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Résumé de l'article

Cet article explore la manipulation de la traduction à des fins de propagande dans la crise du Golfe qui a conduit à l'embargo économique sur le Qatar depuis juin 2017. Il se concentre sur *Al-Ittihad*, un quotidien en langue arabe, détenu par les Émirats arabes unis. Les données proviennent de la section d'actualités *hard news* consacrée quotidiennement au Qatar depuis le début de la crise. Combinant la théorie des récits et l'approche de l'évaluation (*AppraisalFramework*), il apporte des éclairages sur l'usage de la traduction journalistique comme une arme idéologique. Dépassant l'argument réducteur de la « domestication », cette double approche théorique permet de mieux articuler contexte sociopolitique et stratégies de traduction, en rapprochant les niveaux micro et macro d'analyse, et de dévoiler les rouages de la propagande dans l'actualité traductionnelle d'*Al-Ittihad*. De la transédition des attributions à des sources étrangères à la conception intersémiotique de la mise en page du journal, l'approche traductionnelle des nouvelles incruste des récits personnels et collectifs aux niveaux micro et macro de la section d'actualité sur le Qatar et en construit une évaluation négative. Derrière une façade de détachement et de neutralité, les actualités *hard news* et la traduction dont elles dépendent alimentent le discours de propagande des va-t-en-guerre.

# Manipulation of translation in hard news reporting on the Gulf crisis: combining narrative and appraisal

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## RÉSUMÉ

Cet article explore la manipulation de la traduction à des fins de propagande dans la crise du Golfe qui a conduit à l'embargo économique sur le Qatar depuis juin 2017. Il se concentre sur *Al-Ittihad*, un quotidien en langue arabe, détenu par les Émirats arabes unis. Les données proviennent de la section d'actualités *hard news* consacrée quotidiennement au Qatar depuis le début de la crise. Combinant la théorie des récits et l'approche de l'évaluation (*Appraisal Framework*), il apporte des éclairages sur l'usage de la traduction journalistique comme une arme idéologique. Dépassant l'argument réducteur de la «domestication», cette double approche théorique permet de mieux articuler contexte sociopolitique et stratégies de traduction, en rapprochant les niveaux micro et macro d'analyse, et de dévoiler les rouages de la propagande dans l'actualité traductionnelle d'*Al-Ittihad*. De la transédiction des attributions à des sources étrangères à la conception intersémiotique de la mise en page du journal, l'approche traductionnelle des nouvelles incruste des récits personnels et collectifs aux niveaux micro et macro de la section d'actualité sur le Qatar et en construit une évaluation négative. Derrière une façade de détachement et de neutralité, les actualités *hard news* et la traduction dont elles dépendent alimentent le discours de propagande des va-t-en-guerre.

## ABSTRACT

This paper explores the manipulation of translation for propagandistic purposes in the Gulf crisis, which has led to the economic blockade of Qatar since June 2017. It focuses on *Al-Ittihad*, an Arabic daily newspaper owned by the United Arab Emirates. The data under analysis is extracted from a hard news daily section that *Al-Ittihad* has dedicated to Qatar since the outbreak of the crisis. Combining Narrative Theory with the Appraisal Framework provides an insightful account of the ideologically motivated manipulation and weaponization of news translation. Going beyond the reductive claim of domestication in News translation studies, this dual theoretical approach allows for further articulation of the socio-political context with translation strategies, by combining macro- and micro-analysis. This approach also uncovers the workings of propaganda in *Al-Ittihad*'s translational news reporting. From the transediting of foreign attributions to the intersemiotic design of the newspaper's layout, translational news reporting involves embedding personal and shared narratives into the micro- and macro-levels of the hard news section to construe a negative evaluation of Qatar. Behind a façade of detachment and neutrality, hard news reports and the translation on which they rely feed into the propagandistic discourse of hawkish parties.

## RESUMEN

Este artículo estudia la manipulación de la traducción con fines propagandísticos en la crisis del Golfo que ha conducido al embargo económico contra Catar desde junio de 2017. Se centra en *Al-Ittihad*, un diario en lengua árabe que poseen los Emiratos Árabes Unidos. Los datos provienen de la sección de noticias serias (*hard news*) dedicada a diario a Catar desde el principio de la crisis. Al combinar la teoría de las narrativas con la de la valoración, arroja luz sobre el uso de la traducción periodística como arma ideológica. Yendo más allá del argumento reductor de la domesticación, este doble enfoque teórico permite articular mejor el contexto sociopolítico con las estrategias de traducción al aproximar los niveles micro y macro de análisis y así desvelar los engranajes de la propaganda en la manera de traducir las noticias en *Al-Ittihad*. Desde la transedición de las atribuciones a fuentes extranjeras hasta la concepción intersemiótica del diseño gráfico del diario, la manera de traducir las noticias incrusta narrativas personales y colectivas en los niveles micro y macro de la sección de noticias sobre Catar, construyendo una evaluación negativa del país. Tras una fachada de desapasionamiento y de neutralidad, el discurso propagandístico de los belicistas se ve alimentado por las noticias serias y la traducción sobre las que se construyen.

## MOTS-CLÉS/KEYWORDS/PALABRAS CLAVE

manipulation, traduction, théorie des récits, approche de l'évaluation, crise du Golfe  
 manipulation, translation, narrative theory, appraisal approach, Gulf crisis  
 manipulación, traducción, teoría de las narrativas, teoría de la valoración, crisis del Golfo

## 1. Introduction

With the symbolic unleashing of a new Age of Terror, concerns for the role discourses, practices, and technologies play in fueling political violence have been on the rise. Alert to the increased polarization of the world, scholars from translation studies have moved beyond the use of “conflict” as a metaphor for the tension involved in any act of intercultural communication towards engaging with “situation[s] in which two or more parties seek to undermine each other because they have incompatible goals, competing interests, or fundamentally different values” (Baker 2006b: 1).

One particular area of study that has gained momentum in this wake is media translation, in which the scholarship has shown the contested and conflicted nature of news translation and interpreting, particularly so in the context of covering violent and political conflict (Baker 2010; Harding 2011; Jaber 2016). Indeed, news translational practices in adversarial settings – ranging from *ad hoc* news production in the war zone via “interpreters-fixers” (Palmer 2007) to news “transediting” in diplomatic crises (see Chen 2019, for instance) – challenge orthodox views of translation and blur the lines between news production and translation, journalists and translators, engagement and impartiality.

Taking stock of the extent to which this complexity has been accounted for in the literature, this paper adopts a dual theoretical approach and puts it to the test with the analysis of manipulative hard news reporting in the current Gulf Crisis. We aim to demonstrate that combining narrative theory and the Appraisal Framework (our respective theoretical approaches) can equip us with the appropriate tools to account for the interplay between the manifold dynamics of translation in making news, at the intersection of translation studies, communication studies, critical linguistics and sociology.

### 1.1. A rationale for a dual framework in news translation

Up to date, news translation has been largely examined through the lenses of “domestication” (see Valdeón 2015), leading the two authors of *Translation in Global News*, one of the major references in this area, to establish “absolute domestication” as the most widespread translation strategy (Bielsa and Bassnett 2009: 10). Thus, the wide range of interventions, which news translation may encompass – gatekeeping, editing, recontextualizing, rewriting, acculturating, localizing, adapting, transforming (see Schäffner 2012 and Valdeón 2015 for a review) – has tended to be perceived as an endeavor to ease reception and make “news events more familiar and comprehensible to target audiences” (Bielsa 2016: 206).

Yet, textual interventions within the same text may oscillate between what would count as “foreignizing” and what would count as “domesticating” (Baker 2007). For instance, news may conform with domestic norms while demonizing the foreign “other,” particularly when translation is instrumentalized into the belligerent and corporate agendas of states and media outlets. Besides, the apparent fluency and transparency – the two main effects of domestication on the news, as underlined by Bielsa (2016) – do not merely match readers’ norms and expectations, but actively contribute to shaping them. It is precisely to account for these instrumentalization dynamics that narrative theory was first imported from communication and social theory and further developed in translation studies (see Baker’s 2006b pioneering work in this regard). Combining narrative theory with the Appraisal Framework allows us to articulate further the socio-political and institutional context with translation strategies beyond the binaries of foreignization and domestication. In other words, this combination serves to bridge the gap between macro- and micro-levels of semiotic analysis of news translation. Thus, a higher-level narrative analysis of social and cultural concerns is enriched by a principled, theory-driven account of their lower level manifestations in the linguistic-textual terrain. In a sense, it is an attempt to view the same phenomenon from two essentially compatible perspectives.

Alongside an increased number of fieldwork and surveys (Bazzi 2014; Pan 2014), including reception studies (Conway and Vaskivska 2010; Thiranagama 2011; Tian and Chao 2012), news translation studies have naturally adopted textual analysis methodologies. As argued by Valdeón (2015: 647-648) in his literature review of fifteen years of journalistic translation research, these textual approaches have been moved by the central concern for ideology (and, to a certain extent, manipulation, especially when dealing with conflict). Within those approaches, ideology has been examined from two main theoretical perspectives, that is critical linguistics or narrative theory. While the former has examined lexico-grammatical choices and their underlying socio-cultural assumptions and (mis-)representation effect about culture, gender, and politics (Sidiropoulou 2004; Valdeón 2005, 2006, 2007), the latter has explored competing versions of events between groups enjoying different positions of power in the communication space (Baker 2006b; Harding 2012; Luo 2014).

Both approaches converge in their epistemological stance on ideology as inseparable from and constructed in and through language. However, they differ in emphasis: Appraisal Framework deals with the ways in which rhetoric, style, tone, grammar, etc. construct positive or negative evaluations (Munday 2012a, 2012b; Fattah 2020), whereas narrative theory focuses on the ideological mediation of

discourse by groups, individuals, and institutions differently positioned along the mainstream-resistant axis (Baker 2006a; Boéri 2008, 2010, 2014, 2015; Harding 2011, 2012). By adopting a dual framework to analyze journalistic news reporting discourse, we are seeking to achieve an analysis that is both granular and fluid, in other words, that equips us with the means to analyze verbal and non-verbal language, in and across texts. This is of utmost importance if we are to account for the dynamics of inter- and intra-lingual as well as inter-semiotic translation in the production of news.

Although it is precisely to enable such an enlarged scope of analysis that Stetting's (1989) term *transediting* has been drawn upon in translation research (see Schäffner 2012), most studies have restricted their focus to those texts (or excerpts of texts) identified as "translations" (in the traditional sense). Moreover, in their attempt to engage with translation, communication researchers have reinforced the separation between "translation proper" and other forms of textual transformation. The special issue of *Journalism* (Baumann, Gillespie, *et al.* 2011) is a case in point according to Valdeón (2015: 645) and Bielsa (2016: 201). This is at odds with the ubiquity, invisibility, and integration of translation in news production (Bielsa 2016), which demands a more open, interdisciplinary approach, capable of making sense of translation proper, of editing proper, and of all the shades of grey in-between, without artificially separating them.

### 1.2. Objectives and case study

Drawing on Narrative and Appraisal, this paper explores the manipulation of translation for propagandistic purposes in the ongoing Gulf crisis. This crisis, which has led to an economic blockade being imposed on Qatar since June 2017 by "the Quartet," namely Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Bahrain, and Egypt, is a particularly interesting case illustrating the weaponization of media and translation in political conflicts. As documented by Jones (2019), malicious social media bots have been used on Twitter in the Gulf during the outbreak of the crisis, with the effect of promoting fake news, amplifying the perception of grassroots Qatari opposition and international criticism through attribution to fake foreign sources. Interestingly, such an amplification of the impact and reach of the Quartet's views in and beyond national and regional channels can be achieved not only through "socio-technical" devices like those studied by Jones, but also through "rhetorical devices" such as translation.

In this paper, we focus on propagandistic translation in a traditional media outlet, *Al-Ittihad*, an Arabic language daily newspaper, owned and controlled by the United Arab Emirates. We focus on a particular news section dedicated to Qatar, launched on May 29, 2017. Called قطرالمخطوفة [Qatar the hijacked], then renamed قطر تنتحر [Qatar commits suicide] on June 6, 2017, it was finally discontinued on October 13, 2017. This set of data is particularly relevant to an Appraisal-Narrative study of the translational nature of news production because it deploys a wide range of devices in and across languages at different levels of the text and of the material medium. More importantly, *Al-Ittihad*'s daily section on Qatar draws on the "hard news report" (White and Thomson 2008: 3) genre, typical for covering conflict. It is a particularly interesting genre for studying manipulation given its putative "epistemic

status of being ‘objective,’ ‘neutral’ and ‘impartial’” (White and Thomson 2008: 3), and its subsequent confinement of overtly argumentative or subjective stances to “material attributed to external sources” (White and Thomson 2008: 14).

Fattah’s (2018: 157) appraisal study on some excerpts of this data has shown that the transediting of attribution (translation and editing of quoted foreign sources) functioned “as a form of editorialization by the back door,” that is, as a vehicle for expressing views, rather than reporting news. In this paper, we expand on this earlier study of the inter-lingual transformation of foreign language sources within the hard news reports, by combining Appraisal with Narrative and by extending the scope of analysis to the material medium as well as to the verbal and non-verbal translation it encompasses. As will be demonstrated, these multifold dynamics of translation all converge towards one common objective, namely demonizing Qatar. This comes as no surprise for a state-run news outlet in a Gulf State embroiled in an extreme, discursive and economically violent conflict. This is what makes this data a particularly appropriate testing-ground for a dual theoretical analysis. As we aim to demonstrate, combining Narrative Theory and Appraisal Framework reveals the workings of translational manipulation.

In the remainder of this paper, we provide a brief overview of Narrative Theory, followed by Appraisal Framework, before attempting to illustrate them by drawing on the data yielded from *Al-Ittihad*’s section on Qatar. We then move on to the analysis of an excerpt of the data from a joint narrative-appraisal perspective. Indeed, because of the challenge of combining two theoretical approaches within the limits of an academic paper, we have opted for merging both theory and data throughout, with the two theoretical sections using the data to illustrate the theories being expounded and with the joint analysis using the theories to shed light on the data. Our approach is qualitative and the samples selected for analysis considered representative of patterns applicable to the entire set of data.

It may seem rather partial for two scholars from Hamad Bin Khalifa University, based in Doha (Qatar), to decide to focus on the problematic media practices of a blockading country’s newspaper. However, the study presented here belongs to a long-term project that aims to encompass the transediting practices of media organizations across the different parties embroiled in the conflict. Furthermore, adopting a Narrative and Appraisal approach equips us to acknowledge that language, discourse, and translation are constructed versions and evaluations of the world around us and that, consequently, as researchers we do not stand outside of the data under analysis. Focusing on the powerful side of this conflict between unequal parties stems out of our *parti pris* against the blockade and against the instrumentalization of translation in the manufacture of fake news to escalate conflict. Although distorting transediting strategies may well appear in the media on both sides of the conflict, focusing on those stemming from one of the blockading countries will yield insight into how the illegitimate is legitimized in language and in translation, from the vantage point of two complementary approaches.

## 2. Narrative theory

### 2.1. Typology of narratives

Somers and Gibson (1994) outline four types of narrative: ontological, public, conceptual, and meta-narratives.

*Ontological narratives* (or *personal narratives*, Baker 2006b: 28) are narratives of the self that we tell ourselves and others and that construct our sense of identity, our relationship to others, the sense of our own life; they inform our behavior. *Public narratives* are stories elaborated by and circulated among formations larger than the individual, such as families, the media, religious groups, government agencies, networks, and other types of institutions and communities. Competing versions of identity, political life, and society are also mediated by *conceptual narratives*, defined as the concepts that are constructed by social researchers and that cut across time and space (Somers 1997: 85), ultimately constituting the history (or individual histories) of knowledge in the human sciences. Conceptual narratives are particularly important in lending legitimacy to public, as well as meta-narratives. *Meta-narratives* are the inescapable narratives “in which we are embedded as contemporary actors in history” (Somers and Gibson 1994: 61) and that, as highlighted in Lyotard’s original use of the term, grant legitimacy to the social order on the ground of the anticipated completion of an idea, however unrealized in the present (for example, a class-less society in Marxism, the end of Terror in the War on Terror, etc.).

This typology has been extensively used in socio-narrative analysis, particularly in translation studies, where it has been revisited in many ways. Only two are mentioned here: the addition of *professional narratives*, defined as the “stories that professionals elaborate for themselves and others about the nature and ethos of their activity” (Boéri 2008: 26), the enlargement of *conceptual narratives* beyond academia to encompass narratives from any discipline (Baker 2006b: 39) and to extend “to any actor’s theorizing of his/her social action so as to encompass not only knowledge generated from across disciplines but also grassroots knowledge” (Boéri 2010: 64).

These engagements with the typology demonstrate the fluidity and flexibility of socio-narrative theory and are “part of the narrative world we are constantly engaged in constructing for ourselves and others” (Baker 2010: 352). Drawing the boundaries of a narrative, or choosing a particular label for a type of narrative, is ultimately part of the analyst’s narrative (re)construction of the data.

Given the inter-connectedness of personal and shared narratives and the importance of the interaction between individuals and institutions in the production of news, two other additions to the typology are worth mentioning here: *narrative location* and *narrative position* (Boéri 2009: 60–61). *Narrative locations* refer to the dynamic intersection of various types of broad narratives converging with one’s personal narrative in a unique way and mediating one’s experience of the world and sense of identity. Our narrative location is subject to internal and continuous negotiation among the various narratives one considers subscribing to at any moment in time and is amenable to being repressed or taken up by the community(-ies) and institutions in which we are embedded. *Narrative position* refers to the collectively negotiated position of a community (organization, institution, state). They emerge out of a tension between diversity (through processes of deliberation, participation and inclusion) and uniformity (through processes of representation, alienation and



exclusion) and leaning towards the former or the latter is contingent upon the organizational model of the entity in question. These two notions are particularly useful to explore how media organizations position themselves with respect to a crisis.

For instance, *Al-Ittihad*'s section on Qatar brings together different types of narratives, which all converge towards demonizing Qatar: personal narratives of opponents to the Qatari regime, public narratives of Qatar as defecting GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) foreign policies, meta-narratives of the War on Terror, conceptual narratives of a clash of civilizations (originally between the West and the East and now transposed to "good" versus "bad" Arabs). In so doing, it enacts a journalistic professional narrative, underpinned by a tension between the claim of objectivity and neutrality of hard news reporting, on the one hand, and the actual positioning of *Al-Ittihad* among the blockading countries' state-controlled media outlets, on the other hand.

Analyzing how events in the unfolding crisis are turned into the news stories produced by *Al-Ittihad*'s journalists will allow us to uncover the narrative positioning of the outlet. It will hardly account, however, for narrative locations within *Al-Ittihad* as hard news reporting (by difference with editorials, for instance) does not allow for a study of overlap and variation among locations and positions.

## 2.2. Features of narrativity

These different narratives are all constructed through common mechanisms which Bruner (1991) sees as principles for organizing our human experience of the world, for assessing and contesting particular versions of reality. This section provides a brief overview<sup>1</sup> of the main features underpinning narrative construction and evaluation.

Narratives are constructed through a selection and weighting of events and people (*selective appropriation*), and by placing these in relation to each other in a sequential order (*temporality* or *diachronicity*) and within a plot that projects a specific outcome, in an impulse to moralize reality (*causal emplotment*) (see Boéri 2008: 26-27). For instance, the Qatar crisis broke out of a series of events whose versions vary according to the two parties in the conflict.

On May 23, 2017, the Qatar National News Agency posted a statement allegedly made by the Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, criticizing the renewed tensions with Iran and contextualizing Hezbollah, the Muslim Brotherhood, and Hamas as resistance movements. This was two days after the Riyadh summit where President Trump of the United States (historic ally of Saudi Arabia in the region) made explicit statements for the isolation of Iran and of any other group that the USA and GCC perceive as fueling terrorism in the region. Qatar immediately denied that such a statement was made, claiming that the Qatar National Agency website had been hacked and that the news spread by media outlets across the region was fake. Considering the alleged hack as an excuse, the Quartet accused Qatar of supporting Iran and terror organizations and of undermining GCC unity, and thus mobilized sanctions against Qatar.

While both parties would draw on a periodization of the crisis along these lines, their narratives differ on their patterns of selective appropriation and causal emplotment. The Quartet foregrounded the statement and the alleged hack as a provocation and a moral transgression necessitating economic sanctions and diplomatic isolation.



By contrast, Qatar dismissed the authenticity of the statement, investigated the cyberattack, and foregrounded the sanctions as a human rights violation to be redressed through legal action.

As shown above, each element (characters, settings, events) is unique to any given narrative (*particularity*): for instance, who are the friends and foes (the Quartet vs. Qatar), where does the conflict take place (in the Gulf), etc. Yet, every narrative is constructed along a conventionalized storyline (or master plot, *histoire* in narratological terms) which ensures the intelligibility of the narrative by streamlining a complex social reality into a normative one (*canonicity*).

Canonical scripts are abstract constructs which bring “old and simplistic formulas to bear on new and complex problems” (Bennett and Edelman 1985: 157). For instance, propaganda typically rests upon the identification/construction of a “pretext” (or proximate cause), which is more often than not fabricated, and whose outrageous nature stereotypes the “other” as the aggressor (see Boyd-Barrett 2016: 31; Jones 2019: 1390-1391).

These conventions, norms, and canons are open to contestation, as narratives can break from stock political plots (*breach*), opening up narrative possibilities, and can lead to innovative action (Bennett and Edelman 1985). Breach is what makes a narrative worth telling (Baker 2006a) and thus, it is not the preserve of resistant narrative in the same way that resistant narratives may have a repressive side (Hinchman and Hinchman 1997: 235). Thus, even though all storylines encompass both canonicity and breach, those circulated in media outlets operating under the control of hawkish states are more likely to lean towards canonicity.

Not only storylines but also genres can oscillate between *canonicity* and *breach*. Genres are conventionalized frameworks through which narratives are produced, processed, and received. *Genericness* is a device that mediates between the “what” and the “how” of a story, between what Bruner (1991: 12) refers to metaphorically as the “thought” and the “sentence.” For example, a hard news report is a genre whereby journalists are expected to cover events on the ground through an inverted pyramid structure and a “reporter voice” or a “correspondent voice” (White and Thomson 2008: 13). The semiotic significance of the generic architecture is utilized for endorsing or realizing a particular narrative, as we will illustrate in the next subsection.

The construction and apprehension of narrative meaning is also underpinned by a part/whole or micro/macro relationship (*relationality* or *hermeneutic composability*), meaning that “events themselves need to be constituted in the light of the overall narrative” (Bruner 1991: 8). There is an interdependence between the elements of the inner narrative and a higher level of social organization (Somers and Gibson 1994). For instance, the Emir’s statement, the hacking of the agency, the response by the Quartet, as seen above, are not only connected by a temporal relation in the inner narrative, but they are also granted a meaning in light of one’s narrative position (institutions) or location (individuals) on Qatar, namely as an evildoer fueling division in the gulf by siding with its enemies or as a victim of propaganda to legitimize violence (economic or otherwise).

### 2.3. Textual analysis tools

For this section, we draw on the concepts presented by Baker (2006b: 105-104). She puts forward a model of textual analysis for examining the ways in which translation

frames narratives, in other words how translation presents them under a certain light, construes them, renarrates them, evaluates them, and in so doing renarrates reality. Reframing is more specific than renarrating and this distinction runs parallel to the one between frame and narrative. Be they visual or lexical, frames constitute condensed versions of narratives that streamline our understanding of the story being framed. As argued by Baker (2008: 23), “the frame surrounds (or refers to) a narrative; at the same time, it undoubtedly plays an important role in defining the boundaries of the image (or narrative) and constrains our understanding or appreciation of it.” By reducing the narrative to a core outline, a sound bite or a striking image, the frame makes the narrative easier and faster to capture. In this light, reframing and renarrating rest upon this same condensation-expansion distinction but emphasize the mediation taking place through the phenomena of translation.

Baker outlines four strategies for reframing narratives in translation: relying on the new context of enunciation to emphasize a specific aspect of or to grant a new meaning to a particular text or image (*temporal and spatial framing*), selectively appropriating particular aspects of a narrative encoded in the source text or utterance, or of the larger narratives in which it is embedded (*framing through selective appropriation*), selecting a specific label to name a group, an individual, a place or an event (*framing by labeling*), and realigning participants in time and social-political space (*repositioning of participants*). Given the limits of this paper, and given that these strategies are meant to be “illustrative” rather than “exhaustive” (Baker 2006b: 112), we will not give a detailed description. Instead, we propose to expand on Baker’s illustration of the ways in which not only the features of narrativity but also the typology of narratives bring to bear on translational reframing.

One of the stories in our data, published on September 30, 2017, stands explicitly as a meta-statement, in the sense that it is all about what was reported about Qatar by another media outlet. The headline is in itself an attribution, as shown in the Arabic Transedited Text (TT) in example 1 below:

- 1) بسبب عدم رضاهم عن سياسته  
 “مجلة فرنسية: “تميم” أمر بسجن 20 شخصاً من «آل ثاني»  
 [Because of their dissatisfaction with his policy  
 A French magazine: “Tamim” has ordered the imprisonment of 20 people from “Al Thani”]  
 (Al Ittihad PPC 30 September 2017)<sup>2</sup>

Although there is no exact source provided – a departure from professional standards – the closest utterance in the French version is to be found in the lead of an article published by *Le Point* the day before and hereafter referred to as the *Le Point* story:

- 2) Selon un Français incarcéré à Doha, une vingtaine de membres de la famille Al-Thani auraient été jetés en prison. En cause, leur proximité avec Riyad.  
 [According to a French national incarcerated in Doha, around twenty members of the Al Thani family might have been thrown to jail. In question: their proximity with Riyadh.]  
 (Hamel 2017: para. 1)

In the transediting process from French into Arabic (in example 1), the attribution to the French prisoner (in example 2) is deleted and substituted by the reference to “مجلة فرنسية” [a French magazine], thus turning a personal narrative into a public

narrative. This, together with a shift in mood (from conditional perfect in French to an indicative simple past in Arabic (that is, from the irrealis to the realis), turns a personal eyewitness account of the incarceration of Qatari opponents into an objective fact. This “objective” fact is attributed to “Tamim,” who in the Arabic version personifies the agent of action; a reduction of the agent to the Emir as part of the demonization of the ruling family. In fact, any reference to the emir in the French article is constructed through attribution and in ways that portray him as a victim of pro-Saudi conservative Qataris, as condensed in the last section of the French article, under the subheading “Un émir en eaux troubles” [An emir in murky waters] and in its headline, quoted below in its original (example 3) and transedited version (3a):

- 3) la famille Al-Thani divisée face à l'Arabie saoudite  
[the Al-Thani family divided in front of Saudi Arabia]

(Hamel 2017: title)

- a) ونقلت المجلة الواسعة الانتشار في تحقيق نشرته أمس الجمعة تحت عنوان " أمير قطر أمر بالزج بأفراد من عائلته الحاكمة في السجن " عن جان بيار مارونغي...

[The widely circulated magazine reported in an investigation published on Friday under the headline “Emir of Qatar has ordered the throwing into prison of members of his ruling family” according to Jean-Pierre Marongiu...]

(Al Ittihad PPC 30 September 2017)

Note how the *Al-Ittihad* story misattributes *Le Point*’s headline (example 3). The only excerpt in the French article that seems to correspond to this quote is in the lead (see example 2 above), not in the headline. This “generic” misattribution, that is attributing a statement to a higher section of the hard news report, at the base of the “inverted pyramid,” grants the misquoted statement (and *Al-Ittihad*’s overall narrative on Qatar) further objectivity.

Thus, through modifying the type of narrative (from personal to public), the spatial inscription of the content in the hard news report architecture (from lead to headline), mood, and voice, the transeditor transforms an eyewitness account of the potential incarceration of Qatari opponents (embedded in a larger narrative of Qatar as divided before Saudi Arabia) into the main story, into an objective fact, giving credit to the demonization of the Emir and the victimization of his opponents.

This brief analysis shows that the features and typology of narrativity are devices whose examination sheds light on how transediting reframes stories on Qatar.

### 3. Appraisal Framework

The Appraisal Framework was developed in the mid-90s as an analytical model for examining the various mechanisms or devices expressing writers’ or speakers’ attitudes and the way they position themselves evaluatively with respect to potential views and positions (Iedema, Feez, *et al.* 1994; Martin and White 2005). The Appraisal Framework has emanated from research undertaken by a group of scholars led by J. R. Martin, working within the paradigm of systemic functional linguistics (SFL), over a period of almost 15 years. Thanks to its rich descriptive apparatus, the Appraisal Framework has found extensive application in exploring the evaluative and ideological workings of news reporting as “a value laden, ideologically determined discourse with a clear potential to influence the media audience’s

assumptions and beliefs about the way the world is and the way it ought to be” (White 2006: 37).

Situated within the interpersonal metafunction of language, the Appraisal Framework encompasses the various mechanisms or devices expressing writers’ or speakers’ attitudes and evaluative positioning. This approach to critical discourse analysis covers three semantic regions: *Attitude* (concerned with feelings), *Engagement* (concerned with the resources by which the authorial voice positions itself with respect to other voices and positions in the discourse) and *Graduation* (concerned with grading attitudes, that is adjusting the strength of feelings or the sharpness of boundaries between categories).

Attitude (or attitudinal assessment) is further divided into three semantic subtypes: *Affect* (concerned with emotions); *Judgement* (concerned with ethics and normative assessments of human behaviour), and *Appreciation*, (concerned with aesthetics and other systems of social valuation). All subtypes of evaluation could be positive or negative, explicit (inscribed) or implicit (invoked). Explicit attitudinal assessments (inscriptions) are stable regardless of their context (for example, *disgusting*, *honourable*, *ugly*), while implicit evaluations (also termed *invocations* or *attitudinal tokens*) are activated through contextually-dependent inferences and associations. They are further divided into two subtypes, which could be regarded as the two poles of a cline of implicitness ranging from the least implicit evaluative expressions (*provocations*) to the most implicit potentially evaluative content (*evocations*).

Provocations are evaluative formulations that are neither positive nor negative *per se*, yet they trigger a contextually-determined positive or negative response, for instance intensification and counter-expectation. There is an interesting example of intensification in the *Le Point* story (referred to earlier in the previous section) in the following excerpt (4a) dealing with the French prisoner who allegedly witnessed the incarceration of Qatari opponents:

- 4) ... est accusé de chèques sans provision. Un délit qu’il conteste.  
[... is accused of [issuing] bad cheques. An offence he denies.]

(Hamel 2017: para. 2)

- a) أثناء اعتقاله في الدوحة، بتهمة إصدار شيك من دون رصيد لم يرتكبها أبداً  
[... during his detention in Doha on a charge of issuing a bad cheque, which he had never committed.]

(Al Ittihad PPC 30 September 2017)

The use of the negative intensifier أبداً [never] in the embedded clause لم يرتكبها أبداً [he never committed] qualifies the offense of which the French national Jean-Pierre Marongiu was accused. This attitudinally significant addition by the transeditor, which has no equivalent in the attributed text (example 4, above), can be analyzed as a token of positive judgement (propriety) of Marongiu, implying that he was innocent of the accusation levelled against him by the Qatari authorities. Thus, أبداً [never] could be regarded as an evaluative token whose positive value is derivable from the context. The reader is thereby exhorted by the authorial voice to have a positive view of the French national and a negative one of his captors.

Evocations are not evaluative in their own right. They inferentially trigger a positive or negative reaction in the reader simply by virtue of selecting and focusing on factual material (White 2006: 40; White and Thomson 2008: 12). In transedited

news reports, purely factual material may also be omitted if it is perceived to have the potential to trigger a positive evaluation or to detract from an intended negative reaction. For example, the following sentence was conveniently omitted from the Arabic news report because it might run counter to or mitigate the negative proposition that politically motivated arrests only came in the wake of the Gulf crisis:

- 5) Jean-Pierre Marongiu, qui accepte d'être cité, précise que certains Al-Thani étaient déjà emprisonnés avant que l'Arabie saoudite, les Émirats arabes unis et Bahreïn rompent leurs relations diplomatiques avec le Qatar.  
[Jean-Pierre Marongiu, who accepts to be cited, points out that some Al Thani had already been jailed before Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrein severed their diplomatic ties with Qatar.]

(Hamel 2017: para. 5)

Another major distinction made in the Appraisal Framework, which is especially relevant to our present case study of hard news reports, is related to the source of evaluation, namely whether it is the author (authorial) or some quoted external source (attributed). As a characteristic feature of hard news reports, attribution is generally perceived by journalists to be "entirely compatible with authorial neutrality and objectivity" (White 2006: 58).

However, it is the journalistic author who decides whether and where to select a particular quote or quoted source for inclusion in the news report (Bednarek 2006; White 2012). Significantly, this act of selection, which involves the designation of the quoted sources, the mode of attribution of propositions and their evaluative content, signals the author's evaluative stance and ideological position. The above instance of selective omission of propositional content (example 5) demonstrates how such omissions can be evaluatively significant in transediting. Similarly, the quoted French magazine *Le Point* is laudably referred to in the Arabic transedited story as *المجلة الواسعة الانتشار* [the widely circulated magazine], which serves to position the reader in favour of accepting the veracity of the material attributed to it. For the same purpose, the detained French businessman quoted by *Le Point* is designated in the Arabic story as *رجل أعمال فرنسي ويرأس مجلس إدارة شركة فرنسية للإدارة والتكوين* [[who is] a French businessman and chairs the board of a French company for management and training].

The credibility of the French national is also enhanced by the fairly grand designation of his position in example 6a below, as opposed to the attributed French version:

- 6) ... fondateur de la société de formation en management Pro & Sys.  
[... founder of the Pro & Sys management training company]

(Hamel 2017: para. 2)

- a) *رجل أعمال فرنسي ويرأس مجلس إدارة شركة فرنسية للإدارة والتكوين*  
[... [who is] a French businessman and chairs the board of a French company for management and training]

(Al Ittihad PPC 30 September 2017)

The designation of the French businessman's position in the Arabic news report implies a large company. Arguably, the use of the verbal construction *يرأس مجلس إدارة* [chairs the board] rather than the more common nominal one *رئيس مجلس إدارة* [chairman of the board] seems to carry a greater "semiotic weight," further enhancing

the status of the captive Frenchman. Instead of using the more natural nominal group *رئيس مجلس إدارة شركة فرنسية* [chairman of the board of a French company] in coordination with *رجل أعمال* [a businessman], the transeditor opted for a whole clause *“ويرأس مجلس إدارة”* [and he chairs the board], which involves a dynamic, operative, material process rather than a static, relational one. We regard this transitivity shift as a token of attitudinal evocation, which, in juxtaposition with other more explicit attitudinal locutions, has the potential to invoke a positive view of the French businessman and his credibility.

Equally significant in our study are ideologically motivated shifts in the translation of attributed material. Relevant distinctions in relation to the source type include personalization, identification, specification, grouping, and status. The mode of attribution signals the author's stance with regard to the attributed material as well as the author's attempt to position the reader to favour or disfavour a particular position. According to White (2015),<sup>3</sup> quoting or referencing a proposition is an evaluatively significant act on the part of the author on two accounts: first, it indicates the perceived “relevance” of the quoted material; and second, it reveals the author's stance with respect to the attributed value position, that is whether it is *non-endorsing* (neutral/acknowledging), *endorsing* (supportive) or *dis-endorsing* (distancing).

A noticeable feature in the *Le Point* story is the blurring of attribution sources. For example, propositions attributed to the French prisoner in the French source report are attributed to the French newspaper itself in the Arabic transedited report to enhance their credibility (see example 1). In example 1, the explicitly evaluative headline kicker in the Arabic report *بسبب عدم رضاهم عن سياسته* [because of their dissatisfaction with his policy] is devoid of any attributive signal. The reader is left without any explicit clue as to whether the proposition in the headline kicker is to be attributed to some source, even though the following main headline is fronted by the putative source: *مجلة فرنسية: “آل ثاني”* [a French magazine]. However, the attributed proposition *“تميم” أمر بسجن 20 شخصاً من “آل ثاني”* [“Tamim” orders the imprisonment of 20 people from “Al Thani” [family]] is nowhere to be found in the original *Le Point* report, which is a pattern of selective disappropriation already alluded to in the Narrative Theory section. Note also the selective use of quotation marks in the headline to reinforce the allegation that it was the Emir himself who gave the imprisonment order and that those 20 people were all from the Al-Thani family. Both propositions were actually attributed to the French national (Pierre Marongiu) in the *Le Point* report.

Such evaluatively and ideologically motivated translation shifts, or indeed distortions, are patently manifest in the lead:

- 7) قالت مجلة لوبوان الفرنسية ان امير قطر تميم بن حمد أمر "شخصياً" بسجن نحو 20 من أفراد العائلة الحاكمة في البلاد عقاباً لهم على موافقهم الداعمة لدول المقاطعة وجهرهم بعدم رضاهم عن السياسة المتبعة من قبل الأمير وحكومته

[The French magazine *Le Point* said that the Emir of Qatar Tamim bin Hamad had “personally” ordered the imprisonment of about 20 members of the ruling family in the country in punishment for their stance which is supportive of the boycotting countries and their outspoken expression of dissatisfaction with the policy followed by the Emir and his government.]

(Al Ittihad PPC 30 September 2017)

Notably, the French national above is totally absent from the attributive scene, with the sole source of attribution now being the magazine itself. The validity of the



attributed proposition now falls squarely on the shoulders of the French magazine, which is later positively described as المجلة الواسعة الانتشار [the widely circulated magazine]. The Adjunct شخصياً [personally/himself] is directly quoted for further emphasis dispelling any doubt as to the Agency responsible for the imprisonment. The reasons for imprisonment are made unequivocally clear though falsely attributed to the French magazine, with negative tokens of judgement implying injustice and harshness on the part of the Qatari authorities (punishment being meted out to members of the ruling family for mere support of the boycotting countries and open expression of dissatisfaction with the Qatari government's policies).

The attitudinal position of the author of the *Al-Ittihad* report is also reflected in the endorsement of certain evaluatively loaded attributions that cast Qatar in a negative light. The reporting lexeme أكد [stress/emphasize] is used four times in attitudinally negative propositions in example 8a below:

- 8) Il a d'abord évoqué les conditions d'hygiène déplorables.

[He first mentioned the deplorable hygiene conditions.]

(Hamel 2017: para. 3)

- a) وأكد رجل الأعمال الفرنسي أن السجن يعاني من ظروف صحية متدهورة جداً  
[The French businessman stressed that the prison was suffering from extremely deteriorating hygienic conditions]

(Al Ittihad PPC 30 September 2017)

In this instance, the endorsing reporting verb أكد [stressed] is used in attribution to the French businessman as opposed to the French *non-endorsing* or *acknowledging* verb évoqué [mentioned] in the *Le Point* source report above (8).

Another interesting example clearly demonstrating the evaluative workings of transedited attributions in news reports is the following:

- 9) Le prisonnier français nous a communiqué les noms de quatre membres de la famille royale, nous précisant que les autres ne souhaitent pas être cités "par crainte de représailles"... Jean-Pierre Marongiu, qui accepte d'être cité, précise que certains Al-Thani étaient déjà emprisonnés avant que l'Arabie saoudite, les Émirats arabes unis et Bahreïn rompent leurs relations diplomatiques avec le Qatar. Toutefois, les arrestations se sont multipliées depuis le 5 juin 2017.

[The French prisoner communicated to us the names of four members of the royal family, pointing out that the others do not wish to be cited "for fear of retaliation"... Jean-Pierre Marongiu, who accepts to be cited, points out that some Al Thani had already been jailed before Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Bahrein severed their diplomatic ties with Qatar. Nevertheless, arrests have multiplied since the 5th of June 2017.]

(Hamel 2017: para. 5)

- a) بحسب المجلة التي تواصلت مع السجين الفرنسي عبر الهاتف فإن أربعة من أفراد العائلة المالكة كشفوا عن أسماءهم بينما فضل الآخرون عدم كشفها خوفاً على حياتهم من أعمال انتقامية، مؤكدة أن جميع أفراد العائلة الحاكمة المعتقلين أكدوا له أن الاعتقالات تضاعفت وارتفعت بشكل أكبر منذ يوم 5 يونيو الماضي بعد قرار دول المقاطعة تجريد علاقاتها مع الدوحة بسبب دعمها وتمويلها للإرهاب.

[According to the magazine, which communicated with the French prisoner over the phone, four members of the ruling family disclosed their names, while the others preferred not to disclose them in fear for their lives in case of retaliatory acts, stressing [the magazine] that all the detained members of the ruling



family stressed to him that detentions multiplied and increased to a larger extent since 5 June following the decision of the boycotting countries to freeze relations with Doha because of its support and finance of terrorism.]

(Al Ittihad PPC 30 September 2017)

To start with, note how the endorsing lexeme أكد [stress] in 9a above, is used twice in one clause in the Arabic report, first in attribution to *Le Point* and second in attribution to the detainees, with a double projection, that is schematically: the French magazine stressed that the detainees stressed that arrests had multiplied. Note also the redundant intensification in تضاعفت وارتفعت بشكل أكبر [multiplied and increased to a larger extent]. No evidence of such endorsement or intensification is to be found in the quoted French report (9). A negatively evaluative shift is noted in the addition [following the decision of the boycotting countries to freeze their relations with Doha due to its support and finance of terrorism]. This negative inscription of judgement (namely, support of terrorism), which is not in the quoted French report, is presented as a given fact within an integrated attribution creating an impression that that is the position of the French magazine.

Thus, the Appraisal Framework can be fruitfully recruited in analyzing evaluative or ideologically motivated translation shifts and determining translator positioning as reflected in lexico-grammatical choices made by the translator. A notable example of this line of research is Munday (2012a: 2), who employs, and tests, the validity of the Appraisal Framework as a model for investigating “the linguistic signs of translators’ intervention and subjective stance.” Similarly, using the Appraisal Framework, Fattah and Yahiaoui (2018) and Fattah (2020) analyze a pair of English and Arabic online hard news reports covering the same news story, and produced by the same news organization, with a view to uncovering the various overt and covert manifestations of their ideological and attitudinal potential.<sup>4</sup>

It would be beyond the remit of this paper to attempt to delineate the theoretical boundaries of the concept of ideology or provide a decisive account of its relationship with language.<sup>5</sup> Ideology is broadly conceived here as a perspective seeking to naturalize, whether consciously or unconsciously, some particular world views as opposed to others (Hart 2014; Munday 2012a; White 2009). In common with Halliday, we adopt a “total” view that sees ideology as something pervasive or ubiquitous, with language and ideology being “inextricably intertwined” (Lukin 2018: 16). Thus, all knowledge, including views and beliefs, is “constituted in semiotic systems, with language as the most central; and all such representations of knowledge are constructed from language in the first place” (Halliday and Matthiessen 1999: 3). If the relationship between language and culture is one of realization, as Halliday argues, then “it is inevitable that language will take on an ideological role” (Halliday 2003: 380). This conception of the relationship between language and ideology has implications for translation or transediting, which may be conceived of as an intra- or interlingual reconstrual of a news event, potentially involving evaluative or ideologically significant divergences or refractions, which manifest themselves in the lexicogrammatical choices made by the transeditor. The ideological disposition of language should be distinguished from the “specific ideologies that are realized and contested in individual acts of meaning” (Lukin 2018: 70). In other words, language has the potential “for the construction of competing ideologies” (Lukin 2018: 70).

Arguably, this view that “language is always ideological” or that “language cannot escape ideology,” as Lukin (2018: 16) puts it, fully resonates with the narrative concepts of *reframing* or *renarration*, discussed above. After all, seen from a Hallidayan perspective, the various types of narrative outlined above can profitably be modeled as *meaning*, that is as *linguistic constructs* construed in the lexicogrammar of a language (see Halliday and Matthiessen 1999: x). In other words, in Hallidayan SFL, narrative concepts, or any other concepts for that matter, are not simply pre-existing conceptual structures, which then find expression in language; rather, they are linguistic in origin (Halliday and Matthiessen 1999: 3).

#### 4. Analysis and discussion

In the remainder of this paper, we examine the *Al-Ittihad* section on Qatar from a dual theoretical perspective to account for the role of “translation” (in an all-embracing sense encompassing various editorial, reframing choices for various purposes) in the propaganda against Qatar. Given the limits of this paper, we provide a qualitative overview of the trends and patterns we have identified after a longitudinal skimming of the section. These trends and patterns are accounted for by adopting two complementary approaches: a top-down approach and a bottom-up approach, which oscillate between the macro-level of the outlet, section, and page layout, on the one hand, and the micro-level of the stories, headlines, kickers, leads, etc., on the other hand.

##### 4.1. Top-down approach

*Al-Ittihad*’s daily section dedicated to Qatar was launched on May 29, 2017, under the title قطرالمخطوفة [Qatar the hijacked]. This verbal frame for *Al-Ittihad*’s narrative on Qatar invites readers to identify the agent (particularization), by drawing on their personal narrative of the crisis that erupted on May 23, 2017, and on the pictures as well as headlines displayed across the page. See for instance the picture appearing at the center of pages 28-29 (in Figure 1, below).

In this opening day of the section, thus, Qatar is framed as hijacked by Islamist terrorists who are funded (Qatari rivals in quantity displayed) and who devastate the Arab world (explosion in an urban setting in the background).

This danger is part of a pattern of causal emplotment to keep Qatar’s neighbor at a distance. See for instance (in Figure 2, below), the top banner of the section where Qatar, “represented” by its flag, drifts away from the neighboring countries:

FIGURE 1

Al-Ittihad, 29 May 2017 (p. 28-29)



FIGURE 2

Banner of Al-Ittihad's section قطر المخطوفة [Qatar the hijacked]



From right to left: Al-Ittihad, قطر المخطوفة [Qatar the hijacked], followed by the picture and the publication date according to both the Islamic and Gregorian calendars.

On June 6, 2017, the section was renamed قطر تنحدر [Qatar commits suicide] and the top banner subsequently changed. After being caught in its wrongdoings (passive voice of قطر المخطوفة [Qatar the hijacked]), Qatar is now the agent of action, that is the one who commits suicide. Nevertheless, in metaphorical storylines of suicide, there are several protagonists, the explicit ones which undertake “suicidal” actions (here Qatar), but also the implicit ones, namely those who feel harmed by these actions and who will retaliate, consequently deeming them “suicidal.” Quite paradoxically then, Qatar is the explicit agent-victim (one would say that it shoots itself in the foot), but it is also the one to be put to death by an unnamed protagonist. Readers are thus given the outcome of the narrative (Qatar’s death) and are invited to interpret the “suicide” storyline by retracing the “suicidal” events leading to such a death (a kind of reverse causal emplotment, from outcome to cause rather than from cause to outcome). This script of self-destruction (evil will be overcome by evil) breaches from canonical storylines that good will overcome evil and it downplays the responsibility of the “good” (the Quartet) for Qatar’s fate. Such a fate may be assigned different

potential meanings ranging from economic ruination and political isolation to military occupation.

This process of connecting the storyline with actions that protagonists may take on the ground (a feature of particularity) is part of the unpacking of the condensed meaning of the frame قطر تنتحر [Qatar commits suicide], in other words of expanding the frame into a narrative. This hermeneutic process is contingent upon one's narrative location, at the intersection of the competing narratives of the crisis being circulated, at a time when the crisis was escalating at an unprecedented rate. Indeed, on June 7, 2017, the day after the section was renamed, the Quartet released a list of thirteen demands on Qatar and imposed a blockade on the country which is still ongoing at the time of writing this paper.

This hermeneutic process is also contingent upon the stories being reported in this renamed section and/or the explicit engagement of *Al-Ittihad* with its purpose.

Although *Al-Ittihad*'s narrative that Qatar is guilty and deserves its tragic fate is foregrounded here through the renaming of the section, this narrative can be traced back to June 2, 2017, in pictures such as the one below:

FIGURE 3

Illustration, *Al-Ittihad*, 2 June 2017 (p. 22)



The fuse is lit. Its consumption will surround Qatar, until reaching the stick of dynamite that will eventually lead to an explosion and Qatar's disappearance. Readers are urged to consider Qatar as the key protagonist lighting the fuse. Another key protagonist of the scene is the group of Islamist fighters, framing Qatar as the land of so-called terrorist organizations (the Muslim Brotherhood and pro-Iranian groups resonate with the allegedly hacked statement from the Emir), inciting division among Arab countries.

The main drawing on the front page of *Al-Ittihad*'s newspaper on June 6, 2017, is similar with the difference being that the textual material قطر تنتحر [Qatar commits suicide] now appears on top of the drawing as a red square stamp, rather than within a story:

FIGURE 4

Illustration, *Al-Ittihad*, 6 June 2017 (p. 1), central drawing

This time, the official map of Qatar is again covered by the Qatari flag. The burgundy contour does not allow the reader to distinguish between sea and land border, thus turning the Qatari peninsula into an island; a geographical isolation which is further heightened by a barbed wire fence signifying the boycott.

If we zoom out from this picture to the entire front page, we see that the Qatar crisis has been turned into the main headline of the day:

FIGURE 5

The cover of *Al-Ittihad*, 6 June 2017 (p. 1)

The Qatar crisis saturates the page with drawings, photographs, frames with bold red contours, kickers in a bold black font, headings in a bold red font, etc.; all

converging and accruing towards a demonization of Qatar. This pattern of narrative accrual is consistent with the number of pages dedicated to the Qatar crisis, in each section. Indeed, *قطرالمختوفة* [Qatar the hijacked] featured an average of two pages daily, whereas *قطر تنتحر* [Qatar commits suicide] doubled this number, with an average of 3 to 5 pages per day. This intensification is to be read, once again, against the backdrop of events on the ground being the object of increased mediatization. However, the two sections systematically feature the coverage of the crisis on each section's front page and refer readers to the full section, which is systematically positioned in the middle of the *Al-Ittihad* newspaper. This places the section at the heart of the news, both symbolically and physically, as this is the section that will appear under the eyes of readers when they unfold the printed newspaper.

#### 4.2. Bottom-up approach

Besides the macro-level design of the section on Qatar, there are also key evaluative, reframing devices at the micro-level of the hard news report to which we now turn.

Most of the transedited views and assertions explicitly attributed to external sources in the analyzed news reports involve inscribed or invoked negative attitudinal assessments of Qatar, which cannot necessarily be said of the original attributed material. Frequently, the attribution to a particular source is carefully managed in the process of transediting so that a negative assessment is selected to the exclusion of any potentially positive assessment of Qatar.

A stark example of this pattern of evaluatively charged manipulation of translated attributions is a news report revolving around an English statement made by the Qatari Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani at the European Parliament on September 2, 2017, where he defended his country's position in the Gulf crisis and accused the "blockading" countries of inciting violence and of calling for regime change in Qatar. The *Al-Ittihad* story starts with explicitly evaluative headlines:

10)

تزعّم أن موقفها ثابت تجاه مكافحة الإرهاب  
قطر تواصل الأكاذيب

[It claims it has an unwavering stance on fighting terrorism  
Qatar continues the lies]

(Al Ittihad PPC 2 September 2017)

The attribution pattern adopted by the authorial voice in the headline kicker is one of explicit distancing realized by means of the reporting verb *تزعّم* [claims], thereby casting doubt on the veracity of the attributed material and aligning the reader with this skeptical point of view. Thus, the selective appropriation of the Qatari FM's statements through spatial framing (distancing: *claims*) and temporal framing (*continues*) prefabricates a negative interpretive frame, priming the reader to construe the Qatari FM's stance against terrorism as mendacious.

Contrary to expectations in typical hard news reports, or the so-called "reporter voice," the main headline of the news report is a monoglossic statement involving an authorial inscription of negative propriety, which is lexicalized as *تواصل الأكاذيب* [continues the lies]. Thus, the transeditor declares unambiguously that the proposition attributed to Qatar is untruthful just like previous instances in the sense of 'yet



another lie.' What is presented as currently a newsworthy issue is the continuation of lying rather than the lying itself, which is construed as given or taken for granted.

The same authorial position is fully and forcefully expressed in the lead of the news report, which is introduced by the main theme in the headline, namely the author's categorical assertion that [Qatar continued the series of lies] (see 11, below), with the lexical item سلسلة [series] being added for good measure. Thus, the violent rhetoric of lies, involving an inscribed negative authorial judgement of Qatar, is foregrounded by repetition in the one-sentence lead of the news report as the most newsworthy element in the story, which occupies the main clause in the lead: [Qatar continued the series of lies]. The event being reported is construed as one episode in an ongoing series. Interestingly, the foregrounding of the inscribed negative authorial judgement or the demonizing interpretive frame is achieved by deploying the key architectural devices of the hard news report, for instance the kicker, the headline, and the lead. Foregrounded as the most newsworthy element in the story, the negative, monoglossic-inscribed judgement of Qatar occupies the main clause in the lead, which is followed by an elaborating projecting clause complex reinstating the transe-dited proposition attributed to the Qatari FM:

- 11) واصلت قطر سلسلة الأكاذيب، حيث قال وزير خارجيتها محمد بن عبد الرحمن، إن دول المقاطعة "هي من انتهك اتفاق الرياض"

[Qatar continued the series of lies for/since its Foreign Minister Mohammed bin Abdulrahman said that the boycotting countries "are the ones which violated the Riyadh agreement"]

(Al Ittihad PPC 2 September 2017)

FM's name is stripped of his title (Sheikh) and surname (Al Thani), a stark attitudinally significant departure from the newspaper's customary practice before the Gulf crisis. The subtle significance of this shift in designation, while sensitive to context and reading position, can only be brought out by comparison with the paper's own style prior to the crisis. It can thus be regarded as a token of delegitimization through the flouting of expectations.

This negative interpretive frame is sustained in this story (as well as others) through "labeling" enemies in ways that seek to delegitimize them (for example, Qatar rulers, be it the FM or the Emir). Indeed, the omission of the title and surname when referring to the FM (a pattern maintained throughout the section and constituting a conspicuous departure from customary practice in *Al-Ittihad*) delegitimizes the Qatari government and is very much in line with *Al-Ittihad*'s master-frame of قطرالمخطوفة [Qatar the hijacked].

More significantly, by mixing integrated (indirect) and inserted (direct) attribution, the authorial voice swapped the experiential designation, that is, shifting their labeling in the transedited version from *blockading* (the epithet actually used by the Qatari FM; see 12, below) to دول المقاطعة [boycotting countries] in Arabic (see 11, above) and to their actual designation (see 12a, below):

- 12) While the blockading countries who [sic] are accusing Qatar of this now, they are interfering in our internal affairs by the incitement they are carrying out to our people, calling for regime change or inciting the people for violence.

(Associated Press 2017)



- a) وإن "هذه الدول، السعودية والإمارات والبحرين ومصر، هي التي تتدخل في شؤون قطر الداخلية من خلال الدعوة إلى تغيير النظام ودعم حركات تنتهج العنف".

[... and that "it is those countries, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain and Egypt, that are interfering in Qatar's internal affairs by calling for regime change and support for movements pursuing violence."]

(Al Ittihad PPC 2 September 2017)

By this attributive sleight of hand, the reader could be misled into thinking that the designation or "label" preferred by Qatar's adversaries was actually chosen by the Qatari FM.

During the same press briefing, the Qatari FM dwelt on the humanitarian consequences of the "blockade" launched against Qatar, stressing his country's willingness to engage with the "blockading" countries, to comply with international law and to respect the sovereignty of every country. But those aspects, among others arousing sympathy for Qatar or casting it in a positive light, were omitted from the transedited attribution.

Similarly, the FM's narrative of international law and respect for sovereignty (which would ultimately position Qatar as the victim of injustices) is discarded as it would reciprocally turn its opponents into aggressors or persecutors.

## 5. Conclusion

The above discursive analysis of the hard news section of *Al-Ittihad's* coverage of the Gulf crisis reveals the extent to which attribution to foreign sources is part of a strategy to negatively reframe Qatar and of a larger endeavor to renarrate the crisis as the mobilization of good forces against evil.

News reporting, particularly attribution transediting, involves embedding personal and shared narratives into the different levels of the hard news section to construe *Al-Ittihad's* narrative position on Qatar and the crisis. At the micro-level of the stories, attributed observations, values and views are thus carefully selected and reworked to advance an explicit or implicit negative assessment of Qatar to the exclusion of any potentially positive tokens or even any negative assessment of the blockading countries. Twisted and distorted transediting of attributions at the micro-level of hard news stories goes hand in hand with the manifold framing strategies displayed at the larger level (the page layout, the design of the section, its central positioning within the physical newspaper): frequent use of explicitly graphic images (such as those of the snake, crow or pirate-ship) demonizing Qatar or its government. This multimodal prosody of negative evaluation and renarration permeates through the news report section as evidenced in our top-down and bottom-up approach to the data analysis.

In this context, in line with the extension of the notion of translation beyond interlingual translation, *transediting* (very much like attribution) takes place at different levels of the hard news section and even beyond the text as these news stories may then be reattributed elsewhere to individuals and institutions. The multiple rhetorical devices used in *Al-Ittihad's* section on Qatar, the concatenation of voices (individual, collective), of drawings, bracketing, etc. accrue not only on the physical artifact of the newspaper, but also from one day to the next, echoing and refracting other media reports. Such narrative accrual construes a taken-for-granted representation of Qatar as an unscrupulous evil schemer totally lacking in morality.

Interestingly though, such a narrative position on Qatar (like other conflicts in this region) is done “by proxy,” in the sense that the “hard news” section comes to function as disguised editorials with seemingly credible, though conveniently distorted and frequently magnified, attributions intended to align the reader with *Al-Ittihad*’s narrative positioning on Qatar. Behind a façade of detachment and neutrality typical of standard hard news reports, transediting is often evaluatively twisted or distorted to serve ideological ends. This editorialization through the back-door which imparts a semblance of “objectivity” in the reporting or rather masks its subjectivity, is employed as a propagandistic tool in the Gulf crisis. The masquerading of “views” as “news” participates in creating an illusion of “fluency” and “transparency” among readers, but rather than an effect of domestication, they contribute to accustoming readers to a rhetoric of violence against the “Other” and in so doing shape (rather than align with) their norms, expectations and assumptions about Qatar.

Indeed, news producers are piggybacking on external foreign “authoritative” sources to lead the reader into a sham universal position negatively disposed towards Qatar. Our avoidance of terms like “journalists” and “translators” is intentional here given the blatant disruption of professional narratives of both journalism and translation in this context. While we acknowledge that news production and translation are acts of (re)writing which (like narratives, frames, discourses, news reporting) always involves a certain form of manipulation, here our analysis of the data has exposed the workings of a willful demonization of the “Other.”

As we hope we have demonstrated, combining the Appraisal Framework and Narrative Theory has allowed us to uncover attitudinally significant shifts in the coverage of a conflict and its protagonists, deployed and streamlined in the text, in the hypertext, and beyond. Appraisal (and systemic functional linguistics) provides a robust linguistic model, mainly at the micro-level of the text, whereas Narrative enlarges the scope of analysis to language as manifested in and across texts at the macro-level, but also images, layout, and design.

Drawing on these two descriptive and critical apparatuses alerts us to the performativity of news translation (verbal or non-verbal) in the sense that it contributes to constructing the world and legitimizing certain actions. That is to say, news translation has real-life consequences for the parties involved in the conflict, for the media outlet which positions itself with respect to this conflict and for those individual agents involved in translational news production in terms of professional ethics.

Although the full potential of a dual Appraisal-Narrative approach still needs to be explored in further studies, this paper already highlights some interesting conceptual overlaps. For instance, *selective appropriation* (which source to select and how to select) overlaps with *source* and *mode of attribution*, *relationality* (granting positive or negative meaning to events in the light of a larger narrative, and of the socio-institutional context) overlaps with *attitudinal tokens*, whether *evocations* or *provocations*, which trigger positive or negative viewpoints via mechanisms of implication, inference and association. By operationalizing these narrativity features at the macro-level of the text and beyond, Narrative Theory expands the echo of Appraisal at these larger levels, whereas Appraisal, by operationalizing its notions at a much deeper micro-level (for example, propositional content) grants Narrative further granularity. These bottom-up and top-down data analyses lead us to consider evaluation as storied

and narratives as evaluative. Thanks to these reciprocal focuses, news translation, even when so integrated into the news production process that it is invisible to the naked eye, can be accounted for as a space of mediation, refraction, and mediatization of ideologies. These processes, in the context of violent political conflict, are ultimately manipulative and deserve thorough analysis, not only in cases of blatant propaganda, but also in cases of more subtle, but all the more necessary to uncover, manipulation of news translation.

#### NOTES

1. For a more detailed account, see Bruner (1991), Somers and Gibson (1994), and Baker (2006b: 50-104).
2. See Appendix for news references.
3. WHITE, Peter R. R. (Last updated: 4 July 2015): Appraisal: An Overview. Language of Evaluation. *The Appraisal Website*. Consulted on 27 June 2019, <<http://www.languageofevaluation.info/appraisal/appraisalguide/unframed/appraisal-overview.htm>>.
4. For a recent survey of translation studies drawing on the Appraisal Framework in different language pairs and genres, see Tajvidi and Arjani (2017).
5. For a lucid and insightful account of the relationship between language and ideology, see Lukin (2018) and references cited therein.

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## APPENDIX

### News references

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