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Ideological Positioning through Linguistic Choices: Critical Stylistic Analysis of Al Arabiya's Online News Framing the 2017 Gulf Crisis

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Abstract

The present study aims to conduct a critical stylistic analysis of Al Arabiya online news coverage of the 2017 Gulf crisis, focusing on the linguistic strategies used by news reporters to convey ideological positioning. The study utilizes Jeffries's critical stylistic framework (2010) and corpus methods to analyze a corpus compiled from Al Arabiya English covering the first month of the crisis. The research combines qualitative and quantitative methods to examine the ideological implications in the targeted media narrative, highlighting the use of naming and describing and equating and contrasting strategies. The analysis reveals that Al Arabiya has employed linguistic choices such as charged nouns, lexical ambiguity, complex noun phrases, and nominalization to reinforce Saudi Arabia's position, undermine Qatar's credibility, and construct a negative narrative about Qatar. The study also identifies the use of equating and contrasting strategies to stigmatize Qatar, exaggerate threats, and support the anti-Qatar stance in the dispute. The findings demonstrate how Al Arabiya strategically uses language resources and particular linguistic choices to shape readers' perceptions and align them with the Saudi Arabia's geopolitical objectives in the Gulf crisis.

Keywords: critical stylistics, corpus linguistics, media discourse, ideology, Gulf crisis

1. Introduction

In times of wars, conflicts and crises, the involved parties and countries are divided with antagonism. They utilize all possible means to win the field. In such a case, media represents one of the effective tools during such times, (Talbot, 2007:3; Wolfsfeld, 2022). Therefore, discourse of media which creates crises and conflicts is worth to be investigated from several perspectives specially the ideological one which has serious implications. Studies on that conducted by many prominent scholars in the field of CDA, all have shown that news and because of its nature may not always be a completely value-free reflection of facts. News making involves selecting, interpreting as well as presenting events to the recipients, thus creating reality in a way matching the underlying ideologies and agendas of the news makers and presenters, (Fairclough, 1995; Smith et al, 2001: 1400; Koosha & Shams, 2005: 108).

studies have also been carried out on major media outlets in the region such as Al Arabiya and

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Al Jazeera, with an emphasis on political and media arenas, as well as from perspectives of CDA. Scholars such as Kharbach (2020) and Abdulmajid (2019) have investigated the ideological construction of news framing and its political consequences in various media sources using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) methodologies. They concluded that the narrative of these large media outlets is ideologically biased and promotes the interests of their respective countries.

However, previous studies have overlooked the interaction between ideological positioning and lexico-stylistic strategies used by news writers in reporting the Gulf crisis 2017. To address this gap the present study aims to conduct a critical stylistic analysis of AL Arabiya online news, assisted by corpus linguistics techniques. The study argues that these stylistic choices are ideologically laden and manipulative, highlighting the need for investigation into media organizations' ability to be objective and their use of discourse to represent events based on their interests. In order to achieve the objectives, the analysis of the present study will revolve around the following questions:

1. How stylistic strategies of naming & describing are used to encode ideologies by AL Arabiya's online news writers in reporting the Gulf crisis 2017 crisis?
2. How stylistic strategies of equating & contrasting are used to encode ideologies by AL Arabiya's online news writers in reporting the Gulf crisis 2017 crisis?

2. The 2017 Gulf Crisis: An Over View

Arab Spring in 2010 led to major insecurity and disability in the region (Ehteshami & Mohammadi, 2017: 2; Masoud, 2015: 74). However, it is considered one of the most significant events in the Middle East, particularly for Arab countries (Masoud, 2015: 75; Bilgin, 2018: 133). It is in the words of Agdemir, (2016: 223) "the biggest transformation of the Middle East since decolonization". It has had serious and complex ramifications, including the emergence of ISIS, the rise of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, and civil wars in Syria, Libya, Iraq, and Yemen (Kose & Ulutas, 2017: 2; Asisian, 2018: 7; Ehteshami & Mohammadi, 2017). It has also led to an unstable environment and conflicts in the region (Kose & Ulutas, 2017: 2; Asisian, 2018: 7; Ehteshami & Mohammadi, 2017). It has also caused many security challenges especially for the Gulf countries particularly between Qatar and Saudi Arabia (Ehteshami & Mohammadi, 2017: 4; Bilgin, 2018: 113-14; Hayhel, 2013: 13). The diplomatic relations between Qatar and Saudi Arabia since that have been negatively and profoundly impacted by it (Ayman, 2017; Darwich; 2016). Since the diplomatic crisis 2017 between Saudi Arabia and Qatar is the main focus of the current study therefore, it is important to shed some light on the crisis.

In response to the Arab Spring, both Saudi Arabia and Qatar have taken different approaches, with each seeking to leverage the events of the Arab Spring to expand their influence and power in the region (Ayman, 2017; Khlebinkov, 2015). Both countries have supported various factions and players in the region, thereby exerting their power and influencing the ongoing struggles (Bilgin, 2018: 119). Khlebinkov (2015: 17-18) argues that both Saudi Arabia and Qatar are actively involved in the Arab Spring and are engaged in an ideological and geopolitical battle for dominance over the Sunni Islamic world. However, "they have different sociopolitical views about how to weather the inevitable transition that is taking place in the region while maintaining the status quo within their monarchies" (ibid: 18). They also see threats and reacting to them differently according to their interests as in the case of the two main actors in the region, Iran and Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. Riyadh sees Iran and Muslim Brotherhood

as the biggest threat to its security in the region, while Doha does not consider them as a security threat, they maintain good relations (Bilgin, 2018: 119).

The Gulf crisis that began on June 5th, 2017, marked a significant turning point in the rivalry between Qatar and Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia, along with the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, and Egypt, severed diplomatic ties with Qatar, cut off trade and transport relations, withdrew their nationals, and pulled out their investments (Rashid, 2019; Kinninmont, 2019; Asisian, 2018). This crisis is considered to be a major challenge for the Gulf States. The main dispute between Qatar and the Saudi-led bloc revolves around their differing ideological perceptions of regional threats (Khlebinkov, 2015; 18). Other factors include the cordial relations between Qatar and Iran and Muslim Brotherhood, and ALJazeera Media Network (Bilgin, 2018; Rashid, 2019; Ehteshami & Mohammadi, 2017; Kinninmont, 2019; Asisian, 2018).

In response to the situation, The Saudi-led bloc issued a list of 13 demands in June 2017, which Qatar was required to meet in order to resolve the ongoing crisis. These demands included severing ties with Iran, ceasing support for extremist Islamist groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood, ISIS, and Hezbollah, and officially recognizing them as terrorist organizations. Additionally, Qatar was asked to shut down the Al Jazeera media network (Kinninmont, 2019; Asisan, 2018; Khalifa, 2019).

3. Al Arabiya News

Research on media in the Arab world has found that it is generally controlled by governments, with media organizations serving as manipulative and mobilizing tools for authorities (Alhammori, 2013:21; Amin, 2011: 29). State-based media channels primarily focus on praising the accomplishments of the authorities and preventing the introduction or discussion of opposition opinions (Alhammori, 2013:21). Additionally, Arab mass media are associated with specific agendas and ideologies, influenced by regional conflicts (Fandy, 2007: 39).

The current study focuses on AL Arabiya media networks, the English online version, is considered to be among the influential media networks regionally and globally. This network has a history of expertise and provide online news services (AL-Rawi, 2017: 4; Mellor, 2011: 17; Kraidy, 2018: 24). Scholars have noted that the network is often perceived as political tool used to exert pressure on other regional countries (AL-Rawi, 2017; Mellor, 2011; Fandy, 2007; El-Nawawiy & Iskandar 2003).

Al-Arabiya is a Saudi-sponsored news agency based in Dubai Media City started broadcasting in 2003 (Elmasry, et al, 2013; Zayani & Ayish, 2006). Scholars and observers argue that its launch was to compete directly and as a reaction to Al-Jazeera's control of the media scene (Al-Rawi, 2017: 3; Johnson & Fahmy, 2010: 7; Al-Saggaf, 2006). This competence was attributed to Al-Jazeera's reporting of Saudi affairs in a very critical way presenting some controversial issues related to the Royal family of Saudi Arabia. This has further worsened the Qatar-Saudi relationships. As a result, the channel was banned in Saudi Arabia (Rashid & Nassir, 2019:2; Samuel-Azran, 2013).

The antagonism between Riyadh and Doha is not new, but it turned into media with passage of time. Previous researches have shown that the media battle and rivalry between AL Arabiya and AL Jazeera tends to be ideological reflecting the political point of view of their host states (Kharbach, 2020, 1; Rashid, 2019: 2). In this context Rashid (2019: 6) mentions that Saudi

affairs are the focus of AL Jazeera and is related to the diplomatic conflict between them. The Gulf crisis (2017) has brought forth Al-Arabiya and Al-Jazeera into a direct media clash in which each tries to advocate and defend the political point of view and agenda of the authority it represents (Abdulmajid, 2019: 2).

4. Critical Stylistics (CS)

In this section, the study introduces the theoretical framework of critical stylistic as a tool for analyzing Al Arabiya news articles. It also explores various concepts that are pertinent to the research and the tools to be used in the analysis

The emergence of CS is associated with publication of Jeffries's (2010) book on Critical Stylistics; "The Power of English". It is a systematic model of analysis which combines tools from stylistics, CDA, and CL. CS, however, "revives the CL heritage of giving primacy to the text in the investigation of ideology" (ALaghbar, et al 2015: 7). The model according Jeffries is "concerned with the stylistic choices and textual analysis which are made by text producer whether intentionally or not. Such a text conveys particular ideologies that influence the text recipient". The aim of using CS tools is to make the text recipient conscious of these ideologies, whether they alter their view or not" (Ahmed & Abbas, 2019: 89). CS places 'text' at the center of its activity which comprises all forms of language use (Jeffries, 2015: 157; 2010, 2014).

Textual meaning (CS) is a central concern in stylistics, focusing on how meaning is promoted through language to represent a version of reality with ideological consequences (Abeed, 2017: 43). According to Halliday, textual meaning is always encrypted through stylistic choices of linguistic elements in texts, which can be ideologically loaded and manipulative (Jeffries, 2010: 3). According to Jeffries CDA is more socio-political in nature, while CS is more linguistic and offers a detailed analytical toolkit to analyze texts Hussein (2018: 2). CS places the text at the center of linguistic analysis of ideological meaning in texts and separates textual meaning from producer and recipient meaning (Jeffries, 2016: 40). CS is interested in the first two phases of Fairclough's (1995) model of CDA, description and interpretation (Jeffries, 2010) However, Jeffries points out that CS analysis can also be contextualized, considering the power behind discourse arising from socio-political relationships in analyzing and interpreting texts. Overall, CS aims to uncover the encoded meaning of texts through a combination of stylistics and CDA.

4.1 Naming & Describing

This section offers an explanation to the critical stylistic analytical tool upon which the analysis of the present study is based on. This conceptual tool will be explained based on Jeffries (2007, 2010, 2015). Jeffries defines naming as a linguistic process where people, places, and things are identified in language, with the mainly adjectival ways in which these entities can be characterized and the ideological consequences of this (2010: 37). In other words, Text producers use language resources to name events and entities in an ideological way, with their ability to referencing by choosing certain ideological nominals among others can produce an ideological impact. This ability is one of the most influential choices any writer makes, as any stylistic choice is ideologically laden. The choice between 'protester' and 'rioter' can inform the recipient's attitude towards a referent and create an ideological effect (ibid: 2007: 63).

Jeffries (2007: 63) suggests that the strategy of naming and describing is not limited to choosing a specific noun among alternatives but can also be achieved through noun phrases, making it the basic unit of naming practices. The significance of this ideological approach, as proposed

by Jeffries, is in its capacity to encapsulate concepts or knowledge that are not primarily concerned with entities, but rather with the depiction of processes, events, or actions (2010: 19). The structure of a noun phrase encompasses the words that before and follow the head word or noun, such as pre-modifiers, post-modifiers, and adjectives. The impact is created by packaging up particular content which is ideological inside the nominal component. In this sense the recipient is "not encouraged by such structure to question the relationship between the parts of the structure" (ibid: 22). According to Fowler, (1991: 79) "the 'nominal' part of English clause less prone to dispute or questioning than other clausal elements, thereby ideologically 'packaging up' some information which would not offer the reader the attitude to contest the relationships that are named by the nominal element in the clause" (cited in Ononye, 2014: 46).

The process of nominalization, which involves using nouns for actions by deriving nouns from verbs, is another way in which ideological content is packaged up within the head noun itself (ibid: 2010: 25). This syntactic process, highlighted by CDA analysts such as Fowler and Fairclough, among others, as well as Jeffries, has significant ideological functions in texts (Richardson, 2007: 241). Nominalization can be used to omit tense, hide agents, or make them unknown to recipients, particularly when the focus is on other participants, such as victims of violent actions (AL Azzany, 2008: 35). According to Jeffries (2010: 22), using a noun instead of a verb makes the information presented less susceptible to debate or question, leading recipients to believe it is true. Furthermore, nominals can be easily modified in various ways.

4.2 Equating and Contrasting

It deals with the way texts create a version of the world presenting it in terms of the textual constructions of appositions and equivalence (Jeffries, 2010: 51). In other words, it "refers to how texts construct oppositional and equivalent meanings" (Coffey, 2013: 71), or "present different entities as either equivalent to each other or opposed to each other" (Evans, 2016: 53). This textual tool introduced by Jeffries built on the "possibility for words to be semantically similar or semantically opposed" (2010: 52). She further argues that texts are always have the ability to use language resources "to set up *new* synonymies and oppositions, sometimes between words that we would *never* relate to each other out of context, and sometimes between phrases or clauses, or even whole paragraphs" (ibid [original emphasis]).

There are particular linguistic realizations or "syntactic triggers" that can be used by texts producers or speakers to create textual opposition and equivalence relations in texts (ibid: 53). Table (1) summaries the equating and contrasting main types and their syntactic triggers or linguistic realizations as explained by Jeffries (2010).

Table 1: The Main Types of Equating and Contrasting.

Main Categories	Sub-categories	Linguistic realizations
Equivalence	Intensive relational equivalence	x is y, x seems y, x becomes y, x appears y, etc.
	Appositional equivalence	X, y, (z) etc.
	Metaphorical equivalence	X is y, the x of y; x is like y etc.
Opposition	Negated opposition	X not y; some x, no y; plenty of x, a lack of y etc.
	Transitional opposition	Turn x into y; x becomes y; from x to y etc.
	Comparative opposition	More x than y;
	Replacive opposition	X instead of y; x rather than y; x in preference to y etc.
	Concessive opposition	Despite x, y; x, yet y; x still, y etc.
	Explicit opposition	X by contrast with y; x as opposed to y etc.

Parallelism	He liked x. She liked y; your house is x, mine is y etc.
Contrastives	X, but y.

5. Corpus Construction and Methodology

The study incorporates both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The integration of corpus linguistic tools (CL) with the critical stylistics framework (CS) forms the basis of the study. The quantitative phase of the study utilizes techniques from CL, particularly keyword analysis, as a starting point. The results of the keyword analysis are then linked with the theoretical framework of critical stylistics in order to conduct qualitative analysis.

5.1 Corpus of the Study

For the present study, a corpus is compiled by the researcher to be representative of the language used by Al-Arabiya news platforms in covering the crisis. The study focuses on the online newspapers, the English version websites of Al-Arabiya as the main sources of the data. The study covers a period starts from 5th of June 2017 which is the first day of the breakout of the crisis to 5th of July 2017. This period represents the peak of the crisis in which the majority of the publications had been released at that time. Besides, the publications at this period reflect and reveal clearly the deep rift between the conflicted parties. Most important is that in this period the conflict is constructed almost through media discourse.

In order to collect the data, the researcher did extensive online research in the archives of Al Arabiya platform using general search keywords related directly to the crisis under investigation as part of criteria of selection they are; 'Gulf crisis 2017', 'Qatari crisis 2017', 'Saudi-Qatari diplomatic crisis'. The initial results were large number of articles that contain all these keyword references with various irrelevant issues and dates. The researcher did another research using this time another specific search terms taken from the initial resulted articles in order to get more relevant articles. The terms used are 'Saudi's list of demands', 'Blockade of Qatar', 'Qatar boycott(ing)', 'Boycott(ing) of Qatar'. The total number of the articles after the processes of collecting and sifting is 94 articles and the, each article saved in a separate text file. They represent all the articles that published and covered the event of the crisis from the first day of the eruption on 5th of June 2017 to 5th of July 2017 which is one month.

5.2 Keyword Analysis (KWs)

The study uses KWs technique as a starting point in order to conduct critical stylistic analysis (CS). This can be achieved by finding out frequent topics and themes in the corpus under study regarding the crisis. The AntConc software package is used by the study to generate the KWs list. The resulted keywords are grouped into themes based on their contextual usage in the corpus understudy. then applying the analytical tool of naming and describing. The initial generated keywords list for Al Arabiya-corpus is 243 positive words.

The generated list is long and cannot be handled, here comes the process of narrowing down keyword lists by eliminating unwanted items. This method, used by Jeffries & Walker (2018) and Abbed (2017), involves removing grammatical items such as conjunctions, determiners, modal verbs, pronouns, and prepositions. These items are not considered representative keywords for the purpose of the study, which is to analyze the aboutness of the corpora. The

number of items in the KWs lists for the Al Arabiya-corpus has been reduced from 243 to 50. The remaining key items are listed in tables 1:

Table 1: The Keywords in the Al Arabiya-Corpus.

AAE-corpus
Terrorism, terrorists, terror, extremism, extremists, Qaeda, armed, Houthi, fighters, Hezbollah, militias, groups, association, organizations, dozens, stop, supporting, financing, harboring, inciting, incite, incitement, conspire, conspired, conspiring, accuse conspiracies, stability, destabilize, chaos, harmful, interference, neighborliness, neighbors, neighborly, people, brother, father, brotherly, behavior demands, list, boycotting, boycott, severed, siege, ties, severing, media. Strife,

5.3 Keywords Thematic Grouping

The prefinal step in the process of lowering down the KWs lists is by grouping them into meaningful themes. This step has been used by many previous studies with same aim such as (Abbed, 2017; Kandil, 2009; Baker 2004). They grouped the extracted KWs into themes according to their context usage in the study corpora and those items which do not fall into any category are eliminated. Accordingly, generated keywords are grouped thematically based on their semantic associations and contextual usage. Concordance lines are used to verify the semantic associations and ensure that the keywords fit into the theme they are placed in.

A dominant theme is found to be highly recurrent in the coverage of the crisis by Al-Arabiya, they is “geopolitical dynamics and accusations of supporting terrorism”. Due to the short period covered by the study this theme was almost the focus of the narratives of Al Arabiya platform. The majority of the keywords both go under these four major themes and as shown in the tables blew:

Table 2: Grouping Keywords Under Theme of Al Arabiya-Corpus.

Category	AAE-corpus
Geopolitical dynamics and accusations of supporting terrorism	Terrorism, terrorist, terrorists, terror extremism, extremists, Qaeda, armed, Houthi, fighters, Hezbollah, militias, groups, dozens, stop, supporting, financing, harboring, inciting, incite, incitement, conspire, conspired, stability conspiring, conspiracies, chaos destabilize, interference demands, list, boycotting, boycott, severed, ties, siege, severing

Theme of Geopolitical Dynamics and Accusations of Supporting Terrorism

After extensive examination of the concordance lines of the key words of the corpus of Al Arabiya, this theme of supporting terrorism and its geopolitical dynamics and consequences has been very sensitive and dominating. This because the Gulf crisis of 2017 was not merely a localized dispute, but rather a manifestation of more intricate geopolitical dynamics intertwined with persistent rivalries and the strategic competition for power in the Middle East. The core argument of Al Arabiya platform focused on the Qatar's purported support of terrorism and terrorist entities in the region which is perceived by Saudi-led bloc as a serious source of threats

and instability in the entire region. As a result of being sponsored by Saudi Arabia, the platform presented unique narratives and perspectives on the way events of the crisis have been depicted and perceived by readers. Its reporting to far extent can be viewed as aligned with the framework of Saudi Arabia in particular and its allies in general.

Furthermore, Al Arabiya narratives have extensively presented Qatar as an outlier that diverges from normal standards and causes a serious danger to the harmony of the region. It also placed emphasis on policies and actions of Qatar and considering them as significant not only regionally but also globally because of the threat posed by terrorism and radical ideologies. This however has effectively broadened the scope of the issue, transforming it from being solely a concern for the Gulf region to becoming a matter of worldwide significance in terms of security.

6. Procedures of Data Analysis

As it has been mentioned earlier, the main aim of utilizing corpus analysis was to set up an entry point into the data. After establishing this point the process of analyzing the data will be moved from quantitative phase or keyword analysis to the qualitative analysis phase. Quantitative keyword analysis was the initial step which relied on the study collected corpus of Al Arabiya platform in generating the keywords list to determine the most dominated themes in the corpora. The keyword analysis revealed ideological issues that merit further examination in the following step and instantly linked the analysis to the textual data.

The next step switched to concordance analysis. The lists of keywords have been analyzed using concordance tool to identify linguistic trends and patterns throughout the specific corpus within their contextual usages. These features are tied to the analytical tool of naming and describing. This establishes a connection between textual forms and their practical interpretations, thereby exposing their underlying ideological implications.

The third step will be concerned with the processes of interpreting the ideological content. Here, the analytical functional tool of critical stylistics will be examined to reveal the underlying ideological content resided in the narratives of Al Arabiya platform. The analysis here moves from describing the texts to interpreting their ideological implications conceptually.

7. Findings and Discussion

Keywords and concordance analysis conducted have identified one major theme dominating the narratives of Al Arabiya within the stipulated period. The Tools of critical stylistics naming and describing and equating and contrasting outlined earlier will be applied to conduct in depth analysis to this emerged theme and the texts reflecting it.

Text 1

“Saudi Arabia, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain on Friday designated as terrorists dozens of people and groups with links to Qatar, after severing diplomatic relations with Qatar on Monday”.

Naming & Describing

The sentence uses lexical and syntactic choices to convey the ideological content of Saudi Arabia and its allies, presenting their names at the beginning to give a sense of legitimacy and authority, and to present them as unified in their stance against the entities they are acting against.

The term "terrorists" is not just a noun, but a label that holds significant power in discourse. Allied countries have used this term to not only describe designated groups and individuals, but also to categorize them within a universally recognized context of criminality and moral reprehensibility. This use of language can be seen as an attempt to exert power and shape reality by defining it. Ideologically, the use of the term "terrorists" by allied countries in this context grants legitimacy to their actions against these entities while also criminalizing them domestically and internationally. Moreover, labeling "dozens of people and groups with links to Qatar" as terrorists delegitimizes them and removes ethical and legal protections, making it difficult for readers to question their validity or designation.

The noun phrase of the second part of the sentence "dozens of people and groups with links to Qatar" is more complex, embedding an evaluation within a nominal structure. It portrays Qatar as associated with terrorism, but without providing specifics about the nature of these links. Such packaging is ideological making it harder for readers to question the relationships presented in the sentence. Furthermore, the choice of the nominals "dozens", "people", and "groups", apparently seem neutral or generic terms, however, they gain ideological significance when post-modified by the prepositional phrase "with links to Qatar". The unusual noun choice here is "dozens" when referring to the number of people and groups designated as terrorists. Instead of using a more precise number, the writer chooses to use the word "dozens" which imply a large but vague number to amplify the sense of urgency or danger without providing concrete evidence.

Other lexical words "people" and "groups" are broad and can refer to various entities, including organizations and individuals. Like "dozens", they are vague and imprecise, however, their vagueness is strategic, allowing for wide range of interpretations and applications. The prepositional phrase "with links to Qatar" which post-modifies "people" and "groups" implicates that any connection to Qatar, whether individuals or organizations, is considered a terrorist entity. This implication is a classic embodiment of the concept of "guilty by association", which is often used to serve ideological purposes.

Equating & Contrasting

Another layer of meaning and ideological implications can be unveiled through using the notions of equating and contrasting. However, this time is to depict an intricate geopolitical scenario and to influence perceptions of readers regarding the relations between Qatar on the one hand and the allied countries on the other.

In terms of contrasting strategy, the sentence presents clear explicit opposition between the involved countries mention at the beginning of the sentence and the entities "with links to Qatar". The opposition achieved by designating these entities as terrorists and the result is severing ties with Qatar. This establishes a clear polarity between "us" and "them", between the countries implementing this action and the entities targeted by this action. This opposition has further been boosted and underscored by employing another contrasting strategy, which is transitional opposition. This strategy often involves a shift or change from a state to another. The linguistic key here is the preposition "after", which is the syntactic trigger for this strategy. It adds to the context of the sentence a temporal element, indicating that there is a series of events that has resulted in the present situation. This invites the reader to reconsider not only what has happened but also why it has happened now.

The preposition "after" her also shows clearly the contrast in the nature of the relationship

before and after the severing ties with Qatar. This however, adds a layer of complexity to the narrative, underlining a shift from amicable and diplomatic relationships to one that is categorized by designation and open hostility. This dramatic and drastic change attracts reader's attention to the gravity of the situation and the significance of that shift, offering a satisfactory justification for any action against Qatar initiated by the allied countries.

Text 2

"In addition to terrorism and the general Political Islam's empty slogans, it is undeniable that dozens of dissidents, opponents, militiamen and influential religious men from all over the Arab world reside in Qatar".

Naming & Describing

At the lexical level, the writer's choice of nouns, such as "terrorism", "Political Islam", "dissidents", "opponents", and "militiamen", conveys different connotations and meanings. These nouns have the potential to package ideological content in a specific way. For instance, the term "terrorism" is often used to describe individuals or groups involved in violence or intimidation, and using it to describe individuals or groups associated with Qatar perpetuates negative stereotypes and reinforces a particular ideological viewpoint. Moreover, the choice of this word can significantly impact how readers perceive the entities being described.

The other nouns "dissidents", "opponents", and "militiamen" are all used to describe individuals or groups who are opposed to the government or existing power structures in Qatar. In other words, they give specific identifiers to the groups in question. Thus, "dissidents" and "opponents" imply resistance or opposition, possibly against the government or established order. "Militiamen" implies individuals involved in paramilitary activities, which can carry a negative connotation. Choosing these words influences the reader's perception and reinforcing a particular ideological view of Qatar as a society divided by conflict and dissent, rather than a stable and prosperous nation.

At the syntactic level, the sentence uses noun phrases to package up the ideological content in a specific way. The sentence uses the phrase "empty slogans" as a pre-modifier to evaluate the content of Political Islam. This evaluation is subjective and derogatory, as it suggests that the ideology of Political Islam is lacking in substance or value. The post-modifier "from all over the Arab world" is used to qualify the noun phrase "dissidents, opponents, militiamen, and influential religious men." This qualifier could be seen as objective, but it also used to package up ideological content by associating these individuals with a broader geographic region, rather than simply focusing on their local significance.

Equating & Contrasting

The phrase "terrorism and the general Political Islam's empty slogans" demonstrates intensive relational equivalence, where two elements are closely associated and equated as having similar qualities. The writer here links "terrorism" and "Political Islam's empty slogans" as negative and undesirable, creating a strong connotation between the two ideas to suggest they are equally problematic. The equivalence is a powerful strategy to emphasize the seriousness of the situation and the need for immediate action. This ideological association promotes the idea that issues with Political Islam are innate in ideology, and allows the text producer to paint a broad image of the issues and their impact on the region.

Comparative opposition has also been utilized which is a contrasting strategy that compares two things to create a sense of difference. In this sentence, the word "dozens" is used to compare the number of individuals in Qatar to the larger number in the Arab world, although it has been used in other sentences to imply a large but vague number to create a sense of urgency or danger. Here it creates a sense of scale and magnitude, emphasizing the small number compared to the rest of the Arab world. The writer also uses "dozens" to create precision and exactitude, adding credibility to the claim that there are dozens of dissidents, opponents, militiamen, and influential religious men in Qatar.

Text 3

"Among the extremist groups Saudi Arabia accused Qatar of supporting and harboring were the Muslim Brotherhood, ISIS and al-Qaeda, by means incitement through its media channels".

Naming & Describing

The adjective "extremist" functions as pre-modifier in "extremist groups", serving both as a descriptor and an evaluative word. This choice of language makes it difficult to contest the characterization of the groups as extremist, as it is packaged within the noun phrase. The adjective normally describes groups or people who have radical and strict attitudes and ideologies and to some extent actions which often linked to acts of terrorism or violence. Besides being evaluative, its usage has also placed the accused entities outside the norm and framed them as serious source of danger. This in turn would mirror the viewpoint of Saudi Arabiya being the accuser and at same time shapes readers' understanding of the crisis in certain way. The phrase "through its media channels" post-modifies "incitement" and delivers information to readers regarding the means of support. By referring to the means "media channels", the text incriminates Qatar of actively disseminating radical ideologies not just hosting extremist groups. This negative representation further undermines Qatar's reputation of a state sponsor of terrorism.

The sentence also utilizes gerunds "supporting" and "harboring" as nominalizations to attribute two separate actions to Qatar. This strategy focuses on the actions themselves not on Qatar as the agent. The narrative presented these actions as tangible and undisputable by imbedding them inside the nouns. This strategy suggests that these actions are ongoing activities and systematic and not related to individual incidents. The nominal "incitement" is another form of nominalization utilized to package the act of inciting into a single concept, creating an impression of objectivity and detachment from the action. This however further complicate readers' understanding and make it difficult to question this claimed incitement and if it really happened. As a result, all the actions will look like as established fact which may cause readers to accept them unquestioningly without examining the legitimacy of the allegations, reasons, and the evidence.

Equating & Contrasting

Another layer of meaning woven within the folds of the sentence is realized linguistically through using the strategy of equating and contrasting. In terms of equating the writer uses appositional equivalence with the syntactic trigger or linguistic realization of listing (X, y, z) as a way to present equivalent entities. This strategy is realized by using commas to separate and to list the three extremist groups "Muslim Brotherhood, ISIS, and al-Qaeda". This strategy involves equating these groups by presenting them as sharing the same nature, indicating that

they are all part of the extremist groups that Saudi Arabia accused Qatar of supporting and sheltering. It also stresses that any support given to these groups by Qatar will be an indication of its wider association with terrorism. The ideological significance of this form of equivalence lies in its emphasis on Qatar's support for various terrorist groups in the region, suggesting that this support is ongoing and shaping readers' perceptions of Qatar's stance on terrorism and its role in regional conflicts.

The target sentence has also exploited opposition with sub-category contrastive opposition as an effective strategy to create a narrative that concentrations on Qatar's alleged support for extremist groups. The use of the word "among" at the beginning of the sentence introduces a subtle contrastive element. It implies that there are other extremist groups that Saudi Arabia-led bloc accused Qatar of supporting, but the sentence only highlights three of them. This contrast between the mentioned and unmentioned groups creates a sense of uncertainty, making the reader wonder what other groups might be involved. The ideological effect is that it further emphasizes the extent of Qatar's alleged involvement with extremist groups.

Text 4

"Jaber confirmed that the decision to cut ties with Qatar is a clear message to the Qatari regime that it is time to correct the course and change the approach Doha has followed for many years to undermine regional security and stability in the region, by supporting extremism and terrorism."

Naming & Describing

The sentence utilizes various strategies to convey a specific ideological perspective, both in terms of naming and describing. The deliberate choice of certain words and the way actions and ideological content are presented in noun phrases allow the writer to communicate specific messages to readers. One of these ideological choices is the intentional use of the term "regime" in the noun phrase "Qatari regime" to describe the government of Qatar. According to online Collins Dictionary, the meaning of "regime" is that "If you refer to a government or system of running a country as a regime, you are critical of it because you think it is not democratic and uses unacceptable methods".

Additionally, using the term "regime" evokes notions of authoritarianism, autocracy, and totalitarian rule. It implies Qatar has an unelected, self-appointed government that maintains power through oppression, not a government elected through any kind of democratic process. The word "regime" also suggests illegitimacy - an unlawful seizure of power or illegal form of rule imposed on the populace without proper consent. By choosing "regime" instead of a more neutral term like "government" or "administration", the sentence frames the Qatari leadership in a negative light, suggesting that they are not legitimate or benevolent rulers.

Nominalization processes are strategically used in sentences to omit tense and hide agents, making the information less susceptible to debate or question. This makes the conveyed message more persuasive and effective. An example of this can be seen in the noun phrase "the decision to cut ties with Qatar," where the head noun "decision" shifts attention away from decision-makers and focuses on the action itself. The phrase's timeless nature without any specific time indication makes it more general and open for interpretation by readers.

The noun head "approach" is another significant form of nominalization that is derived from the verb "approach". Unlike the nominal "decision" discussed earlier, the focus of the nominalization process here is on the underlying concept of "approach" rather than the specific actions associated with it. This allows the writer to convey ideological content through the head noun. The nominal

"approach" is further described by the relative clause "Doha has followed for many years", which serves two purposes. Firstly, it situates the reader in the historical context of the situation being discussed. Secondly, it creates the perception that the approach of undermining regional security and stability is not a new one, and that Qatar has been pursuing it for a long time. The use of modifications with nominalization in this case helps the text producer present the approach as an established fact with a historical basis, making the message more persuasive.

Equating & Contrasting

The phrase "it is time to correct the course and change the approach Doha has followed for many years" entails two contrasting strategies working together. The first one is negated opposition, suggesting a rejection of Qatar's existing direction. The verb "correct" here implies that the present path is inaccurate or mistaken, creating a contrast with the present approach and the necessity for an adjusted or rectified approach. The other is transitional opposition in which the verb "change" suggests a departure from the present established approach, since it here signifies an alteration, this established an obvious contrast in the text.

Text 5

"The majority of the region's countries agree that the Qatari regime trespassed all limits, caused great destruction, threatened the region's entire security and aided terrorist groups and hostile countries like Iran".

Naming & Describing

The current sentence uses specific words and phrases to create a strong narrative and depict Qatar as a major aggressor in the region. The term "Qatari regime" is chosen instead of "government" or "administration" to convey a sense of authoritarianism and lack of legitimacy. However, the previous example provides a detailed explanation of the phrase and its implied connotations. The other choice that carries heavy ideological impact is the noun phrase "great destruction" to describe the Qatari's approach and actions in region. This choice goes beyond mere description and suggests that Qatar's actions are not only detrimental and aggressive, but also irreversible and cannot be repaired. The use of the noun "destruction" instead of "damage" highlights the writer's intention to emphasize the irreversibility of Qatar's actions. Besides, the adjective "great" pre-modifies the noun amplifies the severity of harm, indicating widespread destruction in a region. This amplification increases emotional response, making the situation more urgent. The choice of lexical words in diplomacy and political discourse shapes perceptions, garners support, and legitimizes actions.

The sentence also uses of complex noun phrases to convey ideological content. An example is the phrase "the region's entire security," which is designed to create a sense of urgency and severity. The phrase suggests that the actions of the Qatari regime pose a threat to every aspect of the region's security. The structure of the phrase leaves no room for questioning its content, as it presents the threat as an indisputable fact. This aligns with Jeffries' research, which shows that syntactic choices can be used to present ideologies in a way that discourages critical examination.

In the same context, the noun phrase "terrorist groups and hostile countries like Iran" is used by text producers to convey a strong ideological stance. The adjectives "terrorist" and "hostile" describe the groups and countries, specifically Iran, as threats to security and peace. By including "like Iran" at the end of the phrase, the writer suggests that there may be other countries in this category. This generalization portrays Iran as a typical example of a "hostile

country," reinforcing the ideological viewpoint. This ideological representation is neatly embedded inside the syntactic structure of the phrase, rendering it as almost factual as well as less susceptible to questioning by recipients.

Equating & Contrasting

These textual strategies employed by the text producer to help stigmatizing the Qatari regime while legitimizing the position hold by the majority of the region's countries, thus, the sentence creates polar opposites between the two entities. One of the most interesting forms of contrast linguistically realized is the explicit opposition between "the majority of the region's countries" and "the Qatari regime" as well as "hostile countries like Iran". The countries collective agreement is depicted as a unified act against Qatari regime's negative actions in the region and, by extension to Iran. This in turn creates a distinct opposition between these parties. The majority of countries are grouped on the "right" side, united and share similar views, whereas the minority represented by Qatar and "hostile countries like Iran" being characterized as deviant or problematic actors. This creates the ideological dichotomy of "us vs. them" or "good vs. bad".

One of the remarkable aspects of this explicit opposition in this sentence is its ability not only to differentiate between different actors but also to evaluate them, categorizing some as acceptable and others as unacceptable. This makes the opposition not just an observation but an ideological stance, deeply embedded in the sentence's structure, making it appear both natural and irrefutable.

A metaphorical equivalence is also used in the sentence when it states that the Qatari regime "trespassed all limits" and "threatened the region's entire security". The metaphorical equivalence here equates actions which differ in nature but similar in their purported harmful effect. In case of the word "trespassed", it often evokes a sense of violation of physical boundaries, which makes it a powerful metaphor for transgressing social, political, or moral norms. When the sentence states that the Qatari regime has "trespassed all limits", it not only accuses that regime of engaging in excessive and deliberate behavior but it also creates an image in reader's mind of regime that exceeded all reasonable bounds and norms.

The metaphorical equivalence is extended by the phrase "threatened the region's entire security" to connect the notion of "trespassing limits" with existential threats to security. The adjective "entire" is used in this context to underscores the comprehensive nature of the threat. This intensification of the thread creates a sense of urgency and danger. The ideological impact of this strategy is to connect different actions taken by the Qatari regime under the umbrella of metaphorical equivalence, subtly equating them and presenting them as a part of a larger pattern of disrespect for accepted norms and collective security.

8. Conclusion

Al Arabiya has strategically leveraged linguistic choices to align with Saudi Arabia's geopolitical objectives and diminish Qatar's. The platform has utilized particular loaded nouns to portray Qatar and its related entities negatively, justifying punitive measures from neighboring countries. This biased representation aimed at undermining Qatar's credibility and legitimacy and advancing anti-Qatar narratives. Al Arabiya has also utilized lexical ambiguity, vague quantifiers, and vague noun phrases to expand the range and to present Qatar's actions as instigating insecurity and instability in the region.

The research also found that Al Arabiya has employed complex noun phrases and

nominalization processes to strengthen the narrative against Qatar, making it challenging to question the underlying assumptions within them. The strategies of equating and contrasting have also been utilized to stigmatize Qatar, inflate threats, and legitimize the actions of the Saudi-led alliance, portraying Qatar as isolated and in conflict with a cohesive group of neighboring countries. Finally, the use of explicit opposition and metaphorical equivalence have further justified the measures taken against Qatar, framing the whole situation as a binary opposition between "us" and "them".

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