In general, the target-*culture*-oriented approach to researching news translation (in most of the reviewed works (with the exception of perhaps Orengo's (2005) on "localisation")) overlooks the localic specificities and individual idiosyncrasies and views the "target audience" as one whole homogeneous unit that acts and behaves, and also receives and processes information in the same manner – or at least this is the deduction with which one ends up when one reads such target-oriented works. For instance, Bassnett (2005) states

Another significant issue that deserves closer attention are the differing expectations of readers in different countries. In some contexts, readers expect reports to contain direct speech, so as to convey a greater sense of authenticity. This is a standard British convention, used by both tabloids and broadsheets. Elsewhere in Europe, direct speech would be perceived as dumbing down, and articles are written using reported speech instead [...] We could all think of countless examples once we start comparing reporting styles across cultures (p. 124)

Grouping different audiences of a country as having a *culture*, or the different styles of soft news media with hard news media (as in the above quote) is not uncommon in works that approach translation-mediated news items from a *cultural* perspective. This is perhaps one of the reasons why TS have been trying (for the last 20 years) to move on to the "sociological/social turn" (see the enticing contributions of scholars such as Brisset (1996) "A Sociocritique of Translation: Theatre and Alterity in Quebec, 1968-1988", and Angelelli (2014) "The Sociological Turn in Translation and Interpreting Studies) as they account for, in a more comprehensive manner, aforesaid societal specificities leaving behind the "cultural turn" without denying its contributions to TS. Wolf (2012) suggests that

The "sociological turn" marks paradigmatic changes in reflection on the reasons conditioning a translation process...Placing the discussion of a scientific discipline's shifts of paradigm on a research agenda might be seen both as a sign of its establishment within the scientific community and a stage in the scientific branch's "evolution" [...] A paradigm or "turn" without a doubt reveals a break with traditional views on a certain subject – in the case in question on translation concepts in their widest sense – and the introduction of new perspectives Such perspectives do not necessarily discard longstanding perceptions but take established approaches as a starting point for sketching new horizons and for further developments in a specific area. (p. 130)

Adopting a localisational approach to news translation can be seen as conforming to the paradigmatic change that Wolf mentions above. Recent works on news translation show a kind of awareness concerning the generalisations implied by *cultural* translation or acculturation.

Though her work still views news translation from a target-*culture*-oriented perspective, Davier (2015, p. 536) argues that “concepts of acculturation and cultural translation should be reconsidered because they are not fine-grained enough to discriminate between different degrees of cultural mediation”. It should be noted however that a complete shift to the sociological turn is far from being a reality yet. Recurrent – though frequency does not determine value – references to studying or even teaching translation from a *cultural* perspective in recent publications proves that we (as affiliates of TS) have not moved on yet (see, for example, Davier 2015, Maitland 2015, Ying and Zhao 2015, Morin 2014, Mbotake 2014, Vakunta 2014, González and Mejía 2014, Massey and Ehrensberger-Dow 2013). These publications still rely on the notion of a “large-scale” *culture* that has become deeply oriented in the group-thinking tradition in TS and pedagogical research which aims at bridging what is perceived to be *cultural* gaps among other issues. Authors of such publications may have their own legitimate perspectives; however, it is advocated here (see 2.7.1) that research on news translation, in particular, is more likely to reveal more verifiable results if tackled utilising a localisational approach.

2.7 News Translation as Localisation

By far, the only work that clearly and devotedly associates news translation with localisation is authored by Orengo (2005). Orengo’s leading research question is: “how are global news texts translated and to what extent is the national character of a people reflected in the way international/global news is translated?” (Orengo 2005, p. 169). Orengo carried out his research by investigating news items or news events from around the world translated into Italian through localising methods adopted by the Italian press. He pays special attention to the sociopolitical factors that affect forenamed methods of localisation. Orengo’s samples come from Italian journals that have different political, ideological and economic agendas such as *Libero*, *Il Giornale*, *L’Unità*, *La Repubblica*, *La Stampa*, etc. He adopts a functional approach in his analysis while drawing on localisation perspectives as established by Antony Pym (2004). Orengo explores the global-local dichotomy in news translation and production, and then suggests that

To do this, it is useful to sketch life in a translation agency in the middle of a localisation project, so as to highlight the key processes and difficulties which are common to all environments where information is processed, globalised, localised, translated and redistributed (Orengo 2005, p. 171)

Orengo's reference to tackling research on translation-mediated news items "in the middle of a localisation project" partially instigated carrying out this study while the Arab Spring is still taking place in the Arabic-speaking world and English articles on the Arab Spring are still being written and localised into Arabic. He conducts his comparisons of the "global" texts to its localised counterparts in Italian in order to investigate the way news contents are presented to the readership through localisation. Orengo (2005) suggests that

The way alleged truth is reported is the starting point to gauge how diversifying the news localisation process can be. We buy the newspaper we trust, and such a trust may stem either from the deception that the newspaper we read is unbiased, 'objectively' truthful and complete, or from the more realistic acceptance that that truth meets our comfortable knowledge that the newspaper's biases will be compatible with our opinions (p. 179)

Orengo's insightful findings reveal the multiplicity of the processes of localisation, the orientation of localisation in the target locale, and the influence of the idiosyncratic norms of the locale on the journalistic genre and the influence of the journalistic genre in creating the localic norms while hinting at the marketing factor of localisation.

Orengo's arguments, however, are not entirely intact. He suggests that in the context of world 'cyberspace' "news reports were perhaps among the first textual products – except perhaps sacred texts in the past – to be standardised worldwide in terms of form, structure, codes of practice and operational norms" (Orengo 2005, p. 169). This notion of global standardisation of norms goes against the essential premise of localisation which suggests the existence of diverse norms which are peculiar to certain news outlets and small groups of people. His reference to cyberspace is noteworthy though. The implication of the internet is inherent in the concept of localisation. The influence that the World Wide Web has on creating "virtual locales" is discussed in detail below.

Localisation was initially intended to address the adaptation of (among other things) multimedia, online products, websites and their contents, advertisements, etc. It is generally defined as "the translation and adaptation of a software or web product, which includes the software application itself and all related product documentation" (Esselink 2000, p. 1). Despite the start of localisation in the field of electronics (such as Microsoft), it has gained more solid ground in TS over time and has come to be seen as increasingly important, especially in marketing translations or in using translation to market a product through the cyberspace. Topping (2000) acknowledges that translation is needed to market a product: "no translation, no

product” (Topping 2000, p. 111). News agencies cannot market international news items in languages other than those of the addressed locales without translation. Schäffner (1999) suggests that everything which reaches an audience in some globalised way is filtered, interpreted, and localised. In her 2012 contribution, Schäffner reiterates the same traditional references to localisation in the digital world, then adds that due to the complexities involved in news translation and news production “the very concept of translation is sometimes questioned and replaced by alternative concepts, with localisation being a case in point” (Schäffner 2012, p. 867). Orengo (2005, p. 168) notes that “Due to the peculiar nature of news texts, the adoption of a theory of ‘localisation’ rather than conventional translation theories accounts more easily for both the commercial nature and the global scale of news distribution”. Though this study endorses localisation as a best fit to describe and account for the processes that pertain to translation-mediated news production and reception, it should be noted that the general concepts of “translation” and “localisation” are not regarded as one and the same. In this study, and from a hands-on translation practice perspective, a distinction is made between the communicative function of translation vs. the communicative-plus (the internet role in creating virtual locales, the financial dimension, the agendas behind localisation, the digitisation of the texts, the marketing aspect whereby news is treated like influence-seeking products, etc.) function of localisation. Anthony Pym, whose name is associated with pioneering research on localisation, provides a valuable academic contribution on the present status of localisation in TS. He maintains that

If you look hard, something of localization can be found in the contexts where translations have long been carried out. Here we have little interest in restricting localization only to the realm of the electronic or the postmodern. The foreign news we read in the local press can legitimately be seen as localization of foreign-language texts, at some point transformed by the international agencies, and transformed in ways that go beyond endemic notions of translations. (Pym 2004, p. 4)

The points that Pym raises are very important:

- Localisation is context-oriented,
- Its realm of application goes beyond the adaptation of websites and computer programmes to foreign markets, and extends to interlingual transfer through translating foreign news,
- The processes involved in localising news are more comprising and complex than the mere textual transfer from one language into another since such processes indulge factors that outstrip traditional notions about translation.

This kind of awareness of the parallels between localisation and traditional perceptions of news translation is enticing as it provides an incentive to seek a better understanding of the reasons behind resorting to the techniques of localisation.

As valuable as the academic works of Pym are, they alone do not provide enough insight into the practical uses of localisation. The works of Esselink (2000; 2003), another pioneer in localisation research, view localisation from an empirical perspective. Yet, Esselink's contributions are mostly dedicated to digital programs, documentation requirements in localisation, and translation technology (Esselink 2000). Localisation, as pointed out above, means more than being attentive to the linguistic transfer which is innate in translation practices. It is inherently adaptive, conforming to extra-contextual needs of the locales. Localisers operate within the parameters set by the norms of the locale as explained above. Schäffner (2004, p. 145) notes that translations can be employed within a wider range of strategic functions of political language. Among the functions she identifies are: "coercion", "dissimulation" and "(de)legitimation". Hence, localisation can be employed as part of the coercion strategies when power is exercised through the selectivity of information – "in-gatekeeping" or "out-gatekeeping". The selection process may be highly censored in order to match a particular political agenda. Localisation can also be part of the strategies of dissimulation when decision-makers wish to hold back certain political ideas from the public. In addition, localisation can be used to legitimise or delegitimise particular individuals or political ideas and ideologies by reconceptualising news items in relation to a pre-defined agenda.

Localisation may be envisioned as operating within "fields" (such as economics, politics, media, power relations, etc.), and as dominating certain "fields". Bourdieu (1991, p. 215) defines a "field" as an "autonomous universe, a kind of arena in which people play a game which has certain rules, rules which are different from those of the games that are played in the adjacent space". Fields, from Bourdieu's perspective, are domains of power, force, and struggle which aim to spatiotemporally transmogrify the relations on which a field is founded. In media, for instance, this is evident in news platforms with different political agendas – whether these platforms operate within the same polity (as in the case of Italian newspapers discussed by Orenco (2005)) or in two different polities as in the case of *Al Jazeera* (Qatari-owned) and *Al Arabiya* (Saudi-owned) (see 1.6). The struggle within a field can take place for different reasons

but for almost the same target, namely obtaining capital of the field – be it a symbolic capital, political capital, economic capital, social capital, etc. (Bourdieu 1991). Isabella Fairclough (2008) suggests that

particular textual features of translated texts [localised news items]¹² have to be related to the wider social, political, cultural context of their production and reception, and the various choices that were made by the translator [localiser]¹³ can be interpreted (at least tentatively) in terms of the wider goals and strategies pursued by agents in the cultural and political field, and in terms of the norms and constraints operating in these fields (p. 68)

Within this context, CDA gives a better understanding of this struggle amongst agents when they utilise translation/localisation to inflict targeted sociopolitical change. In order to inflict such change, agency may resort to adopting market concepts. Orengo (2005, p. 170) suggests that “As ‘global’ as facts and their report can be, they necessarily have to be ‘localised’ to come to terms with the national and political sensitivities of a people while meeting market requirements”. Hence, a localiser cannot ignore norms and other factors such as recipients’ perceptions of their locale (Heilbron, et al 2007, p. 93). These perceptions are integrated when adapting news items so as to comply with the expectations of a specific target locale – with all its, social, political, and ethical considerations (Basalamah 2001), and/or regulatory institutional routines.

Extra-contextual socio-economic factors play an important role in motivating localisation practices. Norman Fairclough (1993) observes that the relationship between discourse and society is intermediated through the manner in which discourse associates ideology with texts and that this intermediation is sometimes undertaken through the “marketization” of “public discourse” (Fairclough 1993, p. 134). Marketisation can be understood as referring to both the symbolic market of power relations or to the actual market where the economic concepts of “demand” and “offer” apply particularly in the circulation of news items when the audience needs are taken into consideration. Localisation sheds light on both understandings. Orengo (2005) states that

If [...] we look at news not just as an information service but also as a global product [...] as well as by increasing global and mass marketing dynamics [...] we can see that news needs to be translated especially in order to be sold. This implies that translation has a role, which goes far beyond that of enabling communication, namely enhancing marketability. In this sense, one of today’s most heated issues is the presumption and working hypothesis that translation has a fundamental role in expanding news markets (p. 175)

¹² Emphasis added by the author of this dissertation.

¹³ Emphasis added by the author of this dissertation.

Marketing principles, then, are inherent in news items localisation. News items producers are so mindful of these principles that they tend to adjust the norms of news translation and news production in accordance with the rules of the market that apply in certain locales (see Bani 2006). Therefore, Orengo (2005, p. 178) maintains that “We can look, for instance, at news agencies as information retailers”.

Extra-contextual factors such as sociopolitical transformations cause a shift in translators’ and translations’ statuses – as suggested by the PS theory and the Norms Theory. Schäffner (2004, p. 140) observes that “At times of social change, translations may thus move from the periphery to the centre of a socio-cultural system” (see also Toury 1995, p. 28). A perspective of localisation that puts the combination of the status of translation and the agendas of the benefactors of news outlets in their context of seeking specific sociopolitical change at times of sociopolitical instability may highlight the fact that using localisation goes sometimes beyond the simple transfer of information. This perspective makes the social unrest of the Arab Spring an alluring case study of localisation whereby the information included in localised texts can be used to further patrons’ agendas and address certain locales but not others.

2.7.1 Why Localisation not Acculturation?

To conclude this review of literature, it is important to highlight and justify this study’s stance with regard to which term better encompasses the processes involved in translating, reproducing, and delivering news items. It is proffered in this study that the large-scale perceptions associated with the concept and expression of “culture” be reconsidered and replaced with the small-scale concept and expression of “locale” as far as the research on news translation is concerned. In other words, attenuating the macro-level references connoted by using the expression “target culture” and accentuating the micro-level variables denoted by using the expression “target locale”. The premise here is that the term *culture*, as used in reference to a collection and/or homogeneity of principles that bring together entire nations with diverse and inhomogeneous populations of hundreds of millions, misrepresents the target orientation of abovementioned research because it assumes the existence of such macro homogeneity amongst large volumes of, for instance, Anglophone or Arabophone populations that can respectively stretch across continents as distant as Australia and North America or Asia and Africa or countries as far apart as Oman and Morocco. Space limitations does not allow for an account of

the numerous definitions of *culture* and the fields of knowledge that use these definitions as a springboard for their premises. Spencer-Oatey (2010, p.1) suggests that

Culture is a notoriously difficult term to define. In 1952, the American anthropologists, Kroeber and Kluckhohn, critically reviewed concepts and definitions of culture, and compiled a list of 164 different definitions. Apte (1994: 2001), writing in the ten-volume *Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics*, summarized the problem as follows: ‘Despite a century of efforts to define culture adequately, there was in the early 1990s no agreement among anthropologists regarding its nature.’

What complicates matters even more is the fact that the term *culture* is pervasively used nowadays to refer to several ideas, groups, or issues. So we have: pop culture, consumer culture, military culture, culture wars, the culture of free, startup culture, cultures of violence, cultures of silence, drug culture, surf culture, high culture, teenage culture, culture shocks, police culture, the National Football League’s culture, media culture, hookup culture (Steinmitz 2014), culture of transparency, culture of accountability, celebrity culture, rape culture (Rothman 2014) and the oxymoron multicultures culture.

In TS, the majority of the functional target-based research is founded on the premise that target *cultures* have large-scale homogenous elements. German translation scholar and founder of the Skopos theory Hans Vermeer (1989, p. 9) defines culture as “the totality of norms, conventions and opinions which determine the behaviour of the members of a society, and all results of this behaviour (such as architecture, university institutions, etc.)” (quoted in Snell-Hornby 2006, p. 55). Generic terms like “entire”, “all”, and “totality” undermine the use of the construct of *culture* in studying news translation (cf Bassnett 2005). The large-scale homogeneity notions behind the concept of *culture* are mostly “imagined” (Anderson 1991) and/or “illusional” (Bayart 2005) as we will discuss in the following segments of this section. This is a very important issue in the research on translation-mediated news items that is often overlooked in TS – with few exceptions. It is suggested in this work that this concept and expression might be better replaced with the concept and expression of locale that accounts for distinctive traits which divide larger groups of people and affect at a finer small-scale level their societal actions without denying the fact that locales sometimes share *cultures* their tenets. However, localisation (as it is derived from locale) goes beyond these tenets to argue that societal actions can be instigated by small-scale or individual interests that cause locales to simply ignore imagined unifying tenets of *cultures*. Following is a review of the essential tenets (language, ethnicity, ideologies (religious, political, ethical, etc.), territorial borders, etc.) that

constitute the construct of *culture* with basic discussions that explain why it is significant to consider said small-scale or individual interests:

1. Language has always been at the core of *cultural* identities (Everett 2012, Millar 2005, Bernabah 2004, Jiang 1999, Djite 1992, Cooper 1989, Al-Husari 1985, Gallagher 1966). Al-Husari¹⁴ argues:

Every person who speaks Arabic is an Arab. Every individual associated with an Arabic-speaker or with an Arabic-speaking people is an Arab [...] under no circumstances should we say: "As long as he does not wish to be an Arab, and as long as he is disdainful of his Arabness, then he is not an Arab." He is an Arab regardless of his own wishes [...] but an Arab without consciousness or feelings, and perhaps even without conscience (Al-Husari 1985, p. 80)

However, individuals who speak a specific language do not necessarily have homogenous beliefs as the above quote implies. Language oversteps large group-defining norms. English, French, Spanish, and Arabic are cases in point. Besides, accents, dialects and vernaculars have always been used to divide populations into classes and different ethnicities. For instance, on April 2, 2008, Egyptian Arabic vernacular Wikipedia (which is different from Standard Arabic Wikipedia) was inaugurated. Those who contribute to it are mostly Coptic Egyptians who insist on ethnically distinguishing themselves (through defiantly using Egyptian Arabic vernacular) from what they call Muslim Egyptians of the Arab ethnicity who uses Standard Arabic in their writing (cf Haeri 2003). In addition, and throughout history, polities who spoke the same language were engaged in wars. Even populations (who share the same language) within the same polities were engaged in civil wars. In fact the zeal to seek a unified language, which is believed to create a *cultural* identity and establish political stability, resulted in political turmoil and counter reactions that sought to preserve ethnic, linguistic and/or localic identities. Cases in point are the Kurds in Turkey, Iraq, and Iran; Coptic Egyptians in Egypt, the Berbers in North Africa; and the Francophones in Canada. Ironically, a polity such as USA which does not have an official/national language is more politically stable than polities such as Libya, Syria, Yemen, and Egypt (all countries where the Arab Spring took place) which have one – namely Arabic. In this regard, the success stories, if any, are the exceptions that prove the rule.

¹⁴ Sati' Al-Husari ساطع الحصري (1880-1968) is a Syrian secular writer and the spiritual father of linguistic Arab nationalism. He "Developed a theory of Arab nationalism based on common language and history, rather than race, religion, will, economic circumstances, or geography. His works on education and nationalism are popular with Baathists and Nasserists" (Sati' Al-Husari, Oxford Islamic Studies Online).

2. Ideology is another element that is used to identify a *culture* (Snell-Hornby 2006, Spolsky 2004, Le Sueur 2001, Ricento 2000, Verdery 1991, Roberts 1997, Aflaq 1959). Even though the usage of *Western Media* (as a homogenous *cultural* entity) is common in specifically the literature on news translation, a review of Canadian (Tasko 2003) and French (Nikolaev and Hakanen 2006) press items and opinion articles (before, during and after the 2003 invasion of Iraq, for instance) show the wide gap that separates the ideologies of Canadian and French press from those circulated in American media. Nikolaev and Hakanen (2006, p. 130) maintain: “Reflecting the population’s attitude and the government stance, The French press at large was not in favor of another Iraq war” (see also Dimitrova and Strömbäck 2005 as they compare US press to Swedish press vis-à-vis their coverage of the 2003 invasion of Iraq). As far as the Arabic-speaking world is concerned, Arab nationalism or Arabism has been a polarising ideology since WWII with devastating predicaments. Michel Aflaq¹⁵, a disciple of Sati’ Al-Husari, maintains that those who do not believe in Arabism

must be imbued with a hatred unto death, toward any individuals who embody an idea contrary to Arab nationalism. Arab nationalists must never dismiss opponents of Arabism as mere individuals [...] An idea that is opposed to ours does not emerge out of nothing! It is the incarnation of individuals who must be exterminated, so that their idea might in turn be also exterminated. (Aflaq 1959, pp. 40-41)

A review of the former and current situations in polities such as Iraq and Syria whose regimes foisted this totalitarian ideology can provide illustrative examples of how ideology can seed heterogeneity rather than cultural homogeneity.

3. Faith has always been used to bring people together as coreligionists (Foucault 2013, Scribner 2001, Hovannisian & Sabagh 1999, McEachern & Shuger 1997, Ballard 1996b). Faith inherently oversteps large group-norms. It is also a historical fact that groups of people of the same faith have been engaging in wars since the existence of religion – several times because of religion. Cases in point are the history of Europe and the history of the Middle East. By the end of the age of religious wars among Roman Catholics and Protestants from the 16th to the 18th century, Europe found itself in a period of religious division into different creeds (Doyle 1986, p. 151). Al Kadhi (2009, p. 19) suggests that after that period “The religious division took place in almost every sense” to the point that Europe “developed

¹⁵ Michel Aflaq ميشيل عفلق (1910-89) is a Syrian secular political leader, thinker, and founder of حزب البعث العربي الاشتراكي (the Arab Ba’ath (renaissance) Socialist Party) and a promoter of Arab nationalism (Michel Aflaq, Encyclopaedia Britannica). Among his Ba’athist acolytes are Saddam Hussein of Iraq, and Bashar Assad of Syria.

diverging values”. Nowadays, some researchers from a variety of research domains suggest the existence of ideological differences (that have roots which can be traced to said period of religious wars) between European populations within Europe or populations of European origins that migrated to US or Australia (Randell-Moon 2006, p. 3, Feldt et al 2007, Sullins 1999). In addition, the Christian faith did not assist in stopping World War I and World War II, nor the Irish conflict between Protestants and Catholics. The history of the Middle East teems with religious conflicts. Perhaps the most notorious is the war that erupted about forty years after Prophet Mohammad’s death (about 1400 years ago) between the forth Caliph Ali and his rival Muawiyah. The consequences of that war are still being felt today as they divide the Muslim world between Sunnis and Shiites and still have a bearing on the relationships of regional states such as Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Iran. Furthermore, the Arab Spring ramifications brought forth sub-sectarian wars within the same radical groups that claim to embrace the same Islamic sect. In Syria, fighting Islamist fractions such as Jabhatul Nusra (the support front) (self-proclaimed as a Sunni sect) that declared allegiance to Al Qaeda on the one hand, and ISIS (also self-proclaimed as a Sunni sect) on the other are engaged in a war against each other.

4. The association between a *culture* and the borders of a polity has dominated the discourse in anthropology (Chang 1999, Erickson, 1997; Ewing, 1998; Goodenough, 1981; Lugo, 1997; Wax, 1993). Chang (1999) suggests:

Cultural border and boundary often connote the border and boundary of a nation, a state or a tribal community, which are clearly identifiable markers [...] The assumption is that as long as two distinct societies remain separate from each other, their boundaries exist and cultural distinctiveness is expected. (no page number)

However, territorial borders have been changing since the existence of the notion of polities. Once again, cases in point are Europe and the Middle East. Latvia, Lithuania, and Ukraine were part of the former Soviet Union, and now they are independent polities. In MENA, Yemen was two separate states (North Yemen and South Yemen) until 1990. The newly-born State of South Sudan (became independent from Sudan on July 9, 2011) offers another good example.

5. Ethnicity is often discussed as an element of *cultural* unity (Spencer 2014, James 2010, May 2001, Shryock 1997, Ballard 1996a, Barth 1969). Despite the fact that in our modern times speaking publicly of ethnic distinction or superiority is becoming more and more a taboo, the

premise of this *culture* tenet draws on the conception that people of the same ethnicity (Caucasians for instance) have bounding ties that rest on the fact that they are genealogically related. Ethnicity is challenged for the very same reasons as those given above. Ethnicity, as a *culture* tenet, is probably one good example on blurring the lines between conception and reality. To explain this point, it may be useful to recall the issue of Brexit (Britain's decision to exit the European Union (EU) after the June 2016 referendum) as an illustrative example. Some members of the British political elite (such as Nigel Farage¹⁶ and Boris Johnson¹⁷) endorsed Brexit for their own political and ideological agendas. They made suggestive remarks against non-Caucasian British immigrants, and explicit ones for the idea that the Brexit vote will bring back Britain to the British people while standing behind the slogan “Take Back Our Country” – adopting a Trumpification (from Donald Trump who holds the same slogan) technique of British politics (Porter 2016).



Image 9. Nigel Farage promoting an anti-refugees poster during the Brexit campaign
(Image labeled for reuse with modification by Google Images)

However, the Brexit issue was discussed in an episode titled “Open or Closed to the World?” on a *TV Ontario’s* (TVO) *The Agenda* with Steve Paikin, which hosted Michael Coren¹⁸. While contesting the idea that there was conformity between the reasons of aforesaid

¹⁶ Leader of The UK Independence Party.

¹⁷ Former British Conservative MP and current Minister of Foreign Affairs.

¹⁸ British-Canadian author, radio personality, columnist, speaker, and best-selling author of fourteen books, including biographies of G. K. Chesterton, H. G. Wells, Arthur Conan Doyle, J. R. R. Tolkien and C. S. Lewis.

British politicians on the one hand, and the British people on the other for voting “yes” to exiting the EU, Michael Coren says:

Let’s talk about Brexit [...] this is a colossal misreading by the establishment [...] I’m not gonna call them the.. chardonnay sipping establishment, but people in London whether they were major party leaders, or Benedict Cumberbatch¹⁹, or J. K. Rowling²⁰, or even David Beckham²¹ [...] and also people outside of London and London is a separate country, London is not Britain [...] London is a separate entity, London is so different: the pulse, the vibe, the pace of London is profoundly different [...] and the assumptions..the cultural assumptions. A lot of the other towns irrespective of the ethnicity of the people – by the way – it’s illusory to think that it was only white working class people..a lot of people..brown, black said we don’t want to be told what to think and have to feel any longer [...] They simply believe that the country they had grown up with is changing radically. And here’s an important point to make because I heard lots of people say “Well, it was racism”. In a way, it may have been. But it wasn’t racism against people from the former British Empire or Commonwealth. It was people from Poland and Romania. Good fine people, but coming in to Britain and transforming the nature and the employment force of the country [sic]. (The Agenda with Steve Paikin: Open or Closed to the World?, 2016)

Coren makes several significant points. Whereas he does not deny that some British voters who voted “yes” for exiting the EU have racist conceptualisations of “Sameness”, Coren suggests that yes-voters were perhaps motivated by different reasons. The end result is the same (i.e. exiting the EU) but the important thing to understand is that even if the collective action was taken by a considerable group of people, heterogeneity can still exist amongst them to an extent that undermines the homogeneity principle of large-scale *culture*. In the 42nd Canadian federal election held on October 19, 2015, which the Conservative Party lost to the Liberal Party of Canada, the expression “strategic voting” was widely circulated by analysts of the election results. This expression has been used to refer to the idea that some of the New Democratic Party (NDP) and the Green Party voters (who were weary of the incumbent Conservative Party of Canada of Prime Minister Stephen Harper) voted for the Liberals though they were not Liberal voters in a strategic move to prevent the Conservatives from winning the election (Breguet 2015, Andrew-Gee 2015). Anti-Conservative voters backed the Liberals, hence eliminating vote-splitting amongst Liberal voters, NDP voters, and the Green Party voters. One can say that the Liberals did not win the election as much as the Conservatives lost it. Strategic voting provides

¹⁹ A British cinema star who supported staying in the EU.

²⁰ A British novelist who is best known as the author of the Harry Potter fantasy series. An articulate critic of leaving the EU move and the leaders behind it, Rowling says “it is nonsensical to pretend that racists and bigots aren’t flocking to the ‘Leave’ cause, or that they aren’t, in some instances, directing it [...] The picture of Nigel Farage standing in front of a poster showing a winding line of Syrian refugees captioned ‘Breaking Point’ is [...] an almost exact duplicate of propaganda used by the Nazis” (Osborne 2016).

²¹ A British football player who supported staying in the EU.

another example on the fact that collective action does not necessarily mean large-scale cultural ethnic homogeneity.

Coren hints at the fact that inner-ethnicity divisions sharply presented themselves during the Brexit campaign (as much as they did during strategic voting), and that the idea that large-scale cultural homogeneity through ethnicity is perhaps apocryphal. He cites the names of white British celebrities (Benedict Cumberbatch, J. K. Rowling, and David Beckham) who voted for staying in the EU to defy the misconception that the majority of white British people voted for exiting the EU out of mere ethnic motivations. He also refers to the fragile grounds which underlay the ethnic-based voting to exit the EU by stating that “brown” and “black” British people voted to leave the EU as well. Coren proposes that there are reasons other than ethnic distinctions which can cause people to make a collective decision. In the Brexit case, these reasons can mostly be attributed to cross-ethnic considerations such as the competition over the labour market that British workers (regardless of their ethnicity) were facing from white workers from “Poland and Romania”. Therefore, cross-ethnic subjective conceptualisation of the ego’s well-being takes precedence over other considerations when well-being is threatened.

Another significant point that Coren makes is his reference to London being “a separate entity” and “so different” with its specific “pulse”, “vibe”, “pace” and “cultural assumptions”. Such a reference flows right into the discussions intended to justify substituting *culture* with locale – hence localisation instead of acculturation. In so many ways, Coren provides a description of what distinguishes locales from each other within the same polity. Though describing locales as separate entities may be a stretch, the way that Coren describes London paves the way for considering it a locale which is adjacent to other locales whose people’s interests are more likely to diverge and possibly intersect at the same time. It is highly possible that the distinctive characteristics that Coren attributes to London can be attributed to other cities or smaller groups of people (which are not necessarily bound by geographical borders) within or outside a polity. By analogy other cities or groups of people around the world can be seen from this perspective – take New York City as an example (Pecorella and Stonecash 2006, p. 3). Groups (large or small) of people, i.e. locales, regardless of their ethnicities can exist anywhere and hence we have “ideological virtual locales” due to the influence of the World Wide Web which facilitates communication and the exchange of ideas through public internet spheres such

as social media outlets (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube), or blogs, or web-based news outlets and their comments sections, etc.

The aim of the above review of the tenets of *culture* is neither to deny the existence of these tenets (at a small-scale such as a locale) nor to quell the scholarly affinity that some researchers harbour for the expression *culture*. It is to specifically argue that the large-scale implications of the concept and expression of *culture* lead sometimes to conjectural results that build on either preconceived stereotypes about certain faiths (cf. Marranci 2006; Manji 2003), ethnicities and political stances (cf. Skidelsky 2011; Whitaker 2009), or on a utopian view of human nature (Nevins 2010). Concordantly, it is suggested that localisation should perhaps replace acculturation – at least as far as this case study on news translation in *Al Jazeera* on the Arab Spring in the Arabic-speaking world is concerned. The Arab Spring is an engaging case study of localisation because it challenges the above tenets of large-scale cultural homogenous grouping. Once considered unified populations (such as those of Egypt, Libya, Syria, and Yemen) by forenamed cultural tenets have been engaged (since 2011) in internal conflicts and/or civil wars that have sharply polarised them (and perhaps the rest of MENA) into political groups, religious sects, religious sub-sects, ethnic tribes, townships, cities, etc. It should not come as a surprise that these fragmented small groups still identify in accordance with the tenets of *culture*. The similarity between the dogmas of small groups of people/locales and large-scale *cultures* is not fortuitous – especially if we consider the roots of the words acculturation and localisation. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary Online lists “a small group of very devoted supporters or fans” as one of the meanings of *cult*. The etymology of the word *cult* shows that it shares its “origin with culture [...] from the Latin “cultus” meaning “adoration” – among others (Merriam-Webster Dictionary Online). On the other hand, the term “localisation” is derived from the term “locale” which traditionally means a “small area or vicinity” (Esselink 2000, p. 1). Normally, but not always, such small areas or vicinities contain small groups of people with their distinctive norms. The multiple types of *culture* mentioned above further this idea. This is an important aspect of localisation. However, it is illustrative to note that the small-scale reference which has been identified as a tenet of the locale concept is not entirely new to the domain of TS, let alone other fields of knowledge, but it is surely not widely recognised. A case in point is the concept of “microculture” in some works on translation (Dejardins 2014, Conway 2015a, Conway 2015b),

on education (Göpferich 2007), on anthropology (McCurdy 2006), and on pedagogy (Lalueza, et al 2008):

- Desjardins (2014, p.146) claims that “smaller micro-cultures” represent groups of people that “do not generally have a “voice” in the larger mass media institutions responsible for so many of the detrimental stereotypes of “Otherness””.
- Göpferich (2007, p. 34) uses the education factor to draw the lines between different microcultures by suggesting that “the adaptation of information for specialists to the needs of laypersons can be considered an intercultural transfer, because specialists and laypersons represent different microcultures”.
- McCurdy (2006, p. 6) tosses an inviting hint to the institutional routines – let alone the economic interests – as small-scale constituting factors when he suggests that “companies have cultures of their own [...] companies are normally divided into subgroups, each with its own microculture” – as it is the case with *Al Jazeera*.
- Lalueza et al (2008) associate the notion of microculture to ethnic groups (in their case study: “gypsy students and their instructors”) in a certain context of learning in a classroom.

Therefore, two points should be stressed/reiterated at this juncture. First, the functionalist principles of target orientation are not being contested but rather the magnitude of the representations associated with the expression *culture*. Snell-Hornby (2006, p. 49) claims that “With “culture” Toury is implying the entire social context involved in the translation, along with the norms, conventions, ideology and values of that society or ‘receptor system’”. Toury (1998), however, maintains that:

there is *variation within a culture*²². Whether within one (sub)system or between the various (sub)systems regarded as building up one higher-order entity, it is not rare to find side by side three types of competing norms, each having its own followers and a position of its own. (pp. 28-29)

Toury is clearly and significantly indicating that there are micro-levels (which are referred to here as locales) of community structures, within the macro-level entities of perhaps polities, with their own norms and norms-practitioners. Second, the idea behind preferring localisation to acculturation is not related to that *culture* has a bad connotation and localisation has a good one. Localisation and acculturation have recourse to almost all the elements of *culture* and perhaps

²² Italicised by Toury.

encounter the same challenges – one may argue: how many individuals constitute a *culture/locale*? From a localisation perspective, the members' number of a news outlet locale is perhaps more identifiable. News outlets which circulate its news to a certain locale through printed newspapers can reckon the number of its immediate locale through sold copies. Web-based news outlets use accurate softwares to count the number of visits that their websites receive and even how many visits a certain news item receive (i.e. how many readers read a certain news item); accordingly, the number of the members of their immediate locales can be duly counted (see 3.2.3.2).

Furthermore, and contrary to the notion of acculturation, localisation implies addressing different locales (with sub-group-defining norms) within one polity (we can see such defining behaviour amongst sports fans, or election voters), or different virtual locales which are not encompassed by geographical borders – internet virtual locales being case in point. Virtual locales can be traced back to the expression “virtual communities” which are defined as “social aggregations that emerge from the net when enough people carry on [...] public discussions long enough, with sufficient human feeling, to form webs of personal relationships in cyberspace” (Rheingold 1993, p. 5). Rheingold, who is an Internet research pioneer, also notes, that the individuals of online communities:

exchange pleasantries and argue, engage in intellectual discourse, conduct commerce, exchange knowledge, share emotional support, make plans, brainstorm, gossip, feud, fall in love, find friends and lose them, play games, flirt, create a little high art and a lot of idle talk. (1993, p. 3)

In our case, many of these exchanges can be seen to happen in the news outlets' comment sections. News items summon the readership's knowledge and sometimes aim at polarising it. Readership's knowledge is normally focused on and around the distinctiveness and peculiarity of the event, and the agents' role as well as their accountability in highlighting such distinctiveness in the news item. News outlets that circulate news through the cyberspace (as a virtual-locale-creating phenomenon) do not restrictively address groups of people which are bounded by geographical limitations. Kozinets (2010) maintains that

Social scientists are increasingly reaching the conclusion that they can no longer adequately understand many of the most important facets of social and cultural life without incorporating the Internet and computer-mediated communications into their studies. Is there a useful distinction between online social life and the social worlds of 'real life'? Increasingly, it seems like the answer is no. The two have blended into one world: the world of real life, as people live it. It is a world that includes the use of technology to communicate, to commune, to socialize, to express, and to understand (p. 2)

It can be argued then that cyberspace blurred the sociological lines between dynamic and static locales. Virtual locales provide a portal-site into the realms of experience whereby agents (the localisers and the readership) express the way they (as members of a certain locale) perceive a specific event and confer their individual interpretation onto these perceptions. In virtual locales agents interact and influence each other. News outlets are subject to the agendas of their benefactors or whoever runs them; therefore, it is not necessarily the case that any of them has standardised macro-norms that unite them even if they share the same language, ethnicity, faith, or belong to a certain sect of a certain faith. Humans tend to exhibit the same kind of non-standardised behaviour. Diverse desires and beliefs may cluster within a human being. *Diverse* and *cluster* are keywords. A certain desire or belief (an interest) will come to the surface and prioritise a specific human behaviour in reaction to elements that rest inside and outside the human being, e.g. a specific spatiotemporal sociopolitical activity or event. Consequently, it is not rare to see that agents align themselves with the interests of more than one virtual locale. Borrowing the image of the Olympic Games symbol which is composed of five intersecting rings with different/diverse colours representing the five continents of the world and their countries, locales can be seen as circles which comprise groups with special interests that can intersect for a short period of time because of a specific event (as in the examples of Brexit, strategic voting, or even the US 2016 presidential election version of strategic voting namely “protest voting” that made the Democratic Party candidate lose the elections) and they can be extremely divergent as in the case of the Arab Spring.

The sociopolitical event of the Arab Spring provides numerous examples on that the Arabic-speaking world is especially vulnerable to such divergence of ideologies and interests that demarcate its germane locales (whether static or dynamic/virtual) and prompt news agencies, such as *Al Jazeera*, to localise web-based translation-mediated news items to meet the needs of their locales’ constituencies. *Al Arabiya* news outlet (Arabic) and *Al Jazeera* news outlet (Arabic) still label, for instance, the Egyptian military intervention of July 3, 2013 as “deposition” and “coup d’état” respectively. Hence, each one of the above news outlets addresses a different locale of Egyptians within or outside Egypt. *Al Arabiya* addresses the locale which is *for* the military intervention, whereas *Al Jazeera* addresses the locale which is *against* the military intervention, i.e. they address different readership perceptions of the military

intervention. These perceptions align readerships (which are generally Egyptians as the event in question is an Egyptian subject-matter) into locales of groups of people that identify themselves as Egyptians, speak Egyptian Arabic, and most probably Sunni Muslims. This is an important feature of localisation and its localic perception that distinguishes it from the research that adopts a cultural one. If localic differences can manifest themselves so sharply, then the impact of these differences on news translation should be studied rather than the impact of cultural homogeneity.

The rift between *Al Arabiya* and *Al Jazeera* (whose benefactors are the governments of Saudi Arabia and Qatar respectively) is a reflection of the sociopolitical differences amongst the rulers and the peoples of the two countries which culminated in the withdrawal of the Saudi ambassador from Qatar on March 5, 2014 due to (among other reasons) “providing support for anti-Saudi [...] media and transforming other Qatari [media] forums into anti-Saudi platforms²³” (Al Arabiya March 6, 2014). On August 27, 2013, *Al Jazeera* published an article in which it quoted *The Wall Street Journal* as reporting that Prince Bandar bin Sultan, a veteran Saudi ambassador to Washington, had said at a meeting on the summer of 2012 that Qatar “is nothing more than 300 people [...] and a TV channel [...] not a country”. The “TV channel” in question is Doha-based pan-Arab satellite network *Al Jazeera*. This Saudi superiority attitude towards Qataris is also expressed by Saudi laymen. During a visit to Qatar, a Saudi friend kept on dismissively referring to Qataris as “liptons”. He explained that Saudis refer to Qataris as “lipton” because their “agals²⁴” have laces that fall down their backs like the thread of the tea bag brand “Lipton” – Saudis’ agals do not have such laces. Images²⁵ 9 and 10 show the difference between Qatari agals (Image 10) and Saudi agals (Image 11). Salman (2008) remarks that localic discrimination based on attire is present in other parts of the Arabic-speaking world:

in the rest of the Arab world where agals are worn, the color, thickness, material, intricacy of design and number of layers – one band around the head or four, for instance – reveal one’s region and class [...] Although agals are a symbol of tradition, wearers are convinced they suffer discrimination in cities at the hands of urban sophisticates who view agal wearers as country bumpkins.

On a different occasion when the Saudi friend’s car battery died, he proudly refused to ask a Qatari for battery jumper cables and preferred to request them from a Sudanese expatriate.

²³ Translated by the author of this dissertation.

²⁴ Plural noun form from Arabic: عقال (a “bond” or “rope”), also spelled iqal, egal or igal. It is a black doubled circlets rope-like accessory worn usually on the head by Arab men in the Gulf, Iraq, Syria, Palestine, Jordan and the Arab tribes of the Sinai Peninsula.

²⁵ Both images were taken by the author of this dissertation during visits to Qatar and Saudi Arabia.

During a visit to Saudi Arabia, other Saudis were asked about the agal issue. The question was met with affirmative laughters. Some Saudis elaborated by pejoratively describing native Qataris as “half Iranians” and “half Indians”. Their justification was that Iranians crossed the Gulf to Qatar from Iran by boats for decades and settled there, and that Indians came with the British army (when Qatar was a British protectorate) then they were left there and later settled in Qatar.



Image 10. Qatari agals



Image 11. Saudi agals

It is worth noting that Saudi Arabia and Qatar are both members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (henceforth GCC)²⁶, the majority indigenous peoples of both countries are Sunni-Muslim Arabs, the official language of both countries is Arabic, and the ruling system is monarchical. Yet, they *resist* being identified as the same and tend to distinguish themselves (in an illustrative example of the localic construct of the “Same” and the “Other”) from each other by signifiers which are hardly noticeable to a foreigner or perhaps an acculturalist. Pym suggests

²⁶ GCC is a political and economic alliance of six Middle Eastern countries-Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, UAE, Qatar, Bahrain, and Oman which have shores along the body of water known as The Gulf, the Arab Gulf, or the Persian Gulf. The GCC was established in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, in May 1981.

that “the concept of “locale” thus becomes fundamentally empirical: locales do not exist until they show themselves by resisting some process of distribution” (Pym 2004, p. 22). Locales in the Arabic-speaking world can be portrayed as having a concentric zone model of power relations with *fields of interests* that pertain to economy, superiority, control, power, influence etc. at the most inner circle representing the highest rank at the ideological hierarchy of power relations. It is perhaps a refined example of Herbert Spencer’s “survival of the fittest” (later adopted by Charles Darwin in his 6th edition of the “Origin of Species”) (Marchant 1975, 140-145), which is innate in the human nature. Localic differences boil down to the personal interests of a member in a circle of individuals, then the immediate members of the circle who share abovementioned individuals the same interests and so on and so forth. However, once the circle becomes too large the interests either disperse or diverge and the small circles of people become more protective of their own interests rather than caring about the interests of the larger circles in a manner that resembles the ripple effect of the circles resulting from throwing a stone into water – the waves are higher at the centre then they get lower and lower until they fade out, or perhaps pull inwards to the centre if they encounter the waves generated by throwing another stone into the water.

Such a concentric zone model of power relations occurs perhaps everywhere in the Arabic-speaking world. Each locale interprets superiority according to its own ideology and by resisting the equal distribution of this superiority to other locales whether within the Arabic-speaking world or within countries of the Arabic-speaking world. For instance, Iraqis and Egyptians think that they are superior to other Arabic-speaking populations because (among many other reasons) the current territorial borders of their polities contain what were at one point the cradles of civilisation – the civilisations of Mesopotamia and the Nile River Valley. Iraqis and Egyptians resist the sharing of this kind of superiority claiming that their own respective civilisation is more ancient and advanced than the other (Waddell 2001). Within Iraqi (Marr 2012, p. 19) and Egyptian (Wilson 2011, p. 64) communities other concentric zone models of class, racial, economic, religious, etc. superiority can be found. Pat (2008) claims that

The light-skinned Arabs who consider themselves pure Egyptian believe their skin color places them in a class above the others [...] Pure Egyptian Arabs, if there is such a thing, are the lightest in color and consist mostly of the upper middle class (p. 258)

In his book “Brown: What Being Brown Means in the World Today (To Everyone)”, Kamal Al-Solaylee²⁷ maintains that when he was a teen in Egypt he could not date an Egyptian girl because his “skin tones would pollute the gene pool of a bourgeois Egyptian family that took pride in its lighter skin, its biggest asset in the marriage and social markets” (Al-Solaylee 2016, p. 36). This struggle for the superiority/power capital takes place within *fields* of other capitals and by utilising different ideologies that generate fault lines amongst communities and divide them into smaller locales. In the eastern part of the Arabic-speaking world, the Gulf populations think that they are superior to other Arabic-speaking populations because they are wealthier (Cordesman 2009, p. 93). The GCC has internal divisions that forestalled having a unified currency or a financial centre. The United Arab Emirates (henceforth UAE) claims that it has less restrictions on foreign investments, less restrictions on foreign nationals visiting the state, more economic success stories (such as the development of Dubai); therefore, it has the right to host the GCC’s financial headquarter (Abdulqader 2015). Saudis, on the other hand, adhere to the idea that they are superior to other Gulf countries (Abdullah 2006, p. 120) because Saudi Arabia is considered the centre of the Islamic world as it is hosting the two holiest locations for Muslims (Kaaba in Mecca and Prophet Mohammad’s Mosque and grave in Medina), geographically larger, oil-reserves wealthier, etc. (Phillips 2012, p. 136); therefore, they demanded having the financial centre in Riyadh – the Saudi capital. In Saudi Arabia, old tribal conflicts still divide the Kingdom’s populations into locales to the point that airing a Bedouin TV drama series entitled *فنجان الدم* (the cup of blood) (produced by the Middle East Broadcasting Center (MBC) Group and tackles said conflicts) was halted due to objections by Saudi tribes as it offends the memory of historic tribal figures and stokes tribal strifes (Al Arabiya, August 27, 2009).

In the western stretch of the Arabic-speaking world similar locales can be found. In Libya, Amazigh/Berber and Arabs discriminate against black Libyans (though they all share the same faith and speak the same language – Libyan Berbers speak Tamazight as well as Arabic) that during the Libyan Arab Spring there were reports of “Libyan rebels killing black Libyans in towns and villages near Tripoli” (Senauth 2013, p. 128). For fear of having their race diluted, Libyan Amazigh/Berber parents do not allow their daughters to marry Libyan Arab men and

²⁷ An associate professor at the School of Journalism at Ryerson University, Toronto.

rather force them to marry Amazigh/Berber men that caused “thousands of Amazigh women in western Libya remain unwed” (Al Shaayfi 2015). Battenberg (1999, p. 158) claims that Tunisian Amazigh/Berbers parents have similar sentiments towards Tunisian Arabs and exercise similar social practices of arranged marriages. Such distinctions predicate different perceptions of the surrounding world which could transpire into a different interpretation of news items – for instance. Van Dijk (2001, p. 355) offers a localic analysis from a CDA perspective by suggesting that this kind of seclusive behaviour can be construed within the context of power-seeking that “may be based on knowledge, information, or authority [...] power [...] may be integrated in laws, rules, norms, habits, and even a quite general consensus”. This localic-construct-based differentiation can be furthered through the employment of language – specifically language use in the news or what is commonly known as media discourse. Orengo (2005) remarks that a localised news product

undergoes further differentiation due to the different backgrounds of readers who speak the same language. For instance, the deep and congenial divisions that characterise political parties in Italy are strongly reflected in news texts in that the political orientation of newsrooms determines some of the significant phenomena of linguistic tribalism. These phenomena in their turn profoundly affect – and are part of – the way global news is localised and turned into news stories in newspapers whose readership is positioned in relation to their political orientation (p. 176)

The key concept in the quote above and in localisation generally is “locale”. Esselink suggests that locale “represents a specific combination of language, region, and character encoding. For example, the French spoken in Canada is a different locale to the French spoken in France” (Esselink 2000, p. 1). Brisset (1996, p. xiii) confirms Esselink’s statement by maintaining that “in the wake of political and ideological ferment, some people in Quebec have gone as far as to posit the existence of a ‘Quebecois’ language that could no longer be called French”. These are illustrative examples (similar examples can definitely be seen in the Arabic-speaking world) on using language in the struggle for a societal capital of localic identity that in a way defies cultural homogeneity. As such, locale is generally used to delimit and describe the characteristics and needs of a market (not necessarily of material commodities but ideological ones as well) or of a certain demographic group or virtual group.

To recapitulate, the above review of literature show that there is an increasing recognition of the target norms as major factors that affect news translation. However, the majority of the research on translation-mediated news items adopts a large-scale cultural approach to investigating these norms and overlooks the influence of sociopolitical change in bringing about

changes to these norms. The above ensuing discussions of this approach may seem like *culture-faults* finding ones that disregard instances (which are, as suggested here, mostly temporal and highly localic) of what is believed to be cultural homogeneity. However, it is important to reiterate that such homogeneity has been acknowledged through pointing out that instances of homogeneity do sometimes exist at a small-scale level not a large-scale one, and not necessarily because of the generally recognised elements of *culture*. The point in this regard is that the large-scale homogeneity which the reviewed literature advocates to exist due to the unity brought about by elements of *culture* stands on fragile ground; therefore, the implication (brought about by acculturation) that there are cultural norms according to which news items are translated stands on a similar ground. The pro-democracy revolutions of the Arabic-speaking world against the autocratic Establishment caused a sociopolitical earthquake that has shaken many of the cultural stereotypical images created by media inside and outside the abovementioned world. An echo of these stereotypes can easily be found in TS research in general and in research on media products such as translation-mediated news items in particular. News translation research became complacent due to the group thinking approach that prioritises generalisations (found in cultural thinking) to localic realities on the ground – at least when it comes to localic realities peculiar to the Arabic-speaking world.

As far as news translation and news reception (which both use interactive target-oriented linguistic communication as their conduit) are concerned, the analysis of this study will further the idea that heterogeneity not homogeneity words the situation best. The interpretive discussions in chapter five of this study will show that precarious tenets of *culture* are used by *Al Jazeera*'s localisation techniques to reflect anything but cultural trends. At first look, *Al Jazeera* translation-mediated news items will seem to contain ethno-religious ideologies of pan-Arabism and Islam which can be easily construed as cultural tenets of the Arabic-speaking world. Some *mainstreamist* news outlets, such as *Al Jazeera*, may seem like drawing on cultural ideologies of large-scale readership, but when other factors of target norms are taken into consideration to investigate news translation production in these outlets a different reality is revealed. Superficially, *Al Jazeera*'s (and perhaps other news outlets') localisation techniques fall into a category of cultural stereotypical preconceptions that is a multidimensional issue on which discussing mainstreamism sheds more light.

2.8 Mainstreamism

In order to contextualise how news translation/localisation is an integral part of media (and social) discourse practices, a brief discussion of media discourse and the way this discourse influence translation production seems a must. The discussions that took place in the previous section will be used as a spring board to frame the contextual and extra-contextual elements that have a direct impact on localisation techniques that mainstreamist news media outlets (such as *Al Jazeera*) adopt. It is tempting to see how social discourses get crystallised through media institutions and then inform sociopolitical issues such as power relations, identity, revolutions, etc. Broadly speaking, media affiliates contribute to creating a discourse that can cause the perception of events to overrule their reality, or the hierarchy of power relations to tilt in favour of whomever or whatever (an idea, a political decision, a social action, etc.) aforesaid discourse lauds, or against whomever or whatever it traduces. Van Dijk (1988, p. x) notes that “journalists are considered part of a dominant, cultural elite who often contribute unwittingly to the expression and legitimation of the national and international power structures”. This kind of journalistic intervention normally happens through the *themes* (explicit and/or subliminal) that media affiliates disseminate through the power of media, and the choices they make wittingly (and sometimes unwittingly) through employing localisation – whether the localisation of local news items or international translation-mediated ones.

On January 20, 2015 and in an interesting TV episode of the *Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's* (CBC) *The National*, the issue of mainstreamism in media was discussed through the topic: “The Choices Journalists Make”. The topic of *The National's* episode, the episode's guests germane opinions, and ensuing discussions of both (the topic and the opinions) will be utilised in this and the following sections as vantage points to elucidate mainstreamism in *Al Jazeera*, and to describe and discuss Robert Fisk's as well as *Al Jazeera's* recurrent themes along with their relevant ideological stances (as manifested through these themes) in general and towards the Arab Spring in particular. The focal point of the episode in question was media coverage of the terrorist attacks that took place in: Sydney-Australia, on December 15, 2014 (resulting in the death of 2 victims and the terrorist); Peshawar-Pakistan, on December 16, 2014 (Taliban terrorists killed 145 students, 132 were under 18); Baga-Nigeria, on January 3, 2015 (Boko Haram killed 150 civilians according to officials, 2000 according to locals); and the Paris-

France Charlie Hebdo terrorist attack, on January 7, 2015 (resulting in a death toll of 12). According to Peter Mansbridge (The National's host), CBC's media coverage ranged between two extremes: highly intensive coverage of the attacks in Sydney and Paris to hardly any coverage of the attacks in Peshawar and Baga. Guests of The National's episode were asked to weigh in vis-à-vis the reasons behind such a discrepancy in coverage by answering Mansbridge's questions: "Why the differences? What makes one massacre or one attack more news worthy than another? What do those choices say about news coverage and those who make the decisions on what to cover and what not to?" As leads for the discussions, Mansbridge cited two quotes (from *Time Online*) that give psychological and anthropological reasons, respectively, for the differences in coverage:

"The psychological distance between us and France is smaller than the psychological difference between us and Nigeria. There's a sense of personal vulnerability (in the Paris Attack) that I don't think one gets from the Boko Haram attacks" Paul Slovic, University of Oregon, Professor of Psychology; and

"I think in this case, cultural, anthropological differences can play a big role in how much we empathise with others. I jokingly call this the 'dark side' of empathy" Marco Iacoboni, UCLA, Psychiatry Professor.

Mansbridge then asked: "What does that say about us, if that's the theory we are using on this?" The National's guests presented a menagerie of plausible justifications behind "The Choices Journalists Make". The most important elements in their answers are arranged below in their direct quotes for ease of reference as they will frequently be mentioned (besides others) in the following discussions.

- Margo Goodhand²⁸ attributes the less intensive coverage of the attacks in Baga to the fact that the city is inaccessible to journalists because it is located in a "volatile and dangerous" region in comparison with the Charlie Hebdo attack where the immediacy of coverage makes "a more compelling narrative". Another reason, Goodhand adds, is the "underlying assumption always

²⁸ The Edmonton Journal's Editor-in-Chief and former editor of the Winnipeg Free Press.

that we kinda' judge the merit of news as to how relevant they are to our audiences [...] I have one woman phoning me up saying: "Why aren't you running these cartoons, the blood of those people on your hands!" [sic].

- Elly Alboim²⁹ observes that he "can't deny the plausibility of the [psychology]³⁰ theory: the more like *us*, the more interesting [...] It doesn't say much about *us* but it goes in the decision making...Journalism is a consumer driven business, most companies develop niches, and they tilt towards more pandering to audience desires than falling into their independent agendas" [sic].

- Jeet Heer³¹ says "media in North America is like ridiculously *white*. It is *whiter* than snow, *whiter* than cocaine, and that creates a set of certain biases and assumptions in as to what's relevant [...] In places like Sydney and Paris a lot of journalists can relate to that and they think that their audience relate to that. And actually I think that this in some ways is a false assumption [...] Media always has two responsibilities one is to gain an audience, but also to educate the audience" [sic].

The guests' opinions and discussions of the topic in question reveal the complexity of what lies behind the discourse of media's mainstreamism and its multi-layeredness. Inaccessibility and resourcefulness (financial and other) sets limits to news coverage especially in locations of upheaval. Journalism is one of the most dangerous professions in the world (Andersen and Gray 2008, p. 213). Journalists put their lives at risk and quite a few of them lose their lives. Fisk (2005, p. xxi) states "In just one year in Bosnia, thirty of my colleagues died. There is a little Somme³² waiting for all innocent journalists". However, using inaccessibility to justify the unbalanced coverage does not seem entirely waterproof. War correspondents, for instance, normally take massive risks when reporting from war zones, so reporting from the location of a terrorist attack after it happens is more likely to be less risky. Inaccessibility is

²⁹ Associate Professor of Journalism, Carleton University, Ottawa.

³⁰ Emphasis added by the author of this dissertation.

³¹ A Toronto-based journalist whose articles have appeared in *The National Post*, *The Boston Globe*, *The New Yorker*, and others.

³² Battles in WWI and WWII.

understandable but it also defines the fine line between dedicated journalism and “hotel journalism” – to use Robert Fisk’s words (Fisk, January 17, 2005).

The frequent use of the socio-politically charged pronouns “us/we” (as agents) in those discussions requires a bit of an analysis of its implications and its influence in shaping the underlying structure of media discourse. Bandura et al (1975) suggest that when personal responsibility disperses amongst the individuals of a group people tend to become more detached and become less caring about others. At the same time, and also when personal responsibility disperses, people become more likely to justify their actions in self-absolving ways. Though used in the context of the show to refer to the participating guests (who are journalists or affiliates of journalism), it is noticeable that the above pronouns are used in a collective manner to include other members of the societal group especially when the “audience” (as Goodhand points out) aspect comes up in the discussions. These pronouns are deictically used to signify that the speakers are members of a locale that includes certain norms which, in turn, should be followed to increase the sense of belonging. The responsibility, concerning the unbalanced coverage in question, then shifts to other members of the society. The implication here is that journalists are not necessarily the meditating “doers” (not only “we”), but the “done to” (“us”) as well. Goodhand admits that journalists “*kinda*’ judge the merit of news”, i.e. they adopt prioritising editorial policies, but it is “*kinda*’ ”. So, the standards for these judgements (according to Goodhand) are set in relevance to the inclinations of “*our* audiences”. In other words, journalists are only partially responsible, and that audience share the responsibility for the choices that journalists make. This implies that media discourse is the creation of both media affiliates and audience. The dialectic of “us-them” or “Same-Other” is very present in Goodhand’s argument: Since the “us” refers to the localic group, then “we” are localising media discourse to members of the group who have the “same” norms or belief systems that “we” have. Consequently, journalistic coverage of the “Other” is not as much relevant to the “Same” to which “we” belong. However, Heer explicitly focuses more on media agendas. He remarks “In places like Sydney and Paris a lot of journalists can relate to that and they think that their audience relate to that. And actually I think that this in some ways is a false assumption”. Thus, Heer attributes the inconsistency and prejudice in the coverage of the attacks to mainly journalists and their mainstreamist assumptions not necessarily the needs of the audience.

Social media statistics are used in the episode to support the influence of the audience factor. Mansbridge cites that there are over four million tweets on the Charlie Hebdo attack versus less than a million on Baga. In other words, this is the kind of coverage that the audience wants and requests, so journalists cannot help but meet those requests. Recalling the Norms model, this can be seen as another example of how “professional norms” yield to “expectancy norms”. In response to these statistics, Heer says: “I think in the media, Nigeria is not getting four times the coverage of Charlie Hebdo which is getting ten times or twenty times more”. One can infer from Heer’s quote that opinions expressed through social media are sometimes reflections of the interests of audiences who are influenced by the magnitude of their exposure to specific events in news media.

Goodhand also hints at the marketing aspect of news, which is inherent in localisation. News items, like any commodity, have to meet the consumers’ needs in order to find a market. Alboin notes that “Journalism is a consumer driven business, most companies develop niches, and they tilt towards more pandering to audience desires than falling into their independent agendas”. Heer objects by stating that “Media always has two responsibilities one is to gain an audience, but also to educate the audience”. The assumption in Heer’s argument is that this kind of education should happen in an impartial manner and for the sake of circulating unbiased information. But this is not always the case. Bamberg (2012, p. 16) suggests that “What narrators accomplish with their stories is first of all highly local business. They may claim to explain, but simultaneously engage in acts of apologizing, gaining their audience’s empathy, or attempting to re-gain their trust”. News platforms create mainstreamist discourses through localising news; this localisation is not necessarily impartial. In most cases, news items are products which are determined by socio-political and economic forces. Sometimes, they are only determined by economic factors regardless of the consequences. Commenting on *CBS*’s intensive coverage of the controversial US Republican Party presidential candidate Donald Trump (who made several racist, bigoted, and antifeminist statements), Leslie Moonves (the chairman of *CBS*) states:

It may not be good for America, but it’s damn good for CBS [...] The money’s rolling in and this is fun [...] I’ve never seen anything like this, and this going [sic] to be a very good year for us. Sorry. It’s a terrible thing to say. But, bring it on, Donald. Keep going (Huddleston 2016)

Marketing news is almost always a factor which is interactively affected by mainstreamism. Hackley (2001, p. 3) observes that “mainstreamism informs popular visions of marketing and promotes an ideology of managed consumption”. Media tends to find a compromise between addressing consumer desires and their own agendas – it might prioritise one over the other whenever appropriate but it does not permanently fall into one at the expense of the other.

News items are not always a reflection of reality. They are in general opinions that endorse perceptions. The issue that Goodhand and Alboim do not address though is how audience’s inclinations and desires come into existence. CDA scholar Van Dijk (2001, p. 355) suggests that

action is controlled by our minds. So, if we are able to influence people’s minds, e.g. their knowledge or opinions, we indirectly may control (some of) their actions, as we know from persuasion and manipulation [...] this means that those groups who control most influential discourse also have more chances to control the minds and actions of others.

Audience desires are innately cognitive actions. Thus, they can be manipulated by the discourse that media propagates. No one can deny the importance of the audience element, but this element cannot be discussed without investigating what factors affect the cognitive processes that underlie its decision making. Psychology, and by quoting Paul Slovic, is presented (as another reason for the difference in the coverage of the terrorist attacks) in a way that tarnishes the subconscious of public opinion through the use of the pronoun “us” again. Alboim approves the influence of psychological factors on media coverage by stating “the more like us, the more interesting”. There is some dubiousness about the meanings of “distance” and “likeness” to which Slovic and Alboim allude respectively. These terms are perhaps used to refer to the existence of imagined cultural (specifically ethnic and coreligionistic) bonds. Humans do have potent conscious or subconscious psychological tendencies. Yet, the important point is the role that media plays in giving prominence and magnitude to certain psychological or psychopolitical tendencies rather than others. It is not psychology per se, but the manipulation of psychology for the sake of creating mainstreamist discourse. From the perspective of the norms concept, Toury (1995, p. 64) maintains that “there is nothing inherently ‘mainstream’ about mainstream behaviour, except when it happens to function as such”. Hence, the question becomes whether the sense of “vulnerability” (that Slovic mentions) is innate or mainly a figment of mainstreamist media. Heer observes “If you are a Canadian you are most likely to be

killed by your husband than by a terrorist attack. But we don't have the 'husband threat' – maybe we should!" Psychology suggests that human behaviour can be modulated. Intensive media coverage played a significant role in creating a discourse of empathy that made the majority of North American public opinion highly sympathetic with people who are not "like us" during or in the aftermath of international disasters such as the 2004 South-East Asian tsunami, the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, the 2011 tsunami in Japan, the 2014 outbreak of Ebola in West Africa, etc. However, no such kind of empathetic discourse was encouraged in the Anglo-American media when in 2010 "The United Nations has rated the floods in Pakistan as the greatest humanitarian crisis in recent history with more people affected than the South-East Asian tsunami and the recent earthquakes in Kashmir and Haiti combined" (Tweedie 2010). Sheerin (2010) quotes Dr. Elizabeth Ferris³³ as attributing the Anglo-American media's lack of response to "the fact that so much Western news coverage in recent years about Pakistan has been negative, stressing its links with the conflict in Afghanistan. I think this is the major reason for the slow public response – the image of Pakistan in our media". Sheerin supports Ferris's argument by quoting Dr. Marie Lall³⁴ who says: "British Prime Minister David Cameron's comments in India [when he said Islamabad promoted the export of terror] did not help". So, it is politics and psychology conjoined – or more likely politics than psychology. Van Dijk (1993) maintains that

politicians speak not only for their colleagues, but also for other elite groups, especially the media, and hence for the white population at large. In both cases the main aim is to form and change ethnic models that may be used to make decisions or develop attitudes that may favour the unequal treatment of the Others, and thereby to reproduce white group dominance (pp. 268-269)

This aspect of the psychological element resonates in the anthropological (as Iacoboni explicates) attempt to justify mainstreamist discourse in Anglo-American media. The proposition deduced from Iacoboni's comment is that media reflects the ethnocentric visions of the politically and economically influential elite in Anglo-American locales. Heer suggests that "media in North America is like ridiculously *white*. It is *whiter* than snow, *whiter* than cocaine, and that creates a set of certain biases and assumptions in as to what's relevant". Public opinion is perhaps led by media to believe in this kind of ethnocentricity. This happens when media

³³ Dr. Elizabeth G. Ferris is a Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution and Co-Director of the Brookings-LSE Project on Internal Displacement. She is author of "The Politics of Protection: The Limits of Humanitarian Action" (2011).

³⁴ South Asia expert, Institute of Education, University of London.

systematically deconstructs and reconstructs the “Other” through a discourse of “alienation”. Society is constantly made aware of the Other’s differences. One illustrative example on how this discourse of alienation affects social behaviour is close to home. Ottawa Mayor, Jim Watson, was criticised for his selective “compassionate flag-raising policy” (Chianello 2016) at Ottawa’s City Hall where the French and Belgian flags (but not the flags of other terrorism-ridden nations) were raised following their respective 2015 and 2016 terrorist attacks. This selectivity was further confirmed when the Pakistani flag was raised at City Hall after a Taliban terrorist attack in Lahore, Pakistan killed 72 Pakistani Christians on Easter of March 7, 2016, but forenamed flag did not fly at Ottawa’s City Hall when 145 Muslim students, 132 of them under 18, were killed by a former Taliban terrorist attack in Peshawar, Pakistan, on December 16, 2014. Constant exposure, through media, to abovementioned discourse of alienation (with its implicit themes) may be attributed with Mayor Watson’s selective behaviour that favours Christian Pakistanis over Muslim Pakistanis. Alboim remarks “We hear a lot about ethnic violence in various parts of the world. A lot of it seems to happen quite frequently and almost predictable and began to lose its news value. It doesn’t say much about us but it goes in the decision making [sic]” – i.e. the decision making behind the choices journalists make. The issue that forces itself into the discussion is that the above two terrorist attacks in Pakistan took place in the same part of the world, but only one of them resonated with the ideological agendas of Anglo-American media. From the media discourse perspective, the power relationship between the “Same” and the “Other” cannot be that of appropriation. Once again, this happens through measured mainstreamist discourse by the dominant media outlets in North America since there are no other outlets that can present a real competition. The readership has come to accept the interpretation (that said measured mainstreamist discourse repetitively provided) of the Other (as much as of the Same) which cannot be but subjective and probably prejudiced. Consequently, media discourse became public discourse. It is instructive to note that “probably prejudiced” is used to give committed journalists the benefit of the doubt. That is to say no matter how hard a journalist tries to achieve the utopian goal of objectivity (the standards of which can be subjective as well) while reporting, a journalist will always end up projecting her/his personal subjective points of view on her/his production. Wolf (2002, p. 184) dubs this as a “crisis of representation”.

The ramifications behind adopting mainstreamism go beyond misinforming the audience. When media, political power, and economic influence join forces to create mainstreamism the consequences can be highly unfavourable. A reality (as portrayed by mainstreamist media) repeatedly skewed in favour of or against an event, an individual, a concept, etc. may shift the attitudes of public opinion in a certain locale. This reality-skewing is carried out through multiple devices which can be visual, verbal/lexical, ideological manipulation, etc. (see Baker 2006) while employing and transmuting sociopolitical realities – Iraq’s Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) prior to the American invasion of March 2003 is a case in point. On Feb. 5, 2003, then-Secretary of State General Colin Powell addressed the United Nations Security Council claiming that Iraq possesses WMD and that Saddam Hussein has been hiding these prohibited weapons³⁵. Anglo-American media in US and in UK repeated those claims attaching



Image 12. Colin Powell giving a presentation to the United Nations Security Council while holding a model vial of anthrax (Image labeled for reuse with modification by Google Images)

Powell’s full report (see CNN, February 5, 2003), or excerpts from it while supporting Powell’s claims with quotes from US officials. For example, CNN quoted then-President Bush’s National Security Adviser, Condoleezza Rice, suggesting that Saddam Hussein can soon acquire nuclear weapons and that the American administration “don’t want the smoking gun to be a mushroom cloud” (Blitzer 2003). Rice’s quote became the trademark for what former White House press secretary Scott McClellan calls “a carefully orchestrated campaign to shape and manipulate

³⁵ In 2012, Colin Powell authored a book in which he says: “I found myself in trouble on more than one occasion because people kept silent when they should have spoken up. My infamous speech at the U.N. in 2003 about Iraqi WMD programs was not based on facts, though I thought it was” (Powell 2012, p. 93). On May 19, 2015, former Acting Director of the CIA and Bush’s intelligence briefer Michael Morell appeared on MSNBC’s “Hardball,” where he admitted that the administration intentionally misrepresented intelligence reports on Iraq’s WMD (MSNBC, May 19, 2015).

sources of public approval to our advantage” (McClellan 2008, p. 125). Solomon (2013) suggests that other news platforms such as

The New York Times editorialized that Powell “was all the more convincing because he dispensed with apocalyptic invocations of a struggle of good and evil and focused on shaping a sober, factual case against Mr. Hussein’s regime.” The Washington Post was more war-crazed, headlining its editorial “Irrefutable” and declaring that after Powell’s U.N. presentation “it is hard to imagine how anyone could doubt that Iraq possesses weapons of mass destruction”.

Then American administration dubbed this manipulation of reality through media as “educating the public about the threat” ((McClellan 2008, p. 120). Martin (2006) notes that

from the perspective of many [...] governments, extremist beliefs and violent methods are considered to be rational and justifiable choices. Such beliefs and methods become mainstreamed within the context of their worldview and political environment, which offer no alternative to using violence to acquire freedom or to maintain order (p. 38)

CDA examines these aspects of mind control and power relations through media discourse. Van Dijk (2001, p. 358) suggests that “If dominant groups, and especially their elites, largely control public discourse and its structures, they thus also have more control over the minds of the public at large”. This kind of public discourse control through localising realities appears to be visible (as discussed above) when Anglo-American media outlets cover events that pertain to MENA – particularly terrorism and the Arab-Israeli conflict. To conclude, it should be noted that mainstreamism and localisation are not that far apart from each other. As feeble as they have perhaps been portrayed by the above discussions, the reasons given by The National’s guests lie at the core of the ideologies behind localisation techniques most likely undertaken by partisan mainstreamist news media outlets such as *Al Jazeera*. Among the issues that this study tackles are whether such localisation techniques (that aim at controlling public opinion through the field of media) are practiced by the localisers of *Al Jazeera*, and whether localisation techniques have detectable effects on *Al Jazeera*’s prospective locales – particularly with regard to the subject of the Arab Spring. The data choices, research methodology, and data analysis of this study (as discussed in the following chapter) have been devised to probe these issues.

CHAPTER THREE

DATA DESCRIPTION AND METHODOLOGY

Strauss and Corbin (1990, p. 23) maintain that “data collection, analysis and theory stand in reciprocal relationship to one another”. Building on the contexts of the theoretical framework and the issues in the review of literature in the previous chapters, this chapter sheds light on the setup of the case study, and provides a description of the data collection processes, the data, and the analysis methods. The methodology adopted in this study is interdisciplinary and eclectic. In other words, certain research and analysis methods or tools were selected in a manner that seems best to investigate the various aspects implicated in the phenomenon of localisation and the types of data collected to examine it, its causes, and its influence. Motivated by the attempt to find verifiable answers to the research questions, the data in this case study is of three main sources: news items, interviews with translators, and readership comments. The following segments of this chapter provide an account of the steps that led to the overall setup of the case study and a description of forenamed sets of data.

3.1 Data Collection

Adopting the data collection methodology of the descriptive norms-based approach that aims at the analysis of large bodies of texts, the analysis is built on three major sources of data: news items, interviews with translators who work for news outlets, and readership comments on the web-based localised news items. Each set of data is tackled with tentative goals in mind. Once collected, news items were searched for translation-mediated news items. Those were inspected for clues on the existence of the studied phenomenon, i.e. localisation, and later for evidence on how such localisation is undertaken by news outlets. The interviews were explored for the motivations of the localisation techniques of the news outlets (which are the sources of the data) and to investigate the roles that translators or journalists play in generating, or carrying out these techniques. These goals were pursued in collaboration with the set of data that contains readership comments (on localised news items) which were scanned for reactions that exhibit favourable or unfavourable attitudes towards the messages of the localised news items in order to find out whether or not these items had/have any particular effects on readers, as well as to shed light on the locales which are targeted by localisation. Restrictions on employing these sets of

data to meet the goals of each set of data are not intended; they will rather be used interactively to meet set goals.

3.1.1 News Items Set of Data

Collecting the news items data went through three phases: the *mega-data corpus* collection which includes news items culled from *The New York Times*, *The Independent*, *Al Arabiya*, and *Al Jazeera*³⁶; the *macro-data set* selection which includes the collection of English news items translated into Arabic by *Al Jazeera* and *Al Arabiya*; then the *micro-data set* selection which exclusively includes the news items of Robert Fisk (from *The Independent*) and their localisations into Arabic by *Al Jazeera*. “Data corpus” is used here to refer to all data collected for this research project, while “data set” is used to refer to sets of data extracted from the mega-data corpus for a specific analysis. The expressions mega, macro, and micro denote the quantity not the quality of the data. They refer to the process of zooming-in on data in a manner that ensures achieving verifiable results that lead to solid analysis. Despite the fact that the analysis of localised items is essentially founded on the micro-data set, the criteria for collecting and selecting abovementioned mega, macro and micro data are the same:

- Selection of data: News items have been collected based on the fact that they *topically* address the Arab Spring with a specific focus on the five countries of the Arab Spring – Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Yemen, and Syria. They are, basically, texts that meet the criteria listed here and contain opinions or stories on the Event (the Arab Spring) thus qualifying them to be called “news”. Therefore, the expression “news items” is used to collectively refer to news reports, news analyses, columns, articles, follow-up articles, and editorials – whether written by journalists or pundits.
- News items whose topic is irrelevant to the Arab Spring but they coincidentally mention the expression “Arab Spring” were excluded from the data and the analysis. Videos or photo galleries on the Arab Spring which are not accompanied by a transcript were also excluded. This case study is oriented towards “translation proper” which focuses on the analysis of relevant texts not the audio-visual effects that accompany news items.

³⁶These are the major sources. It should be noted that most available Arabophone or Anglophone source of news outlet have been scanned for news items on the Arab Spring, the Arabic-speaking world or other relevant topics. Examples from other sources are occasionally used in this study.

- Accessibility of texts: The texts are in the form of easily accessible written online news items of web-based news outlets.
- The texts are time and space sensitive: They cover the period from December 18, 2010 till December 31, 2014 inclusive. They cover events related to the Arab Spring in the Arabic-speaking world.
- Language of the STs is English.
- Language of the TTs is Arabic.
- Sources of the English texts are news items from *The New York Times* and *The Independent*.
- Sources of the Arabic texts are *Al Arabiya* and *Al Jazeera*.
- Representativeness of data: The collected data does not form a random sample, but rather provides a large and representative selection from the journalistic genres of both English and Arabic.
- Credibility of data: The data sources are widely circulated international news outlets with a high level of credibility and popularity amongst their respective readership according to the International Handbook of the Press. They are neither tabloid nor do they serve as special non-news related publications (such as the pure tourist or the advertisement industries). Because this case study focuses specifically on Fisk's and *Al Jazeera*'s texts, a detailed description of the other sources of data is not provided for brevity purposes; they are rather rapidly reviewed.

3.1.1.1 Mega-data

The starting point for data collection was to structure a comprehensive corpus of a particular discourse: sociopolitical media discourse; a particular genre: mainstream online news items; a specific sociopolitical Event: the Arab Spring. Based on the above criteria, the efforts to formulate such a comprehensive corpus have been focussed on international well-known news outlets: *The Independent*, *The New York Times*, *Al Arabiya*, and *Al Jazeera*. Besides being among the top news outlets in regard to their intensity of the coverage of the Arab Spring, these news outlets were amongst the first Anglo-American and Arabic news outlets to cover it. Unlike some other news outlets (such as *Foreign Policy*, *The Economist*, *Reuters*, and *The Associated Press*) which require the reader to subscribe after reading a certain number of articles, *The Independent*, *The New York Times*, *Al Arabiya*, and *Al Jazeera* provide free of charge and

unlimited access to the readers. In addition, they have been chosen bearing in mind the possible ideological and political variances in the press accounts they provide for the Event.

Data collection extended from December 18, 2010 till December 31, 2014. The choice of these dates is not arbitrary. December 18, 2010 has been chosen because it marks the first time a news item that refers to the unrest (later dubbed the Arab Spring) in Tunisia was published. Cessation of data collection took place on December 31, 2014 when the Arab Spring reached the status of a civil war in Syria and no other Spring seemed likely to occur. Starting January 1, 2011, news items from the Arabic sources have collected on daily basis at 16:00 (or 17:00 from March 13 to November 6 due to Daylight Saving Time in Eastern Canada) Ottawa mean time. This specific time has been chosen because it matches 0:00 mean time in Doha (*Al Jazeera's* headquarters) and Dubai (*Al Arabiya* headquarters is in Dubai Media City) when *Al Jazeera* and *Al Arabiya* stop circulating new news items until 06:00. News items have been copied from their web sources and pasted in a word document with a detailed record of each news item. Wodak et al., (2001) argue that no clear line between data analysis and data collection can be drawn in CDA. Therefore, the record assigned each datum information about its source – specifically if it is a translation, name of author or reporter (if any), themes-formulating elements such as arguments, presuppositions/perceptions, focalised naming and description, and the style/rhetoric elements (which have been refined and re-refined through compacting the mega data into macro data and micro data, as well as the recurrent reading), country and city of the event, time of the event it is covering, and frequency of mentioning the expression “Arab Spring”. This detailed record-taking process assisted in sorting out and organising the collected information in order to thematically code the news items dataset without using a coding software.

By December 31, 2014, a total of 49472 Arabic and English news items (that covered 98944 size A4 pages with 36807168 words) were collected. Table 1 offers an overview of the number of articles that the sources of the news items circulated every month between December 2010 and December 2014. The table shows that the numbers of news items in *The New York Times*, *The Independent*, *Al Arabiya*, and *Al Jazeera* fluctuate. The numbers of news items from the Arabic sources exceed those from the Anglo-American sources. As far as the Anglo-American sources are concerned, however, low numbers of items are only low in comparison with their Arabic counterpart high numbers of items in Table 1. *The New York Times* and *The Independent* were scanned for items on each one of the 22 member states of the Arab League

Year	Month	The New York Times		The Independent		Al Jazeera		Al Arabiya	
		Articles	Localised Articles	Articles	Localised Articles	Articles	Localised Articles	Articles	Localised Articles
2010	Dec.	0	0	0	0	39	1	13	1
Total 2010		0	0	0	0	39	1	13	1
2011	Jan.	149	0	116	0	425	4	198	1
	Feb.	423	0	351	0	653	7	489	2
	Mar.	226	0	205	0	422	2	399	1
	Apr.	151	0	172	0	456	3	386	0
	May	144	0	156	0	345	3	311	0
	June	229	0	150	0	316	4	324	0
	July	145	0	131	0	251	2	212	0
	Aug.	176	0	126	0	279	1	298	0
	Sept.	180	0	181	0	299	4	242	1
	Oct.	199	0	225	0	435	2	421	1
	Nov.	105	0	114	0	326	6	313	0
	Dec.	130	0	112	0	458	2	219	0
Total 2011		2257	0	1859	0	4665	40	3182	6
2012	Jan.	144	0	130	0	305	1	277	0
	Feb.	179	0	105	0	330	3	325	1
	Mar.	89	0	146	0	355	3	316	0
	Apr.	92	0	103	0	327	2	229	0
	May	84	0	101	0	399	3	256	0
	June	98	0	85	0	448	6	269	3
	July	81	0	73	0	351	1	334	2
	Aug.	86	0	79	0	316	7	330	1
	Sept.	143	0	133	0	357	2	310	1
	Oct.	75	0	83	0	343	0	310	0
	Nov.	102	0	76	0	264	2	237	0
	Dec.	95	0	77	0	415	0	282	0
Total 2012		1268	0	1191	0	4210	30	3475	8
2013	Jan.	109	0	113	0	352	5	320	0
	Feb.	96	0	98	0	326	0	369	0
	Mar.	92	0	87	0	410	0	382	0
	Apr.	82	0	84	0	358	1	369	1
	May	74	0	78	0	426	1	396	0
	June	91	0	59	0	415	0	466	0
	July	129	0	91	0	605	1	563	0
	Aug.	114	0	98	0	679	4	612	0
	Sept.	83	0	86	0	667	2	654	0
	Oct.	79	0	62	0	493	1	534	0
	Nov.	81	0	78	0	558	3	517	0
	Dec.	73	0	84	0	447	2	492	0
Total 2013		1103	0	1018	0	5735	20	5674	1
2014	Jan.	144	0	116	0	442	3	420	0
	Feb.	99	0	104	0	438	0	402	0
	Mar.	106	0	99	0	596	2	486	0
	Apr.	88	0	92	0	415	1	430	0
	May	78	0	110	0	450	3	390	0
	June	181	0	151	0	458	5	409	2
	July	116	0	162	0	367	2	318	0
	Aug.	171	0	213	0	318	1	365	0
	Sept.	353	0	246	0	506	5	452	1
	Oct.	182	0	186	0	474	3	468	0
	Nov.	115	0	153	0	438	0	441	0
	Dec.	111	0	142	0	366	2	468	0
Total 2014		1744	0	1774	0	5268	27	5049	3
Total 2010-2014		6372	0	5842	0	19878	118	17380	18
Total Number of News Items in All News Outlets 2010-2014								49472	

Table 1. The New York Times, The Independent, Al Arabiya, and Al Jazeera news items and localised news items on the Arab Spring in the mega-data (2010-2014)

organisation from November 1, 2010 to November 30, 2010 – i.e. prior to the Arab Spring. The scan results revealed that *The New York Times* published only 44 news items, while *The Independent* published 39 news items on all of those countries in the scanned period of time. Bearing in mind that the news items in Table 1 mainly cover the five countries of the Arab Spring, we realise that even when *The Independent* news items hit their lowest number of 59 news items in June 2013, or when *The New York Times* hit its lowest number of items of 73 in December 2013, their scores show a considerable increase of interest in issues of the Arabic-speaking world. News items are normally a reflection of recent pertinent events which entails that the more the recent events the more the news items.

Frequency of the expression Arab Spring (as tabulated in Table 2) shows a correlation between the intensity of the events and the recurrence of its mentions and vice versa. For instance, there were larger numbers of news items in *The New York Times* and *The Independent* on the Arab Spring in January, February and March of 2011 when the Arab Springs in Tunisia and Egypt toppled the regimes of these countries and the anticipation was high for the Libyan regime to fall. These numbers became comparatively lower throughout 2012 and 2013 when the events became relatively repetitive as the Arab Spring teetered on the precipice of civil wars and the tragic ramifications of the Springs overshadowed their promising beginnings. However, the numbers went high again towards the end of 2014 when ISIS terrorists declared their so-called “Islamic State” and beheaded American journalist James Foley on August 19, 2014, American-Israeli journalist Steven Sotloff on September 2, 2014, American emergency medical technician Peter Kassig on November 16, 2014 (Callimachi 2014), and British aid worker Alan Henning on October 3, 2014 (Hunter 2014). The comparison (see Table 2) also reveal that there is a borrowing of concepts and expressions (as caused by translation into Arabic) which proved to be an interesting case of translational interaction that gives prominence to the importance of studying news translation in the making.

In general, and unlike *Al Jazeera*’s and *Al Arabiya*’s coverage (specifically *Al Jazeera*’s) of the Event, *The New York Times*’ and *The Independent*’s coverage of it was marked by oblivion – particularly at its very beginning. Invariably, *Al Jazeera*’s numbers surpasses those of the other sources by a relatively big margin. It has the highest total number of news items in each year, and in the total number of items from 2010 to 2014. Worth and Kirkpatrick (2011) maintain that the unrest of the Arabic-speaking world was “Al Jazeera’s moment”. Since its

Year	Month	The New York Times		The Independent		Al Jazeera		Al Arabiya	
		Articles	A/S mentions	Articles	A/S mentions	Articles	A/S mentions	Articles	A/S mentions
2010	Dec.	0	0	0	0	39	0	13	0
Total 2010		0	0	0	0	39	0	13	0
2011	Jan.	149	0	116	0	425	0	198	0
	Feb.	423	6	351	4	653	0	489	0
	Mar.	226	18	205	11	422	1	399	1
	Apr.	151	34	172	19	456	10	386	7
	May	144	75	156	85	345	29	311	13
	June	229	69	150	64	316	41	324	22
	July	145	27	131	31	251	31	212	23
	Aug.	176	46	126	39	279	37	298	29
	Sept.	180	106	181	68	299	71	242	56
	Oct.	199	121	225	46	435	131	421	76
	Nov.	105	77	114	52	326	79	313	69
	Dec.	130	92	112	91	458	111	219	68
Total 2011		2257	671	1859	503	4665	541	3182	357
2012	Jan.	144	76	130	47	305	114	277	99
	Feb.	179	96	105	26	330	102	325	89
	Mar.	89	65	146	33	355	118	316	97
	Apr.	92	65	103	22	327	86	229	62
	May	84	81	101	30	399	101	256	87
	June	98	59	85	25	448	88	269	75
	July	81	49	73	17	351	92	334	72
	Aug.	86	35	79	13	316	30	330	40
	Sept.	143	75	133	32	357	113	310	83
	Oct.	75	40	83	27	343	116	310	68
	Nov.	102	64	76	37	264	99	237	99
	Dec.	95	44	77	16	415	95	282	71
Total 2012		1268	749	1191	325	4210	1154	3475	1017
2013	Jan.	109	39	113	23	352	83	320	59
	Feb.	96	33	98	11	326	74	369	44
	Mar.	92	29	87	9	410	85	382	43
	Apr.	82	29	84	6	358	48	369	32
	May	74	33	78	13	426	48	396	15
	June	91	35	59	12	415	67	466	28
	July	129	30	91	13	605	58	563	31
	Aug.	114	35	98	11	679	37	612	30
	Sept.	83	29	86	3	667	49	654	17
	Oct.	79	27	62	3	493	50	534	28
	Nov.	81	12	78	5	558	39	517	20
	Dec.	73	22	84	9	447	37	492	22
Total 2013		1103	353	1018	118	5735	675	5674	369
2014	Jan.	144	27	116	7	442	33	420	29
	Feb.	99	28	104	4	438	39	402	22
	Mar.	106	23	99	7	596	38	486	34
	Apr.	88	23	92	1	415	38	430	17
	May	78	17	110	8	450	37	390	29
	June	181	29	151	6	458	36	409	16
	July	116	21	162	3	367	28	318	11
	Aug.	171	18	213	7	318	29	365	11
	Sept.	353	27	246	2	506	35	452	15
	Oct.	182	18	186	3	474	23	468	24
	Nov.	115	18	153	4	438	38	441	25
	Dec.	111	36	142	4	366	28	468	17
Total 2014		1744	285	1774	56	5268	402	5049	250
Total 2010-2014		6372	2058	5842	1002	19878	2772	17380	1993

Table 2. Frequency and correlation of using the expression “Arab Spring” (A/S) in The New York Times, The Independent, Al Arabiya, and Al Jazeera (2010-2014)

inception, *Al Jazeera* has helped formulate a narrative of already existing unfavourable emotions towards the autocratic regimes of the Arabic-speaking world. This narrative took the form of implicit and explicit messages with one multifaceted main theme, namely *reform*. When the unrest erupted in MENA, *Al Jazeera* capitalised on the narrative that it had helped propagating. Most of the 19878 news items collected from *Al Jazeera* furthered this message. It seemed that the final piece of its diligent work on exposing the dictatorships fall right into place. On December 18, 2010, *Al Jazeera* published its own first news item on the Tunisian protests (see 5.1). With this item, *Al Jazeera* was perhaps among the fewest news outlets to report on the protests from the small town of Sidi Bouzid – which is a scoop by journalistic standards. In comparison, *Al Arabiya*'s first news item on Tunisia was a re-circulated one from a *Deutsche Presse-Agentur*'s news (*Al Arabiya*, December 18, 2010). From December 18, 2010 to January 09, 2011, *The New York Times* published only six items in which Tunisia was mentioned with no reference to the violent protests which were sweeping the country. Ironically, on January 07, 2011, *The New York Times* published an article with the headline “The 41 Places to Go in 2011” (*The New York Times* January 7, 2011) recommending Tunisia for its tourist attraction facilities with no mention of the clashes between the protestors and the security forces in the capital Tunis during which at least two dozen civilian protestors were killed. It was not until January 10, 2011 (23 days after the protests began and four days before Ben Ali fled Tunisia) that it re-published an article by *Reuters* that reads “14 Killed in Clashes With Police as Violence Spreads in Tunisia” (*The New York Times* January 10, 2011). *The Independent*'s performance was not better (in comparison with that of *The New York Times*) vis-à-vis its coverage of the unrest in Tunisia when it began. From December 18 to January 9, 2011, *The Independent* published 10 news items on Tunisia with no reference to the ongoing unrest. On December 19, 2010, *The Independent* published a Robert Fisk article in which he covered “The tragedy of Algeria's ‘disappeared’” (Fisk, December 19, 2010) during the French colonial rule of Algeria. Fisk wrote his article from the Algerian capital Algiers and referred to Ben Ali as the “Tunisian dictator” but without making a connection to the protests against the latter in neighbouring Tunis. One justification can be that Fisk wrote his article at a time that predated the unrest in Tunisia. On January 7, 2011, Hannah (2011) published the article “Five Questions About: Booking a bargain summer break” in *The Independent* recommending Tunisia and Egypt as destinations for the summer

vacations of 2011. From January 1, 2011 till January 9, 2011, *The Independent* published three news items on Tunisia without referring to the unrest. Following in *The New York Times*' footsteps, *The Independent* re-published (on January 9, 2011) an article by the *Associated Press* headlined "Violent protests leave eight dead in Tunisia". The lack of attention that marked the English sources' coverage of the Arab Spring at its beginning should not come as a surprise especially in mainstream news outlets (see 2.8).

3.1.1.2 Macro-Dataset and Micro-Dataset

The basic aim behind collecting the mega-data from the abovementioned four data sources was to provide the case study with news items which are translated from Arabic into English and from English into Arabic with the aim of studying localisation in both Arabic and English. However, the fact that a search for news items translated into English from Arabic returned "zero" results in the mega-data changed the course of the entire research project. The goal consequently became studying news items translated into Arabic from English. Keeping in mind the original target of collecting a large body of data, news items which (according to *Al Jazeera* and *Al Arabiya*) have non-Arabic STs have been culled from the mega-data then tabulated into a macro-data log that comprises all such items with all relevant details that have been attached to them in the mega-data. Then, the search for the STs and matching them with their Arabic translation-mediated news items counterparts began.

The criteria at this phase became including news items which have been localised by specifically *Al Jazeera* and *Al Arabiya* regardless of their English data sources. Therefore, the few news items which have been localised into Arabic by other news outlets then re-circulated by *Al Jazeera* or *Al Arabiya* were excluded. Otherwise, and in order to analyse these news items, their data sources, and these data sources' other germane news items from 2010 to 2014 should have been included in the data with all the above-mentioned information (in the mega-data) affixed to them. Bearing in mind the small size of the re-circulated news items (15 in total) and the time limitations (this phase was tackled in 2015), this quandary or Herculean task has been eschewed. News items which had been localised into Arabic by news outlets other than *Al Jazeera* and *Al Arabiya* and then re-circulated by either or both are 15 in total from 2010 to 2014. They were all published by only *Al Arabiya* after being localised by other Arabic news outlets such as *Al Ittihad*, *Al-Hayat*, *Al Watan*, *An-Nahar*, *Al Ghad*, *Youm 7*, *El Khabar*, *Awan*,

etc. Out of *Al Arabiya*'s 17380 news items, 13553 items are re-circulated from these news outlets and others. 3827 items are self-generated. 18 items have non-Arabic STs. *Al Arabiya* self-localised 3 articles by Robert Fisk out of these 18 news items and re-circulated the other 15 localised items which were therefore excluded from the analysis. On the other hand, *Al Jazeera*'s Arabic news items are 100% self-generated. Out of its total 19878 (Arabic and translation-mediated) news items, 118 items have non-Arabic STs. All of these items have been self-localised by *Al Jazeera*. 117 out of these 118 items have been localised from Robert Fisk's articles, and one has been localised from an article by Brian Whitaker in *The Guardian* (*Al Jazeera*, December 29, 2010).

At this phase the need for a more focussed set of data, namely the micro-dataset, emerged. CDA scholars Reisigl and Wodak (2009, p. 99) maintain that "When preparing the corpus for analysis, the collected data are downsized according to specific criteria such as frequency, representativity, (proto)typicality, intertextual or interdiscursive scope/influence, salience, uniqueness and redundancy". Therefore, the exclusion of the re-circulated news items has been done in order to avoid having any misrepresentative datum. The analysis of the news items is meant to investigate the localisation techniques as being directly carried out by the immediate localiser(s) of the immediate circulator (the news outlet) without a medium (another news outlet) in between. If the localiser is (an affiliate of) a news outlet other than the immediate circulator of the translation-mediated news items, these techniques cannot be attributed to the aforementioned circulator and the analysis of its own localised news items. The intent is to make the analysis as accurate as possible in order to account for patterns of discourse manipulation that are not only intuitively discernible, but also directly observable. Such patterns cannot be observed or discerned and then discussed within localisation if the localised news item does not have a ST. The fact that this case study is oriented towards translation proper (Jakobson 1959, p. 114) that requires comparing authentic STs to authentic target texts (the generator of both is known to and identified by the analyst) necessitated focussing on the micro set of data which specifically includes Robert Fisk's English articles from *The Independent* and their localisations in *Al Jazeera*.

During the period from December 18, 2010 till December 31, 2014, Fisk wrote 476 articles on the Arabic-speaking world. 468 of these articles addressed the Arab Spring. 117 of

these 468 articles were localised (referentially or exclusively) into Arabic by *Al Jazeera*. 68 out of 117 were exclusively localised while the other 50 articles were referred to by partially quoting Fisk's original article. "Exclusively localised" is used to mean that the localised into-Arabic news item, as circulated by *Al Jazeera*, stated that Robert Fisk is the original author of the article without referring to any other ST. "Referentially localised" denotes that only a portion of Fisk's article (besides portions of other articles) was quoted in the localised text. Since *Al Arabiya* exclusively localised only three of Fisk's articles, the analysis of the news items dataset has been mainly focused on the larger number of *Al Jazeera*'s localised news items for the reasons that have been mentioned above. On December 29, 2010, *Al Jazeera* circulated its first localised news item on the Arab Spring (Al Jazeera, December 29, 2010), and on January 17, 2011, *Al Jazeera* circulated a localised portion of Fisk's first article on the Arab Spring (Al Jazeera, January 17, 2011). In order to fully understand the representativeness and the importance of the two sources of the micro dataset, i.e. Robert Fisk and *Al Jazeera*, following is a review of these two sources' influence in their respective journalistic environments. In compliance with the DTS approach of this study (which focuses more on the product (the translation-mediated news item/TT) and its target-medium than on the ST), more information on *Al Jazeera* (in the discussions to follow) will be provided simply because this news outlet is part of the target-medium where localisation takes place.

3.1.1.3 Robert Fisk

The New York Times describes Robert Fisk as "probably the most famous foreign correspondent in Britain [...] a writer of exceptional power rare combination of scholarly knowledge [sic], experience and drive" (Bronner 2005). Fisk authored and co-authored several books among which "The Point of No Return: the Strike Which Broke the British in Ulster" (1975), "In Time of War: Ireland, Ulster, and the Price of Neutrality, 1939-45" (1983), bestselling "Pity the Nation: The Abduction of Lebanon (1990), "The Age of the Warrior: Selected Writings" (2008), "The Destruction of Cultural Heritage in Iraq" (co-author, 2008), and of course his 2005 other bestselling masterpiece "The Great War for Civilisation: The Conquest of the Middle East" which documents (in over 1300 pages) his epic journey in journalism. Fisk is known for his fervent news reporting and inclination to challenge danger in order to provide his readers with realistic news from his perspective. He notes "When we journalists fail to get across

the reality of events to our readers, we have not only failed in our job; we have also become a party to the bloody events that we are supposed to be reporting” (Fisk 2005, p. 333). His 1990, 2005 and 2008 above works tackled issues of significant importance in the Arabic-speaking world such as Arab-Arab conflicts, Arab-Israeli conflict, and the sociohistorical and sociopolitical changes in forenamed world since WWI. Fisk has been a correspondent of affairs on the Arabic-speaking world (where he lives in Beirut) for over forty years now (Al Jazeera, February 1, 2012). Resources that enable a researcher to account for Fisk’s articles on MENA that date 40 years back are not available³⁷. However, Fisk wrote 476 articles on the Arabic-speaking world between December 2010 and December 2014. His exceptional reporting on the Arab Spring caught the readerships’ attention. According to *The Independent*, 10 out of the 12 most-read articles of *The Independent* in 2011 were Robert Fisk’s. These ten articles were about the Arab Spring. Fisk’s articles ranked first, second, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth and eleventh (Mohamed 2011).

3.1.1.4 Al Jazeera: History and Influence

The transformation that *Al Jazeera* has caused in the Arabic media sphere is so drastic that the Arabic media era can justifiably be divided into *Pre-Al Jazeera* and *Post-Al Jazeera*. Media in the Arabic-speaking world has been moving in a contorted way in accordance with the sociopolitical obtrusive transformations that this world has been experiencing since the late 1940s postcolonial era. Generally, the postcolonial message of media in the Arabic-speaking countries reflected the official perspectives of the governments. This has caused media to be dominated by the ministries of information which have been part of the autocratic regimes and their intelligence or secret services (Al Safi 2013). Media agendas have been set up in a top-down hierarchy model where almost all decisions are made by the government. They have been constructed according to blueprints of a “pro-regimism” (Jones 1985, p. 213) mainstream. Schramm (1959, pp. 5-6) maintains that “Media in the Arab world both reflects and shapes the Arab public opinion; it not only responds to its readers’ interests but also, in a very real sense, stimulates and conditions their knowledge of international events”. The relationship between the mostly state-owned media and the people has been that of *paternalism* whereby official media

³⁷ The Author of this dissertation wrote to Fisk in this regard.

infantilised the public. This relationship between the public and media maintained its status quo throughout the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s. In fact, throughout the 1980s and early 1990s and up until the introduction of satellite media and the internet, audiences were limited to their governments' programming which was characterized as lackluster and consisting of government propaganda and unedited video footage of state events (Ayish 2001, Boyd 1999). Some non-government/uncensored media information came from the short-wave radio broadcast services of BBC Arabic, Voice of America Arabic broadcast, and Radio Monte Carlo Arabic.

In November 1996, *Al Jazeera* network was born in Qatar (El-Nawawy & Iskandar 2002). It was founded by the government of the State of Qatar which provides most of *Al Jazeera's* funding. Simultaneously, the phenomenon of the internet has managed to drastically change the communication of information in the Arabic-speaking world. Gunter (2013, p. 43) observes that "By the end of 2011, more than 114 million people used the internet across the Arab world, or around one in four of the total population of the region". This indicates that the Arabic-speaking world has, since the late 1990s, had an enormous growth in the computer-savvy population that is becoming more aware of the importance of information technology. In January 1, 2001, the network introduced *Al Jazeera's* Arabic news website (Fahmy 2011, p. 220). Wenden (2005, p. 91) states that *Al Jazeera* website is "the first mainstream Arabic news site free from government censorship and control [...] [it] promises a different and new perspective on global events". Later discussions of *Al Jazeera's* localisation techniques and agendas will shed more light on whether *Al Jazeera* is truly "free from government censorship and control" (see 5.2). However, *Al Jazeera* Arabic website launch was timely enough to cover some of the most important sociopolitical events of the second millennia, i.e. the terrorist attacks of September 11, the war in Afghanistan, the invasion of Iraq, and last but not least the Arab Spring. In few years, this website managed to make giant leaps that in 2012 *Al Jazeera* website (the legitimate offspring of *Al Jazeera* satellite TV channel), received over "150 million visits" (Stroud 2014, p. 66). A news platform that manages to attract this amount of readership in such a short period of time is surely worth investigating in depth – especially if we realise that localisation is one of the reasons behind its notable accomplishment. The fact that *Al Jazeera* offers a digital print of most of its live news broadcast, interviews and other shows makes it very useful for the readership who cannot have access to its live TV broadcast – such as those who

live outside MENA. *Al Jazeera* provides its readership with a light mobile version of its website which makes it convenient for those who like to read the news on their mobile devices.

Enabled by the massive funding assigned to it by the Qatari government, *Al Jazeera* has more than eighty news bureaus across the world and it employs hundreds of journalists, editors, translators, technicians and other staff of various Arab and non-Arab nationalities (Stroud 2014, p. 67). *Al Jazeera* website provides analyses of news and events through its coverage of the following:

- Arab, regional, and international affairs, which are covered comprehensively and on daily basis. News is presented in accordance with their importance and the editorial policies of *Al Jazeera*. This coverage is sourced by a wide network of correspondents all over the world and by other news agencies.
- Digital prints of talk shows and interviews on important political, social, economic, religious, etc. events.
- Business and finance news, through which *Al Jazeera* provides its readers with the latest Arab and international commerce news, currency exchange rates, gold and crude oil prices, etc. This kind of news is normally presented with analyses by experts.
- Sports news, where *Al Jazeera* offers a number of newsletters and daily sports news events.
- Educational and documentary reports, through which *Al Jazeera* offers readers documentaries about nature, sciences, and technology.

3.1.1.4.1 Proclaimed Objectives of Al Jazeera

Each media organisation has objectives and *Al Jazeera* is no exception. This section provides a review of *Al Jazeera*'s self-proclaimed (not latent) journalistic and political objectives. *Al Jazeera*'s Professional Code of Ethics accounts for its explicit media objectives:

- To complete the leading role of *Al Jazeera* satellite TV of improving the Arabic media message,
- Providing the Arab readership with access to continuous and interactive follow-up of *Al Jazeera*'s news and programmes, and their analysis,
- Increasing the number of *Al Jazeera* followers through the internet.

The last objective aligns *Al Jazeera* with other mainstream news platforms (see 2.8) which aim at increasing their readerships in order, perhaps, to have as much influence as possible on public opinion. A former Director General of *Al Jazeera*, Mohammed Jassim al-Ali, suggests that the main reason for the popularity of *Al Jazeera* can be attributed to the fact that “it seeks to create a new reality of Arabic media” (Al-Shimmari 2007, p.16). A syllogistic deduction from al-Ali's quote is that *Al Jazeera* has an agenda (whether explicit or implicit) which might be

different from those of the other Arabic media organisations and it seeks to achieve this agenda through various tools – one of which is localisation. *Al Jazeera* website (Who Are We?, *Al Jazeera.net*) states that its vision is to promote a balanced, integral, objective and neutral journalistic treatment of information, which coincides with its Arab readers’ cultural, social, and educational individualities. This vision entails being able to report on news and events in the Arabic-speaking world through a media platform that governments cannot censor or control. *Al Jazeera* website also states that its editorial policies are based on *Al Jazeera*’s motto *الرأي والرأي الآخر* “the opinion and the other opinion” (all opinions should be heard), in addition to the tenets of objectivity and neutrality, immediacy and verification, and preciseness and documentation (ibid). *Al Jazeera* maintains that it addresses the Arab peoples (such as policy makers, diplomats and intellectuals, journalists and researchers, and youth and students) with their entire intellectual, cultural, ideological, and political diversities. It adds that in order to meet the different tastes of its readership, *Al Jazeera* obtains its information from sources such as the correspondents’ reports of *Al Jazeera website* and *Al Jazeera* satellite TV, Arabic as well as international news agencies (which implies that it requires the services of translation), reference books, specialised and general encyclopaedias, and authors and researchers. Whether *Al Jazeera* adheres to the above creed is a different story. Exceptions to the above vision include the red lines, albeit unspoken, that pertain to criticising the Qatari government. The discussions to follow (see 5.2.1) will show that *Al Jazeera* has its own interpretation of the adjectives “balanced, integral, objective and neutral” – just like perhaps any other news platform.

3.1.1.4.2 Success and Influence of Al Jazeera

Some reasons for *Al Jazeera*’s feat can be attributed to the fact that it managed (to a certain extent) to prove itself as the only source of international news on several occasions. During the war in Afghanistan, *Al Jazeera* was the first to report on the events of the war from the Taliban locations (Stroud 2014, p. 64). This made its reports find their way into the United States of America and Europe and become reference points for a large number of well-known media outlets such as *NBC*, *CBC*, and *CNN* which followed and re-broadcasted *Al Jazeera*’s reports of the battlefield in Afghanistan, the 2003 US-led invasion of Iraq, and the Arab Spring (Gharib and Mansoor 2000, pp. 24-25, Sharp 2003, p. 2, Stroud 2014, p.64). Luminary non-Arab journalists with much experience in writing in a free press ambience commended *Al Jazeera*.

Robert Fisk, Middle East reporter and columnist of the British *The Independent*, maintains that *Al Jazeera* “has become the world’s best-known – and most influential – source of news from the Middle East” (Fisk, November 2, 2011). From across the Atlantic Ocean, Tom Friedman, columnist of the American *The New York Times*, states that *Al Jazeera* is “not only the biggest media phenomenon to hit the Arab world [...] it also is the biggest political phenomenon” (Friedman 2001). *Al Jazeera* also managed to attract the attention of world leaders including “the President of the United States” (MacNicol 2011, see also El-Nawawy & Iskandar 2003). Following *Al Jazeera*’s coverage of the Arab Spring, testimonials and praise poured on *Al Jazeera* from American officials. Folkenflik (2011) says that Hillary Clinton, former US Secretary of State and presidential candidate, told members of the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee:

You’ve got a global – a set of global networks – that *Al Jazeera* has been the leader in, that are literally changing people’s minds and attitudes [...] You may not agree with it, but you feel like you’re getting real news around the clock instead of [...] the kind of stuff that we do on our news [...] Which, you know, is not particularly informative to us, let alone foreigners.

While referring to the events that triggered the Arab Spring in Tunisia, Senator John McCain (American Congress member and former presidential candidate) also publicly praised *Al Jazeera*’s performance during a forum that *Al Jazeera* hosted in Washington, D.C.:

I’m very proud of the role that *Al Jazeera* has played [...] When that young man was humiliated by the police [...] decided to burn himself to death, that would have been confined in earlier years to a single isolated incident, and it was *Al Jazeera*, it was *Al Jazeera*, that spread the story time and time again, so that it permeated the conscience, not only of the Tunisians, but of countries throughout the Arab world. (Hagey 2011)

Hagey (2011) also notes that Nancy Pelosi, Minority Leader of the United States House of Representatives, joined other American officials in lauding *Al Jazeera*’s coverage of the Arab Spring. A 2008 poll of media and political science professors in the Arabic-speaking world shows that *Al Jazeera* claimed “77.2% of the Arabic-literate readership” (Al-Khazenadar 2008, p. 30). *Al Jazeera* has excelled beyond other Arabic and international news platforms; even though *Al Arabiya* (*Al Jazeera*’s major competitor and rival in MENA) claims that it has not (Abbas 2013, Al-Shibeeb 2013). Some statistics and polls confirm that *Al Jazeera* ranks first in terms of being the first source of news for the Arabic literate readership inside and outside the Arabic-speaking world. The 2014 IPSOS Affluent Global survey in Europe, Middle East, Africa, Asia and Latin America affirms *Al Jazeera* as the leading Arabic news brand (IPSOS 2014). *Al*

Jazeera's website came in seventh after *CNN*, *National Geographic*, *BBC*, *Discovery*, *Bloomberg*, and *CNBC* (ibid). This survey shows that *Al Jazeera* managed not only to surpass the 557 Arabic news websites (Arabic News Websites, arabic-media.com) inside and outside the Arabic-speaking world, but it has also established a global place for itself well ahead of other renowned news platforms.

3.1.2 Interviews Dataset and Interviews Setup

It has been highlighted in the chapter of the review of literature that most field case studies on news translation did not carry out interviews with translators. Such research is normally based on either only analysing large amounts of news items or on interviews with journalists, or on a combination of these two approaches. The interpretation of the results in this kind of research comes with an unfortunate shortcoming: a lack of sufficient information about the individuals who actually carry out translation, namely the translators. Personal interviews can be a very useful way to explore production backgrounds within the framework of operational norms and its subcategory matricial norms and to explore the social practices that underlie discourse and institute what the factual constraints according to which agents act. Therefore, interviews have been carried out in order to investigate to what extent the translators and the journalism affiliates who work in *Al Jazeera* are involved in localising news items with a special focus on the role(s) that *Al Jazeera* translators play in the selection of the news items to be translated and in their localisation. These interviews, though failed to include journalists (for the reasons explained below), provided this case study with a rich abundance of quality information. On another note, and since this case study involves interviews, Rudestam and Newton (2007, p. 108) maintain that “The researcher’s relationship with the group to be studied must be fully acknowledged and described”. The author of this study and the interviewed translators are originally from MENA. The author has a hands-on experience as translator and interpreter for 23 years (6 of them in the Iraqi press), and as an instructor of English as a second language for 10 years in MENA universities – in Iraq and Libya. The interviewees were made aware of this information.

3.1.2.1 Locating Interviewees

The first step in conducting the interviews began with locating the subjects/interviewees. *The New York Times*, *The Independent*, *Al Arabiya*, and *Al Jazeera* were sent formal letters (that

contained sufficient information on this research project) requesting permission either to interview in person their translators and journalists or to send them questionnaires. In the respective requests sent to each news outlet, the reasons why there is a need to interview their translators and journalists have been explained along inquiries about the number of translators that work for said news outlets, what languages they translate from and into, the reason(s) why *The New York Times* and *The Independent* did not translate any item from Arabic news outlets, and the reason why *Al Arabiya* re-circulate localised news items rather than self-localising them. While the first three news outlets did not reply, *Al Arabiya* did state that their employees' information and their editorial policies are confidential and that their regulations prohibit disclosing them.

However, a breakthrough took place in January 2012 during a visit to Doha-Qatar. *Al Jazeera's* headquarter was paid a visit. The requests to interview *Al Jazeera's* translators or its editorial staff were denied immediately and without giving reasons. The fruit of persistence were finally reaped when two of *Al Jazeera's* translators agreed to be interviewed on their own conditions of anonymity and absolute confidentiality³⁸. The fact that these two translators were the only ones who agreed to be interviewed (which made them the only source of the interviews set of data), and the fact that they work for *Al Jazeera* added other reasons for focussing the case study on *Al Jazeera* as the source of the localised into Arabic news items.

3.1.2.2 Description of the Interviewees

As the interviewees explained, *Al Jazeera* has very strict disciplinary regulations that having interviews without its approval could result in their employment being terminated and in them being expelled from Qatar. Therefore, Table 4 provides a description of the interviewees that abides by their condition of anonymity. The interviewees attributed these strict regulations to the consequences of former interviews carried by an American journalist with *Al Jazeera's* employees. The outcome of those interviews turned out to be highly unfavourable (from *Al Jazeera's* perspective), because that American journalist's report marred *Al Jazeera* by describing it as an anti-American and an anti-Semite news outlet with pro-terrorist agenda.

³⁸ The School of Translation and Interpretation approved including these interviews in this dissertation.

	First Interviewee	Second Interviewee	Notes
Names	Mosa Badr	Qamar Isa	Pseudo
Age	Middle aged	Middle aged	Approximate
Gender	Male	Male	
Ethnicity	Middle Eastern	Middle Eastern	
Residence	Doha, Qatar	Doha, Qatar	
Nationality	Not Qatari	Not Qatari	Approximate
Profession	Translator and interpreter	Translator and interpreter	Full Time for Al Jazeera
Experience	Over 20 years	Over 20 years	Approximate
First Language	Arabic	Arabic	
Other languages	English	English	
Work Location	<i>Al Jazeera</i> , Doha	<i>Al Jazeera</i> , Doha	
Education	University degree(s)	University degree(s)	Approximate

Table 3. Description of the interviewees

The interviewees also requested that they are not to be asked questions about the names and specific job titles of their superiors, or the specific numbers of employees in the various departments of *Al Jazeera*. They agreed, however, on providing approximate pieces of information in case they could not disclose details of exact ones – such as numbers of employees in certain departments.

3.1.2.3 The Setting and the Time

The time, location, and interviews' attendees were determined by the interviewees. In January 2012, the interviews were conducted in two sessions – one on January 29 and the other on January 30. Each session was three hours long – beginning at 19:00 and ending at 22:00. They took place in the sitting room of a hotel suite in Doha. The interviewees were punctual as they showed up at the exact agreed upon time. Both sessions were attended by both interviewees and the personal contact who introduced the author of this dissertation to them. The ambience was friendly and the interviewees seemed comfortable.

3.1.2.4 The Questions³⁹

The research project was explained to the interviewees without using a complicated jargon. The interviewees have been given ample time as well as the freedom to ask for clarifications. Though most of the main questions were prepared beforehand, some of those and

³⁹ Some of these questions were initially designed with the intention of posing them to journalists and translators alike.

other questions evolved during the interviews. Questions and answers were reviewed and compared after the first session then new follow-up questions were devised to bridge certain gaps in the information provided by the interviewees. The questions of the interviews have been divided into three categories:

- **Warm-up Questions:** Such as question number 1 in Table 5 (which summarises samples of the questions and the interviewees' combined answers). These questions are intended to intrigue the interviewees and encourage them to get engaged and provide better elaborate answers later on.
- **Main Questions:** Such as questions 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9 which are formulated in order to probe:
 - The extent of the interviewees' involvement in the localisation of news items in *Al Jazeera* and to fact-check certain localisation techniques (such as omissions, additions, etc.) that the initial combing through of the texts unveiled that they are practiced by *Al Jazeera* localisers. In other words, to explore the insiders' viewpoints on the studied phenomenon of localisation as practiced by *Al Jazeera*,
 - What patterns of control are exhibited during intervening with the reproduced texts and who practices them,
 - The intervention choices the interviewees make, and what kind of background knowledge and assumptions informs this intervention,
 - Whether the interviewees associate their intervention with wider social discourses,
 - Examine which elements of news items the interviewees emphasise and according to which criteria they emphasize them.
- **Improvised and Follow-up Questions:** Such as questions 3.A, 7.A-C, 9.E, etc. which were posed during each session of the interview (or during the second session after reviewing the data from the first session) when the interviewees bring up an aspect or an issue of which the interviewer was not aware and about which he would like to obtain more information.

Questions	Answers
1. How many translators work for <i>Al Jazeera</i> ? Are there any freelancers among them? Are they all men?	Less 10 in total. Freelance translators are sought when there is an event in a country or a region whose language we don't speak. There is more than one female translator/interpreter.
2. What are your exact tasks as translators?	We do written translation of news texts and simultaneous interpretation of televised speeches or interviews. We work for <i>Al Jazeera</i> network which owns the website and the satellite TV channel. We are sometimes on call for "breaking news"
3. Who selects ST articles for translation? And what are the criteria?	Selecting articles is done by "scanners", and <i>Al Jazeera</i> 's correspondents around the world. No idea about their criteria.
3.A. Scanners?	These are employees that take turns around the clock to read and select articles for translation
4. What languages do <i>Al Jazeera</i> 's translators translate from?	English, French, German, Russian, Spanish, Swahili, Persian etc.
5. What are the nationalities of the translators?	Sudanese, Egyptians, Syrians, Iraqis, Algerians, Jordanians, Palestinians.
6. Are there any Qatari translators?	None of the translators is Qatari. Qataris occupy top management positions such as heads of administrations.
7. [The interviewees were shown samples of Robert Fisk original articles and their localisations into Arabic (which were almost 1/5 each of the original) then asked] Is this how you translated these articles?	We can't remember if we translated these articles in particular, but we can assure you that the final product [localised news item] is not how we translate texts. We are professional translators. We do not skip sections of the text at will. We translate the full text then we pass it on with the original text.
7.A. You pass it on to whom?	Our superior.
7.B. Does he handle editing translated texts?	We can't tell for sure, but likely. He is a member of the "editing board"
7.C. Is this board responsible for the final copy of the news item as it appears to the public?	Most likely. We don't ask because once we are done with translating the text, our job is done.
8. Do you have instructions with regard to the way you should handle texts such as how you should translate them or how you should translate certain expressions? Examples?	As far as we [referring to themselves] are concerned "No". But we rely on our education and background in appropriating certain expressions. Persian Gulf is often translated as Arab Gulf – for instance.
9. Since you work in a news media such as <i>Al Jazeera</i> , do you identify yourselves as journalists or editors?	Because we work for <i>Al Jazeera</i> , we can't. Our identity cards/pass cards and our job description identify us as translators. Anyone who works for <i>Al Jazeera</i> has an identity card that specifies his/her job and entails a description of it.
10. Did it ever happen that you were asked for your opinion in the final or before print copy of a text that you translated?	What do you mean exactly by they asked for our opinion?
10.A. Was a before-print news item that you translated sent back to you asking you specifically if you approve of the changes made to it?	Never. Otherwise they won't look like the ones you showed us [referring to localised into Arabic news items which were almost 1/5 each of the original).
10.B. Do you have an idea why translated news items are as much reduced in the print copies?	Editorial policies' guidelines [interviewees exchange looks with smirks on their faces].
10.C. Can you give examples of these guidelines?	We can't give specific ones [body language and tone say otherwise] because we are not members of the editing board
11. <i>Al Jazeera</i> circulates statistics that indicate an increase in the number of its readership. What are the sources of such statistics?	The statistics office which is operated by <i>Al Jazeera</i> Arabic website department.

Table 4. Samples of the interviews' questions and answers

The interviews were conducted in Arabic. Questions were asked in Modern Standard Arabic⁴⁰ (MSA) and they were answered in a diglossia of Arabic vernaculars (the interviewees are not of the same Arabic nationality) and MSA with minimal usage of English words. The interviewees requested that the interviews not to be audio-recorded or video-taped, so detailed written notes were taken while listening attentively to changes in voice tone, keeping eye contact (to show interest), and observing their body language and gestures for shades of meanings. The interviewees were encouraged to elaborate whenever they wished by uttering flat-toned “OK” or “uh-huh”, without nodding or shaking head, in order to avoid open encouragement or discouragement. They were also verbally encouraged to elaborate through asking them if they wish to elaborate or add, and through short pauses but not too long odd periods of silence.

3.1.3 Comments Set of Data

The last, but not least important, source of data is *Al Jazeera* readerships’ comments on its web-based localised-into-Arabic news items on the Arab Spring. Machin and Mayr (2012) criticise CDA research for lacking the emphasis on investigating the impact that discourse has on its receivers. They argue that “If the main purpose of the analysis is to uncover and challenge the repressive discourse practices of powerful, interested groups, then what needs to be considered are the effects of these practices on ordinary (non-academic) people” (Machin and Mayr 2012, p. 211). This shortcoming of CDA research, besides Chesterman’s allusion to the “expectancy norms” (Chesterman 1998, p. 92), prompted this study to include the readers’ comments on the news items as part of the data to be analysed, which in fact contributed to a better understanding of the localisation techniques used in Arabic news platforms and the influence they have on readership. This aspect of the research has been tackled through scanning the commentaries on the localised news items and observing the interpretations and attitudes that the readers of the news items attach to their perception of the information contained in abovementioned items. *Al Jazeera* has a facility (the comments section) for its readers to express their opinions through leaving comments on each news item in its website. This facility is fronted with a liability statement that says “Published comments do not reflect the opinions of *Al Jazeera*, but rather the

⁴⁰ Modern Standard Arabic is the written language of contemporary literature, journalism, spoken prose, and most news broadcasts. It is widely understood by the populations of the Arab-speaking world (see Ibrahim 2009, p. 22).

opinions of the commenters”. The comments’ facility also provides a hyperlink to its comments section’s “Terms of Service” which include:

- A comment cannot exceed 500 characters.
- A comment must adhere to the topic of the published article. Off-topic comments will not be published.
- Any comment that contains insults or indecent expressions will not be published.
- Comments that attack specific figures or bodies will not be published.
- Comments that promote sectarianism, or racism, or that are blasphemous in nature will not be published.
- Comments that contain instigative views or threats to a person or a specific body will be neglected.
- Comments that advertise specific entities, organisations or individuals will not be published.
- Comments that attack the writers of articles, opinion pieces, analyses, or news reports will not be published.
- Comments that contain off-topic opinions about the management of the comments service or the website will not be published. Such opinions, general suggestions, and requests can be directed to: Supportnet@aljazeera.net
- The website is in Arabic. Comments in other languages will not be published.

Readers’ comments are arranged in a linear format. They are located at the bottom of the news item – underneath the above mentioned liability statement. The comments service of *Al Jazeera* is interactive whereby a commenter can post a comment (or more), or s/he can click on the “reply” option placed underneath other comments to respond to somebody else’s comment, hence allowing commenter-commenter conversations to develop. Therefore, some comments are not posted in response to the localised item, but rather a comment on another reader’s comment. The comments facility also has a “thumb-up/thumb-down” rating option next to each comment, which commenters can click only once to indicate their preference. Though they can use pseudo names, *Al Jazeera*’s readers who wish to post a comment on its published items must do so through either creating an *Al Jazeera* online account, log in with a Facebook ID, log in with a Gmail ID, or log in to *Al Jazeera*’s comments’ service through an email account. Visitors of *Al Jazeera* website who do not wish to login can read comments but they cannot post them.

After making the decision vis-à-vis zooming-in on the micro-data news items for the analysis, comments on *Al Jazeera*’s localised articles from 2010 to 2014 were culled from the bulk of the comments on the news items in the mega-data. They were copied directly from *Al Jazeera* website and pasted into a word document. The total number of these comments is 6114, which contain 106822 words stretching over 214 pages. They have been tabulated along with the commenters’ pseudo names, induced observations that pertain to the region or country of the

commenter, and the commenter's reaction towards the information in the localised item. Comments were basically collected with two major goals in mind:

- To examine the readers' opinions towards the localised news items on the Arab Spring in order to measure and analyse the immediate influence of *Al Jazeera*'s messages on the readership.
- To understand which locales *Al Jazeera* addresses with its localised messages.

According to the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), internet penetration rates in the Arabic-speaking world jumped from 24.9% in 2010 (91,053,066 out of its 365,674,964 population) to 41% in 2014 (159,642,930 out of its 389,373,000 population). This can be seen as an increase in the usage literacy of computers and the internet in the Arabic-speaking world. Bearing in mind the nature of the cyberspace, however, readers' comments on *Al Jazeera*'s localised news items were posted by readers who reside within the geographic borders of the Arabic-speaking world as well as outside these borders. A considerable number of the readers' pseudo names and comments included location and nationality references. The comments were written in MSA, variable Arabic vernaculars, and in a mixture of MSA and an Arabic vernacular. This diglossic usage of vernaculars and the localic references that the commenters made in their comments proved to be crucial in identifying commenters' regional affiliations, associating them with the commenters' attitudes towards the localised news items, and probing the influence that these localised items have on the readership of *Al Jazeera*.

To recapitulate, the sets of data to be analysed are:

- The micro-data set which comprises Robert Fisk's articles (the English STs) and *Al Jazeera*'s localised texts (the Arabic TTs).
- The interviews set of data which comprises interviews carried out with two of *Al Jazeera*'s translators/interpreters.
- The comments set of data which comprises readership comments on *Al Jazeera*'s localised news items (the Arabic TTs).

The rest of the research methodology (the analysis methods) logically flows from the endeavour to answer the research questions. The description of these analysis methods are provided in the following segments of this chapter.

3.2 Analytical Framework

There are few difficulties that are commonly encountered when analysing sets of data of relatively different types. One difficulty emerges when the researcher attempts to identify the intersection point(s) amongst the datasets. In other words, what are these relatively different datasets supposed to collaboratively accomplish? Answering the research questions has been identified as the intersection point for all three sets of data. Another difficulty is choosing the appropriate analysis tool(s) to analyse each set of data. In order to overcome this difficulty an overarching analytical framework that incorporates CDA with netnography and thematic coding has been devised. CDA and the other incorporated techniques are chosen because they can facilitate investigating certain elements and patterns in each set of data and supply the steps needed for the analysis that will follow. News items can be categorised as a sociopolitical journalistic discourse where they can be analysed in terms of mainstreamism, power relations, agendas, etc. through using CDA. Though interviews might not be related to analysing elements of a journalistic genre, interviews with individuals (such as the translators of *Al Jazeera*) who are institutionally involved in producing said genre can shed light on similar elements of sociopolitical discourse by providing an insider's view of the agendas behind using the studied phenomenon – i.e. localisation. Besides, they may serve to explore aspects like personal experiences when people engage in professional activities which are closely related to the practices of power and discourse manipulation normally investigated by using CDA. The set of data that comprises readership comments (on web-based news items) explores which ideologies are marketed in the localised news items, which locales they target, and what influence they have on the readers through gauging their reactions; therefore, netnography (which combines analysing *internet* marketing and *ethnography*) was incorporated with CDA to tackle this set of data. Thematic coding will be used to account for thematic patterns in all of the three sets of data (see Chapter Four).

3.2.1 CDA: An Analysis Tool

Now that the data collection methodology has been described and the datasets have been mostly quantitatively delimited, we move on to describing the qualitative analytical method, namely CDA, utilised to analyse the data. By late 1980s and early 1990s, some discourse analysis scholars (Teun van Dijk 1988, 1993; Norman Fairclough 1989, 1992; Ruth Wodak

1989) developed a model of discourse analytical criticism, namely CDA. This model was mostly instigated by works of sociologists (such as Pierre Bourdieu, Michel Foucault, Karl Marx, etc.) and their discussions of notions such as “ideology”, “field”, and “capital” (Bourdieu 1985; 1991). In general, the literature on CDA is twofold: studying CDA as a “research method” on the one hand, and as an under-study phenomenon in itself on the other. CDA researchers/scholars provide a variety of definitions for CDA, in which they describe it as: “a research programme” and “a school of thought” (Wodak and Meyer 2009, p. 4 and p. 5 respectively), a “theory” (Fairclough 2001, p. 122), “discourse analytical research” (Van Dijk 2001, p. 352), “research enterprise” (Wodak 2013, p. XIX). The multiplicity of labels attributed to CDA can perhaps be traced back to the fact that CDA has been relatively recently introduced as a modification of its predecessor discourse analysis (DA) and there is still, as the relevant literature shows, some vagueness in relation to its uses or limitations.

3.2.1.1 What Does CDA Do?

In order to avoid any confusion that may result from the multiple terms attributed to CDA, this study adopts the perspective that CDA (as its name suggests) is a research analysis tool/method which can provide a research with its analytical framework. Van Dijk (1988, p. x) states that CDA “hopes to complement, more qualitatively, the traditional methods of quantitative content analysis”. CDA then falls into the category of descriptive qualitative analysis methods that aim at identifying constituents or elements of the analysed data. It is an efficient methodology for media studies especially if the aim is to explore discursive constructs that influence localising news articles. Van Dijk (1988) suggests that

much of the social, political, or ideological relevance of news analysis resides in making explicit implied or indirect meanings or functions of news reports: What is not said may even be more important, from a critical point of view, than what is explicitly said or meant (p. 17)

CDA is primarily employed to provide the analysis of what is overtly stated and covertly expressed in a localised news item through studying: *why* it is “said” or “not said”, *by who*, *to whom*, through *what means*, and most importantly for *what end*.

In bilingual/translational analysis (where the discussions include comparisons between STs and a TTs), CDA examines what meanings are expressed through *omitting* certain portions from the original news item when it is localised into another language. Thus, the CDA approach adopted to analyse news items aims at an appropriate analytical description of the properties of

Al Jazeera's translation-mediated news items with one essential aim being exploring *latent thematic* implications. Attempting to provide an answer to, particularly, the “why” question (from a sociopolitical perspective), and to provide an analysis and an interpretation of the “end” (from the same perspective) entices the researcher to use CDA rather than, perhaps, any other analysis method. Thus, the recurrent terminology in a CDA analysis will feature concepts such as “field”, “ideology”, “power”, “dominance”, “hegemony”, “discrimination”, “interests”, “reproduction”, “recontextualisation”, “institutions”, “institutional routines”, “agency”, “power relations”, etc.

CDA conjoins social theory with extra-contextual elements analysis in its analytical model that critically probes the underlying structures of discourse meaning(s). This perspective dictates understanding a localised news item (as a sociopolitical discourse) through the ideologies/the localic norms that contributed to its production. CDA assumes a critical viewpoint of the manipulation of language and ideology that aims at causing instability in power relations. Wang (2009, p. 748) points out that CDA focuses on social prejudice and trends of power-relation in the social world. CDA as such provides insights into extra-contextual elements of power-relations. This approach is specifically useful in the analysis of this study because it aims to investigate and account for the sociopolitical and sociohistorical representations that underlie the localised news items. Hence, this CDA approach sheds light on implicit and explicit factors that have led to the adaptations of the news texts. As it employs linguistic analysis tools, CDA supplies researchers with a linguistic toolkit that explores linguistic elements which have ideological significance (cf. Fowler 1991). Therefore, it is a useful method to review and comprehend how the use of certain expressions and their ideological implications creates conscious or subconscious associations between one's perception of one's surroundings and the perception of events which are expressed in the localised news item.

Through its interdependent concepts of “ideology”, and “power” (Reisigl and Wodak 2009, p. 87), CDA sheds more light on the underlying agendas of media discourse than probably any other analysis tool. Ideology and power are among the salient components through which CDA seeks to analyse media discourse, whereas critique is the tool used to analyse them. These concepts will be referred to recurrently in the forthcoming chapters; therefore, they will be rapidly reviewed in the next segments in order to pave the way for the upcoming discussions.

3.2.1.2 Discourse

It is to be acknowledged that the concept of “discourse” has received thorough discussions with regard to its usage and types in the literature on DA and CDA (see Wodak and Meyer 2009, Van Dijk 2001, Fairclough 2008), or in the literature on sociology, philosophy, and politics – especially from its sociopolitical, sociophilosophical, or sociohistorical perspectives (see Habermas 1996, Luhmann 1982, Foucault 1982). Fairclough and Wodak (1997, pp. 271-280) summarise the main tenets of discourse from the perspective of CDA as follows:

- Discourse does ideological work.
- Discourse is situated and historical.
- The link between discourse/text and society is mediated.
- Discourse is a form of social action.

The analysis of the localised texts will be undertaken while bearing these tenets in mind. It will look for which ideologies are included in the texts and which are deleted. It will also investigate the institutional and sociohistorical factors that have a bearing on producing the texts. It will probe *Al Jazeera*’s mediation role and how *Al Jazeera*’s media discourse affects addressed locales. Most important in Fairclough and Wodak’s tenets of CDA is the understanding of discourse as a “social practice” (see also Van Dijk 1981) that influences other social practices, and as a social action being influenced or generated by other social actions. Wodak (2001, p. 66) suggests that “discourses as linguistic social practices can be seen as constituting [...] social practices and, at the same time, as being constituted by them”. Such a priori understanding of discourse facilitates approaching other discursual phenomena (such as localisation) from a localic viewpoint. It implies that the relationship between a certain locale and a certain practice is discursive.

The strategies that media outlets adopt, as in the case of *Al Jazeera*, represent news in conformity with a particular set of norms or agendas that regulate the “in-gatekeeping” and “out-gatekeeping” processes of information circulation as well as information representation through “explanations, legitimizing arguments, evaluations” (Fairclough 2003, p. 139) which are quite evident in localisation. Isabella Fairclough (2008) furthers this notion by suggesting that translation is better understood as

“recontextualisation” whose “purpose” and “goal”, from her own CDA perspective, are “closely related to the purpose or goal [agendas]⁴¹ pursued by social agents [news platforms]⁴² as part of their plan of action. By purpose and goal I understand both the communicative purpose of a text (in the pragmatic sense of illocutionary force) but also political goals, part of wider political strategies, pursued by means of language (p. 69)

Though denoting translation in general, Fairclough’s quote highlights prominent aspects of localisation in action, i.e. the reasons behind undertaking localisation (“purpose” and “goal”), who undertakes it (“social agents”) and how it is undertaken (“means of language – the pragmatic sense of illocutionary force”). Norman Fairclough (1995, p. 14) maintains that discourse is “a socially ratified way of using language in connection with a particular type of social activity”. From this perspective, *Al Jazeera*’s media discourse on the sociopolitical conditions of the Arabic-speaking world in general, and on the Arab Spring (as a “social activity”) in particular, can be viewed as a “ratified discourse”. Discourse, in this case, is generally expected to meet certain localic norms, conventions, institutional expectations, or even certain agents’ interests or agendas. All of these aspects are interconnected by CDA’s important component of ideology.

3.2.1.3 Ideology

Ideology is so significant in CDA that it can be seen as the tie that relates the other components of CDA (as they are discussed here) to each other. Schäffner (1996, p. 1) maintains that “the notion of ideology is a fairly complex and controversial one”. This complexity can be attributed to the fact that ideology is an expression whose meaning depends on who considers what as a systematic framework of thought (cf. Eagleton 1991). In general, ideology is associated with traditional and transnational political concepts such as socialism, capitalism, liberalism, communism etc. However, this is not the only understanding of ideology in CDA. Norman Fairclough, who adopts a Marxist view of ideology, suggests that we should differentiate between “beliefs, values, ideologies” and “knowledge properly so called” (Fairclough 1995, p. 44). In other words, he is signalling that ideology means false knowledge and that we should distinguish between kinds of imagined or untrue knowledge and what might be called true knowledge. This is an argument that is not without merit especially if applied to our discussion of locales and cultures. Despite the fact that certain ideologies can be shared by

⁴¹ Emphasis added by the author of this dissertation.

⁴² Emphasis added by the author of this dissertation.

governments and peoples alike, societal ideologies can sometimes be temporal and public-opinion-mood-dependent (see Bassnett 2001, p. 48). The following two sections are intended to connect CDA, in general, and the concept of “ideology” as understood by CDA, in particular, to the overarching theoretical framework of this study, i.e. to norms, and the phenomenon being studied here, i.e. localisation.

3.2.1.3.1 Ideology and Norms of Localisation

The idea that humans tend to act in a manner that signal their belonging to a certain social group is often reiterated by some sociologists and psychologists as being innate in the human nature. It is an idea that can be traced back to the beginnings of human civilisation. Aristotle says

Man is by nature a social animal; an individual who is unsocial naturally and not accidentally is either beneath our notice or more than human. Society is something that precedes the individual. Anyone who either cannot lead the common life or is so self-sufficient as not to need to, and therefore does not partake of society, is either a beast or a god (Patton 2014, p. 132)

The Norms Theory builds on such a sociological premise and suggests that most humans tend to behave in a manner that is socially acceptable; consequently, they are inclined to circumvent actions which are proscribed (Toury 1999, pp. 15-19). This entails acting in a way that grants them a shared-knowledge/cognitive membership in the social group to which they imagine they belong. Ideological norms might be used to describe these shared common pieces of information or common knowledge. CDA researchers discuss ideology from the rather absorbing perspective that it comprises such shared common knowledge. Van Dijk (1995) states that

ideologies are localized between societal structures and the structures of the minds of social members. They allow social actors to translate their social properties (identity, goal, position, etc.) into the knowledge and beliefs that make up the concrete models of their everyday life experiences [...] ideologies control how people plan and understand their social practices, and hence also the structures of text and talk. Ideologies define and explain the similarities of the social practices of social members (p. 21)

Remarkably, Van Dijk uses the expression “localized” to refer to the strategies of making connections between the existing norms in a society and those which are expected to cognitively exist amongst the society members – in their minds. Norms draws on humans’ perception of their surroundings, and this perception is normally mapped by ideologies – among many other aspects of life. In concordance with Van Dijk’s understanding of ideologies, Toury (2000, p. 206) suggests that norms are not physically present for observation, but “rather norm-governed instances of behaviour. To be even more precise, more often than not, it is the products of such behaviour”. Seen as a system of the systemic paradigm (Even-Zohar 1979), localisation

contributes to the composition of social-systemic meaning since it uses ideology to endorse localic identities, beliefs, traditions etc. Localisation, as conceptualised here by CDA, plays an important role in recontextualising agents' agendas and in moving them on to the audiences in certain locales as common sense assumptions. *Al Jazeera*, for instance, aligns itself with specific locales of the Arabic-speaking world by claiming to adopt and advocate (explicitly and implicitly) ideologies that exist in the minds of its readership. CDA contests such alignment strategies as employed in mainstreamist news media and views them "as part of struggles for various forms of power" (Fairclough 2008, p. 69). Case in point is the manner that *Al Jazeera* endorses Islamist ideologies (to ingratiate itself with the majority Muslims of the Arabic-speaking world) while antagonising liberal and secularist ones (see Chapter Five).

3.2.1.4 Power

News items, as discourses, are perhaps among the most obvious media products where the imbalanced practice of power can be probed. German sociologist Max Weber (1978, p. 53) argues that "'Power' (*Macht*) is the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this possibility rests". Powerful agents (like governments, influential politicians, media outlets which represent the special interests of their benefactors, etc.) may take advantage of the potential vast circulation of information through mass media to seep in their own volitions within a social construct of power relationships. Janks (1997, p. 329) claims that "Where analysis seeks to understand how discourse is implicated in relations of power, it is called critical discourse analysis". CDA tackles extra-contextual reasons behind the manipulation of discourse. Such a perspective will prove to be useful in investigating the extra-contextual elements that led the State of Qatar to establish *Al Jazeera* then use it to counterbalance the unfavourable power relations with rival states. CDA invokes the idea that the relationship between language and society is "mediated" by social actors (such as news outlets and their benefactors), and that researchers who utilise CDA should express their interest in probing this mediation and "play an advocacy role for socially discriminated groups" (Wodak & Meyer 2009, pp. 19-21). Critical discourse analysts should thus attempt to expose how discourse can be recontextualised to cause a shift in power relations. CDA, then, assumes that asymmetric power relationships are furthered by social agents who seek to acquire dominance over other agents in a social relationship.

3.2.2 The Process of Analysing the Texts

As far as the current study is concerned, works on news translation and CDA were reviewed with two aims in mind: first, probing the feasibility of replicating (otherwise replacing) other scholars' traditional research methodologies; second, the possibility of devising a methodology and data analysis tool which is appropriate for addressing news translation from a perspective that encompasses the multifaceted factors underlying the practice of localisation. One thing to bear in mind, while applying CDA to a research on translation, is that it (CDA) was developed by researchers in fields of study other than translation. Wodak and Meyer (2009, p. 1) suggests that CDA has manifold roots in "rhetoric, text linguistics, anthropology, philosophy, socio-psychology, cognitive science, literary studies and sociolinguistics, as well as in applied linguistics and pragmatics". The diverse disciplinary backgrounds of the above fields of research have enriched and developed CDA research in general, as they share the following similar components of research:

- The emphasis on larger components of language, i.e. a bulk of texts, other than individual words and sentences.
- The focus on dynamic social practices (such as localisation).
- The characteristics of naturally occurring language use by real language users.
- The study of the functions of social and cognitive contexts of language use (Van Dijk 2007).

Due to the fact that CDA is utilised as an analysis method across various disciplines (which tend to share almost the same overarching premise that interactive communication constructs our perceptions of our surroundings), researchers tend to tweak the traditional analysis techniques and take on board different more appropriate ones. CDA applicants mostly adopt a bottom-up lexical coding. Halliday's model (1971, 1976, 1985, 1994, and 2004) of lexical analysis through "transitivity" has been widely applied to text analysis and by extension to discourse analysis and its offspring CDA. Whereas this model has been applied in mostly monolingual text studies (see Fairclough 2002, Janks 1997, Fairclough 1992, Van Dijk 1988), several challenges arise when it is applied to translational studies where texts of two languages or more have to be contrasted. Lexical coding proved to be insufficient to produce a coding system that can construct a solid bedrock for the of the analysis in this study for reasons which can be related to inherent problems with lexical coding-based analysis on the one hand, and to its limited application to monolingual

text analysis on the other. In his “Introduction to Functional Grammar”, Halliday (1985) explains transitivity by stating that

A fundamental property of language is that it enables human beings to build a mental picture of reality, to make sense of their experience of what goes on around them and inside them [...] Our most powerful conception of reality is that it consists of ‘goings-on’: of doing, happening, feeling, being. These goings on are sorted out in the semantic system of the language, and expressed through the grammar of the clause (p. 101)

Furthermore, Halliday (1994, p. 101) maintains that “‘Transitivity’ specifies different types of processes that are recognised in language and grammatical structures by which they are expressed”. He builds on the premise of the agents’ conception of reality as expressed in the grammar of the clause and suggests six primary processes or kinds of transitivity: material process, verbal process, mental process, relational process, behavioural process and existential process. Janks (1997), who conducted a CDA research that tackled advertisement in South Africa through applying a lexical coding-based Transitivity Analysis (Halliday 1994), suggests that “To do a transitivity analysis it is necessary to identify every verb and its associated process” (op. cit., p. 332). The researcher has to infer which process is intended by the agent and induce whether this agent is, for instance, the grammatical subject in intransitive clauses or the grammatical object in transitive clauses. This entails the formation of the social meaning based on only the agents’ perception of it. Another problem with this kind of coding is that the process-infering operation could go ad infinitum especially with the analysis of a relatively large corpus keeping in mind that “it is never possible to read meaning directly off the verbal and visual textual signs” as Janks (1997, p. 332) admits. Halliday’s model has been criticised for being very complex, not only in its categorisation of grammar but also in its one-to-one matching of structure and meaning (Fish 1989, pp. 59-64). Hunston and Francis (2000) claim that in the case of metaphorical processes, Halliday’s model provides a dual analysis – one congruent analysis and one metaphorical analysis. This can be very confusing for an analyst and can cause the rest of the analysis to be perfunctory if one meaning (either the congruent or the metaphorical) was chosen over the other. Other critics claim that Halliday’s approach of unpacking a text is too abstract and more of a much ado about nothing. Fish (1981) argues that

When a text is run through Halliday’s machine, its parts are first disassembled, then labelled, and finally recombined into their original form. The procedure is a complicated one, and it requires a great many operations, but the critic who performs them has finally done nothing at all (p. 61)

Other scholars agree with Fish’s claims in relation to the futility of the critic’s efforts. Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 11) maintain that process “descriptors work rhetorically to suggest a theme

really existed in the data, and to convince us they are reporting truthfully about the data”. In other words, lexical coding (as carried out through Halliday’s model) is attributed with doing no more than tagging, allocating grammatical roles to certain segments of the text, and classifying these segments into sets, while inducing that such tags and grammatical roles create the perception of the social meanings in accordance with the writer’s intention. The theoretical framework of this study mandates extending the analysis of the text beyond the text in order to understand its social meanings. Lexical coding and analysis, in general, and Halliday’s model (and its practitioners) in particular appear to disregard the readership’s perception of meanings (cf. Fish 1981). Therefore, one specifically legitimate criticism of Halliday’s approach is that it assigns constant meanings and implications to the analysed texts and in so doing it overlooks the contexts and the extra-contexts that affect their production – or their re-production in the case of localisation.

In addition, translation targets the transfer of meaning more than the transfer of the lexical unit. Bassnett (2005, p. 124) suggests that “At no stage is a text likely to be translated in the traditional sense of the term, following word order and sentence patterns”. From a translational analysis perspective, a linguistic transfer (especially between languages of families as remote as Arabic and English) is expected to yield differences in grammatical structures. Comparative translation studies see these divergences and differences in grammatical structures as a normal phenomenon. It has been pointed out above that Fisk’s articles were either exclusively or referentially localised by *Al Jazeera* with a purposeful omission technique being adopted during the localisation process (see Chapter Five). A lexical coding that seeks verbs associations in the ST and the TT is therefore pointless since verbs, for instance, in one language could end up as nouns or adjectives or even deleted altogether in the other language. Obiedat (1990, p. 21) notes that “Generally speaking, inflected languages like Czech, Latin, classical Greek and Arabic have much freer word order than uninflected languages like English”. While English is generally considered a noun-initial language, Arabic Grammarians consider Arabic a verb-initial language (Keenan 1978, Wright 1974). Hawkins (1983) claims that verb-initial languages (such as Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, etc.) are deemed a minority as they represent only 10% of the total number of languages in the world. Furthermore, Arabic follows a Verb-Subject-Object pattern of sentences, while English follow the Subject-Verb-Object pattern. The verb “to be” in present tense is not used in Arabic sentences. Arabic uses the single present tense form of

the verb to replace the simple and continuous forms in English. Modal verbs are absent in Arabic and adjectives come after the nouns that they describe. Arabic tends to include the object pronoun in the relative pronoun as well as in the main verb of relative clauses, unlike English in which the object pronoun is omitted. Therefore, the structure of English sentences, clauses and phrases can become totally different in Arabic in translation. These differences render the lexical coding of Halliday's model (that rests on considering the clause as the carrier of the message) effete. They seem to leave no ground to conduct an analysis of localised texts other than the one that fathoms patterns of meanings/themes of English and Arabic texts.

More recent works on CDA pay attention to the deficiency of the lexical coding approach. Wodak and Meyer (2009, p. 2) maintain that "CDA is [...] not interested in investigating a linguistic unit per se but in studying social phenomena which are necessarily complex and thus require a multidisciplinary and multi-methodical approach". Thus, in contrast to the traditional recipe approach starting with lexical analysis as the foundation to build on the analysis of texts using the structural/linguistic toolbox, this study proposes a different route. It proposes using a thematic sampling coding method in order to analyse the localised texts of the news items and the other sets of data.

3.2.2.1 Thematic Coding Procedure

Holloway and Todres (2003, p. 347) identify "thematizing meanings" as one of a few shared generic skills across qualitative research. Qualitative research scholars who advocate approaching the analysis of discourse/texts/interviews (Braun and Clarke 2006, Ely et al 1997, Aronson 1994, Edwards 1993) through thematic coding share the understanding that "A theme captures something important about the data in relation to the research question, and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set" (Braun and Clarke 2006, p. 10). The basic idea of thematic coding then is to work out theme codes within which other variables are cloaked and then discussed in the analysis (Klenke 2016, Attride-Stirling 2001, Ryan and Bernard 2000). According to Boyatzis (1998), thematic coding is a multilayered procedure that can be performed inductively or deductively. Thus, recurrent themes within a dataset can be observed either in:

- An inductive or 'bottom up' approach (Frith and Gleeson 2004, Patton 1990) wherein the themes are deeply associated with the material of the data, thus the identification of

themes proceeds from particular thematic code-formulating units to an overarching ideological theme; or

- A deductive or ‘top down’ way (Boyatzis 1998, Hayes 1997) that involves inferences from general ideological themes which are formulated by the researcher based on his/her theoretical or analytical interest in the field/phenomenon being studied.

In so many ways (and although some research argues otherwise (see Boyatzis (1998)) these two approaches are not really separable. Ely et al (1997) state that the process of thematic coding

Can be misinterpreted to mean that themes ‘reside’ in the data, and if we just look hard enough they will ‘emerge’ like Venus on the half shell. If themes ‘reside’ anywhere, they reside in our heads from our thinking about our data and creating links as we understand them (pp. 205-6)

Bearing in mind the flexibility of the thematic coding procedure (Braun and Clarke 2006, p. 4) according to which themes emerge as the research advances (Ely et al., 1997), these two approaches can be viewed as one blanket approach of complementaries in which one approach may precede the other in application, yet the final product of the thematic coding process cannot be but the fruit of using the both of them. Table 6 (which is adapted from Braun and Clarke’s (2006, p. 16) Table 1) sums up the steps involved in this approach to thematic coding.

Step	Description
1. Engrossing oneself in the data	Digitising and transcribing data (if necessary), reading and rereading the data, tabulating initial observations.
2. Generating initial code-formulating units	Coding prominent features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire dataset, collating data relevant to each code.
3. Sampling for the themes	Ordering codes into initial themes with sampling instantiations, gathering all data relevant samples to each initial theme.
4. Reviewing themes and samples	Examining the themes and their examples in relation to the entire dataset, generating a thematic ‘map’ of the data
5. Defining and naming themes	Refine the specifics of each theme, generating clear definitions and names for each theme.

Table 5. Steps of thematic coding (adapted from Braun and Clarke’s (2006, p. 16) Table 1)

Braun and Clarke (2006 p. 16-23) elaborate on the multi-layeredness of the thematic coding procedure that Boyatzis (1998) mentions. Their elaborations (though undertaken with regard to Braun and Clarke’s (2006) psychoanalysis case study) have been incorporated in devising the thematic coding procedure of this study as follows:

- Digitising and transcribing the data facilitate searching for recurrent patterns, especially if such digital forms of data were organised into Word documents and files – for instance. News items and the comments datasets were already digitised as they were culled from web-based news outlets. The only dataset that needed “transcribing” (Bird 2005) and digitising was the interviews.
- The analysts engross themselves in the data to the point that they become ideally aware of the depth and breadth of the datasets’ topics, context, and extra-context. This kind of engrossment can only happen through:
 - Scrutinising the datasets for meanings, patterns and so on, through recurrent reading of the entire data, and by
 - Relying on an investigative thorough knowledge of the social, historical, political, economic, institutional, contextual and extra-contextual factors that led to the occurrence of the Event (the Arab Spring) which the texts’ dataset tackle, and the same aforesaid factors that surround the producer(s) of the texts and interfere with their (the texts’) production/reproduction.
- Note-taking through leaving/inserting comments, and highlighting or numbering is essential to record the analyst’s thoughts on the segments of a datum within a dataset.
- Backed by the required knowledge and after the first reading, an initial list of variables featuring out the prominent elements in the data should be built. This is the first stage of producing initial thematic codes from the data by bouncing around basic units of codes /themes-formulating variables. It has been mentioned above (see 3.1.1) that news items were tabulated with themes-formulating recursive and interrelated elements such as:
 - Arguments: As arguments function “to express group membership” (Stubbs, 1996, p. 202) their analyses are crucial to signalling where the original writer and the localiser stand in relation to the event in question as well as signalling the alignment or affiliation of the localisers with the readership (cf. Brockbank 2001). In other words, according to which argumentation structure the news outlets/the localisers (as the agents) attempt at legitimising certain ideologies (and their adherents) and delegitimising other ideologies and their adherents.
 - Focalised Naming and Description: By examining naming choices or “labelling” (Thetela 2001, p. 354), a researcher uncovers political stances towards or characteristics and

qualities attributed to individuals, groups, political entities, political systems, policies, etc.

- Presuppositions/Perceptions: Argument-listings and label-listings pave the way to itemising the ideological assumptions of the agents (the writer, the localiser, the commenter, and the interviewee), as well as their points of view and their perspectives behind such arguments and labelling.
- Style/Rhetoric: The stylistic features according to which the above elements are articulated or mitigated can orientate them (the elements) favourably or unfavourably. Recurrent features pertaining to stylistic devices such as using religious language, rhetorical questions, idioms, collocation, etc., could indicate ideological “turbulence” (Toolan 2001, p. 227) that aims at tilting the power balance towards a certain ideology rather than another.
- By collating together these themes-formulating recursive and interrelated elements and their pertinent instantiations in one datum to their counterparts in another datum each of these variables become feasibly easy to categorise. The researcher will start formulating main thematic codes as the possible patterns turn out to be identifiable.
- Once the themes and coding labels of the news items embedded in these variables are sought and identified, their overarching ideologies become easier to deduce bearing in mind that it is a must to exemplify each variable with an extract from the dataset texts during the note taking phase.

However, thematic coding is not void of some shortcomings. One specific inevitable shortcoming that encounters the researchers who tackle thematic coding is the subjectivity that underpins their framework of extracting themes (Potter and Levine-Donnerstein 1999, p. 226). Ryan and Bernard (2000, p. 780) note that “themes are abstract (and often fuzzy) constructs”. Accordingly, the recurrent reading and interpretation of the material to be searched for thematic extraction are highly dependent on the “craft skill” of the researcher (Potter 1997, p. 148). The ensuing argument then becomes that since themes are subjectively derived the rest of the analysis is subjective as well. Potter and Levine-Donnerstein (1999, p. 226) argue that in most cases thematic coders are only stating the obvious in their material. As a remedy for the subjectivity problem, they suggest to make the judgments of the original coders intersubjective through having the thematic codes reviewed by other coders, or offered to readers for feedback. Apart

from whether these solutions are remedial, it should be reiterated that any discussion of a topic that involves description or analysis “is not-and cannot be-neutral” (Van Dijk 1993, p. 270). Hence, the issue of subjectivity can be raised as a shortcoming against almost any approach that involves induction or deduction on the part of the researcher.

Having duly noted these shortcomings, the above steps to code the data have been implemented – as explained in Chapter Four. The initial coding procedure has been carried out through the inductive approach in order to guarantee that the derived thematic codes have no inclination that favours formulating a specific overarching ideology. Patton (1980, p. 40) suggests that “a qualitative research strategy is inductive in that the researcher attempts to make sense of the situation without imposing pre-existing expectations on the research setting”. Therefore, without a priori theory to drive the coding process, initial themes have been extracted from each dataset by inductive structuring of observations which are derived from each datum with the aim of categorising each dataset into tentative meaningful groups of themes/ideologies. On the other hand, these themes have been refined through examining them for extra-contextual affiliations to overarching latent ideological variable(s) (or “latent theme(s)” in Boyatzis words (1998, p. 16)) that underlie the analysed items. These kinds of variables/themes are essentially the focus of a research carried out using CDA. This approach allowed ideological patterns in the three datasets to be recursively and reciprocally identified and thematically coded. Due to the peculiarity of the readership comments, another analysis tool – namely netnography – has been used to assist in complementing the all-embracing analytical framework mapped by CDA.

3.2.3 Netnography

Netnography is a relatively recent analysis method of carrying out qualitative data analysis that came into existence with the advent of internet marketing. Kozinets (2010, pp. 1-9) suggests that netnography, which is a blend of internet and ethnography, is a research method that combines online marketing research with ethnography research. This is a combination of research methods that is also carried out under other expressions such as “online ethnography”, “webnography”, “digital ethnography”, and “cyberanthropology” (ibid). Netnography aims at providing realistic insights into human exchanges that take place in online spaces – or as they are called here virtual locales. It requires sourcing data and using qualitative analysis research in order to examine the constituents of data and to form theme codes (Elliot et al, 2005). This

section presents an overview and a purview of the netnography method with the one aim is to show how it can be applied to the analysis of the dataset of readership comments. The following pertinent segments explain how to work through some of the complexities of analysing web-based readership comments and how to follow methodical procedures when analysing them, especially when the analysed medium (in our case *Al Jazeera* news outlet) does not co-operate in providing the statistical data needed to carry out a netnographic analysis⁴³. Both of the aspects that netnography explores, namely ethnography and internet marketing, need to be briefly reviewed before indulging in applying this method to examine the comments dataset.

3.2.3.1 Ethnography in Virtual Locales

The ethnography aspect of netnography can be explained through thinking of commenters on web-based news items as active participants in informing and forming the social discourse of identifying the “same” vs. the “other” while using the virtual online space in a way similar to their usage of real life situations and conversations to draw such identity limitations. Comments provide a close view of interactive discourse devices (such as arguments) normally utilised to express subjective viewpoints. When commenters post comments, they give a discourse form to their perception, memory, or experience. Comments, then, may be seen as a reflection of the desires, needs, wishes, etc., which the commenters express in their arguments. Commenters spatiotemporally position the event that the news item tackles while employing conscious and subconscious experience-ordering and sense-making. Therefore, comments on the information in the localised news items are examined to probe the commenters’ tropisms to forenamed information then to investigate the reasons behind them.

Viewed thus, comments must be examined while laying open the viewpoints on which the commenters’ ideologies rest. Once this is done, the way becomes paved to contextualising and connecting the commenters’ sense-making determinations to their localic ideologies or settings. Kozinets (2010, p. 2) suggests that netnographies have been used “to show how knowledge creation and learning occur through a reflective ‘virtual re-experiencing’ discourse among the members of innovative online communities”. Commenters, in our case, use an online public sphere (*Al Jazeera*’s comment section) to reason for or against the way the event has been

⁴³ The author of this dissertation wrote to *Al Jazeera* requesting access to its readership statistical data and asking its permission to use the comments on their news items but received no reply.

presented in the localised news items, or for or against the sphere of the localised news item (*Al Jazeera*) while organising themselves into online communities. Therefore, a researcher can follow netnographic procedural guidelines a research of an online community (i.e. a virtual locale) where lines between the “same” and the “other” is drawn.

3.2.3.2 Online Marketing

The online marketing research aspect differentiates netnography from other types of research that involves ethnography. Online marketing research studies the means through which web-based news outlets, for instance, collect ethno-demographic information about their readership in order to orient their news marketing schemes. Commercial localisation marketing softwares can detect the regions of the web browsers, how many times they visited the website, their preferences, their browsing and purchase habits, etc. Web-based news outlets use similar softwares to detect germane hits of websites and visits of news items, and from which locations those hits or visits came. Burrell (2014) claims that “Traffic to The Independent’s website has broken the one million-a-day barrier in the UK, with more than 53.4 million people accessing the site every month”. Ellis (2015) quotes Carl Franzen, online director for *Popular Science*, as saying “We use input from readers online in the form of traffic analytics [...] From there, the editors and writers try to figure out what made certain stories so popular”. This resonates with the references that the interviewed translators made vis-à-vis *Al Jazeera* having a statistics section and the news stories being localised by an editing board. In order to understand how news outlets use input from readers’ online traffic analysis to gauge interests in their news items, few technical aspects of online traffic analytics have to be explained. In this regard, the expression “digital footprint” is of significance. This term refers to the trail or records of the actions that a web browser takes online (Crooe 2012, p. 4). These actions may include web searches, web pages visited, links clicked, comments posted, etc. “Cookies” are among the most common ways of tracking a browser’s online record of actions. Petersen (2007) notes that

A *cookie* is a token or ID that can be passed from computer to computer or from one software process to another on one or more systems to keep track of a user. It’s a way to keep records of processes or activities (p. 954)

Therefore, if a web-based news outlet that uses cookies holds account information of a browser, such as the email address, visits history, or other personal information; the cookie links everything a browser does with this information. Monitoring software and spyware such as

eMailTrackerPro, ComScore, DollarRevenue, PermissionResearch, OpinionSquare and VoiceFive Networks (which uses cookies) are often utilised by commercial websites and news websites to collect information about internet browsers (Edelman 2007). eMailTrackerPro, for instance, can track a browser's email address to the internet protocol (IP) address assigned to an internet user's computer through the internet service provider which can be traced to the country and the city of the browser, i.e. the browser's location. Professor Benjamin Edelman of Harvard University argues that

ComScore's tracking software is remarkably invasive. The privacy policy for comScore's RelevantKnowledge tracking program purports to grant comScore the right to track users' name and address, browsing, shopping, and even online accounts ... includ[ing] personal financial [and] health information. (ibid)

ComScore⁴⁴ claims that "Middle Eastern news network Al Jazeera credited 63.5 percent of its total page views in 2010 to the Middle East – Africa region" (Zain 2011). Illustratively, *Al Jazeera* claims that it has received:

- More than one million visits and over one million hits in 2003 (Al Jazeera 2004).
- An average of 515,229 visits a day, 3,606,609 visits from the 18th to the 24th of September 2005, and 40,224,633 hits a day; with a visit period of six minutes and 53 seconds and an average page-reading of 3 pages per visit "according to the weekly report of the website's traffic" breaking the former record of 300,000-350,000 visits a day and 30-35 million hits a day (Al Jazeera September 28, 2005).
- Over six million visits a day during the "Israeli aggression against Lebanon" in July 2006 (Al Jazeera April 4, 2008).

Al Jazeera claims that during the events of the Arab Spring

Al Jazeera website jumped dozens of ranks ahead and witnessed a massive increase of visits due to its coverage of the events in Tunisia and Egypt since last December [December 2010]⁴⁵ [...] Al Jazeera net data shows that the website received 9,420,000 visits in January [2011]⁴⁶ [...] The website recorded 35,580,000 hits, with more than 150,000,000 viewed pages – more than two times the 58,940,000 number of last month [December 2010]⁴⁷ [...] visits from Egypt (bearing in mind that the internet service was shut down in this country for several days) ranked third to visits from Saudi Arabia that ranked second to visits from the United States according to US-based Geekosystem website (Al Jazeera February 3, 2011)

⁴⁴ ComScore is an American global media measurement and analytics company providing marketing data and analytics to many of the world's largest enterprises, media and advertising agencies, and publishers (comScore. <https://www.comscore.com/About-us>). ComScore statistics are often referred to by news outlets to boost their credibility-through-visits status. Sweney (2014) maintains that "The Guardian overtakes New York Times in comScore traffic figures".

⁴⁵ Emphasis added by the author of this dissertation.

⁴⁶ Emphasis added by the author of this dissertation.

⁴⁷ Emphasis added by the author of this dissertation.

Striking in the above statistics of *Al Jazeera* is how accurate it can not only locate the readership's countries of origin and exact numbers of readers but also which news items they read and how long they lasted reading them to the details of seconds! It is likely that *Al Jazeera*'s "statistics office" (to which the interviewed translators referred) has access to highly sophisticated marketing research and tracking equipment and softwares. Given that *Al Jazeera* conditions that comment posters must log in with an *Al Jazeera* online account, a Facebook ID, a Gmail ID, or an email account before they can post a comment, it can be deducted that it uses abovementioned monitoring softwares to collect information (such as age, gender, education, location, interests, etc.) about the readership in order to identify the constituents of its locales and address them in accordance with the news stories they prefer to read.

Now that both major aspects of netnography have been briefly reviewed above, it should be noted that netnography is utilised here to:

1. Provide an account of the reactions towards the localised news items of *Al Jazeera* through examining the opinions expressed in the Arabic readership responses/comments.
2. Investigate the arguments that commenters provide for their reactions and undertake a thematic coding of the comments.
3. Provide an account of the locales to which *Al Jazeera* addresses its localised news items.

3.2.3.3 Applying Netnography: Limitations and Solutions

This study is one of the few that analyses online readership comments posted in response to online translation-mediated news items covering the Arab Spring. It is perhaps among also the few that uses netnography in this translational context of research. *Al Jazeera*'s coverage of the Arab Spring represents a rare opportunity for researchers to study (through online readership comments) the immediate influence of the localised news items (and the events they cover) on readers. One problem with carrying out such research is the fact that there are not many recognised and successful analysis tools for analysing innately dishevelled online readership comments without having access to readership statistical data. In this regard, using netnography is undeniably hindered by a list of obstacles:

1. **Data Representativeness:** One of the problems that any data collection encounters in general is the representativeness of the data. Comments datasets have two kinds of representativeness problems: one concerns the quality of the comments; and the other

concerns the quality of the readership. *Al Jazeera*'s comment's facility clearly states that it censors comments. Therefore, it is probable that some comments on the localised news items on the Arab Spring may not have been posted by *Al Jazeera* for being deemed *inappropriate* by the censor(s). Studying comments which have already been filtered for appropriateness by the administrators of the news outlets may lead to biased analysis results. A researcher, however, should explicitly state any signs of administered bias that s/he notices in the distribution of posted comments (see 4.3.1).

The second problem of data representativeness falls beyond the censorship of the website administrators. Hermida and Thurman (2008, p. 8) argue that individuals who read and comment on online news items may be different in many ways from those who only read but do not comment. Thus, the comments dataset instantiations may not be a true reflection of public opinion – or at least not the majority of it. Purcell et al (2010, p. 20) suggest that the readership that chose to comment represents a minority of readers on any website. This means that those who comment might tend to have similar interests or strong feelings towards the topic of the localised news item. It should be noted that the reason behind analysing the comments is not to measure a generalisable reaction of the entire Arabic-speaking public opinion towards *Al Jazeera*'s localised news items as much as to explore which Arabic-speaking readers that *Al Jazeera* targets and the reactions of those readers. In fact, this particular limitation of the comments dataset instantiation plays in favour of the argument that news outlets address specific locales with specific interests (see 2.7.1); therefore, it is not deemed a limitation here as much as further proof of the phenomenon of localisation. It should be admitted though that this is not a 'one size fits all' approach to addressing the problem around the representativeness of the commenters.

2. **Inhibition and Disinhibition:** Another limitation, which is attributed to internet-based research in general, is the assumption that subjects tend to be untruthful when expressing themselves while sitting behind their computers and feeling that they are not being watched. Commenters may inhibit their real thoughts or disinhibit unreal ones. Though there is no feasible way to verify the honesty of the commenters' feelings in online comments (especially in case studies where thousands of anonymous comments are analysed), some researchers (Mathieu, et al 2012, Blau and Caspi 2010) claim that people may feel more free

to express honest opinions while anonymously using the cyberspace's virtual locales than when they are having personal interactions in the real world.

3. **Ethical Concerns:** While there are some situational ethical guidelines (not rules) as regards to collecting comments from social media outlets (Townsend and Wallace 2016), no specific ethical guidelines on collecting and analysing comments on news items have been found. Giles et al (2015) state that “Netnography is still a relatively new approach to data collection and analysis and there is limited guidance on the ethics of using this approach”. Upon consulting the Internal Guidelines and Procedures of the Office of Research Ethics and Integrity at the University of Ottawa (uOttawa Office of Research Ethics and Integrity January 2016), it turned out that the general guidelines for carrying out online research do not specify a procedure such as obtaining the consent of the participants (the commenters) when conducting a case study that involves comments on news items⁴⁸. The Association of Internet Researchers (2012) argues that the set of Internet research guidelines are flexible, and that a researcher's responsibility towards the participants (the commenters) increases if there is a possible risk of harm to those participants. Townsend and Wallace (2016), who collected the viewpoints on collecting and analysing comments from social media outlets from a workshop held at the University of Aberdeen, suggest that in such a case the commenters' IDs should be concealed. They provide examples from questions on case studies which have been discussed in said workshop and present suggested answers. One particular case study seems to have encountered the same concerns that this study encounters:

- i. Context: A researcher conducts a critical discourse analysis of a dataset of tweets using the hashtags #DonaIdTrump; #TrumpTrain; [...]. These are analysed in order to find out how Trump supporters argue for their candidate on Twitter.
- ii. Concerns: Can we consider this data public? Are there any issues of sensitivity or risk of harm? Do we need to seek informed consent before quoting these tweets directly?
- iii. Solution: Trump supporters use these hashtags in order to reach a broad public and convince other people to vote for Trump. It is therefore reasonable to assume that such tweets have public character: the authors expect and want to be observed by strangers in order to make a political point that they want others to read. The researcher can therefore directly quote such tweets without having to obtain informed consent. It is, however, good practice to delete the user IDs of everyday users, who are not themselves public figures. (Townsend and Wallace 2016, p. 15)

By analogy, and given the fact that the comments analysed in this case study do not contain/show personal ID information such as those of social media accounts, the

⁴⁸ The School of Translation and Interpretation approved including readers' comments on *Al Jazeera's* news items in this dissertation.

participants' consents have not been sought. The commenters normally make a conscious choice of posting comments with no expectation of privacy. The other concern was whether *Al Jazeera*'s consent should be obtained before collecting the comments from its website. *Al Jazeera*'s permission in this regard has been requested but it chose not to reply. *Al Jazeera*'s liability statement that tops its comment section (namely: "Published comments do not reflect the opinions of Al Jazeera, but rather the opinions of the commenters") has been taken as a disclaimer that enables researchers to study those comments without the need for *Al Jazeera*'s consent. Commenters' names/pseudo names that may contain identifying proper names of the commenters were concealed in accordance with Townsend and Wallace's recommendation. Generic names/pseudo names such as those that contain only an adjective (the smart, the suppressed, etc.), nationality adjective (the Libyan, the Tunisian, etc.), first name only (Omar, Ali, etc.), a first name and a nationality adjective (Hassan the Jordanian, Muhammad the Kuwaiti, etc.), etc. have been sampled below as there is an extremely minimal possibility that commenters might be specifically identified.

4. **Access to Commenters' Socio-demographic Data:** In order to apply netnography, it is essential for a researcher to have access to the socio-demographic statistical information about the commenters. Since such access to *Al Jazeera*'s statistical records on the ethno/socio-demographic characteristics of the readership could not be obtained; information about the commenters has been alternatively induced from the names/pseudo names of the commenters, the comments' contents, and used registers and styles. Following are samples of the information that have been induced accordingly with commenters' verbatim comments⁴⁹:

1. **Age:** Very few comments contained references to the age category of the commenters. For instance, one commenter chose the pseudo name ضابط متقاعد "a retired male officer" (*Al Jazeera* December 20, 2010) with a reference in the comment that he is Tunisian. These two signs may lead to the induction that the commenter is at least fifty-five⁵⁰ years old. Another commenter included in his/her comment a reference to the fact that s/he determinedly witnessed events that date back to at least November 1987 at the latest:

على الأقل بورقيبة كان يظهر لنا يوميا في التلفاز وهذا لم أره أبدا يتكلم في المباشر. (ibid).

⁴⁹ All comments are quoted "as is" with their spelling and grammatical mistakes.

⁵⁰ The official minimum age of retirement for state employees in Tunisia according to the official website of Caisse Nationale de Retraite et de Prévoyance Sociale.

Gloss⁵¹: At least Bourguiba⁵² used to appear for us daily on television, but I have never seen this one [Bin Ali]⁵³ speak on live broadcast.

The reference that the commenter makes to the recurrent appearance of President Bourguiba on live television during the 1970s and the 1980s may lead to the induction that this commenter was perhaps in his/her late teens in 1987 and makes him/her in his/her mid to late forties at the time of posting the comment. Most commenters did not provide indications about their age. Therefore it is safer to assume that the age, class, and occupation categories of the commenters are unknown than to resort to suppositional generalisations such as the above.

2. **Gender:** Broadly speaking, MSA's parts of speech such as nouns (whether proper or common), pronouns (excluding the singular first person pronoun), adjectives, determiners, verbs, adverbs, etc. show grammatical gender distinction. They signify the sex of the commenters who use them to identify themselves. 11 (0.17%) commenters out of the 6114 used feminine pseudo names, while 6103 (99.8%) used masculine pseudo names. No personal feminine references were found in the contents of the comments.
3. **Education:** 2445 (40%) commenters showed an ability to write in grammatically correct MSA and elaborate Arabic style. Al-Husari maintains that "MSA is the preserve of a small, select number of educated people, few of whom bother using it as a speech form" (quoted in Freyha 1989, p. 5). Hence, the induction came to be that 40% of the commenters have perhaps good university education. 2140 (35%) commenters used a diglossia of MSA and Arabic vernaculars with different proportions of either and sometimes total disregard of MSA grammatical rules which was taken as an indication that these commenters have perhaps some education but not necessarily a university one.

⁵¹ Glosses are used in this study to give an "interpretation" of the ST not a professional translation. Therefore, they will sometimes include what might seem to be grammatical errors. These are purposefully kept in order to give the reader a feel of the original text structure and order of thought, arguments, word arrangements, etc.

⁵² Habib Bourguiba is the architect of Tunisia's independence from France and first president of Tunisia (1957-1987). Under his rein, the role of Islam in Tunisian identity was reduced and the workings of government were made exclusively secular. Women's rights were recognized in the 1956 Code of Personal Status which banned polygamy, gave women virtual legal equality with men. Education was extended throughout the country, and the curriculum was modernized to reduce religious influence of Islam. (Habib Bourguiba, Encyclopaedia Britannica). In YouTube videos Bourguiba is seen removing "safsari" (a traditional white Tunisian robe/hijab) from timid Tunisian women (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vmHm25oS2Vw>).

⁵³ Emphasis added by the author of this dissertation.

1529 (25%) of the commenters used their own Arabic vernaculars to express their opinions. Arabic vernaculars do not require any kind of formal education to learn. They are the de facto registers that the populations of the Arabic-speaking world use in their daily communication.

4. **Nationality/Location:** 5001 (81.7 %) of the commenters' names/pseudo names or comments included references to the commenters' nationalities, locations, or origins:

Pseudo names in Arabic:

- امحمد من الجزائر (Emhemmad from Algeria)
- يماني يماني يماني (Yemeni Yemeni Yemeni)
- ابن فلسطين الحر (The free son of Palestine)
- تونسي مهاجر (Tunisian immigrant)
- أحمد هولاندا (Ahmad from Holland)

Pseudo names in Latin letters:

- Paris
- Jamal Deutschland
- masry men Hamburg (Egyptian from Hamburg)
- hassan...m...australia
- I am from Libya

Other localic distinctive features have been induced through the references that the commenters made in their comments such as:

- عسى ان تصل شرارتكم الى سوريا وينجيننا الله من نظامنا الفاسد (Al Jazeera December 28, 2010)

Gloss: I hope that your spark gets to Syria so that God saves us from our corrupt regime

- أنا مصري ونفسي نعمل زي تونس لأن الحالة في مصر أسوأ من تونس... (ibid)

Gloss: I'm Egyptian and I wish that we can do like Tunisians because the conditions in Egypt are worse than in Tunisia...

Some localic features have been induced based on the commenters' use of vernaculars, diglossia of MSA and Arabic vernaculars, or even MSA with idiosyncratic expressions that can distinctly be traced to certain geographic regions in the Arabic-speaking world (see Erwin 1963, Harrell 1957). Thackston (2003) maintains that

When one crosses one or more major boundaries, as is the case with a Baghdadi and a Damascene for instance, one begins to encounter difficulty in comprehension; and the farther one goes, the less one understands until mutual comprehension disappears entirely. To take an extreme example, a Moroccan and an Iraqi can no more understand each other's dialects than can a Portuguese and Rumanian (p. vii)

For instance, MSA words in Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia such as: إشهار /ishhar/ (advertisement), نهج /nahj/ (street), هاته /hatih/ (this), جهوي /jahawi/ (local), etc. are normally replaced with إعلان /i'lan/, شارع /shari'/, هذه /hathihi/, محلي /mahalli/ respectively in the MSA Arabic used in other Arabic-speaking countries. Furthermore, Arabic dialects have distinctive phonological characteristics that, if written, reveal in most cases the nationality and the region within a certain country to which the writer belongs (Younes 1993):

- هيك /haik/ the vernacular expression for “like this” in the Levant
- شو /sho/ the vernacular expression for “what” in the Levant
- دلوقتي /dilwati/ the vernacular expression for “now” in Egypt
- كده /kida/ the vernacular expression for “like this” in Egypt
- بهايط /yehayit/ the vernacular expression for “bluff/exaggerate” in Saudi Arabia
- موية /mooya/ the vernacular expression for “water” in Saudi Arabia

Applying analysis tools is never void of challenges. Some challenges are harder to overcome than others due to reasons that can be traced to the analysed material rather than the analysis tool. One of the problems that a researcher encounters in analysing comments is that they are extremely dishevelled which makes them inherently hard to synchronise with the themes of the news items. Comments can be reflections of unrestrained human behaviour by unknown individuals. However, the suggested solutions for the above limitations of applying netnography proved to be relatively helpful in producing one leg of the thematic coding tripod (the other two being the themes of the localised news items and the interviews) on which the analysis of this study rests as we will discuss in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

THEMATIC CODING OF THE DATASETS: DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

It has been noted above (see 3.2.2-3.2.2.1) that this study adopts a thematic coding method in order to analyse the localised texts of the news items and the other two sets of data – the interviews and the readership comments. One of the reasons behind using thematic coding is the “flexibility” of this method (Braun and Clarke 2006, p. 4). Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 16) note that thematic coding is more of a recursive process where a researcher moves back and forth as needed, throughout the steps of mapping the codes; thus thematic codes emerge “before, during, and after” (Ryan & Bernard, 2000, p. 780) the final phase of the analysis. It is then a process that evolves as the research advances (Ely et al., 1997).

Thematic codes stand for a group of themes that can be visibly or discernably detected in the three datasets. The aim of the thematic coding procedure that is specifically pursued in this chapter is to see if there is a *main overarching ideological variable* (or as Boyatzis (1998) terms it the “latent theme”) in these datasets, and then see how other initial ideological variables relate to it. One important aspect of a latent theme is that it captures “the underlying aspects of the phenomenon under investigation” (Boyatzis, 1998, p. 16, see also Klenke 2016, p. 101). This is a significant issue in CDA research which essentially investigates underlying messages and their ideologies. This thematic coding approach has been basically conducted in a way that let the themes lead to verifying the main overarching ideological variable that underpins the three sets of data. The initial ideological variables and the main overarching ideological variable are assumed to stand on reciprocal, intertwined and interactive relationships with each other (Braun and Clarke 2006).

In order to facilitate scanning the sets of data for frequent themes the datasets have been organised in a digital format. Recurrent themes were then sought and tabulated in each dataset. In accordance with the inductive and deductive approaches of thematic coding (see 3.2.2.1), the discussions in this chapter will illustrate how a main ideology can lend meaning to the code units/variables in the news item and their sequential arrangement. They will also illustrate that

the way the code units are arranged can be viewed as the structure of the main ideology. The main themes of the datasets have been laid down through scrutinising this whole-part/part-whole association primarily through multiple readings of the datasets. Through this process, the constituents of a datum have been categorised and subjected to a specific analytic examination; they have also been linked to the analysis of the larger whole – i.e. the entire data of the study.

This chapter provides a description of the themes which are recurrent in the three sets of data described above: micro dataset (specifically *Al Jazeera*'s texts), the dataset of the interviews with *Al Jazeera* translators, and the dataset of *Al Jazeera* readership comments. It also provides an overview of *Al Jazeera*'s media discourse and the main ideologies and themes of this discourse. It should be noted, however, that the accounts provided for the themes and ideologies of *Al Jazeera*'s texts will merely serve as an introduction to the analysis of the localisation techniques of these texts in Chapter Five. On the other hand, the themes of the interviews dataset and the comments dataset are discussed in detail in this chapter with illustrative examples.

4.1 Thematic Coding of the News Items Set of Data

For the purpose of grounding the discussions that will follow (whether in the next segments of this chapter or in the following chapter), an inductive review of the content of the news items dataset has been undertaken to determine their themes. Following a matching process that sought themes in TTs which originate in STs, as many as possible of the meaningful code units (arguments, events, political stances, etc.) in the news items dataset have been grouped into distinctive categories of themes pertinent to the Arab Spring and the Arabic-speaking world. These themes have categorised then into the following five major categories of themes:

- Themes framing the Event and its causes
- Themes framing the regimes of the Arabic-speaking world during the Event
- Themes framing international reactions to/interference in the Event
- Themes framing the results/ramifications of the Event
- Themes framing *Al Jazeera* and its benefactor

Each of these themes is listed in Table 7 below with an example from *Al Jazeera*'s localised news items that features a relevant code unit. The tentative end product of this process was the deduction that there are two initial comprising ideologies in the analysed texts: protagonism and anti-regimism/reformism. This end product of ideologies is tentative because, according to CDA,

these ideologies have to be verified against the agendas of the agents involved in the production of the localised text, which are only touched upon in this chapter and discussed in detail in Chapter Five. However, these two ideologies comprise inter-themes, i.e. themes that have more or less been translated from the non-Arabic STs into the Arabic localised texts of *Al Jazeera*. It is very important to note that there are major and significant differences between the arguments, ideologies, political stances, the orientations, the principles that underlie these themes, and the purposes for which these themes are included in the STs on the one hand and in the localised TTs of *Al Jazeera* on the other.

Before stating the reasons behind identifying these ideologies (protagonism and anti-regimism/reformism) and how they tentatively represent the themes, we need to define them in general terms. Most dictionaries define protagonism as the active support of an idea or cause etc., especially the act of pleading or arguing for something. Therefore, a protagonist is defined as someone who is a proponent, or a supporter of a cause and is involved in a struggle of some kind, either against someone or something (Merriam-Webster Dictionary). Both *Al Jazeera* and Fisk present themselves as protagonists in their own terms. *Al Jazeera* claims that it is a forum of those who do not have one (Code of Ethics, Al Jazeera.net; see also the Proclaimed Objectives of *Al Jazeera* in 3.1.1.4.1). In other words, it provides a public outlet of free speech for those who are victims of violence, minoritisation, hegemonic practices, unfavourable economic or social conditions, etc. Its journalistic discourse (before and during the Arab Spring) claims to endorse an open critique of the social, sociopolitical and economic conditions that have plagued the populations of the Arabic-speaking world. *Al Jazeera*'s selection of foreign articles (that address these issues) for translation furthers said endorsement (see the discussions of *Al Jazeera*'s selection technique in 5.1.1). The themes that emerged (when *Al Jazeera*'s localised texts were thoroughly scanned) seem to comply with this protagonist line of *Al Jazeera*. Robert Fisk (as a major source of the news items) bluntly states that "journalism is about 'naming the guilty' and sod the consequences" (Cooke 2008). He upholds the view that journalism cannot be neutral when tackling issues pertinent to victims of unfavourable situations (see 4.2.1). The themes that *Al Jazeera* localised from his articles support his position.

As for the second ideology, i.e. anti-regimism, Eakins and Gatch (2015, p. 44) maintain that "regimism [...] is a particularly acute problem at many levels [...] A regime that is based on suppression of self-determination and destruction of human rights is not a legitimate

government, but rather is an especially successful criminal enterprise.” The regimes of the Arabic-speaking world can be categorised within this understanding of regimism (see 1.6.1). Both *Al Jazeera* and Fisk are harsh critics of the autocratic regimes of the Arabic-speaking world and consider them responsible for most of the problems of this world. As self-claimed protagonists that hold stances in defence of the victims in the Arabic-speaking world, Fisk and *Al Jazeera* identify the regimes of forenamed world as the perpetrators who are behind these victims’ suffering. They also attribute some of the problems of the abovementioned world to foreign interference. Since it has minimal influence on our subject-matter (localisation of news items on the Arab Spring) this aspect will not receive much discussion here.

Themes	Examples from the Localised Items	Gloss
Themes framing the Event and its causes:		
Causes of the Arab Spring	هي تراكم أسباب تؤدي في النهاية بالشعب إلى التحرك (Al Jazeera, April 15, 2011)	They are an accumulation of reasons that lead people to move
Pan-Arab phenomenon	العرب أخيرا صار بإمكانهم السير نحو المجد لا ربيع للفلسطينيين (Al Jazeera, march 22, 2011) (Al Jazeera, January 28, 2012)	- Arabs can finally march towards glory - No Spring for the Palestinians
Pro-democracy protests	وإن أيادي كثيرة ربما ستتدخل لإعادة الديمقراطية الجديدة إلى دكتاتوريات كسابق عهدها (Al Jazeera, march 22, 2011)	Many hands may interfere to change the new democracies back to the former state of the dictatorships
Anti-regimist protests	إنها أول مرة يتم فيها إخراج دكتاتور من بلد بجماهير كانت تحت سيطرته (Al Jazeera, April 15, 2011)	It is the first time that a dictator is forced to step down by the people who were under his control
Pro-Islamist Implications	جيش الأسد يتلقى الآن ضربات من الثوار المسلحين الذين يشملون قوات إسلامية (Al Jazeera, June 29, 2012)	Assad’s army is now receiving strikes from armed rebels who include Islamist forces
Themes framing the regimes of the Arabic-speaking world during the Event:		
Tunisian regime’s actions	رجال الشرطة في تونس يسحلون معارضي الحكومة (Al Jazeera, February 16, 2011)	Police in Tunisia dragging opponents of the government
Egyptian regime’s actions	شرطة مكافحة الشغب الشرسة وعصابات مدمني المخدرات التابعة لها، الذين يعملون مباشرة تحت إمرة وزارة الداخلية- هم نفس الأشخاص الذين يطلقون النار ليلا في ميدان التحرير (Al Jazeera, January 1, 2011)	The fierce riot police and the gangs of drug addicts, who work directly under the Ministry of the Interior, are the same people who shoot at night in Tahrir Square
Libyan regime’s actions	الدكتاتور القاسي والمتكبر والمغرور أوغل في سفك دماء الليبيين (Al Jazeera, February 22, 2011)	The cruel and arrogant dictator is preoccupied with shedding the blood of the Libyans
Syrian regime’s actions	التنظيف ينذر بقتل جماعي بسوريا (Al Jazeera, March 1, 2012)	Cleansing omens a genocide in Syria

Yemeni regime regime's actions	نفس الأسلوب متبعاً في اليمن (Al Jazeera, February 16, 2011)	The same method is followed in Yemen
Saudi regime's actions	تحكمها الأقلية وتهيمن عليها السعودية (Al Jazeera, April 21, 2012)	Ruled by the minority and dominated by Saudi Arabia
Bahraini regime's actions	في البحرين، رغم ما تشهده من فوضى وقمع للمعارضة (Al Jazeera, April 21, 2012)	In Bahrain, and despite the scenes of opposition suppression
Themes framing international reactions to the Event:		
US government reaction	مبعوث أوباما له علاقات عمل بمبارك (Al Jazeera, February 7, 2011)	US envoy has business ties with Mubarak
General International reaction	الغرب يود رؤية ديمقراطية في تونس ولكن ليس الكثير منها (Al Jazeera January 17, 2011)	The West wishes to see democracy in Tunisia but not too much of it
Themes framing the results/ramifications of the Event		
Expectations of the regimes to fall	بدا زعيما فقد السيطرة على كل شيء وأصبحت أيامه معدودة في السلطة (Al Jazeera, February 24, 2011) فيسك: أهي نهاية البعث بسوريا؟ (Al Jazeera, April 20, 2011)	He seemed like a leader who lost control over everything with few days left for him in power
Expectations of the Islamists to succeed	جماعة الإخوان المسلمين صاحبة الجذور الحقيقية في أنحاء مصر والتي لها حق دخول البرلمان في انتخابات نزيهة (Al Jazeera, February 6, 2011)	The Muslim Brotherhood movement who has real roots in Egypt and the right to enter the parliament in free elections
Success of Islamists	انتخابات 23 أكتوبر/تشرين الأول التي فازت فيها حركة النهضة بـ89 مقعداً (Al Jazeera, August 30, 2012)	The elections of October 23 in which the Nahda Party won with 89 seats
Trials of the Mubarak regime	مبارك سيموت في السجن (Al Jazeera, June 3, 2012)	Mubarak will die in prison
Fall of the Islamists' governing model	حركة النهضة بأنها تسعى إلى السيطرة على مفاصل الدولة (Al Jazeera, August 30, 2012)	The Nahda movement aims at controlling aspects of the state
The Egyptian military coup d'état	الجيش المصري يقود البلاد للهاوية (Al Jazeera, August 17, 2013) مصر تعود إلى عصر الطغاة والاستبداد (Al Jazeera, January 21, 2014)	- The Egyptian army is leading the country into the abyss - Egypt goes back to the era of the dictators
The rise of ISIS	بعد الفظائع التي ارتكبت ضد مسلمي البوسنة لا عجب اليوم أن "الجهاديين" ساروا على درب الحرب في سوريا (Al Jazeera, September 8, 2014)	After the atrocities that has been committed against Bosnian Muslims, there is no surprise that jihadists are taking the root to war in Syria
The refuge crisis	العالم نسي محنة المشردين السوريين الذين فروا وإن الأطفال السوريين يجبرون على العمل في دول اللجوء في ظروف قاسية (Al Jazeera, October 28, 2014)	The world has forgotten the plight of displaced Syrians who have fled and that Syrian children are forced to work in countries of asylum in harsh conditions
Themes framing Al Jazeera/its benefactor		
The role of Al Jazeera	استفاد ملايين المصريين المسالمين في القاهرة من الجزيرة (Al Jazeera, February 16, 2011)	Millions of peaceful Egyptians benefited from Al Jazeera

Persecution of <i>Al Jazeera</i>	ألقى باللائمة على الجانب . المظلم لأعداء البلد الوهميين، مثل الجزيرة (Al Jazeera, February 6, 2011)	He blamed the dark side of imagined enemies of the country such as <i>Al Jazeera</i>
Qatari regime's actions and support for Islamists	ستحث قطر على ضمان حقوق المسلمين السنة في لبنان والعراق (Al Jazeera, June 29, 2012)	It will urge Qatar to ensure the rights of Sunni Muslims in Iraq and Lebanon

Table 6. Summary of Al Jazeera's themes in the news items dataset with sample examples and arguments

These two ideologies (protagonism and anti-regimism/reformism) stand in a complementary and recursive order to each other. The relationship between the two ideologies becomes more obvious if they are put in their Arab Spring (which is essentially a pro-reform and an anti-regimist unrest) context. The ideologies represented by the themes in Table 7 are discussed below and illustrated with examples from the STs and the TTs along with a review of code units that constitute them.

4.1.1 Fisk's Protagonism

The themes in Fisk's works (as well as in *Al Jazeera*'s localised news items) intertwine and interrelate. Therefore, it is natural for different analysts or common readers to observe different themes in the same text. An examination of Fisk's collection of works (whether his opinion articles, news reports or books) shows that he is not only a journalist but also a historian, a novelist, and a political analyst. The following segments provide descriptions of the distinctive features and themes that can be observed in his works. As they are focussing on Fisk's texts (the STs), the upcoming discussions may expectedly seem less associated with the studied phenomenon (localisation) – especially if we consider the DTS-oriented theoretical framework of this work. Fisk's themes are mainly discussed to provide a better understanding of *Al Jazeera*'s ideological borrowings as we will see in this chapter and in more details in Chapter Five.

Fisk is a protagonist in the sense that he vigorously speaks his mind in defence of victims and minorities, and against violence, injustice, discrimination, hegemonic practices, and wars. Fisk's condemnation of victims-generating acts goes beyond loathing them to articulating the plight of those who suffer from them. With regard to the Arabic-speaking world, Fisk's protagonist inclinations precede the events of the Arab Spring. Since MENA has been plagued with many civil wars (the Lebanese civil war, the Algerian civil war, etc.) and regional wars (the Arab-Israeli wars, the first Gulf war, etc.), victims of wars and their ramifications are recurrent topics in his articles. Fisk (2005, p. xix) states "War is primarily not about victory or defeat but

about death and the infliction of death". All wars to him are malign in intention and lamentable in effect. Worth noting in this regard is Fisk's recognition of the Palestinians' tragedy which he attributes to the Arab-Israeli wars and their consequences. Fisk (2005) maintains:

peaceful protests by Palestinians have always been ignored or suppressed. When Palestinians and other Arab nations took their case against Ariel Sharon's land-grabbing Wall to the International Court at The Hague in 2004" [...] Israel simply refused to heed the court's ruling (p. 1252)

In the same vein, Fisk alludes to the Palestinians' suffering resulting from building Israeli settlements on their lands by noting that Israel

is the only nation on earth which does not know and will not declare where its eastern frontier is. Is it the old UN armistice line, the 1967 border [...], or the Palestinian West Bank minus settlements, or the whole of the West Bank? Show me a map of the United Kingdom which includes England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, and it has the right to exist. But show me a map of the UK which claims to include the 26 counties of independent Ireland in the UK and shows Dublin to be a British rather than an Irish city, and I will say no, this nation does not have the right to exist within these expanded frontiers. Which is why, in the case of Israel, almost every Western embassy, including the US and British embassies, are in Tel Aviv, not in Jerusalem (Fisk, September 20, 2011)

In a style that is devoid of the quagmire of terminology that normally engulfs explicating the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, in general, and their border disputes, in particular, Fisk explains to the ordinary English reader (who probably does not know much about said conflict and disputes) the complexities behind the land-grabbing policies of Israel. Fisk presents himself as a truth seeker (Fisk 2005, p. 54). This vision of truth-seeking underpins his profession and writings. He admits that he allocates more space in his articles to victims at the expense of the perpetrators. Fisk says

At Sabra-Shatila [when, in 1982, Christian Phalangists⁵⁴ murdered some 2,000 Palestinian refugees while the Israeli army stood by]⁵⁵ [...] I remember thinking: if these people have souls, they would want me to be there [...] We must pursue injustice. This is not a football match where you report both sides. This is a massive human tragedy. At Sabra-Shatila did I give equal time to the Phalange? No, I did not. When I reported on a suicide bombing in an Israeli pizzeria did I give equal time to Islamic Jihad? No. You talk to the victims (Cooke 2008)

Fisk's stance with regard to the Palestinian issue is perhaps one of the reasons that *Al Jazeera* has chosen his germane articles for translation.

In Fisk's Anglophone media context, the fact that news on MENA's violence-victims in mainstreamist Anglo-American media are scarce and hardly comprehensive (contrary to the news reports when the victims are Anglo-Americans (Jaramillo 2009, pp. 137-138)) caused him

⁵⁴ The Lebanese Phalanges Party (حزب الكتائب اللبنانية) Hizb al-Kata'ib al-Lubnaniyya) is a Christianist political movement that collaborated with Israel during the Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon.

⁵⁵ Emphasis added by Cooke.

to oppose this inequality construct of the “Same” vs “Other” – which sometimes provides a justification for caring less about victims of the Other category (see 2.8). Fisk quotes Robert Skidelsky⁵⁶ (who is commenting on the Arab Spring), then satirically adds

Robert Skidelsky who believes that the Bush-Blair fantasy “liberation” of Iraq [...] led to the street uprisings today “But Western democracies’ combination of freedom and order... is the product of a long history that cannot be replicated in short order,” he has been saying. “Most non-Western peoples rely upon the ruler’s personal virtues, not institutional limits on his power, to make their lives tolerable”. I get the point. Arabs cannot be trusted with democracy – indeed they aren’t ready for it like we smug Westerners are and, er, the Israelis of course (Fisk, March 22, 2011)

Fisk’s critique of Skidelsky’s vision of MENA (in relation to the Arab Spring) and the subliminal messages that it carries reflects his condemnation of Anglo-American dominance, superiority narratives, and apathy towards much of the region’s calamities. This critique also mirrors Fisk’s optimism with regard to the Arab Spring at its beginning. Fisk notes (in the same article in which he criticises Skidelsky):

Right across the Arab world, freedom is now a prospect [...] the Arabs can hope to march into the bright sunlit uplands [...] From Tunisia to Egypt to Libya, to Yemen – perhaps only 48 hours from freedom – to Morocco and to Bahrain and, yes, even now to Syria, the young and the brave have told the world that they want freedom. And freedom, over the coming weeks and months, they will undoubtedly obtain (ibid)

However, as the Arab Spring plunged into the abyss of civil wars, he made a seemingly sorrowful retraction in January 2014 by stating “Who now remembers the Arab Awakening – or “spring” as some of my colleagues still insist on calling it?” (Fisk, January 5, 2014).

Fisk’s reports on the Arab Spring teem with exposés of the pro-regimist Arabophone media, denunciations of the regimes, and vivid descriptions of the dictators’ atrocious actions and deceptive speeches, destruction of historical landmarks, and human losses and suffering of the upheaval’s victims. For instance, Fisk states (while reporting on the Syrian Arab Spring) that “Syrian television has shown not a single dead civilian or civilian funeral after the death of perhaps 320 demonstrators in more than a month. Another 20 were reported killed around Deraa yesterday” (Fisk, April 27, 2011). In accordance with his journalistic inclinations, Fisk’s coverage of the Arab Spring shows that he pays more attention to the victims of violent practices than any other element of the story he is reporting. As the regimes’ violence forced the protestors to arm themselves in order to counter-balance the violence practiced against them, the suffering of ordinary people throughout the Arab Spring increased. At this point, Fisk’s coverage started taking a more comprehensive approach that gives voice to those who were random victims of the

⁵⁶ A professor of political economy at Warwick University and a frequent writer at *The Guardian*.

revolutionists. Some of his reports on the Syrian Arab Spring provide instructive examples. In an article (that *The Independent* published on August 29, 2012) on the mass killing of more than 245 civilians in the Syrian city of Daraya, Fisk points more fingers at the rebels (especially Islamists) than the Syrian government army or pro-regimist militia citing testimonies from the locals (Fisk, August 29, 2012). This infuriated some Syrian rebels as well as some of their supporters. Saleh (2012) claims that Fisk is being immoral with regard to his report on Daraya, touring the city while accompanied by the Syrian regime's tanks and soldiers. In Canada, pro-Syrian rebels went as far as preventing Fisk from delivering a speech in a major mosque in Ottawa. On this incident, Fisk wrote an article (titled: "How Canada, land of political correctness, became the latest front in the Syrian civil war") in which he remarks

The Syrian civil war has "spilled over" into...Canada [...] Arab Muslim residents of Ottawa [...] sent an email to the organisers of my lectures. "If you believe in free speech," it said, "please cancel Robert Fisk's tour" [...]it was an instructive lesson to find that Muslim Arabs living in Canada, resident in Canada and, I'm sure, in many cases citizens of Canada, forgot the basic freedoms of the land in which they have chosen to be. Once anger overcame them, they preferred the suppression tactics of the dictators they hate (Fisk, February 10, 2013)

Obviously, the Arab Spring added more members to Fisk's list of disparagers. In addition to the original members including pro-Anglo-American and pro-Israeli mainstreamists, the new members – oddly enough – are Muslims/Arabs whose causes he has been accused of biasedly protagonising. As we will discuss later, Fisk's stances with regard to the fighting factions during the Arab Spring caused his cooperation with *Al Jazeera* to become unsteady and the number of his articles translated by *Al Jazeera* to fluctuate accordingly.

4.1.2 Fisk's Anti-regimism and Reformism

Fisk has been living in MENA for more than half his life now; consequently, he is quite familiar with the relevant governing systems of the region as well as the concerns and the sufferings of the locals and the reasons behind them. His coverage of the corruption of the autocratic regimes and other issues that pertain to these regimes' practices and defective policies has always been informative and outstanding – especially when compared to that of other Anglo-American writers. Anti-regimism manifests itself through the themes and the arguments against the suppressive regimes of the Arabic-speaking world that emerge in his articles on the Arab Spring. Fisk points out his longstanding anti-regimist stance by remarking that

The end of the age of dictators in the Arab world? Certainly they are shaking in their boots across the Middle East, the well-heeled sheiks and emirs, and the kings, including one very old one in Saudi Arabia and a young one in Jordan, and presidents – another very old one in Egypt and a young one in Syria – because Tunisia wasn't meant to happen (Fisk, January 17, 2011)

In his other reports on the Arabic-speaking world and the Arab Spring, Fisk allots criticism to the corrupt and repressive regimes – past, present, pan-Arabist, republicans, and monarchs alike – of Saddam Hussein of Iraq, Hosni Mubarak of Egypt, Muammar Gadhafi of Libya, Zine El Abidine Ben Ali of Tunisia, Ali Abdullah Saleh of Yemen, Bashar Assad of Syria, the Algerian regime, the Saudi regime, the Bahraini regime, the Qatari regime, etc., in accordance with the atrocities they commit, the faulty policies they enact, or their corruption and unwillingness to carry out the necessary reforms. Fisk's reformist themes associate the lack of reform with the causes of the protests of the Arab Spring

What drove the Arabs in their tens of thousands and then their millions on to the streets of Middle East capitals was a demand for dignity and a refusal to accept that the local family-ruled dictators actually owned their countries. The Mubaraks and the Ben Alis and the Gaddafis and the kings and emirs of the Gulf (and Jordan) and the Assads all believed that they had property rights to their entire nations. Egypt belonged to Mubarak Inc, Tunisia to Ben Ali Inc (and the Trabelsi family), Libya to Gaddafi Inc. And so on. The Arab martyrs against dictatorship died to prove that their countries belonged to their own people. (Fisk, December 10, 2011; see also Fisk, January 19, 2014)

The point that Fisk makes in the above quote is that the Arabic-speaking world has been ruled by dictators whose fallacious actions are, to a great extent, the source of its problems. Fisk highlights an important issue to remember for the upcoming discussions in Chapter Five, namely the reasons and the ideologies that motivated the pro-democracy protestors of the Arab Spring. Not without merit, anti-regimist disparagements of the dictators of the Arabic-speaking world are recurrent in Fisk's works. He describes the majority of these dictators as “the Arab buffoons who have hitherto littered the Middle East” (Fisk, May 30, 2011). In another example, Fisk maintains that the brutality used by the dictators to prolong their rule and to suppress their peoples did not manage but to hasten their fall which “proves [...] that the dictators of the Middle East are infinitely more stupid, more vicious, more vain, more arrogant, more ridiculous than even their own people realised” (Fisk, February 16, 2011). Fisk also criticises the “not democratic” monarchs of the Gulf countries for fuelling the war by proxy in Syria. He argues that “The battle against Assad – a struggle supported by [...] those wonderful, freedom-loving democracies in the Gulf – is an attempt to strike down Iran's only Arab ally [sic.]” (Fisk, May 26, 2013). In other instances, Fisk's frustration with the actions of these dictators causes him to level individual affronts to each one of them in accordance with the event that he [Fisk] is tackling

(see Fisk, November 26, 2011; Fisk, May 30, 2011; Fisk, February 22, 2011; Fisk, January 17, 2011; Fisk, February 6, 2011).

Fisk's articles on the Arabic-speaking world, in general, and the Arab Spring, in particular, were expected to reward him with nothing less than the repressive regimes' wrath. Saudi Arabia was outraged by Fisk's reports, especially as the Saudi regime is a pummelling bag of his criticism. Criticising the Saudi regimes attitude towards the Arab Spring, Fisk (January 28, 2012) remarks that "When Netanyahu and the king of Saudi Arabia could line up to plead with Obama to save Mubarak, you knew something had gone terribly wrong". On April 15, 2011, *The Independent* published an article of Fisk with the headline "The Arab awakening began not in Tunisia this year, but in Lebanon in 2005". In this article, Fisk quotes from an order which is claimed to have been issued by the Saudi Minister of the Interior (Nayef bin Abdul-Aziz Al Saud) on March 11, 2011 in which he (Fisk) claims that Nayef ordered his (Nayef's) security forces to show no mercy and to use live rounds on unarmed demonstrators (Fisk, April 15, 2011)⁵⁷. Nayef took legal action against Fisk and *The Independent*, and forced Fisk to publish an apology (Fisk, August 4, 2011). In June 2011, Bahrain followed suit and sued *The Independent* over Fisk's articles citing "orchestrating a defamatory and premeditated media campaign' against the Gulf state and neighbouring Saudi Arabia. It singled out for criticism the newspaper's award-winning Middle East correspondent, Robert Fisk" (Quinn 2011). Fisk notes that he has been "depicted in a Bahraini newspaper cartoon [...] as a rabid dog, worthy of liquidation" (Fisk, February 23, 2011). He was banned from Bahrain and harassed by "Mubarak's goons" in Egypt for reporting on prison torture in both countries (Fisk, February 10, 2013). The list of antagonism allegations levelled against Fisk grew longer to include being an anti-Arab and anti-Islam – in addition to being anti-Anglo-American and anti-Israel. However, an inspection of his stances towards the Arabic-speaking and Islamic worlds show that he attempts to be impartial while criticising both the dictatorships and the peoples of the Arabic-speaking world in the same manner that he criticises Anglo-American and Israeli governments and their supporters. Fisk sums up his attitude about the biased claims against him by saying "Nothing new in this. In the Lebanese civil war and in Northern Ireland, Christians, Palestinians, the IRA and the British

⁵⁷ Now the article, as found in *The Independent's* website, does not contain the order that Fisk mentions or any reference to it. As the author of this dissertation accessed the article before the abovementioned lawsuit, he has the original article with no deletion.

Army variously accused me of being pro-terrorist, pro-Zionist, pro-British and pro-IRA” (Fisk, February 10, 2013).

Generally, Anglo-American news readers are probably poorly informed about MENA due to the influence of mainstreamist media on one hand, and their unfamiliarity with MENA on the other. Cognisant of this, Fisk suggests (in his interview at the *CBC*) “Get a cheap air ticket and fly and look at the place. I’m not recommending holidays in Syria or Mali, but it’s very easy to get on a plane out of Pearson and actually go and have a look” (Rogers 2013). However, it is doubtful that readership who read the bulk of Fisk’s reports on MENA (as well as those of mainstreamist media) will take his advice of buying that flight ticket to MENA. Through the arguments in his themes, Fisk draws a very dark picture of the Arabic-speaking world. *Al Jazeera* translated 117 articles that Fisk wrote on the Arab Spring. In these articles, a simple extrapolation of English words with denotative and connotative positive references versus those with denotative and connotative negative references shows that he uses fewer words with positive references such as joy (00), joyful (00), pleasant (02), laugh (01), peace (31), peacefully (02), peaceful (09), freedom (26), (free 98), than words with negative references such as war (157), violence (39), violent (13), torture (73), prison (94), prisoner (45), kill⁵⁸ (201), rape (15), victim (35), suffer⁵⁹ (36), brutal (30), etc. If words with denotative and connotative positive references were put in context and word associations were taken into consideration, these words would not contribute to reflecting a positive image of Arabic-speaking world either. There is more to this world than themes of violence, turmoil and upheaval. People in the Arabic-speaking world love, laugh, dance, sing, make jokes, hold sport tournaments, have art galleries, and perhaps like anybody else around the world they celebrate life by seizing every opportunity to enjoy it.

Apart from some of the gratuitous criticism by Fisk’s disparagers and the sometimes excessively graphic journalistic style he utilises in his themes, Fisk is a brilliant journalist and writer. Fisk’s skill can be seen in his aptitude for highlighting and discrediting the mainstreamist tendencies of the Anglo-American news platforms, which bring to the surface the biased coverage loopholes in them. Fisk turns the “alienation” table around and mainstreamist media’s (as well as the Anglo-American audience’s) visions of the Other and the Same become subject to

⁵⁸ Including derivations like killer, killers, killing, etc.

⁵⁹ Including derivations.

deconstruction and reconstruction. This is definitely one of the reasons that caused his works to be translated into Arabic by *Al Jazeera*. His contribution to the journalism field in Anglo-American contexts can to a certain extent be compared to *Al Jazeera*'s contribution to the media of the Arabic-speaking world; therefore, it is not surprising to see many of his themes resonate in *Al Jazeera*'s localised news items.

4.1.3 Al Jazeera's Protagonism: Pan-Arabism and Islamism

This section aims at showing how Islamism and pan-Arabism evolved and influenced media discourse in the Arabic-speaking world, and later became essential ideologies of *Al Jazeera*'s media discourse. DTS mandates historical (and other extra-contextual) elements that envelope the reproduction of TTs to be taken into consideration when analysing a translation (Baker 1998). CDA, on the other hand, postulates that the researcher should be aware of the sociopolitical factors that influence the production of themes in texts and have a bearing on their analysis. Van Dijk (2001, pp. 353-354) states that "CDA will ask questions about the way specific discourse structures are deployed in the reproduction of social dominance, whether they are part of a conversation or a news report or other genres and contexts". Accordingly, and in order to historically and sociopolitically contextualise particularly the protagonism ideology of *Al Jazeera* in its Arabic-speaking context, we will briefly review this ideology's two major ideological substrata: Islamism and Pan-Arabism.

In the modern history of the Arabic-speaking world, pan-Arabism appeared when Arabs of the Arab Peninsula revolted (with British support) against the Ottoman Empire (which was built on an Islamic Caliphate model) during WWI. The British promised the revolting Arabs an Arab state that unifies the Arab Peninsula, the Levant, and Iraq. This state never saw the light. By the 1930s, pan-Arabism combined with elements of Marxism gathered more momentum in the struggle against dominant colonial powers (British and French) in the Arabic-speaking world. In April 1947, when colonial and post-colonial thought commingled in the Arabic-speaking world, the Arab Baath (revival/renaissance) Socialist Party which embraces a secular pan-Arab unity ideology was founded. At almost the same time, and in contrast to calls for pan-Arabism through secularisation, Islamism came into existence as an alternative ideology to secular pan-Arabism. In March 1928, the Islamist Muslim Brotherhood movement was founded to promote a return to traditional Islamic principles in the Egyptian society. Branches of both the Baath Party and the Muslim Brotherhood appeared in several parts of the Arabic-speaking world. The

establishment of Israel (as a turning point of MENA's history) on Palestinian land in 1948 and the ensuing 1948 Arab-Israeli war (resulting in the Arab armies defeat and the Palestinian exodus and later refugee crisis), caused both pan-Arabists and Islamists to use what became known as the "Palestinian Cause" as a focal point for their calls of unity. *Al Jazeera* (July 11, 2008) argues that "The events of 1948 became a rallying call for Arab unity [...] in a sense became one form of Arab unity". Tucker (2008, p. 804) maintains that for Arabs and pan-Arabists "the rhetoric of uniting in an effort to restore the Palestinians to their homeland and defeat the Israeli state became a powerful tool of political unification". In so many ways, these expressions (i.e. Palestinian Cause and Arab unity/pan-Arabism) became synonymous. This is an important point to remember for the upcoming discussions when references are made to either expression. Edward Said (1993, p. 34) remarks that Palestine is "an idea that for years galvanized the Arab world". Palestine is home to the second holiest place (after Mecca) for the majority Arab and non-Arab Muslims in MENA. It has an ethno-religious regional appeal for the peoples of the region. Postcolonial pan-Arabist secular, leftist, and Islamist movements in the Arabic-speaking world endorsed the Palestinian Cause and made it central in their literature and media discourse that accused imperialist colonial powers of supporting Israel and held them responsible for the tragedy of Palestinians. The Palestinian Cause has shaken the region on several occasions. It caused at least three coups d'état and the assassination of one president. The 1952 revolution of Egypt is partly attributed to the defeat of the Egyptian army in the first "Arab-Israeli" war of 1948 (Shoughry 2012, p. 43, Doly 1998, p. 333). The 1968 revolution in Iraq is attributed to the defeat of the Arab armies in the "Arab-Israeli" war of 1967 (Cole 2009, p. 13). Libya's 1969 revolt (led by then lieutenant Gaddafi) is also attributed to the 1968 defeat (Elwarfally 1988, p. 45). The Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty of 1979 resulted in the assassination of the Egyptian President, Anwar Sadat (co-signer of the Treaty) in 1981 by an Islamist Jihadist (Sriramesh and Verčič 2003, p. 364).

The consecutive autocratic regimes of the Arabic-speaking world realised the significance of the "ideology" of the Palestinian Cause in steering and stirring the emotions of public opinion – so did *Al Jazeera* later. Therefore, they exploited the Palestinian Cause to delegitimise their predecessors or their rivals by accusing them of betraying it, and legitimising themselves by claiming to embrace and support it. In other words, it was used to alienate the "other" in the struggles for political power. To this end, the regimes used media that they own.

State-owned media fawned over the claims of the rulers with regards to supporting the Palestinian Cause. Media discourse on the Palestinian Cause in the Arabic-speaking world went through one long phase of banalities about pan-Arabism and unifying Arab efforts. It was dominated mostly by speeches of demagogues (journalists, politicians and rulers) about defeating Israel and retrieving Palestine (see Stephens 2014, p. 97; Evanzz 2001, p. 440; Ghattas 2013, p. 170). In time, the corruption and cataclysmic internal and external policies of those demagogues made their claims sound hackneyed. In 1990, pan-Arabist Saddam Hussein (former president of Iraq) invaded an Arab state – Kuwait. While some Arab states (Syria, Egypt, Morocco, etc.) joined the Coalition forces to expel Iraqi forces others (including the Palestinian authority) sided with Saddam Hussein. With the ensuing defeat of Iraq in February 1991 “wrought in part because Arab states were willing to fight other Arab states, Pan-Arabism seemed all but dead” (Tucker 2008, p. 804, see also Roy 1994, p. 108).

Amid those unfavourable conditions for the Palestinian Cause, *Al Jazeera* and its benefactor recalled the historical high status of the “ideology” of this Cause and its role in rearranging the political power hierarchy of countries in the Arabic-speaking world. So, *Al Jazeera* picked up the Cause, dusted off what was left of its popularity in certain locales of the Arabic-speaking world, and used it as a recurrent theme in its media discourse. This discourse did not fall far from the traditional regimist media of the autocratic regimes that blamed imperial powers and Israel for the problems of the Palestinians and the Arabic-speaking world. For instance, *Al Jazeera* published a localised news item (*Al Jazeera*, September 2, 2014) from a Fisk article (Fisk, September 2, 2014) in which it argued that the US government has been the guarantor of maintaining hegemonic practices of the Israeli government and that the former’s collaboration with the Israeli government emboldens the latter’s hegemonic policies and prolongs the suffering of Palestinians. In the same news item, *Al Jazeera* also argues that the United States’ insult of being nonchalant towards the suffering of the Arabic-speaking peoples is to be added to the injury of being constantly biased towards the Israeli government’s unfair practices against Palestinians. Such a narrative clearly aligns the nonchalant stances of Israel with those of the US vis-à-vis the affliction of the Arabic-speaking peoples. Both of the US and Israeli governments deny *Al Jazeera*’s claims and counterclaim that *Al Jazeera* is an anti-American and anti-Israeli antagonist news outlet (DPA 2008, Friedman 2008).

Table 7 shows how extensive *Al Jazeera*'s coverage has been of issues that pertain to Palestinian affairs in comparison with two other Arabic news platforms, namely the Saudi-owned *Al Arabiya* and the US-owned *Alhurra*⁶⁰. This comparison is quantitatively tackled; it takes into consideration the following:

- The frequency of mentioning specifically expressions such as: Palestine, Palestinian Cause, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United States of America, and Arab. The main elements to be compared are Arab, Palestine, and the Palestinian Cause. The other expressions were selected for the purpose of showing the influence of the benefactors on each news platform's coverage.
- Frequency was calculated during the period between February 14, 2004 (when *Alhurra*'s website was launched) and December 31, 2014 inclusive. February 14, 2004 was chosen as the start date to guarantee fairness of comparison because *Al Jazeera*'s website was launched in 2001 and *Al Arabiya*'s in 2003. The scanned news items included monolingual and localised items.

	Palestine	Palestinian Cause	Qatar	Saudi Arabia	USA	Arab
Al Jazeera	27852	11408	15167	5180	92744	90738
Al Arabiya	3005	1207	3944	7571	18581	1481
Alhurra	54	120	769	216	5546	198

Table 7. Indicator of interest in Palestinian and Arab affairs

Although Table 7 is not necessarily a reflection of the popularity of any of the compared news platforms, it still highlights points that could syllogistically be connected to the popular themes in their media discourse. For instance, Lynch (2007) maintains that one of the reasons behind the failure of *Alhurra* (mainly focussing on US news) is its “questionable news selection”. A look at the mention-numbers for the term “Arab” shows that *Al Jazeera* with a frequency of 90738 has a massive lead in coverage of Arab affairs over *Al Arabiya* and *Alhurra* with frequencies of 1481 and 198 respectively. The references to Palestine and the Palestinian Cause can be seen as another indication to major pan-Arabist themes in *Al Jazeera*'s media discourse. With mention-numbers of 27825 for “Palestine” and 11408 for “Palestinian Cause”, *Al Jazeera*'s coverage of Palestinian affairs can be easily seen to trounce its closest competitor *Al*

⁶⁰ Lynch (2007) suggests that these two news platforms had been founded to “counter balance” the influence of *Al Jazeera* on public opinion in the Arabic-speaking world.

Arabiya (let alone *Alhurra*) by a big margin. *Al Jazeera*'s mention-numbers of Palestinian affairs surpass its mention-numbers of even Qatar – especially if the numbers of mentioning Palestine and Palestinian Cause are combined mounting to 39260 mentions of Palestinian affairs vs. 15167 of Qatar. Meanwhile, *Al Arabiya* and *Alhurra* mention-numbers of their respective benefactors exceed those of Palestine and Palestinian Cause collectively.

On the other hand, Table 8 shows that expressions like “Salafism”, “Salafists”, “Islamists”, and “Muslim Brotherhood” have been more recurrent in themes of *Al Jazeera*'s news items than in the news items of its competitors between February 14, 2004 and December 31, 2014. Once again and with big margins, *Al Jazeera* surpasses the numbers of *Al Arabiya* and *Alhurra*. The contents of the news items (which were scanned for these frequency numbers) teem with relatively positive references and word associations that may provide proof of *Al Jazeera*'s support for Islamists. Whereas *Al Arabiya*, for instance, circulates news items that malign the Muslim Brotherhood and Salafists especially after the Arab Spring (see *Al Arabiya* articles by Khashiqji 2014, Kheerallah 2014, and Al Habtoor 2014), *Al Jazeera* circulates news items and reports that laud them and report them as victims (Al Jazeera, March 29, 2011; Al Jazeera, September 27, 2011; Al Najjar 2011b; Al Jazeera, December 23, 2010) and even advertise their publications on its website (Yunus 2012, Badr 2011). It should be noted, however, that *Al Jazeera* utilises an “omission” technique of localisation to adapt translation-mediated news items in a way that negative references to Islamists are either suppressed or deleted altogether (see 5.1.3.1).

	Salafism ⁶¹	Salafists	Islamists	Muslim Brotherhood
Al Jazeera	715	485	3835	10940
Al Arabiya	325	224	67	489
Alhurra	53	63	524	1368

Table 8. Indicator of interest in political Islamists

⁶¹ The term Salafism is derived from the Arabic expression as-Salaf as-Salih السلف الصالح (the righteous ancestors), which refers to the first generation of Muslims. The contemporary revival of this traditionalist trend began in Saudi Arabia in the eighteenth-century. Salafists are of three Salafi factions: purists, politicians and jihadis. The purists think that Muslims should return to the correct form of practising their religion before engaging in any kind of activism. In 1980s and 1990s, purists became politicians due to the influence of the Egyptian Muslim Brothers who found refuge in Saudi Arabia from persecution by the secular regime in their home country. Politicians questioned the authority of the Saudi rulers. Confrontations between the Saudi regime and politicians resulted in the latter's persecution and led to the formation of the jihadi extremist faction. This faction seeks the establishment of Islamic states by using violence. Al-Qaeda is an example of the jihadi faction (Pall 2013, p. 17-24).

Tables 7 and 8 provide clear indications of the amount of attention that *Al Jazeera* pays to the coverage of pan-Arabist/Palestinian and Islamist affairs. The frequencies illustrate the pan-Arabism and Islamism themes or ideology substrata within the protagonism ideology of *Al Jazeera*. They also illustrate its localisation trends, especially during the Arab Spring. These trends are important in the analysis and discussions which will follow when discussing the motives behind Qatar's establishing *Al Jazeera* (see 5.2). The Examples below of *Al Jazeera*'s protagonistic ideology show that this news outlet combines addressing both themes of pan-Arabism and Islamism as one unifying factor of the target medium. In the following example that tackles excavations under Al-Aqsa Mosque in Al-Quds⁶²/Jerusalem, *Al Jazeera* furthers the commonality of issues that it believes pertinent to all Arabs and Muslims:

M-Example 1⁶³:

قضية القدس قضية كل العرب وكل المسلمين في كل أنحاء العالم وليست قضية الفلسطينيين وحدهم والمسجد الأقصى هو لب هذه القضية ولم يعد خافيا على أحد خطورة مخططات الجماعات اليهودية المتطرفة التي تستهدف هدم أولى القبليتين وثالث الحرمين الشريفين سواء عبر الحفريات أو الأنفاق التي تهدد أساسات المسجد وتعرضه للانهدام لإقامة ما يُسمونه هيكل سليمان مكان الأقصى، فهل سينجح المتطرفون اليهود في مخططهم لبناء الهيكل المزعوم مكان المسجد الأقصى؟ وهل يتناسب رد الفعل العربي والإسلامي مع حجم الأخطار المحدقة بمقدسات إسلامية في القدس؟ وهل لا زالت قضية القدس تحتل الأولوية في السياسة العربية أم صارت نسيا منسيا؟ ألا تستحق هذه القضية تحركا عربيا وإسلاميا فعليا رسميا وشعبيا لنصرة القدس؟ وماذا قدمت المؤسسات التي تحمل اسم القدس لقضية القدس والأقصى؟ وهل يتفاعل الإعلام العربي والإسلامي مع خطورة الاعتداءات على الأقصى؟ (Al Jazeera, April 14, 2005)

Gloss:

The issue of Al Quds concerns all Arabs and all Muslims all over the world. It is not an issue that concerns only the Palestinians. Al-Aqsa Mosque is the crux of this issue. The dangerous plans of the extremist Jewish groups are no longer a secret. These plans aim at demolishing the first Qibla⁶⁴ and the third holiest mosque (either through excavations or tunnels which threaten the foundations of the mosque and can cause it to collapse) in order to establish what they call the temple of Solomon. Will the Jewish extremists succeed in their plans to build their alleged temple at the location of Al-Aqsa Mosque? Is the Arab and Muslim reaction proportionate to the magnitude of the impending dangers that threaten Islamic holies in Al Quds? Is the issue of Al Quds still a priority in Arab politics or it has been completely forgotten? Does not this issue deserve an Arab and Islamic official and popular effective action in support of Al Quds? What did the institutions that bear the name of Al Quds offer to the issue of Al Quds and Al-Aqsa? Do the Arab and Islamic media react in a way that matches the gravity of the attacks on Al-Aqsa?

The questions that *Al Jazeera* asks starting with “Is the Arab and Muslim reaction proportionate to the magnitude of the impending dangers that threaten Islamic holies in Al Quds?” onwards are rhetorical questions with explicit/subliminal messages that capitalise on the de facto context

⁶² The Arabic name for Jerusalem.

⁶³ M-Examples refer to Monolingual examples taken from either genuinely Arabic or English texts not localised ones. L-Examples refer to *Al Jazeera*'s Localised texts whose origins are not Arabic. L-Examples are given when the theme is inter-thematic. When an L-Example is given, a gloss is provided in addition to the original excerpt from the ST. The cardinal numbers that follow “Example” are added for future reference.

⁶⁴ The direction toward which Muslims turn for their daily prayers. In the early days of Islam, Muslim's Qibla was Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem then it had been changed to Kaaba in Mecca; therefore, Al-Aqsa Mosque is referred to as the first Qibla in Islamic tradition.

which each question addresses. Paul and Moss (2015, p. 275) quote Ian Betteridge's⁶⁵ "law of headlines" which is an adage suggesting that "Any headline which ends in a question mark can be answered by the word 'no'". In a media discourse context, Betteridge's law can be applied to not only the headline but perhaps the text as well. The fact that all of the questions (which end in question marks) in the above quote can most probably be answered with "no" by *Al Jazeera's* target locale members enhances this deduction. This is to say that *Al Jazeera* is deliberately aiming at having the answers for the above questions to be "no". Some media scholars argue that this kind of questions entails in the vast majority of cases that the narrative that follows them is tendentious or over-sold. Marr (2004, p. 253) maintains that these questions are often followed by a text with "a scare story, or an attempt to elevate some run-of-the-mill piece of reporting into a national controversy and, preferably, a national panic". This might be conceivably true of *Al Jazeera's* above example. For certain locales in the Arabic-speaking world, the answers for these questions and their messages read as follows:

1. ***"Is the Arab and Muslim reaction proportionate to the magnitude of the impending dangers that threaten Islamic holies in Al Quds?"***
Sought answer: No. Arabs and Muslims are doing nothing to stop the hegemonic practices against one of their holiest holies.
Message: Arabs and Muslims should be more proactive in confronting said dangers.
2. ***"Is the issue of Al Quds still a priority in Arab politics or it has been completely forgotten?"***
Sought answer: No. The regimes of the Arabic-speaking world have completely neglected this cause and they are doing nothing to support the Palestinians and to protect the Islamic holies.
Message: These regimes are not worthy of ruling their peoples because they are inactive on the subject of the aspirations of their co-ethnist (co-Arab) and co-religionist (Muslim) Palestinians.
3. ***"Does not this issue deserve an Arab and Islamic official and popular effective action in support of Al Quds?"***
This question sums up the statements and the messages of both of the above questions.
4. ***"What did the institutions that bear the name of Al Quds offer to the issue of Al Quds and Al-Aqsa?"***
Sought answer: Nothing. None of the institutions (whether governmental or non-governmental) that carry Al Quds name did anything to support this cause.
Message: Some other entity is doing something, namely the State of Qatar (see 5.2.1).
5. ***"Do the Arab and Islamic media react in a way that matches the gravity of the attacks on Al-Aqsa?"***

⁶⁵ Ian Betteridge is a British technology writer who, in 2009, brought forth said maxim on his Technovia website.

Sought answer: No. None of the Arab and Islamic media is giving this cause its due coverage.

Message: Except for *Al Jazeera*.

The general message that can be inferred from the text is that: Islamic holies in Jerusalem are in danger and nobody is doing anything to prevent it. Paul and Moss comment on Betteridge's law by maintaining that "the opposite is often true" (ibid). In other words having no question mark at the end of a question implies the high probability of answering it with "yes". The following is an illustrative example from *Al Jazeera*:

M-Example 2:

الإسلاميون والربيع العربي

أليس البيع الإسلامي مجرد خرافة اختلقها الطواغيت العرب الساقطون والمتساقطون كي يخوفوا بها الداخل والخارج زورا وبهتانا، ألم تثبت الثورات العربية بأن الإسلاميين هم القوة الأكثر شعبية على الساحة العربية رغم القمع والحصار وتجفيف منابع، ألم يحاول الرئيس التونسي المخلوع على مدى العقود علمنة بلاده رغما عنها ولما أتيحت الديمقراطية للشعب التونسي اختار الإسلاميين، أليس من الخطأ الفادح جدا أن تتخوف الأقليات من الصعود الإسلامي بعد الثورات، أليس من حق الأكثرية أن تختار ممثلها إلى سدة الحكم، ألم يخرج معظم المظاهرات التي أطاحت بالطغاة العرب من المساجد والجوامع، ماذا حقق العلمانيون والقومجيون العرب على مدى عقود كي يتهموا الإسلاميين بالتخلف والظلامية، هل أنتجوا غير الظلم والطغيان والفساد ألم يتعهد القادة الإسلاميون بممارسة الديمقراطية على أصولها بعد الثورات، ماذا يضير العرب لو كان لديهم أنظمة كالنظام التركي الإسلامي العظيم بقيادة الزعيم الإسلامي العظيم أردوغان (Al Jazeera, December 2, 2011)

Gloss:

Islamist movements and the Arab Spring

Is not the Islamist bogeyman just a myth invented by the Arab tyrants, who fell or are falling; in order to falsely scare the locals and the foreigners; did not the Arab revolutions prove that Islamists are the most popular force in the Arab arena despite repression, cordoning, and drying up of resources; did not the deposed Tunisian President try, over the decades, to secularise the country against its will and when democracy became available for Tunisians they chose Islamists; is not it a grave mistake for minorities to fear the eminence of Islamists after the revolutions; is not it the right of the majority to choose their representatives to power; did not most of the demonstrations that toppled Arab tyrants come out of mosques; what did the secularists and pan-Arabists achieve over the decades to have the right to accuse Islamists of backwardness and obscurantism; did the secularists and pan-Arabists produce anything but injustice, tyranny, and corruption; did not the Islamist leaders pledge to exercise genuine democracy after the revolutions; what harm could befall Arabs if they have regimes such as the great Turkish Islamist regime led by the great Islamist leader Erdogan.

By presenting the rhetorical questions in this example as factual statements rather than questions (that do not end in question marks), *Al Jazeera* is reinforcing its aim of having the questions (with the exception of the wh- ones) in this example to be answered by "yes":

1. ***"Is not the Islamist bogeyman just a myth invented by the Arab tyrants, who fell or are falling; in order to falsely scare the locals and the foreigners"***
Sought answer: Yes.
2. ***"did not the Arab revolutions prove that Islamists are the most popular force in the Arab arena despite repression, cordoning, and drying up of resources"***
Sought answer: Yes.
3. ***"did not the deposed Tunisian President try, over the decades, to secularise the country against its will and when democracy became available for Tunisians they chose Islamic movements"***
Sought answer: Yes.

4. ***“is not it a grave mistake for minorities to fear the eminence of Islamists after the revolutions”***
Sought answer: Yes.
5. ***“did not most of the demonstrations that toppled Arab tyrants come out of mosques”***
Sought answer: Yes.
6. ***“did the secularists and pan-Arabists produce anything but injustice, tyranny, and corruption”***
Sought answer: Yes.
7. ***“did not the Islamist leaders pledge to exercise genuine democracy after the revolutions”***
Sought answer: Yes.

The answers (whether yes or no) that *Al Jazeera* seeks for its suggestive questions and the explicit/implicit messages that it aims at delivering in the last two examples appeal to either the conscious or the subconscious reactions of specific locales (but not all of them) in the Arabic-speaking world. These reactions are most likely shared-knowledge-based and locales-sensitive. An informed non-Islamist Tunisian or an informed non-Islamist non-Tunisian Arabic-literate reader may provide alternative answers to questions 2, 3, and 5 as follows:

2. ***“did not the Arab revolutions prove that Islamic movements are the most popular force in the Arab arena despite repression, cordoning, and drying up of resources”***

Answer; No. The ideologies of Islamists do not resonate with the majority of the Arabic-speaking populations.

3. ***“did not the deposed Tunisian President try, over the decades, to secularise the country against its will and when democracy became available for Tunisians they chose Islamic movements”***

Answer: No. Secularising Tunisia had been carried out by the former president Habib Bourguiba (president of Tunisia from 1956 to 1987), so Tunisia was secular before Ben Ali.

5. ***“did not most of the demonstrations that toppled Arab tyrants come out of mosques”***

Answer: No. The demonstrations in most of the countries of the Arab Spring were led by either leftists (such as the case in Tunisia) or non-Islamist youth whose demands did not include religious freedom.

The above monolingual texts of *Al Jazeera* portray its media discourse with regard the themes being discussed in this section. Whereas *Al Jazeera* freely includes the themes it desires in its own texts, it seems to resort to localisation to adapt the STs’ themes in order to have them concur with the protagonist ideology of its media discourse. This adaptation is undertaken through, for instance, *selecting* certain portions from STs that ostensibly praise Islamists and *adding* to these portions expressions that do not exist in the ST (see 5.1.3.1 and 5.1.3.2). Thus, it renders the ST’s arguments to be especially in favour of Islamists as in the following examples:

L-Example 3:

ولا تزال جماعة الإخوان المسلمين - صاحبة الجذور الحقيقية في أنحاء مصر والتي لها حق دخول البرلمان في انتخابات نزيهة- البيع على السنة كل مقدمي الأخبار، رغم عدم وجود أدنى فكرة لديهم عنها. (Al Jazeera, February 6, 2011)

Gloss:

The Muslim Brotherhood – the group with the real roots throughout Egypt and the right to enter parliament in a fair election – is repeatedly referred to as the bogeyman by all news presenters, although they have no idea about it.

ST:

The Muslim Brotherhood – with genuine historical roots in Egypt and every right to enter parliament in a fair election – remains the bogeyman on the lips of every news presenter, although they have not the slightest idea what it is or was. (Fisk, February 6, 2011)

Fisk's localised quote in the above example has been adapted in a way (adding the definite article "the" in "**the** real roots" and the proposition "throughout" in "**throughout** Egypt") that may give an Arabic-speaking reader the impression that other parties have fake roots (with probably not as much right to enter parliament) and they are not as popular in Egypt as the Muslim Brotherhood. In other instances of localisation, *Al Jazeera* omits the expressions that criticise Islamists and keeps neutral or positive ones:

L-Example 4:

هذا ما فعلته الشرطة الجزائرية بعد ذلك مع الإسلاميين والشعب. (Fisk, February 16, 2011)

Gloss:

This is what the Algerian police subsequently did to Islamists and the people.

ST:

Which is what le pouvoir then did to the vicious and armed Islamists as well as their own people. (Fisk, February 16, 2011)

This example is taken from a news item that has been localised by *Al Jazeera* within the context of criticising the autocratic regime's actions against Arabic-speaking peoples while focussing on the cooperation between the suppressive regimes' security forces in the brutal handling of Islamist parties in Syria, Egypt and Algeria. By omitting the adjectives "vicious and armed" in "**vicious and armed** Islamists", *Al Jazeera* censors the views that these Islamists are perpetrators of violent actions against innocent people. The kinds of additions and omissions that we observed in L-Example 4 and L-Example 5 are very common in *Al Jazeera*'s localised texts. *Al Jazeera* resorts to these techniques whenever it deems appropriate in order to adjust the messages in the STs to match its localised themes and ideologies.

The discussions above have been aimed at highlighting the initial overarching ideology of protagonism in *Al Jazeera*'s media discourse. They trace back the roots of the themes/ideologies (notably pan-Arabism and Islamism) that constitute the backbone of *Al Jazeera*'s protagonism. The examples (in this section) confirm that *Al Jazeera* propagates narratives with arguments which are supposed to be protagonistic. They also show that *Al Jazeera* has a tendency to adapt STs in order to portray Islamists – for instance – as victims of pro-regimist media or state

administered violence. This aspect of the localisation practices of *Al Jazeera* has been tentatively engaged in order to provide grounds for the upcoming discussions about *Al Jazeera*'s localisation techniques and their motives. The examples also exhibit an inclination towards implicating the regimes in many wrongdoings which is an issue that is discussed in the next section.

4.1.4 *Al Jazeera's Anti-regimism and Reformism*

A review of *Al Jazeera*'s anti-regimist and reformist themes shows that their founding arguments and other theme-forming units have been circulated in *Al Jazeera*'s monolingual news, articles, editorials, etc. prior to the Arab Spring. The arguments (the need for replacing the corrupt regimes, promoting human and civil rights, etc.) behind this particular theme were energised by the Arab Springs, which was an opportunity that *Al Jazeera* definitely seized to reiterate its pertinent media discourse. An introduction to *Al Jazeera*'s talk-show "في العمق" (in depth), which tackle the subject of "Reform and the Arab Spring", states:

M-Example 5:

الإصلاح والربيع العربي
لم تكتمل فرحة التغيير في العالم العربي [...] ها هو النظام الحاكم في الجزائر يعيد إنتاج نفسه دون تكاليف زائدة، والأردن الذي كان مرشحا قويا كأحد بلدان الربيع العربي يبعث قاذبه برسالة واضحة للغرب أن لا مزيد من الإصلاحات معتبرين أن ما تم من إصلاحات سياسية واقتصادية حتى الآن كاف ولا حاجة لطلب المزيد، أما عن موريتانيا والسودان والتجاهل الخليجي الكامل لحركة التغيير الدائرة، هذا ما يدفعنا للتساؤل الليلة هل نشهد نهاية ربيع العرب؟ هل تجاوزت الثورات بعض البلدان العربية المهددة سابقا؟ ما مصير وعود الإصلاح التي تعهدت بها بعض الأنظمة العربية؟ (Al Jazeera, May 17, 2012)

Gloss:

Reform and the Arab Spring

The euphoria of transformation in the Arab world is not complete [...] The Algerian regime is reproducing itself without excessive costs. Jordan, which was a strong candidate as one of the countries of the Arab Spring, sent a clear message to the West that there will be no further reforms. It considers the political and economic reforms it carried out by far as sufficient and there is no need to ask for more. The case applies to Mauritania, Sudan, and the Gulf, which completely ignored the current transformation movement. Are we witnessing the end of the Arab Spring? Did some Arab countries which were on the verge of revolutions manage to escape them? What will happen to the promises of reform made by some Arab regimes?

It seems that *Al Jazeera* associates the stalemate on the reforms in the Arabic-speaking world with the unwillingness of the autocratic regimes to undertake them. This may be an explicit condemnation of these regimes delivered through the arguments in expressions such as "reproducing itself", "no further reforms", "What will happen to the promises", etc. Such recurrent themes in *Al Jazeera*'s narratives were further accentuated in its localised news items. One issue that makes *Al Jazeera*'s localised themes worth studying is the fact that they shed light on the reasons behind *Al Jazeera*'s decisions to select and localise specific STs and accentuate specific arguments in them. As mentioned above, Fisk's news reports on the Arabic-speaking

world abound with anti-regimist themes; therefore, they have been often selected for translation by *Al Jazeera*. Following are examples of inter-themes which are recurrent in *Al Jazeera*'s anti-regimism ideology:

L-Example 6:

فيسك: الشعوب العربية تسير للتحرر
قال الكاتب البريطاني المعروف روبرت فيسك إن احتمالات حصول الشعوب العربية على الحرية والديمقراطية باتت قوية، وإن ولادات ديمقراطية بدأ
مخاضها من رحم دكتاتوريات "عفنة" رغم العنف والدماء، وإن العرب أخيرا صار بإمكانهم السير نحو المجد والعلاء. (Al Jazeera, March 22, 2011)

Gloss:

Fisk: Arab peoples march towards freedom

Renowned British writer Fisk said that the prospects of the Arab peoples obtaining freedom and democracy became high. Democracies' births are being delivered from the "rotten" wombs of dictatorships despite bloodshed and violence. Arabs can finally march towards glory and uplands.

ST:

Robert Fisk: Right across the Arab world, freedom is now a prospect

From the mildewed, corrupted dictatorships is emerging a people reborn. Not without bloodshed and violence. But now at last, the Arabs can hope to march into the bright sunlit uplands. (Fisk, March 22, 2011).

L-Example 7:

لقد بدأ المصريون يتذكرون سخرية أخرى. فقد أخفق أولئك الحكام المستبدون الذين يزعمون أنهم يمثلون شعوبهم - كما في الجزائر وليبيا والمغرب- كما
هو واضح في تمثيل شعوبهم مرة أخرى بعدم تهنئة مصر على ثورتها الديمقراطية الناجحة، لأنهم إذا فعلوا ذلك فإن هذا معناه اهتزاز عروشهم. (Al
Jazeera, February 14, 2011)

Gloss:

Egyptians started remembering another irony. Those autocratic rulers, who claim to represent their peoples in Algeria, Libya and Morocco, have failed once again in representing their peoples by not congratulating Egypt on the success of its successful democratic revolution because if they do that the result will be having their thrones shaken.

ST:

Another irony has dawned on Egyptians. Those Arab dictators which claim to represent their people – Algeria comes to mind, and Libya, and Morocco – have signally failed to represent their people by not congratulating Egypt on its successful democratic revolution. To do so, needless to say, would be to saw off the legs of their own thrones. (Fisk, February 14, 2011)

The above localised examples of *Al Jazeera* and their STs contain the following arguments for:

1. Reform: e.g. ***"L-Example 6: [...] the prospects of the Arab peoples obtaining freedom and democracy became high [...] Arabs can finally march towards glory and uplands"***
2. Criticising the autocrats: e.g. ***"L-Example 6: Democracies' births are being delivered from the "rotten" wombs of dictatorships"; "L-Example 7: [...] because if they do that the result will be having their thrones shaken."***
3. Subliminally urging Arabic-speaking populations to continue their protests: e.g. ***"M-Example 5: The euphoria of transformation in the Arab world is not complete"; "L-Example 6: Arabs can finally march towards glory and uplands."***

The bungled and atrocious actions of the autocrats during the Arab Spring provided *Al Jazeera* with an endless source of themes with anti-regimist arguments. In *Al Jazeera*'s coverage of the Tunisian Spring, instances of these themes include Ben Ali's brutal actions against the protestors. For example, on January 12, 2011, *Al Jazeera* published a localised news item that says:

L-Example 8:

العالم العربي يشهد سخطا شعبيا وانتقدت ذي غارديان ما وصفته بالنظام القمعي المستبد في تونس، الذي أصدر أوامره للشرطة لإطلاق الرصاص على المتظاهرين المسالمين غير المسلحين الذي يطالبون بتحسين أوضاعهم المعيشية وإيجاد وظائف لهم لسد رمقهم، والذي أمر القوات العسكرية بالانتشار بالمدن التونسية وأنحاء متفرقة من البلاد. وقالت الصحيفة إنه يبدو أن الرئيس التونسي زين العابدين بن علي مثله مثل بقية حكام الدول العربية لا يجيد التعامل مع شعبه سوى باستخدام الأساليب القمعية والاستبدادية (Al Jazeera, January 12, 2011).

Gloss:

The Arab world is witnessing popular discontent

The Guardian criticised what it described as the oppressive tyrannical regime in Tunisia that had ordered the police to shoot at peaceful unarmed demonstrators who are demanding the improvement of their living conditions and the creation of jobs to feed themselves. The regime ordered military forces to deploy in Tunisian cities and different parts of the country. The newspaper says that the Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, like the rest of the rulers of the Arab states, seems to be able to deal with his people only by using repressive and authoritarian methods.

ST:

The failure of governance in the Arab world

The official response to unrest on Tunisia's streets comes straight out of a tyrant's playbook: order the police to open fire on unarmed demonstrators, deploy the army, blame resulting violence on "terrorists" and accuse unidentified "foreign parties" of fomenting insurrection. Like other Arab rulers, President Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali seems not to know any better. For this murderous ignorance, there is less and less excuse. (Tisdall 2011)

Such localised anti-regimist themes, succeeded in providing the protestors with momentum throughout the Arab Springs. In this example, *Al Jazeera* promotes the criticism that it has circulated (before the Arab Spring) about the Tunisian regime as well the other suppressive regimes of the Arabic-speaking world. The anti-regimist and the reformist themes are argued through the criticism of the state-administered violence inflicted on "peaceful unarmed demonstrators". The relative clause "who are demanding the improvement of their living conditions and the creation of jobs to feed themselves" is *added* by *Al Jazeera* in order to legitimise the demands of the victims and dehumanise the perpetrators of violence, namely the regimes. *Al Jazeera*'s anti-regimist and reformist narratives through localised news items team with such additions that further the bad image of the dictators and appeal to the readership's empathy with the victims.

During the Egyptian Arab Spring, and in order to cope with the massive amount of news coming from Egypt throughout the protests, *Al Jazeera* changed its website's layout and set-up, giving news on the Egyptian situation precedence. The coverage of this Spring was so extensive

that it was 24 hours a day in order to report live on even the night protests. It has included localised news items with anti-regimist and reformist themes that took aim at Mubarak and his suppressive regime:

L-Example 9:

توقع الصحفي البريطاني المتخصص في شؤون الشرق الأوسط روبرت فيسك أن نظام الرئيس المصري حسني مبارك قد لا ينجو بجلده من مظاهرات جديدة بعد أن عمت حمم الغضب أرجاء الشرق الأوسط. (Al Jazeera, January 28, 2011)

Gloss:

British journalist Robert Fisk, who is specialised in Middle East affairs, predicted that Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak's regime may not survive new protests after lava of anger swept through the Middle East.

ST:

Mubarak regime may not survive new protests as flames of anger spread through Middle East. (Fisk, January 28, 2011)

L-Example 10:

رحيل مبارك بات قاب قوسين
نوه فيسك إلى أن مبارك لم يكن جاهلاً بظلم نظامه، وأنه ظل باقياً في مكانه بالقمع والتهديدات والانتخابات المزورة. وكثيراً ما نبهه السفراء الأميركيون المتعاقبون إلى الفظائع التي ترتكب باسمه. وكان مبارك يعبر عن دهشته وقتها ويعد بإنهاء وحشية الشرطة، لكن شيئاً لم يتغير. (Al Jazeera, February 6, 2011)

Gloss:

Mubarak's departure is very close

Fisk noted that Mubarak was not ignorant of the injustice of his regime, and that he remained in power through repression, intimidation, and rigged elections. Successive American ambassadors often attracted his attention to the atrocities being committed in his name. Mubarak expressed his surprise every time and promised to end police brutality, but nothing ever changed.

ST:

Robert Fisk: The wrong Mubarak quits. Soon the right one will go

Over 30 years, successive US ambassadors have informed Mubarak of the cruelties perpetrated in his name. Occasionally, Mubarak would express surprise and once promised to end police brutality, but nothing ever changed. (Fisk, February 6, 2011)

A recurrent combination of anti-regimist and reformist arguments and messages in L-Example 9 can easily be matched to their counterparts in L-Example 10:

1. Legitimacy of the pro-democracy and thematic credibility through international recognition: e.g. ***“L-Example 9: British journalist Robert Fisk, who is specialised in Middle East affairs, predicted”, “L-Example 10: [...] Successive American ambassadors often attracted his attention to the atrocities being committed in his name”.***
2. Incentivising the continuum of the protests that aim at toppling the regimes: e.g. ***“L-Example 10: Mubarak's departure is very close”, “L-Example 9: [...] may not survive new protests [...]”***

These and other arguments in *Al Jazeera's* inter-themes of anti-regimism and reformism, especially with regard to the Arab Spring, underscore *Al Jazeera's* role as an influential news

platform whose coverage of the Arab Spring causes controversy to continue to swirl about it. *Al Jazeera*'s anti-regimist themes during the Arab Spring led to verbal fisticuffs between *Al Jazeera* and the pro-regimist media officials – such as the Ministers of Information. On January 2, 2011, and despite the fact that many other news platforms started covering the protests in Tunisia, *Al Jazeera* was singled out by the criticism of Abdullah Al-Qallal (president of the Tunisian council of advisors) who claimed that *Al Jazeera* disregarded the ethics of journalism and exploited the protests in Tunisia to fabricate lies about this country (Al Jazeera, January 2, 2011). Circulating these themes in *Al Jazeera*'s localised news items also angered the Egyptian regime. Anas Al Fiqi (Minister of Information in Mubarak's regime) ordered closing *Al Jazeera*'s bureau in Cairo and revoking its press permits (Karlsson 2012, p. 99; Al Jazeera, January 30, 2011). Eakin (2011) maintains that

As long ago as 2002, nearly every country in the Arab League had formally protested unfavourable coverage on Al Jazeera, and no fewer than six—Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Tunisia, Libya, and Morocco – had at some point withdrawn their ambassadors to Doha.

Much like Fisk, *Al Jazeera*'s themes resulted in angry reactions by autocratic regimes and democratic ones alike. Since *Al Jazeera*'s themes targeted suppressive, mainstreamist, and hegemonic political practices inside and outside the Arabic-speaking world, non-Arabic-speaking states such as Israel (Martinez 2013), US (Friedman 2008), Iran (Al Jazeera, April 19, 2005), Spain (O'Carroll 2005), UK (McCarthy 2003, Kafala 2003), France (Salim 2003), China (Richburg 2012, Chan 2012) have protested, in one way or another, against the so-called provocative news reporting policies of *Al Jazeera*. These old-new protests are summed up by the former director general of *Al Jazeera*, Wadah Khanfar, in an article that *The Guardian* published in 2005. Khanfar (2005) states

I have lost count of the number of accusations levelled against al-Jazeera and the incidents of harassment to which it has been subjected [...] It was rumoured to have been set up by Israel's Mossad intelligence agency with the purpose of improving Israel's standing in the Arab world. It has also been accused of being a CIA mouthpiece designed to disseminate western culture among the Arabs. Some have suggested that it is part of an international conspiracy to break up the Arab world by means of stirring up discord and creating problems for the Arab regimes. Others decided it was a front for Osama bin Laden and the Taliban; or funded by Saddam Hussein. And, at the same time, it has been condemned by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi and bitterly criticised by Donald Rumsfeld.

The above discussions on both of *Al Jazeera*'s ideologies (protagonism and anti regimism) focussed on showing the amount of attention that *Al Jazeera* pays to issues that it considers pertinent to Arabs and Muslims. They also aimed at showing how *Al Jazeera* manipulates news items (monolingual and localised alike) to present *Al Jazeera* as a protagonist

and an anti-regimist news outlet that supports Arab and Muslim victims on the one hand, and criticise the regimes/perpetrators who victimised them on the other. The criticism of the regimes has been accentuated in *Al Jazeera*'s anti-regimist themes which regaled *Al Jazeera*'s readership with an abundance (though selective) of information on the political, social, and economic issues behind the Arab Spring, and up-to-date (yet again selective) reports which address the practices of the regimes during the events of the Arab Spring and the plausibility of their ousting. The examples show that advocacy for the initial ideologies of protagonism and anti-regimism are recurrent in *Al Jazeera*'s media discourse. Broadly speaking, the themes in *Al Jazeera* are predicated on the idea that *Al Jazeera* seemingly endorses the ideologies of pan-Arabism and Islamism that address collective target medium tenets. The role of the Qatari government in motivating such narratives in *Al Jazeera* has been repeatedly questioned by journalists (see Kirkpatrick, September 7, 2014; Bakr 2014; Blair & Spencer 2014, Fisk, February 4, 2015, Dabashi 2012, Henry & Jang 2013, Joffé 2013, Guzansky 2014, Förster 2014).

As far as this study is concerned, the fact that none of *Al Jazeera*'s localised news items (whose STs contained straightforward criticism of the role of the State of Qatar in the Arab Spring) nor its monolingual ones comprise themes or arguments with any kind of critique (let alone criticism) of *Al Jazeera*'s benefactor suggest that there is a serious attempt (on the part of *Al Jazeera*) to portray this benefactor in a way that distinguishes it from the other corrupt or repressive regimes of the Arabic-speaking world. This is an important observation about *Al Jazeera*'s themes which will be pursued in the upcoming segments of this study while bearing in mind the fact that CDA considers what is not said in the analysed texts is as important as what is said in them. The discussions in this section have been tackled as an introduction for the detailed discussions (in Chapter Five) of *Al Jazeera*'s localisation techniques and the objectives of *Al Jazeera*'s benefactor. A comparative discussion of the initial ideologies/themes in Fisk's articles and their translations by *Al Jazeera* may shed some intriguing light on how these themes have been used and for what actual ends.

4.1.5 Fisk and Al Jazeera: Concordance and Discordance

It can be safely said that Fisk and *Al Jazeera* have shaken their respective journalistic spheres out of their lethargy. They have revolutionized news coverage and contributed to new standards and conceptions about media. The first time *Al Jazeera* referred to Robert Fisk in a localised news item was on January 11, 2001 – ten days after its launching date on January 1,

2001. It used an excerpt from his article on the effects of using depleted uranium by the US army on Iraqi civilians. Fisk's article was supposedly published in *The Independent* on January 11, 2001. *Al Jazeera* published the excerpt within an article that was entitled "Press Review" (Ismat 2001). This review include excerpts localised from articles published in *The Times* (one article), *The Guardian* (two articles), *The Daily Telegraph* (two articles), *The Financial Times* (one article), and *The Independent* (two articles). The only writer whose name is mentioned in the abovementioned press review of *Al Jazeera* is Robert Fisk – with direct quotes localised from his original article⁶⁶. In quite a few instances, *Al Jazeera* published Fisk's articles on the same date on which they were published in *The Independent*. Inquiries about this issue have been made to both *Al Jazeera* and Robert Fisk, but neither replied to them nor to the other inquiries with regard to who contacted whom in order to initiate their journalistic cooperation, the arrangement agreed upon in terms of translating his articles, the financial arrangements, etc.

Reviewing Fisk's and *Al Jazeera*'s production leads to the deduction that they share recurrent themes of protagonism and anti-regimism – though out of different sociopolitical stances and ideologies. Whereas both *Al Jazeera* and Fisk actively argue for the rights of Arabs and Muslims and especially accentuate the suffering of victims of violence in the Arabic-speaking and Muslim worlds, Fisk is rather critical of Islamism. For example, Fisk remarks

M-Examples 11:

And the Brotherhood, let us remember, were negotiating with Mubarak's government even while the protesters in Tahrir Square were still being shot down by the state security police. The idea that the largest Islamist movement in Egypt has spent its darkest years in clandestinity is not true; Mubarak, for his own reasons, encouraged them to participate in elections as independents; and the Brotherhood duly obliged. (Fisk, June 21, 2012)

Fisk's quote above contains straightforward anti-Islamist arguments. It exposes the Brotherhood's political ambitions and its willingness to cooperate with the dictator at the same time that the protestors of the Egyptian Arab Spring were demanding that he be ousted. Such critique of Islamists does not find its way into *Al Jazeera*'s circulated localised items. *Al Jazeera* promulgates a seemingly pro-Islamist narrative that draws on co-religionism. *Al Jazeera*'s protagonist narratives also advocate a pan-Arabism ideology that draws on ethno-nationalism while Fisk is neither an Arab nor a Muslim; therefore, it is highly unlikely that he has personal or self-serving ethno-religious interests in endorsing issues that pertain to the victims of the above ethnicity or faith. In other words, while Fisk is a protagonist out of his perhaps ethical principles,

⁶⁶ By saying direct quotes, I am referring to *Al Jazeera*'s use of quotation marks.

Al Jazeera's protagonism is motivated by other objectives – in 5.2 these objectives are discussed in regard to its benefactor's (Qatar's) quest for alterity or an individual identity. Hence, *Al Jazeera* is ostentatiously protagonistic or quasi-protagonistic. Fisk and *Al Jazeera*, however, advocate reform in the Arabic-speaking world and criticise the repressive dictators. In their quest to voice the suffering of the victims, they have gone further than most mainstreamist journalists or media outlets to report it. For instance, both Fisk and *Al Jazeera* oppose the hegemonic practices of the US and the Israeli governments, and support United Nations resolutions germane to the rights of the Palestinians, though Fisk is more solemn than *Al Jazeera* because this kind of promotion concords with his motives of giving more space in his reports to the disadvantaged.

The resemblance in the themes of their journalistic production has probably contributed to facilitating the co-operation between them. Yet, and while Fisk (in most cases) addresses Anglo-American anti-mainstreamist locales by spilling out his ideas independently, *Al Jazeera* (as discussed above) does not follow suit. As a mainstreamist news outlet, *Al Jazeera* appeals to specific ideologies such as pan-Arabism and Islamism (that Fisk does not embrace) which address certain locales in the Arabic-speaking world. Selectivity is evident in *Al Jazeera*'s chosen articles and provides proof that it applies its own "in-gatekeeping" editorial policy. Fisk, who is obviously a good reader of *Al Jazeera*, has criticised the latter's coverage (Fisk, August 18, 2013) as well as its benefactor (along with Saudi Arabia) by claiming that they are fuelling the conflict in Syria through funding Islamist terrorists (Fisk, February 4, 2015). Like perhaps any other bond which is built on common interests, the heat of cooperation between *Al Jazeera* and Fisk throughout 2011 and 2012 (when a larger number of his full articles were circulated by *Al Jazeera*) started to cool off throughout 2013 and 2014 when the gap between Fisk's and *Al Jazeera*'s attitudes towards the events of the Syrian Arab Spring got wider.

Table 10 and chart 1 show that the relationship between Fisk and *Al Jazeera* passed through two distinctive stages of cooperation in accordance with the ideologies they embrace, and their stances towards the Arab Spring and the parties involved in its conflicts. The first stage of cooperation extended from early 2011 towards the end of 2012. These two years witnessed a relative concordance between Fisk's attitudes and those of *Al Jazeera*. The number of Fisk's exclusively localised articles that *Al Jazeera* circulated in 2011 and 2012 are 31 and 29 a year respectively, while the referentially localised ones are 9 in 2011 and one in 2012, which

Year	Month	Robert Fisk Articles		Al Jazeera		Al Arabiya	
		Arabic-speaking world	Arab Spring	Referentially	Exclusively	Referentially	Exclusively
2010	Dec.	2	0	0	0	0	0
Total 2010		2	0	0	0	0	0
2011	Jan.	15	13	4	0	0	0
	Feb.	24	24	0	7	0	0
	Mar.	12	12	0	2	0	0
	Apr.	9	9	0	3	0	0
	May	14	14	1	2	0	0
	June	11	11	0	4	0	0
	July	12	12	1	1	0	0
	Aug.	12	12	0	1	0	0
	Sept.	11	11	2	2	0	0
	Oct.	12	12	1	1	0	0
	Nov.	11	11	0	6	0	0
	Dec.	9	9	0	2	0	0
Total 2011		152	150	9	31	0	0
2012	Jan.	9	9	0	1	0	0
	Feb.	11	11	0	3	0	0
	Mar.	11	11	0	3	0	0
	Apr.	10	10	0	2	0	0
	May	9	9	0	3	0	0
	June	14	12	0	6	0	0
	July	12	12	0	1	0	1
	Aug.	21	21	1	6	0	0
	Sept.	6	5	0	2	0	0
	Oct.	2	2	0	0	0	0
	Nov.	3	3	0	2	0	0
	Dec.	4	4	0	0	0	0
Total 2012		113	111	1	29	0	1
2013	Jan.	10	10	1	4	0	0
	Feb.	5	5	0	0	0	0
	Mar.	9	9	0	0	0	0
	Apr.	14	12	0	1	0	0
	May	9	9	0	1	0	0
	June	10	10	0	0	0	0
	July	6	6	1	0	0	0
	Aug.	8	8	4	0	0	0
	Sept.	9	9	2	0	0	0
	Oct.	6	6	1	0	0	0
	Nov.	7	7	3	0	0	0
	Dec.	8	8	2	0	0	0
Total 2013		101	99	14	6	0	0
2014	Jan.	8	7	3	0	0	0
	Feb.	6	6	0	0	0	0
	Mar.	8	8	2	0	0	0
	Apr.	11	11	1	0	0	0
	May	9	8	3	0	0	0
	June	13	13	4	1	0	1
	July	9	9	2	0	0	0
	Aug.	11	11	1	0	0	0
	Sept.	11	11	5	0	0	1
	Oct.	6	6	3	0	0	0
	Nov.	11	11	0	0	0	0
	Dec.	7	7	2	0	0	0
Total 2014		110	108	26	1	0	2
Total 2010-2014		476	468	50	67		3
Total				117		3	

Table 9. Localisation of Robert Fisk's articles in Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya (2010-2014)

makes the total number of the articles 40 in 2011 and 30 in 2012. The notable drop of 10 articles in total (8 referentially localised articles and 2 exclusively localised articles) in 2012 marked a Fisk- *Al Jazeera* divergence trend that has deepened in 2013 and 2014. 2013 and 2014 mark the second stage of the cooperation when concordance between *Al Jazeera* and Fisk has become relatively sparse. The decline in the number of Fisk's exclusively localised articles (6 in 2013 and 1 in 2014) and the increase in his referentially localised ones (14 in 2013 and 26 in 2014) is a significant indicator of the fact that Fisk's and *Al Jazeera*'s attitudes towards the Arab Spring have become different, which forced *Al Jazeera* to be more selective with regard to which of Fisk's articles to exclusively localise or referentially localise.

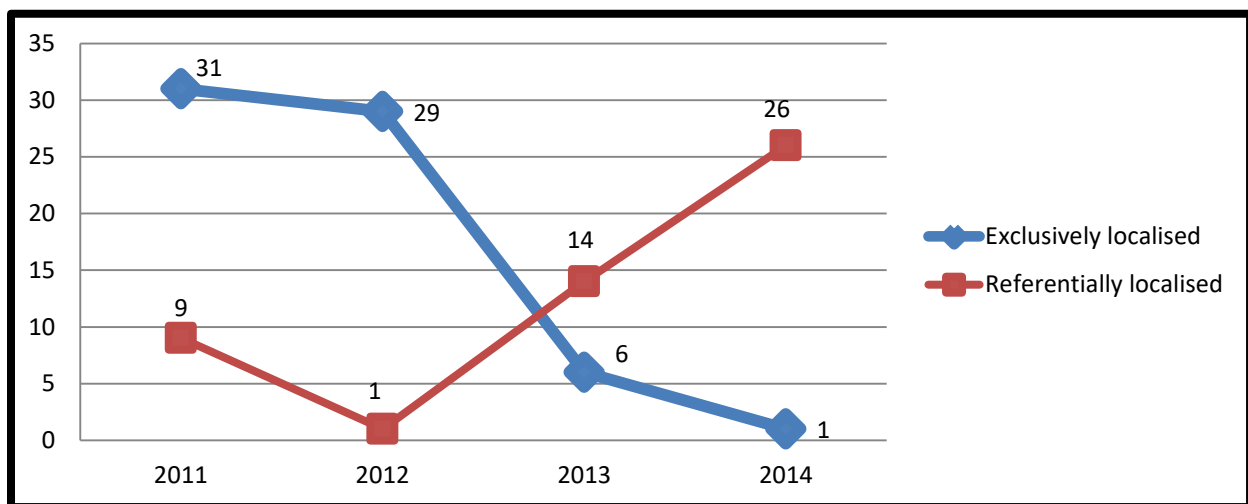


Chart 1. Differences in *Al Jazeera*'s and Fisk's attitudes towards the events of the Arab Spring as represented by the exclusively localised vs. referentially localised news items

This fluctuation in cooperation can be attributed to the fact that Fisk has a tendency to report what he believes to be the truth, and to give voice to the suffering of the victims of violence while passing his criticism to whomever he deems the perpetrator. Therefore, in his articles on the Syrian Arab Spring, for instance, he criticises the atrocities committed by the Islamist fractions fighting against the Syrian regime as much as he criticises the Syrian regime. *Al Jazeera*'s coverage of the Arab Spring in general shows a tendency to favour Islamists. It has lauded Islamists' ascension to power in Tunisia and Egypt, and has provided the Islamists in Syria with extensive favourable media coverage. This caused the ideological and thematic concordance between Fisk and *Al Jazeera* to become an ideological discordance which resulted in having his chosen articles (if any) to be referentially localised while mostly selecting, for localisation, the portions in which he criticises the Syrian regime. The selective practice of localising Fisk's articles (in 2013 and 2014) reveal that *Al Jazeera* chooses only the portions in

which Fisk criticises the Syrian regime, merges them with other similar portions of other news outlets or writers, and then publishes all the portions in one localised article that serves the purpose of criticising only the regime. After 2014, the cooperation between *Al Jazeera* and Fisk has become even less, especially since the latter started criticising *Al Jazeera's* benefactor (the State of Qatar) for funding the Islamist terrorists in Syria and Iraq. In an illustrative example Fisk maintains: “Millions of dollars must be arriving in Isis hands from outside Iraq and Syria, and the question must be asked: if it doesn’t come from within Saudi Arabia – or Qatar – who on earth is providing the wherewithal? Iceland? Peru?” (Fisk, February 4, 2015).

The English STs (Fisk’s articles) of the exclusively localised news items contain 60231 words which are spread over 95 pages, while their counterpart Arabic target texts contain 26182 words which are spread over 43 pages. Tentative observations has led to the deduction that this reduction in the size of the Arabic texts (in certain cases some of Fisk’s articles have been reduced to 1/5 their original size in Arabic) is neither natural (due to linguistic differences between Arabic and English as discussed above) nor coincidental. It is rather the result of a purposeful omission technique that *Al Jazeera* adopted throughout the examined localised texts. These important techniques of localisation have been further explored through the interviews set of data.

4.2 Thematic Coding of the Interviews Dataset

The thematic codes that have been extracted from the interviews with *Al Jazeera* translators will be reviewed in this section. In discourse studies, qualitative interviews are normally treated as empirical data (Cruickshank 2012, p. 38). The interviews with *Al Jazeera* translators provide a discussion of the roles of the translators in the localisation processes and the status that is assigned to actors through the structure of the institution in which localisation takes place. The statements that the interviewees made have been primarily examined in order to verify the phenomenon of localisation. They have been also explored to find out facts in relation to the following inquiries:

- To what extent the translators are involved in the selection of the STs.
- To what extent they contribute to the final form and content of the localised news item.
- To what extent the institutional hierarchy influences power relations and whether the nationality (Qatari employees vs. non-Qatari employees) plays a significant role in this hierarchy and in influencing the localisation process, etc.

The thematic coding process of the interviews started with the production of transcriptions from the notes taken during the interviews, and through the elaboration of the interviewees' body language and intonation.. This process of transcribing the interviews is seen as "a key phase of data analysis within interpretative qualitative methodology" (Bird 2005, p. 227). Throughout such a process, an analyst develops a good understanding of the interviews dataset. In addition, the attentive reading that accompanies the transcription process facilitates the second phase of analysis, which is the coding. There has been no need for an account of the dataset's lexis. It has been sufficient to compile all the statements on said inquiries and check out who said what. Bearing in mind the aims behind conducting the interviews, and following the protocol regarding the drawing up of themes that has been illustrated above, the researcher's recurrent reading of the interviews' transcripts resulted in having certain segments of this dataset being highlighted as they have revealed observations about:

- Delimitations of interviewees' duties as *Al Jazeera* translators.
- Where translation stands in the multifaceted processes of localisation carried out in *Al Jazeera* news outlet.
- Institutional hierarchy and elements of control in *Al Jazeera*'s institutional power relations.
- Textual intervention carried out by the interviewees or other *Al Jazeera*'s staff.

The fact finding mission of the interviews has been accomplished when the above observations were clustered into themes, and extracts from the interviews transcripts were found to exemplify them. Borrowing some of the terminology that Toury (1995, pp. 56-61) employs to label his norms while devising other labels, the following represent the themes map of the interviews dataset:

- **Preliminary Themes:** These refer to the interviewees' statements that indicate which individuals in *Al Jazeera* select the ST news items, the languages of the source texts, and the sources of the selected news items. For example⁶⁷:

Q.: "Who selects ST articles for translation? And what are the criteria?"

A.: "Selecting articles is done by "scanners", and Al Jazeera's correspondents around the world. No idea about their criteria."

Q.: "What languages do Al Jazeera's translators translate from?"

⁶⁷ In order to contextualise the interviewees' answers, the questions in response to which these answers were made are also provided in the examples

A.: “[Languages of selected texts are] English, French, German, Russian, Spanish, Swahili, Persian etc.”

- **Operational Themes:** These pertain to the statements that the interviewees made on the subject of the decisions that *Al Jazeera* translators make when translating and how relevant their tasks are to localisation. For example:

Q.: “[they were shown samples of Robert Fisk original articles and their localisations into Arabic (which were almost 1/5 each of the original) then asked] Is this how you translated these articles?”

A.: “We can’t remember if we translated these articles in particular, but we can assure you that the final product [localised news item] is not how we translate texts. We are professional translators. We do not skip sections of the text at will. We translate the full text then we pass it on with the original text.”

Q.: “Did it ever happen that you were asked for your opinion in the final or before-print copy of a text that you translated? Was a before-print news item that you translated sent back to you asking you specifically approve of the changes made to it?”

A.: “Never. Otherwise they won’t look like the ones you showed us [referring to localised into Arabic news items which were almost 1/5 each of the original].”

- **Matricial Themes:** These include the interviewees’ answers to questions about who makes decisions about textual segmentation, omissions, additions, etc. as they appear in the localised news items. For example:

Q.: “Do you have instructions with regard to the way you should handle texts such as how you should translate them or how you should translate certain expressions? Examples?”

A.: “As far as we [referring to themselves] are concerned “No”. But we rely on our education and background in appropriating certain expressions. Persian Gulf is often translated as Arab Gulf – for instance.”

Q.: “Does he [the interviewees’ superior] handle editing translated texts?”

A.: “We can’t tell for sure, but likely. He is a member of the “editing board”

Q.: “Is this board responsible for the final copy of the news item as it appears to the public?”

A.: “Most likely. We don’t ask because once we are done with translating the text, our job is done.”

- **Institutional Themes:** These constitute statements concerning the position of the translators in the hierarchy within *Al Jazeera*. For example:

Q.: “What are your exact tasks as translators?”

A.: “We do written translation of news texts and simultaneous interpretation of televised speeches or interviews. We work for Al Jazeera network which owns the website and the satellite TV channel. We are sometimes on call for “breaking news””.

Q.: “Are there any Qatari translators?”

A.: “None of the translators is Qatari. Qataris occupy top management positions such as heads of administrations.”

Q.: “Since you work in a news media such as Al Jazeera, do you identify yourselves as journalists or editors?”

A.: “Because we work for Al Jazeera, we can’t. Our identity cards/pass cards and our job description identify us as translators. Anyone who works for Al Jazeera has an identity card that specifies his/her job and entails a description of it.”

- **Gestural Themes:** These concern a mix of variables observed during the interviews such as body language, tone, and sentiments. For example:

Q.: “Do you have an idea why translated news items are as much reduced in the print copies?”

A.: “Editorial policies’ guidelines [interviewees exchange looks with smirks on their faces].

Q.: “Can you give examples of these guidelines?”

A.: “We can’t give specific ones [body language and tone say otherwise] because we are not members of the editing board.”

The interviews that have been conducted with *Al Jazeera* translators reveal that *Al Jazeera* has a few distinctive streaks in comparison with other news outlets. These exceptions include: institutional hierarchy and work distribution, translators participation in localisation, and level or kind of governmental intervention/governmentality.

4.2.1 Discussion

In terms of the institutional hierarchy and work distribution, the interviews show that *Al Jazeera* is a considerably organised media institution. For instance, the selection of the articles to be localised (which other research on news translation list as a task of the very same individuals who tackle translating them in some news outlets) turned out to belong to a novel category (hardly mentioned in aforesaid research) of employees, namely *scanners*. According to the interviewees, these are journalists or affiliates of journalism but not translators. It seems logical to assume that *Al Jazeera* has staff members (with possible political aptitudes) that choose the

pieces it localises and publishes – selecting certain articles from Fisk’s works furthers this assumption.

Although the interviewed translators did not specify the exact techniques or strategies which *Al Jazeera* editors follow to continue localising the news items, they emphasised the fact that translators in *Al Jazeera* represent a separate category of employees. Their relative independence allows them to work irrespective of specific linguistic guidelines. They do not have direct orders from their superiors in regard to the selection of terminology or the omission of certain portions of the original text that, for instance, might deprecate *Al Jazeera* or its benefactor. These translators do not have a direct connection to producing the final version of the localised news item as it appears to the public in *Al Jazeera*’s website – unlike other media outlets where the lines between the tasks of the translators and the journalists/editors coalesce. Bassnett (2005, p. 124) suggests that

journalists, including those who work with material across different languages, refer to themselves as journalists and eschew the term ‘translator’. Translation appears to carry with it associations of some form of inferior, more derivative practice, though as emerged during a debate at our first project conference held at the University of Warwick in April 2004, none of the participants from the world of media could explain what that distinction might be.

Al Jazeera translators eschew the job title journalist in the same manner that the journalists in Bassnett’s quote eschew the term translator. The context of job title distinction in *Al Jazeera* can be interpreted in two ways. The first is that *Al Jazeera*’s upper management (mostly formed of Qatari nationals) shares the views of inferiority associations (that Bassnett mentions) regarding translation and deems translators in *Al Jazeera* as conduits of information rather than decision-makers. Therefore, translators are secluded from having the right or the power to influence or make a decision about the form or content of the final version of the localised news item – see operational themes. The fact that there are no Qatari translators in *Al Jazeera* (at the time of conducting the interviews) may further underscore this point. On a side note, the lack of Qatari translators may also be ascribed to the dearth of qualified local staff. It has been noticed, during the visit to Qatar, that the few Qataris capable of speaking English take pride in that capability. However, any elaborations on this issue will be highly speculative due to the failure to secure interviews with members of the management, editing board, or journalists who can verify this hypothesis. Second, not including translators in making final decisions could be a mere question of employment organisation or task distribution – see institutional themes. The interviewees seemed self-assured when they talked about their “identity cards” and their “job description”

identifying them as translators. They also attributed the tasks of “only searching and finding” when they spoke of “scanners” with the tone of talking about an inferior category of employees – journalists. They left the researcher with the impression that they are quite content and – in a way – proud of their status in *Al Jazeera*. During the interviews, they asked about the average salary of a Canadian translator/interpreter who works for the Canadian government. When a guestimate of \$60,000 a year was mentioned, they confidently stated that they are paid higher income tax-free salaries with much better benefits but without being specific.

It has been mentioned above that the interviewees requested absolute confidentiality since otherwise they could lose their jobs and be expelled from the State of Qatar. While having employees dismissed for conducting interviews about their work places without the permission of their employer may be explainable (though considered puerile if the work place in question is a media outlet), having an expatriate employee expelled from a country for the same reason may not be so. It is an indication of the extent to which the Qatari government infiltrates *Al Jazeera* and controls its decision-making including decisions with regard to localisation policies. This kind of state interference in the management or direction of the country’s institutions is sometimes termed “governmentality” (Foucault 1977). Governmentality allows the government to control and enforce certain standards of a society through a variety of methods. One of these successful methods is media – or localisation through media in particular.

Localisation techniques generated a sense of uneasiness when the interviewed translators were shown the localised texts – see operational themes. Given the fact that the interviewed translators claim to hold high standards of their profession as translators, their statements ***“We are professional translators. We do not skip sections of the text at will. We translate the full text then we pass it on[...]*”** and ***“Otherwise they won’t look like the ones you showed us”*** clearly indicate their dissatisfaction with the localised items. Their body language provided further clues that they were not content with the management’s interference.

Coding the interviews has helped with the analysis of the part-whole relationships in terms of their top-down institutional hierarchy in *Al Jazeera*. The themes that have been revealed by the coding presented a second layer of empirical evidence that points towards some overarching theme or ideology driving the localisation phenomenon visible in the analysis of the localised texts. However, the interviews analytic procedure has been fixated on getting an insiders’ view of what is really happening in the institution of *Al Jazeera*, either in terms of the

distribution of tasks and the structuring of employees, or the processes of news items localisation – which are viewed as practices (though tackled by different individuals who hold different job titles) that are not necessarily isolated but employable together. The analysis of the interviews shows that there is an encompassing localisational intervention *before*, *during*, and *after* the linguistic textual transfer – which (from a perspective of news translation) can be seen as a continuum of the primary translation process. This analysis has revealed that the extent to which institutional power relations play a role and intervene in the production of localised texts at *Al Jazeera* goes well beyond the reach or purview of the actual translators. Inquiries at this point arise in regards to the purposes of these interventions – which is an aspect worth following up in the analysis of the readership comments dataset.

4.3 Thematic Coding of Readership Comments

In order to thematically code the comments that readers posted in *Al Jazeera* website in response to localised news items, the researcher recurrently read these comments and attached notes detailing the comment's theme(s), commenter's expected education, nationality, location, etc. The main focus was on the themes of the comments that unveiled the stances and opinions of the commenters. These stances and opinions have been utilised as the major code-formulating units. Once all these code units were generated, similar ones were matched and merged under the same theme category. Then labels that best describe the data have been formed to name the overarching themes of the comments dataset. The comments' themes cover a variety of readership opinions on the Arab Spring, the Arabic-speaking world, *Al Jazeera*'s coverage of the Arab Spring, *Al Jazeera*, Robert Fisk, etc. Three overarching themes have been identified and categorised as: themes from positive responses, themes from critical responses, themes from mixed responses. Following is a review of these themes:

First: Themes from Positive Responses

Where *Al Jazeera*'s and Robert Fisk's stances and presentations of the Arab Spring events were viewed favourably, the following five themes have been extracted. Each of these themes is illustrated below with two examples.

Theme 1: *Al Jazeera* is providing moral support for the protestors:

There is a view among the majority of the commenters, who expressed favourable opinions about *Al Jazeera*, that it is siding with Arab causes in general and the protestors of the

Arab Springs in particular. This theme highlights the division between the “same” (the protestors and *Al Jazeera*) versus the “other” (pro-regimists and the pro-regimist media). Pan-Arabism or pan-Arabist causes are recurrently hinted at in these comments as ideological aspects that distinguish who is the same and who is the other. Commenters who reflect such opinions single out *Al Jazeera* with praise and assert that the Arab Springs have been led by the ordinary suppressed Arabic-speaking peoples:

اشكر الجزيرة على انها كانت القناة الإعلامية الوحيدة و اكرر الوحيدة التي ساندت الشعب المصري في ثورته التي حاولت أنظمة الإعلام أو إعلام الأنظمة اجهاضها ولقد أدرك المصريون البسطاء ولا اتحدث هنا عن الموالين للسلطة أهمية الاعلام الوطني الحر الواعي في مساندة قضايا الشعوب العربية. (Al Jazeera, February 6, 2011)

Gloss:

I thank Al Jazeera for being the only I repeat the only media outlet that supported the Egyptian people during the revolution, which the regimes of media or the media of the regimes attempted to suppress. Ordinary Egyptians, and I’m not talking about pro-regimists, realised the importance of the conscious national free media in supporting the causes of the Arab peoples.

الجزيرة هي القناة الوحيدة التي تعبر عما يجول في وجدان الشعوب العربية القهورة والمغلوبة على امرها وهي الوحيدة من بين القنوات العربية التي كسب ثقة غالبية الجمهور العربي وانا واحد منهم تحيا قناة الجزيرة وتبقى شامخة شموخ الأمة العربية. (Al Jazeera, February 3, 2011)

Gloss:

Al Jazeera is the only channel that expresses the conscience of the suppressed and subjugated Arab peoples. It is also the only Arab channel that earned the trust of the majority of the Arab public, including myself. Long live Al Jazeera. May it remain as proud as the Arab nation.

Theme 2: *Al Jazeera* is informing and reporting promptly on the Arab Springs:

A considerable number of commenters emphasise the up-to-date and comprehensive qualities of *Al Jazeera*’s coverage of the Arab Springs. They simultaneously emphasise that the pro-regimist media coverage of the Arab Springs is one-sided and out-dated. Many of these commenters, who appear to be living in non-Arabic-speaking countries, express the need to disseminate the reports of *Al Jazeera* and accentuate its credibility versus the discredibility of the pro-regimist media. The fact that such comments are posted by Arabic-speaking readers who reside outside the Arabic-speaking world confirms the virtual locales notion discussed in this work. For example:

انا اشكر وبكل حراره الجزيره وموقعها الالكتروني الذين اثبتوا وبحق انهم قلب الاعلام النظيف النزيه الشجاع انني وكل المصريين وبقية الأخوة العرب في أمريكا الان لا نقرأ سوي الجزيره لنعرف اخبار اخواننا المتظاهرين هناك في الشوارع. (Al Jazeera February 6, 2011)

Gloss:

I wholeheartedly thank Al Jazeera and its website which proved to be at the core of pure, honest and courageous media. Currently, I and all Egyptians and the rest of Arab brothers in America do not read but Al Jazeera in order to know the news of our protesting brothers there in the streets.

مهم وطارئ .. يا اخوان هناك محاولة مستميتة من النظام الليبي لضرب مصداقية قناة الجزيرة باشاعة ان هناك قصف لطرابلس بالطائرات الحربية الذي هو اصلا غير موجود ولكن هناك فعلا مرتزقة يسيطرون على شوارع طرابلس ويقتلون او يطلقون النار على التجمعات كما أوردت الجزيرة الآن. (Al Jazeera February 22, 2011)⁶⁸

Gloss:

Important and urgent.. Brothers, the Libyan regime is trying very hard to undermine the credibility of Al Jazeera by falsely rumouring that Tripoli is being bombarded. There are actually mercenaries who are controlling Tripoli's streets and are killing or shooting crowds as Al Jazeera reported now.

Theme 3: Robert Fisk is siding with the Arab Causes and criticising the dictators:

Commenters who appear to be primarily in favour of *Al Jazeera* and the Arab Spring often interpret Fisk's criticism of the dictators of the Arabic-speaking world and the cautious optimism (at the beginning of the Arab Spring) which highlight his writings about the protests as suggesting that he is in favour of the Arab Springs. It seems that these commenters are unaware of the fact that *Al Jazeera* is only localising parts of Fisk's articles. The comments, in this case, are basically on the parts of Fisk's articles that *Al Jazeera* deems appropriate to report to the Arabic-speaking readership. This theme can be linked to the way that *Al Jazeera* interferes with reporting news and also to how this kind of interference targets certain locales. For example:

كم هو رائع هذا الكاتب البريطاني روبرت فيسك أنه صحفي محايد ومساند لقضايانا العربية، وأتمنى من الجزيرة (قناة العرب) أن تنشر كتاباته أولا بأول. (Al Jazeera February 24, 2011)

Gloss:

What a great British writer Robert Fisk is. He is a neutral and supportive journalist of our Arab causes. I wish that Al Jazeera (the channel of Arabs) to publish all his writings.

إن روبرت فيسك رجل مثقف ، وهو يعلم بأنه لا يوجد في سوريا معركة وإنما يوجد مجازر وسفك دماء من الطاغية المستبد بشار الأسد. (Al Jazeera September 18, 2011)

Gloss:

Robert Fisk is a learned man. He knows that there is no battle in Syria but massacres and bloodshed committed by the dictator and suppressor Bashar Assad.

Theme 4: The Arab Spring is positive and motivational:

Some commenters believe that the Arab Spring will bring about change and an Arab or Islamic renaissance. Following the toppling of the regimes in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya, there was a sense of euphoria amongst commenters who are in favour of the Springs. There is a strong feeling in this collection of comments that the revolutionary behaviour of the protestors is contagious and will grant the protesting youth political influence. The commenters suggest that the Springs are capable of causing a ripple effect of positive change throughout the Arabic-speaking and the Islamic worlds. This theme reflects a view that the protestors are making the right choice for themselves and others in these worlds. For example:

⁶⁸ The pseudonym of this commenter says that he is from France

ربيع التحرر العربي قد هدر و لن يقف في وجهه اي من الأنظمة التي حكمتها طوال 50 عاما و أكثر كانت هي الأسوأ في تاريخ العرب و المسلمين فهذه ثورة لن تبقى و لن تذر. (Al Jazeera September 18, 2011)

Gloss:

The spring of Arab liberation has roared and none of the regimes that ruled for over 50 years, which were the worst in the history of Arabs and Muslims, will be able to stop it. This is a revolution that will keep none of them.

الشعب العربي بدأ خطوته الأولى في السيادة، وهؤلاء الشباب هم الذين سيقودون العالم العربي وسيؤثرون في العالم الاسلامي، وقريبا سنرى تحركا شبابيا في العالم الاسلامي، وسنرى تضامنا بين الشباب العربي سيصنع المعجزات. (ibid)

Gloss:

The Arab peoples began their first steps towards independence. These youth are the ones who will lead the Arab world and leave an impact in the Islamic world, and soon we will see a move of youth in the Islamic world, and we'll see a solidarity amongst the Arab youth that will make miracles.

Theme 5: Fatalism:

The localised articles generated a relatively large amount of comments around the fated course of the uprisings and the protestors. These comments endorse the fatalistic success of the protests. Lacey (1986, p. 79) suggests that “Fatalism holds that the future is fixed irrespective of our attempts to affect it”. Fatalistic expressions in Arabic refer to the steering power of a deity as the agency practicing an absolute control over what humans do. In general, such expressions permeate phatic communication in Arabic, e.g. verbal/action provisionals such as *إن شاء الله* /*in sha' allah*/ (God willing), *لا حول الله* /*la hawl illah*/ (no one has power without God), or positive fatalistic expressions such as *شهيد* /*shaheed*/ (martyr) or *شهداء* /*shohda'*/ (martyrs). The latter, for instance, is used by the pro-Arab Spring commenters to refer to protestors who are killed in the protests as a reminder of the “Otherness” of the people responsible for killing them on the one hand, and of the sacredness of the fight against the unjust dictators on the other. In comments with such expressions, concerns around the pragmatics of political change or the practical means of winning a political or military conflict are marginalised in favour of continuing the protests and, later, the civil wars through a strong sense of fatalism which is generally associated with some kind of political coreligionism – Islamism. Fatalistic expressions around martyrdom imply that God has destined the death of these protestors who will go to heaven. Viewed thus, such fatalities are justified by some commenters through quoting verses from the Quran in order to increase the fervour of the uprisings, encourage the protestors, and provide them with an incentive to continue protesting even if it meant losing their lives. The connotations of the verbal/action provisionals routinely teem with fatalism to indicate that every human action is provisioned by God's blessing/permission. As such and in order to obtain God's permission, one has to have faith in whatever He destines. For example:

لا تخافوا من الموت: قُلْ لَوْ كُنْتُمْ فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ لَبَرَزَ الَّذِينَ كُتِبَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْقَتْلُ إِلَى مَضَاجِعِهِمْ. إِنَّ الَّذِينَ تَقْتُلُهُمْ أَسْلِحَةُ الْأَنْظُمَةِ الْقَمْعِيَّةِ هُمْ شُهَدَاءُ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ. (Al Jazeera December 29, 2010)

Gloss:

Don't be afraid of death: "Say you, 'If you had been in your houses, even then those for whom killing was already written would have gone forth to the place of their slaughter'"⁶⁹. Those who are being killed by the weapons of the suppressive regimes are martyrs – God willing.

انصح اخواني في سوريا الايتوقف نضالهم على مناصرين لهم من الخارج حتى لوكانو من السوريين وليتوكلو على الله ويتحدو. هي يد الله. انا من ثوار مصر. والله ما فعلنا سوى الاستعانة بالله من ثم التوحد ونبذ الخلافات وجعلنا الصبر ذائنا. (Al Jazeera September 18, 2011)

Gloss:

I advise my brothers in Syria not to depend on supporters from abroad, even if they were Syrians. Depend on God and be united. It is the hand of God. I'm an Egyptian revolutionist. I swear that we didn't do more than asking for God's help, being united, putting aside our differences. And we provided for ourselves with patience.

Second: Themes from Critical Responses

Where *Al Jazeera's* and Robert Fisk's stances and presentations of the Arab Spring events were viewed unfavourably the following three themes have been observed:

Theme 6: Criticising *Al Jazeera* and Fisk: Critical opinions of *Al Jazeera* and Fisk are of two types:

1. Deprecating *Al Jazeera* and Fisk for siding with the regimes:

The fact that *Al Jazeera* has propagated an anti-regimist discourse since its inception created a sense of entitlement among the pro-Arab Spring readership that only such discourse should dominate throughout the Arab Springs. *Al Jazeera's* occasional localisation of Fisk's critique of the revolutionists' actions earned it (as well as Fisk) the discontent of a considerable number of the readership. Many of the commenters who did not support the regimes view such criticism as reinforcing a feeling of failure amongst the protestors who have been unable to topple the Syrian or the Yemeni regimes contributing consequently to creating a low mood at a time when a morale boost is needed:

عند حرب العراق اعترض السيد فيسك على المراسلين الذين يذهبون بمرافقة الجيش في مقال بالانديندنت بتاريخ ٢٢ كانون الثاني ٢٠٠٣ و هاهو الآن يذهب برفقة الجيش السوري ليعرض وجهة نظره كنت أعتقد أنه صحفي مخضرم و لكن يبدو أنه لعبون الأسد يهون كل شيء حتى المبادئ. (Al Jazeera August 29, 2012)

Gloss:

During the Iraq war, Mr. Fisk criticised (in an article that was published in *The Independent* on January 22, 2003) the reporters who escort the army. And now he accompanies the Syrian army to present this army's point of view. I

⁶⁹ The commenter is quoting The Quran: Surah 3/Verse 154. Taking verses of the Quran out of their context and employing them for political purposes or personal gains is a common practice by Islamists. Using religious texts for political gain is common practitioners of other faiths as well. Römer (2007) states that "le président des Etats-Unis avait évoqué Gog et Magog dans une conversation avec Jacques Chirac. La discussion portait sur l'actualité au Proche Orient. Après avoir expliqué qu'il voyait Gog et Magog à l'œuvre, George W. Bush a ajouté que les prophéties bibliques étaient en train de s'accomplir". The medieval Crusades provide other illustrative examples (see Austin 1910, p. 128; Cohen 2004, p. 41).

used to think that he is a veteran journalist, but it seems that for the sake of Assad everything can be trivialised, even principles.⁷⁰

ومن يكون فيسك مهما عظم شأنه أو صغر لينشر له كل ماينطق به؟! يريد التشويه ونعينه عليه؟ هل هو خطأ بالنشر أم أن مقالاته تسقط عن غير قصد على صفحات الجزيرة!! مانطق إلا محض كذب ... هل القصد من النشر المستمر لفيسك هو الإطلاع على الرئي الآخر أم هوة إعجاب بتحليلاته التي تمنيت أن تلامس الحقيقة مرة واحدة. (Al Jazeera April 15, 2011)

Gloss:

Who is Fisk (no matter how important or unimportant he is) to have all that he says published?! He wants to deform and we are helping him? Is there a publishing mistake or his articles fall unintentionally on the pages of Al Jazeera? What he says is a downright lie ... Is the purpose behind the continuous publishing of Fisk to provide access to other opinions or is it a mere enchantment with his analyses which are absolutely far from the truth?

2. Deprecating *Al Jazeera* and Fisk for adopting an aggressive foreign agenda that aims at destabilising the Arabic-speaking world and the regimes:

Fisk's criticism of the regimes that *Al Jazeera* has localised is viewed by some commenters as a way to encourage foreign conspiracies against the regimes of the Arabic-speaking world. Routinely, these comments tend towards "Othering" *Al Jazeera* and Fisk in the sense that: if *Al Jazeera* and Fisk are not on our side (not the "Same" as us), then they are serving agendas of their own or of the enemies. These comments argue that the regimes are targeted by such criticism from *Al Jazeera* and Fisk because they did not comply with the will of their enemies. They also focus on portraying the regimes as victims of forenamed criticism, for example:

انا لست من مؤيدي الزعماء العرب ولكن السؤال الذي يطرح نفسه هل فعليا الجزيرة هي صاحبة الراي والراي الآخر كما تدعي ام انها سقطت في اجندات جهات وحكام ضمن النظام السياسي الجديد وضمن استراتيجية الفوضى الخلافة. (Al Jazeera March 31, 2011)

Gloss:

I'm not a supporter of the Arab leaders but the nagging question is: Does Al Jazeera really publish all opinions or has it adopted the agendas of parties and rulers within the new political order and within the creative chaos strategy?

أن نظام الأسد يشكل تهديداً لاستقرار إسرائيل والمشاريع الأمريكية في المنطقة ولأتباعهما وأدواتهما فيها... القائد الأسد متواضع جداً مع شعبه ويزدري كثيراً أعداءه وخدامهم. كنا ظن أن فيسك يهودي مختلف.. وإذا به يهودي دوماً. (Al Jazeera March 31, 2011)

Gloss:

The Assad regime is a threat to the stability of Israel, US schemes in the region, their followers and their stooges...Leader Assad is very modest with his people, but he disdains his enemies and their servants. We used to think that Fisk is a different Jew.. But it turned out that he is always a Jew.

Theme 7: Questioning the Arab Springs' motivations and impact:

In contrast to the positivity expressed by the commenters towards the Arab Spring, there is a minority view that the protestors/revolutionists have no policies for the future or detailed knowledge of the nature of political change. Some commenters state that the Springs are motivated by outside influence – due to the intervention of *Al Jazeera*, Qatar and other

⁷⁰ The commenter refers to Fisk's article which is headlined "War journalists should not be cosying up to the military". In this article, Fisk says: "Reporters who say "we" when they are referring to the US or British military unit in which they are "embedded"" (Fisk January 21, 2003).

influential parties. These commenters point out that the public should be able to make the choice to protest or revolt and should not be pushed into engaging in collective uncalculated behaviour. The Arab Springs are also viewed by other commenters as being too costly in terms of not taking into account the ramifications of toppling stable countries even though they are governed by dictators. For example:

ما يحصل في الدول العربية ليس ثورات حقيقية. ان هذه الحركات الشعبية تستخدم دم الشباب وقود لها وهو لاء المساكين لن يستفيدوا شي من نتائج هذه الحركات. (Al Jazeera March 31, 2011)

Gloss:

The happenings in the Arab countries are not real revolutions. These popular movements use the blood of the young for fuel. The poor youth will benefit nothing from these movements.

أن الثورة الحقيقية تحدد لها أهدافا كالحرية والعدالة والمساواة وأن تقطع أشواطا من البناء في بناء الوعي الجماهيري .. الثورة ليست موضحة وليست تسريحة شعر وليست املاء من قناة اخبارية .. وليست لعب عيال على الفاييس بوك تحرك خيوطه قوى هي لا تتوفر لا على الديمقراطية ولا العدالة ولا المساواة .. (Al Jazeera August 31, 2011)

Gloss:

A true revolution sets goals such as freedom, justice and equality. It should gradually build public awareness.. A revolution is not a fashion or a hairdo, and it isn't instructions from a news outlet. It isn't a game played by the Facebook kids motivated by powers which do not have democracy, justice or equality.

Theme 8: Awareness of *Al Jazeera's* localisation techniques and news coverage:

The comments in this theme highlight the lack of specific details in the localised news items. They focus on the format and value given to the localised portions of Fisk's articles. The commenters question the rationale for not translating certain portions of Fisk articles. Comments in this theme mirror a distrust of *Al Jazeera*. These comments are particularly distrustful of *Al Jazeera's* subjective policies of selecting specific news items or portions of them. In other words, they reflect an awareness of *Al Jazeera's* localisation techniques and question their motives. Some commenters went as far as verifying Fisk's original article and contrasting it with *Al Jazeera's* localised one. There are also concerns over inaccuracies in the translations of how Fisk's articles. Some comments suggest corrections to *Al Jazeera's* translations of Fisk's articles and argue that more appropriate translations should be provided. For example:

الجزيرة تنتقي من المقال فقط ما يناسبها. أهم ما قاله روبرت فيسك هو أن وزير الداخلية السعودي أمر بإطلاق الرصاص الحي في اندلاع مظاهرات في شهر مارس بأمر مكتوب و الوثائق موجودة لدى جريدة الاندبيندنت. (Al Jazeera April 15, 2011)

Gloss:

Al Jazeera selects only what it deems appropriate from the article. The most important thing that Fisk said is that there is a written order by the Saudi Interior Minister to shoot the protestors with live bullets during the demonstrations in March and that germane documents are in the possession of The Independent

لماذا اختصر صحفي الجزيرة مقال فيسك على الجزائر ولم يقل كلمة على ما قاله هذا الاخير عن قطر.... الجزيرة تفتقد المصداقية في التعاطي مع الخبر. مقال فيسك كاملاً لمن يهمه الامر تجدونه في جريدة الاندبيندنت. (Al Jazeera August 31, 2011)

Gloss:

Why did Al Jazeera journalist cut short Fisk's article and focus it on Algeria without mentioning a word of what was said about Qatar?... Al Jazeera lacks credibility in dealing with the news. Fisk's article can be found in full in The Independent for whomever interested.

في مقاله الأصلي شبه فيسك صمت الزعماء بصمت الفئران وعلى الرغم من دقة ترجمتكم للمقال فإنه تم إهمال هذا التشبيه! برأيي أن فيسك يجب أن يُترجم بدقة وبشكل كامل على الدوام فمقالاته هي نتاج عقود من محاولة الفهم لتناقضات الشرق الأوسط. (Al Jazeera September 23, 2011)

Gloss:

In the original article, Fisk resembled the silence of leaders to the silence of mice. Despite the accuracy of your translation of the article, this analogy was deleted! In my opinion, Fisk's articles must be accurately and completely translated. His articles are the product of decades of trying to understand the contradictions of the Middle East.

قال فيسك إن القذافي أعلن أنه سيذهب إلى تلك القمة ممطياً فرسه الأبيض، وليس أنه أعلن امتطاء القمة: (Al Jazeera February 22, 2011)

Gloss:

Fisk said that he will go to the Non-Aligned Movement summit riding his white charger, not riding the summit :⁷¹

Third: Themes from Mixed Opinions on *Al Jazeera*

Theme 9: Critiquing *Al Jazeera*:

Some commenters posted a range of contrasting opinions that critique *Al Jazeera's* news reporting performance and agenda. These opinions can be linked to both theme (8) (as far as the readership's awareness is concerned), and the research questions of this study with regard to whose interests *Al Jazeera's* localisation policies are serving. The comments of this category exhibit commenters' understanding of *Al Jazeera's* contributions to the media field in the Arabic-speaking world as well as the fact that *Al Jazeera* is a mainstreamist news outlet that has its own agenda. There is, however, some support of *Al Jazeera's* performance from those who took a pragmatic viewpoint towards both *Al Jazeera's* promotion of causes that concern the Arabic-speaking world (such as the demands of political change during the Arab Springs) and the exposure of the corruption and faulty policies of the suppressive regimes. Other comments articulate critique of *Al Jazeera's* self-assurance that made it seem complacent. For example:

صحيح الجزيرة عميلة وفيه مأخذ عليها .. وصحيح أنها تتبع سياسة الحكومة القطرية التابعة لأمريكا وإسرائيل .. لكن لا يمنع أيضا أن نعترف بأنها فضحت الكثير من الطغاة .. ربما لها مآرب أخرى .. لكن المهم أن الحقيقة وصلتنا دون ميك أب. (Al Jazeera February 3, 2011)

Gloss:

It is true that Al Jazeera is a puppet with shortcomings.. it is also true that it follows the policies of the Qatari government which is a satellite of America and Israel.. but we have to admit that it has exposed many tyrants.. perhaps for its own purposes .. but the important thing is that we were told the truth without make-up.

أحترم الجزيرة كثيرا لكن أظن أنها أكثر من الأشهار لنفسها أتمنى أن لا تدخل في تفاهة المدح على حساب المصادقية. (Al Jazeera, February 24, 2011)

Gloss:

I respect Al Jazeera a lot, but I think that it has got more into self-advertising. I hope that it doesn't indulge in the platitudes of chest-thumping at the expense of credibility.

⁷¹ The commenter is correcting the translation of *Al Jazeera* which says "[...] حاول امتطاء حركة عدم الانحياز [...]" (Al Jazeera February 22, 2011) (he tried to ride the Non-Aligned Movement). In the original article, Fisk says: "[...] he would ride to a Non-Aligned Movement summit in Belgrade on his white charger" (Fisk February 22, 2011).

4.3.1 Discussion

The netnographic approach that has been used in cramming and analysing readers' comments on *Al Jazeera's* localised news items provides some evidence that it is possible to analyse a large collection of comments without having access to any statistics about the readership who post them. The commenters expressed reactions which are either positive or critical of the Arab Spring, *Al Jazeera*, Fisk, the protestors/revolutionists/rebels, and the regimes. Other commenters devoted their comments to critique *Al Jazeera*. These comments contain a mix of viewpoints that both praise and criticise *Al Jazeera*.

The analysis of the reactions that have been expressed in the comments show a higher number of comments that praise *Al Jazeera* and its coverage of the Arab Spring in comparison with the number of the comments that criticise *Al Jazeera* and its coverage of the Arab Spring. The fact that *Al Jazeera* censors comments may affect the validity of this finding. Several readers expressed similar concerns through their comments, e.g.

اعتقد ان الآراء تعبر عن رأي الجزيرة لانكم تحذفون ما تريدون وتنتشرون على هواكم فنرى كل الآراء من لون واحد. (Al Jazeera, April 27, 2011)

Gloss:

I believe that posted opinions articulate Al Jazeera's viewpoint because you delete what you don't like and publish what you like. One can see that all opinions are similar.

In order to test the representativeness of the comments which have been collected from *Al Jazeera's* website and to verify whether *Al Jazeera* censors comments, the researcher sent *Al Jazeera* comments on a news item about Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani (the current Amir of Qatar) upon his accession to the throne of the State of Qatar in June 2013 (Al Jazeera, June 23, 2013). One comment said:

هل يعرف أحد ما هو راتب الأمير وفيما إذا كان سيواصل دور رقصة الجرب الذي تلعبه دولة قطر والذي يستمر بإشغال الربيع العربي؟ وهل سيواصل تعليماته للجزيرة بمواصلة الاهتمام الرخيص والمخادع لمحنة الشعوب العربية التي يسببها الربيع العربي.

Gloss:

Does anyone know what the Amir's salary is and whether he would continue the pyrrhic role of the State of Qatar that fuels the Arab Spring? Or whether he would continue instructing *Al Jazeera* to continue the tawdry and disingenuous concern for the plight of the Arab peoples that is caused by the Arab Spring?

This comment was posted twice but it was not published. Then, *Al Jazeera* was sent a comment that praises the Amir, the Qatari government, and *Al Jazeera*:

حفظ الله الأمير وسدد خطاه. أرجو أن تشهد دولة قطر الأزدهار الذي تستحقه في عهده وأن تستمر حكومة قطر وقناة الجزيرة في دعمهما اللامحدود لمحتج الربيع العربي ضد الطغاة.

Gloss:

May God save the Amir and guide him. I hope that the State of Qatar will witness the prosperity that it deserves under his reign and that the government of Qatar and Al Jazeera will continue their unlimited support to the protestors of the Arab Spring against the tyrants.

Less than fifteen minutes later this comment was published. As soon as the complimentary comment was published, the former comment was posted once again but *Al Jazeera* never published it. The posting and reposting of comments have been done to eliminate any doubt that *Al Jazeera* did not receive the posted comments. Two different IPs, computers, and pseudo names (when posting said comments) have been used in order to disguise the identity of the commenter, but the results were the same. Although *Al Jazeera*'s unwillingness to publish comments that criticise the Qatari regime does not meet its own code of ethics and in fact underscores the notion of "governmentality" discussed above, it is not the only news outlet which sets guidelines for publishing comments. The *CBC*'s website states "Comments [...] are moderated according to our Submission Guidelines. Comments are welcome while open. We reserve the right to close comments at any time [...] Please note that comments are moderated and published according to our submission guidelines" (*CBC Policies*). Other renowned online news outlets, such as *Reuters* (*Reuters*, November 7, 2014) and *Popular Science* (LaBarre 2013) have shut off their comments' sections altogether. The latter news outlet cites the problem that "trolls and spambots" overwhelm the intellectual debate diminishing the scientists' ability to spread "the word of science far and wide" (*ibid*). This is a shortcoming that any researcher who analyses comments may encounter, whether utilising netnography or any other method.

Bearing the censorship issue in mind, caution has been taken in order not to consider positive comments of *Al Jazeera* (or its ideologies) as a poll of its popularity. However, and although there are a considerable number of critical opinions from those commenters who took anti-Arab Spring or pro-regimist stances, the majority of commenters seem to be supportive of the Arab Spring and *Al Jazeera*'s germane anti-regimist news reporting. Supportive commenters can conservatively be considered *the locale* that *Al Jazeera* targets. These commenters originate in spectra of locations from around the world as their pseudo names or the references they made to their locations in the comments show. They have been brought together by the main interest(s) of having the same positive reactions to the Arab Spring and the aspiration of seeing a sociopolitical (though subjective) positive change in the Arabic-speaking world. They rest their arguments for a political change on themes and ideologies that *Al Jazeera* has long advocated: anti-regimism/reformism, pan-Arabism, and Islamism. These shared interests and ideologies

provided the pro-Arab Spring commenters with a virtual sense of belonging – a virtual locale – which was nurtured by *Al Jazeera*'s promotion of these ideologies and probably censorship of counter opinions. Although joined by the same interest, commenters seemed to show some political inclinations according to which they can be categorised as: leftist secular reformists who advocate socialist political change that protects the vulnerable members of the society from exploitation and persecution; secular nationalists who advocate a political change that is led by pan-Arabists who can bring about a unity that combines Arabic-speaking countries as one nation; or Islamists who advocate a political change that starts in the Arabic-speaking world and then extends to the rest of the Islamic world for the purpose of unifying this world and bringing back the glory of the Muslim Empire.

However, using the ideologies that have been identified above was, on the whole, not restricted to commenters who support the Arab Spring and *Al Jazeera*. Pro-regimist and anti-Arab Spring commenters, who held viewpoints in stark contrast with those of the anti-regimist and pro-Arab Spring viewpoints, resorted sometimes to the same ideologies to justify their arguments. Pro-Syrian regime commenters, for instance, portrayed the Syrian regime as a fortress of pan-Arabism that represents a threat to US and Israeli imperialistic ambitions, and as a protector of the vulnerable non-Arab and non-Muslim minorities in Syria. They even used similar Islamist fatalistic expressions in their comments in theme 5. For example, the members of pro-regimist forces who were killed by the rebels were called “martyrs” by these commenters.

The diversity of the viewpoints that the comments contain and the intertwined tiers of positive, critical, and mixed reactions within these viewpoints made it difficult to classify them quantifiably or statistically into generalisable categories. Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 10) argue that “the ‘keyness’ of a theme is not necessarily dependent on quantifiable measures – but in terms of whether it captures something important in relation to the overall research question”. This is quite expected in qualitative descriptive research. Some qualitative research scholars emphasise that applying statistical generalisability to qualitative research in the same way one may apply it to quantitative research is “illegitimate” (Tracy 2010, p. 838). Therefore, subjective adjectives rather than specific numbers or percentages have been used to account for the readership reactions through their comments. Furthermore, Tracy suggests that statistical generalisations may lead to shifting the focus to only large sample instantiations and disregard the few yet significant ones (ibid, p. 845). A case in point is the group of commenters who

criticised the way that *Al Jazeera* localised Fisk's articles in theme 8, and critiqued *Al Jazeera* in theme 9. Though they are fewer than those posting positive and critical comments, these commenters reflect a significant perspective on how *Al Jazeera*'s localisation techniques are seen by readership. This finding extends the scope of research on news translation to a new group of participants (i.e. not professional journalists or translators) and to a wider range of reactions to the contents of translation-mediated news items than previously studied.

In general, the analysis of readers' comments has not only unveiled strongly polarised and controversial reactions to *Al Jazeera*'s localised news items on the Arab Spring but has also shown that these reactions ground their arguments in the same ideologies which are simply adapted for different uses. These findings contradict current culture-oriented literature on news translation that refers to and advocates acculturation, suggesting the existence of some sort of consensus amongst the members of a culture. The spatiotemporal interest of witnessing a political change (for different reasons and for different ends) brought together the members of *Al Jazeera*'s virtual locale despite the fact that they have different ideological backgrounds, live in separate and remote geographical locations, and (as they identified themselves in the comments or the pseudo names) are not of the same nationalities. Their shared interest in and support for witnessing a political change differentiated the pro-*Al Jazeera* locale from the other locales that do not wish for such a change. This interest demarcates the line between who is the *same* and who is the *other*.

The asymmetry in readers' reactions shows that controlling readership reactions through the promotion of certain ideologies (deemed sometimes cultural) is more difficult than has so far been documented or studied by current literature on news translation. Commenters' strong viewpoints defy the idea of controllable collective thinking suggested by acculturation. The strong viewpoints, which often seem deeply grounded in the commenter's personal experiences, may further mitigate the acceptability of ideas about culturally homogenous close-knit groups, and lead researchers to reflecting on the reality that the great majority of the individuals which form a locale prioritise their personal interests to the interests of the larger group (see section 2.7.1). The interest(s) that bring these individuals together are only circumstantial. Altruistic behaviour is extremely unique and rare which is why it is singled by exceptional praise.

The netnographic analysis of the comments suggests that *Al Jazeera* localises ideologies which are largely acceptable only amongst the group of individuals that represents its target

locale. It provides some evidence of concerns about *Al Jazeera*'s censorship policies of readers' comments being discriminatory. In other words, the analysis found that these policies assist in othering or alienating those who do not adhere to the interests of *Al Jazeera* and its target locale. Given the discussions above about mainstreamist media preferences for intervening in public opinion collective thinking through localising agendas, some commenters showed a piquant awareness of *Al Jazeera*'s localisation/intervention techniques. The majority of the commenters attributed praise or criticism to *Al Jazeera* not Fisk. One way of interpreting this tendency of the commenters is that it confirms the importance of studying localisation from the target medium perspectives of DTS and the Norms Theory whereby the focus is on the medium in which the localisation is produced and the locale which this localisation targets. *Al Jazeera* promotes the ideologies on which the pro-political change arguments rest to further the sensations of "Otherness" and "Sameness" while identifying itself as a member of the *same* pro-political change locale. For this end, it employs localisation techniques that present Fisk's articles as showing support of the Arab Spring.

At the beginning of this chapter, we have stated that the aim of the thematic coding procedure is to see if there is a main overarching ideological variable (latent theme) in the analysed datasets, and then see how other ideological variables relate to it. The thematic map drawn above (for the three sets of data: the news items dataset, the interviews dataset, and the comments dataset) has shown indications that there is an underlying theme/message/ideology that drives *Al Jazeera*'s work. Insights from this map reveal that there is government interference (on the part of the Qatari government) in *Al Jazeera*'s work. Considering these insights from a deductive thematic coding approach (top-down) led this research to contemplate the premise that the initial ideologies (protagonism or anti-regimism) are exploited for purposes that are neither related to their apparent ones of defending victims or criticising those who victimised them nor to endorsing cultural aspects which might seem dominant amongst the Arabic-speaking readership. These ideologies are most probably used within an alterity policy or a *solipsism ideology* (the main overarching latent theme) – as we will elaborate in Chapter Five through an investigative CDA examination. Boyatzis (1998) associates the process of interpreting the analysis results with the latent theme analysis. Based on this perception, the argument we will pursue henceforth is that the initial ideologies found in *Al Jazeera*'s localised news items are encompassed by the solipsism ideology that puts the objectives of *Al Jazeera*'s benefactor at its

core. In order to shed ample light on this argument, we now move to probe the purposes of the localisation techniques of *Al Jazeera*.

CHAPTER FIVE

AL JAZEERA LOCALISATION TECHNIQUES: ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND CONCLUSION

Having mapped the themes of the STs and TTs, and having discussed the entailments of mainstreamism in partisan news media such as *Al Jazeera*, we can now examine and analyse the localisation techniques that *Al Jazeera* localisers adopt. This chapter raises questions about the selection of non-Arabic news items for translation in *Al Jazeera* and, particularly, about the changes, reorganisation, and structural fragmentation through indirect speech, which the original texts underwent in the processes of translation and localisation. By incorporating the data analysis of the interviews and the readership comments with the upcoming analysis of the texts, the news translation schema of *Al Jazeera* will take shape. At this point, we can consider localised news items as part of *Al Jazeera*'s (and *Al Jazeera*'s benefactor) political media discourse which is basically generated under regularities/norms of institutional conventions that represent the news outlet's agenda. Naturally, these regularities or norms have roots in the sociopolitical and sociohistorical circumstances that drive the news outlet. Such circumstances are reflected in the messages that the translation-mediated news items contain. In the following sections and subsections of this chapter we will discuss the salient localisation techniques of *Al Jazeera* with illustrative examples from localised news items. A discussion of *Al Jazeera*'s motives for using these techniques will seek to establish reasons behind *Al Jazeera*'s ideologies in order to contextualise them and to offer a broader interpretation of the analysis. Once these points are explored and discussed, we will turn to investigating the motives of *Al Jazeera*'s benefactor for establishing *Al Jazeera* – the sociohistoric, sociopolitical and socioeconomic circumstances in which *Al Jazeera* was set up. This investigation will argue that the circumstances that both predate and are contemporary to the establishment of *Al Jazeera* have a great influence on the localisation techniques, the ideologies that *Al Jazeera* propagates, and the themes and messages found in *Al Jazeera*'s localised news items.

5.1 Al Jazeera Localisation Techniques

One of the main objectives since the earliest stages of this study has been to verify the existence of the phenomenon being studied, namely localisation. This process of this verification started with a critical analysis of one item, a scoop that *Al Jazeera* circulated in regard to the

Tunisian Arab Spring. The aim of this particular analysis is to explore how much information can be obtained from a single text in order to answer questions and confirm hypotheses raised by Norms Theory and CDA, and to then move on to examine other texts to find answers arose during this initial analysis. The ensuing aim has been to find patterns which can be utilised as a source to investigate the techniques that are used in localising news items in the making, and to examine the influence of news items on their target locales.

The scoop examined was circulated by *Al Jazeera* on December 18, 2010 – one day after Bouazizi’s self-immolation. It is a monolingual (Arabic) news item which tackles the events that shadowed Bouazizi’s self-immolation in his town of Sidi Bouzid. The news item’s headline reads:

M-Example 12:

"مسيرة بتونس للمطالبة بفرص عمل" (Al Jazeera, December 18, 2010).

Gloss:

Demonstration in Tunisia demanding employment opportunities

The leading sentence in this item reads:

فرقت قوات الأمن التونسية في مدينة سيدي بوزيد وسط البلاد مسيرة شعبية حاشدة كان منظموها يطالبون باتخاذ إجراءات عاجلة لتوفير فرص عمل، وتحقيق تنمية عادلة في المنطقة (ibid)

Gloss:

Tunisian security forces dispersed a massive popular demonstration, in Sidi Bouzid city in central Tunisia, whose organisers were demanding urgent measures to create employment opportunities, and achieve equitable development in the region

Other lines in this item are running in support of the leading line:

وقد نظمت هذه الاحتجاجات على خلفية إقدام شاب من حاملي الشهادات العليا العاطلين عن العمل الجمعة على إحراق نفسه (op. cit.)

Gloss:

These protests were organised in reaction to the self-immolation of an unemployed graduate degree holder young man on Friday

وأن المعطلين فيها وجدوا فرصة للتعبير بشكل فيه نوع من التشنج عن مطالبهم المتمثلة في العمل (op. cit.)

Gloss:

The unemployed found an opportunity to articulate, in an agitated manner, their demands for employment

The underlined phrases and words in the above Arabic lines and their English glosses are instances of what might be considered localisation. In the case of this particular example, they represent some adaptations of the information which leads to the tentative deduction that *Al Jazeera* has localised the reporting of these. This deduction has been founded on comparing *Al Jazeera*’s story on Sidi Bouzid’s events against the stories of other sources on the same events. The first adaptation can be seen in *Al Jazeera*’s reference to the small crowd in the small town of Sidi Bouzid as a “massive popular demonstration”. Fisher (2011) notes that “On the day after the

burning, one of Bouazizi's cousins had used his cellphone to record the small crowd gathered in front of Sidi Bouzid's city hall to protest how the vendors had been treated". The cellphone video, for which Fisher provides a hyperlink in his article, can still be accessed on YouTube⁷². The video shows that the scattered crowd of a few dozen (about 40-50 individuals) in Sidi Bouzid is anything but massive. The second adaptation is the reference to Mohammad Bouazizi as a "graduate degree holder". *Al Jazeera* reiterates this particular piece of information in at least three different news items between December 18, 2010 and December 31, 2010 (see *Al Jazeera*, December 25, 2010; *Al Jazeera*, December 26, 2010; and *Al Jazeera*, December 27, 2010). Toumi (2011) who interviewed Bouazizi's sister "Samia" quotes her as saying: "My brother is 26 years old and did not succeed in getting a high school diploma, so he took up selling fruits and vegetables in order to make some money for himself and the family". In addition, *Al Jazeera* makes four references to the protests against "unemployment" in the text, with its news item's headline suggesting that the protests were essentially motivated by this issue. Fisher's abovementioned article and a *Deutsche Presse-Agentur's* (henceforth DPA) article (that *Al Arabiya* re-circulated on December 18, 2010) make no specific connection between the protests of Sidi Bouzid on December 18, 2010 and unemployment. Both Fisher and DPA state that the protests on said date were against the bad treatment of vendors that lead Bouazizi to self-immolate.

The issue at this point became whether such adaptations/additions are deliberate, or merely the result of deficient investigative reporting. If they are deliberate, then why is this line of narrative (namely, on unemployment) chosen? More substantially, what is being accomplished by reiterating the unemployment narrative? Investigating the extra-contextual elements revealed that unemployment, though not the immediate reason behind the protests of Sidi Bouzid, has been a major concern for the considerably large Tunisian educated and unemployed locales prior to the Arab Spring (see 1.6.1). Often, news outlets attempt to connect to the target locale by addressing their main concerns. To a certain extent, localised news items depend on contextually or extra-contextually shared knowledge in their accounts of the events. *Al Jazeera* had criticised the unemployment situation in Tunisia prior to the protests; therefore and in order to connect to the larger Tunisian locale(s) beyond the small town of Sidi Bouzid, it

⁷² Sidi Bouzid's YouTube Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0x2mdGimsDo>

carried on its criticism thereof throughout the Tunisian Arab Spring. Translation-mediated/localised news items on the Arab Spring are considered social actions with sociopolitical themes that indulge and affect sociopolitical knowledge. They aim at modifying localic attitudes. From this perspective, the way is paved for understanding ideologically-oriented variables that play a role in applying localisation techniques as they will be discussed below. Considering these variables has proven to be admittedly consistent especially with the news items which have been *selected* for translation by *Al Jazeera*.

5.1.1 Selection Technique: In-gatekeeping and Out-gatekeeping

Text reproduction that is based on preconceived text selection techniques is a common practice, especially in media. Schäffner (2003, p. 23) suggests that most translations are ideologically mediated since “the choice of a source text and the use to which the subsequent target text is put are determined by the interests, aims, and objectives of social agents”. This is to say that no translation/localisation of a selected text is done in an ideologically neutral zone and that localisations, in particular, have almost always been performed on texts which are selected for specific purposes. The fact that *Al Jazeera* selected only 117 out of the 468 articles that Fisk wrote on the Arab Spring leads to an intuitive deduction that there are selection criteria that *Al Jazeera* adopts when it chooses texts to-be-translated. Further, the interviews with *Al Jazeera* translators confirmed that there is a category of employees, which the translators called *scanners*, who are responsible for selecting news items for translation. This selection process is usually included within the term “gatekeeping” (Vuorinen 1995) in the research on news translation. Stivers and Wheelan (1986, pp. 227-230) maintain that the term gatekeeping can be traced back to pioneer social psychologist Kurt Lewin (1890-1947). Lewin coined the expression “gate keeping” in reference to the process of blocking unwanted memories, ideas, concepts, etc. by using a mental gate. Though it was first used in psychology research, the term gatekeeping soon acquired popularity as an essential theory in the field of communication (ibid) and by extension in the field of translation (Cheesman and Nohl 2010). In translation research (see 2.3), gatekeeping is normally used to collectively refer to the processes of selecting the news items to be translated, and to the processes involved in controlling the information to be reported in the translation-mediated news items. This study suggests the sub-categorisation of gatekeeping into the inflections “in-gatekeeping” and “out-gatekeeping” whereby in-gatekeeping refers to the

selection of the news items to-be-translated, and out-gatekeeping refers to the selection of the information published in the localised/translation-mediated news item.

The discussions of inter-themes in Chapter Four (which provide some locale-sensitive examples) have shown that in-gatekeeping is definitely not random. In *Al Jazeera*, STs are selected with the intention of addressing a certain locale and in order to deliver a specific message which can be observed in the following example as well as in many other examples in this chapter. On December 28, 2010, *Al Jazeera* published its first localised news item – on the protests in Tunisia – which reads:

L-Example 13:

هل يلقي بن علي مصير تشاوشيسكو؟
تساءل الكاتب البريطاني بريان وايتكر عن مصير الرئيس التونسي زين العابدين بن علي على خلفية المظاهرات الأخيرة التي تشهدها البلاد، قائلا "هل سيلقى الدكتاتور التونسي مصيرا شبيها بمصير الدكتاتور الروماني نيكولاي تشاوشيسكو عقب أحداث 1989؟".
فبعد 22 عاما من الحكم، جاءت نهاية تشاوشيسكو مفاجئة وغير متوقعة. وقد بدأت بحدث صغير حين لاحقت الحكومة قسا هنغاريا بسبب تصريحاته، فاندلعت مظاهرات واختفت قصة القس لتتحول إلى احتجاجات عامة أطاحت بالنظام.
ويرى الكاتب أن المظاهرات التي اكتسحت تونس خلال الأيام العشرة الماضية بدأت أيضا بحادثة صغيرة حين أقدم الشاب محمد بوعزيزي (26 عاما) - الذي يحمل شهادة جامعية- على إحراق نفسه عندما استولت قوات الشرطة على منتجات الخضار والفواكه التي بدأ يبيعها في الشارع لكسب المال، بحجة عدم حصوله على رخصة. وقد انتشرت المظاهرات في مختلف مدن تونس حتى وصلت إلى قلب العاصمة. ويقول الكاتب في مقال بصحيفة ذي غارديان رغم أن الحديث عن تلك المظاهرات كان متواضعا بسبب القيود الشديدة المفروضة على وسائل الإعلام المحلية وعدم اهتمام الإعلام العالمي، فإن هذه الأحداث تبقى في غاية الأهمية إذا ما وضعت في السياق التونسي. فتونس -والكلام للكاتب- بلد بولسي حيث نادرا ما يشهد المظاهرات، وخاصة بشكل متزامن في المدن والبلدات التونسية.

مضامين الأحداث:
ويرى وايتكر أن هذه الأحداث تكشف عن ثلاثة مضامين، أولها فشل نظام شيد على مدى سنوات لمنع الناس من تنظيم المظاهرات والاحتجاجات. ثم تكشف الأحداث عن تحرر العديد من الناس من الخوف من النظام، فرغم الخطر الحقيقي من الاعتقال والتعذيب فإنهم يرفضون الترويع. وثالث هذه المضامين انهيار "قبضة الشيطان المحكم الذي يقدم الاحتجاجات الاقتصادية مقابل الاستسلام للدكتاتوري". ويستند الكاتب على تسريبات مراسلات الخارجية الأميركية من موقع ويكيليكس التي تقول إن معظم الأنظمة العربية تعول على شبكات الرعاية للبقاء في السلطة، غير أن قاعدة الدعم لنظام بن علي تبدو نسبيا هشة ومحدودة. وختم بالقول إن بن علي قد يحاول التثبيت بالسلطة، غير أن النظام يمر بحقبة جديدة، فقد جاء إلى السلطة عام 1987 عندما أعلن أن الرئيس السابق الحبيب بورقيبة لا يصلح للحكم، "فالأمر مجرد وقت قبل أن يأتي آخر ويعلن مصير بن علي".
المصدر : غارديان. (Al Jazeera, December 29, 2010)

Gloss:

Will Ben Ali meet Ceaușescu's fate?

British writer Brian Whitaker questioned the fate of Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali against the recent demonstrations in the country, saying, "would the Tunisian dictator's fate be similar to the fate of Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceaușescu following the events of 1989?"

After 22 years in power, Ceaușescu's end was sudden and unexpected. Ceaușescu's end started with a small event when the government pursued a Hungarian priest because of his remarks. Protests were triggered. The priest's story disappeared and was replaced by the public protests that toppled the regime.

The writer thinks that the demonstrations that swept Tunisia during the past ten days have also started as a small incident when young man Mohammed Bouazizi (26 years) - who holds a university degree - set himself ablaze following the police seizure of his fruit and vegetable products - that he began to sell on the street to earn money - under the pretext that he does not have a license. Demonstrations have spread in various cities of Tunisia until they got to the heart of the capital. The writer says in an article in *The Guardian* that despite the fact that reporting the demonstrations was modest because of the severe restrictions imposed on local media and the lack of global media attention, these events remain very important if they are considered in the Tunisian context. Tunisia, according to the writer, is a police state where demonstrations rarely happen, especially simultaneously in the cities and towns of Tunisia.

The implications of events:

Whitaker believes that these events reveal three implications. The first is that the system which was constructed over many years to prevent people from organising demonstrations and protests has failed. The events then reveal that many people have become free from the fear of the regime. They refuse to be intimidated through serious dangers

such as being arrested and tortured. The third of these implications is the collapse of the “firm grip of Satan who provides economic needs in exchange for submitting to dictatorship”. The writer refers to correspondence of the US State Department, leaked by the WikiLeaks site, which says that most of the Arab regimes rely on support networks to stay in power, but the support base for the regime of Ben Ali looks relatively fragile and limited. He [Whitaker] concluded by saying that Ben Ali may try to cling to power, but the regime is going through a new era. It came to power in 1987 when it announced that former President Habib Bourguiba was unfit to rule “so it is only a matter of time before someone announces the fate of Ben Ali.”

ST:

1 How a man setting fire to himself sparked an uprising in Tunisia

2 A relatively minor incident has become the catalyst for a wave of protests that may end the presidency of Zine El
3 Abidine Ben Ali.

4 Watching events in Tunisia over the past few days, I have been increasingly reminded of an event in 1989: the fall
5 of the Romanian dictator, Nicolae Ceaușescu. Is the Tunisian dictator, Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, about to meet a
6 similar fate?⁷³

7 After 22 years in power, Ceaușescu’s end came suddenly and somewhat unexpectedly. It began when the
8 government harassed an ethnic Hungarian priest over something he had said. Demonstrations broke out but the
9 priest was soon forgotten: they rapidly turned into generalised protests against the Ceaușescu regime. The Romanian
10 public, to put it mildly, had had enough. The riots and demonstrations that have swept through Tunisia during the
11 past 10 days also began with a small incident. Twenty-six-year-old Mohamed Bouazizi, living in the provincial town
12 of Sidi Bouzid, took to selling fruit and vegetables in the street without a licence. When the authorities stopped him
13 and confiscated his produce, he was so angry that he set himself on fire.

14 Rioting followed and security forces sealed off the town. On Friday, rioters in Menzel Bouzaïene set fire to police
15 cars, a railway locomotive, the local headquarters of the ruling party and a police station. After being attacked with
16 Molotov cocktails, the police shot back, killing a teenage protester. By Saturday, the protests had reached the
17 capital, Tunis – and a second demonstration took place there yesterday. Reporting of these events has been sparse, to
18 say the least. The Tunisian press, of course, is strictly controlled and international news organisations have shown
19 little interest: the “not many dead” syndrome, perhaps. But in the context of Tunisia they are momentous events. It’s
20 a police state, after all, where riots and demonstrations don’t normally happen – and certainly not simultaneously in
21 towns and cities up and down the country. So, what we are seeing, firstly, is the failure of a system constructed by
22 the regime over many years to prevent people from organising, communicating and agitating. Secondly, we are
23 seeing relatively large numbers of people casting off their fear of the regime. Despite the very real risk of arrest and
24 torture, they are refusing to be intimidated. Finally, we are seeing the breakdown of a long-standing devil’s compact
25 where, in return for submitting to life under a dictatorship, people’s economic and welfare needs are supposedly
26 taken care of by the state. Officially, unemployment levels in Tunisia are around 13% though in reality they may be
27 higher – especially among university graduates. According to one recent study, 25% of male graduates and 44% of
28 female graduates in Sidi Bouzid are without jobs. In effect, they are victims of an educational system that has
29 succeeded in providing them with qualifications that can’t be used and expectations that can’t be met. The regime
30 also seems to have overdone its trumpeting of Tunisia’s economic progress. If those claims are true, people ask,
31 what happened to the money? One answer they give is that it has gone into the pockets of the Ben Ali family and
32 their associates. “The First Lady,” Dr Larbi Sadiki of Exeter university wrote the other day, “is almost the
33 Philippines’ Imelda Marcos incarnate. But instead of shoes, Madame Leila collects villas, real estate and bank
34 accounts”. Then there’s the president’s son-in-law and possible successor, Mohamed Sakhr el-Matri whose OTT
35 lifestyle and business interests were eloquently described, courtesy of WikiLeaks, by the US ambassador. The
36 defining moment in the Romanian revolution came when President Ceaușescu and his wife held a rally – televised
37 live – to drum up support. But instead of cheering as they had always done before, the crowd booed and heckled.
38 Visibly stunned, the Ceaușescus disappeared inside the building and the whole country knew their game was up.
39 President Ben Ali has so far avoided that mistake and continues to be extolled by the official media. But there was a
40 telling straw in the wind when his Constitutional Democratic Rally party called a meeting in Sidi Bouzid last week.
41 “The meeting, which was supposed to deliver a strong political message and calm things down, was feeble,” one
42 journalist was quoted as saying. In the event, very few party members turned up The regime’s claim that

⁷³ Underlined lines in this “STs” and the upcoming ones indicate the localised segments and not underlined ones indicate omitted components.

(unspecified) sinister forces lie behind the riots and demonstrations also sounds half-hearted. By hastily finding \$15m (£10m) in economic aid for Sidi Bouzid it has, after all, acknowledged that the protesters have a point. The crucial question is what members of the security forces, members of the ruling party and government officials – all those who have helped to keep the Ben Ali show on the road for the past 23 years – really think. How many of them have family members among the unemployed? And, more important, how many really believe Ben Ali is the man to lead the country out of its problems? Most Arab regimes rely on patronage networks to keep themselves in power but Ben Ali's support base looks comparatively small and increasingly fragile, as the US ambassador noted last year in one of the WikiLeaks documents. He described a regime that has lost touch with the people, a regime that tolerates no advice or criticism and whose corruption has become so blatant that “even average Tunisians are now keenly aware of it”. Ben Ali may try to cling on, but his regime now has a *fin de siècle* air about it. He came to power in 1987 by declaring President Bourguiba unfit for office. It's probably just a matter of time before someone else delivers that same message to Ben Ali. (Whitaker, December 28, 2010).

It is important to associate the selection of the ST theme(s) with the contextual and extra-contextual elements – the topic, timing, immediate sociopolitical events, the addressed locale, etc. – when discussing *Al Jazeera's* localised news items. Several writers (Zoubir and Dris-Aït-Hamadouche 2013, p. 15; Hababou and Amrouche 2013; Bollier 2011) assert the secular identity of the majorly educated Tunisian society, and the fact that most influential political parties/movements are leftist or centre-leftist with socialist agendas (Cesari 2014, p. 157; Perkins 2014, p. 240). A society with a majority of secularists will probably not react zealously to a news headline that echoes a religious ideology. Localisation, according to Pym (2004, p. 111), shows that “texts belong in some locales and not in others”. Therefore, a localised text which addresses toppling a leftist socialist autocratic regime such as Ceaușescu's will be more appealing to the Tunisian protestors' locale as it draws a parallel between Ceaușescu's regime and Ben Ali's socialist (motivated by the ideology of the ruling Democratic Constitutional Assembly Party) autocratic regime. The resemblance between the two autocratic regimes represents a point of reference for shared knowledge that has incentivised *Al Jazeera* to select Whitaker's ST for translation. This goes some way to show the amount of time, effort, and knowledge that *Al Jazeera* puts into the selection process.

Further, text selection in news translation is time sensitive, especially in *Al Jazeera's* case. The timing of the selection of this particular news item for translation calls into question *Al Jazeera's* motives for publishing it at that particular phase of the Tunisian Arab Spring. As Whitaker explains, the protests reached Tunis (the capital) two days before his article (the ST) was published. A review of the news items in English and Arabic (including *Al Jazeera's*) shows that up to this point the protestors' demands did not include ousting Ben Ali. However, the day that shadowed circulating *Al Jazeera's* localised news item witnessed demonstrations with demands that included deposing Ben Ali according to an *Al Jazeera* monolingual news item

headlined محامو تونس ينتفضون (Tunisia's lawyers uprising) (Al Jazeera, December 30, 2010). This monolingual news item opened with an image of Tunisian lawyers carrying a banner that says: “Ben Ali, we ask you to leave...! Lawyers against extension⁷⁴ and bequeathing” (see image 13). The plausible correlation between the selection and the circulation of *Al Jazeera*'s localised news item and the lawyers' protest draws attention to the role played by *Al Jazeera*'s localisation technique of selection – in the case of this example – in incentivising the protests against Bin Ali's regime. The lawyers' protests inaugurated a new phase in the Tunisian protests with a higher bar of demands – ousting Bin Ali being at the top of the list of these demands.



Image 13. Tunisian lawyers protest (Al Jazeera, December 30, 2010)

The structure in which *Al Jazeera* presented this localised news item shows that there are characteristic localisation techniques whose exploration may shed light on the subliminal or even the explicit message(s) driving the selection of the ST. Amongst the first striking techniques, that one can observe is “reorganisation”: the ST's headline has been replaced in the localised text with a different line from the body of the ST. This will be discussed below with further examples. There is also the “indirect speech” (notice the references: “British writer Brian Whitaker questioned”, “The writer thinks”, “according to the writer”, etc.) localisation technique of out-gatekeeping which, in turn, provides cover for other out-gatekeeping localisation techniques. The selection technique of localisation can be seen as the entry technique that *Al Jazeera* uses to deliver its messages or execute its agenda which is further developed by other

⁷⁴ Maddy-Weitzman (2002, p. 578) notes that “Some Tunisians speculated that the constitutional clause limiting presidents to two terms would be altered at some point in the future. This would allow Ben ‘Ali to extend his rule, and possibly become “president for life””.

localisation techniques. We will see in section 5.2 (when we discuss Qatar's motives for establishing *Al Jazeera*) that certain STs containing anti-regimist themes with references to specific regimes have been selected for localisation within a context that alienates said regimes and serves the agenda of *Al Jazeera* and its benefactor. Following the normal order of analysing news items – i.e. discussing headlines and then the bodies of the news items – we will start by discussing the reorganisation localisation technique used in out-gatekeeping, with examples from the localised items headlines. Discussing indirect speech and the rest of the localisation techniques will follow with pertinent examples.

5.1.2 Reorganisation and Substitution Technique

Reorganising the content of the translated news articles and substituting certain expressions with others are among the salient techniques of localisation. Gambier (2006, p. 14) suggests that “Re-organisation means to (re)structure the source text: refocusing the information in a given paragraph, moving or permuting some of the details somewhere else in the story”. Hursti (2001) also emphasises the idea that reorganisation means “restructuring”. As far as the corpus of this study is concerned, reorganisation is observable in all of the TTs. As a common technique of localisation, reorganisation can be particularly found in headlines which are normally the most noticeable lines in news items. Headlines are designed to draw the readers' attention to the stories; otherwise, news items can go unnoticed. Localisers, cognisant of this, tend to add localisms (phrases or expressions which are peculiar to particular locales) in order to make the headlines distinctive and more appealing for those particular locales. A review of *Al Jazeera*'s localised news items show that there are three common kinds of thematic localisms: religious/Islamist, anti-regimist, and pan-Arabist. The translators/localisers chose particular ideas from certain ST segments (expressions, phrases, or sentences) which are not part of the original ST headline, adapted them through localisms, and then used them as the headlines. In quite few cases, alterations consisted of substitutions of certain expressions by others selected or created by *Al Jazeera*'s translators/localisers. The following is a representative selection of the headlines and their localisms from the news items micro-dataset. *Al Jazeera*'s Arabic headlines are presented first followed by: their glosses, the original headlines of the STs, and the segments (identified with the line number(s) that shows their location in the original text and bold fonts) in the STs which are pertinent to the Arabic headlines:

1. **Headlines with religious/Islamist localisms:**

L-Example 14:

رحيل مبارك بات قاب قوسين (Al Jazeera, February 6, 2011)

Gloss:

Mubarak's departure is very close

ST's Headline: Robert Fisk: The wrong Mubarak quits. Soon the right one will go (Fisk, February 6, 2011)

Pertinent line is 19 in the 134-line ST (see L-Example 21):

Hosni Mubarak of Egypt *appears to be on the cusp of stage four – the final departure* (ibid)

L-Example 15:

رمي عمامة في درعا أشعل أحداث سوريا (Al Jazeera, April 15, 2011)

Gloss:

Throwing a turban in Dera ignited Syria's events

ST's Headline: Revolutions don't start with a single dramatic event, such as the destruction of a church or a man's self-immolation (Fisk, April 15, 2011)

Pertinent lines are 163-165 in the 224-line ST (see Appendix 1):

But the governor, a crusty old Baathist and regime-loyalist, took the *turban* of the most prestigious sheikh, *threw it on the floor* of his office and stamped on it (ibid)

2. Headlines with anti-regimist localisms:

L-Example 16:

هل يلقي بن علي مصير تشاوشيسكو؟ (Al Jazeera, December 28, 2010)

Gloss:

Will Ben Ali meet Ceausescu's fate?

ST's Headline: How a man setting fire to himself sparked an uprising in Tunisia (Whitaker, December 28, 2010).

Pertinent lines are 4-6 in the 54-line ST (see L-Example 13):

I have been increasingly reminded of an event in 1989: the fall of the Romanian dictator, *Nicolae Ceaușescu*. Is the Tunisian dictator, Zine El Abidine *Ben Ali*, about *to meet* a similar *fate*? (ibid)

L-Example 17:

فيسك: القذافي يترنح (Al Jazeera, February 22, 2011)

Gloss:

Fisk: Gaddafi reels

ST's Headline: Cruel. Vainglorious. Steeped in blood. And now, surely, after more than four decades of terror and oppression, on his way out? (Fisk, February 22, 2011)

Pertinent line is 5 in the 71-line ST (see L-Example 22):

[Gaddafi] *is going to ground*.

3. Headlines with pan-Arabist localisms:

L-Example 18:

فيسك: لا ربيع للفلسطينيين (Al Jazeera, January 28, 2012)

Gloss:

Fisk: No Spring for the Palestinians

ST's Headline: The present stands no chance against the past (Fisk, January 28, 2012)

Pertinent line is 4 in the 63-line ST (see Appendix 2):

the only Arabs on the Mediterranean ***not to enjoy a Spring***

L-Example 19:

(Al Jazeera, August 11, 2012) فيسك: النظام السوري يشرد الفلسطينيين

Gloss:

Fisk: Syrian regime displaces Palestinians

ST's Headline and pertinent line: Syria welcomed ***them*** – now it has ***spat them out*** (Fisk, August 11, 2012) (see Appendix 3)

Bell (1991, p. 187) maintains that headlines across languages tend to show format similarities. This turned out to be relatively true of the Arabic headlines of *Al Jazeera's* localised headlines and their ST counterparts. Headlines in both the STs and the TTs are in most cases brief and even elliptical with a touch of intended obscurity. On the other hand, Gambier (2006) and Hursti (2001) maintain that translators' tendency to resort to reorganisation can mainly be attributed to differences between the source and target languages, and to the willingness of the news outlets to meet the needs of the target readership. *Al Jazeera's* use of localisms in the above headlines goes beyond catering for the needs of the audience. Normally, headlines give direction to the story of the news item. The headlines of the above selection reveal the variety of news reports circulated by *Al Jazeera* where the localisers put emphasis not on the elements with which the writer of the ST wants to lead but on the themes with which *Al Jazeera* wants to address its readership. The above examples also show that the localisers opt to isolate sometimes minor ideas in larger stories from nearly the middle or the end of the original English article and then reorganise these items as the headlines in the Arabic translation-mediated news items.

For instance, L-Example 19 and L-Example 20 include religious localisms which aim to attract specific readers and to leach into their subconscious the importance of the information in the localised news items. Bassnett (2005, p. 128) suggests that "where Biblical or poetic language is used, the effect is to highlight such moments and signal to an audience that something significant is being said." Hence, patterns of religious localisms usage have been sought in *Al Jazeera's* localised headlines as well as in the texts. The Islamist theme in L-

Example 19 utilises the Quranic idiom ⁷⁵قاب قوسين which functionally means “very close” and addresses the religious, perhaps subconscious, affiliation or knowledge that *Al Jazeera*’s locales share with this idiom while implying that Mubarak’s departure is *destined*. This Quranic idiom substituted for more religiously-neutral Arabic translations (على وشك “on the verge of”, قريب من or “close to”, يقترب من “approaching”, etc.) of Fisk’s “on the cusp of”. The Islamist theme in L-Example 20 which utilises رمي عمامة “throwing a turban” does not employ a religious text but a semiotic sign that is normally identified through the attire of Muslim clergymen. From a semiotic perspective, analysis of this example reveals that signifiers of particular events have been emphasised in the Arabic localised news item to create a less favourable attitude towards the Syrian regime that (according to the rest of the localised item) violates the human rights of every Syrian, including men of the cloth. Following this line of argument, the headline summarises and gives further direction to the details of the story. While the information deemed most salient to the localised news report is given pride of place in the lead sentence, information or events perceived to be of lesser importance are reorganised in a way that places them further down in the TT or even deletes them. In the ST, Fisk refers to the destruction of a Coptic church in Egypt but no mention of this reference can be found in the TT. The assumption behind this deletion is that in the Muslim and, generally, conservative societies of the Arabic-speaking world offending a clergyman is more influential or useful for the purpose of instilling negative attitudes against a certain regime. Therefore, a leading line that insinuates that a prominent Muslim scholar has been insulted would probably attract more Islamist readers than one that reports on the “destruction of a church”.

In L-Example 21 we notice that the headline in Whitaker’s ST reads: “How a man setting fire to himself sparked an uprising in Tunisia”, while in *Al Jazeera*’s localised news item the headline thrustingly says: “Will Ben Ali suffer Ceauşescu’s fate?”. Taking into account the fate of Nicolae Ceauşescu (who was a president one day, then arrested and executed four days later along with his wife Elena Ceauşescu), reorganising the ST in order to localise the headline in this way sends the subliminal message that autocratic regimes are feeble and can easily be toppled. It also delivers the pro-protests incentivising message that if a brutal dictator like Ceauşescu fell so

⁷⁵ From the Holy Quran, Surah 53/An-Najm, Verse 9, meaning the length of two hands or the distance between the bow and its bowstring.

quickly than any other dictator (including Ben Ali) can also fall; and so protests should continue until Ben Ali falls. A comparison between the locations of the above posed question in the ST and the TT causes a researcher to call into question *Al Jazeera*'s motives behind such a reorganisation. As the first news item on the Arab Spring to be selected for translation by *Al Jazeera*, Whitaker's localised news item set the tone of anti-regimist themes for many of *Al Jazeera*'s localised news items circulated later during the Arab Spring. Prior to circulating this item, *Al Jazeera* used to wrap up its criticism of the dictators in the Arabic-speaking world with a gossamer layer of courtesy when addressing or labelling them. This localised news item initiated a stage in *Al Jazeera*'s journalistic style where *Al Jazeera* moved from the courteous critique of the dictators to openly criticising them. However, *Al Jazeera* almost always resorts to its house style of attributing scurrilous detraction (such as "suffer Ceaușescu's fate", or labels such as "Tunisian dictator") to foreign writers. Therefore, the introductory sentence in its localised news item starts with "British writer Brian Whitaker questioned". In other words, *Al Jazeera* only translated Whitaker's message so it should not be blamed if someone gets the message that Ben Ali and his wife should be toppled and perhaps be executed like the Ceaușescus. The same style can also be seen in L-Example 22 where the headline starts with "Fisk" as a preemptive justification of the criticism directed against Gaddafi that follows in the localised news item. There is not much information disclosed in this headline; yet, the ST is reorganised in Arabic in a way that gives priority to a specific piece of information (which appeals to a specific locale), namely: Gaddafi is falling. Its content brevity attracts the attention of those anti-regimist and pro-democracy protestors who wish to see Gaddafi ousted, and motivates them to read the rest of the news item. The readership's thirst for more relevant information is quenched after reading the Arabic text where criticism of Gaddafi and anticipation of his fall are pretty straightforward.

In the last couple of examples, namely L-example 23 and L-Example 24, *Al Jazeera*'s localisers used the reorganisation technique while taking the pan-Arabist locales into consideration. The allusion to the Palestinian Cause as a pan-Arabist issue resonates frequently in *Al Jazeera*'s monolingual news items (see 4.1.3). Given the fact that news items on the abundant daily events of the Arab Spring overwhelmed news media, Palestinian-Israeli events took second place in Arabophone media of MENA from the beginning of the Arab Spring. The news items whose headlines are discussed here are among the few that associated the Palestinians' tragedy inside and outside the Palestinian territories with the Arab Spring. The first

interesting observation in these two headlines is the addition of the expression “Palestinians” which only exists in the bodies of the STs, not their headlines. This reorganisational addition does not seem to respond to any particular guideline other than that of *Al Jazeera*’s quasi-protagonism theme of pan-Arabism and its willingness to address pan-Arabist locales that still deem the Palestinian Cause as a pivotal unifying factor that brings together the populations of the Arabic-speaking world. Through an affirmative statement that is attributed to Fisk (to grant said statement more credibility), the headline in L-Example 23 (as well as the localised text) functions as a reminder of the despair of the Palestinians inside the Palestinian territories. L-Example 24 on the other hand uses a headline that combines the anti-regimist theme and the quasi-protagonism theme of pan-Arabism. The reference in this headline is to Palestinians who were provided a safe-haven in Syria after being displaced either by the Arab-Israeli wars or by the Israeli authorities’ land-confiscating policies. Two important reorganisational aspects about this headline can be observed if it is compared to the original headline and text. The first is the implication that the Syrian regime is deliberately targeting Palestinians by displacing them – attributing this incriminating statement to Fisk. In the ST, Fisk points his finger at all fighting parties – the rebels and the regime alike – for creating the conditions that led to the predicament of the Palestinians in Syria. The second is the use of the verb يَشرد “to displace” which is an expression that is usually associated (in Arabic literature on the Palestinian cause) with the diasporic suffering of the Palestinians at the hands of the Israeli authorities and the Israeli settlers. Using such an expression in reference to the Syrian regime is intended to call to mind an analogy that compares the actions of the aforementioned regime to those of the Israelis against Palestinians. It should be noted that this localised item is especially interesting. With 761 words, this item is the longest translated article of Fisk in the micro-dataset. It stands out as example to represent the amount of attention that *Al Jazeera* pays to the Palestinian Cause and it provides the Arabophone readership with a feature localised news item that demonises the Syrian regime. Once again, one can observe a combination of two themes of *Al Jazeera*: the anti-regimist theme and the quasi-protagonism theme of pan-Arabism.

Generally, *Al Jazeera*’s localisers choose to reorganise and produce substitutes for Fisk’s words and sometimes use them out of their original contexts. The TTs’ headlines (and in a quite few cases as we will see in the discussions of the other localisation techniques below) were localised in a way that made them hardly representative of the content of the ST. The localisers

put emphasis not on Fisk's context but on their own inclination towards prioritising *Al Jazeera's* themes and subliminal messages. This is a tendency that can also be observed in the localisation techniques discussed under *Al Jazeera's* characteristic localisation style of indirect speech.

5.1.3 The Curious Case of Indirect Speech

Indirect speech has been extensively studied by grammarians, semanticists, and linguists from syntactic, functional, or stylistic perspectives (Van der Houwen 2012, Holt & Clift 2007, Coulmas 1986). The tend to generalise that the primary difference between direct and indirect speech (in languages that have both communicative styles) is the change in mood, tense, and person – first person pronouns become third person pronouns – and the complexity involved in producing indirect speech vs. the simplicity of reporting speech directly. The focus in this section, however, is on the applications of using indirect speech as a localisation technique in *Al Jazeera*. In none of the translation-mediated news items that *Al Jazeera* has localised (whether the ST is Fisk's or any other writer's) have these items been published in the direct speech of the original writer unless he is quoted within the localised news item – even then some text manipulation took place (see 5.1.3.2). In the following illustrative example, *Al Jazeera* refers to Fisk (which is a sign of indirect speech) 17 times in a translation-mediated news item that comprises 16 lines:

L-Example 20:

- 1 فيسك (1): أهي نهاية البعث بسوريا؟
- 2 تساءل الكاتب البريطاني روبرت فيسك (2) في مقاله بصحيفة ذي إنديبندنت عن ما إن كان الرئيس السوري بشار الأسد قادرا على فعل ما بوسعه
- 3 "لتطهير" ما وصفه (3) بنظامه الفاسد، وما إن كان حزب البعث قد اقترب من نهايته؟
- 4 وبسبب فيسك الضوء (4) على ما يجول في خاطر الشعب تجاه القوات الأمنية في سوريا، ويتنيس (5) مما قاله الناشط السوري ديري العيتي "إن الشعب
- 5 يتطلع إلى قوات أمنية لا تتعامل مع الناس كالحبوانات". وينقل (6) كذلك عن أحد أصدقاء بشار الأسد قوله إن "الرئيس مثل مقال فوكوشياما، إنه
- 6 يتفكك". وهنا يتساءل فيسك تعليقا (7) على تلك العبارة قائلا (8) "هل هذا صحيح؟ هل يمكن أن تكون هذه نهاية حزب البعث في سوريا، وهو الحزب الذي
- 7 دعمه والده حافظ الأسد؟ وهل هذه هي نهاية حقبة القوات الأمنية السورية؟ ورغم أن الكاتب لا يصدق (9) كل ذلك، فإنه رجح (10) أن كل ما قدمه الأسد
- 8 من عروض سخية (إنهاء حالة الطوارئ على سبيل المثال) قد باء بالفشل. غير أن ثمة أناسا في سوريا يقولون إن الأمر قد انتهى، وإنه ليس بوسع الأسد
- 9 أن يفعل شيئا لإنقاذ نظامه. ويوضح الكاتب البريطاني (11) أن الأجهزة الأمنية ترتعد الآن من تعرضها لطعنة من الداخل، ولا سيما أن "تاريخها حافل
- 10 بالتعذيب وعمليات الإعدام". والرئيس الحالي –الكلام لفيسك– (12) يدرك كل هذا، وقد حاول أن يوقف ذلك، ونجح إلى حد ما، ولكنه لم ينجح في تقديم
- 11 نفسه كقائد، فضمن حاولاته "اليائسة" لإقناع السوريين بأنه يستطيع السيطرة على البلاد، اتهم الولايات المتحدة ولبنان وفرنسا بمسؤوليتها عن عنف
- 12 المتظاهرين في بلاده. وسخر الكاتب (13) من تلك المحاولات، قائلا (14) إن السوريين أنفسهم لا يصدقون ذلك، مشيرا (15) إلى أن المشكلة –كما يقول
- 13 العيتي– في أن سوريا تبقى دكتاتورية، وأن الأسد يبقى دكتاتور. ويضيف (16) أن فشل بشار في تخليص عائلته من الفاسدين (في إشارة إلى عمه) هو
- 14 المشكلة الرئيسة للنظام. ويختم فيسك (17) بأن عائلة الأسد تدرك ما يتعين عليها فعله "لتطهير" اسمها، فهل يستطيع بشار ذلك؟ هل لديه السلطة للقيام
- 15 بذلك؟ فهذا أهم ما يمكن أن يفعله الأسد في الوقت الراهن لإنقاذ نظامه.
- 16 المصدر: إنديبندنت (Al Jazeera, April 20, 2011)

Gloss:

Fisk (1): Is it the End of the Ba'ath [party] in Syria?

British writer Robert Fisk (2) wondered in his article in The Independent about whether Syrian President Bashar Assad is capable of doing what is necessary to "cleanse" what he [Fisk] (3) described as his [Assad's] corrupt regime, and whether the Ba'ath Party has drawn to its end.

Fisk (4) sheds light on what is on the minds of the people in regard to the security forces in Syria, and he [Fisk] (5) quotes Syrian activist Daeiri el-Eiti saying that “The people look forward to having security forces that do not deal with people like animals”. He [Fisk] (6) also quotes a friend of Bashar Assad as saying that “the president is falling apart like the Fukushima reactor”. Fisk (7) wonders here, while commenting on this statement, by [Fisk] (8) saying “Is this true? Could this be the end of the Ba’ath Party in Syria, a party that was supported by his [Assad’s] father, Hafez Assad? Is this the end of an era of Syrian security forces?” Although the writer (9) does not believe all that, he (10) implicated the likelihood that all of Assad’s generous offers (to end the state of emergency, for example) had ended in failure. But there are people in Syria who say that it is over and that Assad could do nothing to save his regime. The British writer (11) explains that the security apparatus are shaking out of the fear that they could be stabbed from within especially that “their histories are full of torture and executions”. The current president – according to Fisk (12) – realises all of this. He [Assad] tried to stop it and succeeded to some extent, but he did not succeed in presenting himself as a leader. Among his [Assad’s] “desperate” attempts to convince Syrians that he can control the country, he accused the United States, Lebanon, and France of being behind the violence of protesters in his country. The writer (13) ridiculed these attempts by [he] (14) saying that the Syrians themselves do not believe them then [he] (15) pointing out that the problem – according to el-Eiti – that Syria remains a dictatorship, and that Assad remains a dictator. He [Fisk] (16) adds that Bashar’s failure in ridding his family of the corrupt members (in reference to his uncle) is the main problem of the regime. Fisk (17) concludes that the Assad family is aware of what it needs to do to “cleanse” its name. Can Bashar do that? Does he have the power to do so? This is the most important thing that Assad can do at the moment to save his regime.

Source: The Independent

ST:

Robert Fisk: Can President Assad do what it takes to cleanse his corrupt regime?

“People are looking for security forces who will not treat the people like animals.” So said Daeiri el-Eiti last night, a Syrian activist, summing up the thoughts of his country. He was right. In Baniyas, in Latakia, in Homs, in Aleppo, in Deraa, even in Damascus itself, it is the same thing. As a friend of Bashar al-Assad, the President, said last night, “Bashar is like Fukushima. He is irradiated.” Is this true? Can this be the end for the Ba’ath party of Syria, the very end of the “Renaissance Party” of the country which Bashar’s father Hafez supported? Is this the end of the Syrian security forces? It seems incredible, but it looks as if all Bashar’s dutiful offers of generosity – an end to the state of emergency, for example – have failed. There are those in Syria who say it is over, that there is nothing Bashar al-Assad can do to save his regime. We shall see. The security forces – and we shall use the word “security” in quotation marks from here on – are fearful. There are long histories of torture and executions behind them and there are many within the military security apparatus inside Syria who are fearful of a riposte. For many years, the torture regime has imposed the most terrible revenge upon opponents of both the President and his father. There was the “German chair” which broke the back of opponents and there was the “Syrian chair” which broke their backs more slowly. The current President knows all this and has tried to bring it to a halt. Largely, he has been successful. His regime has largely proved to be humanitarian. But he has not been a successful leader. In his desperate attempts to persuade Syrians that he can control his country, he has accused America, France and Lebanon of being responsible for the violence of demonstrators in his country. Nobody in Syria believes this. The idea that Lebanon – let alone America and France – can cause demonstrations is ridiculous. The problem lies, as Mr Eiti says, in that Syria remains a dictatorship and that Assad remains a dictator. His failure to rid his own family of the corrupt men within it (I am speaking of his uncle in particular) is the main problem for the regime. This is not a Gaddafi-corrupted government. This is not a Mubarak government. This is an Alawi regime – and essentially a Shia regime – which has been corrupted by its own family. The Assad family knows what it must do to cleanse the family name. Can Bashar do it? Does he have the power to do it? This is all that matters now if he is going to save his regime. (Fisk, April 20, 2011)

The references that *Al Jazeera* makes to Fisk in this localised text are underlined and numbered in both *Al Jazeera*’s version and its gloss. The indirect speech communicative style in *Al Jazeera* has been explored through two hypotheses. The first is that indirect speech is as much a communicative style of the Arabic journalistic genre as it may be of the journalistic genre of any other language. Bassnett (2005, p. 124) assigns the choice between direct and indirect speech

in European newspapers to the different expectations of the readership, as she claims “In some contexts, readers expect reports to contain direct speech, so as to convey a greater sense of authenticity [...] Elsewhere in Europe, direct speech would be perceived as dumbing down, and articles are written using reported speech instead”. As a DTS advocator who deems translators as the new writers of the TT, Bassnett refers to already existing quotes of – for instance – interviewed individuals in the STs when reproducing/translating these STs. In other words, she is suggesting that these quotes are either localised as direct speech or as indirect speech depending on the home style of the news outlet.

The issue with *Al Jazeera*’s use of indirect speech (as L-Example 20 shows) is that it turns the writer of the ST into a constituent of the news story when the entire localised news item is rewritten in indirect speech. Though indirect speech is not rare in the repetitive and redundant Arabic journalistic genre (Parkinson 1993, p. 66), other Arabic news outlets do not duplicate *Al Jazeera*’s specific style of utilising indirect speech. When *Al Jazeera*’s localised texts of Fisk (specifically the technique of indirect speech) have been compared to other translation-mediated articles of Fisk in other Arabic news outlets, it was found that *Al Arabiya*, for instance, self-localised three news items out of the 18 that it has published for Robert Fisk, and re-circulated the other 15 after they have been translated and published by other Arabic news outlets. Only one of *Al Arabiya*’s self-localised three news items is rendered into an indirect speech text. It states at the beginning that the news item is Fisk’s and it concludes by stating that the source is *The Independent* (Al Arabiya, July 4, 2014); the other two news items are published in a direct speech style. All of *Al Arabiya*’s re-circulated news items are localised in direct speech – see for instance *Al Arabiya*’s news item (February 18, 2010) which has originally been published by Kuwaiti *Awan* newspaper, and *Al Arabiya*’s (September 26, 2011) which has originally been published by Egyptian *Shorouk* newspaper⁷⁶.

It appears to be that *Al Jazeera*’s extensive use of indirect speech in translation-mediated news items is an idiosyncratic localisation technique of *Al Jazeera*. This point/observation lays the groundwork for discussing the second hypothesis which is that *Al Jazeera* uses indirect speech as a cover to justify adapting the localised text and consequently leading the readership to understand the news item the way *Al Jazeera* intends. At first glance, a reader of *Al Jazeera*’s

⁷⁶ As a translator for the Iraqi state media (1993-1999), I never came across a text that my colleagues or I had translated, which was then published in other than the direct speech of the original writer.

localised news items might be left with the impression that indirect speech is utilised to give a summary of the ST. But a comparison of the STs to the TTs shows that there are as many additions (see 5.1.3.2) to the TTs as there are *surgical* omissions in them. For instance, indirect speech has been used to add assertive leading verb forms such as “يسلط الضوء” (sheds light), “مشيرا” (points out), etc. which can be seen as a means of attracting the reader’s attention to specific messages in the localised text. In L-Example 25, line 12 has a nexus of three assertive verb forms “سخر” (ridiculed), “قائلا” (saying – functionally meaning emphasising), and “مشيرا” (pointing out – functionally means asserting) respectively. The context, in which these verb forms have been used, leads the readership to engage with the escalating criticism of the Syrian regime from *ridiculing* the regimes attempts (to convince Syrians that foreign hands are behind the protests) as being lies, to *saying* (while emphasising that this is Fisk’s statement) that Syrians believe that the regime is lying, to *pointing out* (asserting) that the regime is a lying dictatorship.

The tendency to use indirect speech that prevails in *Al Jazeera*’s localisation makes observable the *norm* of adding the name of the foreign writer and his nationality, or pronominally referring to him. Fisk has been referred to in the localised text through:

1. His name: His last name “Fisk” is mentioned five times in lines 1, 3, 5, 10, and 14; his first and last “Robert Fisk” is mentioned once in line 2.
2. A proform: Namely “the writer”, in lines 7 and 12, and “British writer” in line 9.
3. Latent pronoun “he”: Latent pronouns (ضمير مستتر in Arabic) are a characteristic of Arabic grammar where the agent is embedded in verb forms. In L-Example 25, the latent pronoun “he” (as referring to Fisk) is used eight times and is embedded in: وصف (*he* described) line 3, يقتبس (*he* quotes) line 4, ينقل (*he* quotes/conveys) line 5, قائلا ((*he*) says/saying) line 6, رجح (*he* implicated/favoured) line 7, قائلا ((*he*) says/saying) line 12, مشيرا (*he* points out/(*he*) is pointing out) line 12, يضيف (*he* adds).

Fisk is described as British twice in lines 2 and 9. Such emphasis appears to be intended by *Al Jazeera* to highlight the fact that the news item is a translation-mediated one. By reviewing *Al Jazeera*’s readership comments, it can be said that *Al Jazeera* has succeeded in making this point clear. Many comments with favourable or unfavourable attitudes towards the contents of the localised news item implicated Fisk. Some commenters went as far as correcting *Al Jazeera*’s translations by referring to what Fisk says in the ST (see Theme 8 in section 4.3). Also, this style of intemperately *reporting the reporter* purports to make the status and the calibre of the source

(namely Fisk) and what is being said become part of the story's authenticity and credibility. The autocratic regimes of the Arabic-speaking world have always accused *Al Jazeera* of being a biased news outlet that fabricates lies about them. Therefore, reiterating the fact that Fisk is the source of the localised story seems to be aiming at deflecting any accusations that *Al Jazeera* is doctoring news, and gives *Al Jazeera*'s inter-themes more credibility as coming from and endorsed by internationally recognised sources.

The influence of the indirect speech feature technique of localisation can be seen in other localisation techniques. Li (1986, p. 40) maintains that "indirect speech is a more complex communicative strategy than direct speech. Direct speech involves reproducing or mimicking the speech of the reported speaker, whereas indirect speech involves rephrasing or paraphrasing the speech of the reported speaker". Li highlights important strategies of indirect speech, namely "reshaping and paraphrasing" both of which are inordinately used by *Al Jazeera* in the translation-mediated news items to justify the use of two of the most significant out-gatekeeping localisation techniques: i.e. omission, and addition.

5.1.3.1 Omission Technique

Generally, the reporter of indirect speech communicates to the reader either more or less than what the original message actually says. In so doing, the reporter relies either on the missing information or on the shared background information to deliver a modified or a codified content that may serve a specific goal. This is a common *fuzzy logic* (Zadeh 1965) strategy in media and political discourses that mostly aims at delivering partial truths. A fuzzy logic strategy gets activated when one or more variables in a statement are left out or replaced with another variable, while maintaining other original variables. *Al Jazeera* utilises indirect speech to shift the focus of a news item by omitting those portions of the ST that do not serve *Al Jazeera*'s intended theme.

This approach of using the omission technique has been widely applied – with varying degrees – to all of *Al Jazeera*'s localised news items in order to inflict changes in the main bodies of the texts and their headlines alike whereby ideologies and themes (whether inherent in the ST or not) are embedded in the TT. One good example is a Fisk article on the early days of the Egyptian Arab Spring. Fisk's article contains 2122 words/134 lines, but its localised Arabic version – as shown below – has been reduced to 552 words/30 lines:

L-Example 21:

رحيل مبارك بات قاب قوسين
استقالة قيادة الحزب الحاكم بمصر أمس - بمن فيهم جمال نجل الرئيس حسني مبارك - لن تهدئ أولئك الذين يريدون إسقاط الرئيس. لقد أصبح صرح السلطة الهائل المتمثل في الحزب الحاكم مجرد قشرة فارغة الآن وملصق دعائي لا يسنده شيء. هكذا استهل روبرت فيسك مقاله في صحيفة إنديبنندنت. وقال فيسك إن المشهد المخادع لرئيس الوزراء المصري الجديد أحمد شفيق وهو يبلغ المصريين أمس أن الأمور بدأت تعود لطبيعتها، كان كافيا ليثبت للمحتجين في ميدان التحرير - الذين ظلوا طوال 12 يوما يطالبون برحيل مبارك الذي حكمهم مدة 30 عاما - أن النظام الحاكم كان مصنوعا من الكرتون. وعندما ناشد قائد القيادة المركزية للجيش عشرات الآلاف من المتظاهرين المؤيدين للديمقراطية في الميدان بالعودة لمنزلهم، أوقفوه عن الكلام. وأضاف أن حسني مبارك أصبح قاب قوسين من المرحلة الرابعة، ألا وهي الرحيل الأخير. وبعد مواجهته بغضب شعبي متزايد على حكمه المستبد ودولته البوليسية وتعتيبيه لشعبه وفساد نظامه، ألقى باللائمة على الجانب المظلم لأعداء البلد الوهميين، مثل القاعدة والإخوان المسلمين وقناة الجزيرة وقناة سي أن أن وأميركا.

وأشار الكاتب إلى أن شرطة مكافحة الشغب الشرسة - التي طردت من شوارع القاهرة منذ تسعة أيام - وعصابات مدمني المخدرات التابعة لها، هم جزء من الأسلحة الباقية في جعبة هذا الدكتاتور الجريح والخطير. وقطاع الطرق هؤلاء -الذين يعملون مباشرة تحت إمرة وزارة الداخلية - هم نفس الأشخاص الذين يطلقون النار ليلا في ميدان التحرير. ومقابلة مبارك المنتحبة مع مذيع شبكة أي بي سي نيوز الأميركية كريستيان أمانبور الأسبوع الماضي - التي زعم فيها أنه لم يرد أن يكون رئيسا لكنه اضطر للاستمرار لمدة سبعة أشهر أخرى لإنقاذ مصر من الفوضى - كانت أول إشارة على أن المرحلة الرابعة قد بدأت.

وقال فيسك إن شعب مصر فاته جيلان من النضج لأن مهمة الحاكم المستبد الأساسية هي تصغير شعبه ومعاملتهم كأطفال. ولكن عندما أجبرت قوة الشباب والتكنولوجيا هذا الشعب الطيع على النضج وشن ثورته المحتومة، بدا واضحا لكل هذا الشعب الذي عومل كأطفال أن الحكومة نفسها كانت مكونة من أطفال أكبرهم كان عمره 83 سنة. كذلك عامل هذا الدكتاتور حلفاءه في الغرب كأطفال عندما توهموا أن مبارك وحده سيظل الجدار الحديدي المانع للمد الإسلامي الذي ينتشر عبر مصر وبقية العالم العربي .

ولا تزال جماعة الإخوان المسلمين - صاحبة الجذور الحقيقية في أنحاء مصر والتي لها حق دخول البرلمان في انتخابات نزيهة - البعيع على ألسنة كل مقدمي الأخبار، رغم عدم وجود أدنى فكرة لديهم عنها.

ونوه فيسك إلى أن مبارك لم يكن جاهلا بظلم نظامه، وأنه ظل باقيا في مكانه بالقمع والتهديدات والانتخابات المزورة. وكثيرا ما نبهه السفراء الأميركيون المتعاقبون إلى الفظائع التي ثرت بك باسمه. وكان مبارك يعبر عن دهشته وقتها ويعد بانتهاء وحشية الشرطة، لكن شيئا لم يتغير.

ونبه الكاتب إلى أن الخيانة دائما تتبع الثورة الناجحة، وأن هذا قد يحدث في الحالة المصرية. وأشار إلى ظاهرة غريبة لاحظها المتظاهرون المؤيدين للديمقراطية، وهي أنه في الأشهر السابقة على اندلاع مظاهرات 25 يناير/ كانون الثاني انتشرت سلسلة من الهجمات على الأقباط وكنائسهم في أنحاء مصر، ودعا بابا الفاتيكان إلى حماية الأقلية القبطية في مصر وأصيب الغرب بالفزع، وعزا مبارك الأمر كله إلى "أياد خارجية". لكن بعد 25 يناير/كانون الثاني لم تُس شعرة قبطي واحدة. لماذا؟ لأن الفاعلين كانت لديهم مهام عنيفة أخرى يؤديونها.

وختم فيسك مقاله بأنه عندما يرحل مبارك فإن الحقائق المخيفة ستتكشف. والعالم ينتظر. ولكن لا أحد ينتظر بانتباه أكثر وبشجاعة أكبر وبخوف أكثر من الشباب الموجودين في ميدان التحرير. وإذا كانوا بحق على حافة النصر فإنهم في أمان. وإذا لم يكونوا كذلك فسيكون هناك قرع لزوار الفجر على كثير من الأبواب.

المصدر : إنديبنندنت (Al Jazeera, February 6, 2011)

Gloss:

Mubarak's departure is very close

The resignation of the leadership of the ruling party in Egypt yesterday – including the president's son Gamal Mubarak – will not appease those who want to overthrow the president. The enormous power structure of the ruling party has now become just an empty shell and a baseless propaganda poster. This is how Robert Fisk began his article in The Independent.

Fisk said that yesterday's deceptive scene of the new Egyptian Prime Minister Ahmed Shafiq informing the Egyptians that things were returning to normal was enough to prove to the protesters in Tahrir Square – who remained for 12 days demanding the departure of Mubarak who ruled them for 30 years – that the regime was made of cardboard. When the commander of the army's central command appealed to the tens of thousands of pro-democracy protesters in the Square to return to their homes, they stopped his speech.

He [Fisk] added that Hosni Mubarak became just around the corner from the fourth stage, namely, the last departure. After he [Mubarak] was confronted with an increasingly popular anger because of his tyrannical rule, state police, torturing his people, and the corruption of his regime, he blamed the dark side of the country's imaginary enemies such as al Qaeda, the Muslim Brotherhood, Al-Jazeera channel, CNN, and America.

The writer [Fisk] noted that the fierce anti-riot police – which was expelled from the streets of Cairo nine days ago – and its affiliated gangs of drug addicts are part of the remaining weapons in the quiver of this wounded and dangerous dictator. [The writer also noted that] Bandits – who work under the direct command of the Interior Ministry – are the same individuals who shoot at night in Tahrir Square. Last week's weepy interview that Mubarak had with Christiane Amanpour broadcaster of American ABC News network – in which he alleged that he did not want to be president but was forced to continue [being so] for another seven months to save Egypt from chaos – was the first indication that the fourth phase has begun.

Fisk said that the Egyptian people had missed two generations of maturity because the primary mission of the suppressive ruler is to infantilise his people and to treat them as children. But when the force of the youth and technology compelled the obedient people to mature and launch the inevitable revolution, it was clear for all the

people who had been treated as children that the government itself was made up of children whose oldest is 83 years old. This dictator also treated his allies in the West as children when they imagined that Mubarak alone would remain the iron wall that will stop the Islamic tide spreading through Egypt and the rest of the Arab world.

The Muslim Brotherhood – the group with the real roots throughout Egypt and has the right to enter the parliament in fair election – remains the bogeyman who is repeatedly referred to by all news presenters although they have no idea about it.

Fisk noted that Mubarak was not ignorant of the injustice of his regime, and that he remained in power through repression, intimidation, and rigged elections. Successive American ambassadors often attracted his attention to the atrocities being committed in his name. Mubarak expressed his surprise every time and promised to end police brutality, but nothing ever changed.

The writer warned that treason always follows the successful revolution, and that this might happen in the case of Egypt. He [Fisk] pointed to a strange phenomenon that the pro-democracy demonstrators noticed, which is that in the months preceding the outbreak of the demonstrations on January 25 a series of attacks on Christians and their churches in parts of Egypt spread out, which urged the Pope to call to protect the Coptic minority in Egypt and made the West to feel appalled. Mubarak attributed the whole thing to “foreign hands”. But after January 25, a single hair of a Copt was not touched. Why? Because the perpetrators had other violent tasks to perform.

Fisk concluded his article [by saying] that Mubarak when is gone, the frightening facts will be exposed. The world is waiting. But no one is waiting with more anxiety, greater courage, and more trepidation than the young people in Tahrir Square. If they are truly on the verge of victory, then they are safe. And if they are not, many doors will be knocked at by the dawn visitors.

Source: The Independent

ST:

1 Robert Fisk: The wrong Mubarak quits. Soon the right one will go

2 Protesters in Tahrir Square are right to be sceptical despite the apparent shake-up in Egypt’s ruling party.

3 The old man is going. The resignation last night of the leadership of the ruling Egyptian National Democratic Party
4 – including Hosni Mubarak’s son Gamal – will not appease those who want to claw the President down. But they
5 will get their blood. The whole vast edifice of power which the NDP represented in Egypt is now a mere shell, a
6 propaganda poster with nothing behind it.

7 The sight of Mubarak’s delusory new Prime Minister Ahmed Shafiq telling Egyptians yesterday that things were
8 “returning to normal” was enough to prove to the protesters in Tahrir Square – 12 days into their mass demand for
9 the exile of the man who has ruled the country for 30 years – that the regime was made of cardboard. When the head
10 of the army’s central command personally pleaded with the tens of thousands of pro-democracy demonstrators in the
11 square to go home, they simply howled him down.

12 In his novel The Autumn of the Patriarch, Gabriel Garcia Marquez outlines the behaviour of a dictator under threat
13 and his psychology of total denial. In his glory days, the autocrat believes he is a national hero. Faced with rebellion,
14 he blames “foreign hands” and “hidden agendas” for this inexplicable revolt against his benevolent but absolute rule.
15 Those fomenting the insurrection are “used and manipulated by foreign powers who hate our country”. Then – and
16 here I use a precis of Marquez by the great Egyptian author Alaa Al-Aswany – “the dictator tries to test the limits of
17 the engine, by doing everything except what he should do. He becomes dangerous. After that, he agrees to do
18 anything they want him to do. Then he goes away”.

19 Hosni Mubarak of Egypt appears to be on the cusp of stage four – the final departure. For 30 years he was the
20 “national hero” – participant in the 1973 war, former head of the Egyptian air force, natural successor to Gamal
21 Abdel Nasser as well as Anwar Sadat – and then, faced with his people’s increasing fury at his dictatorial rule, his
22 police state and his torturers and the corruption of his regime, he blamed the dark shadow of the country’s fictional
23 enemies (al-Qa’ida, the Muslim Brotherhood, al-Jazeera, CNN, America). We may just have passed the dangerous
24 phase.

25 Twenty-two lawyers were arrested by Mubarak’s state security police on Thursday – for assisting yet more civil
26 rights lawyers who were investigating the arrest and imprisonment of more than 600 Egyptian protesters. The
27 vicious anti-riot cops who were mercifully driven off the streets of Cairo nine days ago and the drug-addled gangs
28 paid by them are part of the wounded and dangerous dictator’s remaining weapons. These thugs – who work directly
29 under ministry of interior orders – are the same men now shooting at night into Tahrir Square, killing three men and
30 wounding another 40 early on Friday morning. Mubarak’s weepy interview with Christiane Amanpour last week –
31 in which he claimed he didn’t want to be president but had to carry on for another seven months to save Egypt from
32 “chaos” – was the first hint that stage four was on the way.

Al-Aswany has taken to romanticising the revolution (if that is what it truly is). He has fallen into the habit of holding literary mornings before joining the insurrectionists, and last week he suggested that a revolution makes a man more honourable – just as falling in love makes a person more dignified. I suggested to him that a lot of people who fall in love spend an inordinate amount of time eliminating their rivals and that I couldn't think of a revolution that hadn't done the same. But his reply, that Egypt had been a liberal society since the days of Muhammad Ali Pasha and was the first Arab country (in the 19th century) to enjoy party politics, did carry conviction.

If Mubarak goes today or later this week, Egyptians will debate why it took so long to rid themselves of this tin-pot dictator. The problem was that under the autocrats – Nasser, Sadat, Mubarak and whomever Washington blesses next – the Egyptian people skipped two generations of maturity. For the first essential task of a dictator is to “infantilise” his people, to transform them into political six-year-olds, obedient to a patriarchal headmaster. They will be given fake newspapers, fake elections, fake ministers and lots of false promises. If they obey, they might even become one of the fake ministers; if they disobey, they will be beaten up in the local police station, or imprisoned in the Tora jail complex or, if persistently violent, hanged.

Only when the power of youth and technology forced this docile Egyptian population to grow up and stage its inevitable revolt did it become evident to all of these previously “infantilised” people that the government was itself composed of children, the eldest of them 83 years old. Yet, by a ghastly process of political osmosis, the dictator had for 30 years also “infantilised” his supposedly mature allies in the West. They bought the line that Mubarak alone remained the iron wall holding back the Islamic tide seeping across Egypt and the rest of the Arab world. The Muslim Brotherhood – with genuine historical roots in Egypt and every right to enter parliament in a fair election – remains the bogeyman on the lips of every news presenter, although they have not the slightest idea what it is or was.

But now the infantilisation has gone further. Lord Blair of Isfahan popped up on CNN the other night, blustering badly when asked if he would compare Mubarak with Saddam Hussein. Absolutely not, he said. Saddam had impoverished a country that once had a higher standard of living than Belgium – while Mubarak had increased Egypt's GDP by 50 per cent in 10 years.

What Blair should have said was that Saddam killed tens of thousands of his own people while Mubarak has killed/hanged/tortured only a few thousand. But Blair's shirt is now almost as blood-spattered as Saddam's; so dictators, it seems, must now be judged only on their economic record. Obama went one further. Mubarak, he told us early yesterday, was “a proud man, but a great patriot”.

This was extraordinary. To make such a claim, it was necessary to believe that the massive evidence of savagery by Egypt's state security police over 30 years, the torture and the vicious treatment of demonstrators over the past 13 days, was unknown to the dictator. Mubarak, in his elderly innocence, may have been aware of corruption and perhaps the odd “excess” – a word we are beginning to hear again in Cairo – but not of the systematic abuse of human rights, the falsity of every election.

This is the old Russian fairy tale. The tsar is a great father figure, a revered and perfect leader. It's just that he does not know what his underlings are doing. He doesn't realise how badly the serfs are treated. If only someone would tell him the truth, he would end injustice. The tsar's servants, of course, connived at this.

But Mubarak was not ignorant of the injustice of his regime. He survived by repression and threats and false elections. He always had. Like Sadat. Like Nasser who – according to the testimony of one of his victims who was a friend of mine – permitted his torturers to dangle prisoners over vats of boiling faeces and gently dunk them in it. Over 30 years, successive US ambassadors have informed Mubarak of the cruelties perpetrated in his name. Occasionally, Mubarak would express surprise and once promised to end police brutality, but nothing ever changed. The tsar fully approved of what his secret policemen were doing.

Thus, when David Cameron announced that “if” the authorities were behind the violence in Egypt, it would be “absolutely unacceptable” – a threat that naturally had them shaking in their shoes – the word “if” was a lie. Cameron, unless he doesn't bother to read the Foreign Office briefings on Mubarak, is well aware that the old man was a third-rate dictator who employed violence to stay in power.

The demonstrators in Cairo and Alexandria and Port Said, of course, are nonetheless entering a period of great fear. Their “Day of Departure” on Friday – predicated on the idea that if they really believed Mubarak would leave last week, he would somehow follow the will of the people – turned yesterday into the “Day of Disillusion”. They are now constructing a committee of economists, intellectuals, “honest” politicians to negotiate with Vice-President Omar Suleiman – without apparently realising that Suleiman is the next safe-pair-of-hands general to be approved by the Americans, that Suleiman is a ruthless man who will not hesitate to use the same state security police as Mubarak relied upon to eliminate the state's enemies in Tahrir Square.

Betrayal always follows a successful revolution. And this may yet come to pass. The dark cynicism of the regime remains. Many pro-democracy demonstrators have noticed a strange phenomenon. In the months before the protests

broke out on 25 January, a series of attacks on Coptic Christians and their churches spread across Egypt. The Pope called for the protection of Egypt's 10 per cent Christians. The West was appalled. Mubarak blamed it all on the familiar "foreign hand". But then after 25 January, not a hair of a Coptic head has been harmed. Why? Because the perpetrators had other violent missions to perform?

When Mubarak goes, terrible truths will be revealed. The world, as they say, waits. But none wait more attentively, more bravely, more fearfully than the young men and women in Tahrir Square. If they are truly on the edge of victory, they are safe. If they are not, there will come the midnight knock on many a door.

The key players

Hosni Mubarak

A former Egyptian air force commander who was thrust into power after Anwar Sadat's assassination in 1982, Mubarak has proved to be a ruthless and resilient President. By combining political repression at home with close relations with the US, and relatively cordial relations with Israel, he has been able to retain Egypt's place as a pivotal voice in the Arab world. His handling of the Egyptian economy has been less successful, however.

Ahmed Shafik

Like President Mubarak, Prime Minister Shafik's background is in the Egyptian air force, which he at one point commanded; he has also served as aviation minister. Both his military background and his reputation for efficiency as a government minister made him an obvious choice during the reshuffle forced by the protests.

Omar Suleiman

As the head of the Mukhabarat, Egypt's secret service, Suleiman was one of the most powerful and feared men in Egypt. He also cultivated a close relationship with the US: Mukhabarat cells became one of the destinations for terror suspects who had been "renditioned" by the CIA. As Egypt's new Vice-President, however, he hardly represents a new face for the Mubarak regime. Reports of an assassination attempt against him last week have been denied by the Egyptian authorities.

Mohamed Elbaradei

Winner of the Nobel Peace prize, the former head of the International Atomic Energy Agency has the highest international profile of Mubarak's potential successors. However, he still lacks a strong domestic support base in Egypt, and among the Tahrir Square protesters. It remains to be seen whether he has time to build that kind of support before Mubarak leaves.

Quotes...

"We need to get a national consensus around the pre-conditions for the next step forward. The President must stay in office to steer those changes."

Frank Wisner, US special envoy for Egypt

"There are forces at work in any society, and particularly one that is facing these kinds of challenges, that will try to derail or overtake the process to pursue their own specific agenda.... [That is] why I think it is important to support the transition process announced by the Egyptian government, actually headed by now Vice-President Omar Suleiman."

Hillary Clinton, US Secretary of State

"We need a transition of power within a constitutional framework. At this stage, we have two possible directions: either constitutional reforms or a coup d'état by the army. I don't see another way out."

Mounir Fakhry Abdel Nour, secretary general of the liberal Wafd Party

"I don't believe that we solve the world's problems by flicking a switch and holding an election.... Egypt is a classic case in point."

David Cameron, speaking at security conference in Munich

"I think a very quick election at the start of a process of democratisation would be wrong.... If there is an election first, new structures of political dialogue and decision-making don't have a chance to develop."

Angela Merkel, German Chancellor (Fisk, February 6, 2011)

Some of the lines in the ST above have been underlined to highlight the fact that only these have been localised into Arabic – the rest of the ST lines have been omitted. Valdeón (2008, p. 307) explains omissions in translation-mediated news items by suggesting that they are undertaken in order to abide by space limitations imposed on news outlets' websites on the one hand, and to delete elements in the original story line which are irrelevant to the prospective readership on the

other. The issue of website space limitations might be valid in Valdeón's study which has been conducted through comparing English news items in BBCWorld to their translations in BBCMundo that – according to Valdeón (ibid) – receives less funding than BBCWorld. Nevertheless, this is not the case with *Al Jazeera* which receives multi-millions of US dollars in funding from the State of Qatar, and owns the domain *www.aljazeera.net*. In many cases *Al Jazeera* has published news items which can easily occupy a few pages of a Word document. Besides, in contrast with Valdeón's case, specialists argue that the online element enables news outlets to overcome the traditional problems of space limitations normally encountered in print papers. Bivens (2014, p. 106) maintains that “When localized news stories break [...] news interactive capabilities are enabled that are not constrained by the space limitations inherent within more traditional news media formats”. Eliminating the space factor as a reason behind the omissions leads to the deduction that the issue of *relevance* – as suggested by Valdeón – is a more viable explanation for the omissions in the texts localised by *Al Jazeera*.

Notwithstanding, the important point to keep in mind is that determining relevancy is mostly handled by the news outlet – i.e. *Al Jazeera* – rather than the readership. Thus, we are taken back to the point that *Al Jazeera* aligns the localised portions of the translation-mediated news items with the themes it insinuates into the text and the messages that it aims to deliver. L-Example 26 teems with arguments that move from implications that Mubarak's end is close (e.g. رحيل مبارك بات قاب قوسين “Mubarak's departure is very close” (line 1/the headline in the Arabic text)), to reminders of the regime's atrocious actions (e.g. مبارك لم يكن جاهلا بظلم نظامه، وأنه ظل باقيا في مكانه بالقمع والتهديدات والانتخابات المزورة “Mubarak was not ignorant of the injustice of his regime, and that he remained in power through repression, intimidation, and rigged elections” (line 21 in the Arabic text)), to finally warning the protestors of a fateful end (to them) if they do not continue protesting until Mubarak steps down (e.g. وإذا كانوا بحق على حافة النصر فإنهم في أمان. وإذا لم يكونوا كذلك فسيكون هناك قرع لزوار الفجر على كثير من الأبواب “If they [the protestors] are truly on the verge of victory, then they are safe. And if they are not, many doors will be knocked at by the dawn visitors” (lines 28-29 in the Arabic text)). To achieve this reorganisation of arguments – which contributed to forming the anti-regimist theme – in the localised news item, Fisk's article underwent drastic reduction. Several expressions, sentences, and paragraphs were omitted (see Gambier (2006) for examples from other case studies on news translation); these include:

- Positive references to Mubarak, his regime, or members of his regime have been omitted as they are seen detrimental to the anti-regimist theme of the story:
 - The expression “benevolent” was deleted when the sentence “Faced with rebellion, he blames “foreign hands” and “hidden agendas” for this inexplicable revolt against his benevolent but absolute rule.” (lines 14-15 in the ST) has been localised into Arabic. The sarcastic tone that Fisk uses for the expression “benevolent” will be lost in its translation into Arabic *متسامح/خير* as these two alternatives carry a positive connotation; hence, it will deliver a positive reference to Mubarak’s regime that *Al Jazeera* wants to avoid.
 - Tony Blair’s comments (lines 54-61 in the ST) have been deleted altogether as they include favourable references to Mubarak in the sentences that state: “Mubarak had increased Egypt’s GDP by 50 per cent in 10 years” (lines 56-57 in the ST), “Mubarak [...] was a proud man, but a great patriot” (lines 60-61 in the ST).
 - The sentence that says Mubarak “has been able to retain Egypt’s place as a pivotal voice in the Arab world.” (lines 100-101 in the ST)
 - The quotes that suggest keeping Mubarak in power “The President must stay in office to steer those changes.” (lines 118-119 in the ST), and “it is important to support the transition process announced by the Egyptian government, actually headed by now Vice-President Omar Suleiman.” (lines 122-124 in the ST)
- News stories that normally accentuate the bad qualities of a specific party (in this case Mubarak and his regime) require sketching a positive image of the “hero” party. Therefore, unfavourable references to the protestors (the hero in *Al Jazeera*’s story) have been omitted. For example, lines 80-86 in the ST were omitted because they present an image of the protestors as lacking courage (e.g. “[...] entering a period of great fear (line 80)), desperate (e.g. “Their “Day of Departure” on Friday [...] turned yesterday into the “Day of Disillusion”” (lines 80 and 81)), and willing to negotiate with the autocratic regime (e.g. “They are now constructing a committee [...] to negotiate with Vice-President Omar Suleiman” (lines 83-84)) against whom they are protesting. From *Al Jazeera*’s perspective, such an image will send the wrong message to the protestors which may deter them from continuing to protest until Mubarak steps down.
- The localiser(s) has also deleted references to political figures that may share the credit for spearheading the Arab Spring protests in Egypt with the Muslim Brotherhood and

consequently become the legitimate political successor of the Mubarak regime in the post-Mubarak phase. Paragraphs that contain references to and quotes of Egyptian author Alaa Al-Aswany (lines 16-18 and lines 33-39) have also been omitted. Reasons for deleting Al-Aswany's mentions may be attributed to *Al Jazeera*'s quasi-protagonism of Islamism which it promotes in the localised news item through retaining (in lines 19-20) the positive reference that Fisk makes to the Muslim Brotherhood in lines 50-53 of the ST. Exploring the extra-contextual elements behind deleting any reference to Al-Aswany reveal that the latter is a liberal secularist who opposes the Islamisation of politics and governance in Egypt. In the ST, Al-Aswany labels the Egyptian society as a "liberal society" (line 37 in the ST) which goes against the grain of *Al Jazeera*'s story line. Al-Aswany "backed the army's removal of Mursi on July 3 after mass protests against his rule" (Georgy and Perry (2014), and justified the army's brutal crushing of the protests of the Muslim Brotherhood supporters while describing them as "terrorist groups striking Egypt everywhere and killing people everywhere, and burning churches" (Lloyd 2013). Al-Aswany is also a prominent figure of *كفاية /kefaya/* (enough) or *الحركة المصرية من أجل التغيير* "The Egyptian Movement for Change" which is one of the influential political movements that demanded Mubarak step down as early as 2004 (Fawzy 2007). Clarke (2011) suggests that at its beginning, the support-base of this movement was composed of Egypt's Marxist revolutionists, Nasserist pan-Arabists, liberal political parties, and Islamist opposition groups, i.e. composed of secularists and Islamists that are "supposed to be enemies" who "really hate each other" (ibid, p. 397). The circumstantial alliance amongst the members of the aforementioned movement soon fell apart due to "Controversy over the identity of the movement [which] provoked a "civil-religious" rivalry, with the movement offering no visualization of the relationship between religion and the state" (Fawzy 2007, p. 23). Consequently, Islamists and secularists went back to being at loggerheads again. Therefore, crediting Al-Aswany with praise (such as "the great Egyptian author Alaa Al-Aswany" – line 16 in the ST, or "joining the insurrectionists" – line 34 in the ST) will cause *Al Jazeera*'s Islamist and anti-regimist themes in the localised news item to be less appealing to *Al Jazeera*'s intended locale – mainly comprised of Islamists.

It would seem that *Al Jazeera* translators/editors/journalists have self-servingly determined what might be relevant or irrelevant to the Arabic-speaking readership while taking contextual and extra-contextual elements into consideration. The localised news item has been adapted through

omission (as licensed by indirect speech) to address a specific locale with particular messages within the thematic frameworks of anti-regimism and Islamism. Thus, while the ST abounds in information for and (mostly) against the Mubarak regime, the Arabic localised item never once refers positively to said regime. It seems that the positive lexicon (“benevolent”, “national hero”, “participant in the 1973 war”, “natural successor to Gamal Abdel Nasser as well as Anwar Sadat”) sarcastically used in the ST to describe Mubarak has been deleted altogether in the localised item in order to prevent the readership from developing any favourable recollection of Mubarak that might assuage the angry Egyptian protestors. This kind of text manipulation shows the importance of investigating the influence of extra-contextual elements (such as the socio-political events, socio-historical conditions, or the backgrounds of the agents or entities involved in the events) in shaping translations/localisations and the processes involved in their productions/localisations. The examples offered in the discussions of the next technique of localisation, namely addition, will provide more insight as regards the role that indirect speech plays in said manipulation.

5.1.3.2 Addition Technique

Adding extra information (that does not exist in the ST) to the texts when translating them is a common practice which has been thoroughly discussed in works on translation (Valdeón 2008, Gambier 2006, Molina and Albir 2002, Klaudy 1998). Valdeón (2008, p. 310) suggests that “By providing a target text with additional information not present in the source article, news writers attempt to familiarize their readers with foreign institutions, norms, history or events”. Such additions, according to Valdeón (*ibid*) and Gambier (2006, p. 14), are likely intended to make texts more understandable for the readership. This understanding of the function of the addition strategy in translation can be traced back to the traditional works on translational *dynamic equivalence* that discuss additions (such as those taking place in footnotes) within the translation of culture-specific expressions or concepts (cf. Nida and Taber 1969, Nida 1964).

In *Al Jazeera*’s case, additions have been used for purposes which are much similar to those driving the drastic omissions. It has to be acknowledged though that additions in *Al Jazeera*’s localised news items are fewer in comparison with omissions, but they are no less essential to discuss with regard to their influence in reshaping and adapting the localised texts. We have noticed in the above examples that additions are very present in the localised texts –

adding references that pertain to Robert Fisk and adding leading/assertive verbs/verb forms to the localised texts are illustrative examples. However, references to Fisk and verb forms are not the only additions that *Al Jazeera* inflicts on localised texts. In the following L-Example 27, which covers the Libyan Arab Spring with an essentially anti-regimist theme, we will come across a variety of additions that range from single words to phrases to whole sentences:

L-Example 22:

1 فيسك: القذافي يترنح
2 شن الكاتب البريطاني روبرت فيسك هجوما شرسا على العقيد الليبي معمر القذافي ووصفه بأقذع وأقسى الصفات، وقال إن "الدكتاتور القاسي والمنكبر
3 والمغرور أوغل في سفك دماء الليبيين وأنه يترنح وربما هرب إلى الخارج".
4 وأضاف أن "الدكتاتور القادم من سرت في ليبيا والذي أمضى أكثر من أربعة عقود في حكم الشعب الليبي عبر الترويع والقمع هو في طريقه للسقوط،
5 وأن الثعلب المجنون المهووس المتدلي الخدين الذي يتخذ من النساء حرسا إمبراطوريا والذي ألف الكتاب الأخضر الذي لا يمت للعقلانية بصلة والذي
6 حاول مرة امتطاء حركة عدم الانحياز، هو الآن يترنح على الأرض أو أنه فر هاربا خارج البلاد لا يلوي على شيء". وقال الكاتب إن "القذافي بات
7 مطاردا من جانب أبناء وبنات الشعب الليبي الغاضبين وأنه سينخلم لا محالة، ويلحق بسلفيه كل من الدكتاتور المخلوع زين العابدين بن علي والدكتاتور
8 المخلوع حسني مبارك". وأشار فيسك إلى مظاهر القتل والجثث والجرحى والدمار التي تشهدها المدن الليبية في بنغازي وطرابلس وغيرها من البلدات
9 والقرى الليبية، وإلى الثورة الشعبية الليبية الملتهبة ضد كل مظاهر نظام القذافي المترنح.
10 **مسرحية دموية**
11 وقال إن القذافي الذي شغل عقول الناس عبر عقود بمسرحياته الهزلية بات الآن في آخر أيامه يقود مسرحية دموية ضد أبناء وبنات الشعب الليبي،
12 مضيفا أنه يتسبب في مجازر وحمامات من الدم في البلاد، وأنه يعيش حالة من اليأس وهو يترنح في آخر أيام حكمه. وأشار إلى ماضي القذافي وطرده
13 الفلسطينيين من ليبيا وإلى تصرفاته المختلفة وتبذيره أموال الشعب الليبي في قضايا خارجية متعددة مثل دعمه الجيش الإيرلندي وغير ذلك من القضايا
14 ودعمه وإثارتة النعرات في العالم. كما أشار الكاتب إلى تصريحات سيف الإسلام القذافي ابن العقيد القذافي وقال إنه أزد وأرد وهدد الشعب الليبي
15 بالفوضى وبالحرب الأهلية التي لا تبقى ولا تذر، وهدد بمحاربة أبناء وبنات الشعب الليبي حتى آخر رجل وآخر امرأة وآخر طفلة.
16 المصدر: إنديبندنت (Al Jazeera, February 22, 2011)

Gloss:

Fisk: Gaddafi reels

British writer Robert Fisk launched a vicious attack on the Libyan Colonel Muammar Gaddafi and attributed to him the meanest and harshest qualities. He [Fisk] said that the "cruel, arrogant and bumptious dictator who persisted in shedding the blood of Libyans is reeling and probably fled the country". He (Fisk) added that "the dictator from Sirte in Libya who has spent more than four decades ruling the Libyan people through intimidation and repression is on his way to fall", and that "the crazy obsessed droop-cheeked fox who uses women as imperial guards, and author of the Green Book, which has nothing to do with rational thinking, who tried to ride the non-aligned movement is either gone to the ground or fled the country hoping for nothing but his safety". The writer said that "Gaddafi is pursued by the angry sons and daughters of the Libyan people and that he will inevitably be deposed and follow the footsteps of his counterpart ousted dictator Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, and ousted dictator Hosni Mubarak". Fisk referred to the scenes of the killings, the corpses, the wounded, and the destruction in the Libyan cities of Benghazi and Tripoli and other Libyan towns and villages. He also highlighted the blazing revolution of the Libyan people against all manifestations of the falling Gaddafi regime.

Bloody Drama

He [Fisk] said that Gaddafi who occupied the minds of people for decades with his comedy plays is living now his last days while playing the leading role in a bloody drama against the sons and daughters of the Libyan people. He [Fisk] added that he [Gaddafi] is causing massacres and blood baths in the country and that he [Gaddafi] is living in a state of despair while reeling in his last days in power. He [Fisk] cited instances from Gaddafi's past such as expelling Palestinians from Libya, weird behaviours, squandering Libyan people's money in multiple external issues like supporting the Irish army [Provincial Irish Republican Army] and other issues, and supporting and provoking strife in the world. The writer also pointed out the statements of Colonel Gaddafi's son, Saif al-Islam Gaddafi. He [Fisk] said that he [Saif al-Islam] foamed, thundered, and threatened the Libyan people with chaos and a civil war which will keep no being alive, and that he [Saif al-Islam] threatened to fight the sons and daughters of the Libyan people to the last man, the last woman, and the last bullet.

Source: The Independent

ST:

1 Cruel. Vainglorious. Steeped in blood. And now, surely, after more than four decades of terror and oppression, on
2 his way out.
3 So even the old, paranoid, crazed fox of Libya – the pallid, infantile, droop-cheeked dictator from Sirte, owner of his
4 own female praetorian guard, author of the preposterous Green Book, who once announced he would ride to a Non-
5 Aligned Movement summit in Belgrade on his white charger – is going to ground. Or gone. Last night, the man I
6 first saw more than three decades ago, solemnly saluting a phalanx of black-uniformed frogmen as they flappered
7 their way across the sulphur-hot tarmac of Green Square on a torrid night in Tripoli during a seven-hour military
8 parade, appeared to be on the run at last, pursued – like the dictators of Tunis and Cairo – by his own furious people.
9 The YouTube and Facebook pictures told the story with a grainy, fuzzed reality, fantasy turned to fire and burning
10 police stations in Benghazi and Tripoli, to corpses and angry, armed men, of a woman with a pistol leaning from a
11 car door, of a crowd of students – were they readers of his literature? – breaking down a concrete replica of his
12 ghastly book. Gunfire and flames and cellphone screams; quite an epitaph for a regime we all, from time to time,
13 supported. And here, just to lock our minds on to the brain of truly eccentric desire, is a true story. Only a few days
14 ago, as Colonel Muammar Gaddafi faced the wrath of his own people, he met with an old Arab acquaintance and
15 spent 20 minutes out of four hours asking him if he knew of a good surgeon to lift his face. This is – need I say it
16 about this man? – a true story. The old boy looked bad, sagging face, bloated, simply “magnoon” (mad), a comedy
17 actor who had turned to serious tragedy in his last days, desperate for the last make-up lady, the final knock on the
18 theatre door. In the event, Saif al-Islam al-Gaddafi, faithful understudy for his father, had to stand in for him on
19 stage as Benghazi and Tripoli burned, threatening “chaos and civil war” if Libyans did not come to heel. “Forget oil,
20 forget gas,” this wealthy nincompoop announced. “There will be civil war.” Above the beloved son’s head on state
21 television, a green Mediterranean appeared to ooze from his brain. Quite an obituary, when you come to think of it,
22 of nearly 42 years of Gaddafi rule. Not exactly King Lear, who would “do such things – what they are, yet I know
23 not, but they shall be the terrors of the earth”; more like another dictator in a different bunker, summoning up non-
24 existent armies to save him in his capital, ultimately blaming his own people for his calamity. But forget Hitler.
25 Gaddafi was in a class of his own, Mickey Mouse and Prophet, Batman and Clark Gable and Anthony Quinn
26 playing Omar Mukhtar in *Lion of the Desert*, Nero and Mussolini (the 1920s version) and, inevitably – the greatest
27 actor of them all – Muammar Gaddafi. He wrote a book – appropriately titled in his present unfortunate
28 circumstances – called *Escape to Hell and Other Stories* and demanded a one state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian
29 conflict which would be called “Israeltine”. Shortly thereafter, he threw half the Palestinian residents of Libya out of
30 his country and told them to walk home to their lost land. He stormed out of the Arab League because he deemed it
31 irrelevant – a brief moment of sanity there, one has to admit – and arrived in Cairo for a summit, deliberately
32 confusing a lavatory door with that of the conference chamber until led aside by the Caliph Mubarak who had a thin,
33 suffering smile on his face. And if what we are witnessing is a true revolution in Libya, then we shall soon be able –
34 unless the Western embassy flunkies get there first for a spot of serious, desperate looting – to rifle through the
35 Tripoli files and read the Libyan version of Lockerbie and the 1989 UTA Flight 722 plane bombing; and of the
36 Berlin disco bombings, for which a host of Arab civilians and Gaddafi’s own adopted daughter were killed in
37 America’s 1986 revenge raids; and of his IRA arms supplies and of his assassination of opponents at home and
38 abroad, and of the murder of a British policewoman, and of his invasion of Chad and the deals with British oil
39 magnates; and (woe betide us all at this point) of the truth behind the grotesque deportation of the soon-to-expire al-
40 Megrahi, the supposed Lockerbie bomber too ill to die, who may, even now, reveal some secrets which the Fox of
41 Libya – along with Gordon Brown and the Attorney General for Scotland, for all are equal on the Gaddafi world
42 stage – would rather we didn’t know about. And who knows what the Green Book Archives – and please, O
43 insurgents of Libya, do NOT in thy righteous anger burn these priceless documents – will tell us about Lord Blair’s
44 supine visit to this hideous old man; an addled figure whose “statesmanlike” gesture (the words, of course, come
45 from that old Marxist fraud Jack Straw, when the author of *Escape to Hell* promised to hand over the nuclear nick-
46 nacks which his scientists had signally failed to turn into a bomb) allowed our own faith-based Leader to claim that,
47 had we not smitten the Saddamites with our justified anger because of their own non-existent weapons of mass
48 destruction, Libya, too, would have joined the Axis of Evil. Alas, Lord Blair paid no heed to the Gaddafi “whoops”
49 factor, a unique ability to pose as a sane man while secretly believing oneself – like miss-a-heart-beat Omar
50 Suleiman in Cairo – to be a light bulb. Only days after the Blair handshake, the Saudis accused Gaddafi of plotting –
51 and the details, by the way, were horribly convincing – to murder Britain’s ally, King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia. But
52 why be surprised when the man most feared and now most mocked and hated by his own vengeful people wrote, in
53 the aforesaid *Escape to Hell* that Christ’s crucifixion was a historical falsehood and that – as here I say again, a faint
54 ghost of truth does very occasionally adhere to Gaddafi’s ravings – a German “Fourth Reich” was lording it over
55 Britain and America? Reflecting on death in this thespian work, he asks if the Grim Reaper is male or female. The
56 leader of the Great Libyan Arab People’s Popular Masses, needless to say, seemed to favour the latter. As with all

57 Middle East stories, a historical narrative precedes the dramatic pageant of Gaddafi's fall. For decades, his
 58 opponents tried to kill him; they rose up as nationalists, as prisoners in his torture chambers, as Islamists on the
 59 streets of – yes! – Benghazi. And he smote them all down. Indeed, this venerable city had already achieved its
 60 martyrdom status in 1979 when Gaddafi publicly hanged dissident students in Benghazi's main square. I am not
 61 even mentioning the 1993 disappearance of Libyan human rights defender Mansour al-Kikhiya while attending a
 62 Cairo conference after complaining about Gaddafi's execution of political prisoners. And it is important to
 63 remember that, 42 years ago, our own Foreign Office welcomed Gaddafi's coup against the effete and corrupt King
 64 Idriss because, said our colonial mandarins, it was better to have a spick-and-span colonel in charge of an oil state
 65 than a relic of imperialism. Indeed, they showed almost as much enthusiasm as they did for this decaying despot
 66 when Lord Blair arrived in Tripoli decades later for the laying on of hands. As a Libyan opposition group told us
 67 years ago – we didn't care about these folks then, of course – “Gaddafi would have us believe he is at the vanguard
 68 of every human development that has emerged during his lifetime”. All true, if now reduced to sub-Shakespearean
 69 farce. My kingdom for a facelift. At that non-aligned summit in Belgrade, Gaddafi even flew in a planeload of
 70 camels to provide him with fresh milk. But he was not allowed to ride his white charger. Tito saw to that. Now there
 71 was a real dictator. (Fisk, February 22, 2011)

The underlined additions in L-Example 22 are particularly noticeable in two places of this localised item where they occur in what are supposed to be direct quotes from Fisk – notice the quotation marks in (a) and (b) below. In instance (a), lines 2-3 in the Arabic text read

(a)

وقال إن "الدكتاتور القاسي والمتكبر والمغرور أوغل في سفك دماء الليبيين وإنه يترنح وربما هرب إلى الخارج".

Gloss:

He [Fisk] said that the “cruel, arrogant and bumptious dictator who persisted in shedding the blood of Libyans is reeling and probably fled the country”,

These lines are supposedly quoting Fisk's headline (lines 1-2) that says:

“Cruel. Vainglorious. Steeped in blood. And now, surely, after more than four decades of terror and oppression, on his way out”

The deprecating way in which Gaddafi and his regime are described in this TT version starts by adding the expression الدكتاتور (the dictator) in initial position in the Arabic rendition of Fisk's quote as part of the primary discourse of the localised item's anti-regimist theme. Apart from the fact that Fisk's quote has been subjected to omission (the sentence “And now, surely, after more than four decades of terror and oppression” was deleted without any indication of *ellipsis* thereon), it was freely paraphrased that Fisk's elliptical sentence “[He is] Steeped in Blood.” was translated into أوغل في سفك دماء الليبيين (persisted in shedding the blood of Libyans) implying a premeditation on Gaddafi's part to overkill الليبيين (Libyans). Further, the prepositional phrase “on his way out” was translated into ربما هرب إلى الخارج (probably fled the country) insinuating a cowardly attitude (that recalls the fact that Gaddafi's counterpart in Tunisia (former President Ben Ali) also fled the country), and implying that Gaddafi will ultimately follow suit. Particularly interesting in this example is the addition (in line 7) of the following underlined phrase+clause combination to the second direct quote of Fisk:

(b)

وقال الكاتب إن "القذافي بات مطاردا من جانب أبناء وبنات الشعب الليبي الغاضبين وأنه سينخلع لا محالة، ويلحق بسلفيه كل من الدكتاتور المخلوع زين العابدين بن علي والدكتاتور المخلوع حسني مبارك".

Gloss:

The writer said that "Gaddafi is pursued by the angry sons and daughters of the Libyan people and that he will inevitably be deposed and follow the footsteps of his counterpart ousted dictator Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, and ousted dictator Hosni Mubarak".

ST:

"[Gaddafi] appeared to be on the run at last, pursued – like the dictators of Tunis and Cairo – by his own furious people."

Whereas the noun phrase أبناء وبنات الشعب الليبي الغاضبين (the angry sons and daughters of the Libyan people) may be seen as a paraphrase of Fisk's "by his own furious people" that does not necessarily imply a specific message, the addition of the sentence إنه سينخلع لا محالة (he will inevitably be deposed) may be viewed as a doctored one that aims to boost the fortitude of the anti-Gaddafi protestors by providing them with the impression that an international source (such as Fisk) is saying that Gaddafi cannot escape deposition. At the time (February 22, 2011) of publishing this localised item of *Al Jazeera*, Gaddafi's forces were marching towards Benghazi (the cradle of the Libyan Arab Spring) crushing any resistance in their way (NATO and Libya, NATO website). So, Libyan protestors needed a morale boost more than ever. Also observable in L-Example 22 is the addition of the noun phrase "the sons and daughters of the Libyan people" which has been included three times in lines 7, 11 and 15. Some of *Al Jazeera*'s readers found the repetition of this addition odd to the point that two different commenters posted the following sarcastic comments:

هو فيسك ده دائما بينسى أمهات و آباء واجداد وخالات وبنت خالات... الخ الشعب الليبي ليه؟ (Al Jazeera, February 22, 2011)

Gloss:

Why does Fisk always forget the Libyan peoples' mothers, fathers, grandparents, aunts, maternal aunts, maternal cousins, etc.?

العمى ليكون الكاتب مابعرف انه القزافي وبقية الحكام بدن يقتلو كل الشعوب مو بس الأبناء والبنات. (ibid)

Gloss:

It is a problem if the writer does not know that Gaddafi and the rest of the rulers wish to kill all the peoples not just the sons and the daughters

This particular addition to the TT neither provides the Arabophone readership with any specific information that might contribute to a better understanding of said noun phrase nor represents the content of the ST. It has probably been added by the localiser to either encourage the protestors to continue – by choosing to insert it in Fisk's direct quote in line 7, or to warn the Libyan locale of protestors/rebels of their own imminent massacre in line 11 and line 15 which in turn include the following two other noticeable additions:

(c) The Quranic idiom لا تقي ولا تذر (which functionally means “keeps no being alive”) is used to describe the “civil war” in the fatalistic context that it will enable the regimes’ forces to eradicate all protestors; and

(d) The sentence هدد بمحاربة أبناء وبنات الشعب الليبي حتى آخر رجل وآخر امرأة وآخر طلقة (He [Saif al-Islam] threatened to fight the sons and daughters of the Libyan people to the last man, the last woman, and the last bullet), which supposedly predicts the ominous consequences of the “civil war threat” that Gaddafi’s son, Saif al-Islam, made.

In (c), we find a religiously loaded idiomatic addition that intends to engage the locale of Islamists among Libyan protestors by addressing them with a Quranic expression that appeals to what is supposed to be their religious affinity. This expression is taken from Surah 74/Al-Muddaththir, Verse 28: “It leaves not and spares none”, which describes Hellfire. A possible implication is that if the addressed locales remain inactive they will suffer unbearable consequences at the hands of the pro-regime forces. The localiser then goes on to complete the allusion to aforementioned consequences by adding the sentence in (d) which implies that if the regime is intending to amass all its supporters (men and women) and continue fighting to the last bullet, then the anti-regimists (sons and daughters of the Libyan people = men and women) are entitled to do the same to defend themselves in a civil war that targets them. Let us not forget that these sentences are introduced by “The writer also pointed out” and “He [Fisk] said”. The references to Fisk are perhaps intended to eliminate suspicion with regard to the authenticity of these statements and to provide international legitimacy to addressing the anti-regimists as “the sons and daughters of Libyan people” which is meant to portray only those who oppose the Gaddafi regime as “Libyans” on the one hand, and to alienate the Gaddafi regime on the other.

These examples of additions that contain messages not suggested by the ST seem to indicate that these messages aim to address the specific locale of the anti-regimists. Valdeón (2008, p. 310) states that additions often “result in a complete change in the meaning of the sentence”. The issue with *Al Jazeera*’s additions is that sometimes they *are* the sentences and not simply additions within sentences. Another issue is that some of these additions have been deliberately attributed to the writer of the ST by inserting them in his quoted speech. Additions that localisers/translators opt for appear to be illustrative examples of the hidden agendas of news outlets. *Al Jazeera*’s text renditions have attracted the attention of some critics who have studied its role in and coverage of the Arab Spring. Förster (2014, p. 148) maintains that “The role of Al

Jazeera in inspiring the Libyan [...] protesters is undeniable”. Förster’s statement may be particularly applicable in L-Example 27 where *Al Jazeera* turned Fisk’s ST (through additions, among other localisation techniques) into a text that borders on perhaps becoming an instigative revolutionary leaflet/speech that increases the fervour of rebellion against Gaddafi’s regime. The additions that we discussed above do not really contribute to making the TT *neutrally* informative – if there is such a thing as impartial information in translation-mediated news items.

To sum up the review of *Al Jazeera*’s localisation techniques, it can be safely said that there are multiple clues that *Al Jazeera* *in-gatekeeps* and *out-gatekeeps* the information it circulates through instrumentally utilising localisation techniques such as selection, reorganisation, omission, and addition (under guise of the indirect speech) to propagate certain ideologies. It is quite common to see that *Al Jazeera*’s localisers use more than one localisation technique in the same TT. The TTs are often adapted in a way that combines translating the ideological references included in the inter-themes (themes that Fisk and *Al Jazeera* share) and engrafts *Al Jazeera*’s quasi-themes. Such a use of the localisation techniques meets perhaps two goals: to have the translation-mediated news items interpreted in a way that complies with *Al Jazeera*’s agenda, and to attract the readers of certain locales that *Al Jazeera* normally targets. One expected outcome of the application of the selection technique is that most of the texts which have been selected for translation have an anti-regimism inter-theme. Therefore, anti-regimism is an ideology that stands out in almost all of the examples that we have discussed above. This should not come as a surprise especially as the Event being covered by the news items (namely the Arab Spring) is essentially a sociopolitical anti-regimist event. Reorganisation turned out to be a far more common localisation technique than was anticipated. Studying the way that headlines have been localised and comparing their messages to *Al Jazeera*’s themes shows that these headlines appear to be following particular guidelines that first and foremost cater for the agendas of *Al Jazeera*, and second appeal to specific locales in the Arabic-speaking world. The way in which the Arabic headlines have been localised seems to provide cogent clues to *Al Jazeera*’s motives which, in turn, caused the headlines to be explicitly edifying for the pro-Arab Spring readership.

The localisers of *Al Jazeera*’s TTs often opt to make drastic changes to the STs’ contents through utilising indirect speech. Indirect speech has provided the localisers with the justification to inflict omissions and additions on the localised texts. CDA suggests that what is not said in the

text (or what is omitted) is as important as what is said – i.e. retained or added. When *Al Jazeera*'s localised texts have been probed for the retained and deleted segments of the STs and then have both (segments) compared, some of *Al Jazeera*'s most salient ideological elements became part of the problematising discussions of translation. The most prominent amongst these elements are the anti-regimist, Islamist and pan-Arabist themes. Islamist elements are alluded to through using religious idiomatic expressions. Hence, whereas most of the STs have anti-regimist themes but zero religious affiliation, the translation-mediated news items of *Al Jazeera* teem with religiously loaded expressions. In addition, the fact that anti-Islamist arguments have not been localised into Arabic shows that *Al Jazeera* delivers a purposefully subliminal pro-Islamist message. The abundance of such Islamist themes turns the news outlet's use of religious language in its circulated news items into the journalistic "home style" of *Al Jazeera*. Such a style *seemingly* aims at co-religiously engaging the addressed Islamist locale(s) as much as the pan-Arabist and anti-regimist themes aim at engaging their germane locales.

Many of the changes in the TTs have been so drastic that they have drawn direct attention to *Al Jazeera*'s motives for causing and disseminating them. The assumption so far is that by promoting such ideologies, *Al Jazeera* is attempting to ingratiate itself with specific locales in the Arabic-speaking world. At this juncture, the question that remains unanswered concerns the extent to which this attempt at ingratiation has other implications. If we dig deeper into the motives of *Al Jazeera*, doubts arise about *Al Jazeera*'s benefactor – The State of Qatar. Qatar's motives are unquestionably important to discuss in order to further contextualise and justify the appropriateness of choosing the term localisation and better understand the discussions in this chapter.

5.2 Establishing Al Jazeera: Qatar's Motives

Van Dijk (1998, p. 71) notes "If ideologies monitor the way people as group members interpret and act in their social world, they also function as the basis of their social identity". An examination of *Al Jazeera*'s motives for using the localisation techniques discussed above raises questions about the ideologies of *Al Jazeera*'s benefactor and leads to an empirically-oriented interpretation of the analysis. Fairclough's (1989 and 1995) models for CDA mandate investigating the situational context and the intertextual context in which a discourse is generated because they are central to the process of interpretation. *Al Jazeera*'s localisations of translation-

mediated news items (which are social practices and major contributors to its media discourse) are in fact products of the inclusive environment in which they are generated. Sociohistorical, sociopolitical, institutional, socioeconomic, and other such factors have a bearing on localisation the same way that they do on other social practices. Most of the discussions in regard to the translation of news in *Al Jazeera* can be correlated with the above factors. Janks (1997, p. 329), who offers a CDA approach to analysing texts that is based on Fairclough's models, suggests that "All social practices are tied to specific historical contexts and are the means by which existing social relations are reproduced or contested and different interests are served". This vision of discourse as a social practice forms the blueprints of this section on interpreting the results of the analysis. It has led also to a discussion of the sociohistorical and sociopolitical circumstances in which *Al Jazeera* was established and in which it operates. The idea is that these circumstances influence ideologies whose signs abound in the localised/translation-mediated news items. In an attempt to answer the second research question, the following discussions will pursue issues around whose interests are served and whose interests are annulled by the localising techniques deployed by *Al Jazeera*.

Al Jazeera and the discourse produced through its localisation practices are products of the various commingled factors which have prevailed inside and outside the State of Qatar before and since the time of the emergence of this news outlet. Qatar was a British protectorate until it became independent in September 1971 (Blanchard 2014, p. 1). Qatar's history of relations with its immediate neighbours prior to and after its independence has a direct influence on its internal and external policies and the underlying solipsistic ideology that permeates its state-owned news media – especially *Al Jazeera*. These policies and ideology have found their way into the translation-mediated news items that *Al Jazeera* circulates. The following rapid review of the abovementioned historical relations is intended to put *Al Jazeera*'s localisation policies in their sociohistoric, sociopolitical, and socioeconomic extra-contexts.

Prior to its independence, Qatar took part in the negotiations that later resulted in the establishment of the State of The UAE without Qatar which preferred to be an independent state in 1971 (Wilson 1999, p. 126). Up until 1973, Qatar used a currency that was issued by a joint currency board with Dubai – the Qatar and Dubai Currency Board (Legrenzi & Momani 2011, p. 24) (see image 14). Normally, politically independent states need to be economically independent as well. Though it got its independence in 1971, Qatar did not issue its own

currency until 1973 (Molyneux and Iqbal 2016, p. 134). However, Qatar's zeal to sever ties with its co-dependent economic past did not become a reality until the mid-1980s when its massive natural gas resources provided the small city-state peninsula with unexpected fortunes that caused it to become the richest country in the world in regard to its income per capita



Image 14. Banknote showing Qatar and Dubai using the same currency

(Morrison 2015, p. 86). However, these fortunes (which are mostly located at the borders of Qatar) brought to the surface the old-new border conflicts that Qatar has with its neighbours. Saudi-Qatari border conflicts posed a challenge to the militarily inferior Qatar. In 1992, Saudi forces seized a Qatari border post and expelled its occupants one day after a clash with Saudi forces at the same post resulted in two Qatari deaths (The New York Times, October 2, 1992). From the mid-1980s till late-1990s, Bahrain and Qatar were engaged in border conflicts and had exchanged accusations of spying (Mitchell 1998, pp. 90-91). In 1995, Qatar resorted to the International Court of Justice to settle its border conflict with Bahrain. The documents that Bahrain presented to support its border claims show that Bahrain's border claims include areas that contain Qatar's richest underwater natural gas wells (see image 15) (International Court of Justice, 2001). In addition, Bahrain presented a document (which dates back to 1937 when both Bahrain and Qatar were British protectorates (see image 16) that lay claim to Zubara (now part of the Qatari peninsula) which is a territory that contains some of Qatar's oil riches and overlooks said natural gas wells (ibid). Amidst such unfavourable political conditions, Sheikh

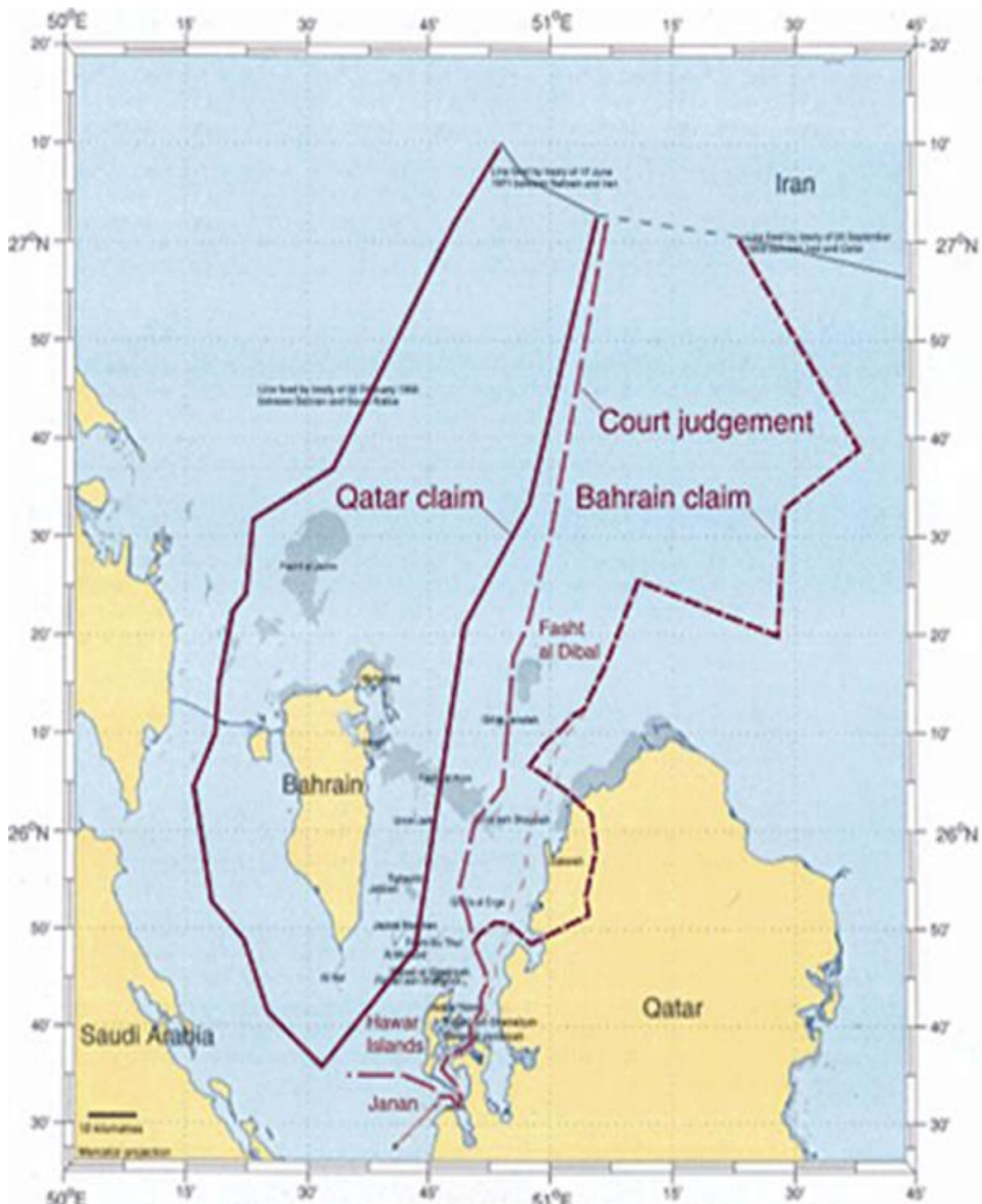


Image 15. Border claims of Bahrain and Qatar (form the files of the International Court of Justice)

Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani (then Crown Prince and Minister of Defence) led in June 1995 a bloodless coup against his father Sheikh Khalifa Al Thani (Abu Aisha 2002, p.113). Political, constitutional, and social reforms, within Qatar came next. Smith (2002) maintains that Qatar “held municipal elections, in which women both voted and ran for office [...] It has drafted

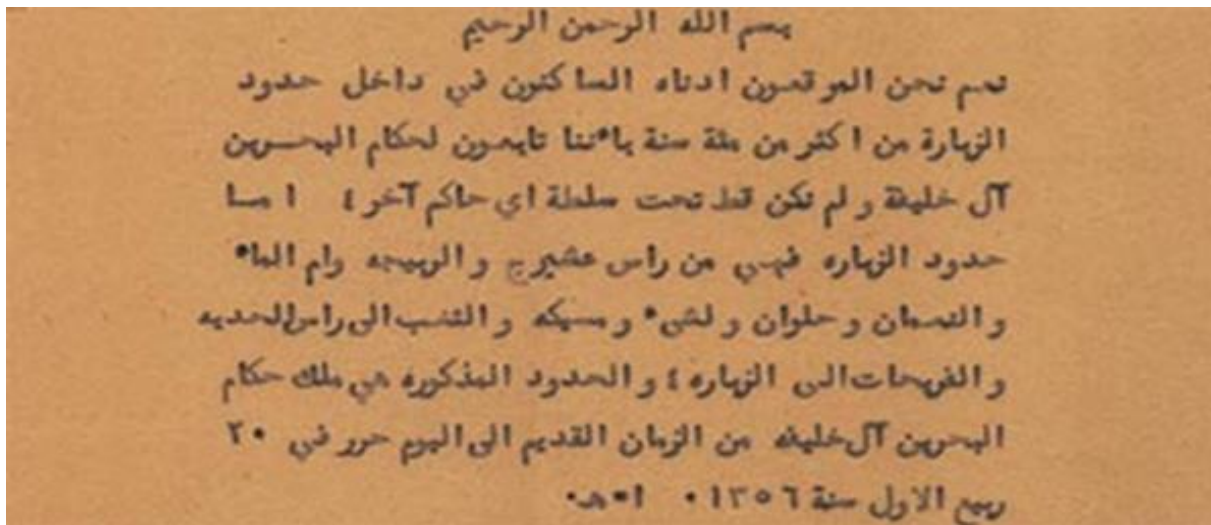


Image 16. Document that supports Bahrain's claim to Zubara (from the files of the International Court of Justice)⁷⁷

a Constitution that provides for an elected Parliament. It has even broken ranks with its Arab neighbors by establishing ties with Israel” (see also Al-Zaydi 2003, p.19; Abdul Wahhab 1999, p. 175). In order to recognise the importance of these *breaking-ranks* measures, one needs to see them within the context of Qatar's solipsistic ideology that essentially aims at “Othering” its neighbours and finding an individual unique identity for the country, which is comparatively local. Women's suffrage, for instance, is a major issue in the GCC countries. Qatar held its first municipal elections in which Qatari women voted and were voted for on March 8, 1999 (Lambert 2011). By comparison, Saudi Arabia only granted women the right to vote in 2011, Kuwait in 2005, Bahrain in 2001, The UAE granted limited suffrage to men and women in 2006 (Stokes 2012, p. 398). The media sector in the State of Qatar was not uninvolved in this reformist atmosphere. The former Amir of Qatar Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani began to cancel the strict and direct censorship of the press that had been imposed on Qatari newspapers since 1985. Those censorship guidelines prohibited the critique of heads of state of the GCC and other Arabic-speaking or friendly countries (Abdul Wahhab 1999, p. 174).

⁷⁷ A gloss of this document reads:

In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Compassionate,
We the undersigned, the inhabitants within the boundaries of Zubara for over hundred years are belonging to the Khalifah Rulers of Bahrain and we have never been under the rule of any other Ruler: the boundaries of Zubara are from Ras Ashairij and Rebaijeh and Om al Mai and Na'naan and Halwan and Lisha and Misaichah and Thegab to Ras al-Hiddeyyah and Fraihat to Zubara and these boundaries are the property of the Khalifa Rulers of Bahrain from oldest time to today. Written on 20th Rabi' Awwal 1356.

The above reforms were landmarks that inaugurated a new era in Qatar. However, Qatar has been facing inherent issues that internal reforms could not solve. These issues set limits for Qatar's ambitions of playing a role in the geopolitical scene of the region. Qatar's small geographical size⁷⁸ (see map 2) vs the region's behemoths (Saudi Arabia and Iran), its limited population⁷⁹, lack of an industrial infrastructure that enables it to be an influential economic power, and lack of any measurable military power (Blanchard 2014) provided it with nothing but a minimal political influence in the regional or international arenas (Dickinson 2014). In addition, its largest Arab neighbour Saudi Arabia, along with UAE and Bahrain, refused to recognise the legitimacy of the 1995 coup and backed a counter-coup to restore the deposed Sheikh Khalifa Al Thani in February 1996 (Kamrava 2013, p. 116, Fromherz 2012, p. 95).



Map 2. Location and size of Qatar

These are very significant issues of power-relations (as they have influenced Qatari internal and external policies) that *Al Jazeera* reiterates to confirm the “Otherness” of Qatar’s immediate neighbours of the Gulf vs. Qatar. *Al Jazeera* still articulates Qatar’s concerns in this regard through its translation-mediated news items as in the following illustrative example from one of Fisk’s articles:

⁷⁸ With 11,571 km² (almost four times the size of Ottawa), Qatar is the second smallest country (Bahrain is first) in the Arabic-speaking world and in the GCC.

⁷⁹ 250,000-300,000 Qatari citizens (Blanchard 2014).

L-Example 23:

ويرى الكاتب أن من تلميحات هذا التغيير أن الأميركيين تخلوا عن الحرب السورية باعتبارها قضية خاسرة، وأن أميركا سوف تغادر الخليج، وقد تغلق معظم قواعدها الجوية الكبيرة في قطر تاركة أميرها معرضا "للجشع الإقليمي من إخوته في الخليج العربي" (Al Jazeera, March 24, 2014)

Gloss:

The writer (Fisk) argues that amongst the implications of this change is that the Americans have abandoned the Syrian war as a lost cause, and that America will leave the Gulf. It may as well close most of its large airbases in Qatar leaving its Amir exposed "to the regional greed of his brothers in the Arab Gulf".

ST:

And not without reason. The Americans have abandoned the Syrian war as a lost cause. The US will leave the Gulf. They may well close most of their huge airbases in Qatar, leaving the Emir grimly exposed to the territorial greed of his Arab Gulf brothers. Who else to guard him – and Oman and the other small Gulf states – other than that former policeman of the Gulf, namely Iran? (Fisk, March 23, 2014)

Before *Al Jazeera*, Qatar did not have any regional media platforms. The historical disputes between Qatar on the one hand, and Saudi Arabia and Bahrain on the other (especially their border conflicts which sometimes escalated to military bickerings with the Saudis) were only reported from the Saudi perspective, at least, in regional media. Utilising its financial influence and historical status, Saudi Arabia dominated the media arena of the Gulf with its many media platforms such as the *Middle East Broadcasting Center* (MBC) Network, *Al Hayat Newspaper*, and *Asharq Al-Awsat Newspaper*⁸⁰ (Mandaville 2002, p. 75, Förster 2014, knowledgeview.com).

Such sociopolitical conditions caused media discourse to be seen as a *field of power* for whose *capital* agents (Qatar and its rivals) were competing while utilising several *ideologies*. Those conditions, hence, led the Qatari government to wage a transnational media public relations effort to empower Qatar and introduce it to the world as an independent decision-making state in its own right. It is not an entirely new approach for a state to adopt a public relations campaign. Other geographically small and politically challenged states have undertaken such campaigns. Cummings (2012, p. 38) suggests that the independence of Israel "called for new conceptions of relations with the outside world" and that Israel innovated "a system of foreign relations where one had not previously existed", namely *Hasbara*⁸¹. Aided by the massive national income obtained from Qatar's natural gas resources and in compliance with the reforms in the Qatari media sector, the Amir of Qatar issued, on February 8, 1996, a Decree on

⁸⁰ Sheikha Mozah sued Saudi-owned Asharq al Awsat newspaper for falsely reporting that the Amir of Qatar Sheikh Hamad, her husband, had secretly visited Israel. In her petition to the court, the Sheikha charged that the paper was "controlled by Saudi intelligence paymasters who used the newspaper as a mouthpiece for a propaganda campaign against Qatar and its leadership." (Al Jazeera, January 25, 2005)

⁸¹ Hebrew for information meant for the outside world (hence, propaganda) (Said 2001).

establishing a government-owned public institution called the Qatari Satellite Channel – which has become known later as *Al Jazeera Network* (Gharib and Mansoor 2000, p. 25). Yasser Abu Hilala, an *Al Jazeera* Director, says: “*Al Jazeera* is the result of Amir Sheikh Hamad’s planning to create tools of power through controlling media” (Abol Rob 2010, p. 69). Much like the Israeli model of Hasbara (into which “Israel has already poured hundreds of millions of dollars” (Said 2001)), *Al Jazeera* was financed with about \$137,000,000 by the Qatari government (Bahry 2001b, p. 90). Dickinson (2014) maintains that “by 2010, *Al Jazeera* had evolved into the Arab world’s most influential media operation, supported by a massive annual budget of \$650 million”. Qatar’s huge natural gas wealth needed to be balanced by a matching media power. In fact, *Al Jazeera* empowered Qatar to the point that former Qatari Foreign Minister Hamad bin Jassim said in a press conference: “we do not need jetfighters and military personnel, we have been establishing a media channel which will be the Qatari military forces” (Abol Rob 2010, p. 69). Leaked WikiLeaks documents from the US Embassy in Doha claim that bin Jassim did try to use the new Qatari *military forces* (Booth 2010). One leaked US Embassy cable claims that bin Jassim attempted to use *Al Jazeera* as a bargaining chip in negotiations with Hosni Mubarak, former president of Egypt, offering to cease *Al Jazeera*’s critical reports of the Egyptian regime in exchange for major concessions vis-à-vis Egyptian sanctions imposed on the Palestinian Gaza strip (ibid; Dickinson 2014; see 4.1.3 for the reasons behind Qataris’ interest in this issue). By establishing *Al Jazeera*, the State of Qatar thus aimed at creating a parallel polarisation that would challenge the monopoly of reality in news media, put Qatar at its centre, and enable this State to compete for the symbolic capital that comes with the “power” of media discourse in the region.

Al Jazeera’s critical anti-regimist and reformist themes have not only been used against the regimes of Arabic-speaking states which have been affected by the Arab Spring, but also against Arabic-speaking states of the GCC such as Qatar’s rivals Saudi Arabia and Bahrain (Al-Qudah & Khamees 2008, pp. 30-31). *Al Jazeera*’s news items on these two countries have included interviews with dissidents of both regimes, bold criticism of their human rights and democracy profiles, religious issues, the Saudi regime’s stances vis-à-vis the Palestinian Cause, the civil rights of Bahraini Shiites, foreign policies, and corruption (Al-Zaydi 2003, pp. 58-59). For instance, on May 25, 2007, *Al Jazeera* circulated a detailed exposé on the corruption that tarnished an armament agreement between Saudi Arabia and UK that involved members of the

Saudi royal family (Al Jazeera, May 25, 2007). Consequently, the Saudi government prohibited *Al Jazeera* from reporting from inside Saudi Arabia, instructed Saudi nationals (inside or outside Saudi Arabia) not to have interviews with *Al Jazeera*, and Saudi writers were instructed not to write for *Al Jazeera*. On May 10, 2002, Bahrain's Information Minister, Nabil al-Hamr, criticised *Al Jazeera*'s coverage of Shiite Bahrainis' protests stating that "media should not be biased [...] *Al Jazeera* is a satanic bush planted by Zionist hands" (Al Jazeera, November 25, 2002). On May 2010, the Bahraini government banned *Al Jazeera* journalists from operating in Bahrain citing "breach of media norms and bias" according to Information Minister Nabil al-Hamr (BBC, May 10, 2010). The Arab Spring has provided *Al Jazeera* with more journalistic material to criticise both countries. In this regard, *Al Jazeera*'s localised news items covered two major issues: Bahrain's protests, and the Saudi regime's role in crashing them, as in the following examples:

L-Example 24:

كما شكك فيسك في احتمالات وصول البحرين بسهولة إلى الديمقراطية، خاصة في ظل ما وصفه بالتدخل العسكري السعودي في البلاد، موضحاً أنه يبدو أن السعودية - تماماً كإسرائيل - منزهة عن الانتقاد. (Al Jazeera, March 22, 2011)

Gloss:

Fisk also questioned the likelihood of Bahrain having an easy ride to democracy, especially in light of what he called the Saudi military intervention in the country. He adds that Saudi Arabia seems – exactly like Israel – immune to criticism.

Original ST:

I'm not certain, either, that Bahrain is going to be an easily created democracy, especially when Saudi Arabia – the untouchable chalice almost as sacred from criticism as Israel – is sending its military riff-raff across the border bridge. (Fisk, March 22, 2011)

L-Example 25:

ويقول فيسك إن السعودية تضخ أموالاً كثيرة لدعم مسلحين إسلاميين مرتبطين بالقاعدة (Al Jazeera, January 6, 2014)

Gloss:

Fisk says that Saudi Arabia is pumping a lot of money to support al Qaeda-linked Islamist militants.

Original ST:

Meanwhile private Saudi money is still pouring into Syria to help the al-Qa'ida-associated Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (Isil) (Fisk, January 5, 2014)

L-Example 26:

ويلوح أوباما -والكلام لفيسك- بقيضته الضعيفة لقسوة النظام البحريني، وما زال صامتاً بما يثير الدهشة حيال ما يجري في السعودية، ثم يركع على ركبتيه أمام إسرائيل. (Al Jazeera, May 30, 2011)

Gloss:

Obama is swinging – according to Fisk – his weak fist against the cruelty of the Bahraini regime, and remains surprisingly silent about what is happening in Saudi Arabia, and then kneels in front of Israel.

Original ST:

Obama [...] waves his puny fist at puny Bahrain's cruelty and remains absolutely, stunningly silent over Saudi Arabia. And he goes on his knees before Israel. (Fisk, May 30, 2011)

L-Example 27:

السلطات البحرينية أيضا رحبت بالمراسلين الرياضيين فقط ورفضت منح تأشيرات للمراسلين والصحفيين الآخرين الذين قد ينقلون للعالم الحقائق التي تشهدا البحرين أو ما وصفه بالمملكة التي تحكمها الأقلية وتهيمن عليها السعودية. (Al Jazeera, April 21, 2012)

Gloss:

Bahraini authorities welcomed only sport reporters and refused visas to other reporters and journalists who may transfer to the world the realities about Bahrain or as he described it the kingdom ruled by the minority and dominated by Saudi Arabia.

Original ST:

The Bahraini authorities prove it by welcoming sports reporters but refusing visas to other correspondents who want to tell the world what's going on in this minority-run, Saudi-dominated kingdom. (Fisk, April 21, 2012)

It has been mentioned above that one of the reasons why *Al Jazeera*'s localisation techniques are questionable is its selection of the arguments to be localised. The way that Fisk's arguments in the above examples have been localised shows that there is a tendency towards accentuating the following messages:

1. Bahraini regime is suppressive and perhaps not legitimate because it represents only the Sunni minority in Shiite dominant Bahrain, e.g. "L-Example 24: questioned the likelihood of Bahrain having an easy ride to democracy", "L-Example 27: [...] the realities about Bahrain or as he described it the kingdom ruled by the minority [...]"
2. Saudi regime is a suppressive one, e.g. "L-Example 26: [...] remains surprisingly silent about what is happening in Saudi Arabia [...]"
3. Saudi regime interferes in the affairs of other sovereign states, e.g. "L-Example 24: [...] especially in light of what he called the Saudi military intervention in the country", "L-Example 27: [...] dominated by Saudi Arabia"
4. Saudi regime is not siding with Arab Causes (the Palestinian Cause in particular), e.g. "L-Example 24: [...] exactly like Israel [...]"
5. Saudi regime is supporting terrorism, e.g. "L-Example 25: [...] Saudi Arabia is pumping a lot of money to support al Qaeda-linked Islamist militants."
6. A credible international source is arguing all the above, e.g. "L-Example 24: Fisk also questioned [...]", "L-Example 25: Fisk says [...]", "L-Example 26: [...] according to Fisk [...]"

These examples show that Fisk's anti-regimist and reformist arguments have been localised by *Al Jazeera* through sometimes adding to them (e.g. "exactly in "exactly like Israel") or taking them out of context (bearing in mind that none of Fisk's articles were entirely localised) and turning them into alienation arguments which are used especially against Saudi Arabia and Bahrain. DTS suggests looking beyond the translated text and investigating the sociopolitical

context in which it was produced. Such an investigation has led to uncovering information that is essential to understanding these alienation arguments in the localised texts. *Al Jazeera* uses such arguments to settle scores with Saudi Arabia and Bahrain for meddling in Qatari affairs after the coup d'état led by former Amir of Qatar Hamad ben Khalifa Al Thani (founder of *Al Jazeera*) against his father and the Qatari-Saudi and Qatari-Bahraini border conflicts. The fact that *Al Jazeera* criticises the Saudi regime and the Bahraini regime (despite the fact that Qatar is a member of the GCC) furthers the argument that the Arabic-speaking world contains diverse locales of interest, as well as the premise that the term localisation should perhaps replace acculturation in studying news translation.

The question becomes: If Qatar is using *Al Jazeera* as an *army* (in former Qatari Foreign Minister Hamad bin Jassim's words) to propagate ideologies that do not sit well with most of the autocratic regimes, what/who is *Al Jazeera's* (or *Al Jazeera* benefactor's) *vanguard*? An army cannot win a war without having boots on the ground. The existing state of unfriendly relations between Qatar and the rest of the GCC (let alone most of the autocratic regimes of the Arabic-speaking world) motivated it to seek allies in locales other than those of the GCC. Hence, the localisation techniques (such as the selection technique which focuses on news items with anti-regimist themes) that have been adopted by *Al Jazeera* seek to disseminate themes and ideologies that alienate the regimes of the Arabic-speaking world (especially those of the GCC) from locales that embrace such themes and ideologies, and to create conditions which bring Qatar nearer to these locales.

5.2.1 Al Jazeera's Spurious Ideologies and Agenda Performers

Given the above discussions, it would probably be naïve to think that the funding assigned to establish and maintain *Al Jazeera* has been made available just for the sake of providing news readership in the Arabic-speaking world with a source of information (be it neutral and objective as *Al Jazeera* claims (Code of Ethics, *Al Jazeera.net*), or not), or for providing a forum for the perspectives of those who do not have one (ibid). It would also be irrational to believe that ideologies such as pan-Arabism and Islamism (which basically advocates that populations of the Arabic-speaking world are one ethno-religious nation with similar cultural values that should be unified and live in one country without borders) are truly embraced by the news outlet of a country that zealously seeks to distinguish itself from its immediate neighbour-states, the majority of whose populations are Arab Muslims. As for the

anti-regimist or the reformist ideologies or themes that *Al Jazeera* uses to criticise the autocratic regimes of the Arabic-speaking world assuming the political stance that these regimes are not democratic, it suffices to say that these criticisms are coming from a news outlet owned by the State of Qatar which has “constitutionalised prohibiting” the formation of and membership in political parties (Salih 2014, p. 97, see 1.6.1). *Al Jazeera*’s protagonism and anti-regimism ideologies have been, therefore, subjected to a fact-checking process that went beyond the contexts of the texts to include extra-contextual elements. This process unveiled that these ideologies are not as straightforward as they may seem. At some point, using these ideologies contorts towards ingratiating *Al Jazeera* with specific locales and most importantly endearing its benefactor to them. They have been used in a way whereby certain components of the Arabic-speaking world have been alienated and others have been disingenuously approached. The underpinning ideology behind this “Same” vs. “Other” localic stasis is solipsism. This solipsistic ideology has been aimed at giving an inward image of how different is *Al Jazeera*’s benefactor (the State of Qatar) from its immediate neighbour states with more emphasis than ever on that forenamed state has a localic identity which is uniquely better. The rest of this study flows in concordance with this argument.

Paul Salem, director of the Beirut-based Carnegie Middle East Center, remarks that “Qatar is a secure little kernel with huge resources that has chosen to use those resources in foreign policy” (Rudoren 2012). Establishing *Al Jazeera* gave Qatar a virtual ambassador which became the spearhead of its foreign policy. *Al Jazeera* put Qatar on the geopolitical scene of the region – if not of the world (Dickinson 2014). Nye and Owens (1996, p. 20) observe that “The one country that can best lead the information revolution will be more powerful than any other”. By establishing *Al Jazeera*, Qatar has endeavoured to lead an information revolution that empowers Qatar. However, leading the information revolution requires (as a general principle) having an understanding of the basic social systems and the common ideologies or social representations that can influence the specific beliefs of certain locales as well as the personnel who can work with such an understanding. What follows is a discussion of how *Al Jazeera* has managed this massive undertaking, the ideologies it advocates, its editorial policies, the locale(s) that it addresses and the performers of the agendas of *Al Jazeera* and Qatar.

Al Jazeera addresses the media audiences of the Arabic-speaking world while assuming its position as a leading pan-Arabic news platform. It assumes that its media position authorises

it to promote its agendas through causes which it presumes are of concern to some of the Arabic-speaking readership. As such, it is moving beyond its proclaimed role as an Arabic news platform that has an impact on spreading its narratives, to also disperse ideas about its ethnic and religious membership in the Arabic-speaking and Islamic locales. This spuriously claimed sense of belonging goes some way to explaining the infantilising choices made with regard to the localisation of the STs and its promotion of pro-Arab or pro-Muslim causes. The “ideology” of pan-Arabism through the Palestinian Cause has been used by *Al Jazeera* within two intertwined contexts. First, as *Al Jazeera*’s objectives clearly indicate, as a means to increase the numbers of its audiences – since *Al Jazeera* has aligned itself with beliefs and interests that it deems popular. Second, to create the construct of the “Otherness” and “Sameness”: *Al Jazeera* and its benefactor are different from the rest of the Arabic-speaking news platforms as they are more concerned with issues that unify the Arabic-speaking populations such as the suffering of the Palestinians and the other issues that pertain to their Cause. On October 28, 2015, for example, *Al Jazeera* published a localised news item whose headline reads: صحيفة إسرائيلية: العرب نائمون باستثناء الجزيرة (Israeli journal: Arabs are sleeping except for Al Jazeera) (Al Jazeera, October 28, 2015). The article is localised by *Al Jazeera* into Arabic from an English article (by Israeli writer Eyal Zisser) whose headline reads: “Extremists no longer welcome”. The phraseology of *Al Jazeera*’s localised headline (and article) is based on the following subliminal messages:

- The implied insult included in the headline (i.e. Arabs are insensitively careless towards what is happening to the Palestinians) is twofold: it comes from the party that is supposed to be the enemy – Israel; the enemy is pleased that the “other” Arabs (all except Qatar) are asleep/inactive.
- The insult is meant for the “other” Arabs but not *Al Jazeera* because *Al Jazeera*, according to the headline, is an exception. *Al Jazeera* is a Palestinian-Cause-proactive news platform.

The original article (which was published in *Israel Hayom* on October 28, 2015) discusses, from an Israeli writer’s perspective, the escalation of violence (late September to early November 2015) in Jerusalem and other parts of Palestinian territories where Palestinians on the one hand, and Israeli forces and Israeli settlers on the other, have been attacking each other. Zisser (2015) notes that “The Arab world’s roaring silence is actually commendable [...] Arab media has also marginalized the story, toning down the rhetoric, with the exception of the Qatar-based Al Jazeera, where incitement is a reflex”. This quote addresses the idea behind *Al Jazeera*’s headline of the localised Arabic article. The English ST mentions nowhere that the

Arabs are “asleep” or “sleeping” – which is a derogatory way of describing “inaction” in Arabic. In fact, the ST quote commends the rational silence (as it serves Israeli policies) of the Arabic-speaking world’s media and regimes. The way that *Al Jazeera* has localised Zisser’s excerpt above (as a direct quote) further underlines the insinuations in the localised headline and shows how the adaptations that *Al Jazeera*’s localisers inflict on the ST serve its own Sameness vs. Otherness construct:

L-Example 28:

"جزءا كبيرا من وسائل الإعلام العربية لم تشأ أن تحتل الأحداث الفلسطينية صدر عناوينها الإخبارية، باستثناء قناة الجزيرة القطرية طبعا"⁸²

Gloss:

“A large number of Arabic media platforms were not willing to have Palestinian events on their major news headlines, except of course for Al Jazeera Qatari channel”

A comparison between *Al Jazeera*’s localised segment and Zisser’s quote shows the following:

- “Arab media” has been localised as “A large number of Arabic media platforms” with pre- and post-modifiers added to the expression in the TT. The exaggeration indicated by the use of modifiers is intended to credit *Al Jazeera* with being so distinguished in comparison with other media platforms with regard to the attention it pays to the Cause.
- “the story” was localised into “Palestinian events” which is intended to personify the original expression “story” by giving it a humane character (i.e. Palestinian) to remind the receptors whose experiences the story is about, namely the Palestinians to whom the receptors can relate and with whom they empathise. In his article, Zisser refers to the violent reactions carried out by the Palestinians as “terrorist attacks”. If *Al Jazeera* uses this expression to describe the Palestinians’ actions/re-actions, it would alienate itself and consequently lose readership. This is the reason why the word “events” has been used to replace “terrorist attacks” in the ST. A “story” normally has at least two sides but *Al Jazeera*, in this particular example, uses the “Palestinian events” to perhaps indicate that the only side of the story that matters is the Palestinians’. Once again, this is employed to serve the “Sameness” element in the “Sameness” vs. “Otherness” construct. *Al Jazeera* addresses the locales in which the Arabic-speaking readership sympathises with only the Palestinian side.
- “Qatar-based Al Jazeera” has been interestingly localised into “Al Jazeera Qatari channel” which can be understood as meaning that *Al Jazeera* is the property of Qatar. There is a big

⁸² Quotation marks added by Al Jazeera to indicate direct speech.

difference between saying: a media platform broadcasts from a certain country, and saying: a media platform is owned by a certain country. Qatari officials have always denied the fact that Qatar owns or controls *Al Jazeera* in order to deny their responsibility for the criticism that *Al Jazeera* levels against any regime or individual. For instance, on December 19, 2011, Qatari Acting Minister of Information, Mubarak bin Nasir Al Khalifa, asserted that: “*Al Jazeera* is an independent media platform, and the Qatari government has no influence whatsoever on it” (Shlabi 2011). However, and in this particular instance, localising “Qatar-based” into “Qatari” on the part of *Al Jazeera* is not a flop or a random act. It is meant to confirm that Qatar takes credit for the support that *Al Jazeera* provides for the Palestinians in their struggle against the Israeli government – in comparison with the little to no support provided by other Arabic-speaking countries and their media platforms. Once again, this type of localisation is intended to confirm that *Al Jazeera*/Qatar is the “same” while other Arabic-speaking countries are the “other”.

- Deleting from or adding to the message contained in the original news item are common localisation practices by *Al Jazeera* (as we discussed above). For instance, the critique that Zisser directs to *Al Jazeera* for being a naturally violence-inciting news platform (when he says “where incitement is a reflex”) is not localised by *Al Jazeera* because it does not contribute to the “ideology” that the localisation of this particular news item promotes. On the other hand, *Al Jazeera* has added the expression “of course” in reference to the fact that its support for the Palestinian Cause is recognised even by Israeli figures. So questioning this support or its motives (by other Arabophone news platforms or other Arabic-speaking countries) causes the questioning parties to be more alienated.

Al Jazeera did manage to attract the attention of public opinion in certain locales of the Arabic-speaking world, places such as Palestine and Jordan where the majority of the population have Palestinian origins. Kessler (2012, p. 53) suggests that “a remarkable 53 percent of Palestinians use *Al Jazeera* as their primary news source”. However, whether *Al Jazeera* has managed to address the entire public opinion in the Arabic-speaking world (by paying this great amount of attention to Palestinian affairs) especially during the Arab Spring is another issue. The point that *Al Jazeera*’s TT does not address is the real reason why the Arabic-speaking world is inactive with regard to the Israeli-Palestinian events in question. Scanning through the bulk of the journalistic production that *Al Jazeera* circulates shows that it purposefully disregards the

fact that the demands of the Arab Springs' protestors did not include the rights of the Palestinians. A study carried out by Professor Samir Awad from the Department of Political Science at Birzeit University (in West Bank, Palestine) confirms that the

uprisings of the Arab Spring didn't point whatsoever to the Palestinian cause or the Israeli occupation, since they are more concerned with their internal affairs, arranging their priorities to the national agenda, and not to the external policy of the state (Awwad 2013)

Awad's study points out that the pro-democracy protestors of the Arab Spring are more concerned with unemployment, social freedoms, etc. than with the foreign policies of the autocratic regimes. The upheavals of the Arab Springs caused stable dictatorships such as Syria and Egypt (immediate neighbours of Israel) to be destabilised leaving most of the populations of these countries overwhelmed by their own immediate calamities. Whereas the Palestinians have been living one long tragedy for over 70 years now – which is hardly news anymore, the events generated by the Arab Spring have become the daily concern of the current Arabic-speaking populations. One can venture to assert that this is currently the status quo of the Palestinian Cause/pan-Arabism (in influential parts of the Arabic-speaking world) which *Al Jazeera* chooses to disregard.

Al Jazeera, which can tell how many minutes a reader has spent reading a certain news item (see 3.2.3.2) and which censors readership comments in the way described in section 4.3, must be aware of said status quo. It most probably also realises that it cannot communicate with all the locales of the Arabic-speaking world through an ideology that does not address their immediate concerns. So why does it continue to promote the Palestinian Cause/pan-Arabism? The critical manner (i.e. Arabs are “sleeping” while Palestinians are suffering) in which *Al Jazeera* refers to the inactive Arabic-speaking world media in comparison with the proactive “Qatari *Al Jazeera*” promotes the argument that Qatar wishes to distinguish itself as a different locale (which addresses similar locales) from the other Arabic-speaking locales. This kind of localisational intervention in L-Example 28 paves the way for another very pertinent issue that requires discussion, namely: To whom does *Al Jazeera* speak? *Al Jazeera* localisation techniques disseminate words that carry ideologies which *might* lead to transformation, but words alone cannot guarantee the continuity of this transformation. In reality, neither Qatar nor *Al Jazeera* have their own indigenous organised and qualified manpower to mete out and maintain change. Qatar has massive financial resources, but also an intellectual vacuum that it has needed to fill.

This vacuum necessitated Qatar's cooperation with a procurator/proxy that Qatar assumed (as discussed below) has a considerable demographic infiltration in the target locales.

The ensuing argument becomes that Qatar found its procurator in political Islamist movements (conspicuously the joint forces of Salafists and Muslim Brotherhood) whose ideologies (including that of the Palestinian Cause) have some resonance in certain locales of the Arabic-speaking communities – as various democratic and most autocratic regimes as well as conspiracy theorists would claim. *The Economist* (December 20, 2014) states that “Qatar had given [...] generous and persistent support to the Muslim Brotherhood. It had lent money, diplomatic backing and a powerful media platform” – namely *Al Jazeera*. This theory has considerable truth to it. Qatar has based its support for political Islamists on the premise that political Islamist movements share the same faith of their coreligionists in the Arabic-speaking world; therefore, *Al Jazeera*'s dissemination of these movements' news and ideological views would appeal to public opinion. Further evidence that promotes the truthfulness of said theory can be found when the ideological tendencies of *Al Jazeera*'s top staff are reviewed. Kessler (2012) maintains that in 2002, Wadah Khanfar who is a Palestinian reporter from the West Bank town of Jenin and “widely believed to have close Muslim Brotherhood ties [...], was promoted to director general of the Al Jazeera network [...] he replaced relatively secular-minded journalists”. In addition to the interviewed translators, quite a few of *Al Jazeera*'s chiefs of bureaus, anchors, and top staff expressed their discontent with *Al Jazeera*'s editorial policies that have implicit and explicit Islamist inclinations (Gillespie 2007). Hafez Al-Mirazi, former Washington bureau chief of *Al Jazeera*, for instance, resigned a year after Khanfar's arrival to protest *Al Jazeera*'s “Islamist drift” (ibid). Ferjani (2010, p. 89) quotes Al Mirazi as stressing that “There's no doubt Al-Jazeera has crossed the line [...] From the first day of the Wadah Khanfar era, there was a dramatic change, especially because of him selecting assistants who are hardline Islamists.” *Al Jazeera* replaces those who resign in protest of its editorial policies with journalists who abide by them. Gillespie (2007) argues that observing *Al Jazeera*'s published material and programmes leads to the discernment that “religious figures are almost always treated deferentially as voices of authority on almost any issue.” *Al Jazeera* employs prominent Brotherhood members such as Yusuf Al-Qaradawi (a prominent Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood member who was banned from entering Egypt by a court sentence) as host of *Al Jazeera*'s “الشريعة والحياة” (Sharia and life) (Dorsey 2013, p.18), and Ahmed Mansour (an Egyptian Muslim

Brotherhood member also banned from entering Egypt by a court sentence) who is host of *Al Jazeera* TV's "بلا حدود" (without borders) and "شاهد على العصر" (a witness to history) (Fandy 2007, p. 48).

The alliance between Qatar and political Islamist movements can be attributed to the fact that Qatar has perceived the tentacular influence of Muslim Brotherhood⁸³ in certain locales of the Arabic-speaking world as a booster for its empowerment ambitions. This has caused it to wager "on Brotherhood-style Islamism as the political wave of the Arab future" (The Economist, December 20, 2014). In regard to Salafists, Dickinson (2014) remarks that "by the early 2000s, Doha was already becoming a hub for extremists", especially after the persecutions and the confrontations that they had with Saudi authorities in earlier years (Pall 2013). In order to endear itself to radical Jihadi Salafist locales, *Al Jazeera* localises the terrorist attacks of September 11 as either "أحداث 11 سبتمبر" (the events of September 11) or "هجمات 11 سبتمبر" (the attacks of September 11) without describing these "events" or "attacks" as "terrorist". Furthermore, *Al Jazeera* still labels the so-called "Islamic state" (commonly known as ISIS) terrorists "تنظيم الدولة الإسلامية" (The Islamic state organisation) using the neutral expression "organisation" in its localised news items (and monolingual ones alike) while omitting references that attribute terrorism to them or to their actions as in the following examples:

L-Example 29:

قال رئيس جهاز المخابرات الداخلية الألماني هانز جيورج ماسن إن تنظيم الدولة الإسلامية يضع نصب عينيه بطولة أوروبا لكرة القدم. (Al Jazeera, June 2, 2016)

Gloss:

Hans-Georg Maassen, head of the German interior intelligence, said that the Islamic State organisation has set its sights on Europe's football championship.

ST:

'ISIS has Euro 2016 in its sights': German spy chief fears football fans will be latest victims of jihadi terror (Boyle 2016)

L-Example 30:

وأضاف الكاتب أن المجتمع الدولي انشغل بمواجهة تنظيم الدولة الإسلامية (Al Jazeera, October 28, 2014)

Gloss:

The writer adds that the international community became occupied with confronting the Islamic state organisation

⁸³ The Muslim Brotherhood is the "mother organization" of Brotherhood affiliates in Jordan, Palestine, Kuwait, Syria, Iraq, Sudan, and Bahrain and has served as a model and source of inspiration for Sunni revivalist groups in Arab North Africa as well (Wickham 2013, p. 20).

ST:

While the world obsesses over the atrocities committed by Isis (Fisk, October 26, 2014).

Quite a few writers have noticed this tendency of *Al Jazeera* and criticised it as well as its benefactor thereon (see Fisk, February 4, 2015; Semetko and Scammell 2012, p. 482; Cook and Allison 2007, p. 97). In fact, the theories which suggest that Qatar has close ties with extremist Islamists during the Arab Spring have been proven to be true when Qatar “led the negotiations with the al-Qa’ida affiliate in Syria that freed American writer Peter Theo Curtis in August 2014” (Blackwill and Harris 2016, p. 72).

Regional regimes that compete with Qatar (especially Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and the UAE) “frown upon political Islam as dangerously power-seeking” (Dickinson 2014). They have viewed political Islamists’ influence with trepidation. Kirkpatrick (2014) observes that

Although the Brotherhood’s views are not nearly as conservative as the puritanical, authoritarian version of Islamic law enforced in Saudi Arabia, the Saudis and other gulf monarchies fear the group because of its broad organization, its mainstream appeal and its calls for elections.

Therefore, and by having Islamists as their allies, the Qatari rulers have aimed to cause the balance of power to tilt to their benefit and have distanced themselves from the foreign and national policies of neighbouring states of the Gulf. This comes within the quest to distinguish Qatar as having an individual national identity – or a locale that is different from its neighbouring ones. In protest of Qatar’s violation of the GCC Charter (according to Saudi Arabia, UAE, and Bahrain) the ambassadors of these three Gulf States were recalled from Doha on March 5, 2014 (Kholaf 2014). In fact, the incident of recalling the ambassadors has more to do with the hardline policies that Qatar adopted against the leaders of the military coup d’état that overthrew President Morsi (a Muslim Brotherhood leader) of Egypt than with the GCC Charter. In their “War by Other Means: Geoeconomics and Statecraft”, Blackwill and Harris (2016, pp. 71-72) provide a description of how Egypt became a field of political and financial wars between Qatar on the one hand, and the rest of GCC on the other. Qatari Foreign Minister, Khalid Al Attiyah, responded to the ambassadors’ withdrawal by saying: “Qatar is not part of any bloc, it wants to have its own independent character” (Al Jazeera, March 3, 2014). *Al Jazeera* adds

Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Bahrain frown upon (what they consider) Qatar’s support for the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, whereas these three countries support the coup d’état regime in Egypt. Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Kuwait provided Cairo with 12 billion dollars since President Mohammad Morsi was ousted on July 30 (ibid).

In so many ways, *Al Jazeera* is the media platform that Qatar utilises to declare this individual localic/solipsistic identity to the world, which is not the first time that media discourse has been used in this manner to create an imagined national identity for different political reasons (see Anderson 1991, p. 35). At this point we can safely assume that Qatar and *Al Jazeera* are two faces of the same coin; therefore, references to *Al Jazeera* will be used as references to Qatar henceforth.

The Arab Spring provides an interesting case study of localisation because (among other reasons) it puts *Al Jazeera*'s politics that underlie its localisation agendas (as much as the traditional approaches to studying news translation) to a litmus test. For instance, the support with which *Al Jazeera* overwhelmed the Libyan Arab Spring was overshadowed by an excessive financial and weaponry-donating generosity towards the Libyan rebels by the Qatari government (Black 2011b, Mazzetti and Schmidt 2015, Blackwill and Harris 2016).). At the beginning of the Libyan Arab Spring and within certain locales in Libya, *Al Jazeera*'s public relations campaign on behalf of Qatar managed to find some resonance as evident in scenes where the Qatari flag is carried by Libyans or painted on walls (see image 17). Fisk (August 31, 2011) notes "Qatar's role in the Libyan conflict remains one of the untold stories of the war – there were Qatari flags waved in Martyrs' Square in Tripoli last week". However, it is important to realise that *Al Jazeera*'s pro-Islamist discourse that provides support for Islamists (including extremists fighting in Libya, Syria and Egypt) is not necessarily motivated by its endorsement of their extremist ideologies nor Islam at all for that matter. The same can be said about *Al Jazeera*'s pan-Arabist ideology and its articulation of the injustice inflicted on Palestinians. In politics, providing support for the adherents of an ideology does not necessarily entail believing in this ideology.



Image 17. Qatari flag (left) painted on wall in Benghazi-Libya (courtesy of *The New York Times*)

Accordingly, *Al Jazeera*'s localisation policies address Islamists' locales but do not necessarily embrace Islamism; they address pan-Arabist locales but do not necessarily embrace pan-Arabism. It is merely the kind of political pragmatism that can be founded in the rationale of "the enemy of my enemy is my friend" – it has been argued above that Qatar's immediate neighbours frown upon Islamist ideologies. *Al Jazeera* localises news items to address Islamist-sympathetic locales in a manner that serves its agenda. Political Islamist movements do not necessarily have a well-established rapport with the majority of the peoples of the Arabic-speaking world. Islamist movements' political tendencies (which sometimes seek political change through violence) do not resonate amongst the majority moderate Muslims, let alone Christians, liberals, secularists, leftists etc., in the Arabic-speaking world. A review of the reasons behind the Arab Spring reveals that the protesting crowds have been neither demanding religious freedoms nor advocating the Palestinian Cause. They have been demanding universal freedom, changing the head of the regime, social justice, improving economic conditions, better governance, etc. (Pollack 2011, pp. 2-3, Althani 2012). In Syria, for example, protesters marched the streets chanting "لا إخوانية لا سلفية إنا طلاب الحرية" (We are neither Muslim Brotherhood members nor Salafists. We are demanding freedom) (Al Jazeera, April 20, 2011, see also Zack 2012). Even the success that the Islamists managed to achieve in the elections that followed the Arab Spring in Tunisia (Bradley 2012), for instance, soon backfired and turned into a defeat in subsequent elections (The Economist, December 20, 2014, Bakr 2014, Khashiqji 2014). Their temporary success can, perhaps, be attributed to: first, the failure of the toppled secular or pan-Arabist autocratic regimes which caused the Arabic-speaking peoples to feel forlornly eager for change regardless of its nature or political character; and second: the fact that the Islamist movements were the most organised political groups given the speed with which the Springs happened and the chaos they caused that shocked everybody including political parties and civil society movements (Bradley 2012). In this regard, Cronin (2009, p. 192) observes that "Given the failure of Arab Nationalism [...] Islamism provides an alternative vision; but that does not mean that it satisfies and replaces local concerns".

Sooner than perhaps *Al Jazeera* and Qatar expected, the Arabic-speaking peoples who do not embrace Islamism, especially those who do not wish to mix religion with government, realised that the support provided to Islamists by *Al Jazeera* and Qatar is a destabilising factor to their respective countries. In Egypt, where "al-Jazeera, openly sided with the protesters [...]" and

provided them with the media outlet they needed to show what was happening across Egypt” (BBC News, February 25, 2015), Egyptian protestors burnt the Qatari flag (see image 18) in protest against Qatar meddling in Egyptian affairs, and in Benghazi-Libya



Image 18. Egyptian protestors burn the Qatari flag (courtesy of the BBC)

“where anti-Gaddafi protesters once waved Qatar’s flag [...] an effigy of Qatar’s former emir was burnt to a crisp” (ibid). *Alalm News Network* (February 1, 2015) reports that Libyan protestors burnt the Qatari flag in protest against the support that Qatar and *Al Jazeera* provide for “terrorist organisations and armed militias in Libya” (see Image 19). These reports are not without merit. The chanting of the Syrian protestors or the burning of the



Image 19. Libyan protestors burn the Qatari flag (courtesy of *Alalm News Network*)

Qatari flag by Egyptian and Libyan protestors can be seen as true indications of the resentment that these protestors show towards Islamist ideologies that *Al Jazeera* promotes through localisation. In general, Islam (as an ideology used by individuals for political purposes) had failed to present itself as a unifying factor when Prophet Mohammad died and his companions started arguing about who should succeed him in leading the young Muslim nation (Muir 1891).

In other words, Islamist ideology failed when Islam was taken out of context (as a faith that promotes a relationship between the Deity and the worshipper) and exploited for self-serving political gains in the same way that *Al Jazeera* does in its translation-mediated news items. In recent history, other examples provide further examples of this issue. Roy (1994, p. 108) states that the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait

spread confusion in the Arab world by organizing a conservative Arab and Western coalition against Iraq. Arab nationalists identified with Saddam Husayn, who is any-thing but an Islamist, while the principal backers of Islamists (Saudi Arabia and Kuwait) found themselves in the Western camp. Thus Islam failed to play a unifying role in Arab public opinion. It is the strategy of states, and not the existence of a mythical Islamist International, that explains the placement and movements of Islamists on the Middle East checkerboard.

Roy highlights one of the basic arguments in this study, notably the fact that political/self-serving interests are far more important than spurious large-scale stereotypical assumptions about culture in the practice of news translation at times of political change. As such, the most recent example of Islamist ideology presented by the notorious ISIS (which *Al Jazeera* also promotes in its localised texts) is definitely not in touch with public opinion in the Arabic-speaking world. Al il-Sheikh (2016) argues that

There are many reasons that have made the theories of political Islamism fail to resonate with the public, especially young people who are under the age of thirty. The most important of these reasons is that this phenomenon presented itself as a saviour from the state of backwardness experienced by most Muslim peoples, especially the Arabs, but it failed miserably. I have no doubt that ISIS has put this phenomenon to death [...] ISIS played a major role in proving that political Islamism cannot provide a civilised solution [...] the Muslim Brotherhood, when it took over the government in Egypt and failed, provided further evidence.

It can be said that the majority of the Arabic-speaking populations most likely wish to live in secular, permissive societies and not in restrictive societies ruled by repressive forms of government which are controlled by outdated religious ideologies that prohibit “listening to music” or “shaving beards” (Hawramy et al 2015). An illustrative example is the hundreds of thousands of the Arabic-speaking world’s peoples that risk their lives crossing the Mediterranean in boats to seek refuge in Europe and the tens of thousands that seek refuge in Canada and elsewhere.

There is little doubt that *Al Jazeera* has used localisation to successfully develop the journalistic influence with which it has managed to thrust irreversible and drastic changes upon the media sphere of the Arabic-speaking world. In so many ways, *Al Jazeera*’s localised themes created a discourse of potent unfavourable feelings towards the repressive regimes of the Arabic-speaking world. However, and although it enjoys an autonomy which perhaps exceeds that of

other media outlets in the Arabic-speaking world, *Al Jazeera* remains the property of the Qatari government which “can take any position anytime anywhere” (Blackwill and Harris 2016, p. 72). It reflects the regional and international Machiavellian policies of the Qatari government that change allies as it suits the interests or the agenda of the state. The Qatari-Saudi relations can be taken as a constructive example. Qasim (2009), who is a frequent opinion writer at *Al Jazeera*, states that

While I was about to be interviewed, an Al Jazeera producer recommended that I keep my tone down when it comes to Saudi Arabia. Nobody mentioned Saudi Arabia throughout the interview. This kind of recommendation entails non-professionalism. I wonder if they did the same with other interviewees.

Qasim’s statement has been further underscored by leaked documents during the WikiLeaks scandal. Eakin (2011) observes that “In cables from 2009 released by WikiLeaks, the US embassy in Doha reported that Qatar–Saudi relations had improved as a result of “toned down criticism of the Saudi royal family on al-Jazeera”. Kirkpatrick (2014) notes that several of the Muslim Brotherhood’s “prominent members had been asked to leave Qatar, in an apparent concession to a campaign by other [...] Gulf monarchies to pressure Qatar away from its support for the group”. Nevertheless, following the 2013 coup d’état in Egypt and the fact that Saudi Arabia and Qatar adopted different stances towards it, Saudi-Qatari relations soured again so *Al Jazeera* went back to criticising the Saudi regime. Even the ideologies that *Al Jazeera* promotes change in accordance with the attitudes of the ideologists towards *Al Jazeera* and its benefactor. Towards the end of 2016, many pan-Arabists, secularists, liberals, and leftists started openly criticising Islamists and their supporters – including *Al Jazeera* and its benefactor – for contributing to the failures of the Arab Spring revolutions. *Al Jazeera*, in turn, replied by equating those ideologists with the suppressive regimes in the Arabic-speaking world in articles with headlines such as: “ما الذي يجمع القومي والعلماني واليساري بالطاغية؟” (*Al Jazeera*, August 30, 2016) (What brings the pan-Arabist, the secularist, and the leftist together with the tyrant?), and “هل غاب الليبراليون عن الربيع العربي؟” (*Al Jazeera*, January 18, 2016) (Have the liberals been absent during the Arab Spring?). Yet, pan-Arabism, for instance, is still a major ideology that *Al Jazeera* fervently adopts.

Thus, the argument that has perhaps been proven to be valid through the above discussions is that news translation cannot always be studied using a one-size fits all large-scale approach such as acculturation in accordance with dominant or preconceived cultural values. Such an approach overlooks the idiosyncrasies of diverse small-scale locales (be they the news

outlets or the addressed ones) – even if these values are included in the localised texts or seem to be deployed by the news outlet to address large-scale populations through translation-mediated news items. From a localisation perspective that tackles news translation while considering forenamed idiosyncrasies, a comprehensive and thorough examination through an analysis tool such as CDA (which considers contextual and extra-contextual factors) can lead to a better understanding of:

- The underlying messages of localised news items that can be found in the retained or omitted parts of the STs in the TTs.
- The ideologies used in localised news items
- The ends for which ideologies are used in translation-mediated news items
- The agents' interests which are served and/or are annulled by the use of such ideologies in translation-mediated news items

Adopting such an approach has been productive in accounting for the multidimensional aspects of news translation at least in a context like the Arabic-speaking world (with its many diverse locales) and at a time of a “revolutionary change” (Volosinov 1973, p. 24) such as the Arab Spring which has made visible the actual meanings of signs (be they linguistic, ideological, or social practice) affiliated with news translation.

To recapitulate, the starting point for this chapter was the verification of the phenomenon of localisation in *Al Jazeera*. Once done, this verification has led to the formulation of questions about the reasons why *Al Jazeera* adopts its relatively drastic localisation techniques that *Al Jazeera* adopts in light of the drastic adaptations that the localised texts underwent. In order to answer these questions CDA was applied. The strength of CDA is that it brings to light the different dimensions of analysis and interpretation that underlie text production. The analysed localisation examples comprised numerous textual, contextual and extra-textual properties. Hence, the analysis explored aspects of communicative acts and thematic meanings. The analysis shows that *Al Jazeera* localisers align their choices of localisms not to the themes or ideologies included in the STs, but to those which they intend to include in the localised news items. At this point the need arose to describe and interpret these alignment practices in accordance with the norms or regularities dictated by the sociohistorical, sociopolitical, and socioeconomic conditions which govern them. The recurrent features which are most relevant to the present study have then been sought out and described in the interpretive discussions. The interpretation of the findings, which has been conducted through the application of CDA, brought us to the

discovery that localisation has been used as an integral part of *Al Jazeera*'s media discourse in the context of a self-serving media public relations campaign that purportedly endorses large-scale ideologies in the Arabic-speaking world, while in reality it aims to alienate rival states of the State of Qatar and at the same time create a distinctive localic/solipsistic identity for said State. It should be noted at this juncture that the above discussions are not meant to support the claims of the dogmatically opinionated regimes which argue that *Al Jazeera* and its benefactor have engineered the Arab Springs as part of a global conspiracy against their polities. *Al Jazeera*, on the other hand, is not squeaky clean. It does select specific texts that serve its agenda and it has localised these texts through omission, addition and reorganisation, but it is not the schemer that plotted the Arab Spring. Mohammad Bouazizi, the Tunisian youth whose self-immolation basically triggered the Arab Spring did not do so upon being motivated by *Al Jazeera*. Qatar's motives for establishing *Al Jazeera* pre-date the Arab Spring. The motives of *Al Jazeera* benefactor happened to coincide with the events of the Arab Spring, so it seized the opportunity of localising *Al Jazeera*'s news items to further promote these motives.

CONCLUSION

The current study of translation-mediated news items has argued that it problematises the research on and discussions around news translation. While acknowledging the contribution of former research, my aim has been to assess the current approaches to news translation and present, if needed, a different perspective. Without periodical reassessment of current approaches to any research, especially when new evidence comes into existence, we would not be able to advance science. Thus, it has been proposed that cultural approaches to studying news translation fall short of fathoming the specific localic idiosyncrasies of the target medium that influence the production of translation-mediated news items (in a news outlet such as *Al Jazeera* as a locale). Further, these approaches do not differentiate the diverse localic entities in a place as complex as the Arabic-speaking world. This study suggests that signs such as those carrying conventional ideologies can acquire new meanings especially at times of sociopolitical disturbance such as the Arab Spring, and can also be used (by the news outlets) in ways that supersede their conventional meanings as cultural tenets in order to serve the agendas of news media. When these signs are used in this manner, researchers are recommended to view them as localic variables instead of cultural tenets.

In order to account for such variables in news translation, it has been argued that the use of a localisation approach (which incorporates CDA and the Norms Theory) for the study of news translation should therefore replace cultural approaches which, due to their stereotypical cultural orientation – among other reasons – may miss out on these variables. The Norms Theory-CDA research model that has been adopted in this study necessitated a consideration of the factors (sociohistorical, sociopolitical, institutional, socioeconomic, etc.) that delineate the small-scale locales – such as *Al Jazeera* – which tackle generating localised texts, or those addressed by the localised texts. It has been argued that these factors significantly affect the localisation of news items by *Al Jazeera* and their reception in the target locales – both are important issues to consider when embracing a DTS theoretical approach to news translation.

This approach (utilised within the theoretical framework provided by the Norms Theory) resulted in a fruitful line of enquiry which has led to verify that *Al Jazeera* uses localisation with the aim to create its own mainstream through which it practices paternalism towards and infantilisation of certain locales in the Arabic-speaking world. This line of enquiry has also led to

the conclusion that translation, as practiced by *Al Jazeera*, has been used to serve the agenda of its benefactor, favouring a localisation of quasi-anti-regimist, quasi-Islamist, and quasi-pan-Arabist ideologies and themes. In other words, localisation has been utilised to re-actualise these ideologies in certain locales of the Arabic-speaking world in order to further the aforementioned agenda. They have been employed to encourage the addressed locales to adopt an inward-looking isolationist attitude (towards their respective regimes and other locales) that discourages curiosity about or dialogue with the Other, especially if this Other entity includes the regimes or members of other locales with opposing viewpoints. This localisational practice has perhaps enhanced the underlying existing ideological heterogeneity of the societies (whether static or virtual) of members of the Arabic-speaking world inside or outside said world.

It was at this level of the analysis that we have finally obtained indications showing the depth of the localisation techniques penetration. These indications, in turn, made it possible to conclude that the localisers have been consciously and deliberately adapting STs in order to avoid certain themes on the one hand, and adding other intimations – themes and subliminal messages – on the other. The themes and subliminal messages that have been added in the localised texts provided empirical evidence that the TTs are designed to address specific readership or locales. Though the localisation techniques seemed sometimes obvious and locked in the traditional media discourse and themes of *Al Jazeera* (anti-regimism for instance), they have also shifted in accordance with the attitudes/stances of writers or ideologists towards the Arab Spring or *Al Jazeera*'s benefactor on the one hand, and changed in concert with the self-serving policies of said benefactor on the other.

This study has shown that *Al Jazeera*'s localisers choose to adapt translation-mediated news items in ways that serve the interests of *Al Jazeera*'s benefactor and undermine the interests of the rival regimes of the GCC and the rest of the autocratic regimes of the Arabic-speaking world. The use of a CDA perspective made it possible to conclude that the interests of the immediate rivals of Qatar have been annulled within the context of Qatar seeking an identity that distinguishes it from its immediate neighbouring locales, while the interests of the more remote autocratic regimes have been annulled in an attempt to ingratiate *Al Jazeera*'s benefactor with the respective locales in the countries of those regimes – since Qatar does not have friendly relations with the adjacent ones. These conclusions have been founded on the study of extra-contextual defining sociohistorical and sociopolitical factors that clarified the regional context of

the dichotomy of Otherness and Sameness. They have also been founded on an analysis of the themes of the localised news items of *Al Jazeera* and on an examination of its localisation techniques. The CDA approach brought this study to the conclusion that localisation (employed within media discourse) constructs and/or reframes reality for the readership of *Al Jazeera* – or at least sets out to do so.

In addition to their broader sociopolitical implications, *Al Jazeera* localisations of the STs have revealed numerous thematic imports and substrates of sociopolitical interaction. At the interface level, euphemism and phatic communion is gestured by *Al Jazeera*'s formal modes of addressing dictators of the Arabic-speaking world except when news items are localised then criticism is freely applied to them. Markers of sociopolitical power relations with the autocratic regimes of the Arabic-speaking world (in general) and of the GCC (in particular) during the Arab Spring events seemed to be intentionally unequal, especially that the Springs have been protesting against dictators that in this scenario must be portrayed in an unfavourable manner throughout *Al Jazeera*'s media discourse. In an exemplary way, this practice shows how ideologies (thought to have dominant cultural implications) can be tempered by self-serving politics of pragmatism. *Al Jazeera*, for instance, has localised ethno-religious affiliations (pan-Arabism and Islam) of the populations in the Arabic-speaking world to alienate the regimes and the pro-regimist locales of this world. And in a manner that shows how sociopolitical revolutionary change can also affect the meaning of a sign, *Al Jazeera* has used translation-mediated foreign texts on the Arab Spring to further alienate said regimes of the GCC. The agents of the communicative act and the roles and the status of the participants give their narratives value and influence. *Al Jazeera*'s use of indirect speech in localised texts while frequently reiterating references to the author of the ST has been used to give credibility to the themes or ideologies that *Al Jazeera* has promoted in the TTs – even though some of these themes or ideologies do not exist in the original ST. *Al Jazeera*'s narratives contain asseverations which are intended to align *Al Jazeera*'s benefactor with the perceptions of the addressed readership in specific locales. They also contain implied or direct adversarial insinuations against those who oppose such ideas. Motivated thusly, *Al Jazeera* complacently circulates pragmatically tempered ideologies of Islam or pan-Arabism in its localised news items, disregarding the fact that neither is among the priorities of the Arab Spring protestors.

From a CDA point of view, the purpose of the narratives is not only determined by its source. It is also determined by the influence they have on the readership as agents (who participate in the communicative act) and by how such narratives are accepted by them. The reviewed readers' comments show that *Al Jazeera*'s adversarial insinuations against the suppressive regimes of the Arabic-speaking world have been generally lauded and considered sociopolitically acceptable and correct prior to and during the Arab Spring. Adversely, they have been considered biased and partial in locales beyond those that *Al Jazeera* intends to address. For instance, autocratic regimes and their pro-regimists deem *Al Jazeera*'s coverage biased. As important participants in the communicative act or social practice of communication, Arabic-speaking readers/populations have shown some signs of resistance towards *Al Jazeera*'s interpretation of forenamed ideological affiliations (within the same context of the revolutionary change of the Arab Spring) deeming them unrepresentative of their immediate concerns. Such variation in the interpretation of the sign at a specific time and in specific and distinct locales enhances this study's conclusion that a localisational approach to news translation can provide a better understanding of important issues that underlie and drive the processes involved in the translation of news items. In this localisation approach, translation is shown to be not only linear but recursive as well. This orientation proved important when Qatar's motives for establishing *Al Jazeera* have been investigated.

The present study has argued through thorough analysis that the selection of news items to be localised and the discursive adaptations made by localisers are primarily determined by the institutional norms and agendas of *Al Jazeera*. The results obtained in the analysis and the interpretative discussions show that not only did the localised news items undergo radical changes but the concept of localisation (as a social practice) did as well. None of the reviewed case studies on news translation have dealt with or discussed instances of where deliberate additions to the TT have been put in quotation marks and then attributed to the original author. *Al Jazeera*'s journalistic translation genre has become one of a kind: it has pulled no stops in its creation and legitimation of a media discourse that ingratiates it with specific receiving locales within the context of Qatar's quest for a solipsistic identity. This issue has confirmed one of this study's main conclusions, which is that modifications to the traditional cultural large-scale approach to studying news translation are needed; smaller scale localic norms must be taken into account. Such modifications, if applied, will enable researchers to attain a richer appreciation of

the localisational qualities of the studied translation-mediated news items. The current approaches to news translation too often lead to generalisations about large-scale cultural transformations whereas news outlets such as *Al Jazeera* localises aspects of ideologies along two parallels: spuriously cultural vs actually localic. Current approaches in Translation Studies that fail to distinguish between the functions of these parallels may lead to results that underappreciate the localic factors underlying translation-mediated news items and indeed produce stereotypical abstractions (which are sometimes prejudice-ridden) about the cognitive impact that these items have on public opinion. Such abstractions are normally not supported by empirical evidence, especially that hardly any of the reviewed works carried out an investigation that included readership reactions through analyses of the comments of the readers who are the very target of the localised news items.

When systems of governing Establishments fall apart and isolated and separate smaller entities develop (as in the case of several Arab Spring countries) or when emerging countries feel politically challenged (as in the case Qatar – *Al Jazeera*'s benefactor), new/old societal norms and ideologies of survival emerge and definitely affect the practice of translation. Such factors cannot be ignored when research on social practices (news translation as our subject matter) is undertaken. So, unconventional research approaches should be considered. These approaches look deeper into the human nature and view societies from a perspective of them acting as individual humans who are generally bellicose and acquisitive. Sociologist Thomas Hobbes, who witnessed the English civil war of the 17th century, remarks:

The condition of Man... is a condition of Warre of everyone against everyone; in which case every one is governed by his own Reason; and there is nothing he can make use of, that may not be a help unto him, in preserving his life [...] It followeth, that in such a condition, every man has a Right to every thing [sic.] (Hobbes 2012, p. 72)

It is hoped that this study has achieved its purpose in bringing into the realm of TS a perspective on news translation in which underlying idiosyncratic characteristics of individual locales – be they the news outlet or the addressed readership – can be brought to light.

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APPENDICES

Appendix1:

Robert Fisk: 'The Arab awakening began not in Tunisia this year, but in Lebanon in 2005'

Revolutions don't start with a single dramatic event, such as the destruction of a church or a man's self-immolation.

Friday, 15 April 2011

First, to reports from the revolutionary front lines in Syria, in the same imperfect, but brave, English in which they were written less than 24 hours ago...

"Yesterday morning I went to the square to demonstrate, I arranged it with guys on Facebook, I don't know them, but we share the same ambition of freedom, that night I was awake until 6am watching the news, it was horrible what's happening in Syria, the security forces slaughter people as if animals !!!...

"I wore my clothes and went to (the) sq. there was about 150 security service in civilian cloths in street calling for Assad's life [ie praising Assad] and one taxi car the driver was driving against the cars to stop them moving in street, I am not sure if he was revolutionizing or just empty the street for security service!, it was crazy, I was angry that they are calling for the dictator's life and want keep him running Syria like he doing.

"They were looking around at every man in street if he doesn't call for president's life they beat him and arrest him, of course I didn't call for his life and I took my phone and started taking video to show the world who's calling for this dictator, his gang! 2 guys were running infront of the demonstration – they are revoluter but they had to run with this gang until freedom seekers arrive from ommayad mosque, those 2 guys told me not to take video and hide my phone.

"I hid it in my pocket but suddenly about 40 men from secutiry came to me, they started shoulting 'he is taking video, he is taking video!!' 5 guys hold me (like when they arrest someone) and started beating me...another 7 attacked me, they took my phone, my ID and my money and other 7 guys attack me, they said why are you taking video bastard??"

"We will kill you all enemies of assad, Syria belongs to assad not to you bastard people!!" Immediately I said: 'I am with you guys!! We all follow president assad even to death!' they said then why are you taking video?"

"I said 'because I am happy there is demonstration calling for the greatest leader assad...'"

"There was one man (looks like officer) caught me and slapped me and he was the last one in this fake demonstration which calls for assad life..."

The second report:

"Assad is lying I assure you! There is more than 6000 political prisoner in Syria so what does let 260 free mean?!...they said the emergency law to be lifted BUT they will create new law against terrorism, which will be worse than emergency law we are sure!

"They said they will fight the corruption, do you think that Assad will arrest his cousin Rami Makhoulouf, his brother Maher Assad, his uncle zo al himma shaleesh, will Assad arrest all his family, take their money and give it back to us??...the gang in Lattakia are Alawiyeen gang belong to Assad family we all know them in Syria they are called shapeeha, the people in Lattakia were demonstrating against the government and afterwards the secret service, police and army brought these shapeeha to scare people and kill them.

"In Syria we are not demonstrating for food or money, we want to change the whole system and hang all Assad family..."

This is raw stuff, the voice of popular – and young – fury that will not be quenched by torture rooms and the cosh. Both Syrian men escaped arrest – though one has now had to flee his country – but their accounts tell a grindingly familiar story from Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen, Libya... The fake pro-government demonstration, the promiscuous use of secret police violence, the popular knowledge of corruption and the production of plain-clothes regime thugs – "baltagi" in Cairo, where Mubarak used them, which literally means "thugs" – and the sectarianisation of suppression (the "Alawiyeen" in Lattakia are Alawi (Shia) gangs from the sect to which the Assad family belongs).

And now the regime in Damascus is claiming that Lebanon is one of the outside powers sewing discord in the "Um al-Arabia Wahida", the mother of the Arab nation, specifically the Lebanese March 14 Alliance of the outgoing Lebanese Sunni prime minister Saad Hariri, whose principal opponents are the Lebanese Shia Muslim Hezbollah party and their allies.

See how easy it is to create a "sectarian" war in Syria and then infect your neighbour with the virus?

These are not idle words. Revolutions don't start with dramatic incidents – the self-immolation of an unemployed Tunisian, the destruction of a Coptic church – however dramatic these tragedies may be.

In reality, the "Arab awakening" began not in Tunisia this year, but in Lebanon in 2005 when, appalled by the assassination of ex-prime minister Rafiq Hariri (Saad's father), hundreds of thousands of Lebanese of all faiths gathered in central Beirut to demand the withdrawal of Syria's 20,000 soldiers in the country.

Bachar made a pitiful speech in Damascus, abusing the demonstrators, suggesting that live television cameras were using "zooms" to exaggerate the number of the crowds.

But the UN passed a resolution – a no-soldier zone, rather than a no-fly zone, I suppose – which forced the Syrian military to leave.

This was the first "ousting" of a dictator, albeit from someone else's country, by the popular Arab "masses" which had hitherto been an institution in the hands of the dictators.

Yet I recall at the time that none of us – including myself, who had lived in Lebanon for decades – realised how deeply the Syrian claws had dug into the red soil of Lebanon over the previous 29 years. Syria's Lebanese stooges remained in place. Their "mukhabarat" security police simply re-emerged in transmogrified form.

Their political murders continued at whirlwind speed. I spent days chasing from the scene of one car bomb or hit-job to another. This is what terrifies the demonstrators of all the nations struggling to throw off their brutal – and often American-supported – masters. Field Marshal Tantawi, the head of the Egyptian army, for example, is now running Egypt. Yet he is not only a close friend of America but a childhood and lifelong friend of Mubarak, who was allowed to whinge the usual ex-dictator's self-congratulatory excuses on al-Arabia television ("my reputation, my integrity and my military and political record") prior to his own questioning – and inevitable emergency entry into hospital. When the latest Tahrir Square crowds also called for Tantawi's resignation, the field marshal's mask slipped. He sent in his troops to "cleanse" the square.

When the Iranians, in their millions, demonstrated against Mahmoud Ahmedinejad's dodgy presidential election results in June of 2009, many members of the "green" movement in Tehran asked me about the 2005 Lebanese revolution against Syria – dubbed the "Cedar Revolution" by the US State Department, a cliché that never really caught on among the Lebanese themselves – and while there was no direct political connection, there was undoubtedly an inspirational

89 junction; two sets of tracks of the same gauge which reinforced the idea that the youth of Tehran
90 and Beirut belonged to the same transport system of humanity and freedom.

91 Of course, there were many in the Middle East Muslim world who hoped the security forces
92 could be won over to their side. In Cairo, individual soldiers did join the revolution – on a large
93 scale, in Yemen – but wolves do not turn into pussycats. And – despite one obvious historical
94 example in the region – it is unrealistic to expect anyone to save the world by walking towards
95 their own crucifixion. Police chiefs, however personally devout, will do as they are told – even
96 when their orders involve mass murder.

97 Take, for example, the Saudis. The Independent is in possession of an extraordinary – and
98 outrageous – order from Prince Nayef Bin Abdul al-Saud, the Saudi minister of interior, issued
99 on 11 March, prior to the much-feared "Hunayn Revolution" organised by Shia and Sunni
100 intellectuals last month.

101 Hunayn was the name of a battle which the Prophet Mohamed won by a virtual miracle against
102 far more powerful armies.

103 "To all the honourable heads of police in the areas of Riyadh, Mecca and Medina, al-Bahr,
104 Qassim, the northern borders, Tabouq, Sharqiya, Qaseer, Najwan, Jezaan and the head of the
105 emergency Special Forces," Nayef begins – note how responsibility is neatly spread across the
106 entire network of the "mukhabarat" – "previous to our conversations regarding the so-called
107 'Hunayn Revolution' – if indeed it exists – with its single goal of threatening our national
108 security: this group of stray individuals spreads evil throughout the land. Do not show them
109 mercy. Strike them with iron fists. It is permitted for all officers and personnel to use live rounds.
110 This is your land and this is your religion. If they want to change that or replace it, you must
111 respond. We give thanks to you – and good luck!"

112 This outrageous order – which, mercifully, did not have to be obeyed – was well-known to the
113 Americans, who have so bitterly condemned the Assad regime's brutality in Syria but who, in
114 this case of course, uttered not a bleat.

115 Shia, it seems, are targetable in these revolutions – whether they be of the Saudi, the Bahraini,
116 the Syrian or, indeed, the Lebanese variety.

117 Prince Nayef's instruction is worthy of investigation by the International Criminal Court at the
118 Hague – he orders his police chiefs to shoot down unarmed demonstrators – but even if his men
119 had performed their bloody duties (and they have, in the past), he is safe. Saudi Arabia is one
120 kingdom where we in the West will no more tolerate Arab "awakenings" than will the local
121 autocrats. No wonder every Saudi carries an identity card which refers to him not as a citizen but
122 as "al-tabieya" which means, in effect, "serf".

123 The odd thing about all these revolutions, of course, is that the dictators – be they the Ben Alis,
124 the Mubaraks, the Salehs, the Assads, even the al-Sauds – spend more time spying on foreigners
125 and amassing documentation of their people's transgressions than in trying to understand what
126 their own indigenous populations actually want. Eric Rouleau, a Le Monde correspondent in
127 Iran, who subsequently became French ambassador to Tunisia, has recounted how "General" Ben
128 Ali, Tunisian minister of interior between 1985 and 1986, wished to acquire the very latest
129 French communications equipment from Paris. The "pitiless 'superflic'", as Rouleau cruelly
130 called him, trained by American intelligence in the US, had files on "everyone".

131 At one meeting with Rouleau, Ben Ali outlined the greatest threats to the Tunisian regime: social
132 "unrest", tensions with a certain Colonel Gaddafi of Libya (here, one must admit a certain
133 sympathy for Ben Ali) and – most serious of all – "the Islamist threat", whatever that may be.
134 Rouleau remembered how "in a theatrical gesture, he (Ben Ali) pushed the button of a machine,

which in an instant unrolled an unending list of names whom he said were under permanent surveillance. An information engineer, obsessed with technology, Mr Ben Ali did not cease to use this science of information gathering". Rouleau, who was sending back to Paris less than flattering accounts of the regime and its interior minister, was puzzled that his relations with Ben Ali declined steadily – until the day he ended his mission. "On the day of my final departure from Tunisia, when I went to pay my courtesy visit to him," Rouleau was to recall, "he asked me, in a state of white-hot anger, why I regarded him as a CIA agent possessed of unstoppable ambition. And he started quoting from his files, almost word for word, my own confidential telegrams to the Quai d'Orsay... The ambassador had not escaped from the intricate workings of his spy centre."

Ben Ali could penetrate the French embassy, but as president he simply failed to learn about his own people. There is an unforgettable photograph of the soon-to-be-deposed president as he rather tardily visits the young suicider-by-fire, Mohamed Bouazizi, as he lies dying in his hospital bed.

Ben Ali is doing his best to look concerned. The boy clearly unable to communicate. But the doctors and paramedics are watching the president rather than their patient and doing so with a tired impatience, which the president obviously does not comprehend. From small kindlings do great fires grow.

Take the first uprising against Bashar al-Assad in Deraa – home to the old steam train station, by the way, in which TE Lawrence was supposedly assaulted by an Ottoman officer in the First World War – where no amount of sophisticated intelligence could have forewarned the regime of what was to come. A place of historical rebellion, some youths had painted anti-Assad graffiti on a wall. The Syrian security police followed their normal practice of dragging the young men to the cop shop, beating and torturing them. But then their mothers arrived to demand their release. They were verbally abused by the police.

Then – much more seriously – a group of tribal elders went to see the Deraa governor to demand an explanation for the behaviour of the police.

Each placed his turban on the governor's desk, a traditional gesture of negotiation; they would only replace their turbans when the matter had been resolved. But the governor, a crusty old Baathist and regime-loyalist, took the turban of the most prestigious sheikh, threw it on the floor of his office and stamped on it.

The people of Deraa came out in their thousands to protest; the shooting started; Bashar hastily dismissed his governor and replaced him. Too late. The fire had been lit. In Tunisia, an unemployed young man who set himself alight. In Syria, a turban.

These episodes, of course, are not without their foundation of history. Just as the Hauran district, in which Deraa is situated, has always been a place of rebellion, Egypt was always the land of Gamel Abdul Nasser.

And oddly – although Nasser was the originator of the military dictatorships which were to cripple Egypt – his name was spoken of with respect by thousands of the demonstrators in Tahrir Square who successfully demanded Mubarak's overthrow.

This was not because they forgot his legacy but because, after decades of monarchy and British colonial rule, they regarded Nasser as the first leader who gave Egypt self-respect.

Nasser's daughter Hoda was undoubtedly right in February, when she said that "the parallel with the people's power, the spontaneous uprising that brought my father to power, especially heartens me... People thought that the youth of today are apolitical, but they proved their detractors wrong.

181 "My father would have been ecstatic. He would have been proud of the people who
182 demonstrated in Tahrir Square, chanting slogans urging radical political reform and social
183 change. Nasser remains at the core of revolutionary mythology in Egypt and the Arab world at
184 large. That is why you saw the portraits of Nasser hoisted high in Tahrir Square." Against all
185 this, the Libyan "revolution" is beginning to stale; its blood congealing along with the words
186 once used about it.

187 The tribes we once acknowledged as a democratic opposition – namely the Senussis of the old
188 Idriss family – are now called "rebels" by our press and television colleagues, the uprising is now
189 a "civil war", an unpleasant way of reminding ourselves why we must not put "boots on the
190 ground".

191 Our Tory masters – especially our odious defence minister of the time – invented the Bosnian
192 "civil war" to delay our intervention in the Balkan ethnic cleansing.

193 Most Arab nations would be happy to see the end of Gaddafi, but he sits uneasily amid the
194 pantheon of "revolution". Wasn't he supposed to be the original revolutionary against the
195 corruption of King Idriss and later scourge of the West and Zionism?

196 Oddly, there are parallels with Syria which we – and Assad – may not like. For it is Syria's
197 refusal to bend to the United States' "peace process", its unwavering support for the Hezbollah
198 "resistance" in Lebanon which broke the Israeli army in 2006, which allows the Assad family –
199 caliphs, I suppose, by definition – to claim that their independence and their refusal to bow down
200 to US-Israeli demands constitute a long-running revolution in Syria of infinitely more
201 importance than the street fighting gangs of Deraa, Lattakia, Baniyas and Douma.

202 Hamas maintains its head political office in Damascus. Syria remains the lung through which
203 Iran can breathe in the Middle East; through which Iran's own president can enter Lebanon and
204 proclaim – to the horror of the Lebanese whom Bachar Assad now blames for his own country's
205 violence – that southern Lebanon is now Iran's front line against Israel.

206 And now let's go a little further. On 31 March, the Israelis – who have steadfastly opposed the
207 overthrow of the Middle East's dictators – published a series of photo-reconnaissance pictures of
208 southern Lebanon, supposedly marking the exact locations of 550 Hezbollah bunkers, 300
209 "monitoring sites" and 100 weapons storage facilities run by Syria's Lebanese Shia militia allies
210 in the country. They had been built, the Israelis claimed, next to hospitals, schools and public
211 utilities. The documentation was fake. Visits to locations marked on the map uncovered no such
212 bunkers. Indeed, the real Hezbollah bunkers known to the Lebanese are not marked on the map.

213 The Hezbollah quickly understood the meaning.

214 "They are setting us up for the next war," a veteran Hezbollah ruffian from the village of Jibchit
215 told me. If Israel had really discovered our positions, the last thing they would have done is
216 inform us they knew the locations – because we'd immediately move them!"

217 But last week, the Turkish air force forced down an Iranian transport aircraft supposedly flying
218 over Diyarbakir en route to the northern Syrian city of Aleppo with "auto spare parts". On board
219 the Ilyushin-76, the Turks found 60 Kalashnikov AK-47 assault rifles, 14 BKC machine guns,
220 8,000 rounds of ammunition, 560 60-mm mortar shells and 1,288 120-mm mortar shells.

221 Forget Facebook. These were not part of any Arab "reawakening" or "uprising", but further
222 supplies for the Hezbollah to use in their next conflict with Israel. All of which raises a question.
223 Is there a better way of taking your people's minds off revolution than a new war against an
224 enemy which has resolutely opposed the democratisation of the Arab world?

Appendix 2:

Robert Fisk: The present stands no chance against the past

Saturday 28 January 2012

The Palestinians are not only, it seems, an “invented people” – courtesy of Newt Gingrich – but the only Arabs on the Mediterranean not to enjoy a Spring or an Awakening or even a Winter.

And Benjamin Netanyahu has been boasting that he was right about Egypt and Tunisia and Libya. He did not welcome their supposedly democratic revolutions last year – and who, he has been asking, blames him now for his silence? And the Israeli Prime Minister’s silence, I notice, continues over Syria. Save for the accusation that the Assad regime was involved in the attempt by Palestinian refugees to cross the border via Golan last year – Netanyahu must be right about that – and a passing comment in June that “the young people of Syria deserve a better future”, that’s it. Israel, the beacon of democracy in the Middle East, has nothing more to say.

For some reason, we – in the press, on television, in our parliaments – are not discussing this silence. But, as Professor Ian Buruma pointed out recently, the political heirs of “deeply racist traditions” are the new champions of the Jewish state, whose policies now owe more to 19th-century ethnic chauvinism than to Zionism’s socialist roots. All kinds of strange people now give their support to Israel. It is disturbing to note that the Oslo mass murderer, Anders Behring Breivik, supported the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians from the West Bank. That’s not Israel’s fault. But Republicans in America are now warning of an Islamic Sharia law takeover in the US. It’s an idea fostered, according to The New York Times, by a 56-year-old Hasidic Jewish lawyer called David Yerushalmi and his Society of Americans for National Existence, who now has former CIA director James Woolsey and Republicans Newt Gingrich and Michele Bachmann echoing his views. The last two have actually signed a pledge “to reject Islamic law”.

For what? Israel, which in the past could analyse events rationally, if not always correctly, appears, too, to have lost its ability to grasp events, its Prime Minister hiding behind self-delusional speeches when he should be understanding the typhoon sweeping across the Arab states around him. People who will no longer tolerate dictators are not going to accept peace treaties with an ever more expansionist Israel – 2,000 more colonisers’ homes, Netanyahu decided last autumn, would be the latest punishment for the Palestinians who dare to demand statehood.

Obama is also silent. When Netanyahu and the king of Saudi Arabia could line up to plead with Obama to save Mubarak, you knew something had gone terribly wrong. Gideon Levy, one of the finest of Israeli journalists, writes with biting eloquence of his government’s folly, its failure to see that Arab democracy is a cause for good, not bad, that its relationship with the United States is – in a grim and almost colonial way – even more dangerous to Israel. And, all the while, the settlements continue. Which is why the Palestinians will not resume peace talks with Israel under the grubby neutrality of the United States.

Liberal Jews in America are ever more outraged at this phenomenon. They have often seen something faintly fascist about the right in Israel. Indeed, I have a letter beside me as I write, sent to The New York Times on 2 December 1948, warning of the visit to the US of the young Menachem Begin whose “Freedom Party”, said the letter’s authors, was “closely akin in its organization, methods, political philosophy and social appeal to the Nazi and Fascist parties”. Among the authors of this letter was Albert Einstein. Today, brave Israeli leftists like Miko Peled, son of the legendary Israeli General Matti Peled, have been touring the States, trying to warn of the dangers presented by Israel. In a recent speech, he described the fearful start of the

46 bombardment of Gaza on 27 December 2008 (total dead about 1,300 Palestinians and 13 Israelis)
47 as “a date that will forever be etched in our memory as one of the darkest and most shameful
48 days in the long history of the Jewish people”.
49 Now, said Peled, at Silwan just outside East Jerusalem, thousands of Palestinians may be evicted
50 from their homes “so that Israel can build a park to glorify a conquest that took place 3,000 years
51 ago, never mind that not a shred of scientific evidence exists that such a king (David) ever lived,
52 any more than there is evidence the world was created in six days. The past trumps the present in
53 Israel – a state that wants to eliminate the existence of people who live on their land to solidify
54 the myth of a glorious past”. Strong stuff indeed.
55 But is it any surprise that the Palestinians believe this when the president who told them they
56 deserve a state vetoes their demand for statehood at the United Nations, while his country
57 deprives them of millions of dollars for daring to believe him, withdraws its funding from
58 Unesco when it bestows a kind of statehood on the Palestinians – and then remains silent when
59 Israel says it will keep money legally owed to the Palestinians of the West Bank? But since
60 Obama’s re-election counts for more than “Palestine”, what chance is there of peace in the
61 Middle East? Maybe Israel is ensuring that the past also trumps the present in the United States.
62 If only we could ask the one rabbi Netanyahu chose to quote in his UN speech against
63 Palestinian statehood last year: the very same rabbi who inspired the murderer Baruch Goldstein
64 to kill so many Palestinians 18 years ago.
65 But, of course, we remain silent.

Appendix 3:

Robert Fisk: Syria welcomed them – now it has spat them out

Saturday 11 August 2012

The Palestinians caught in Syria's crossfire have fled. Our writer met them in Bourj el-Barajneh, Beirut

Syria's tragedy began 10 years before she was born. Her parents were driven from their home in Haifa – in that part of Palestine that became Israel – and fled to Lebanon in 1948, then to Syria in 1982. "God bless his soul, our Dad called me Syria and another sister he called Palestine," she says, sitting in the corner of a hovel of oven-like heat in the largest Palestinian refugee camp in Beirut. A fan fights the dust-filled 35C air. Syria's sister Palestine lives down the same alleyway. Um Hassan, a third sister, listens with narrowed eyes, nodding in agreement, freeze-framed face for most of the time. Both wear black.

Syria – the country – was a welcome place when Syria the refugee arrived there with her young husband as a refugee from the Lebanese civil war. The early Hafez el-Assad years – how quickly the West and Syria's Arab enemies forget this today – assured homes, equal rights as citizens, employment and free hospital services to the half million Palestinians who lived under the Baathist regime: better conditions than any other Arab nation offered. "The government was 'strict' but treated us the same as Syrians," Syria says. "We were neutral in Syria."

She started her family – she has five boys and two girls, she says – in the refugee camp at Deraa, the southern Syrian city where the revolution started nearly 18 months ago, when government agents tortured an 11-year-old Syrian boy to death for painting anti-government graffiti on a wall.

"After 1982, they were beautiful years and we had a very nice life," she says. "We were treated well and with dignity – and my children, they feel they belong to Syria, not to Lebanon where their parents came from. My sons married Syrian women." She has not yet spoken of her tragedy.

Um Hassan agrees. She is 48, the youngest of the sisters, now the mother of five sons and five daughters. She settled in the Beirut refugee camp of Tel al-Zaatar which came under siege by the Christian Tiger militia of Dany Chamoun in 1975.

"My two brothers died in the massacre there the following year," she says. "Their names were Nimr and Korfazeh." She speaks without emotion. Nimr, ironically, means "tiger" in Arabic. A tiger killed by a tiger. She and her family moved to Deraa in 1981; her memories are the same as Syria's. "A secure life; as a Palestinian, everything was available to us, any job opportunity, hospitals were free..." Her smile does not last long.

"Things started to go wrong 18 months ago. We were treated well, but the shooting started in Deraa and we sympathised with the Syrian people. We tried to bring them medical supplies and to help the wounded. Then the armed rebels came to our camp last month and the word went round that the Syrians wanted us Palestinians to leave our homes.

"Some left, some stayed. Then helicopters came and started to bombard the houses. I ran away with my family, so quickly I even left the key in the house and the door unlocked. When I returned briefly, I found the house destroyed and all our furniture and property looted – stolen by the rebels, by the regime, even by our own neighbours."

Syria has sat through Um Hassan's account in silence. "The government thought some Palestinians were with the protesters and some were arrested. They took one of my sons to the prison and tortured him for two or three weeks. Then he died from the torture." There is silence in the room.

46 So she has four sons out of the five she originally mentioned, I say quietly. “No, I already took
47 him from the total number,” she says. “I have five sons living. I had six sons.” Her surviving
48 children are now living in a school and a mosque in a village outside Deraa. They all have
49 Lebanese identity papers. She came to Beirut to find the documents and take them back to Syria
50 so her sons and daughters can enter Lebanon.

51 The Palestinians of Syria have been treated well by Lebanon’s border officials, allowed to enter
52 the country after recording their names and ages. Ahmed Mustafa, who collates details of all the
53 Palestinian refugees arriving in Beirut from Syria, says that there are 80 families registered in
54 Bourj el-Barajneh, 70 in the Sabra and Shatila camps – scene of the 1982 massacre by Israel’s
55 Christian militia allies – and 10 in the tiny Mar Elias camp. Three hundred more Palestinian
56 families from Syria have settled in the huge camp at Ein el-Helweh outside Sidon, another 60 in
57 Rashidieh, scarcely 17 miles from the Israeli border.

58 Ehud Barak, the Israeli Defence Minister, says that his country will accept no refugees from
59 Syria. The Palestinians of Syria – there are more than half a million of them – believe that Mr
60 Barak’s comment was directed at them. The homeland of the Palestinians will remain forbidden
61 territory.

62 Um Khaled arrived from Deraa this week but her tragedy began, of course, 23 years before she
63 was born when her grandfather, a camel-dealer, fled with his family – including her eight-year
64 old father – from the suburb of Tir al-Haifa in what is now Israel’s largest northern city: first to
65 Jordan and then to Egypt, where her grandmother’s family lived. When she died, the family
66 moved to the Damascus suburb of Doumar and then into the Palestinian camp of Yarmouk. Um
67 Khaled was 17. She now has 10 children – her husband set off for Europe four years ago to find
68 a job. She fled Damascus just four days ago and her story is as instructive as it is tragic.

69 “I suppose we were sympathetic to the protesters in the streets and we were probably upset that
70 unarmed people were being killed. The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine General
71 Command were with the regime, but some of their officers were not. Even some of the Palestine
72 Liberation Army (part of the Syrian armed forces) are not with the regime. Violence began in
73 Yarmouk two weeks ago. PLA men came to protect the camp. Shells landed on the camp – we
74 don’t know who fired them.

75 “Then Syrian helicopters flew over us and dropped leaflets. They showed a picture of a boy
76 smiling, and the caption said: ‘If you want to keep your son smiling, evacuate the area’.”

77 Irony again. In 1982, the Israeli air force dropped almost identical leaflets over civilian areas of
78 besieged Beirut which said: “If you value the lives of your loved ones, leave West Beirut.” Did
79 the Syrian authorities learn from the Israelis?

80 “Syrian tanks then came to Arouba Street and started firing. A neighbour of mine, Maafeq
81 Sayed, was in the Araba area and was hit in the neck by a sniper and died. His mother said the
82 government television claimed he was a terrorist. The government hospital registered him as the
83 victim of a heart attack. The ‘GC’ Palestinians did not shoot back.

84 “Then came rumours that the Alawi in the Syrian army were going to massacre us. Some women
85 were slaughtered in the Asali area next to the Yarmouk camp. Palestinians came to rescue people
86 trapped in their homes. Then there were more rumours that people had come with knives to
87 slaughter the Alawis.”

88 On Friday of last week, shells fell across Yarmouk, killing 20 and wounding 54 Palestinians, 18
89 of whom lost limbs. There were women and children among the victims. Um Khaled sold her
90 family furniture and set off to friends in Beirut, praying that her husband – now an unemployed

91 refugee in the Swedish city of Malmo – might be able to help her. She still insists that life was
92 good before the conflict in Syria. “We had dignity,” she says. “But this is our tragedy.”