

**Technical vs Ideological Manipulation of MENA Political Narratives
via Subtitling**

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Abstract

MENA political conflicts have inculcated controversial narratives, giving rise to deep-seated political tensions and combat, locally and globally. Political media can accentuate or contest such narratives and, sometimes, even create new ones. Narratives dwell in their source text until they are relocated to the target text through the translation process, in which they can often be subject to multi-level manipulation in proportion to the ideological constraints of translators and their institutions. Subtitling, in particular, also has its own technical constraints that can require textual manipulation. This variation of constraints motivated the study to investigate whether manipulation is technically necessitated or ideologically driven. The ultimate purpose is to raise awareness of the commonly unrecognised role of ideology in manipulating the subtitling of political narratives under the pretext of technicality.

Focusing on the Arabic–English subtitling of MENA political narratives produced by Monitor Mideast, Palestinian Media Watch, and Middle East Media Research Institute, the investigation starts with the first phase, where a micro-analysis drawing on Gottlieb’s (1992) subtitling strategies differentiates between the subtitlers’ technical and ideological choices. The second phase of the investigation comprises of a macro-analysis (comprehensive framework) drawing on Baker’s (2006a) narrative account, which interprets the subtitlers’ ideological choices for the text in association with broader patterns of manipulation in the paratext and context.

The study discussed concrete examples where ideology—rather than a technicality—manifested in textual choices. Coherently woven, furthermore, the narrative distortion shown was not only limited to the text but also included the paratext and context. Besides paratextual verbal manipulation (e.g., using different titles), there were also higher-level patterns of non-verbal manipulation that included reconfiguring the original narrative features. These multi-level manipulation patterns have ultimately led to the source text narratives being reframed in the target text.

Declarations and Statements

1. I declare that the work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.
2. I state that the thesis is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated, and that other sources are acknowledged by in-text citation and footnotes giving explicit references and that a bibliography is appended.
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Table of Contents

Abstract	1
Declarations and Statements	2
Table of Contents	3
Dedication	6
Acknowledgements	7
List of Tables and Figures.....	8
Tables	8
Figures.....	10
List of Abbreviations	13
Introduction	14
Study Context.....	14
Study Observations and Problem.....	15
Study Objectives, Significance, and Contributions.....	18
Study Questions	21
Study Outline	21
Chapter One Media, Ideology and Translation.....	24
1.1 Introduction.....	24
1.2 Media and Translation/AVT	26
1.2.1 Media: Communication and Impact.....	26
1.2.2 Television and its Ideological Impact: Pedagogy and Demagogy	27
1.2.3 Media Productions: A Controversy of Objectivity and Biasedness.....	29
1.2.4 Media Studies and the Semiotics of Audiovisual Material.....	34
1.2.5 Media in Literary Translation and AVT Studies	36
1.3 Ideology and Manipulation/Recontextualisation Processes of Translation ..	41
1.3.1 Ideology, Translation/AVT and Political Media.....	41
1.3.2 Translation as Rewriting and Manipulation.....	44
1.3.3 Political Media and Recontextualisation Processes	48
1.3.4 Manipulation/Recontextualisation of Political Translation/AVT	50
1.4 Conclusion.....	60
Chapter Two Audiovisual Translation and Subtitling: A Foundational Discussion for Micro-Level Analysis	63
2.1 Introduction.....	63
2.2 Audiovisual Translation.....	64
2.2.1 AVT Semiotics and the Constraints of Ideology and Culture: Internal and External Dimensions	65
2.2.2 Types of AVT	67
2.3 Subtitling	68
2.3.1 Subtitling Typology and Definition	68
2.3.2 Interlingual Subtitling Constraints.....	70
2.3.3 Interlingual Subtitling Strategies (Technical vs Ideological).....	72
2.3.4 Technical Manipulation and Strategies.....	73
2.3.5 Ideological Manipulation and Strategies.....	79
2.4 Subtitling vs Dubbing: Preference Factors in the General Ambit	81

2.4.1 Literacy	83
2.4.2 Technicality	84
2.4.3 Economy	85
2.4.4 Traditionality	85
2.4.5 Authenticity	86
2.4.6 Ideology, Culture, and Politics	89
2.5 Preference Factors in English-Speaking Milieus: MEMRI as an Example ...	93
2.6 Conclusion	96
Chapter Three Narrative Theory: A Foundational Discussion for Macro-Level Analysis	99
3.1 Introduction	99
3.2 Narrative and Narrative Theory (Social vs Linguistic Approaches)	100
3.3 Narrative Functionality	105
3.4 The Significance of Narrative Theory and Analysis in Translation/AVT Research	109
3.5 Narrative Typology	123
3.5.1 Ontological Narrative	123
3.5.2 Public Narrative	125
3.5.3 Conceptual Narratives	128
3.5.4 Meta- (Master) Narrative	129
3.6 Features of Narrativity	132
3.6.1 Temporality	133
3.6.2 Relationality	133
3.6.3 Causal Emplotment	134
3.6.4 Selective Appropriation	137
3.7 Frame and (Re)framing Strategies in Translation/Subtitling	139
3.8 Conclusion	145
Chapter Four Data and Methodology	147
4.1 Introduction	147
4.2 Study Remit	148
4.3 MM, PMW, and MEMRI in Translation Studies	149
4.4 The Monitor Mideast (MM) Organisation	155
4.5 The Palestinian Media Watch (PMW) Organisation	157
4.5 The Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI) Organisation	161
4.6 Study Methodology	169
4.6.1 Selection Stages	170
4.6.2 Data Collection Limitations and Difficulties	171
4.7 Analysis Procedure	172
4.8 Conclusion	176
Chapter Five Micro-Analysis: Technical Manipulation vs Ideological Manipulation	178
5.1 Introduction	178
5.2 General Combined Corpus-Based Statistical Analysis (CBSA) and Strategy- Based Statistical Analysis (SBSA)	179
5.3 CBSAs and SBSAs of MM	185
5.3.1 Combined CBSA and SBSA of MM	185

5.3.2 CBSA and SBSA of MM's Speeches	189
5.3.3 CBSA and SBSA of MM's Interviews	199
5.3.4 CBSA and SBSA of MM Debates	210
5.4 CBSAs and SBSAs of PMW.....	226
5.4.1 Combined CBSA and SBSA of PMW.....	226
5.4.2 CBSA and SBSA of PMW's Speeches/Reports	230
5.4.2 CBSAs and SBSAs of PMW's Speeches/Reports and Interviews	240
5.4.3 CBSAs and SBSAs of PMW's Interviews.....	251
5.5 CBSAs and SBSAs of MEMRI.....	261
5.5.1 Combined CBSA and SBSA of MEMRI.....	261
5.5.2 CBSA and SBSA of MEMRI's Speeches.....	266
5.5.3 CBSA and SBSA of MEMRI's Interviews.....	275
5.5.4 CBSA and SBSA of MEMRI's Debates.....	285
5.6 Concluding Remarks.....	294
Chapter Six Macro-Analysis of Ideological Manipulation: Narrative Account	298
6.1 Introduction.....	298
6.1.1 MM's Narratives	300
6.1.2 PMW's Narratives.....	302
6.1.3 MEMRI's Narratives.....	304
6.2 Ideological Manipulation via (Re)framing Strategies.....	307
6.2.1 MM's Accentuated Narratives	307
6.2.2 PMW's Accentuated Narratives.....	346
6.2.3 MEMRI's Accentuated Narratives.....	376
6.3 Concluding Remarks.....	399
Conclusion	406
Chapter Five: Micro-Analysis Findings.....	408
Chapter Six: Macro-Analysis Findings.....	410
Study Contribution and Recommendations for Future Research and Translators	413

Dedication

For my father, my mother, and my devoted wife who supported me and helped me
make this work possible.

إلى أبي وأمي الغاليين وزوجتي المخلصة الذين كانوا بحق نعم المعين على إنجاز هذا العمل.

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List of Tables and Figures

Tables

Table 1	Al-Jazeera's Interpreting.....	53
Table 2	RT's Interpreting.....	54
Table 3	Vietnam Frame.....	111
Table 4	Extract 1: Secular Frame 1	113
Table 5	Extract 2: Secular Frame 2	114
Table 6	Extract 3: Original Narrative Frame.....	114
Table 7	MEMRI's Subtitling.....	151
Table 8	General Combined SBSA: 60 Video Clips, 1264 Frames.....	180
Table 9	Combined SBSA of MM: 20 Video Clips, 304 Frames.....	186
Table 10	MM's Video Clips.....	186
Table 11	SBSA of MM's Speeches: 1–8 Video Clips, 99 Frames.....	190
Table 12	Technical Manipulation of MM's Speeches	191
Table 13	Ideological Manipulation of MM's Speeches	195
Table 14	SBSA of MM's Interviews: 9–15 Video Clips, 104 Frames.....	201
Table 15	Technical Manipulation of MM's Interviews	202
Table 16	Ideological Manipulation of MM's Interviews	205
Table 17	SBSA of MM's Debates: 16–20 Video Clips, 101 Frames.....	211
Table 18	Technical Manipulation of MM's Debates	213
Table 19	Ideological Manipulation of MM's Debates	217
Table 20	Combined SBSA of PMW: 20 Video Clips, 229 Frames	226
Table 21	PMW's Video Clips	227
Table 22	SBSA of PMW's Speeches/Reports: 1–8 Video Clips, 85 Frames.....	231
Table 23	Technical Manipulation of PMW's Speeches/Reports	232
Table 24	Ideological Manipulation of PMW's Speeches/Reports	235
Table 25	SBSA of PMW's Speeches/Reports and Interviews: 9–11 Video Clips, 46 Frames	241
Table 26	Technical Manipulation of PMW's Speeches/Reports and Interviews.....	242
Table 27	Ideological Manipulation of PMW's Speeches/Reports and Interviews.....	246
Table 28	SBSA of PMW's Interviews: 12–20 Video Clips, 98 Frames	252
Table 29	Technical Manipulation of PMW's Interviews	253
Table 30	Ideological Manipulation of PMW's Interviews.....	256
Table 31	PMW's Subtitling of PA TV's Headline.....	259
Table 32	Combined SBSA of MEMRI: 20 Video Clips, 731 Frames	261
Table 33	MEMRI's Video Clips	262
Table 34	SBSA of MEMRI's Speeches: 1–4 Video Clips, 238 Frames	267
Table 35	Technical Manipulation of MEMRI's Speeches	268
Table 36	Ideological Manipulation of MEMRI's Speeches.....	271
Table 37	SBSA of MEMRI's Interviews: 5–17 Video Clips, 344 Frames	277
Table 38	Technical Manipulation of MEMRI's Interviews	277
Table 39	Ideological manipulation of MEMRI's Interviews	281
Table 40	SBSA of MEMRI's Debates: 18–20 Video Clips, 149 Frames	286
Table 41	Technical Manipulation of MEMRI's Debates	287
Table 42	Ideological Manipulation of MEMRI's Debates.....	290
Table 43	Video Clip 1: Non-Verbal and Verbal Manipulation in Paratext.....	310
Table 44	Video Clip 1: Verbal Manipulation in Text	311
Table 45	Recontextualisation/Reframing Outcomes.....	313

Table 46	Video Clip 18: Non-Verbal and Verbal Manipulation in Paratext.....	314
Table 47	Video Clip 18: Verbal Manipulation in Text	315
Table 48	Recontextualisation/Reframing Outcomes.....	320
Table 49	Video Clip 13: Non-Verbal and Verbal Manipulation in Paratext.....	321
Table 50	Video Clip 13: Verbal Manipulation in Text	322
Table 51	Recontextualisation/Reframing Outcomes.....	324
Table 52	Video Clip 11: Non-Verbal and Verbal Manipulation in Paratext.....	325
Table 53	Video Clip 11: Verbal Manipulation in Text	326
Table 54	Recontextualisation/Reframing Outcomes.....	329
Table 55	Video Clip 16: Non-Verbal and Verbal Manipulation in Paratext.....	330
Table 56	Video Clip 16: Verbal Manipulation in Text	331
Table 57	Recontextualisation/Reframing Outcomes.....	334
Table 58	Video Clip 19: Non-Verbal and Verbal Manipulation in Paratext.....	336
Table 59	Video Clip 19: Verbal Manipulation in Text	337
Table 60	Recontextualisation/Reframing Outcomes.....	342
Table 61	Video Clip 9: Non-Verbal and Verbal Manipulation in Paratext.....	343
Table 62	Recontextualisation/Reframing Outcomes.....	344
Table 63	Video Clip 14: Non-Verbal and Verbal Manipulation in Paratext.....	344
Table 64	Recontextualisation/Reframing Outcomes.....	345
Table 65	Video Clip 4: Non-Verbal and Verbal Manipulation in Paratext.....	347
Table 66	Video Clip 4: Verbal Manipulation in Text	349
Table 67	Recontextualisation/Reframing Outcomes.....	352
Table 68	Video Clip 8: Non-Verbal and Verbal Manipulation in Paratext.....	353
Table 69	Video Clip 8: Verbal Manipulation in Text	354
Table 70	Recontextualisation/Reframing Outcomes.....	356
Table 71	Video Clip 20: Non-Verbal and Verbal Manipulation in Paratext.....	357
Table 72	Video Clip 20: Verbal Manipulation in Text	358
Table 73	Recontextualisation/Reframing Outcomes.....	361
Table 74	Video Clip 19: Non-Verbal and Verbal Manipulation in Paratext.....	363
Table 75	Video Clip 19: Verbal Manipulation in Text	364
Table 76	Recontextualisation/Reframing Outcomes.....	367
Table 77	Video Clip 14: Non-Verbal and Verbal Manipulation in Paratext.....	368
Table 78	Video Clip 14: Verbal Manipulation in Text	372
Table 79	Recontextualisation/Reframing Outcomes.....	376
Table 80	Video Clip 1: Non-Verbal and Verbal Manipulation in Paratext.....	377
Table 81	Video Clip 1: Verbal Manipulation in Text	378
Table 82	Recontextualisation/Reframing Outcomes.....	382
Table 83	Video Clip 2: Non-Verbal and Verbal Manipulation in Paratext.....	383
Table 84	Video Clip: Verbal Manipulation in Text	387
Table 85	Recontextualisation/Reframing Outcomes.....	388
Table 86	Video Clip 10: Non-Verbal and Verbal Manipulation in Paratext.....	388
Table 87	Video Clip 10: Verbal Manipulation in Text	390
Table 88	Recontextualisation/Reframing Outcomes.....	392
Table 89	Video Clip 17: Non-Verbal and Verbal Manipulation in Paratext.....	393
Table 90	Video Clip 17: Verbal Manipulation in Text	394
Table 91	Recontextualisation/Reframing Outcomes.....	395
Table 92	Video Clip 20: Non-Verbal and Verbal Manipulation in Paratext.....	396
Table 93	Video Clip 20: Verbal Manipulation in Text	397
Table 94	Recontextualisation/Reframing Outcomes.....	398
Table 95	Viewers' Reactions to MM's 20 Video Clips	402

Table 96 Viewers' Reactions to PMW's 20 Video Clips.....	403
Table 97 Viewers' Reactions to PMW's 20 Video Clips.....	403

Figures

Figure 1 96	
Figure 2 Model of Analysis	176
Figure 3 General Combined CBSA.....	179
Figure 4 General Detailed CBSA.....	183
Figure 5 Combined CBSA of MM.....	185
Figure 6 CBSA of MM's Speeches.....	189
Figure 7 Detailed CBSA of MM's Speeches	190
Figure 8 Screenshot 1.....	192
Figure 9 Screenshot 2.....	194
Figure 10 Screenshot 3.....	195
Figure 11 Screenshot 4.....	197
Figure 12 Screenshot 5.....	198
Figure 13 Screenshot 6.....	199
Figure 14 CBSA of MM's Interviews.....	200
Figure 15 Detailed CBSA of MM's Interviews	200
Figure 16 Screenshot 7.....	203
Figure 17 Screenshot 8.....	204
Figure 18 Screenshot 9.....	205
Figure 19 Screenshot 10.....	207
Figure 20 Screenshot 11.....	208
Figure 21 Screenshot 12.....	209
Figure 22 CBSA of MM Debates.....	210
Figure 23 Detailed CBSA of MM Debates	212
Figure 24 Screenshot 13.....	215
Figure 25 Screenshot 14.....	216
Figure 26 Screenshot 15.....	217
Figure 27 Screenshot 16.....	220
Figure 28 Screenshot 17.....	221
Figure 29 Screenshot 18.....	222
Figure 30 Screenshot 19.....	223
Figure 31 Screenshot 20.....	225
Figure 32 Combined CBSA of PMW	226
Figure 33 CBSA of PMW's Speeches/Reports.....	230
Figure 34 Detailed CBSA of PMW's Speeches/Reports	230
Figure 35 Screenshot 21.....	233
Figure 36 Screenshot 22.....	234
Figure 37 Screenshot 23.....	235
Figure 38 Screenshot 24.....	237
Figure 39 Screenshot 25.....	238
Figure 40 Screenshot 26.....	239
Figure 41 CBSA of PMW's Speeches/Reports and Interviews	240
Figure 42 Detailed CBSA of PMW's Speeches/Reports and Interviews.....	240
Figure 43 Screenshot 27.....	243
Figure 44 Screenshot 28.....	244

Figure 45	Screenshot 29.....	245
Figure 46	Screenshot 30.....	246
Figure 47	Screenshot 31.....	248
Figure 48	Screenshot: 32.....	249
Figure 49	Screenshot 33.....	250
Figure 50	CBSA of PMW’s Interviews	251
Figure 51	Detailed CBSA of PMW’s Interviews.....	251
Figure 52	Screenshot 34.....	254
Figure 53	Screenshot 35.....	255
Figure 54	Screenshot 36.....	256
Figure 55	Screenshot 37.....	258
Figure 56	Screenshot 38.....	259
Figure 57	Screenshot 39.....	260
Figure 58	Combined CBSA of MEMRI	261
Figure 59	CBSA of MEMRI’s Speeches	266
Figure 60	Detailed CBSA of MEMRI’s Speeches.....	266
Figure 61	Screenshot 40.....	269
Figure 62	Screenshot 41.....	270
Figure 63	Screenshot 42.....	271
Figure 64	Screenshot 43.....	273
Figure 65	Screenshot 44.....	274
Figure 66	Screenshot 45.....	275
Figure 67	CBSA of MEMRI’s Interviews	275
Figure 68	Detailed CBSA of MEMRI’s Interviews.....	276
Figure 69	Screenshot 46.....	278
Figure 70	Screenshot 47.....	279
Figure 71	Screenshot 48.....	281
Figure 72	283	
Figure 73	Screenshot 50.....	284
Figure 74	Screenshot 51.....	285
Figure 75	CBSA of MEMRI’s Debates	285
Figure 76	Detailed CBSA of MEMRI’s Debates.....	286
Figure 77	Screenshot 52.....	288
Figure 78	289	
Figure 79	Screenshot 54.....	290
Figure 80	Screenshot 55.....	292
Figure 81	Screenshot 56.....	293
Figure 82	Screenshot 57.....	294
Figure 83	Agency to Foreigners & High Treason of the Palestinian Cause	301
Figure 84	Saudi Terrorism & Agency to Israel.....	302
Figure 85	PA’s Support of Terrorists.....	303
Figure 86	Palestinian Terrorists’ Exploitation of Children.....	304
Figure 87	Terror of Arab and Islamic Regimes	305
Figure 88	Arabs’ Inclination towards Dictatorships and Totalitarianism	306
Figure 89	The First Part of MM’s Video Clip 1	308
Figure 90	The Second Part of MM’s Video Clip 1	308
Figure 91	MM’s Video Clip 1: Frame 4	312
Figure 92	MM’s Video Clip 18: Frame 2	317
Figure 93	MM’s Video Clip 18: Frame 4	319
Figure 94	MM’s Video Clip: Frame 5	320

Figure 95	MM's Video Clip 13: Frame 2	323
Figure 96	MM's Video Clip 11: Frame 6	328
Figure 97	MM's Video Clip 11: Frame 32	329
Figure 98	MM's Video Clip 16: Frame 1	332
Figure 99	MM's Video Clip 16: Frame 13	333
Figure 100	The First Part of MM's Video Clip 19	335
Figure 101	335	
Figure 102	MM's Video Clip 19: Frame 18	340
Figure 103	MM's Video Clip 19: Frame 19	340
Figure 104	MM's Video Clip 19: Frame 19	341
Figure 105	PMW's Video Clip 4: Frame 11	350
Figure 106	PMW's Video Clip 4: Frame 19	351
Figure 107	PMW's Video Clip 4: Frame 28	352
Figure 108	PMW's Video Clip 8: Frame 5	355
Figure 109	PMW's Video Clip 20: Frame 3	359
Figure 110	PMW's Video Clip 20: Frame 20	359
Figure 111	PMW's Video Clip 20: Frame 23	360
Figure 112	PMW's Video Clip 20: Frame 33	360
Figure 113	PMW's Video Clip 20: Frame 28	361
Figure 114	PMW's Video Clip 19: Frame 1	366
Figure 115	PMW's Video Clip 19: Frame 2	367
Figure 116	PMW's Video Clip 6	371
Figure 117	PMW's Video Clip 6	371
Figure 118	PMW's Video Clip 14: Frame 2	373
Figure 119	PMW's Video Clip 14: Frame 6	374
Figure 120	PMW's Video Clip 14: Frame 7	375
Figure 121	PMW's Video Clip 14: Frame 9	375
Figure 122	MEMRI's Video Clip 1: Frame 56	379
Figure 123	MEMRI's Video Clip 1: Frame 69	380
Figure 124	MEMRI's Video Clip 1: Frame 83	381
Figure 125	MEMRI's Video Clip 1: Frame 145	381
Figure 126	MEMRI's Video Clip 2: Frame 2	385
Figure 127	MEMRI's Video Clip 2: Frame 7	385
Figure 128	MEMRI's Video Clip 2: Frame 6	386
Figure 129	MEMRI's Video Clip 2: Frame 10	387
Figure 130	MEMRI's Video Clip 10: Frame 1	391
Figure 131	MEMRI's Video Clip 10: Frame 2	392
Figure 132	MEMRI's Video Clip 17: Frame 25	395
Figure 133	MEMRI's Video Clip 20: Frame 27	398
Figure 134	Percentages of Viewers' Likes and Dislikes	403
Figure 135	YouTube Message of Termination	405

List of Abbreviations

AVT: audiovisual translation

ST: source text

TT: target text

TS: translation studies

CBSA: corpus-based statistical analysis

SBSA: strategy-based statistical analysis

LT: literal translation

MM: Monitor Mideast

PMW: Palestinian Media Watch

MEMRI: Middle East Media Research Institute

MENA: Middle East and North Africa

ISIS: Islamic State in Iraq and Sham

IS: Islamic State

PA: Palestinian Authority

Introduction

Study Context

The current political conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) are unceasing crises and an arena in which the ideologies and economic interests of the countries of these regions and their warring parties, on the one hand, and foreign parties on the other, compete. During the recent political conflicts between the West and MENA countries, the concepts of extremism, terrorism, and war on terror have received exceptional attention in global media. The political conflict over such controversial issues has constructed and inculcated public and meta-narratives, thus giving rise to deep-seated political tensions and combat, even amongst the MENA countries themselves. Amid this fierce competition, political media of all types and affiliations have been active in constructing their propaganda and adopting certain positions through which they support some parties and oppose others. As a result of this often-biased work, the media accentuate and contest existing narratives and sometimes create a range of new ones when publishing and commenting on daily news and events.

These narratives remain trapped in the language of the source text (ST) until the decisive translation profession comes to release it and transfer it across linguistic and cultural boundaries into the target text (TT) language. Nevertheless, “as with any narrative, there is no way that the story can be told from a privileged position of absolute neutrality. The narrator cannot stand outside the narrative” (Baker, 2006a, p. 129), and neither can the translator. In the process of translating, the narratives of the ST are often subject to attempts of manipulation and distortion in proportion to the ideologies and affiliations of translators and their institutions. Hence, the political translation, in particular, is seen as a sensitive activity almost shrouded in ambiguity and accordingly subjected to much criticism and scepticism, especially by scholars of the Manipulative School. For them, “translation, although often invisible in the field of politics, is actually an integral part of political activity. Which texts get translated, from and into which languages is itself already a political decision” (Schäffner & Bassnett, 2010, p. 13).

In this context, the socio-cultural perspective of this school—unlike the traditional definitions of Translation Studies (TS)—views the concept of translation at the core of the present struggle for dominance as some entities can ideologically and politically utilise it in our increasingly conflict-ridden and violent world. Therefore, to conceptualise translation within the current political turmoil more effectively, we need to critically engage with the narratives that translators and subtitlers reframe across linguistic and cultural borders (Baker 2006a, 2016). In her narrative account, Baker (2010, p. 348) reveals some of these entities, indicating that some media organisations such as the Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI), via different forms of translation, enhance controversial narratives through which certain races, cultures, and regions can be significantly distorted or otherwise embellished. Yet, the different translation forms may not be treated ideologically at the same level of manipulation. Compared to monosemiotic translation, audiovisual translation (AVT) is more likely to be related to this type of theorisation, in light of the richness of the ideological loads it delivers via its polysemiotic composite in which the verbal element is only one part of an integrated structure: a structure that consists of linguistic and extra-linguistic elements, not only at a textual level but also a paratextual level. This area of study, however significant, continues to be largely unexplored, especially with respect to the Arabic–English subtitling of political narratives.

Study Observations and Problem

Due to initial observations during the investigation of variant political videos subtitled from Arabic into English and recirculated by Monitor Mideast (MM), Palestinian Media Watch (PMW), and MEMRI, I have made some general observations worth investigating further. These organisations seem to have recontextualised source videos according to what serves specific ideologies and political agendas. They appear to have carefully selected from the most radical and extreme—though rare and exceptional—speeches and opinions while condoning the general discourse of the mainstream media, which reflects the majority’s culture of moderation and tolerance. This initial observation may cast doubt on the actual

objectives behind monitoring the Arab media outlets and republishing their products to Western audiences.

More specifically, MM seems to propagate narratives about Shia regimes and militia brigades (e.g., Iran and Bashar's regimes, Hezbollah in Lebanon, Abu Fadl in Iraq) and, in turn, attempts to depict opponents as merely a group of terrorists and demagogues. It seems to select videos that could help construct and disseminate a narrative that embeds opponents (e.g., the Saudi Kingdom and Egypt's current government) as terrorists and supporters of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS). Similarly, PMW seems to propagate narratives of Israel and its legislative and military actions and, in turn, defame the Palestinian Authority (PA) and Palestinians' resistance. It constructs a competing image in which Palestinian national symbols are depicted as murderers and terrorists. MEMRI does likewise in terms of topic-selection, though it seemingly attempts to construct and disseminate a narrative that, more excessively, portrays Arabs and Muslims as extremists and a terrorist threat to the West¹.

What these general observations also identify at the textual level are, surprisingly, not in line with the subtitling convention of reduction introduced to tackle the technical constraints, which, again, puts into question the reasons behind the general tendency of these three organisations to produce such remarkably long subtitles. It also emphasises the importance of investigating the strategies utilised to explain the unconventional tendency in the genre of political subtitling. Furthermore, I have noticed that subtitlers, in many cases, use subtitling strategies in a cryptic way, showing no technical necessity for their interventions. But with such interventions, it seems to be essential, again, to distinguish written texts from audiovisual texts to highlight the problem of the present study.

¹ More information about MM, PMW, and MEMRI—their objectives, political affiliations, funding, opponent accusations and defence—will be provided in Chapter Four.

On the one hand, written texts are more flexible in that they allow translators to negotiate their way around them through a range of translational choices and techniques. This flexibility, however, is sometimes restricted, especially in political contexts where translating becomes a sensitive process for translators “since their credibility can easily be undermined if their opponents were to identify and publicise a list of errors in these translations” (Baker, 2007, p. 158). For this reason, translators (individually or institutionally) may resort to using reframing strategies in the space around the text (i.e., paratext) where they find much more freedom while keeping linguistically accurate in the body of text (Baker, 2010, p. 360). On the other hand, subtitling, which is one of the common AVT modes, is relatively unlike written texts: it imposes specific on-screen conventions known as temporal and spatial constraints, which can lead, on many occasions, to decisive patterns of technical manipulation in the source text using subtitling strategies. These patterns of manipulation might be seen as conventionally technical, or suspiciously viewed as unconventionally ideological (Díaz Cintas, 2012a), depending on the objectives of the translator and the text-nature considerations.

Media translation organisations tend to exploit the TT subtitles as a fertile ground on which they may intentionally adopt various strategies for the sake of reframing ST narratives in TT differently and functionally. In political contexts, in particular, ST narratives can be subject to striking linguistic and extra-linguistic deviations with or, sometimes, without the pretext of technical constraints. Subtitlers working for suspicious organisations like MEMRI, PMW, and MM are more likely to be bound by certain ideologies imposed on them by the job terms and conditions, if not fundamentally self-imposed. Ideological constraints, however, might not always be recognisable by viewers. Unlike written text translators, subtitlers may exploit the subtitling strategies for their benefit so that they can justify their intervention, not necessarily just around the text, as in the case of most written forms, but also in the text, under the pretext of tackling its technical constraints. The selection of a particular subtitling strategy, such as omitting intentionally uttered expressions, might be opted to reframe the narrative of the source text differently and functionally.

For instance, on many occasions, the condensation strategy that entails the omission of certain redundant linguistic elements can be technically justifiable because it is considered the most common and applicable of the different strategies in producing more screen-friendly subtitles. Díaz Cintas and Remael (2007, p. 61) state that “the transition from oral to written mode obviously means that some of the typical features of spoken language will have to disappear”. They assume that “the written version of speech in subtitles is nearly always a reduced form of the oral soundtrack” (ibid., p. 145). However, an unnecessary choice of a qualitative reduction that distorts the semantic load of the ST message would leave the viewer (let alone an academic researcher) perplexed. On some other occasions, subtitlers tend to use different strategies that are rarely used in film subtitling because they produce structures longer than the utterance of the STs. For instance, MEMRI’s subtitlers, unlike other film subtitlers, are observed to overuse the expansion of religious-specific elements resulting in the production of TTs that are significantly longer than the STs (Boukhaffa, 2017, p. 67). This choice could be attributed to implicit intentions of rendering the political discourse of the ST with a religious connotation in the TT (ibid.).

Besides these contextual and textual interventions, I have also noticed during the research process that the three organisations seem to have exploited the space around the text of the video clips by adding different titles and introductions, which are often injected with controversial terms and labels unstated visually and audially in the original videos. At a theoretical level, one might argue that, together, these observations can put the conceptual narrative of subtitling authenticity at stake. This argument indicates the present study significance, especially when knowing that subtitling is the only AVT mode that MM, PMW and MEMRI use, in addition to other written forms of translation, to disseminate their propaganda described by many critics as misleading.

Study Objectives, Significance, and Contributions

In addition to ideological constraints and motives, subtitling, as mentioned above, has its own technical conventions that subtitlers need to manipulate to produce

better subtitles for the target audience. This binarism of constraints and motives (i.e., technical vs ideological) necessitates the adoption of a multilevel framework to facilitate investigation of both reasons of manipulation. Here lies the motivation and objective of the present study: to investigate subtitlers' textual manipulation and "oscillation" (Baker, 2006a) to discover whether they are technically necessitated or ideologically driven, with a special focus on the subtitling of political narratives of the MENA. The study is particularly encouraged by Díaz-Cintas's (2012a) call to "clear the ideological smokescreen that confounds the original message in an attempt to see the silver screen behind". He argues that "the boundaries of research into AVT should be pushed beyond its traditionally parochial linguistic sphere by focusing more on unmasking the rationale behind ideologically motivated changes and by contextualising them within a wider socio-cultural environment" (2012a, p. 279).

The study is also encouraged by Boukhaffa's paper, which urges AVT researchers to investigate the MEMRI organisation with larger corpora, including a variety of discourses from different Arab countries, to disclose its actual tendencies (2017, p. 70). He also calls upon researchers "to draw generalisable and replicable deductions about all digital media translations of political narratives requires a study of many media outlets active in the digital world" (ibid.). Hence, this is one of the aspects of the present study's significance, offering an investigation scope that encompasses, in addition to MEMRI, two other translation organisations found so far: MM and PMW. The ultimate purpose of this broad investigation is to raise awareness of the commonly unrecognised ideological role of subtitling in the process of manipulating political narratives under the pretext of technicality. Yet, before drawing any conclusions based on the ideological analysis, a thorough investigation based on the technical analysis of a relevant set of subtitles needs to be carried out to avoid any pre-judgments or misinterpretations.

Today's communities seem to be more audiovisual media-oriented than print media-oriented, which possibly makes AVT more exposed to commercial powers, more vulnerable to attempts of ideological manipulation, and hence, more motivating for research opportunities. Most AVT studies, however, have focused on the pre-scripted entertaining works "while real spontaneous speech has been largely ignored"

(Díaz-Cintas, 2012b, p. 278). Thus, there is a persistent need to pay more attention to genres whose dialogue is more sensitive and controversial, characterised by spontaneity, and permeated by a lot of tautology and hesitation. Therefore, the present study is dedicated to studying the subtitling of the political genre, including the different dialogues of its subgenres: speeches, interviews, and debates.

The present study has identified the gap in previous TS and offered a research contribution that focuses on the technical and ideological manipulation of subtitling MENA political narratives, which has not been found in the relevant PhD theses researched². This is seemingly the first attempt to adopt Baker's comprehensive narrative analysis for mainly reflecting upon MM, PMW, MEMRI's subtitlers textual choices and interpreting them in association with paratextual and contextual patterns of manipulation. Then, the study attempts to explore the organisations' immediate narratives, accentuated and contested in their video clips, and link them with other larger public and meta-narratives in which they are embedded.

Furthermore, the present study offers four points of contribution: (1) it studies, in depth, the subtitles of two understudied organisations, namely, MM and PMW; (2) it studies MEMRI in more depth, as well as analysing a wider sample of its subtitling translations; (3) it contextualises MM, PMW, and MEMRI's videos clips and subtitles within a wider scope of comparable organisations' work; (4) it reaches solid conclusions about the degree of bias, and the type of accentuated/contested narratives in MM, PMW, and MEMRI's subtitles based on a systematic word-by-word and context-by-context analysis of a far more substantial amount of data than the previous studies have offered. Having said all the above, this study is dedicated to answering the following questions.

² Elaboration on this point is provided in Chapter Four, Section 4.3, pp. 149–154.

Study Questions

- (1) Is political subtitling similar to other subtitling genres, such as movies and TV programmes, in terms of TT lengthiness? If not, what seems to be the reason(s) they are different?
- (2) Can technical manipulation utilising subtitling strategies be ideologically driven to reframe original narratives differently under the excuse of technical necessity?
- (3) To what extent can media translation organisations elaborate the MENA political narratives so diversely? Also, what are the strategies they utilise, and how do they utilise them to reframe/recontextualise original narratives at different levels: text, paratext, and context?
- (4) What role can subtitlers, as social actors, play in reframing/recontextualising our socio-cultural/political reality?

Study Outline

Following this introduction, this study comprises six chapters and a conclusion. Chapter One aims to shed light, from a socio-cultural/political perspective, on the role of translation and AVT reflected in different patterns of ideological manipulation in media productions. It discusses some scholarly media viewpoints about the objectivity and biasedness of media productions and how far these concepts are related to the translation profession. Chapter Two reviews the literature on AVT with a special focus on subtitling, discussing the most relevant definitions, categorisations, technical constraints and manipulation strategies, and ideological constraints and manipulation strategies. It discusses the motivation behind subtitlers' selective and ambiguous choices argued originally in Díaz-Cintas's (2012a) notion of "technical manipulation vs ideological manipulation". It also explores the selection between subtitling and dubbing and how far various factors and constraints of preference can control it, especially in political translation. Chapter Three introduces Baker's narrative theory, generally providing a literature review on some narrative concepts and arguments relevant to the present study framework outlined further in Chapter Four: Data and Methodology. It also discusses, from a socio-cultural/political point of view, the

relationship between narrative and reality, highlighting the significance of narrative functionality (how narratives emerge and function on the ground) with relevant examples discussed. Most importantly, it highlights the scope (advocated by Baker) of the present analysis, which investigates both the text (linguists' focus) in Chapter Five and the broader multilevel narrative analysis (Baker's focus), including text, paratext, and context, which are discussed in Chapter Six. Chapter three discusses Baker's narrative features and how they are renegotiated in the authorship and translation fields. It also discusses her reframing strategies in translation and how textual interventions can connect to simultaneous interventions in the context and paratext of the same text or video and to larger narratives articulated in other texts or videos, accomplishing coherently an integral process of recontextualisation, and, strictly speaking, narrative reframing.

Chapter Four introduces the study data and provides information about its sources: MM, PMW, and MEMRI. It reviews brief literature of the previous academic research concerned with investigating the translation of the organisations in question. It explains the data selection criteria and the data collection limitations and difficulties. It also determines the study approaches, the data analysis procedure, and the analysis model implemented in the analysis chapters. Chapter Five represents the first level of the study analysis: the micro-analysis, which, first, conducts a quantitative analysis to investigate the researcher's first observation regarding the lengthiness of the TT subtitles; then, it conducts a qualitative analysis to discuss the technical manipulation identified in the long subtitles from Díaz-Cintas's (2012a) perspective to see whether it has any ideological considerations leading to narrative reframing under the excuse of the subtitling technical constraints. If no technical constraint was found, then the manipulation can probably be technically unjustifiable, and hence, can be ideological. Chapter Six represents the second level of the study analysis: the macro-analysis, which offers a comprehensive framework based on Baker's narrative analysis to investigate the textual, paratextual, and contextual patterns of manipulation to see how they reframe the immediate ST narrative in the new accentuated TT narrative. It then connects this multilevel manipulation with the broader public and meta-narratives in which the immediate narrative is possibly embedded. In addition to the separate

conclusions attached to each one of these six chapters, the thesis provides the reader with an overall final conclusion, which re-highlights the most prominent arguments and concepts discussed in chapters one to three and the major findings of Chapters Five and Six.

Chapter One

Media, Ideology and Translation

1.1 Introduction

Media and translation are socio-cultural and socio-political forces in which social agents, such as journalists, translators and interpreters, are the main agents who may be able, authorised, or even enforced to manipulate the context of the concepts received. This manipulation is conventionally controlled by a set of cultural and ideological constraints through which media production may ultimately be deemed polarised, subjective, and biased. Concepts of media, politics, translation, ideology, biasedness, and objectivity have been closely related since the early days of intercultural communications. Many critics have argued against the correlation of some of these concepts, questioning the possibility of having an objective media production. Some took a firm position against it, precluding the existence of an objective media devoid of motivating ideology (e.g., Bignell, 1997, 2002), or even an objective translation (e.g., Nord, 2003); some defended it with conditions (e.g., Gander, 2014); others discussed the meaning of unbiasedness and objectivity in the media productions and whether or not they are synonyms of neutrality (e.g., Collier, 2003).

Unlike other text genres, mass media productions, including media translation of political texts, received more attention from academics as they are conventionally controversial (Sylwester, 2001) and prominently controlled by ideologies (Schäffner, 2003, p. 23). With the emergence of AVT (e.g., subtitling, dubbing and voice-over), new strategies of ideological manipulation have been more widely developed in favour of the receptiveness of the ST in the target culture (Díaz-Cintas, 2012a). The general aim of this chapter is to shed light on the role of translation, reflected in its ideological manipulation of media productions, including media translation/subtitling. Asserting the significance of this aim, Paul & Elder postulate that

If the vast majority of citizens do not recognise bias in their nation's news; if they cannot detect ideology, slant, and spin; if they cannot recognise propaganda when exposed to it, they cannot reasonably determine what media

messages have to be supplemented, counter-balanced, or thrown out entirely. (2006, p. 2)

Likewise, Alvarez & Vidal (1996) argue that “translation as a political or manipulative action will be much less dangerous if we are aware of its consequences”. For this reason, a set of concepts related to media and translation will be explored in the following pages.

This chapter is divided into four sections. Section 1.1 introduces the chapter. Section 1.2 divides into four subsections: Subsection 1.2.1 explores the term of media and media types, with particular focus on TV and its impact; Subsection 1.2.2 explores the ideological impact of television on the audience; Subsection 1.2.3 reviews some media scholarly and journalists’ viewpoints about the objectivity and biasedness of media productions; Subsection 1.2.4 reviews the literature on media studies showing the recent tendency of examining media production within a socio-cultural context; Subsection 1.2.5 reviews the literature on media in translation studies (TS), highlighting the advocacy of some scholars in TS to adopt more effective theorisation and approaches stemming from a socio-cultural framework adopted in the present study. It also shows the significance of this framework for audiovisual translation (AVT) studies, in particular.

Section 1.3 is divided into four subsections: Subsection 1.3.1 reviews the concepts of ideology, translation, and media, highlighting the relationship between them, with a particular focus on political translation; Subsection 1.3.2 discusses the theme of “translation as rewriting and manipulation” as well as that of “technical manipulation vs ideological manipulation” in AVT; Subsection 1.3.3 discusses the relationship between political media production and the processes of recontextualisation; Subsection 1.3.4 discusses various forms of ideological manipulation through a provision of examples taken from translations of official political media organisations. Section 1.4 provides an overview of the concluding remarks on the chapter.

1.2 Media and Translation/AVT

1.2.1 *Media: Communication and Impact*

The term *media* “is the plural of medium. It is derived from the Latin word *medius*, which means *middle*” (Croteau & Hoynes, 2014, p. 8). People who are social actors always encounter, use and produce an enormous variety of media. As identified by Bignell (2002, p. 1), *media* falls into a categorisation of a general term known as “media” and a specific term known as “the media”. On the one hand, the term “media” widely encompasses everything utilised to communicate something. Accordingly, the way people experience the world is likely to be influenced by their communication with media. While we are walking in the street, for instance, messages we see on posters, logos displayed on clothes and cars, and shop signs generate meaning for us. On the other hand, the other term habitually known as “the media” encompasses communicative channels such as journalism, cinema, radio, television, and the internet, utilised to disseminate news, advertisements, and data. These are apparently the communication media (*ibid.*) which are mostly the main social instrument for communicating with the masses in our present time. As defined by Croteau & Hoynes (2014, p. 8), communication media are “the different technological processes that facilitate communication between (and are in the middle of) the sender of the message and the receiver of that message”.

In addition, communication media is also designated, according to Croteau & Hoynes (*ibid.*, pp. 8–9), as mass media whose producers are unlikely to identify the number and identity of the audience who will read, watch or buy their productions. By virtue of mass media, nations of different languages, cultures and ideologies have been able to communicate internationally via translation more than ever. Mass media includes the commonly acknowledged channels of radio, television, print, sound recording, film, and the Internet. It may also include, due to the emergence of new technologies, social media pages (e.g., Facebook). These forms of communication, however, are distinguished from mass media since they are followed by only a limited number of people—usually those we already know (Croteau & Hoynes, 2014, p. 9). The media, or mass media, though considered as a vital source of information, has a

huge impact on our perception of our world, which creates a high degree of scepticism and requires deep reflection by researchers. As argued by Danesi (2002, p. 1): “our modern mediated world is indeed a two-edged sword”. Danesi (2002, p. 1) argues that the information generated by the media every day carries both “a blessing and a curse at the same time”. Despite the online variety of new mass-media technologies, TV has yet been considered the most popular and favourable tool of communication for what it broadcasts in terms of entertainment, but without ignoring the less recognisable socio-cultural impact—whether positive or negative—that it may have on the construction of our personalities and attitudes.

1.2.2 Television and its Ideological Impact: Pedagogy and Demagogy

TV has specifically been thought of as the scene on which history is being made and documented at the same time. TV forges history because it gives its audience the opportunity to experience historical events and information, more than reading books or studying at school (Danesi, 2002, p. 144). Against popular belief, Bourdieu (1998, p. 84), translated by Priscilla Ferguson, argues: “I do not share the nostalgia professed by some people for the paternalistic pedagogical television of the past, which I see as no less opposed to a truly democratic than populist spontaneism and demagogic capitulation to popular tastes”. Highlighting the actual influence, particularly of digital TV, in creating a “global electronic village”, Danesi (2002, p. 142) argues that it “allows viewers even to see themselves as ‘participants’ in wars and conflicts going on in some other part of the world ‘as they happen’”.

In the powerful role it plays in reconstructing narratives and changing perceptions (especially in politics), TV launches from and delivers certain (almost dominant) ideologies to its audience. Bignell (2002, pp. 123–124) states that in televised news, for instance, the ideological role is to construct a mythical reality about life in a given society by exploiting the semiotic structure of TV news discourse and its images and language. Bignell (*ibid.*, p. 124) argues that “even in the apparently “balanced” and “objective” context of TV news, ... what is presented as factual and neutral is a mythic construction determined by the dominant ideology”. The controversial concepts of biasedness, objectivity and neutrality, and their relationship

to media productions, including translation, will be further discussed in the following subsection. There are also the censorial forces (often political), who oppose unguarded access to TV and set conditions that could be counterproductive to the independence of those (e.g., broadcasters, interviewers, translators) who are shown on it. In reference to the political nature rooted in censorship, Bourdieu (1998, p. 15) argues “that television censorship — ... of the journalists who are its agents — is political”.

By virtue of the Internet, TV is no longer just a home-based device but is also an online digital service that can be accessed anytime and everywhere on our mobiles and laptops. Via the digital mass media of the Internet—one of the main ideological impacts of which comes from its availability exceeding the limits of space and time, online TV channels, especially free-of-charge media organisations such as MEMRI, MM, and PMW—have continued to disseminate their productions, perhaps even more broadly, more easily, and faster than ever before.

For all these reasons, the present study is concerned with the online TV channels of media organisations, which are used to disseminate numerous audiovisual materials (short video clips) subtitled from several Middle Eastern languages, including Arabic, into Western languages, but most prominently into English. For the generic scope of the present study, the primary concern is the Arabic–English subtitling of the political audiovisual speeches, interviews, and debates recirculated by the TV channels of the MM, PMW and MEMRI websites, and this is what is particularly meant by the term “mass media” in this study. For the specific scope of this chapter, however, other channels of mass media, such as print media (i.e., journalism), as well as other types of media literary translation and, more specifically, AVT (i.e., subtitling, interpreting and voice-over) will also be mentioned and discussed in some examples.

1.2.3 Media Productions: A Controversy of Objectivity and Biasedness

Objectivity, the opposite of biasedness, is one of the most controversial terms, especially when discussing the media and its news processing. Objectivity, particularly within the political context, can be misunderstood, not to mention misused, as Collier (2003, pp. 139–140) argues. It has often been exploited by media professionals, as well as the public, to judge, praise or vilify a specific television, radio, newspaper or internet website. To begin with, it seems beneficial to look at the commonly acknowledged interpretation of objectivity as a rational, dispassionate and neutral concept in order to examine the possibility of having such characteristics within the media's activities and productions. Before using scholarly definitions in the discussion, let us review the meaning of objectivity from a purely linguistic viewpoint. According to the Oxford English Dictionary (OED), objectivity is “the ability to consider or represent facts, information, etc., without being influenced by personal feelings or opinions; impartiality; detachment”. Accordingly, a description of any given media outlet as objective implies impartial and rational reporting and dissemination of information devoid of interventions from reporters of this information. In the same vein, Ryan & Switzer argue that philosophical foundations for objectivity are

a refusal to serve any political, social, religious, cultural or scientific agenda; imagination, creativity and logical consistency; honesty about personal preferences and idiosyncrasies; communality in sharing findings; and verification of findings in subsequent reports. (2009, p. 48)

In other words, media professionals and their activities—in compliance with the above definitions—should be functioning merely as a mirror, reflecting the actual picture of what occurs in the world and delivering neutrally diverged perspectives on controversial issues exclusive of any judgemental and evaluative interference. Realistically, this might be unobtainable as long as the media productions are human activities overcome by a set of debatable topics, such as religion, culture, and politics. Hence, making any human interaction (e.g., through speaking or writing) with such topics would probably make objectivity infeasible. Kimberly (2013) points out that “controversial issues ... and questions concerning morality will inevitably generate

heated and sometimes painful discussions that often deteriorate into a free-for-all devoid of rationality or objectivity”. Paul & Elder (2006, p. 5) argue that “the human “objectivity” is an ideal that no one perfectly achieves” due to the irrational and emotional nature of human beings. Media is a human activity and, therefore, media objectivity as dispassionate and rational can arguably be unattainable. The reason is that, normally, “mass media seek a broad audience for a typically narrow (and often biased) message that’s typically embedded in entertainment or useful information/opinion” (Sylwester, 2001).

In media productions, there are often emotional and irrational features to be anticipated, which probably require intervening with strategies such as deletions, additions, and substitutions. Thus, as argued by Paul & Elder (2006, p. 4), “if objectivity or fairness in the construction of news stories is thought of as equivalent to presenting the facts and only the facts ..., objectivity and fairness is an illusion”. Gander (2014) similarly argues that, because humans are somehow naturally biased, and news outlets, though subtly, work from a specific bias, media objectivity has always been counted as a myth. Gander (2014) adds that “if postmodern theory taught us nothing else, it certainly taught us that all expressions of knowledge are partial and subjective, and that the pretence otherwise is merely a form of subjective construction”.

Does this argument embed the impossibility of achieving objectivity? Or is it that there is a different interpretation of the concept that causes it to be achievable?

It seems that what media objectivity entails is not dispassionateness and rationality, but rather a firm commitment to consistently seek and present the often hard-to-reach aspects and evidence. As argued by Gander (2014), “an objectivity as we ever can muster as humans: seek the story, tell all sides, try to find the truth of the matter”.

It could, however, sometimes be difficult, if not impossible, to cover such aspects of a given event or news. As Paul & Elder assert, “99.99999% of the “facts” are never mentioned at all” (2006, p. 4). Accordingly, the lack or failure of providing sufficiently essential details, which may be more closely representable of what actually

and mostly occurs in reality, is likely to be the reason behind the reduction or even failure of the mission of achieving media objectivity.

Many factors can be directly efficient in that they might either facilitate or, perhaps most likely, obstruct this mission. The accessibility, for instance, to a particular piece of information remains an obstacle on some occasions, taking into consideration the level (i.e., local/national or international) from which this information is hoped to be obtained. Reporting on an international event, for instance, can be very complicated, due, in part, to the reporter's absence from the location in the field. It might, therefore, be more exposed to processes of narrative reframing³, that "a single news story, reporting the facts, inevitably either must leave out context entirely, or else make choices in providing context that inevitably will be partial, and therefore biased" (Gander, 2014).

The philosophy of objectivity as a state of neutrality, rationality, and dispassionateness has been opposed by other thinkers who have also argued otherwise. Collier (2003, pp. 132–142), for instance, disagrees with many epistemologists and existentialist thinkers who assume that objectivity can only be obtained by adopting neutrality devoid of passion and concern. Thus, he comments that "nothing could be more antagonistic to the true mission of philosophy which ... is precisely to be objective about the things that we are and ought to be passionately concerned about" (Collier, 2003, p. 140).

In his book titled, *In Defence of Objectivity*, Collier (ibid.) mentions the importance of eliminating some traditional philosophies about objectivity; amongst these philosophies, which he considers false, is that objectivity implies neutrality (ibid., p. 139). He argues that to choose among opposing positions could have objective grounds, and if it does, then it leaves no chance for neutrality but rather to

³ This is the main focus of the present study, investigating the processes of reframing Arab narratives in the subtitles of media organisations under the pretext of technicality.

be subjective in the worst sense. Additionally, he argues, the belief that objectivity and neutrality are often assumed to be the same exists because neutrality is confusingly associated with the state of being unbiased and, strictly speaking, objectivity is unbiasedness (ibid.). Neutrality, however, is itself different from unbiasedness. For instance, a judge convicting a prisoner as guilty due to his criminal-looking facial features would undoubtedly be biased, whilst convicting a prisoner as guilty due to trustworthy testimonies of numerous independent witnesses who have seen the crime would conventionally be unbiased. The judge has objective grounds for choosing between the two positions in both cases; however, in neither is the judge neutral (ibid.).

The term “biased” is often used between opposing parties (including individuals and institutions) to accuse one another of having extremist partisan affiliations. However, this can be deemed a misuse due to confusingly relating the state of unbiasedness to neutrality. Extreme partisan affiliations can be unbiased and objective as long as they are based on reliably objective grounds (Collier, 2003, p. 139). Collier emphasises his dissatisfaction with this confusion, arguing:

If “millions of innocent civilians were massacred” is true, then it is objectively true that the people who did the massacring were a bunch of brutal mass-murders, and the emotion of intense indignation against them is objectively appropriate. One’s emotions would be lacking in objectivity if one felt anything else. (ibid., p.140)

One can argue that the decision-making in the media industry seems to be no different from that of other powerful authorities, such as the judiciary and economists. Thus, if media reports (even in the form of judgements and assessments) are dependent on reliably objective reasons and a shred of solid evidence, then the media production, in this case, is more likely to be unbiased and, properly speaking, objective. However, failure to commit to ethical standards in media (particularly political), might often lead to disastrous consequences. In this context, Howard Kurdz criticises that “the media, including The Washington Post, failed the country by not reporting more skeptically on President Bush’s contentions during the run-up to war ... that somehow if the media’s coverage had been different, there wouldn’t have been a war” (2004, pp. 1–4). The abandon of objectivity, at the very least, will not be in the interest of the media’s institution. Consequently, as Ryan & Switzer put it, “the body of shared

knowledge is suspect, and consensus and “right” answers are harder to achieve. The loss of credibility does not do much for a news organisation’s bottom line, either” (2009, p. 62).

One can also assume that even decisions of what to translate (i.e., selection) and how to translate (i.e., strategies) can be objective in some respects, since the achievement of objectivity depends on whether or not the decision’s grounds are reliably convincing for the audience. Consequently, anyone can arguably be objective and unbiased—albeit passionate—if they provide solid grounds for their position. For instance, a strategy of deleting some culturally inappropriate references in the target text would be met with an appraisal by the audience, who would see such an action as objective. It may hold true for translation, as well. Lefevere argues that “if the source text clashes with the ideology of the target culture, translators may have to adapt the text so that the offending passages are either severely modified or left out altogether” (1992, p. 87).

In terms of selectivity, however, the objectivity of media productions, including translations, can still be questionable. For instance, deliberately selecting certain topics or parts of the original to report on or translate at the expense of others can be deemed biased and subjective. In translation, for instance, as Díaz-Cintas (2012a, p. 282) argues, “subjectivity shifts will probably occur, provoking the displacement of part of the original meaning”. But for media, as Paul & Elder (2006, p. 5) assert, it is always important to take a carefully selected position that is congruent with the interests of their audience, even if said audience sometimes embraces irrational beliefs; without doing so, such media would be unacceptable. Therefore, media productions—involving, initially, the decision to report on international events and statements (not specifically in politics but in general) and, finally, the production and dissemination of that reporting—are all influenced by the target society’s ideologies and rules (Schäffner & Bassnett, 2010, p. 8). During the Olympics, for instance, each country’s national TV focuses its cameras on games in which their nation’s athletes are anticipated to play well. Audiences are often excited by their triumphs but unconcerned with the triumphs of others, and losers are often ignored (Paul & Elder, 2006, p. 5). This makes media selectivity ultimately a crucial strategy

worth investigating, especially in translation, and hence, significant to the present study⁴.

The following subsection will provide a short literature review on the development of media studies, including the most prominent approaches proposed within the domain and advocated later in literary and audiovisual translation studies.

1.2.4 Media Studies and the Semiotics of Audiovisual Material

Recent years have witnessed significant progress in mass media studies. In the first place, print media was the basis for critical analysis. Some studies (e.g., Luger, 1995; Montgomery, 2007) focus on the language of the media, shedding light on certain stylistic, grammatical and lexical aspects. Comparative studies (e.g., Kress & Trew, 1978) show how different the language in quality papers is from that in broadsheets concerning readership anticipations. In this regard, two important aspects emphasised are the journalistic ethics and credibility of news reporting to be conveyed honestly (Schäffner & Bassnett, 2010, p. 3). Another noteworthy area of study is the analysis of ideology and culture in the social context of media. Curran & Gurevitch's (2000) edited book *Mass Media and Society* is a case in point. It includes several essays discussing media from a perspective that encompasses ideological and cultural notions such as class, gender and ethnicity, and, therefore, plugs media studies into a new phase of socio-cultural sciences. In the same context, Richard Hoggart argues that the most important gauge according to which media productions are constructed is "the cultural air we breathe, the whole ideological atmosphere of our society, which tells us that some things can be said and that others had best not be said" (Cited in Shudson, 2000, p. 192).

⁴ Section 1.3 (pp. 41–50) will show how ideological constraints may variously influence the translators' work and cause it to be biased, determining the frame in which the term *ideology* is used throughout the entire study. It will also show the strong relationship between the multifarious concept of ideology and translation/AVT, especially in political media.

In his investigation of the social and cognitive practices that reporters rely on in processing news texts, Van Dijk (1988, pp. 114–119) mentions five major procedures: selection, reproduction, summarisation (deletion, generalisation, and construction), local transformation (deletion, addition, permutation, substitution), and stylistic and rhetorical formulation. These procedures “can equally be used for describing news production across linguistic boundaries” (also cited in Schäffner & Bassnett, 2010, p. 3). Regarding the perspective, which links textual manipulation with its socio-cultural/socio-political contexts and ideologies in media production, Van Dijk (1985a, p. 74) states that little effort has been made about “the relationship between text and context of news”. He argues that the approach of analysing the content of media productions is important, but it represents only one part of the story. What needs to be made in order to disclose the other parts is “an integration of such an approach with the prevailing sociological approaches” (ibid.).

By virtue of semiotics or semiology primarily originated in the work of Ferdinand de Saussure, a new perspective emerged in the analysis of meanings generated by mass media. It includes not only verbal elements but also non-verbal elements, such as pictures, symbols, and music. In this respect, Bignell (2002, p. 1) states that “in recent times, one of the most powerful and influential ways of thinking about media has been the approach known as semiotics (or semiology)”. Bignell’s (2002, p. 1) volume focuses on the applicability of using semiotics to study the media, drawing on “the assumption that meanings in the media are communicated by signs, and because the question of how signs work is what semiotics is concerned with” (Bignell, 2002, p. 2). Audio-visual media such as radio, television and the internet are semiotic; the studies of their productions have supplemented the analysis of print media, showing how verbal and non-verbal elements are constructed together to deliver a message and impact the receivers. Thus, any element (e.g., close-ups, seating arrangements of speakers, and external sound effects) could be meaningful and perform certain functions at the same time (Schäffner & Bassnett, 2010, p. 4).

In TV production, signs and codes play an important role in mediating between the reality they construct and its viewers. A semiotic analysis of TV broadcast undertaken by Bignell (2002, p. 106), shows “how particular mythic meanings of

reality are shaped by signs and codes, and how watching TV news also shapes the subjective identity of viewers in different ways”. At the present time, the “new media” of the Internet, in particular, where the analyses are also structural, has likewise received attention. Within the socio-cultural context, the semiotic approach has also triggered prominent translation studies (e.g., Alvarez & Vidal, 1996; Baker, 2006a) and AVT studies (e.g., Díaz-Cintas, 2012a) to investigate and show the importance of considering the verbal and non-verbal element for an appropriate rendering of source texts (particularly political texts).

Within linguistics, Bednarek (2006, p. 11) mentions a list of eight approaches to analyse the language of news discourse: the narrative/pragmatic/stylistic approach, the critical approach, the practice-focused approach, the corpus-linguistic approach, the socio-linguistic approach, the diachronic approach, the conversational approach, the cognitive approach. Yet, the role of translation has not been profoundly dealt with throughout all this research. It has almost been neglected, as Schäffner & Bassnett (2010, p. 4) argue.

The following subsection will provide literature on positioning the media in translation studies and AVT studies, highlighting the turning point of “culture turn”, which has distinctively changed many traditional concepts in translation studies in general.

1.2.5 Media in Literary Translation and AVT Studies

The origins of attention towards language transfer in the media is not very old: it first manifested in 1995. Since then, several conferences and other forums concerned with the translation of radio, TV, and cinema have increasingly arisen. Yet, there is a belief that specialised studies are still relatively limited (Gambier & Gottlieb, 2001, p. ix). Orero (2004, p. viii) states that, despite the considerable effort made by Yves Gambier and Henrik Gottlieb, plenty of work still needs to be undertaken in two academic fields: researching and teaching. Gambier & Gottlieb (2001, p. xx) state that the lack of appropriate methodologies and theories within translation studies is still the reason behind the continuing difficulty of embarking on research in media translation. They argue (2001, p. xx) that, until now, media translation has not been tackled by a

polysystemic approach (Even-Zohar, 1978, 1979), relevance theory (Sperber & Wilson, 1986), cognitive psychology (Ulric Neisser, 1967, 2014) or critical discourse analysis (CDA) (Fowler, 1991; Fowler, Hodge, Kress, & Trew, 1979; Hodge & Kress, 1993).

In support of Gambier & Gottlieb's (2001) view, Schäffner & Bassnett (2010) show their dissatisfaction with the current research of translation studies that is, though increasing, still scarce, particularly in investigations of the factual practices of media translation in political institutions. They raise questions, showing the necessity of exploring the ambiguities of these practices:

What exactly happens in the complex processes of recontextualisation across linguistic, cultural and ideological boundaries? What exactly happens in the processes from producing political discourse within a particular national political institution to its (re)presentation in mass media in another language in another country? Who exactly are the agents who are involved in all these processes, and who takes which decisions and why at which point? How are all these complex processes reflected in the texts, in particular, which transformations occur in the recontextualisation processes from the original source text to its representation, for example, in a newspaper or on a government website? How can these transformations be explained and justified? What effect do they have on readers and their perception of policies? (2010, p. 21)

Here, it seems worthwhile to mention the “culture turn”: a term coined in translation studies by Mary Snell-Hornby (1988) and advocated by Lefevere (1992) and Bassnett & Lefevere (1998). For Snell-Hornby (1988, p. 39), translation is “a cross-cultural event”. This cultural view has expanded the translation's scope, conventionally over-interested in the linguistic aspects of the text, by shedding light on its embedded social-cultural aspects (Díaz-Cintas, 2012a, pp. 281–282). As argued by Bassnett (1998, p. 123), the attention of translation studies previously always focused on the possibility of teaching and studying translation, but not anymore. The main objective now is to place the text embeddedness in its broader framework, which consists of the signs of both the source and target culture. Hence, the scope of translation studies has become more inclusive, employing not only the linguistic approach but exceeding it and employing broader approaches, such as ideology and culture. Bassnett (*ibid.*, p. 136) points out: “A writer does not just write in a vacuum:

he or she is the product of a particular culture”. Highlighting the significance of the social-cultural embeddedness, Díaz-Cintas puts it:

The task of the intellectually inquisitive scholar attempting to take translation beyond its traditionally parochial linguistic sphere by contextualising it within a wider socio-cultural context, thus involves an understanding of the reasons why these ideologically motivated changes may occur, and for the benefit of whom. (2012a, p. 285)

Audiovisual media (e.g., old-style, and online TV channels), with their translation, are perfectly related to this type of approach, in light of the richness of the cultural loads they deliver and their semiotic composite in which the linguistic component is only a part of an integrated structure (ibid, p. 281). In this respect, Gambier & Gottlieb (2001, p. xx) question whether translation studies research encompasses the different media AVT modes such as subtitling, localisation, dubbing, and voice-over. Such technologies, which have turned paper-oriented communities into audiovisual media-oriented communities, have similarly turned audiovisual translation into the most effective scope within translation studies. Media orientation, as referred to by Orero (2004, p. viii), has promoted the need for audiovisual translators in the market of media translation jobs. Paradoxically, however, relevant research in AVT studies drawing on a social-cultural approach is still timid. Díaz-Cintas (2012a, p. 281) states: “There are, of course, works on AVT that are firmly rooted in the principles of the cultural turn, but these are still in minority”.

In the context of political translation, in particular, only a limited range of outstanding studies—specifically branching from the *Manipulative School*—have been interested in translation as an example representing a conflict between different cultures. It remains necessary, therefore, to conduct more research concerning “the semiotics and hermeneutic problems translation poses” (Alvarez & Vidal, 1996, p. 2), especially in its audiovisual productions. Díaz-Cintas’s (2012a) paper *Clearing the Smoke to See the Screen* is one of those few, but prominent, studies concerned with AVT and, more specifically, with subtitling. Drawing on a critical and methodological approach in tackling the issue of manipulation in AVT, Díaz-Cintas (ibid., p. 279) argues that “AVT should be pushed beyond its traditionally parochial linguistic sphere by focussing more on unmasking the rationale behind ideologically motivated changes

and by contextualising them within a wider social-cultural environment”. He urges other researchers to highlight the central choices controlled by power, ideology, and language, and the potential connections between them that could all be concealed from people (2012a, p. 283). In so doing, as he argues, scholars may “clear the ideological smoke screen that confounds the original message in an attempt to see the silver screen behind” (ibid.).

Stemming from the same school, Pérez-González (2014) also undertakes an exploration of the role played by amateur subtitlers in selecting, subtitling and disseminating political news interviews, which are congruent with the narrative they adopt about the international relationships specifically between the Arab world and the West. Pérez-González attempts to increase awareness of the role played by the involved audiovisual mediators in digital media productions, since the latter has increasingly changed into a non-linear role due to technological developments. For the purpose of explaining the issues highlighted in his paper, he uses a case study of political interviews subtitled by amateur mediators.

Baker’s (2006a) study, praised by Annie Brisset, David Johnson, Dirk Delabastita, Ian Mason and Susan Petrilli (Baker, 2006a), focuses on the role of translators and patrons. She (2006a) unprecedentedly contributes to the research on translation studies with a new type of theorisation based on the social framework of narrative theory originally developed in social studies by Somers (1997) and Somers & Gibson (1994). With a partial focus on AVT, the narrative theory (2006, 2005, 2007, 2010) helped her investigate the socio-cultural role of translators and its effectiveness on the target culture. The narrative theory assisted her in exploring manipulation processes, not only at the textual level but even at the paratextual and contextual levels of translation by using the narrative strategies of selecting and reframing political texts in audiovisual mass media⁵.

⁵ Baker’s narrative theory will be discussed in detail in Chapter Three.

In support of the socio-cultural perspective, Baker (2016), in her article “Message to Colleagues in Translation Studies”, urges researchers to reconceptualise media translation realistically and critically, and to abandon the “well-worn” metaphor of translation as a bridge-building process. In reference to political media translation—in particular, with a focus on MEMRI’s translations—she (2016) argues that the conventional perception of translation as an intercultural communication is no longer persuasive, but should rather be perceived as an important factor “at the heart of the current struggle for world domination and ... openly used as a political tool in an increasingly violent and conflictual world” (ibid.).

Stemming from both Díaz-Cintas (2012a) and Baker’s (2006a) works, the present study will attempt to tackle the technical and ideological manipulation in political subtitling with reference to the selection of subtitling strategies associated with the recontextualisation/reframing of Arabic narratives⁶.

Suffice it to say, in sum, that the cultural turn has helped scholars of literary and AVT studies “recognise the importance of understanding the manipulatory processes that are involved in media textual production” (Bassnett, 1998, p. 136). Bassnett (ibid., p. 123) further advocates that studying the manipulation processes of texts would explain

how a text is selected for translation, for example, what role the translator plays in that selection, what role an editor, publisher or patron plays, what criteria determine the strategies that will be employed by the translator, how a text might be received in the target system (Bassnett, 1998, p. 23).

For this reason, the following section is dedicated to reviewing a range of concepts related to media translation, with a particular focus on political translation and subtitling, and highlighting the relationship between them. It discusses the notions of “translation as rewriting and manipulation”, “technical manipulation vs ideological

⁶ The theorisation related to this framework of investigation will be discussed in Chapters Two and Three.

manipulation” in AVT, and “media production and the processes of recontextualisation”. Additionally, it discusses various patterns of ideological manipulations through several examples taken from translations of official political media organisations.

1.3 Ideology and Manipulation/Recontextualisation Processes of Translation

1.3.1 Ideology, Translation/AVT and Political Media

Ideological features embedded implicitly or explicitly in any intercultural interactions are not a modern phenomenon, but are as old as translation itself, which has been an absolutely indispensable instrument for those interactions throughout history. Fawcett (1998, p. 106) emphasises that “an ideological approach to translation can be found in some of the earliest examples of translation known to us”, and “throughout the centuries, individuals and institutions applied their particular beliefs to the production of certain effects in translation” (ibid., p. 107). Regarding its relationship with translation, Lefevere identifies ideology as “the conceptual grid that consists of opinions and attitudes deemed acceptable in a certain society at a certain time, and through which readers and translators approach texts (1998, p. 48).

Following Lefevere (1992) and other theorists mentioned above, many scholars (e.g., Alvarez & Vidal, 1996; Nord, 2003) no longer look at translation as a linguistic transfer from one language into another but as a cultural mediation controlled by ideological considerations. They argue that translation has never been counted as a neutral activity (e.g., Hatim & Mason, 2005, p. 120; Díaz-Cintas, 2012a, p. 291), but rather as a subjective process in which translators are part of the social context upon which they perform. Therefore, translating is an ideological activity (Hatim & Mason, 2005, p. 121; Schäffner, 2003, p. 23).

This socio-cultural perspective has enshrined an inseparable connection between translation and ideology, which Schäffner (2003, p. 23) designates as multifarious, in the sense that “the choice of a source text and the use to which the subsequent target text is put is determined by the interest, aims, and objectives of social agents”. Nord (2003, p. 111) also argues that, in translation, “almost any decision is – consciously or unconsciously – guided by ideological criteria”. Bearing

this in mind, as Alvarez & Vidal (1996, p. 5) suggest, would enable us to understand and appreciate the importance of being aware of the ideology that triggers and controls the translation.

According to Van Dijk (1985b, p. 43), ideological constraints can generally be recognised implicitly through the translators' personal beliefs and attitudes or explicitly through the society's values and ethos, which gives patrons the authority to restrain the translation practice. Lefevere (2003, p. 14) argues that amongst the powerful restrictions opposing translators' free will is the ideology imposed "by patrons, the people or institutions who commission or publish translations". Lefevere (2017, p. 12) describes these patrons as "the powers that can further or hinder the reading, writing, and rewriting of literature". He asserts that "nobody ever speaks or writes in complete freedom" (1983, p. 25); rather, it is the power that determines what and how to write or translate. He defines patronage as "any kind of force that can be influential in encouraging and propagating, but also in discouraging, censoring and destroying works of literature" (1984, p. 92).

Being the ideological power of both individuals (i.e., subtitlers) and translation institutions (i.e., Monitor Mideast, PMW, and MEMRI), which stands behind the production of translations, "patronage helps to consolidate the study of extralinguistic factors connected to the socio-economic and ideological forces that permeate all social interactions, including AVT" (Díaz-Cintas, 2012a, p. 283). It is in this context that the present study dedicates Chapter Six (of the narrative analysis) to investigate the ideological considerations that stand behind the topic and strategy selection and narrative reframing/manipulation.

Regarding what Díaz-Cintas (Díaz-Cintas, 2012a, p. 284) describes as "tension" between ideology and linguistics, the socio-cultural perspective highlights the more influential function, which ideology—unlike linguistics—could have in translation. Compared to linguistics, Tymoczko (2010, p. 216) likewise argues that ideology "resides not simply in the text translated, but in the voicing and stance of the translator, and in its relevance to the receiving audience". The latter aspects are stimulated and controlled by "the translator's cultural and ideological affiliation" (Tymoczko, 2010, p. 216). In other words, ideology in translation can function in the

body of the target text as well as, at a broader level, in its context, which includes the less identifiable constraints imposed on translation practitioners (e.g., subtitlers), such as their own ideology, their patrons' authority, or the censorship power. Patrons' ideologies have authority, as a commissioner of the translation, to determine the strategy and degree of manipulation required to serve the patron's agenda. Focusing on the contextual multifunctionality of ideology, Xiao-Jiang (2007, pp. 63–65) argues that, in addition to the political purposes it serves, ideology also determines the selection of the text to be translated, the translation strategy to be adopted, and controls the dissemination of specific translated texts.

Hatim & Mason (2005) further propose an essential distinction between what they designate as the translation of ideology and the ideology of translating. The former represents how ideologies manifesting in the source message can be tackled: in a sense, whether or not they appropriately render to target message receivers. The latter represents the basic orientations of translators controlled by certain ideologies “in terms of what is familiar (and then unchallenging) to the dominant culture” (Hatim & Mason, 2005, pp. 119–122). These two notions are closely connected, as clearly noticed, for instance, in the translation practices conducted under the control of totalitarian regimes (*ibid.*, p. 119), as will be demonstrated by examples in the subsection “Translation/Subtitling of Media Political Texts” below.

Likewise, ideology involves, albeit mostly implicitly, even in the most recent technological mode of translation: AVT. Like literary translation, audiovisual translation has also been counted as an influential channel of transferring and maintaining ideology, especially in political mass media. However, in terms of textual structure, audiovisual media, with their translations, are more ideologically permeated. From a communicative view, audiovisual media in media-oriented societies has been counted as an ideal and influential channel that not merely delivers facts, but also facilitates the spread of ethics, assumptions, and stereotypes (Díaz-Cintas, 2012a, p. 281). Díaz-Cintas adds that through its audiovisual translation, media audiovisual productions “can contribute greatly to perpetuating certain racial stereotypes, framing ethnic and gender prejudices, and presenting viewers with out-dated role models and concepts of good and bad seen as rigid, diametrically opposed” (*ibid.*).

Translation, in general, is a vital technique by which a particular message is imposed while the power associations that produce that message are obscured. For instance, the identification of censorial forces in AVT can be less straightforward than in literary translation. Where literary translation is concerned, it is possible to identify censorship: for example, when the novels of Emile Zola were first translated into English, the source text was considerably minimised and modified by both publishers and translators. Yet, where AVT is concerned, it is less directly possible to identify censorship: when films are translated, certain technical constraints (e.g., space in subtitling or lip synchronising in dubbing) can be exploited as a tool of eliminating parts considered inappropriate. This will always be the reason for censorship and is the ever-widening landscape of political correctness. Interestingly, some countries (often dictatorships) have developed dubbing in the AVT industries rather than subtitling in order to conceal censorship and reinforce their totalitarian governments.

Governments aside, political activists as “local empowerments” resort to using subtitling as a “*pièce de résistance*” to resist dominant ideologies and maintain self-identity (Pé rez Gonzá lez, 2010, 2014). The reasons behind this are, first, because subtitling helps them resist the ultimately dominant censorial forces set by authorities (presumably totalitarian regimes) on media. Second, because subtitling is “fast, inexpensive, flexible and easy to produce” (Díaz-Cintas, 2012a, pp. 288–299). An example of this is the *Mosireen Project*, a non-profit media organisation based in Cairo and launched during the Egyptian revolution by Egyptian activists in 2011. They collect short documentary films, which are basically in Arabic, and search for translators who can voluntarily subtitle them into different languages so that they might be able to deliver their voice and society’s plight internationally. This organisation chose to use subtitling as a tool to avoid the inevitable attempts to manipulate their films via dubbing under the pretext of state control, and to confront the prevalent discourse of the dominant ideology (Díaz-Cintas, 2012a, pp. 288–299).

1.3.2 Translation as Rewriting and Manipulation

The very phantasm of the faithful translator both obscures and hints at the degree to which the equivalence of a source text and its translation is a matter of faith rather than evidence, ideology rather than technique — inevitably,

given the aporia that structures translation. (Seidman 2006, p. 9, as cited in Simon, 2012. p. 8)

Before reflecting on the manipulative role translators play as socio-cultural mediators, it seems significant to refer, here, to the public's ideal depiction of the creditable and faithful role translators play as merely innocent message transmitters to the readership. Such a depiction comes from the fact that "nations have always felt they needed some person or persons they could trust enough to entrust him or her with the task of translating" (Lefevere, 2003, p. 2). It also comes from the fact that the concept of "equivalence as sameness" across linguistic boundaries was created due to the independence on bilingual dictionaries to render meaning. Hence, "difference" had no place in this vision; every single utterance "should be rendered into another, and the success of that rendering was gauged in terms of the faithfulness of the copy to the original" (Bassnett, 1996, p. 19). Yet, this might not always be the case during the praxis of translating, as many scholars argue.

There is a lack of consensus between philosophical schools on what is to be designated as manipulation in translation. Some scholars consider translation and manipulation as synonyms, while some others do not. According to the post-structuralist viewpoint, the concept of translation as manipulation is precluded and can still be questionable. Arguably, a given text may have variant interpretations and, therefore, claiming that some of these interpretations are correct while others (including the translator's interpretations) are wrong seems to be unacceptable. Why is it the scholar who would understand the text while the translator would not? However, from the epistemologist viewpoint of the Manipulation School, translation is intrinsically a manipulation (Kramina, 2004, p. 37).

After the revolutionary theorisation of the cultural turn coined by Snell-Hornby (1988) and advocated by Lefevere (1992) and Bassnett & Lefevere (1998), translating has become "a matter of adjusting and manipulating a ST so as to bring the TT into line with a particular model ... to secure social acceptance" (Alvarez & Vidal, 1996, p. 2). As put forward mainly by Lefevere (1992), translation equals manipulation. Bassnett and Lefevere (2003, p. xi) argue that translating is obviously a process where an original text is rewritten and, through any process of rewriting,

whatsoever its purpose, specific ideologies and emotions are involved. This is how the original text is being manipulated so that it functions appropriately in a particular way and a particular society (2003, p. xi).

Consequently, notions of subjectivity, biasedness, and unfaithfulness in the process of translating emerged after those of objectivity, unbiasedness and faithfulness had been abandoned. Nord, for instance, assumes that the “‘objective translator’ does not exist” (2003, p. 111). Continuing the same argument, though more harshly, Dimitriu (cited in Doorslaer, 2010, p. 206), states that translators, as social agents, “are never ‘innocent’”, as there is always intention behind their selection of the text, strategy, and place and time of dissemination. As confirmed by Alvarez & Vidal (1996, p. 2), the translator/subtitler is “artificially” able to determine the context by which a given text is to be received. He or she may have the authority to manipulate the politics, culture, and literature to be appropriate for the target audience. From a socio-cultural perspective, such an intervention is essential for indicating the importance of reassessing translation more critically. As argued by Bassnett (1996, p. 22), “once considered a subservient, transparent filter through which a text could and should pass without adulteration, the translation can now be seen as a process in which intervention is crucial”.

Politically speaking, the cultural turn in translation studies has made an “enlarged” perspective of translation, proposing that, for a full engagement in the powers of its historical moment, translation is expected to be an unfriendly word functioning in a mediating practice of writing at the crossroads. Therefore, translations must be recognised as “cultural artefacts”, which represent not only the need for interconnections but also the states of “rivalry and tension” (Simon, 2012, p. 8). In a like manner, Munday (2016, p. 212) depicts translation as “the battleground and exemplification of the postcolonial context”. He argues that “the central intersection of translation studies and postcolonial theory is that of power relations” (2016, p. 210). Within these power relations, Niranjana (1992, p. 2) confronts how translation into English has been exploited by the colonial power to rewrite a narrative of the East through an embeddedness of the coloniser’s ideology. She therefore considers

translation as a process that “shapes, and takes shape within, the asymmetrical relations of power that operate under colonialism” (1992, p. 2).

Following the postcolonial theorist Robert Young, Baker (2016) asserts a new academic trend that no longer considers translation as only a tool of intercultural communication but also as a manipulative tool associated closely with the current political issues of power and dominance. Translation and politics, as well as translators and politicians, together, play a significant role in practices that have a socio-political or translational-political nature. In these very practices, the translator him/herself is, again, seen as a rewriter. Dimitriu (cited in Doorslaer, 2010, p. 206) argues that “translators have become increasingly aware of the power involved in the selection of texts and in the choice of translation strategies. Heightened awareness of this complex process inspires confidence: the translator as co-author/re-writer determines the implicit meaning of both original and final version”.

It can also be argued that AVT, like literary translation, is a rewriting and manipulative process because, through it, ideology, as mentioned above, is assumed to be the factor that determines what is to be translated and how to translate it (Díaz-Cintas, 2012a, p. 284). Yet, manipulation in AVT is an ambiguous concept (*ibid.*, p. 285). Unlike literary translation, AVT has technical conventions (i.e., visual, temporal and spatial constraints), which subtitlers, for example, attempt to manipulate to produce better subtitling for the intended audience. For this reason, modifications in the source text are made using various strategies, such as deletion, substitution or, possibly (though rarely), an addition of particular items, at times; hence, manipulation, in this case, can simply be justified. These strategies, besides others, can yet be utilised for an implicit or explicit ideological consideration rather than for immediately recognisable technical ones. The questions to be raised here and that need to be answered later would be: is manipulation in AVT always technical, or could it sometimes—if not often—be ideological? In this respect, Díaz-Cintas similarly points out:

In AVT, visual, time and space constraints should not serve as an excuse for toning down or leaving out controversial or sensitive elements present in the original dialogue, such as expletives, blasphemies, sexual references, or political comments. However, the reality is that these technical limitations and

diasemiotic differences can often be misconstrued and taken advantage of quite openly, as has been the case in censorial regimes, both in the past and nowadays, by using them as a shield to justify certain unpalatable solutions. (2012a, p. 285)

In light of this argument, the present study aims to further investigate the motive (whether technical or ideological) behind the manipulation in political subtitling, concerning the selection and reconstruction of certain MENA political narratives, contextually and paratextually, as well as the parallel selection and exploitation of certain subtitling strategies for manipulating/reframing those narratives textually⁷.

The following section will discuss the critical relationship between media and politics, providing several examples that show how a political text, due to ideological affiliations, could intentionally be subject to processes of recontextualisation, and to what extent these processes could, as a result, affect politicians and the public.

1.3.3 Political Media and Recontextualisation Processes

“In addition to the state and the public, the media belong to the main actors in political communication. The media has, in fact, been called the ‘fourth estate’” (Schäffner & Bassnett, 2010, p. 3). Media generate a variety of topics in general, yet, the political genre, specifically, has been given greater attention and priority over other media genres. In print media (i.e., journalism), for instance, politics conventionally occupies the texts of the first pages of formal newspapers. Political texts usually are attached with editorials and comments, which do not adopt objectivity when reporting on political issues. Instead, they provide assessments that can have consequential effects on public opinion and decision-making circles. The publication of specific texts has occasionally led to critical political consequences. The Watergate scandal, in which investigations forced senior politicians to resign, together with the other scandal

⁷ Examples will be analysed and discussed in Chapters Five and Six.

concerning the expenses of British MPs in 2009, are both cases in point (Schäffner & Bassnett, 2010, p. 4).

Although the intervention of newspapers' leaders, in the form of editorials and comments, are meant to provide extra information—which is, in fact, an assessment of the political event—the event itself is barely sufficiently presented. Such interventions (whatever their form) are typically undertaken through a process of recontextualising an original text (Schäffner & Bassnett, 2010, p. 5). As defined by Blackledge (2005, p. 121), the term *recontextualisation* refers to “the process of reformulating a previous utterance in a new generic context, so that its potential meaning and interpretation is affected”. That said, media reports and the process of recontextualisation are strongly linked to each other. Whenever media reports recirculate any political statements or actions in political events, the process of recontextualisation normally takes place. In this respect, Schäffner & Bassnett (2010, p. 6) argue that “as communicative events move along the political and media chain, they are transformed”. This includes the transformation of statements, opinions, and arguments by means of different strategies, such as assessment (as in the Watergate scandal), addition, deletion, and perhaps repositioning and substitution of the original texts (*ibid.*, pp. 5–6).

Transformation, regardless of its form, is never arbitrary. The occurrence of any of its forms is “dependent on the goals, values and interests of the context into which the discursive practice is being recontextualised” (Blackledge, 2005, p. 122). Van Dijk (1988, p. 118) also argues that “any transformation of source texts into news texts must involve subjective or group-based (professional as well as ideological) norms and values”. Norms and values causing transformation in political texts are more easily identifiable than in other types of media texts. As argued by Schäffner (2003, p. 23): “In political texts, ideological aspects are, of course, particularly prominent”.

It seems important here to indicate the awareness of the public; in that merely a minority are able to identify recontextualisation processes, in contrast to the inability of the majority to determine bias in media propaganda. Paul & Elder (2006, p. 2) argue that only “relatively few are able to detect one-sided portrayals of events or seek out

alternative sources of information and opinion to compare to those of their mainstream news media". They further add that the vast majority of citizens nowadays are under the control of their local and national media outlets due to a lack of critical thinking (Paul & Elder, 2006, p. 2). For politicians, on the other hand, it seems that they are well aware of the subtle interventions the media outlets undertake when reporting on their statements and actions.

In sum, when the media reports on politics, they conventionally are controlled by individual and/or institutional ideologies and interests, which inevitably involve recontextualisation processes (Schäffner & Bassnett, 2010, p. 8). The decision to prioritise objectivity, unbiasedness, and faithfulness, or otherwise, seems to be entirely within the authority of media professionals and the media institutions for which they work. Additionally, reporting from a native language at local or national levels is no different from at the international level. In the latter, information could be more affected and exposed to distortion in light of the incompatibility of world languages and cultures. Thus, via the process of translating (be it print or audio-visual), media information is more likely to be subject to ideological manipulation to conform to the target audience's ideology and culture. Ideological manipulation, whether overt or covert, is an inevitable strategy that has always existed (Schäffner 2003, p. 23) and, therefore, should receive special attention in academic research.

The following section will highlight the strong relationship between the international scope of the media and media translation/subtitling of political texts, considering the commonalities between them in transforming the source message in favour of certain ideologies at the expense of maintaining objectivity and faithfulness. To this end, it will discuss, through examples, some of the transformation strategies adopted in literary translation and, more specifically, in the AVT modes of interpreting, subtitling and voice-over.

1.3.4 Manipulation/Recontextualisation of Political Translation/AVT

In their volume *Translation, Power, Subversion*, Alvarez & Vidal describe translation from a political point of view:

Translation always implies an unstable balance between the power one culture can exert over another. Translation is not the production of text equivalent to another text, but rather a complex process of reviewing that runs parallel both to the overall view of language and of the “Other” people have throughout history; and to the influences and the balance of power that exist between one culture and another. (1996, p. 4)

Since the emergence of the globalisation era, mass media, thanks to the indispensable aid of translation, has played a vital role in global communication and its mutual exchanges at all levels. With a particular focus on a political level, certain information can yet be subject, for whatever reason, to disclosure. Other information, in turn, can be hidden and perhaps banned from being disseminated (Schäffner & Bassnett, 2010, pp. 6–8), not to mention that information which, though disseminated, were subject to manipulation. Manipulation can sometimes be inevitable, especially when knowing that the dissemination of certain information may conflict with the norms, values, and ideologies of the disseminator and the audience. Besides its penetration in the mass media industry locally and nationally, manipulation, as mentioned above, has similarly (perhaps more widely) penetrated it internationally across linguistic boundaries. Therefore, the international level is also worthwhile to address because it provides a fertile ground where individual and institutional media producers (especially translators/subtitlers) crucially involve, via translation, in ideologically manipulating source texts, especially political texts (Schäffner 2003, p. 23).

The need for reconsidering such involvements has become significantly urgent because “most readers are unaware of the role played by translators in international news reporting” (Schäffner & Bassnett, 2010, p. 2). Media audiences are also unaware of the socio-cultural and socio-political role that translation plays in the mass media industry, when, in fact, “there is a direct, though usually invisible link between politics, media and translation” (ibid.). Thus, it seems worth mentioning some examples of those involvements to increase awareness of audiences in this connection, as shown below. As highlighted by Alvarez & Vidal (1996, p. 5): “It is essential to know what the translator has added, what he has left out, the words he has chosen, and how he has placed them”. Translators’ selections are never arbitrary, but they rather

disclose “a voluntary act that reveals his history and the socio-political milieu that surrounds him; in other words, his own culture and ideology” (Alvarez & Vidal, 1996, p. 5).

As far as AVT and, more specifically, its subtitling mode are concerned in the present study, one can argue that what applies in media literary translation in terms of ideological manipulations also applies, perhaps more widely, in media AVT. Díaz-Cintas, in this regard, asserts: “Compared to the literary world, audiovisual products are a lot more exposed to commercial forces, a fact that opens up additional opportunities for manipulation and for avenues of research” (2004, p. 28). Demonstrated examples below show how political speeches, interviews, and news can be subject to manipulation through different audiovisual modes (e.g., interpreting, voice-over, subtitling) of translation in favour of individual and institutional ideologies.

In 2017, the whole world witnessed the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) crisis and the US–Qatari crisis concerning terrorism and the funding of terrorists. In the aftermath, an Islamic Conference Summit (ICS), attended by the US president, Donald Trump, was held on 20 May 2017 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia discussing these matters. Following the event, Trump held a press conference immediately after his return to America. He commented on different political issues but mainly on his participation in the ICS, and the war against terrorism and its funders. Speaking about terrorism, Trump launched an attack on Qatar by making blunt statements accusing it of its continued funding of terrorism. Although Trump’s declarations are uttered squarely in a clear and slow tone, the Arabic interpreter of the Al-Jazeera channel seemed to be unfaithful. He did not transfer what Trump actually stated, violating the objectivity and unbiasedness expected by the target audience. He, instead, made several textual manipulations (presumably ideological) to probably serve the political agenda of his employers (i.e., the Al-Jazeera channel). The following table shows the version of Al-

Jazeera's interpreting⁸, including the original English text and the Arabic translation with its back translation:

Table 1

Al-Jazeera's Interpreting

English Source Text	Arabic Target Text	Back translation
Qatar, unfortunately, has historically been a funder of terrorism, at a very high level ...	إن دولة قطر كانت لديها علاقات جيدة بهذا الأمر ...	The state of Qatar has had good ties in this matter ...
they spoke to me about confronting Qatar over its behaviour ...	وقد تحدثوا لي وقالوا: أبات مواجهة تهت الدول القار بخصوص مواقفها ...	they spoke to me and said: (nonsense and unclear utterance) ... its attitudes ...
time has come to call on Qatar to end its funding. They have to end that funding and its extremist ideology ...	أنه حان الوقت لدعوة قطر لوقف هذه العمليات ...	Time has come to call on Qatar to stop these operations ...

As the event (i.e., the ICS) and its following press conference held by Trump had extensive international attention, many media institutions (especially those who address the Arab world) were racing to deliver the news instantaneously to the audience worldwide. RT (Russian Today) Arabic was among those institutions which broadcasted Trump's press conference live along with Arabic interpreting. Compared to Al-Jazeera's interpreter, the RT's interpreter had different choices that would have

⁸ Retrieved 22 January 2017, from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aupcjCEmKHw&t=182s>

probably served different political agendas. Yet, his translation happened to be more accurate and closer to what trump stated, and hence—intentionally or otherwise—more objective and faithful to the source text and the target audience. The following table shows the RT’s interpreting⁹, including the original English text and the Arabic translation with its back translation:

Table 2

RT's Interpreting

English Source Text	Arabic Target Text	Back Translation
Qatar, unfortunately, has historically been a funder of terrorism, at a very high level ...	دولة قطر للأسف تاريخيا كانت تمويل الإرهاب، وعلى مستويات عالية ...	The state of Qatar, unfortunately, has historically been funding terrorism, and at high levels
they spoke to me about confronting Qatar over its behave ...	تحدثوا إلي على مواجهة قطر على تصرفها	They spoke to me about the confrontation of Qatar over its behaviour
time has come to call on Qatar to end its funding. They have to end that funding and its extremist ideology ...	الوقت قد حان لدعوة قطر أن تنهي تمويلها، وعليهم إنهاء هذا التمويل ...	Time has come to call on Qatar to end its funding, and they have to end this funding

Given the existence of an environment conducive to self-oppression on behalf of the media, the recontextualisation process through translation can play a crucial role in manipulating political discourses. The term *recontextualisation* is chosen by Juliane

⁹ Retrieved 22 January 2017, from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3v8R5AqyKiE>.

House to define translation because it involves “taking a text out of its original frame and context and placing it within a new set of relationships and culturally conditioned expectations” (House, 2006, p. 356). From the ideological point of view, “the selection of a strategy is affected by the translator’s ideology constrained by authoritative bodies such as publishers, institutions, clients, and government, either implicitly or explicitly, representing different ideological positions” (Chung-ling, 2010). Translation strategies, such as deletion and alteration have been harnessed, with impunity, to serve political agendas. As aforementioned, Schäffner & Bassnett (2010, p. 3) argue that in “dictatorial societies, texts can be prevented from being made accessible to the public if they are not in line with the official ideology of the ruling political party”.

It is worth mentioning, in this regard, the linguistic distortions made by the official Iranian TV to the Arabic-Persian interpreting of the political speech of the former Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi. Morsi’s speech was delivered at the Non-Aligned Countries Summit held in Iran on 31 August 2012. Amongst the preparatory proceedings of the summit, there seemed to be an officially pre-prepared plan to transform Morsi’s speech and prevent some of his words from reaching the ears of the Iranian people, serving the political ideology of the Iranian regime. The interpreter of the official Iranian TV altered certain words, which resulted in distorting a significant part of what Morsi had actually stated, especially regarding the Syrian file. The following are some examples of these alterations explained in English:

When Morsi said: “Syrians are struggling for their freedom”, the Iranians heard something totally different through the Arabic-Persian translation. The Persian translation read: “Bahrainis are struggling for their freedom”: the ST word “Syrians” had been altered intentionally with the word “Bahrainis” in the TT. Also, when Morsi said: “and now the Syrian revolution on the unjust regime”, the Persian translation

read: “and now the Bahraini revolution on the unjust regime”: the ST word “Syrian” had, again, been altered intentionally with the word “Bahraini” in the TT.¹⁰

Due to the political and sectarian alliance with Assad’s Shia regime in Syria, the Iranian TV manipulated all Morsi statements that included references to Syria and the Syrian revolution. The interpreter, alternatively, opted for “Bahrain” and the “Bahraini uprising” in order to maintain interests and good ties with the Shia allies in Syria while striking the opposite Bahrain Sunni regime in favour of the protests led by the Bahraini Shiites in Bahrain¹¹.

As in the examples shown above, translating for dictatorial and oppressive regimes can be a critical, if not life-threatening task. A translator’s biasedness and unfaithfulness to the source text is most likely adherence to constraints enforced by the patron’s policies and ideologies rather than a mere resort to a personal choice. Manipulation, on this occasion, appears to be an unavoidable process that translators must make in compliance with the obligatory guidelines of the translation task, the breach of which could put their livelihood at risk.

It seems worthy to mention that ideological constraints could differ in terms of the degree of sensitivity and the consequences of negligence. In this regard, Lefevere (2003, p. 9) argues that it is true that translators are often subject to constraints, but not in “a mechanism universe in which they have no choice. Rather, they have the freedom to stay within the perimeters marked by the constraints, or ... to move beyond them”.

When translating audiovisual material, the process of recontextualisation can be carried out subtly due to what Díaz-Cintas (2012a) calls the “semiotic composite” of such material. A given news story provided by any news agency may arrive as only visual material with no apparent denotation of its context, which consequently allows

¹⁰ Retrieved 22 June 2017, from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pf18FccYJ1U>.

¹¹ Such a pattern of manipulation brings in the reframing strategy of repositioning participants of the original narratives, which will be elaborated on in Chapters Three and Six.

broadcasters to impose their connotation to create an entirely different context, utilising, for instance, the AVT mode of voice-over (Bignell, 1997, p. 128). Gurevitch (1991, p. 181) cited in Bignell (1997, p. 128) mentions, in this respect, an anecdote reported by a Worldwide Television News staff member in Tal Aviv, Israel. Film footage shot by a WTN cameraman, showing some uncrowded local beaches, was expected to attract European broadcasters, as most European countries suffered an extreme, cold winter. However, the Jordanian TV recontextualised the original context of film footage by exploiting the few numbers of people on the beaches to construct a different narrative. It added some linguistic signs accompanied by a voice-over in Arabic insinuating that Israeli tourism is declining.

Regarding subtitling, Boukhaffa (2017, p. 67) found out, in his analysis, that MEMRI's political subtitling exploited the imitation strategy for the preservation of religious-specific elements; religious signifiers, such as "Allah", meaning God, and "Jihad", meaning holy fight, are consistently preserved in the TT. The retainment of the signifiers' foreignness in the TTs could be attributed to implicit intentions of rendering the political discourse of the ST with a religious connotation in the TT. Hence, as he continues to argue, the manipulation could be ideological rather than technical, given in conclusion that "MEMRI's overall 'accurate' translations clearly demonstrate that technical constraints are of little importance" (ibid., p. 69). Unlike dubbing, subtitling is assumed by some political institutions to be the most authentic and faithful to the original message; nevertheless, subtitlers are still arguably thought of by others as source text transformers. Cazdyn (2010, p. 456), for instance, confirms that original text is invariably manipulated in all subtitles. He further exemplifies: "The Pentagon chose subtitling over dubbing in order to lend greater authenticity to the original. But with so many viewers familiar with the basic concepts of video production, the status of the original itself is called into question" (2010, p. 456).

When investigating the transformation of the source message—via literary or audiovisual translation—it seems to be crucial to consider the context. The latter, as confirmed by Alvarez & Vidal (1996), should continuously be considered because "nothing has meaning in 'isolation'", but rather "the problem is always, what kind of context" (ibid., p. 3). Regarding subtitling, "context often gives dialogue great weight"

through identifying essential components, such as style, scene tense, and humour, Bannon (2013, p. 60) argues. There are also the textual and paratextual levels (e.g., titles, introductions) at which verbal and non-verbal elements need to be appropriately rendered into the target text to guarantee the safety and best understanding of the original context. These two levels, however, can be exploited to help recontextualise the source message in favour of the target ideology. The recontextualisation process can sometimes be carried out implicitly by manipulating the non-verbal elements of the source text: cutting specific scenes from the original video and cobbling them together in a new clip to display a differently reframed narrative. The verbal elements of the text and paratext can also play a vital role in this process. For clarity, the following examples will show how subtitled media can be subject to different patterns of manipulation at both textual and paratextual levels.

(Example 1) Manipulation of Verbal Elements at Textual Level. The following example is an extract mentioned by Mona Baker as evidence of what she describes as “blatant mistranslations” (2010, p. 348) in subtitles. The source text is a video clip selected, subtitled into English, and widely disseminated by MEMRI (Middle East Media Research Institute) under the title: *Mickey Mouse Character on Hamas TV Teaches Children about Islamic Rule of the World*.¹²

The video clip shows a Mickey Mouse character named Farfour and a young girl, Saraa, in a children’s programme called *The Pioneers of Tomorrow* chatting with a young girl, Sanabel, on the phone. As seen below, square brackets, which include the back translations, refer in English to what Sanabel said in Arabic next to the relevant MEMRI subtitles. The English subtitling is completely different from what could be heard in Arabic and, therefore, it might carry a negative implication in favour of targeted agendas. The paraphrasing strategy adopted for subtitling Sanabel’s

¹² Retrieved 20 May 2018, from <https://www.memri.org/tv/mickey-mouse-character-hamas-tv-teaches-children-about-islamic-rule-world>

conversation could be deemed an ideological rather than a technical pattern of manipulation, since no technical challenge seems to be hindering the translation of what she exactly said.

Sanabel, a young girl on phone: “I will shoot”. [I’m going to draw a picture.]

Sanabel: “We want to fight”. [We want to resist.]

Sanabel: “We will annihilate the Jews”. [The Jews are shooting us.]

(Example 2) Manipulation of Verbal Elements and Non-Verbal Element at Paratextual Level. The example is taken from MEMRI’s subtitled and disseminated video clip titled, *Libyan Leader Mu`ammar Al-Qadhafi Explains His Objection to the Union for the Mediterranean: Libyans Cannot Form a Union with Europeans Who Walk Around Naked*.¹³

The original video, a political speech delivered by Al-Qadhafi, seems to be manipulated ideologically. MEMRI recontextualised the source narrative by adding a different title (a verbal element) that was carefully selected from a statement uttered only during 19 seconds of the whole six-minute-long video clip. The narrative feature of selection appropriation (proposed in Baker 2006a) seems to have been exploited here. Although Al-Qadhafi tried to be rational explaining the political, cultural and religious obstruction for Libyans to accept the Union, none of these obstructions was selected to form the title. The irritating statement mentioned in the title of the TT was only an example of cultural difference and does not represent the whole rational speech, nor does it prevent, if alone, Al-Qadhafi and Libyans from accepting the Union. Al-Qadhafi also mentioned Libya’s good ties with many participating countries in the conference, thus, the headline could have been formed in a more

¹³ Retrieved 20 May 2018, from <https://www.memri.org/tv/libyan-leader-muammar-al-qadhafi-explains-his-objection-union-mediterranean-libyans-cannot-form>

moderate and reasonable way: a political reason, for instance, could have been more appropriate here. However, the cultural example seems to have reframed the source message in a way that might accentuate the narrative of anti-Western hatred against Europeans. Moreover, the TT audience would not accept the image of portraying Europeans as commonly walking around naked because this may not be the case and certainly not what Al-Qadhafi meant in his speech.

1.4 Conclusion

Mass media, especially TV, has been counted as the most influential instrument of intercultural communication. Despite the global impact—described as a double-edged weapon—that it has on our perception, attention towards the role of translation has manifested only recently, since 1995. Additionally, many scholars (e.g., Schäffner & Bassnett 2010) show their dissatisfaction with the current research of translation studies that is, though increasing, still scarce, particularly in investigating the factual practices of media translation in political institutions. With respect to AVT, scholars (e.g., Gambier & Gottlieb 2001) question whether existing translation studies research encompasses different media translation modes (e.g., subtitling, dubbing), urging researchers to apply new methodologies and theories to investigate media translation more effectively. For instance, social-cultural theories, suggested by media scholars (e.g., Curran & Gurevitch 2000) for media research, have also been advocated by translation scholars for the investigation of media translation (e.g., Bassnett & Lefevere 1998) and, more specifically, of their AVT (e.g., Díaz-Cintas 2012a). The AVT studies seem to be perfectly related to this theoretical framework, in light of the richness of the cultural loads it delivers and its semiotic composite, in which the linguistic structure is only one part of an integrated whole.

Media and media translation (i.e., print and AVT) are socio-cultural and socio-political roles, in which social agents conventionally select, manipulate, and disseminate various genres of information. Concepts of objectivity and unbiasedness are unlikely to always find room in the pursuit of translation. A given media outlet may succeed at achieving objectivity by collecting a large amount of authentic information and evidence from reliable sources; however, the issue of selectivity may,

in turn, compromise its credibility and objectivity because of choosing a party (e.g., country, region, person, topic) to shed light on at the expense of another party. When the media reports on political news and events locally or nationally, in a native language or internationally in a foreign language through translating, they often transform original stories in favour of specific policies and ideologies. Translation, therefore, is no longer thought of as merely a literal linguistic transfer but rather a broader process of mediation in which the political, cultural, religious, and self-serving commercial attitudes of translators and their institutions are echoed. Translators are likely to be challenged by the individual and institutional ideologies of their patrons, and, therefore, they ought to choose either to be faithful or a traitor to the source text. Once failed, the source text would most likely be distorted while the target text (assuming a level of awareness from the text receivers) would be perceived as biased and unfaithfully rendered.

In the political context of subtitling, subtitlers are responsible for their choices. If they adhere to credibility and strip themselves of intellectual and ideological affiliations that may hinder their work, the result will be a balanced text, sound from distortion. The recipient will regard the subtitler's work as objective and unbiased, even if some changes are made to the source text, as long as those changes fall within the context of technical necessity. The alternative, however, will lead to unpalatable choices of translations that, even if they deceive the public, certainly would not escape scholarly criticism.

Unlike linguistics, ideology (e.g., to the benefit of commercial ends) exceeds the limitation of the text to manifest in broader dimensions of the whole translation process, including paratext (e.g., titles, introductions, images, cover pages) and context (e.g., selection of topics, time, and place of dissemination). In the translation of audiovisual texts, ideological manipulation seems to be unavoidable and more prominent than in the translation of other text genres. The reason is that AVT is a complex process where the semiotic dimensions of the original message can be manipulated to recontextualise a new message congruent with the TT ideology and culture (further discussed in the following chapters). An awareness of such aspects would help identify the less recognisable strategies and levels at which media

producers, including translators/subtitlers, are able (if they want), or actually enforced to camouflage media narratives with or without necessarily making any linguistic changes in the body of the text.

Chapter Two

Audiovisual Translation and Subtitling: A Foundational Discussion for Micro-Level Analysis

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is dedicated to reviewing the literature on AVT, in general, and subtitling, in particular. It is divided into five sections. Section 2.1 introduces the chapter. Section 2.2 reviews the terminology of media language transfer and its semiotic characteristics and is divided into two subsections: Subsection 2.2.1 discusses the unconventional, influential dimensions of ideology and culture that have the potential to “take translation beyond its traditionally parochial linguistic sphere by contextualising it within a wider socio-cultural context” (Díaz-Cintas, 2012a, p. 285); Subsection 2.2.2 discusses the different types of AVT.

Section 2.3 is divided into five subsections that are particularly concerned with subtitling: Subsection 2.3.1 provides the relevant categorisations, definitions, and features of subtitling; Subsection 2.3.2 discusses the conventional subtitling constraints categorised into *formal* (quantitative) constraints and *textual* (qualitative) constraints; Subsections 2.3.3/4/5 discuss the internal and external factors that lead to the utilisation of specific subtitling strategies at the expense of others, as well as discussing the motivation behind this selectivity, argued originally in Díaz-Cintas’s (2012a) notion of “technical manipulation vs ideological manipulation”¹⁴.

Section 2.4, divided into six subsections, explores the selection between subtitling and dubbing and to what extent various factors and constraints of preference can control it, especially in political translation. It also reconsiders, from a socio-political viewpoint, the traditional notion of subtitling authenticity, its relationship to

¹⁴ Within the socio-cultural context of narrative theory, I will elaborate on the multifaceted subjective notion of selectivity in media and AVT in Chapter Three, pp. 137–39.

ideological motives and political status, and the consequential manipulations of this relationship. Section 2.5 explores the most prevalent factors in English-speaking media, using MEMRI as an example that specialises in translating political video clips from Arabic into English. Section 2.6 reviews the concluding remarks of the chapter.

2.2 Audiovisual Translation

Unlike traditional forms of communication (such as magazines, books, radio, cassette tapes), the audiovisual form of communication is more likely to attract its audience because it makes a highly intricate message enjoyable and entertaining to communicate. This is, mainly, attributed to “the composite, semiotic nature ... that gives it the edge over simply written communication” (Díaz-Cintas, 2010, p. 105). In other words, the advantage that the dual-functional mode of audiovisual materials has over single-functional modes is that it consists of a simultaneous occurrence of two communicative functions (i.e., audio and visual) on the screen, which conveys a more comprehensive message from producer to consumer. Nowadays, audiovisual productions of media are indispensable means of interlingual and intercultural communication. Since the introduction of the first audiovisual material in the 1920s (Chiaro, 2009, p. 141), such materials have greatly influenced our societies, and, consequently, required the utilisation of new forms of translation. As an essential means of audiovisual media, cinematography, for instance, has been considered the most entertaining and powerful form of mass media communications. The translation of its productions is known as TV translation, film translation and, most officially, as audiovisual translation (AVT) (Matkivska, 2014, p. 28).

The “unsettled terminology” of AVT, for some time, was not unanimously adopted by scholars but substituted by other multifarious terms such as *Constrained Translation*, *Film Translation*, *Film and TV Translation*, *Screen Translation*, *Media Translation*, and *Film Communication* (Orero, 2004, p. vii). However, after many years of terminological disarray, which introduced all these (and other) provisional terms, including the recent term of *(Multi)Media Translation* proposed by Gambier & Gottlieb (2001), the term *Audiovisual Translation* (e.g., Luyken et al., 1991; Baker & Hochel, 1998) still gains undeniable approval in, at a minimum, academic circles

(Chaume, 2012, p. 2). Therefore, the present study adopts the term *Audiovisual Translation* (AVT) in Karamitroglou's (2000) sense.

2.2.1 AVT Semiotics and the Constraints of Ideology and Culture: Internal and External Dimensions

Translating screen products is very different from translating print products because the nature of the former (be it film, TV programme, or documentary) is totally audiovisual (Chiaro, 2009, p. 142). In this sense, Chaume (2004, p. 16) points out that “an audiovisual text is a semiotic construct comprising several signifying codes that operate simultaneously in the production of meaning”. In this semiotic structure—also labelled as “semiotic composite” by Díaz Cintas (2012a)—there are two main channels that must simultaneously be operating in any audio-visual communication: “the acoustic channel through air vibrations and the visual channel through light waves” (Karamitroglou, 2000, p. 1).

On the one hand, are unillustrated books of a monosemiotic nature, and thus, “the translator is in control of the entire expression” (Gottlieb, 1994, p. 265). On the other hand, we have audiovisual texts, such as films, which are polysemiotic: they consist of integral codes, such as language, music, pictures, and perspective, that work together to achieve audiovisual communication with the optimal audience. Within this polysemiotic structure, Delabastita (1989, p. 199) differentiates between the visual and acoustic channels, suggesting the following categorisation: (a) visual presentation – verbal signs; (b) visual presentation – non-verbal signs; (c) acoustic presentation – verbal signs; (d) acoustic presentation – non-verbal signs.

From a translational point of view, Gottlieb (1994, p. 265; 1998, p. 245) similarly subsumes four simultaneous channels, which should be taken into consideration when translating polysemiotic material like films and TV programmes:

- (1) The verbal auditory channel, including dialogue, background voices, and sometimes lyrics;
- (2) The non-verbal auditory channel, including music, natural sound and sound effects;

- (3) The verbal visual channel, including superimposed titles and written signs on the screen;
- (4) The non-verbal visual channel: picture composition and flow.

Accordingly, AVT is a “multi-semiotic transfer” in which both verbal and non-verbal elements (e.g., pictures, sounds) of the source message have a significant value and effect for the target audience (Kenneth, 2009, p. vii). AVT is needed to be an integrally interlingual process that transfers the audio-visual verbal elements (heard or seen) to the target audience, along with an adequate synchronisation of the accompanied non-verbal elements. From a practical perspective, this complex, polysemiotic structure could impose an uncountable number of inherent challenges on the translator/subtitler, which hinder their audiovisual translation practice. Karamitroglou (2000, p. 104) similarly argues that “the number of possible audiovisual translation problems is endless and a list that would account for each one of them can never be finite”. In addition to the technical (e.g., tempo-spacial) constraints encountered conventionally in the manipulation of textual elements, “socio-cultural factors should not be overlooked as life-style and value systems of the people who are reflected in the film and TV programmes” (Kenneth, 2009, p. vii).

Through any audiovisual media product, audiences are involved in socio-cultural interactions whose impact does not simply stop by turning off the TV or putting the lights back on in the cinema. Audiovisual media can, rather, have an effect of continuous deliverance and enhancement of ideologies, representations, stereotypes, and narratives in their audience, long after watching their productions. The impact of such ideological/cultural-orientedness is usually unmarked during the time of broadcasting, only to be noticed later on in daily societal practices, including “fan culture, every day small talk, tabloid journalism, and so on” (Gambier, 2009, p. 40).

Translation/AVT plays a crucial role in facilitating these socio-cultural interactions across language barriers, but in a manner that, in most cases, ensures compatibility with the patron’s (e.g., political party) ideology, on the one hand, and the target audience’s ideology and culture, on the other. It is through what is called “cultural mediation of film translation” that new narratives about the other are being

framed, or, perhaps, other existing narratives are being more widely confirmed or reframed in favour of the target culture. This is “all a form of intervention”, as Baker (2008, p. 16) argues. For her, intervention can also mean proceeding with the mediation and being as “faithful” as possible in “speaking on behalf of another” but, at the same time, distancing yourself from their ideas, even challenging them directly” (ibid.).

Ideological and cultural dimensions can be identified not only at an internal level of the translated message but also at an external level. From a socio-cultural point of view, as Whiteman-Linsen (1992) argues, this implies that the translatable and untranslatable ideology/culture-specific load imposed on the audiovisual translator in the text is not the only matter of concern. Occasionally, if not always, the audiovisual translator may also be implicitly or explicitly instructed from “‘above’ (distributor, dubbing studio, and the censorship agencies ...) to alter other ‘foreign’ elements and culturally unfamiliar items to make them more palatable or attractive ... to the target language audience” (ibid., p. 125).

2.2.2 *Types of AVT*

Editing Luyken et al.’s (1991) and Gambier’s (1994) categorisations, Karamitroglou (2000, p. 3) introduced the following typology of AVT: (a) subtitling, (b) (lip-sync) dubbing, (c) narration (including voice-over) and (d) free commentary. Subtitling and dubbing are the two best-known and most prevalent amongst other audiovisual modes utilised in translating screen products (Baker & Hochel, 1998, p. 74). The less commonly used acoustic modes of screen translation are narration (including voice-over) and free commentary (Chiaro, 2009, p. 142). In subtitling, the original soundtrack is maintained while a written text is displayed on the screen to let the viewers understand what the characters concerned are saying. With dubbing, in turn, the original soundtrack of the source language is entirely, or at least, largely substituted in the target language by other speech and dialogue. In this process, one should pay great attention to lip-synchronisation in order to avoid the potential of inconsistency between the target acoustic edition and the on-screen speaking character

(Kilborn, 1993, pp. 642–643). As it is the main concern of the present study, subtitling will be discussed in detail in the following section.

2.3 Subtitling

The term “subtitling” does not only refer to the type of language conversion but also to another type of facility, which functions as sound recognition within the original language of the broadcast (Gottlieb, 1997, p. 310). The latter is typically operated within the dominant national language of nations, as is the case in countries like Germany, the US, and Japan (ibid.). British broadcasters also started to operate it in 1990, after they had recognised its importance as a principal tool of information accessibility for the deaf and hard-of-hearing audience (Linde & Kay, 1999, p. 10). For a more nuanced terminology, a distinction of subtitling typology is drawn on a linguistic and a technical basis.

2.3.1 *Subtitling Typology and Definition*

Linguistically, the translation of foreign language dialogue in a film is referred to as *interlingual subtitling*, while the visual representation of dialogue in the same language as that used in the film is referred to as *intralingual subtitling* (Cordella, 2007, p. 80). According to Gottlieb (1997, p. 311), intralingual subtitling, on the one hand, is divided into (1) subtitling of national films and programmes for the accessibility of deaf and hard-of-hearing, and (2) subtitling of foreign-language films and programmes for the facilitation of language learning. Interlingual subtitling, on the other hand, is “diagonal” in a sense that “the subtitler ‘crosses over’ from interpreting the spoken foreign-language dialogue to presenting a written domestic-language translation on the screen” (ibid.).

Technically, subtitles are either *open* (not optional) or *closed* (optional, displayed as teletext) (Gottlieb, 1998, p. 247). Open subtitle is further divided into (1) *cinema subtitles* displayed either as part of the film screening or separately, as in festival shows, and (2) *interlingual TV subtitles* displayed terrestrially and disseminated as part of the TV screening. Closed subtitle is also divided into (1) *intralingual TV subtitles*, provided as an optional service on the remote control for the

help of the deaf and hard-of-hearing, and (2) *interlingual television subtitles*, provided by satellite channels as an optional service enabling different language communities to simultaneously view alternative versions of the same broadcast (ibid.). For the purpose of the present study, interlingual subtitling will only be considered.

Díaz-Cintas & Remael define interlingual subtitling as

a translation practice that consists of presenting a written text, generally on the lower part of the screen, that endeavours to recount the original dialogue of the speakers, as well as the discursive elements that appear in the image (letters, inserts, graffiti, inscriptions, placards, and the like), and the information that is contained on the soundtrack (songs, voices off). (2007, p. 8)

Furthermore, subtitles are the visual, written texts of dialogues in films and TV programmes, synchronised with the audiovisual materials and often displayed at the bottom of the screen. Subtitles may also be used to provide additional information for the viewer. In the words of Gottlieb (1997, p. 311): “Subtitling can be defined as a (1) written, (2) additive, (3) synchronous type of translation of a (4) fleeting and (5) polysemiotic text type”.

- (1) The feature *written*—as opposed to uttered—excludes all other modes of AVT.
- (2) The feature *additive* refers to the addition of verbal elements on the screen translation, maintaining the authenticity of the source text.
- (3) The feature *synchronous* refers to the simultaneous matching of the translation to the original scene, which is dissimilar to interpreting simultaneity, where the interpreter drops a bit behind.
- (4) The term *fleeting* refers to the flowing style, which distinguishes the discourse of filmic media and exceeds the viewer’s capability to follow up.
- (5) The term *polysemiotic* indicates that the rendering of the source text in the target text incorporates only one of the various communicative channels of the audiovisual message (Gottlieb, 1997, p. 311).

From an audiovisual translational perspective, the polysemiotic structure of an audiovisual material can be distinguished as follows:

- (1) *Isosemiotic* structure, where the translated text is produced through the same communicative channel(s) of the original text (e.g., oral to oral).

(2) *Diasemiotic* structure, where the translated text is produced through a communicative channel that is different from that of the original text (e.g., oral to written) (Gottlieb, 1994, pp. 270–271).

In this sense, subtitling can be said to have a diasemiotic structure in which a written translation is added to the screen of the original speech. The distinctive feature of addition makes subtitling different from other AVT modes, which all operate with revoicing (*ibid.*). Generally speaking, it seems highly beneficial to understand these features and connect them to the present study investigation. Arguably, the subtitling features can, occasionally, be intentionally ignored to produce a more appropriate TT that suits specific ideological and political agendas¹⁵.

2.3.2 *Interlingual Subtitling Constraints*

Unlike literary translation, audio-visual translation involves technical constraints due to the polysemiotic nature of audiovisual materials. Subtitling, in particular, has its own constraints: being an additive, diasemiotic mode of AVT, it may exceed the expectations and abilities of translators at times. In the context of subtitling films and TV programmes, for instance, subtitlers come across various challenges that may hinder an appropriate rendering of the source text. The representation of original, spoken dialogues as coherent subtitles written within the limitation of the “semiotic conventions” (Delabastita, 1989, p. 203) of space and time is an example of these challenges, which often entails a simplification of the language in the subtitles. Subtitling constraints, according to Gottlieb (1992, p. 164), are mainly categorised into *formal* (quantitative) constraints and *textual* (qualitative) constraints.

Formal (quantitative) constraints. This type of constraint consists of (1) the time factor (the on-screen character is assumed to speak faster than the viewer reads);

¹⁵ Examples, which show subtitlers’ negligence of the ‘synchronous’ and ‘polysemiotic’ features of subtitling, will be demonstrated later in the analysis of Chapters Five and Six.

and (2) the space factor (with a maximum number of two lines, of around 35 characters each, on the screen). Time is a more relevant constraint than space (Gottlieb, 1992, p. 164). Díaz-Cintas (2012a, p. 284) alludes: “In the specific case of subtitling ..., the audience’s assumed reading speed is a key concept that will inform whether or not condensation or deletion of the original dialogue is needed”.

While the space factor can sometimes be seen as an advantage, the time factor can be a hurdle. The space factor, with a maximum quantity of 70 characters in two lines, allows subtitlers to translate even complicated dialogues in the target text (Gottlieb, 1992, p. 164). With a space size that can be increased to “keep [a] full two-liner of some 80 characters on screen” (Díaz-Cintas, 2012b, p. 276), the subtitler will be able to “minimise the need for original text reduction and omissions” (Karamitroglou, 2003, p. 2). The time factor, on the other hand, with only one second at the minimum and six seconds at the maximum, enforces the average subtitle viewer to quickly read these two lines before they disappear (Gottlieb, 1992, p. 164). Any effort to increase this period would entail splitting the subtitles into smaller frames (Díaz-Cintas, 2012b, p. 276), otherwise it can cause viewers—especially those with fast reading ability—to re-read the subtitle automatically (Karamitroglou, 2003, p. 3).

The reductive techniques (whether of condensation or deletion) of the source text are dependent on the key factor of “the viewer’s assumed reading speed”, as Díaz-Cintas (2012b, p. 284) argues. Some Belgian studies, for instance, have disproved the notion of slow-reading viewers: a wide range of audiences managed to read subtitles faster than the speaking speed (d’Ydewalle et al. 1985, cited in Gottlieb, 1992, pp. 164–165). Such findings may help subtitlers reduce the amount of information loss. If substantiated in future studies, they would lead to a whole reconsideration of the predominant notion of subtitling as “a necessarily reductive mode of verbal transmission” (ibid., p. 165). Yet, Gottlieb claims another effective factor that could determine the amount of reduction needed. Drawing on some examples he analyses in his research, he proves that even “a conscientious and talented subtitler is able to operate with a minimal loss of information, to the — often subconscious — delight of his audience” (ibid.).

Textual (qualitative) constraints. Due to its additive nature, “subtitles intrude into the picture (1) and challenge the dialogue (2)” (Gottlieb, 1992, p.165). At the same time, however, the audiovisual text, consisting of a picture, dialogue and sound effects, limits the subtitler’s freedom in two ways: first, there must be some correspondence on the screen between the spatial positioning and temporal cueing of the subtitles and “the static and dynamic visual features” of the film; second, the speaking speed, style and syntax, and order of the essential features in the auditory track must be reflected in the language of the subtitles (ibid.). The latter constraint is imposed by the diasemiotic nature of subtitle “in its migration from oral to written language” (Díaz-Cintas, 2012a, p. 284). Both types of constraints go together to show the importance of source text reduction. In this respect, Gottlieb puts it:

A large part of the reduction (still found) in subtitling follows directly from its diasemiotic nature; the deletion or condensation of redundant oral features is a necessity when crossing over from speech to writing — a language mode more concise than oral discourse. (2005, p. 19)

2.3.3 *Interlingual Subtitling Strategies (Technical vs Ideological)*

It seems beneficial, at the beginning of this section, to mention Gottlieb’s metaphor, which describes translators’ and subtitlers’ constrained work remarkably: “No matter whether we look at technical or literary translation, film subtitling or conference interpreting, most translators see themselves as common soldiers in the battlefield, rather than armchair strategists calmly considering their next move” (Gottlieb, 2005, p. 16). Within the socio-cultural context, the comparison of the subtitler with a soldier on a battlefield seems to be a profound analogy unwrapping many features of similarity. The soldier moves on the battlefield within various constraints, such as time, field terrains, and enemy positions and moves. However, he is more likely controlled and guided externally through the combat strategies, needed ammunition, and ways of dealing with the enemy according to a plan often prepared in advance. In this case, the decisive factor (i.e., war patron or leadership), who determines these strategies, also decides when to start the war, how to lead it, and when to end it. The subtitlers’ practice appears to be no different in Gottlieb’s sense. Subtitlers are imposed by the technical constraints of subtitling: formal and textual

constraints. These constraints entail a textual manipulation for which subtitlers resort to adopting technical strategies to retain most of the ST's linguistic, cultural, and ideological load in the target text. Alternatively, however, subtitling practice may also be controlled by external (e.g., individual and institutional) constraints of ideology and politics (Díaz-Cintas, 2012a).

Subtitlers—driven either by their own ideological and political interests or those of their commissioners and audience—may resort to using (conventional and unconventional) strategies in order to manipulate the content and form of the source text. In this sense, the internal (in-text) technical constraints may often lead to technical manipulation if used in terms of necessity. The external (outside-text) ideological constraints may, in turn, lead to ideological manipulation, resulting in blatant examples of textual, paratextual and contextual distortion, at times. This is the core argument upon which Díaz-Cintas (2012a) puts forward his concept of “technical manipulation vs. ideological manipulation”.

Whatever the strategy is (technical or ideological), and however applicable and justified it may theoretically be, the subtitler/translator, practically speaking, is almost alien to the concept of liberty. Gottlieb (2005, p. 16) likewise argues: “As with the notion of “translation strategies”, we are once more confronted with a gap between theoreticians and practitioners: Very few literary or film translators take such liberties in their translations”.

2.3.4 *Technical Manipulation and Strategies*

As argued by Bannon (2013, p. 4), “time and space constraints often require clever solutions and no small amount of wit on the subtitler's part to ensure the viewers enjoy what's on the screen”; hence, comes the need to use particular strategies to manipulate the source text and overcome its technical constraints so that the TT would meet the audience's expectations. Under the pressure of formal and textual constraints, the subtitler becomes a balancing actor whose task is to strive for the reduction of the source text, yet, at the same time, to deliver the maximum load of its semantic and stylistic features (Gottlieb, 1992, p. 166). In their “balancing act”, the subtitler (consciously or subconsciously) needs to use specific strategies to tackle constraints

and produce adequate subtitling, even though “the goal of adequacy ... is not always reached”, as Gottlieb (1992, p. 166) argues. Díaz-Cintas (2012a, p. 284) refers to this act as *technical manipulation*. Unlike in literary translation, this type of manipulation can appropriately be used in AVT “to refer to instances where changes and modifications to the original text are incorporated because of technical considerations” (ibid.). For any pattern of manipulation to be technical and nothing else, it must only be undertaken for reasons of technical necessity, such as “the need to change the source text in order to respect lip-sync in dubbing or having to condense it so that it will fit in a given subtitle” (ibid.).

This brings in the challenging task of synchronisation. According to Chaume, it is “one of the key factors in audiovisual translation” (2012, p. 66). Mayoral, Kelly and Gallardo define synchronisation as “the agreement between signals emitted for the purpose of communicating the same message” (1988, p. 359). They introduce various categories of synchrony (ibid.):

- *Synchrony of time*: agreement in time of different signals that communicate units of information;
- *Spatial synchrony*: the signals occupy neither more nor less space than that which corresponds to them;
- *Content synchrony*: the meaning transmitted by different signals contradict neither each other nor the whole message;
- *Phonetic synchrony*: synchrony of sound signals of spoken dialogue with the visible speech movements on the screen;
- *Character synchrony*: the harmony between the image of the character and his or her voice and words.

More specifically, Chaume (2012) introduces two synchronisation categories for subtitling: 1) kinetic synchrony or body movement—a correspondence between the translation and the actor’s body movements; 2) isochrony or synchrony between utterances and pauses—a correspondence between the translation duration and the length of the actor’s utterance on the screen (2012, pp. 68–69).

Technically speaking, scholars have multifariously attempted to introduce categorisations for the most applicable and effective subtitling strategies in order to produce as accurate synchronised subtitles as possible and obtain a maximally adequate and equivalent rendering of the ST in TT subtitles. Different text types have been tackled accordingly, so that translators/subtitlers can achieve their goals and meet the expectations of the target audience. Gottlieb (1992, p. 166), for instance, proposes the following ten strategies that embody the technical manipulation of the source text in interlingual subtitling:

- (1) Expansion: expanded expression, adequate rendering (culture-specific references, etc.)
- (2) Paraphrase: altered expression, adequate rendering (non-visualised language-specific phenomena)
- (3) Transfer: full expression, adequate rendering (“neutral” discourse, slow tempo)
- (4) Imitation: identical expression, equivalent rendering (proper nouns, international greetings etc.)
- (5) Transcription: anomalous expression, adequate rendering (non-standard speech, etc.)
- (6) Dislocation: different expression, adjusted content (musical or visualised language-specific phenomena)
- (7) Condensation: condensed expression, concise rendering (normal speech)
- (8) Decimation: abridged expression, reduced content (fast speech of some importance)
- (9) Deletion: omitted expression, no verbal content (fast speech of less importance)
- (10) Resignation: different expression, distorted content (“untranslatable” elements).

Whatever the strategy used, Gottlieb (1992, p. 166) argues, a stylistic and semantic analysis of the source verbal segment is essential to evaluate the quality of a given subtitle. With strategies 1–7, a proper correspondence of the original content of the source text can be provided in the target text. Yet, with reductive strategies 7–9,

the semantic and stylistic content is more or less lost. For many, reductive strategies seem to be somehow confusing (1992, p. 166) and probably need more elaboration.

Delabastita (1989) highlights the importance of source text reduction, the most utilised technique under which Gottlieb's subtitling strategies 7–9 (i.e., condensation, decimation, and deletion) are subsumed. Delabastita argues that “the film dialogues are usually delivered at a faster speed than a translation ... consequently, a certain compression or reduction of the text seems to be unavoidable” (1989, p. 203). For the same reason, Díaz-Cintas & Remael (2007, p. 61) also argue that “the written version of speech in subtitles is nearly always a reduced form of the oral soundtrack” (Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2007, p. 61). However, the nature of the original content (essential or not) is the criterion that determines the need to reduce as well as which reductive strategy to use. Karamitroglou (2003, p. 8) confirms that the decision for omission or inclusion of any piece of information depends on the quality of the information meant to be comprehended and appreciated by the audience of the target version of the film. Accordingly, in what he calls the process of editing linguistic items, he (ibid.) proposes three reductive strategies:

(1) Omitting Linguistic Items of the Original. Transference should not always be opted for, even when there is a sufficient amount of space and time on screen. What is needed is a satisfactory balance between the retainment of the source text and the duration of adequate time for the eye to enjoy the other non-verbal elements. What can be omitted are padding expressions, tautological cumulative adjectives and adverbs, and responsive expressions.

(2) Altering Syntactic Structures. This strategy helps reduce the length and complexity of sentences. The number of characters allowed in each line, for example, imposes a challenge on the subtitler to produce a more simplistic syntactic structure without changing the meaning of the original dialogue, however. Armstrong, Caffrey and Flanagan (2006, p. 3) argue that “with regard to subtitling and the similarities it shares with a controlled language, simpler syntactic structures (canonical forms) are often preferred as they tend to make sentences shorter, and thus are more easily and quickly understood” by the

audience. However, to achieve this process successfully, Karamitroglou (2003, p. 8) requires, as a condition, that a strict balance needs to be obtained between (1) semantics—preserving the semantic attributes of the source, (2) pragmatics—preserving the pragmatic attributes of the source, and (3) stylistics—preserving the stylistic attributes of the source.

(3) Use of Short Forms. This may include the use of abbreviations (e.g., USA), acronyms (e.g., UNESCO), contractions (e.g., I've), symbols (e.g., %, £). However, these forms should be used carefully as some of them can be unrecognisable and incomprehensible.

For Gottlieb (1992), reduction is a blurring strategy embodied in three further categories: condensation, decimation and deletion. The condensation strategy (i.e., Gottlieb's category 7) is considered the prototype of quantitative reduction in subtitling, but confused by many critics with the other reductive strategies of decimation and deletion (i.e., Gottlieb's categories 8–9) (Gottlieb, 1992, p. 166). Susanna Jaskanen, for instance, criticises Gottlieb's strategies because "they give the impression of being clear-cut, scientifically verifiable categories. Under scrutiny, however, they appear overlapping and subjective" (1999, p. 11). She argues that it is difficult to draw a line between condensation and decimation because Gottlieb's extracts from "the dialogue of *Young Frankenstein* fail to shed any light on the issue" (Jaskanen, 1999, p. 11).

According to Gottlieb, nevertheless, a condensation—unlike a decimation and deletion—is a strategy that allows subtitles to deliver the original content containing the stylistic and semantic load of the source text. What is conventionally lost, apart from that, is the redundant spoken features uttered in spontaneous dialogues, such as interviews (Gottlieb, 1992, p. 166-167). In other words, all textual features that are untypical in "standard or even informal written language (e.g., hesitation, false starts, taboo, language, etc.) are inevitably omitted", as Chiaro (2009, p. 151) argues. Even in the case of prearranged discourses (news commentary, pre-scripted political speeches, etc.) "much of the reduction necessitated by the formal constraints of subtitling is created automatically, due to the diagonal nature of this type of

translation” (Gottlieb, 1992, p. 177). Alternatively, when using the semantically reductive strategies of decimation and deletion, the original content is likely to suffer a significant amount of loss because “these strategies represent drastic cuts in the original expression” (ibid.). Regarding the resignation (i.e., Gottlieb’s category 10), it is a strategy used in all translation modes. In subtitling, in particular, it is used as an abortive strategy that subtitlers resort to when they are unable to translate some problematic, untranslatable culture/language-specific terms and expressions (ibid.).

In the cases of prearranged events and discourses, it seems worth mentioning that reductive strategies might not always be an option, especially in political speeches. On such occasions, subtitlers come across expository texts where the material is mainly informative and often pre-scripted. Often, there is not much action and visual material to view as cameras are, most of the time, fixed on the speaker. Political speeches are also traditionally delivered at a slow tempo: they allow translators to transfer or intentionally add additional information to create an intelligible target text. Ignoring such options may lead to ambiguity in terms of the semantic, pragmatic, and ideological considerations of the ST. Due to the sensitive nature of their informative content, along with the spatiotemporal opportunity they allow on the screen, political speeches entail an accurate rendering of the source text whose every single utterance may count. In this case, even repetition could imply essential meaning intended by the speaker. Conscious or subconscious negligence of translating some segments can, therefore, have dire consequences.

Moreover, the subtitler’s trust in the viewer’s intelligence to recognise what is concealed can be a challenge of an uncertain result, as well. This is because, in expository discourse, “information can seem entirely unrelated to the action on the screen or to any previous conversation”, as explained by Bannon (2013, p. 17). For subtitlers, therefore, expository text types are “the ultimate no-no!”, as stated by Kate Wright, cited in Bannon (ibid., p. 15). To tackle this text type, Bannon (ibid.) proposes the following strategies:

- (1) Read the entire screenplay,
- (2) Double-check the seemingly unrelated bits,
- (3) Translate the expository dialogue without giving anything away.

Other constraints, which can exploit the formal and textual constraints as an excuse to justify source text distortion for further considerations, will be discussed in the following subsection.

2.3.5 Ideological Manipulation and Strategies

Subtitling strategies are multifarious, and associating them exclusively with linguistic recoding would narrow the range of their applications. When examining attributes of faithfulness and genuineness at the different levels of message manipulation, it is not enough to focus only on the rendering of the message's verbal elements; non-verbal elements are also highly relevant. The polysemiotic nature of subtitling, therefore, imposes more challenges for the translator's objectivity and faithfulness to the source text. In support of this, Delabastita (1989, p. 213) argues that if translation is bound to a mere linguistic recoding that targets a maximal rendering of source text semantics and syntax only, "then clearly film translation is emphatically not a form of genuine translation". He explains that the relationship between the source text and target text in film translation can barely be seen as "a maximally faithful linguistic recoding process" (ibid.) but rather a more intricate one. In the following points, he summarises his argument highlighting the multilevel patterns of manipulation:

- Some verbal components of the source text can be totally ignored and not translated;
- The technical constraints of lip-synchrony in the isosemiotic mode (dubbing) and of text reduction in the diasemiolic mode (subtitling) often hinder the rendering syntax and semantics of the source text's verbal signs, and hence, affect the notion of faithfulness to the original;
- Translation of dialogues is often associated with other subtle processes (mostly cutting), which occasionally involves the intention of "tampering" with the source text's semiotic channels to a greater extent (Delabastita, 1989, p. 213).

The latter non-verbal strategy of manipulation (i.e., time cutting), particularly, can have a far-reaching effect on the perception of the target viewer. When it occurs, in Delabastita's (1989) sense of "tampering", specific visual and auditory segments—

which are probably essential for a full understanding of the generally intended meaning of the original text—will be eliminated for no technical necessity. It leads us to the types of manipulation that intentionally serve particular ideological, political, religious, or financial interests, under the guise of technical constraints. Raising awareness of such difficult-to-recognise patterns of intervention, Díaz-Cintas similarly argues “*diasemiotic differences* can often be misconstrued and taken advantage of quite openly, as has been the case in censorial regimes, both in the past and nowadays, by using them as a shield to justify certain unpalatable solutions” (2012a, p. 285).

In the particular case of subtitling, the reductive strategies (e.g., deleting or decimating verbal and non-verbal segments of the source text) are not only used due to the inherent technical constraints (be it formal or textual) of the mode. They can also be used due to ideological constraints imposed by external power, including the translator/subtitler, the translation commissioner (individual or institution), or the target audience. Referring to *ideological manipulation*—an AVT term originally coined by Díaz-Cintas (2012a)—these externalities consequently have the authority, or are authorised, to manipulate original media narratives. For him, “when *unfair* changes that unbalance the relationship between source and target products take place on purpose and *unscrupulously*” (Díaz-Cintas, 2012a., p. 285, emphasis in original); manipulation, then, is deemed ideological rather than technical. To investigate this type of manipulation, Díaz-Cintas encourages researchers to understand “the reasons why these ideologically motivated changes may occur, and for the benefit of whom” (ibid.). This would also include an investigation of the unconventional strategies of ideological manipulation by contextualising the subtitling practice within a broader socio-cultural context (elaborated on in Chapter Three), which is the core purpose of the present study.

Previously, most descriptive AVT studies were concerned with subtitling, its technical conventions and strategies within the traditional domain of linguistics, investigating a maximal equivalence in message semantics, pragmatics, and stylistics. Today, AVT studies seem to have made progress in studying various patterns of “a paradigm in which deviations from the original are regarded as permissible and the typical pre-eminence of the source text can be overturned in favour of the interests of

the target culture” (Díaz-Cintas, 2012a, p. 285). Instead of arguing about the quality of rendering the source ideology and culture into those of the target audience, recent translation studies have shown a tendency to focus on the actual ideological and cultural implications and consequences the translation process may have for the target culture (ibid., p. 286). As an example of these translation studies, Díaz-Cintas (ibid.) highlights Baker’s (2006a) seminal volume *Translation and Conflict*. Within the narrative framework of her work, she discusses the interaction between translation, power, and conflict, shedding light on “the ethics, agency and positionality taken by translators and interpreters in an increasingly globalised and turbulent world” (Díaz-Cintas, 2012a, p. 286).

Apart from the technical and socio-cultural constraints that determine the function of subtitling strategies, the following section attempts to explore—besides the advantages and disadvantages—the various factors that determine the choice of whether to subtitle or dub. It also attempts to explain, through examples, why media translation organisations, such as MEMRI, tend to opt for subtitling rather than dubbing, and to shed light on the political and ideological dimensions of such a trend.

2.4 Subtitling vs Dubbing: Preference Factors in the General Ambit

For many decades, the preference for subtitling or dubbing has been the source of contentious debates regarding their (dis)advantages—an issue that, in some cases, is described as being caught between a rock and a hard place. As long as the translation is never like the source text (Lefevere, 1992), the choice between them is deemed, by some scholars, as the choice between two equally unpleasant but indispensable alternatives. In his volume *Understanding Movies*, Louis Giannetti, in this context, points out:

Generally, the sound quality of the dubbing is terrible — a crude approximation, usually by different actors with less talent than the originals. On the other hand, written subtitles can be just as exasperating, forcing us to “read” the movie instead of exploring its *mise en scène*. (2002, p. 242)

Despite all the cumbersomeness of subtitled and dubbed productions, each mode has its advantages and disadvantages that determine the preference for usage. In

the context of examining the effectiveness of each, scholars have put forward considerable argumentations; yet, for the limitations of this chapter, only some of them can be pointed out briefly. Rather than listing the (dis)advantages of each situation separately, it may be more appropriate to discuss them interactively because, often, the (dis)advantages of one of the two modes are mentioned alongside the other as part of an argument for or against it. For example, a feature of subtitling—as opposed to dubbing—is that it is possible to add explanations in translation to make the information more intelligible, omit inconceivable or unimportant elements, and allow communication between the audience and the source’s language and culture. The last feature may be the main motive that encourages some media organisations to prefer subtitling over dubbing, as it probably bestows on them more credibility and reliability among their audiences. A disadvantage of subtitling, however, is that the text condensation strategy is seen as an inevitable process, which is relatively unnecessary in all cases of dubbing (Goris, 1993, p. 171).

In some quarters, particularly vigorous attitudes are made towards the alleged deficiencies of dubbing, claiming that it is counted as an utterly disgraceful practice (Kilborn, 1993, p. 643). The subtitling fan, Hasbrouck (2013, p. xii), criticises dubbing by arguing that it is not a translation since the original story is almost lost, through the exaggerated focus of dubbers on how to time the actors’ utterances appropriately. Some complete subplots are entirely eliminated in order to line up voices for the viewers who like seeing a synchronisation between voices and lip movements. Additionally, with dubbing films into our native languages, we forget that they are originally foreign works and would be better displayed in their original language (ibid.). Emphasising the notion of “loss of authenticity”—the most regularly cited “disadvantage” of dubbing (Goris, 1993, p. 170)—Hasbrouk points out:

La Femme Nikita, Brotherhood of the Wolf or Let the Right One In are fantastic movies that I could never imagine watching dubbed. Why would you want to take a film’s dialogue and hammer it into English? It steals the fun. It robs the audience of the actors’ performances. It is truly a crime. (2013, p. xii)

In dubbing, again, the original films’ voices are often replaced by other new voices that are often confined to certain dubbing actors (Goris, 1993, p. 170). Thus, no matter how diverse the original films are, the viewers will hear the same voices

whenever the mode of dubbing is involved; hence, the problematic concept of “stereotyped voices” (ibid., emphasis in the original). Dubbing can also create a gap between the vocal performance of the original actor and that of the dubbing actor, which may consequently affect the power embedded in the original utterance. Likewise, Giannetti (2002, p. 241) argues: “Dubbed movies often have a hollow, tinny sound, and in most cases, the dubbing is performed by less gifted actors than the original’s”. No one can rule out, in this regard, exploiting this gap ideologically by using for dubbing the voices of certain actors or alternative music that has a connotation (either negative or positive) in the culture and stereotypes of the target audience to distort or embellish the characters and culture of the source text.

Other attitudes go against subtitling, claiming that it is also counted as a disdainful practice, because it purportedly creates “unwarranted demands on the traditional TV audience’s powers of concentration and also draws the viewers’ attention away from the visual action which some see as being at the centre of the television experience” (Kilborn, 1993, p. 643). At some stage, subtitling was conceived as “a nuisance or a necessary evil” (Gottlieb, 1997, p. 310), because, basically, “nobody likes to read a movie” (Giannetti, 2002, p. 242). In other words, audiences do need to understand dialogues, but at the same time, they do not like to read a TV programme or film’s subtitles because they “are distracting and can absorb much of a viewer’s energy” (ibid.). Comparatively, dubbing does not divide the visual concentration of its audience between the film and the translation written on the screen; rather, it provides “a more homogeneous discourse” containing a spoken translation of an originally spoken source dialogue or speech (Goris, 1993, p. 171). The contradistinction between subtitling and dubbing is generally based on several decisive factors believed to lead to the choice between them, most likely determined from the producer’s, rather than the audience’s, standpoint.

2.4.1 Literacy

Due to literacy consideration, a receiver-oriented evaluation might propose that “viewers would prefer dubbing if they were given a choice. ... a dubbed film has greater mass appeal because most people prefer not to read titles” (Danan, 1991, p.

207). In addition, for certain types of audiences, such as illiterate people and the visually impaired, dubbing, unlike subtitling, is still far more preferable since it considers their needs, allowing them to fully comprehend the translated films (Goris, 1993, p. 171; Pedersen, 2011, p. 5). For some dubbing fan scholars (e.g., Mayer, 1973), subtitling can only be suitable for people who “mastered speed-reading or those who are only interested in looking at pretty shots” (ibid., p. 58). This may explain the tendency of political media organisations like MEMRI to adopt subtitling to translate their material. It may also explain their producer-oriented evaluation, which proposes an opposing attitude to the receiver-oriented evaluation based upon some technical and economic drawbacks in dubbing discussed below.

2.4.2 *Technicality*

For many dubbing professionals, even including bilingual actors who dub their own scenes, a homogeneity between images and voices are not easy to achieve, especially at the end of the speech (i.e., close-up shots) where the lip movements do not synchronise with the dubbing sounds (Giannetti, 2002, p. 241). Technically speaking, both subtitling and dubbing are controlled by particular audiovisual constraints of synchronisation. Yet, in the context of a comparison between them, dubbing is the mode that “requires the most thorough synchronisation” (Orero, 2004, p. 48), highlighting the flexibility and simplicity of subtitling production (Díaz-Cintas, 2012a, p. 288). With regard to subtitling, synchrony is worthy of less attention since the lip synchrony is unimportant; the other two categories, however, still are. First, kinetic synchrony is considered and, therefore, the translation is commonly correspondent to the actor’s movements on the screen. Second, isochrony can be significant in subtitling, but this is not as essential as it is in dubbing. A subtitle’s duration does not have to match exactly with the start and end of the actor’s utterances as the case in dubbing; however, it should, at least, generally correspond with the actor’s utterance on the screen (Orero, 2004, p. 48). What matters for the viewers of a subtitled film, as Karamitroglou argues, is “to see the end of a subtitled sentence soon after they realise that the speaker has finished his/her utterance and before a new one begins” (2000, p. 7). Yet, interestingly enough, the flexibility of subtitling synchrony

seems to have allowed quite a lot of space for ideological considerations to take place¹⁶.

2.4.3 Economy

Highlighting the economic advantage of subtitling production, for instance, Díaz-Cintas (2012a) states that besides being fast, flexible and easy to produce, subtitling is an inexpensive means of AVT, which makes it the best option on the internet and the “perfect translation ally of globalisation” (p. 288). From the same viewpoint, Gutiérrez-Lanza (1997, p. 36) argues that “dubbing is considered as a much slower, more expensive and complicated technique when compared to subtitling”. Likewise, Luyken et al. (1991, p. 105) state that dubbing is fifteen times as costly as subtitling. Therefore, for non-profit, non-governmental organisations financially dependent on donations (e.g., MEMRI and PMW), this factor can play a vital role in choosing to subtitle rather than dub.

2.4.4 Traditionality

Baker and Hochel argue that although preference for subtitling or dubbing in any country is determined by a multifaceted range of factors, “none of these factors on its own can account for local preferences” (1998, p. 75); it is ultimately the historical context, in which the audience’s traditions seem to powerfully determine the choice of the AVT mode (ibid.; Pedersen, 2011, p. 7). Danan (1991, p. 607) confirms: “people seem to prefer whatever method they are originally exposed to and have resultantly grown accustomed to”. In other words, what matters is the predominant tradition, in the sense that audiences in traditionally subtitling countries would prefer subtitling while those in traditionally dubbing countries would prefer dubbing (Baker and

¹⁶ Relevant examples of breaching kinetic synchrony (considered most in subtitling) and isochrony are provided in Chapters Five and Six.

Hochel, 1998, p. 75; Danan, 1991, p. 607). Using the other option may be counterproductive to the receiving public. Media Consultant Group (cited in Pedersen, 2011, p. 7) similarly indicates that “broadcasting a subtitled work in countries with a dubbing tradition can lead to audience drops of about 30%”.

2.4.5 Authenticity

Gottlieb (1997) argues that, in habitually subtitling countries, the text authenticity is paramount while the economic factor is secondary. Subtitling, therefore, “is now becoming the preferred mode of language conversion for literate film and television audiences worldwide” (Gottlieb, 1997, p. 310). Similarly, Giannetti (2002, p. 242) asserts that subtitling allows its viewers to receive the authentic vocal nuances such as the actors’ tone, which discloses their intentions (*ibid.*). In short, as Giannetti (*ibid.*) states, “subtitles permit us to hear what the original artist said, not what some disinterested technician — however clever — decided we would settle for”.

Although subtitling is thought of as an example of the visibility of translation (Pedersen, 2011, p. 214), the absoluteness of its authenticity notion still requires reconsideration as authenticity is partially missing when the polysemiotic puzzle is being reconstructed for the target audience (Gottlieb, 1994, p. 266). There are two drawbacks of subtitled productions related to the TT and ST. First, the audiovisual balance between the verbal auditory channel and the verbal visual channel can be distorted in the TT; the semantic load of the original soundtrack is nearly lost in the written translation on the screen (Gottlieb, *ibid.*, p. 265; Baker, 1998, p. 245).

The first drawback can be reasonably justified as unavoidable because, in the process of moving from spoken to written, the latter is more concise than the former, as indicated by Gottlieb (2005, p. 19). He argues that “mechanical translation in the audiovisual media is ... quite unfeasible [*sic*]. Hence, the notion of equivalent translation is an illusory ideal” (1994, p. 265).

The second drawback I attempt to claim in this chapter is the loss of source text originality, in some genres, before the translation of its dialogue even starts. As opposed to dubbing—the target-oriented mode of translation—subtitling is assumed to be a source-oriented mode of translation where the original is retained (Danan, 1991,

p. 612). Subtitling originality/authenticity can be utilised as a double-edged weapon; it may hold true for some media genres, but not necessarily for all. In media genres like fully-displayed cinematic movies, TV films and programmes and drama serials, the authenticity of the source text is often maintained. The enjoyment of the unamended, original message is allowed, and the educational goals (e.g., local culture stimulation and foreign language acquisition and improvement) are, arguably, obtained. This explains why many writers (be they scholars or practitioners), as seen above, tend to praise it. For instance, Gambier (1994, p. 282) states: “The co-presence of two codes and two languages will hopefully make us more tolerant towards multilingualism, if not multiculturalism”.

Alternatively, subtitling authenticity could be an illusion in other media genres such as short political video clips. Exploiting it as an excuse for the safety of the source text might lead to subtle processes of recontextualisation in every way possible during the reconstruction of the video clip, which can even happen prior to the translation phase. As emphasised by Baker & Hochel (1998, p. 76), “if a decision is taken to naturalise a film or a programme for political, ideological or commercial reasons, changes may be introduced at various levels to help maintain the illusion of authenticity”. Some media-political organisations (specialised mainly in translation/subtitling) tend to carefully select specific news, speeches, and current affairs, reconstruct and recirculate them in shorter subtitled video clips. The activity of reconstruction is undertaken through an unconventional, intersemiotic distortion of the original context. Various strategies can be utilised in this process, including cutting the video’s original time duration, cobbling different videos together, and changing or adding new linguistic elements (e.g., different titles and introductions). Followed by the TT subtitles, such a recontextualisation process could ultimately lead to a reframing of the original narratives and delivering it to the target viewer in a distorted frame.

In support of the above argument, it is worth mentioning Chaume’s (2018) recent paper *Is Audiovisual Translation Putting the Concept of Translation Up Against the Ropes?* He confirms the unconventional distortion of text originality/authenticity (including its verbal and non-verbal elements) and designates it, following Katan

(2014), as *transcreation*. Chaume argues that what has conventionally been manipulated through the AVT modes of dubbing, voice-over, and subtitling are the auditory elements such as linguistic, paralinguistic, and special effects. Today, however, the intervention in the audiovisual material encompasses the manipulation of images (symbols, indices and icons), types of shots, lighting and movements (2018, p. 96). The overall intention in AVT seems merely to domesticate the foreign product so that it “allegedly, satisfies a specific target audience” (ibid.).

The recontextualisation process can affect the viewer’s interpretation of the original narrative, sticking to it a different depiction based on a distorted and one-sided standpoint. This depiction does not necessarily satisfy the viewer’s expectations, nor does it guarantee the message that the translator or original performer desired to deliver. Therefore, even with presumably accurate subtitles, authenticity—let alone its absoluteness—can be thrown into question, especially in the genre of political text subtitling, where predominant political and ideological partisanship would often leave little margin for text originality.

What also needs to be questioned because of originality loss is the traditionally unseen role of translators/subtitlers, especially when counting a subtitler as a visible translator (Pedersen, 2011, p. 214). Since the emergence of the subtitling market, AVT has been foregrounded as an independent profession highlighting the visibility of the subtitler. Hence, the role of subtitling practises should always be heavily criticised—no matter what the genre or who the translator/subtitler are (whether a person or institution) because it is a key motor in the achievement of the goals of authenticity distortion and its social and political consequences.

Moreover, assuming that the recontextualisation process often occurs prior to subtitling, and that the subtitle itself could be linguistically accurate, does not exempt the intervening task of the subtitler from being embedded in the final product as a whole. It could arguably be true that what is actually left of the whole source text is already a patchily manipulated message prior to subtitling. Yet, it is only after the work of the subtitler that the original foreign message becomes capable of delivering to its target audiences the ideologically mediated context in which a different narrative from the original is embedded. Thus, subtitlers should always be embedded in their socio-

cultural activities, since without their help the recontextualised narrative would not be well received by the target audience. Stemming from the new socio-cultural theorisation of the cultural turn, Díaz-Cintas argues that “translators cease to be linguists in the traditional sense, ... translators are now ... agents participating in the shaping of the ideological discourse of their culture” (2012a, pp. 282–283).

It could be argued, then, that in the particular genre of political media, the objective of using subtitling in translating political video clips is, seemingly, to further dominant ideologies and serve political agendas under the pretext of the subtitling authenticity feature¹⁷. In a blunt statement by one of the *Danmarks Radio* subtitlers (cited in Gottlieb, 1994, p. 263), describing what actually occurs in media subtitling: “We don’t translate. We subtitle. To subtitle from a foreign language is to Danicise”. In this decisive process, subtitlers (individuals or institutions) endeavour, in every way possible, to subjugate the source text to the cultural and ideological system of their society or the translation’s patrons¹⁸.

Short scrutiny of the authenticity preference factor may conclude that what indeed counts in the realm of AVT, whatsoever its mode (i.e., subtitling or dubbing), could arguably be more serious than a simple choice between foreignisation and domestication. As similarly argued by Baker & Hochel (1998, p. 76): “Whether domestication or foreignisation in its approach, any form of audiovisual translation, including dubbing, ultimately plays a unique role developing both national identities and national stereotypes”.

2.4.6 Ideology, Culture, and Politics

This factor plays the most fertile heuristic role in choosing between subtitling and dubbing, as well as between the translational strategies of each of them (Goris,

¹⁷ This argument is substantiated in Subsection 2.5, pp. 93–96.

¹⁸ Relevant literature reviewed in Chapter One, pp. 41–44.

1993, p. 172). Such a factor can sometimes exceed creative choices to reveal the translators'/subtitlers' (individual or institutional) ideological and cultural motives embedded in their choices, especially in the political context. In this vein, Schäffner (2003, p. 23) argues that "in political texts, ideological aspects are, of course, particularly prominent".

Regardless of the viewer's benefit and entertainment, it seems questionable why a film translator (be it an individual or institutional producer) would prefer to adopt the far more expensive and time-consuming mode of dubbing. Danan raises further, similar questions regarding the preference for dubbing as opposed to subtitling, despite its economic drawbacks and process complexity:

What justified the additional cost and effort involved? Was there any governmental pressure put on distributors to encourage dubbing in some countries? Were there, beyond profit, some political or nationalistic considerations at stake? (1991, p. 607)

On some occasions, the economic factor probably stays at the centre of the preference decision, albeit from the translation patron's (e.g., commissioner) point of view. This factor, however, may not lead us to the answer to these questions in isolation from the recognition of the socio-cultural factor, which could provide more comprehensive explanations in this regard. Goris confirms that the choice of which audiovisual translational mode to use is associated with "cultural identity, and is not determined by economic principles only" (1993, p. 171). Arguing from the same angle, Martine Danan states:

Subtitling and dubbing represent two extremes on the translation spectrum because they originate from two opposite types of cultural systems. Subtitling corresponds to a weaker system open to foreign influences. Dubbing results from a dominant nationalistic system in which a nationalistic film rhetoric and language policy are prompted equally. (1991, p. 613)

On the one hand, the Indian authorities, for instance, have banned dubbing in translating foreign-language films into the Kannada language since the 1960s in order to protect their weak local film industry (Independent, 2011). On the other hand, Mussolini's fascist Italy prohibited foreign languages for protecting its nationalistic dominance; therefore, foreign films were all translated into Italian with the use of dubbing only (ibid.).

Due to its significant role in modern media communications, subtitling is believed to incorporate societal and language-political consequences, as Gottlieb (2004, p. 87) argues. He indicates that subtitling, more than anything else, is contributory in 1) the improvement of reading skills, 2) the improvement of foreign language skills, 3) the facilitation of simple and inexpensive exchange between international programmes, and 4) the strengthening of the dominance of English (*ibid.*). The latter, nonetheless, is, in reality, the most significant contribution of subtitling, which represents the societal and language-political effects in the translation of anglophone audiovisual production in non-anglophone societies (*ibid.*, pp. 87–92). Such consequences would explain the reason behind the fear of an aversion of many non-anglophone nations towards the source-oriented nature of subtitling. It may also justify the subsequent harsh reactions of some authorities who opted for dubbing and imposed firm controls on foreign products, and the anglophone products, in particular.

Previous dictatorial regimes—motivated by their patronage factors—have taken strong reactions to resist the increasing hegemony of US productions in defence of their political ideologies and nationalistic status. In addition to the linguistic growth of English as a dominant and colonising language, the devastating dominance of US films epitomising their unique lifestyle provoked a backlash against it, particularly by Germany, Italy, and Spain (Díaz-Cintas, 2012a, p. 287). Although Fascism in Italy, Franco’s dictatorship in Spain, and Nazism in Germany were mainly behind such reactions in the last century (Danan, 1991, p. 611), those reactions should not always be associated with totalitarianism. It is, alternatively, nationalism that is often thought of as a central power, which prioritises dubbing in countries with such a powerful nationalistic mainstream (Pedersen, 2011, p. 6). In the same vein, Danan (1991, p. 613) states: “No extreme nationalistic society could allow a foreign language to reach the masses so easily and compete with its national language”. Consequently, dubbing has worked for them as a controlled national filter on the foreign ideology and culture (Goris, 1993, p. 172) leaking from anglophone films and TV programmes.

Conversely, in countries that are culturally and ideologically open to foreign influences, subtitling is habitually used (Goris, 1993, p. 172). In the Arab countries,

for instance, the factors that determine the choice of subtitling instead of dubbing are also mostly cultural, ideological, and economic. Maluf (2005) argues that although dubbing foreign films in Arabic can theoretically be an alternative, the Arab audience's capability of reacting with the general message of foreign productions could cause an aversion from opting for the mode. He adds that "neither programmers nor distributors seem to believe that Arab audiences will be willing to accept situation and dialogues that are too foreign to their culture, expressed in Arabic" (ibid.). In the same context, Gamal argues that "it sounds odd to hear familiar voices speaking in Fusha¹⁹ while the action and the faces on screen show a totally different culture" (2008, p. 8). For Maluf, Arab audiences seem to have no difficulty accessing foreign films through subtitling "where there is no pretence that protagonists are Arab speakers and where rapport is relegated to non-ideological level" (2005).

More specifically, in Egypt, the early choice of subtitling was a conscious decision due to economic and technical considerations as "it offered a much less labour-intensive, faster and cheaper alternative" (Gamal, 2008, p. 2). It was also due to national considerations; to protect the nascent domestic cinema industry of Egypt against the more dominant productions. Gamal argues that "dubbing foreign films would have dealt a crippling blow to Egyptian cinema as it would not have been able to compete with better produced Hollywood films" (2009, p. 08). Hence, dubbing in Egypt was perceived as a threatening formula that "filmmakers and producers abhorred and resisted" (ibid.).

Furthermore, the socio-cultural concept of "patronage" coined by Lefevre (1984)²⁰ could be a fruitful instrument in answering Danan's (1991) questions. Patronage helps to recognise the censorial and authoritative forces and their motives (e.g., nationalism) involved in the choice between dubbing and subtitling and the

¹⁹ A standard variety of Arabic used for formal purposes, including conferences, speeches, journalism.

²⁰ Discussed earlier in Chapter One, p 42.

related manipulations undertaken on the construction of their final products. According to Lefevre, patronage refers to “the powers (persons, institutions) which help or hinder the ... rewriting of literature” motivated by three factors: ideology, economy, and status (1985, p. 227). These powers can be exerted not only by governments (be it democratic or undemocratic) but also “by persons ..., groups of persons (a religious body, say, or a political party), a social class, a royal court, publishers ... and, last but not least, the media” (Lefevre, 1985, p. 228). The latter power is the focus of the present study, represented in the online media organisations MM, PMW, and MEMRI, which mainly specialise in translation/subtitling Middle Eastern political and religious media. The organisations’ pursuit of reliability and credibility derived from the notion of authenticity and the greater savings in their translation expenses may have also prompted them to choose subtitling rather than dubbing. Yet, with the potential involvement of ideological and political motives, they can exploit the authenticity feature to mislead the viewers and distract them from distortions occurring in the source message and its three elements: the text, the paratext, and the context. This argument falls into the scope of the present study investigation conducted in the analyses of Chapters Five and Six.

2.5 Preference Factors in English-Speaking Milieus: MEMRI as an Example

The situation in anglophone countries cannot be clearly and categorically determined. On the one hand, English-speaking countries like the UK show a general tendency to use dubbing. A survey conducted in the 1980s showed that 48 per cent of British audiences prefer dubbing while only 36 per cent of them prefer subtitling. On the other hand, in the UK itself, national channels are not yet unanimous in this regard. Channel 4, for instance, unlike other British channels, opts for the use of subtitling, as it matches with its policy of broadcasting materials targeting, among others, special interest spectators and minorities (Kilborn, 1993, pp. 650–651). Concealing linguistic features, such as style and intonation, and cultural-specific references to the discourse of minorities, including homosexuality and ethnic groups, through dubbing, may lead to the obscuring of their identities and narratives the channel intends to present to the world; therefore, their choice was to opt for subtitling. In this sense, Channel 4 is a

source-oriented institution. This approach may also apply to the organisations under consideration in this study: in addition to the preference factors mentioned above, the choice of MM, PMW, and MEMRI²¹ for subtitling is likely based on the same reasons that enable the preservation of the linguistic and cultural characteristics of the political and religious narratives prevalent in the MENA regions.

For leading film and TV-exporting countries like the UK and the US, the situation is not far different from other nationalistic countries, as Gottlieb (2004, p. 92) argues. Although “anglophone sources influence practically all the world’s languages” (Gottlieb, 2001, p. 249), English-speaking communities remain reluctant to become open to multilingualism and multiculturalism (Gottlieb, 2004, p. 92). Regardless of whether to subtitle or dub, what really matters is that, when broadcasting foreign-language products on national TV, the Anglo-Saxon domination must be well protected. Thus, it seems particularly vital that foreign-language productions should, in every way possible, be manipulated to involve certain implications that save the national and political status and ideology (ibid.). An example of this, as Gottlieb points out, is that when Anglo-Saxon countries translate foreign-language (e.g., Spanish) films and TV programmes, “the dialogue is often mutilated—or, to put it in milder terms, domesticated—to adapt to Anglo-Saxon norms and tastes” (ibid.).

If this is the case, why do some English-speaking media organisations like MEMRI bother using subtitling when it is a source-oriented mode of translation that threatens their Anglo-Saxon domination? Why do not they resort to dubbing when it is a target-oriented mode of translation that completely deletes the original and opens the floodgates for all forms of ideological and cultural manipulation and adaptations?

MEMRI’s choice of subtitling seems to be determined by the three factors of patronage: economy, status, and ideology. First, being a non-profit organisation financially dependent on donations, MEMRI seems to consider subtitling as the best

²¹ More details concerning MM, PMW, and MEMRI are provided in Chapter Four.

translation mode due to the simplicity, quickness, and cheapness of its productions. Second, any media organisation status could be respected and praised amongst its audiences as long as it maintains the authenticity and faithfulness principles through the processes of recirculation. Kilborn (1993, p. 646) emphasises: “Television policy-makers will sometimes use the ‘integrity’ argument when justifying the use of subtitling in a particular strand of their programming”. Yet, practically speaking, any form of manipulation—often unnoticeable—in the original material may no longer make the distinctive feature of authenticity a convincing pretext, but rather conceived as a mere illusion of faithful reproduction²². Since this is likely the case, the choice of subtitling may alternatively be thought of as having further ideological implications.

This leads us to the third patronage factor of ideology. As a foreignising mode of translation, subtitling can cause the viewers abroad to experience the other culture through their textual linguistic, ideological, and cultural qualities. These qualities, nonetheless, are likely to be manipulated contextually, making the viewer’s experience likely to be a source of concern instead of interest and enjoyment. MEMRI’s extravagant selectivity of the controversial topics of terrorism and extremism, and the locking of them constantly and exclusively into the Middle Eastern cycle, may lead to a reconstruction of a narrowly one-sided standpoint that probably does not represent the general mainstream discourse of the Arab and Muslim nations. The repetition of such a practice, wittingly or unwittingly, may create a stereotyped association between the Middle East and global violence, wherever it may be. MEMRI, for instance, has launched its recent Russian Project but continues to conclude all video clips, no matter who the addressees are (i.e., Arabs, Asian or Russians), with the same objective: exposing Middle Eastern extremism and terrorism. The example of the screenshot²³

²² Cazdyn (2010, p. 456) elaborates further on this notion. See Subsection 1.3.4, p. 57.

²³ <https://www.memri.org/tv/russian-deputy-fm-americans-want-us-on-their-hook>

(Figure 1) below shows the concluding disclaimer appearing in a video clip on the tense relationship between Russia and the US, which is irrelevant to the issue of Middle Eastern extremism and terrorism:

Figure 1



MEMRI's video clip on the tension between Russia and the US, 2017, August 07

2.6 Conclusion

Unlike the other traditional (monosemiotic) forms of communication, the audiovisual (polysemiotic) form is more likely to attract its audience because it makes a highly intricate message enjoyable and entertaining to communicate. The dual-functional mode of audiovisual materials has an advantage over other single-functional modes because it consists of a simultaneous occurrence of two communicative functions (i.e., audio and visual) on the screen, conveying a more comprehensive message from producer to consumer. It is what makes the AVT of screen products different from the translation of print products. Yet, the complex, polysemiotic structure could impose on translators/subtitlers many challenges that may hinder their audiovisual translation practice. Some of these challenges may even impact their choice between the various modes of AVT, especially between subtitling and dubbing. As some negative views describe, the preference between subtitling and dubbing is

like being caught between a rock and a hard place. Many factors quoted by scholars can be decisive in whether to dub or subtitle; however, what can exceed creative choices to reveal the actual motives embedded in any given decision, especially in the political context, is likely to be the socio-cultural/political factor.

Subtitling, as a diasemiotic²⁴ mode of AVT, is distinguished from other isosemiotic modes by its formal and textual constraints. From a technical point of view, scholars have multifariously introduced a range of the most appropriate strategies to overcome the technical constraints of subtitling. These strategies offer different manipulative techniques to obtain a maximally adequate and equivalent rendering of the source text in the target text subtitles.

Despite the challenges they impose on a subtitler's work, technical constraints are not the only reason for ST manipulations. Drawing on their socio-cultural tendencies, many translation scholars argue that other constraints and motivations, such as ideology, culture and politics, can also play a role in this regard. For some of them, technical constraints can be exploited as an excuse to intentionally distort the verbal and non-verbal elements of the source text and recontextualise/reframe them following specific interests and values. Technical-specific features, such as synchronisation and number of characters per line, can be ignored, at times, for the same reasons. Such patterns of manipulation can be conceived as ideological interventions employing ideological strategies rather than technical interventions employing technical strategies. Using various ideological strategies (e.g., adding and deleting), even paratext can suffer ideological manipulation and, definitely, for no technical justification, as it falls outside the obstructions of the screen frame. The purpose of this intervention is most likely to create a narrative coherence between the text and its paratext in the newly recontextualised/reframed product. Consequently, source text originality, which is expected to be maintained under the alleged notion of

²⁴ Moving from a spoken to a written form of language.

“subtitling authenticity”, seems to be put at stake.

Not merely that, but the source video clips—especially those with political nature—can also be subject to higher-level patterns of manipulation. For instance, selecting specific topics from different video clips, selecting parts of these topics and reconnecting them in a new video clip may lead, intentionally, to constructing a new context and, typically speaking, a new narrative—a narrative in which the co-presence between the manipulated sites and the unchanged elements of the ST (including original images, body movements, and the voices of characters) can create an unconsciously suspicious and hostile attitude at the addressee towards the ST entity. Thus, one can assume that, through subtitling, the original narrative is likely to be reframed or “transcreated”, as Chaume (2018) prefers to label it, in a diverse context congruent with the subtitler’s and patron’s agendas and the target audience conceptions. In the words of Riessman (2005, p. 1): “What makes such diverse texts “narrative” is sequence and consequence: events are selected, organised, connected, and evaluated as meaningful for a particular audience”.

As argued by Stein (2013, p. 122), the process of transcreation or reframing does not necessarily entail erasing of the original text but alternatively retailoring its narrative to match the local norms of the target viewer. Through various extracts identified in the study data, Chapter Six is dedicated to investigating similar and other patterns of manipulation utilised to distort the ST message. The next chapter is dedicated to reviewing the relevant theorisation of narrativity, including its (re)framing strategies and its application in translation and, more specifically, in subtitling.

Chapter Three

Narrative Theory: A Foundational Discussion for Macro-Level Analysis

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter was dedicated to discussing subtitling—the reductive mode of AVT—and its technical constraints, which often lead to technical manipulations. It also discussed the technical strategies introduced by translation scholars to tackle these constraints and help subtitlers obtain the maximum retainment of the semantic and stylistic content of the source text (ST) in the target text (TT). Moreover, it highlighted the possible occasions in which subtitlers could exploit the technical constraints of subtitling as a disguise to unnecessarily manipulate the source text in favour of certain ideologies and political interests. This type of exploitation is what has been referred to by Díaz-Cintas (2012a) as an *ideological manipulation*. As Baker (2007, p. 159) argues, it is the type of manipulation that not only encompasses conventional (e.g., technical) strategies used at textual level but also a range of unconventional (re)framing strategies used at textual, contextual and paratextual levels—mostly, combined. Based on her social narrative theorisation (Baker 2005, 2006a, 2006b, 2007, 2010, 2016), some media translation organisations tend to adopt such a multi-level manipulation as a systematic programme that endeavours to undermine and misrepresent others' narratives whenever feasible.

The present chapter, therefore, is dedicated mainly to exploring Baker's narrative theory. Yet, before it delves into the narrative typology, features, and strategies, Sections 3.2, 3.3, and 3.4 will provide a literature review on some narrative concepts and arguments that are also related to the present study framework, outlined further in Chapter Four: Data and Methodology. Section 3.2 reviews the term *narrative* in both linguistic and social studies showing where Baker's narrative theorisation (adopted in this study) stands thereon. It also discusses, from a socio-cultural/political point of view, the drastic transformation of the narrative concept and the relevant relationship between narrative and reality. Section 3.3 discusses the significance of narrative functionality—how narratives emerge and function on the ground—with

relevant examples discussed. In the end, it highlights the scope (encouraged by Baker) of the study analysis, which investigates both the text (linguists' focus) in Chapter Five and the broader level of the narrative analysis (Baker's focus), including text, paratext and context, in Chapter Six.

Section 3.4 sheds light on the significance and aspects of narrative theory that make it distinguishable from other traditional translation studies (TS). It also attempts to justify the adoption of narrative analysis in this thesis by thoroughly discussing its interconnected strengths and highlighting Baker's seminal work in this regard. Divided into four subsections, Section 3.5 reviews Baker's narrative typology. Section 3.6, also divided into four subsections, reviews Baker's narrative features and how they are renegotiated in the authorship and translation fields. Section 3.7 discusses the difference between the notions of *frame* and *framing* and reviews Baker's reframing strategies in translation with due examples explained. It also explores how textual interventions can connect to simultaneous interventions in the context and paratext of the same text or video and to larger narratives articulated in other texts or videos, accomplishing an integral process of recontextualisation and, strictly speaking, narrative reframing.

3.2 Narrative and Narrative Theory (Social vs Linguistic Approaches)

Narrative and narrative theory are crucial subjects in several disciplines, particularly in social and communication studies as well as linguistic and literary studies. Yet, among various researchers, there is still substantial variation in definitions of the term *narrative*. The social definition, which Baker (2005, 2006b, 2006a) tends to adopt, may not necessarily be recognised by some narratologists and linguists due to the extent of their involvement in other disciplinary narrative negotiations, as argued by Baker (2006a, p. 174; 2007, p. 151). For scholars of social and communication theories, on the one hand, narrative is not a textual construction but rather a textual functioning. Bruner, for instance, argues that "the central concern is not how narrative as text is constructed, but rather how it operates as an instrument of mind in the construction of reality" (1991, pp. 5–6).

For scholars of traditional linguistics, on the other hand, narrative is treated as a text genre and, hence, they consider it as “an optional mode of communication, often contrasted with argumentation or exposition” (Baker, 2006a, p. 8). They focus on the structural make-up (e.g., characters, plots, episodes) of oral and literary narratives, emphasising the benefit of assuring the viewer’s involvement and commitment that the other modes of communication might lack (ibid.). The most influential theorist of the linguistic school is Labov. Focusing on the structure of oral narratives, he defines narrative as “one method of recapitulating past experience by matching a verbal sequence of clauses to the sequence of events which (it is inferred) actually occurred” (1972, pp. 359–360). For any number of clauses to be narrative clauses, they must be temporally connected and ordered. As argued by Labov and Waletzky (1967, p. 28), a narrative is “any sequence of clauses which contains at least one temporal juncture”. Hence, a *minimal narrative* is “a sequence of two clauses which are temporally ordered” (Labov, 1972, pp. 360–361).

In turn, Baker (2006b, p. 464) is more likely to conform to the definition introduced by social and communication theorists, including Fisher (1987), Somers (1992), Somers and Gibson (1994), and Bruner (1991). Fisher defines narratives as sequences of continuing stories narrated and experienced by human beings who are natural storytellers (1987, p. 24). It is through these stories, as Somers (1992, p. 600) argues, that we experience and understand life, and “come to be who we are” (ibid.). In the same disciplinary discussion, Baker (2006b, p. 464), in her theory, defines narratives as the stories that we experience personally (personal narratives) or participate in publicly (public narratives), and according to which our attitudes and behaviour are formed and guided. Narratives do not only incorporate the stories we tell others about our knowledge and experience in life, but they also incorporate the stories we tell ourselves about those experiences (ibid.).

Contrary to linguistic theorists, Baker (2006a, p. 9) treats narrative as the only mode of communication. In terms of absolute comprehensiveness, she counts narrative as “a meta-code that cuts across and underpins all modes of communication” (ibid.). This implies that there is no chance to assume that narrative is an optional text genre because, as she argues following Fisher (1987, p. 85), “there is no genre, including

even technical discourse, that is not an episode in the story of life” (Baker, 2006a, p. 9). Narrative is “often described as a meeting ground of disciplines” (Baker, 2008, p. 21). It, accordingly, encompasses not only literary, folkloric, political texts, but also purely technical and scientific texts. Landau, for instance, argues that “many laboratory reports, with their sections labelled ‘methods,’ ‘results,’ and ‘conclusions,’ bear at least a superficial resemblance to a typical narrative, that is, an organised sequence of events with a beginning, a middle, and an end” (1997, p. 104).

In their social approach, Ewick and Silbey (1995, p. 198) consider narratives as “sequences of statements connected by both a temporal and a moral ordering”. Baker (2006a, p. 19) agrees with this definition, provided that the interpretation of “sequences of statements” is not narrowly limited to a group of sentences within the boundaries of a single utterance or text (*ibid.*). The reason is that a narrative is not “necessarily traceable to one specific stretch of text but is more likely to underpin a whole range of texts and discourses without necessarily being fully or explicitly articulated in any of them” (Baker, 2005, p. 5). It is, therefore, “the responsibility of critical analysis ... to construct texts from diverse fragments and then explain how interpretive communities are able to imbue those fragments with coherence” (Ehrenhaus, 1993, p. 79). With respect to the second part of Ewick and Silbey’s (1995) definition, Baker argues that narrative is “a story: specifically, a temporally configured set of happenings or “event” with a beginning, middle and (projected) end” (Baker, 2008, p. 21). A narrative is located in time and space and occupied by participants. She uses the word “configured” in her definition, to assert the differentiation of narrative from chronology, which is mainly a range of dates, events, and participants. Narrative, instead, should intentionally have a “causal emplotment that allows us to make moral sense of events and understand (or construct) the pattern of relationships among the participants” (*ibid.*). The process of emplotting narratives causally will be further explained in Section 3.6.3.

In the same sociological context, narratives are believed to be “constitutive”; through them, we understand events and become who we are (Hall et al. 2004, p. 38). And social actors play a crucial role in this constitutive process. Referring to their notion of “social narrativity”, Somers and Gibson (1993, p. 5; 1994, p. 41) argue that

“everything we know from making families, ... to carrying out strikes and revolutions is at least in part a result of numerous crosscutting story-lines in which social actors locate themselves”. This narrative interpretation of human communications arguably implies the notion of embeddedness; the members of any society can be absolute contributors in constructing messages, be they agents (authors, translators/subtitlers) or audience. In his words, Fisher also puts it: “viewing human communication narratively stresses that people are full participants in the making of messages, whether they are agents (authors) or audience (co-authors)” (1987, p. 18). When constructing narratives through which our identity ultimately takes its shape, there are always two parties—involved but unequally related—to consider: the influencing active who prepares the bait and the influenced passive who swallows it. On most occasions, we are the passive party positioning ourselves, mostly unconsciously, in social narratives hardly of our construction (Somers, 1992, p. 600).

At a political level (the focus of the present data analysis), “stock political narratives disguise and digest ideology” for us while we prefer to be merely passively objective informers of the world around us (Bennett and Edelman, 1985, p. 159). What we almost do, as Hall et al. argue, is weave our “own narratives in part by appreciating cultural scripts that have broader social existences, what Somers and Gibson term ‘social narrativity’” (2004, p. 38). Even active actors in societies, such as translators/subtitlers and interpreters, can be the influenced passives at times. As Baker argues, “we often digest, translate, and circulate passively” political narratives without examining them and considering their consequences (Baker, 2006a, p. 15). This issue leads to scholarly discussions concerning to what extent narrative is related to reality (ibid., p. 17). Somers (1992, p. 600) argues that the narrative concept differentiated drastically from the old understanding of narrativity as merely an uncorrupted representation of reality. From a socio-cultural/political point of view, it is through narrativity that people come to realise and comprehend the social world and create their social identity. Thus, narratives do not just represent but actually construct reality (ibid.).

Hence, the concern of Baker’s narrative theorisation has become more about the power of narratives (Baker, 2006a, p. 17), which Bruner also describes as “a form

not only of representing but of constituting reality” (1991, p. 5). This power entails that there is no such thing as an entirely independent story. All stories are narratives, and all experiences are narrative experiences. The narrative constructedness implies that every story or experience can neither be evaluated independently nor isolated fully from other stories and experiences, and the perspectives of their narrators (Baker, 2006a, p. 17). Even the writing of history, as Kellner (1989, p. 10) argues, is not actually about our past but rather about the scattered and meaningless remains, which we collect mostly selectively to construct variously meaningful stories. Riessman similarly argues that “narratives do not mirror, they refract the past” (2005, p. 6). Therefore, as Kellner adds, “there is no story *there* to be gotten straight; any story must arise from the act of contemplation” (1989, p. 10, emphasis added/in original). Riessman likewise argues that imagination and strategic interests are likely to influence storytellers in their choice of how to link events and news, and reproduce them in a meaningful form for others (2005, p. 6). This constructedness, thus, might cast doubt on narratives regarding their relation to reality and truth, especially in the political context, where individuals or media institutions (re)narrate events within specific ideological constraints.

When any set of narratives (historical, political, economic, etc.) performs in our daily activities, rather than being neutral, we normally take a position towards it, either by adopting and fostering it or rejecting and resisting it at its presentation stage. As Baker confirms, “none of us is in a position to stand outside any narrative in order to observe it objectively” (2006a, p. 141). However, we also need to judge the credibility and veracity of those narratives as they directly influence our lives. In the media, for instance, the constructedness of political and social narratives and our mostly unconscious embeddedness in them should not prevent us from reasoning about their validity (*ibid.*, p. 17). If this happens, it will most definitely lead to an unproductivity of attitudes, beliefs and values controlling the ultimate shaping of communities and identities. It will also prevent us, as Baker asserts, from being able “to connect with other individuals who share at least some of the narratives we subscribe to in order to form communities of various types — from a scientific association to a political party” (*ibid.*, p. 141).

Narration believability answers part of our questioning about narratives, which logically supposes that what we receive, particularly in media, is provable by resorting to some reality (Baker, 2006a, p.17). This raises, as Baker mentions, a debatable question among theorists about “the relationship between narrative and truth” (ibid., p. 18). In historian debates, for instance, Zhang Longxi (2004, p. 400) suggests that history as a human narrative should not be dealt with through a take-it-or-leave-it approach. He argues that history may be subject to inaccuracies, spots of omission, and of course ideological biasedness, yet, behind all elements of relations, fabricated dialogues and images, narration’s drives and intentions, there is still a range of provable facts as the core of all the narratives. These facts—along with what could be presumably derived from or found in other sources (e.g., non-linguistic artefacts and archaeological discoveries)—can probably provide a solid ground for assessing the validity of historical narratives (Longxi, 2004, p. 400). In this sense, Klein (2000, p. 163) argues that a narrative does not provide a truth-value from within itself, as much as it allows it to us through being “conscious of the conditions of its production”.

It is noteworthy to emphasise, as Baker (2006a, p. 18) argues, that the constructedness of narratives neither entirely contradicts the truth of certain happenings nor assumes the impossibility of straight access to realities. It, instead, helps us acknowledge the potential multiplicity of truths, which is “a key issue in the claiming that narratives have political import and that they unsettle and contest hegemonic views of the world” (ibid., p. 19). The political import and its repercussions on the ground bring in narrative functionality, which has received much attention from Baker’s narrative theory in particular, and from sociologists in general.

3.3 Narrative Functionality

In addition to the focus on the structural make-up and textual realisation of narratives, focus on narrative functionality should be prioritised, as Baker (2006a, pp. 19–20) argues. Bennet and Edelman (1985, p. 159) likewise emphasise that focus should move towards how narratives forge our perceptions of objectivity, rationality, ethics, and our understanding of ourselves and others surrounding us. In social and communication theory, narrative and its functionality are recognised more broadly

through different forms of media, including “an oral telling, a ballet, a motion picture, or written document” (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 8). Highlighting the particular effect of the visual material display, a photograph of the World Trade Center attack, for instance, can be politically imported to refer to the narrative of the 09/11 event (Baker, 2006a, p. 19).

Setting a more intelligible facet for narrative functionality, Baker (*ibid.*, p. 11) presents the power of normalisation. She assumes that narrativity can normalise stories full of values and concepts when it displays them in a certain way over a passage of time so that they are no longer odd and unacceptable. They rather “come to be perceived as self-evident, benign, uncontestable and non-controversial” (*ibid.*). Normalised narratives are not entities that appear and disappear magically without consequences, but they “gradually seep into our consciousness and become part of the everyday fabric of life” (Baker, 2006a, p. 13). With an emphasis on the function of normalising public representations, narrativity corresponds, to some extent, with the abstract concepts of discourse and myths (*ibid.*, p. 3). Yet, a distinction needs to be drawn here. Discourse is seen as “a vehicle for social and political processes and myth as an element in a second-order semiological system”. Narrativity, in turn, has the advantage of being “much more concrete and accessible”: it encompasses not only public representations, but also personal experiences narrated by individuals (*ibid.*), as explained below.

Baker offers a concrete example of George Cuvier’s individual degrading narrative of race, which normalises the concept of the superiority of his race—with white skin, an oval face, straight hair, and pointed nose—versus the inferiority of other races—with dark skin, compressed skulls, and Afro-textured hair. Cuvier used a South African woman called Saartjie Baartman for dissecting and studying the secretaries of her genitalia. Before her death, he took her to London in 1819 and displayed her for the public as an anthropological exploration. Public crowds gathered to see and admire her extraordinary genitalia. Although some may have found the sight humiliating in the beginning, they continued to crowd until it rolled along merrily (*ibid.*, pp. 11–12). In fact, as Baker describes it, “their senses had been numbed by the narratives of their time, much as ours are by the narratives of today” (*ibid.*, p. 12). By 1815, the degrading

narrative of racial superiority/inferiority had come to be perceived as so self-evident and acceptable that Cuvier was able to undertake, without condemnation, his outrageous dissection (Baker, 2006a, p. 11).

One can argue, therefore, that even nowadays, we can continuously be socialised into or contested by vicious narratives, including those related to the “War on Terror”, terrorism, security, the “clash of civilisations”, and “Islamic radicalism” (ibid., p. 12). What is remarkably interesting at this moment of our history is that translation functions dynamically as a normalising and fostering vehicle for these narratives and the like across linguistic and cultural barriers (ibid., p. 14).

Translation/subtitling and interpreting play a particularly vital role in multicultural interactions, especially when knowing that most of our current conflicts are normally discussed on the international ground rather than being limited to specific local, monolingual communities. Interestingly enough, some local conflicts are typically discussed cross-linguistically and cross-culturally due to the multiculturalism that characterises some communities, especially in the West (ibid., pp. 21–22). In this context, Baker (ibid., 22) argues that “every time a version of the narrative is retold or translated into another language, it is injected with elements from other, broader narratives circulating within the new setting or from the personal narratives of the retellers”. In accordance with the premises of Baker’s narrative theory, we naturally and subconsciously construct/narrate a story or, strictly speaking, narrative through experiences (including political or ideological/cultural conflicts), and one possible way to transfer that narrative across the linguistic and cultural barriers is through translation or, strictly speaking, renarration. But narration and renarration are quite unlikely to reflect genuine experiences (Somers, 1992, p. 600; Riessman, 1993, p. 6), which may allude, in this sense, to the idea that translation is no different.

In her analogy, Rizzo states that “translation as (re)narration thus ‘constructs’ rather than ‘represents’ the event and characters it renarrates in another language” (2018, p. 162). When a narrative is translated (renarrated), the target text (renarration) may not necessarily be a genuine representation of the source text (original narration). By utilising translation strategies (reframing strategies), the source text can be wittingly manipulated by the translator (renarrator) to create a new, different story for

the audience (narratees) that is compatible with the agency's policies and ideologies. In the specific context of political functionality, such manipulation can justify (i.e., normalise or reinforce) the oppression of minorities or cruelty of war to local communities. As politically argued by Sanatifar (2013, p. 102): "renarration functions as a tool of power in the hands of politics; it manipulates the narrative as a tool for fighting against truth". Baker (2006a, p. 62) comments on the consequence of this process that "translating a narrative into another language and culture inevitably results in a form of 'contamination', whereby the original narrative itself may be threatened with dilution or change".

The above argument probably interprets Baker's advocacy for narrative theorists to appreciate translational practices and reflect upon their vital role. For this purpose, she introduces a new framework adopted in her related, narrative-based research (2006a, 2007, 2010), which is "to complement this essential social and political focus with attention to micro- and macro-analysis of text, especially translated texts and interpreted utterances" (Baker, 2006a, p. 20). Establishing this newly serious limitation in translation studies, Baker also invites translation and linguistic scholars "to supplement the social theory approach to narrativity with textual methods of analysis in order to offer a productive application of narrativity within translation studies" (Baker, 2006a, p. 20).

In this very context, the present study attempts to investigate the subtitling of the MENA²⁵ political narratives and the role that media translation organisations play in this respect. Chapter Four will provide an extensive explanation of the study framework drawn on in the analysis chapters. Baker's combination of limited textual analyses and comprehensive narrative analyses is not a traditional framework overtly adopted in the literature of social and communication theories or traditional, linguistic, and audiovisual theories. As mentioned earlier in Section 3.2, the entire focus of social

²⁵ MENA refers to the regions of the Middle East and North Africa.

and communication theories is chiefly aimed at the narrative function, while the focus of traditional, linguistic, and audiovisual theories is far too restricted to the structural, linguistic, and technical classifications of analysis in mostly oral and literary individual narratives (Baker, 2006a, p. 20). Hence, this is the significance of the present multi-level analysis. The following section sheds light on the significance and aspects of narrative theory that make it distinguishable from other traditional translation studies. It also attempts to justify the adoption of narrative analysis in this thesis by thoroughly discussing its interconnected strengths.

3.4 The Significance of Narrative Theory and Analysis in Translation/AVT Research

Generally, one of the attractions of narrative as a social term can be traced to its “highly transparent and intuitively satisfying concept that can easily be understood by anyone” (Baker, 2006a, p. 3). In Fisher’s fundamental argument, “*narrative* is a concept that can enhance understanding of human communication and action whenever those phenomena occur” (Fisher, 1987, p. 20). Fisher also argues that narratives are specifically and generally meaningful for everyone across time and place and the culture of communities (ibid., pp. 65–66). He adds that “narratives enable us to understand the actions of others ‘because we all live out narratives in our lives and because we understand our own lives in terms of narratives’” (ibid., p. 66). Highlighting the advantages of doing research in the light of the social approach to narrative, Riessman suggests:

Narratives are useful in research precisely because storytellers interpret the past rather than reproduce it as it was. The “truths” of narrative accounts are not in their faithful representations of a past world, but in the shifting connections they forge among past, present, and future. They offer storytellers a way to re-imagine lives (as narratives do for nations, organisations, ethnic/racial and other groups forming collective identities). (2005, p. 6)

More specifically, as for the purpose of the present study, narrative theory remains vital to the activities of translation/AVT researchers and critics for exploring the conventionally invisible role of translation/subtitling and interpreting, and understanding the intricate behaviour of their practitioners. Baker (2007, pp. 151–52),

for instance, draws heavily on narrative theory and explains that the reason behind her choice is her dissatisfaction with the existing theories. She argues (2007, p. 152) that throughout most of the literature on translation and interpreting, scholars tend to draw on norm theory (Gideon Toury, 1995) in monitoring translators and explaining their behaviour. Norm theory, Baker (2007, p. 152) criticises, encourages analyses of abstract, repeated, invariable, and systematic behaviour, and as a result, favours certain forms of socialisation in that behaviour at the expense of demonstrating the various individual and collective efforts at subverting dominant political and social beliefs.

Baker adds that norm theory seems inefficient for investigating some intricate forms of translators' behaviour, such as the "interplay between dominance and resistance". This translational phenomenon that Baker (2007) is particularly keen to shed light on refers to the intricacy of the interplay between invariable, repeated forms of behaviour and persistent efforts at undermining that behaviour. She also argues that norm theory does not pay enough attention to the political and social circumstances that cause such forms of "dominance *and* resistance" to unfold (*ibid.*, p. 152, emphasis in original). It is narrative theory, she assumes, that can interpret "the political import of narratives and the interplay of resistance and dominance ..., stressing that narrative, both, reproduces existing power structures *and* provides a means of contesting them" (Baker, 2006a, p. 4, emphasis in original).

Another type of existing theory that leads to Baker's dissatisfaction and foregrounds the substantial capability of narrative theory is Lawrence Venuti's theory of foreignisation and domestication, and the dichotomies of its strategies (Venuti, 1993, 1995). Besides the fact that they minimise the multiplicity of positions the translator can take in connection with different texts, authors and audiences, Venuti's dichotomies also eliminate "the shifting positions of translator within the same text" (Baker, 2007, p. 152). In other words, they minimise the intricate techniques that translators use to negotiate their way across variant facets of one text into an approximately straightforward decision between a foreignising or domesticating strategy. In response to this type of binarism, Baker (*ibid.*) emphasises that the examinations of some texts in her research indicate translators' oscillation between

different choices for translating the same word within the same text²⁶. Such inconsistency is overlooked by Venuti’s theorisation, which would generally consider those choices as either foreignising or domesticating strategies.

To substantiate her critique, Baker (2007, p. 163) mentions two examples of textual (within the translation) reframing taken from the subtitling of an Arabic documentary called *Jenin Jenin* directed by Mohamed Bakri in 2002. The documentary was filmed in Arabic in the occupied West Bank, after the Israeli attack on Jenin camp, henceforth called the Jenin events.²⁷ The film was subtitled into English, French, Italian, Spanish and Hebrew, but the English subtitles appeared to be aimed, specifically, at Americans (ibid.). The first example is the subtitler’s use of the *Vietnam Frame* in the TT, which is different from the ST utterance. It associates the Palestinian suffering with the Vietnamese suffering in the war of 1955–1975.

Table 3

Vietnam Frame

ST	Baker’s Translation	TT
أنا عارف والله العظيم، والله العظيم، بيتنا ما صار بيت.	What can I say, by God, by God, <u>our house/home is no longer a house/home.</u>	What can I say? <u>Not even Vietnam was as bad as this.</u>

According to traditional translation studies, the choice of replacing the ST destruction frame with the TT Vietnam frame would be interpreted as a way of “acculturating” the ST so that the target audience (presumably Americans) would

²⁶ See the ‘secular frame’ examples below on pp. 113–115.

²⁷The *Jenin events* refers to the Israeli attack on Jenin camp in April 2002. The attack “was indisputably fierce and bloody. But while the British papers, almost unanimously, presented it from the outset as a ‘massacre’ ... the US and Israeli papers — Ha’aretz included — were far more reserved and cautious, saying that there was no evidence to back such claims” (Sadeh, 2002).

perceive it more intelligibly (Baker, 2007, p. 164). Showing a dissatisfaction with this interpretation, Baker (ibid.) argues that if this is the goal of the subtitler, another more recent and more prominent event such as 9/11 would be more intelligible and effective in this case; the death and destruction of this tragedy, arguably, would have more resonance in the memory of American society, especially for its younger generations.

In order to perceive the more likely goal of the subtitler's choice, Baker considers the significance of the wider narratives constructed locally and internationally. At both levels, the direct narrative of what occurred at Jenin has been highly controversial. Some English-speaking media described it as an "incursion" conducted by the Israeli Defence Forces. Such a description was received by some activists of the solidarity movement with resentment, as an "'incursion' was [a] far too sanitised description for the full-blown and sustained assault that left the camp in the ruins and many people dead" (ibid., p. 165). Therefore, the subtitler's choice to make use of the Vietnam narrative seems to reframe the atrocities that occurred at Jenin as a war of occupation and aggression over using a more mitigated description, like that implied by the word "incursion" (ibid.).

The other narrative widely spread amongst Palestinians and the international solidarity movement is the public narrative, which considers America as the main supporter of Israeli oppression of Palestinians (ibid.). Knowing that "Vietnam was ... widely perceived as a vicious and bloody war, among large sectors of the American public as well as internationally" (ibid.), the decision to opt for such a frame reinforces this public narrative. Far from the prevailing explanations of essentialists²⁸, the choice to trigger the Vietnam narrative "encodes both accommodation to dominance and resistance to it" (ibid.). In other words, the Vietnam frame implies dominance, which already has resonance in the dominant American society. It also embeds resistance to

²⁸ A traditional perspective in TS (most prominently Venuti's categorisation of foreignising and domesticating strategies) criticised in Baker's (2006a, 2007) account of narrativity.

that dominance by depicting America as an oppressor, the people of which are also involved in its oppression unless they choose to resist and condemn it in Palestine and elsewhere, as they did in Vietnam (Baker, 2007, p. 165).

The second example is the subtitler’s choice of the *secular frame* to reframe the broader Palestinian narrative by manipulating the recurring word “shaheed” in the interviews conducted with some Palestinians in this documentary. “Shaheed” in Arabic is the general equivalent of “martyr”, yet, it is tricky for two reasons. Firstly, “shaheed” is not the fully semantic equivalent of “martyr”; it embraces more general usage, referring to those killed brutally in wars—whether they are militants or civilians—regardless of their religious affiliations. Secondly, within the context of the Middle East crisis, the term “shaheed” may implicate indications of Islamic fundamentalism, which can be exploited, if repeated without scrutiny in translations, to draw a vision of “a religious war, fuelled by young, deranged Muslims in search of virgins in paradise” (ibid., pp. 165–166). Below are three extracts, taken from the same documentary subtitles through which Baker (ibid., p. 166) shows how the subtitler keeps oscillating between different choices to tackle same the term—“shaheed”—and its derivations in the same story.

Table 4

Extract 1: Secular Frame 1

ST	Baker’s Translation	TT
لسه مندور شُهَدَا من تحت الأرض.	We are still pulling <u>martyrs</u> from underneath the ground.	We are still pulling <u>victims</u> out of the rubble.

Table 5*Extract 2: Secular Frame 2*

ST	Baker's Translation	TT
متخلفين عقليا استشهدوا عندنا، معاقين استشهدوا عندنا، أطفال استشهدوا عندنا.	We have mentally retarded people who been <u>martyred</u> ; we have disabled people who have been <u>martyred</u> ; we have children who have been <u>martyred</u> , we have women who have been <u>martyred</u> .	They <u>killed</u> some mentally disabled people, children and women in the camp.

In extracts (1) and (2), the subtitler opts for the secular frames by using two different equivalents: “victims” and “killed”. Both reframe a more secular narrative for the Palestinian crisis. This choice would avoid any possible misunderstanding that may result from the lack of awareness of the extensively different semantic scope of this word in the source language (Baker, 2007, p. 166).

Table 6*Extract 3: Original Narrative Frame*

Baker's Translation	TT
The camp is a tall, tall towering tree, consists of leaves, inscribed with the name of a <u>shaheed</u> .	The camp is like a tall, eminent tree. The tree has leaves, and each leaf of the tree bears the name of a <u>martyr</u> .

Due to an unknown technical fault, the fifth clip of the documentary from which Extract 3 is taken is uploaded silent, and hence, the Arabic source text is unheard. Baker, though, provided her translation which she claimed as an equivalent of the source text she had obtained from the subtitler. The extract is a scene of a seven- or eight-year-old girl who was expressing her grief in the camp and also her

determination to survive. The subtitler opts to use the term “martyr”, retaining the semantic load of the original utterance with its religious connotation, “arguably because the innocent-looking, if defiant, young girl does not exactly fit the image of a deranged extremist in pursuit of paradise” (Baker, 2007, p. 166).

Having explained this, one can technically argue that Baker’s discussion of the Vietnam frame did not mention the technical constraints of subtitling and the challenges they set on the screen, which could affect the ability to render the ST meaning appropriately and, hence, determine the translation choices. The choice of providing a shorter equivalent by using the Vietnam frame could be attributed merely to the need for technical manipulation due to a technical constraint rather than necessarily for an ideological one. The Vietnam frame underlined contains only 29 characters on the screen, while Baker’s translation of the Arabic utterance underlined contains 35 characters. What remains elusive and difficult to explain technically, however, is the subtitler’s oscillation between “martyr” and “victims” and “killed” underlined in the example of the secular frame. Here lies the power of Baker’s narrative theory, which recognises and explains such translational behaviour.

The narrative analysis of the two examples shows how textual reframing can trigger broader narratives beyond the immediate subtitles and cannot be justified by the traditional translation theorisation (e.g., norm theory and domestication vs foreignisation) (Baker, 2007, p. 163). Because it exceeds binarism²⁹, narrative theory is, therefore, capable of allowing “the examination of different cases and opposing strategies even within the same text” (Boukhaffa, 2018, p. 169). Significantly, as Baker (2007, p. 152) further asserts, translators’ oscillation does not occur randomly or illogically; it may, in reality, serve intended purposes such as the reframing of events and news in different contexts. In short, she attempts to balance the focus of norm

²⁹ Binarism, first established by Ferdinand de Saussure, refers to a state of thought based on apparently constant oppositions (such as black and white or good and evil) that are perceived in post-structuralist and post-colonial analysis as an insufficient method to study differences (Mambrol, 2017).

theory on invariable, systematic behaviour and the constant division of Venuti's dichotomies by adopting a new framework identifying "the varied, shifting and ongoingly negotiable positioning of individual translators in relation to their texts, authors, societies and dominant ideologies" (Baker, 2007, p. 152). This framework enables us to understand the motives of translators/subtitlers' continuous relocating within one text. In the perspective of Baker, the romantic process of intercultural communication between communities should be alternatively seen as a controversial process of either mitigating or fuelling conflicts; hence, is Baker's interest in narrative theory and her encouragement for scholarly research on translation and interpreting to establish linkages to its applications, as mentioned in Section 3.3.

In the course of analysing texts narratively, particularly in visual media, it is significant to dismantle the structure to discover how the narrative emerges and functions. In this respect, Neves (2004, p. 132) argues that every narrative, far from being natural, is the consequence of information editing and manipulation. Filmic texts should be broken down into their structural parts to comprehensively explore implicit and explicit narratives. Despite the complexity and time-consuming nature of narrative analysis, it is worth spending some time to apply the following three stages of analysis: 1) a description of what is occurring in the story, 2) an interpretation of explicit narratives, 3) disclosure of implicit narratives (the most complex stage) (Neves, 2004, p. 132). The latter stage is the one in which the function of the implicit and explicit narratives could unfold. It is the stage, as also argued by Selby and Cowdry (1995), in which we can understand "why things are presented in the way they are and how this relates to dominant social values. It is this that makes analysis at this level a more critical and analytical exercise" (1995, p. 34).

The complexity of narrative analysis could be attributed to the fact that narrative is a dynamic entity, as Baker (2006a, p. 3) assumes. Narrative keeps transforming delicately or even drastically in accordance with the new stories we are subject to in day-to-day experiences. This dynamic nature needs a type of theorisation with proper strengths to effectively analyse the structural parts of (re)framed messages, especially in AVT. Without claiming a complete unproductivity of the existing theorisation on translation and interpreting, nor claiming that narrative theory can

unilaterally tackle all deficiencies of other existing theorisations, Baker (2007, pp. 152–54) summarises five major interconnected strengths, which support the applicability of her narrative analysis.

First, narrative theory does not privilege essentialist and reductive classifications such as gender, race, religion, and ethnicity. Rather, it implies that our behaviour is not controlled by our attributes but ultimately controlled by the stories that we come to receive about the experiences in which we are embedded (2006a, p. 3). The theory “acknowledges the ongoingly negotiable nature of our positioning in relation to our political and social reality” (Baker, 2007, p. 152). In other words, narrative theory is concerned with the volatile nature of our identity, which, on some occasions, results in embracing attitudes and beliefs often unfamiliar to local and/or universal principles and classifications. Hall et al. (2004, p. 38) similarly claim that narrative theory “offers a way of conceptualising identity that is neither universal nor essentialist, but rather temporally and culturally specific”. It, therefore, enables us to exceed the so-called inborn cultural differences and identity politics that have received a great deal of attention in translation and interpreting studies (Baker, 2007, pp. 152–153), especially in studies on gender (e.g., Simon 1996), patterns of behaviour and cultural attributes (e.g., Katan 2004) and sexuality (e.g., Harvey 1998, 2003a).

Despite its potential productivity in some political contexts, identity politics has always been limited and deficient in others. The most prominent limitation is that it conventionally categorises people into groups that externally carry the same characteristics (e.g., Black people, extremists, women, secularists, homosexuals) while neglecting common, individual differences within these groups. It is also deficient in that it prioritises particular characteristics of individuals at the detriment of others, leading to the overdetermination of the identities of those individuals (Baker, 2007, p. 153).

In the translation context, as Baker (*ibid.*) argues, individual translators and interpreters need to be embedded in the variety of narratives they get involved in, and that unfold their behaviour in reality. Although the behaviours of translators and interpreters are likely to be influenced by their position in a specific ideological and cultural community or racial group, that influence is neither predictable nor inevitable.

Seeing translators as slaves of a given social context is probably “overly deterministic, and is at odds with prevailing models of ... translation that see the translator as a creative agent” (Jones, 2004, p. 722). Highlighting the vitality of individuality, Jones refers to the internal “self” factor, among other factors, that shape the translator’s acts. Self includes “the translator’s psyche, personal history and motivations, political and ideological loyalties and views, ethical principles and conceptualisation of his/her own role, preferred translating tactics and strategies” (ibid.). Hence, self-identifying as a Muslim or Jew translator, for instance, would not enable us to predict their action in real life, nor justify their attitudes, until we recognise the narratives in which they are embedded (Baker, 2007, p. 153).

Currently, for instance, being a female could arguably mean rejecting self-identifying as a “feminist” at all and showing no interest in the contentious issues of “feminism” and equality campaigns. As stated by Scharff (2019), “fewer than one in five young women would call themselves a “feminist”, polling in the UK and US suggests”. This outcome could be unpredicted because “feminism” is perceived as representing women’s rights of gender equality; yet, for many, the rejection is not because they object to gender equality itself but because in some Western countries, like the UK and Germany, young women tend to associate the term “feminism” with local narratives that mark “feminists” as man-haters, lesbians, or women with no femininity (Scharff, 2019). Someone being a woman, therefore, would not enable us to predict their action in real life, nor justify their attitudes, until we recognise the narratives in which they are embedded.

The notion of embeddedness leads to the second strength, which allows us to treat translators/subtitlers and interpreters as concrete entities and “real-life individuals rather than theoretical abstractions” (Baker, 2007, p. 153). Generally speaking, Whitebrook (2001, p. 15) argues that theory “frequently fails to make the political agent concrete” and that identity is traditionally “treated as a matter of the variables an observer must assess when trying to understand or predict anyone’s behaviour”. Such a critique, as Baker (2007, p. 154) presumes, is most probably aimed at traditional theorisation in translation studies, because, as Whitebrook proposes, the only way out from those theoretical abstractions is to adopt narrative theory:

A turn to narratives allows for the de-personalised of theory, the bearers of a representative or typified identity, to be understood as separate persons — characters — with singular sets of characteristics, including but not confined to their political context and/or group identity. (Whitebrook, 2001, p. 15)

The third strength is that it enables us to understand behaviour dynamically rather than statically: the theory “recognises the complexity of being embedded in crisscrossing, even competing, narratives” (Baker, 2007, p. 154). Due to their dynamism, narratives cannot be organised into a series of unchangeable stories. In addition to simply selecting from and retelling stories mostly unquestioningly, we also subscribe consciously or unconsciously to their construction and elaboration, which, thereby, justifies and emphasises narrative instability. On this consequence, Baker (2006a, p. 3) comments that “at any moment in time we can be located within a variety of divergent, crisscrossing, often oscillating narrative, thus acknowledging the complexity and fluidity of our positioning in relation to other participants in interaction”. As argued by Somers and Gibson, narrativity “embeds the actor within relationships and stories that shift over time and space and ... precludes categorial stability in action” (1994, p. 65); hence, due to dynamism of behaviour, there would be no allowance here for any attempts of arranging the actors’ (translator’s) behaviours and choices into macro categorisations “such as foreignising versus domesticating, acculturating versus exoticising, nor of course faithful versus free — not even within the space of a single text” (Baker, 2007, p. 154). Additionally, due to the notion of embeddedness, there would be no scope for claiming an objective or neutral position in the narratives we subscribe to via translation/subtitling or analysing. By reflecting on and reasoning about the stories that we come across and which construct our identity, there would be no way to prevent (as translators) “our subjectivity or stand outside those narratives, even as we reason about them” (ibid.).

The fourth strength, and the most significant in Baker’s perspective, is that narrative theory helps us recognise the notion of dominance versus resistance—to what extent social and ideological structures are prevailing and how much active individual or group resistance there can be. The theory equally highlights “the ritual nature of interaction ... as well as the means by which rituals are questioned and undermined” (Baker, 2007, p. 154).

Due to the continuous changeability of the stories and experiences we come across, narratives can be said to have “significant subversive or transformative potential” (Ewick and Silbey, 1995, p. 199). The Arabic uprisings in 2011, for instance, are being portrayed and narrated by various media outlets quite differently. Due to the conflict that has followed, some choose to describe the uprising as the *Arab Autumn* instead of the most common media term *Arab Spring*. Each narration could be totally at odds with, or only differ slightly from the other in some details. With time, only some of these narrations will become more appreciated and mainstream narratives through “various processes of reinforcement and contestation” (Baker, 2006a, p. 20). Our subscription—whether politically or personally motivated—to narratives means that acceptance of some of them involves the refusal of others (Bennett and Edelman, 1985, p. 160). The difference between competing narratives may last for centuries (Baker, 2006a, p. 20), yet it would “give all of them their meanings” (Bennett and Edelman, 1985, p. 160). This argument brings in Baker’s notion of the political import of narratives mentioned above. The renarration of past narratives could be employed as a powerful strategy to contest or reinforce present narratives. African Americans, for instance, renarrate past narratives of slavery in order to struggle against present narratives of non-stop racism and oppression, and Israelis renarrate past narratives of the Holocaust repeatedly, as many times as needed, to support their present narratives of freedom and the right to settle (2006a, pp. 20-21).

The fifth and final strength is that, unlike narrative theorisation in social and communication studies, which barely gives attention to linguistic and translational issues, Baker’s narrative theory contributes to both. It allows us to understand linguistic and translational choices associated with broader social, ideological, and political contexts, yet without neglecting individual texts and events (Baker, 2007, p. 154). In other words, it simultaneously gives us the ability to recognise a broad range of narratives in which individual texts are embedded. It helps, on some occasions, to exceed the direct local story found in an utterance or text to evaluate its subscription to finding broader stories, both domestically and internationally. The theory “allows us to piece together and analyse a narrative that is not fully traceable to any specific stretch of text but has to be constructed from a range of sources, including non-verbal

materials” (Baker, 2005, p. 4). More specifically, in subtitling, an immediate narrative in a given subtitle can be embedded more broadly within other external narratives through the influence of specific elements (e.g., words, images, sounds) that are not necessarily traceable in the ST or TT. Undoubtedly, such unconventional embeddedness deserves closer investigation, which is the core of the present study. Furthermore, the theory helps us recognise not only the textual elaboration of narratives but also the paratextual and contextual. As Boukhaffa (2018, p. 169) argues, the theory provides a practical framework that helps investigate all levels of the TT, from the text and paratext to the larger context in which the product in question is (re)framed, (re)circulated, and ultimately digested.

The significance of adopting narrative analysis in translation studies (TS) is probably best exemplified in Baker’s account of narrativity (2005, 2006a, 2006b, 2007, 2010). It provides critical discussions on the socio-political and socio-cultural/ideological influences of the power³⁰ and conflict³¹ narratives on communal perceptions via variant processes of translating. She draws on the notion of narrativity to investigate how translators intervene in these processes and guide perceptions (2006a, p. 3). The main argument of Baker’s narrative theorisation reads: “clearly narratives do not travel across linguistic and cultural boundaries and do not develop into meta narratives without the direct involvement of translators and interpreters” (2006b, p. 467).

Following the postcolonial theorist Robert Young (2003)³², Baker (2016) asserts a new academic trend in translation/audiovisual translation studies that no longer considers translation as only a tool of intercultural communication but also a tool associated closely with the current political issues of power and dominance. It is

³⁰ Power refers to the supreme exercise of manipulating and affecting another party’s needs and desires in order to prevent noticeable conflict from emerging at the beginning (Lukes, 1974, p. 23).

³¹ Conflict refers to a tense situation between two or more parties contesting over clashing goals or different beliefs (Baker, 2006a, p. 1).

³² The author of *Postcolonialism: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

the trend in which narrative theorisation has been carried to the surface, and in which Baker critically describes the role of translation and interpreting as “ways in which translators and interpreters — in collaboration with publishers, editors and other agents involved in the interaction — accentuate, undermine or modify aspects of the narrative(s) encoded in the source text or utterance, and in so doing participate in shaping social reality” (Baker, 2006a, p. 5).

Speaking about the significance of the narrative theory in apprehending the concepts of power, resistance, and conflict in TS, it is worth mentioning Baker’s (2005) seminal work *Narratives in and of Translation*. The study has inspired and encouraged academic researchers, including herself (and the present thesis), to examine translations of media organisations more realistically. In this study, she questions the narrative of translation, which dominates the scholarly and professional discourses with an image portrayed for our world promoting peace through communication and dialogue. Disappointed by this type of narrative, she argues:

They ... attempt to explain away the politics of language and translation by portraying a world in which cultural misunderstanding is unintended, innocent and can be avoided once we are sensitised to cultural differences and have a well-trained group of professionals who can mediate between different cultures in a non-biased and responsible manner. (Baker, 2005, p. 4)

She also emphasises (ibid., p. 9) examining the efficiency of the metaphors of “translation as a bridge and translator as a bridge maker”, which have long been interpreted positively. She argues that the postulate of considering translators as merely peace-giving encouragers and communication enablers could isolate them from narratives that considerably determine their awareness of the world. As such, it makes sense not to risk intensifying their unconsciousness of the potential distortion and damage they might cause due to the lack of sensitivity and awareness of the nature of their involvements. In an unprecedented initiative, Baker explains how to question and break up the monotony in the traditional theorisation of TS by drawing on narrative theory. The main argument put forward in Baker’s paper is that TS scholars have evaluated the roles of translators uncritically and unrealistically. Therefore, she ultimately aims to highlight this vital role, which is played almost invisibly to either mitigate or otherwise fuel conflict at times of rising political tensions. She

conceptualises this role by introducing more genuine and nuanced models, dependent on realistic rather than over-romanticised translating practices and behaviour (Baker, 2005, p. 4).

In the process of obtaining a complete description of her theory, Baker (*ibid.*, p. 5) mentions two essential factors: a) the types or dimensions of narrative that mediate our overall “take” on the world, and b) the features that distinguish a narrative from a story or chronology of events and explain the strategies by which narratives are (re)framed at different levels (i.e., text, paratext and context). The following section discusses the narrative typology with due examples explained for each type.

3.5 Narrative Typology

A broad literature in many disciplines has expanded in introducing variant types of narrative. Yet, as has seemingly been found relevant to the purpose of the present study, a typology mainly introduced by Somers (1992, 1997) and Somers and Gibson (1993, 1994), later developed by Baker (2005, 2006a, 2006b), is, in particular, adopted. In an attempt to summarise the social and political power of narratives, Somers and Gibson distinguish between four interdependent types of narrative: ontological, public, conceptual and meta-narrative. Their discussion of each of these types is nonetheless concise. As sociologists, they reasonably did not mention translation and interpreting at all, a task that Mona Baker took over “to flesh out the details of their typology and to demonstrate its potential application in translation studies” (2006a, p. 28).

3.5.1 *Ontological Narrative*

Ontological narratives (also known as narratives of the self) refer to all “personal stories that we tell ourselves about our place in the world and our own history” (Baker, 2006a, p. 28). These stories contribute to both constructing our lives and making them meaningful. Even though considered personal, “ontological narratives can only exist interpersonally in the course of social and structural interactions over time” (Somers and Gibson, 1994, p. 61). In other words, these stories are personal in that they ultimately focus on someone’s self and direct surroundings,

but they are equally interpersonal and social in that they need to be shared in a social world. For a person to communicate their personal stories, and for those stories to flourish and function, social relations must exist (Whitebrook, 2001, p. 24). Accordingly, this means that ontological narratives, even the most personal, are dependent and in need of collective narratives (e.g., linguistic structures, signs and symbols, stereotypes, and expressions of motives), without which, they (the personal) are otherwise ambiguous and unexplainable (Ewick and Silbey, 1995, pp. 211–12). This could partially explain, as Baker (2006a, p. 28) argues, why the retelling or translating of particular personal stories from one language into another can be problematic. It is because the interdependence between personal and collective narrative implies that “the retelling (or translating) is inevitably constrained by the shared linguistic and narrative resources available in the new setting” (p. 29).

Baker (2006a) gives the concrete example of Ella Shohat for the absence of this significant connection. Ella is an Iraqi Jew who left with her family to Israel in the 1950s, and, later as an adult, she left for America. She describes the impact of the gap between her personal narratives of her childhood and the collective narratives of American society. She struggled, as Americans could not realise hyphenated identities like hers (“Iraqi-Israeli”), which resulted in an immediate reduction to a more assimilable identity:

“Ah, so you’re Israeli!”. In the United States ... our Asianness disappears, subsumed under the dominant Eurocentric definition of Jewishness (equated with Europe) and Arabness (equated with Islam) as antonyms. Millennia of existence in Iraq are erased in the name of three decades in Israel. (Shohat, 2000, p. 289, cited in Baker, 2006a, p. 29)

Ontological narratives are constrained and located within collective narratives; however, without them, the expansion, flourishing and continuation of collective narratives in the social world would be virtually impossible (*ibid.*). In this sense, for any narrative to be collective, it needs to be shared and repeated in many personal narratives to become acceptable and ultimately “to become ‘normalised’ into a self-evident account of the world and hence escape scrutiny” (Baker, 2006a, p. 30).

The Libyan uprising that triggered the 2011 NATO-led intervention came to be normalised by (but not limited to) “national subjects trained to accept yet another level of insecurity in the name of security, to tolerate military invasions in the name of human rights” (Longinovic, 2004, p. 6). As a national character, the former Libyan ambassador to the UN, Abdel Rahman Shalgam, is a case in point. Among others like him, he supported the Rebels and compared Qadhafi’s actions to those of Hitler, which activated the meta-narrative of the Holocaust and Nazi totalitarianism. In his well-known, tearfully emotional speech to the UN Security Council, he stated: "معمر القذافي يقول لليبيين: إما أن أحكمكم أو أقتلكم" "Muammar Qadhafi is telling the Libyans: ‘either I rule you or I kill you’”. Though it has not as yet been proven, this personal story swept the whole country in hours, activating (locally and internationally via translation) a collective narrative: that is, the meta-narrative of the Protection of Civilians from Qadhafi’s regime. On the same day, Shalgam appealed to the fifteen members of the Security Council: “We need a courageous resolution from you”. Later, he gave another speech invoking the whole world to intervene to protect civilians “within hours, not days” (Swaine, 2011). According to Baker (2006a, p. 30), “it is this willingness on the part of many individuals to bring their ontological narratives in line with specific collective narratives that sustains the latter and gives them their legitimacy and power”.

3.5.2 Public Narrative

Public narratives are somewhat similar, yet not identical to shared and collective narratives. Collective narratives are loose in that they ambiguously include any sort of common narrative mainstreaming in societies (Baker, 2006a, p. 33). Following Somers (1992, 1997) and Somers and Gibson (1994), Baker refers to public narratives as the “stories elaborated by and circulated among social and institutional formations larger than the individual, such as the family, religious or educational institution, political or activist group, the media, and the nation” (2006b, p. 465). She argues that Somers and Gibson’s definition does not include the literary system—which is also very important in constructing one of the most influential institutions for circulating public narratives in communities—that is literature (Baker, 2006a, p. 33).

As exemplified by Jones, “the manipulation of literature often plays a crucial role in the process of the ethno-national identity formation by generating ‘pseudo histories’ that create or reinforce national mythologies” (Jones, 2004, p. 715). Public narratives are likely to be circulated differently in society, especially by media organisations, leading to further construction of competing public narratives.

The Protection of Civilians, for instance—launched by NATO and invoked domestically by some Libyans as a public narrative—has been confronted by a relatively large segment of other Libyans, as well as non-Libyans interested in the issues of why it was launched and who is responsible (“to what extent was the NATO intervention in Libya a humanitarian intervention?”), along with other purported “myths of atrocities” (Green, 2019, pp. 1–12). While the accentuated public narrative was “framed under Responsibility to Protect”, the competing public narrative is “that regime change was the priority for NATO” (ibid.). NATO opponents in Libya have also used "العدوان الصليبي" “the Crusader Aggression” as a competing public narrative, which was activated first by Qadhafi and then circulated repetitively by his pro-government media.

In the course of circulating any public narratives, individuals either accept the officially disseminated versions or simply reject them (Baker, 2006a, p. 33). Rejections occur because those versions “include aspects which the person as a member of the group cannot easily accommodate in their own story of identity” (Whitebrook, 2001, p. 145). Translators and interpreters play a vital role in circulating foreign public narratives within their own societies. They contribute to the normalisation of new, maybe exotic, perspectives promoted in those shared narratives for the members of a community and any possible recent migrants (Baker, 2006a, p. 36). They can also be faithful to ideologies and agendas internal or external to a culture (Tymoczko, 2003, p. 201), and this may cause them to “position themselves differently in relation to domestic public narratives” (Baker, 2006a, p. 36). Gush Shalom, for instance, is an Israeli activist group that produced a brochure with a Hebrew–Russian translation in 2004, specifically to invoke the Russian community in Israel. Titled *Truth Against Truth: A Completely Different Look at the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, the brochure advocates for an ideological public narrative external to the Israeli culture

in order to breach the national consensus about the causes and history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Baker, 2006a, p. 36).

In other scenarios, translators and interpreters may elaborate domestic public narratives in dimensions wider than their local communities. Their ideological or commercial affiliations can either lead them to accentuate or contest those narratives “by appealing to a foreign audience with a different view of the world” (ibid., pp. 37–38). An example of this is the public narrative "الجيش الليبي" “Libyan Army”, which is circulated in the Libyan political domestic context by some GNA³³ officials, referring interchangeably to different parties, including some western forces in Misrata and Tripoli and Haftar military forces. In the same context, there is also a challenging collective narrative, which selectively recognises some of these parties and deems the others as "مليشيات مجرمة" “criminal militias”. In April 2019, Haftar forces attacked some Western regions in Libya not under their control and, since then, their public narrative (of the Libyan Army) has been contested and elaborated differently. Possibly for ideological motives (internal or external), what used to be elaborated as the Libyan Army is alternatively portrayed as militias. Due to their objection to this attack, some pro-GNA official and non-official media started to circulate the domestic collective narrative, in which Haftar and his forces are embedded as criminals. More importantly, in June 2019, a pro-GNA website called The Libyan Observer posted an article in English titled “Libyan Army Seizes Fuel Truck for Haftar Militias” written by Safa Alharathy³⁴. The article seems to be stimulating resistance to Haftar’s past public narrative at both national and international levels, and accentuating a new public narrative embedding him as the cause of the Libyan conflict. Herein lies the significant role of translation, because the survival and further promotion of such a domestic

³³ The Libya General Accord.

³⁴ Safa Alharathy is a Libyan journalist working for the Libya Observer, a pro-GNA social and political media outlet.

narrative and the like “depends on them being articulated in other dialects, languages and non-domestic contexts” (Baker, 2006a, p.38).

3.5.3 *Conceptual Narratives*

Conceptual narratives, according to Somers and Gibson (1994, p. 62), are “concepts and explanations that we construct as social researchers”. Social actions and institution-building are not merely produced through ontological and public narratives, and therefore, our concepts and explanations must rather “include the factors we call social forces — market patterns, institutional practices, organisational constraints” (Somers & Gibson, 1994, p. 62). For Baker, however, it appears to be more sensible and productive to make this definition broader by subsuming *disciplinary narratives* under this type. In this sense, conceptual narratives can be more representative of all “the stories and explanations that scholars in any field elaborate for themselves and others about their object of inquiry” (Baker, 2006a, p. 39). As further clarified by Ewick and Silbey (1995, p. 201), the elaboration of narratives is not only about the object of inquiry but also about “the method of inquiry, or the product of inquiry (the researcher’s representation)”. The latter is the category that relates to Baker’s definition: “narrative as the product of inquiry, the representations elaborated by researchers” (Baker, 2006a, p. 39).

All disciplines, even translation studies, construct, elaborate and flourish their own conceptual narratives. Interestingly, one of the conceptual narratives in translation studies that appears to be at odds with Baker’s narrative theory is the conventional image of translation as merely a romantic process of bridging the gap between communities and fostering intercultural communications. As mentioned earlier, Baker (2005) contests this narrative by describing translation as a controversial process of either mitigating or fuelling conflicting narratives—a process that helps in “subjugating entire populations and providing precisely the kind of bridging of language gaps that allow such atrocities to take place” (Baker, 2005, p. 9–12). Another conceptual narrative dominant in AVT studies is the notion of subtitling authenticity, which has been challenged by several scholars, like Chaume (2018), who elaborates a competing narrative in which the notion is embedded as an illusion (relevant

discussions provided in Chapter Two). Although some conceptual narratives remain limited to circulating amongst the communities of specialists, others can be constructed and elaborated in variant disciplines but with a remarkable effect on a worldwide scale: Darwin's theory of natural selection is one such example (Baker, 2006a, 39).

Similarly to how they subscribe to public narratives, translators and interpreters are also able to agree and promote, or reject and contest conceptual narratives. In this respect, Baker (2007, p. 153) mentions Samuel Huntington's *Clash of Civilizations* (1993, 1996) as a *pernicious* theory with a remarkable impact even outside its disciplinary limitations. Politically motivated, this theory continues to emphasise, through a degrading conceptual narrative, the clichéd stereotyping of Arabs and Muslims and their "propensity toward violent conflict" (Huntington, 1996, p. 258, cited in Baker, 2007, p. 153). In turn, as Longinovic criticises, Huntington's narrative "places the US-led West at the center of political domination" (2004, p. 6). After only two years, two Arabic translations of Huntington's book were released: the first was by Tal'at Al-Shayib in 1998 in Egypt, and the second was by Malik Obeid Abu Shuhayaa and Mahmoud Mohamed Khalaf in 1999 in Libya. The two translations are preceded by lengthy introductions, pre-empting the reader's reaction towards Huntington's narrative. They contested it by reconstructed a negative narrative aligned with ideologies internal to the culture of their identity, preventing the TT readers from making their own interpretations and judgements on the original text even before reading it (Baker, 2007, p. 161).

3.5.4 Meta- (Master) Narrative

Meta- (also known as *Master*) *Narratives*, according to Somers and Gibson (1994, p. 61; 1993, p. 32), are those narratives "in which we are embedded as contemporary actors in history and as social scientists" (Somers and Gibson, 1993, p. 32). Although they often function beyond our consciousness, meta-narratives have various facets, such as Enlightenment, Industrialisation, Progress, that encode our concepts and theories (ibid.). Meta-narratives "can be the epic drama of our time: Capitalism vs Communism, the Individual vs Society, Barbarism/Nature vs Civility"

(Somers and Gibson, 1993, p. 32). It is reasonable to consider, for instance, the Cold War—which would have initially begun as a public narrative—as a meta-narrative? It has continued for decades and influenced our lives, in particular, as well as the international society in general (Baker, 2006a, p. 45).

Nowadays, a concrete potential elaboration of an ontological and public narrative into a meta-narrative can be found in the term *War on Terror*, which has excessively persisted and circulated through uncountable channels across the whole world. Ultimately, it may encourage and lead to interventions beyond national and geographical boundaries (Baker, 2006a, p. 45). In 2016, for instance, US-backed GNA militants launched airstrikes on ISIS and seized their control in Sirte, Libya (Ryan and Raghavan, 2016). Baker (2006a, p. 45) argues that the *War on Terror* narrative “was essentially an intervention of the American political elite, soon to be followed by other political elites across the globe”³⁵. Economic dominance is also a central factor in this respect, thanks to influential media outlets (e.g., the multi-billion-dollar institution of Hollywood), without which, such a narrative, in its numerous elaborations, could have never “travelled far beyond its immediate geographical settings” (Baker, 2006a, p. 45).

In addition to political and economic factors, Alexander proposes the representation of evil in historical narratives and its cultural trauma as other factors that can also play well in describing the development of any narrative into a meta-narrative. The meta-narrative of the Holocaust, as he explains, was firstly “reported to contemporaries as a war story, nothing less but nothing more” (Alexander, 2002, p. 17). Through an aggressive promotion of persecution and violence in this historical event, “the Holocaust became the dominant symbolic representation of evil in the late twentieth century” (p. 5) and the cultural trauma of the Jews became a cultural trauma for all humanity across time and space (ibid., p. 29).

³⁵ The Protection of Civilians meta-narratives promoted in Shalgam’s personal narrative at the security council meeting, mentioned earlier, can be another example.

Furthermore, meta-narratives using the age-old concepts of binarism, like good vs evil, can stimulate racial, religious, and ideological divisions and widen the gap, especially in the theatre of conflict between the West and the Middle East. It can validate oppression conducted by the opposing party against soldiers, presidents, and—no one is left behind—even civilians “by rhetorically constructing an enemy that is non-human, evil, and dangerous” (Kushlan, 2007, p. 2). In this vein, one can argue that the evilness implied in the meta-narrative of totalitarianism, “in which paranoia and projection were the handmaidens of aggression and mass murder” (Herf, 2006, p. 32), had been heavily propagated in media against Qadhafi during the forty-two years of his totalitarian rule. Therefore, the public narratives of Qadhafi’s threats, purported abuses, and targeting of civilians during the 2011 uprising seem to have triggered the *evil* narrative and traumatised people all over the world, representing probably one of the main factors in manipulating the international community and legitimising the NATO intervention in Libya (Green, 2019, pp. 1-2).

The binary of good vs evil is, for instance, used in American politics as “a rhetorical strategy ... to reinforce dominant power structures” (Kushlan, 2007, p. 2). It is in this context, as also argued by Hardt and Negri (2000, p. 34), that “the imperial machine, far from eliminating master narratives, actually produces and reproduces them (ideological master narratives in particular) in order to validate and celebrate its own power”.

As with the aforementioned types of narrative, however, meta-narratives can similarly be exposed to contestation. *Progress*, for instance, as one of the most prevalent meta-narratives in modern times, has been challenged and described as “the most dangerous vestiges of the Enlightenment project” (Fleming, 2004, p. 42). Although *progress* supposes the creation of a world devoid of power and domination,

“it has also introduced the gulags³⁶, the holocaust, environmental degradation and frenzied nuclear age” (Fleming, 2004, p. 42).

Ultimately, people across time and space will have and will continue to come across a variety of meta-narratives, either in the source language or its translation. But without the aid of translation and interpreting, narratives cannot make their way across foreign languages and cultures and, hence develop into meta- (master) narratives. Nevertheless, it is also worth mentioning that translators/subtitlers and interpreters are now locating themselves to produce a challenging narrative that can alter the dominant narratives of our current time (Baker, 2006b, p. 467).

Having discussed the four types of narratives, the following section reviews the features of narrativity and how narratives can function in constructing what people perceive as a “real” world.

3.6 Features of Narrativity

Somers and Gibson (1993, 1994) and Somers (1992, 1997) discuss how narrativity is reframed through four identifying features: *temporality*, *relationality*, *causal emplotment*, and *selective appropriation*. Bruner (1991) examines a more wide-ranging list, including *particularity*, *genericness*, *normativeness/canonicity and breach*, and *normative accrual*. However, some of these additional features interfere with Somers and Gibson’s features or extend their outline. Some even seem to be less beneficial to the political import of narrativity (Baker, 2006a, p. 50), which is also the focus of the present study. Therefore, the first four features will be discussed in this section and drawn on later when analysing the political narratives in Chapter Six. These features, as Baker puts it: “mediate our experience of the world and outline the political import of narrativity in broad terms” (ibid.).

³⁶ Gulags were labour camps used by the Soviet Union from 1930–1955 as a prison and detention system, which witnessed thousands of deaths.

3.6.1 *Temporality*

Temporality or *narrative diachronicity*³⁷ (Bruner, 1991, p. 6) is not “an additional or separable layer” of narratives but a primary feature that constitutes them (Baker, 2006a, p. 50). As Bruner (1991, p. 6) argues, temporality means that narrative is “irreducibly durative”. In other words, it does not refer to the real chronology of “clock time” but to the intentional fabrications of “human time ... whose significance is given by the meaning assigned to events within its compass” (ibid.). The constituents of a narrative are continuously positioned intentionally in a specific order that conveys meaning. Temporality implies that this order is functioning as an organising tool in interpreting experiences. The constituents (e.g., events and participants, relationships) of any narrative have “to be embedded in a sequential context and in a specific temporal and spatial configuration that renders them intelligible” (Baker, 2006a, p. 51).

The temporal configuration can be seen, for instance, in how “translators responsible for the 1969 version of Milan Kundera’s *The Joke* cut, paste and reordered the chapters to make them fit into a strict chronological order” (ibid., pp. 51–52). The spatial configuration is also a temporality feature, as Bruner (1991, p. 6) argues: for instance, the spatial order of visuals on cathedral windows and walls narrates a story.

3.6.2 *Relationality*

Relationality or *hermeneutic composability* (Bruner, 1991, p. 7) refers to the incapability of human minds to interpret separated events. Relationality entails that “every event has to be interpreted within a larger configuration of events” (Baker, 2006a, p. 67), and for an assortment of events to be potentially interpretable, it must be constructed coherently as a narrative (ibid., p. 61). Bruner argues that this feature

³⁷ Diachronicity refers to the interpretation or understanding of events by the way they connect across time rather than by their real-time sequences.

“marks narrative both in its construction and in its comprehension” (1991, p. 8). The construction of a narrative is not only a matter of “selecting” events and news from our memories, realities or imaginations and positioning them in an appropriate sequence. Rather, it is considered a matter of constituting them “in the light of the overall narrative ... to be made ‘functions’ of the story” (ibid.).

Relationality plays a vital role in translation and interpreting. It implies that reconstructing a story in a foreign language does not allow the direct importation of segments from source narratives (Baker, 2006a, p. 61). As argued by Clifford (1980, p. 16), in the translation of the Bible into the Melanesian language, for instance, “there could be no simple importation of a Western divinity into a Melanesian religious landscape”. He adds that some “missionary predecessors on Lifou ... had translated ‘Bible’ as ‘container of the Word, until they discovered that the islanders also called their penis sheath ‘container of the word’” (ibid.). At the semantic level, a straightforward equivalent of a linguistic element in the source text can be avoided when translating, since it possibly “is or has become embedded in a different and potentially negative set of narratives in the target culture” (Baker, 2006a, p. 64). In order to produce an unproblematic TT, the translator has to reconstruct, at times, the original story’s elements in accordance with the narrative frames of the target audience. The treatment of the Arabic religious expression “shaheed”—“martyr”—using a secular frame rendering it into “victims” in the target text is an example in point (discussed further in Section 3.4).

3.6.3 Causal Emplotment

Causal emplotment “gives significance to independent instances, not their chronological or categorical order” (Somers & Gibson, 1993, p. 28). The process of constructing a narrative from different events and actions employs a plot responsible for weaving experiences and events and interpreting them into narrative episodes (ibid.). The weaving process of the plot, which Polkinghorne (1995, p. 5) calls the “thematic thread”, is called emplotment. Without the emplotment, a distinction between narratives and chronicles is impermissible (Somers & Gibson, 1993, p. 29). Accordingly, experiences and events would merely be perceived as a set of

categorisations that have no narrative meaning (ibid., p. 28); thus, the plot is counted as “the logic or syntax of narrative” (p. 29). Polkinghorne differentiates between categorisation and emplotment by arguing that our social activities can either be seen as a categorisation, as in “I am 40 years old; I should buy life insurance”, or as a narrated episode of a storyline, as in “I felt out of breath last week, I really should start thinking about life insurance” (Polkinghorne, 1988, p. 21). As can be seen with emplotment, the connectivity between the segments of a text or utterance is what makes narrativity capable of changing events and experiences into episodes, “whether the sequence of episodes is presented or experienced in anything resembling chronological order” (Somers & Gibson, 1993, p. 28).

The construction of the narrative meaning, therefore, is primarily dependent on events being emplotted because they can be “understood from the perspective of their contribution and influence on a specific outcome” (Polkinghorne, 1988, p. 5). This allows us “to *weight* and *explain* events” instead of merely categorise them, to change a range of propositions into an understandable order towards which we can take a position; it is the emplotment, therefore, that “charges events depicted with moral and ethical significance” (Baker, 2006a, p. 67). Because narrative is inherently emplotted, some theorists, including White (1987, p. 14), argue that narrativity—definitely in real stories and also possibly in fictional stories—is closely connected to and perhaps functioning as “the impulse to moralise” real-life experiences. This impulse, as Baker (2006a, p. 67) argues, can be recognised from within the causal emplotment: the cause for which events are emplotted.

In this respect, Baker sheds light on the property of causal emplotment, which enables us to treat the same events differently by weaving them into completely diverse “moral stories” (Baker, 2006a, p. 67). In concrete terms, she argues that people could agree on specific events or facts; yet, they take divergent positions in the course of understanding and judging them. For instance, one narrative of the Libyan 2011 uprising portrays Qadhafi’s military offensives as a reaction to the rebels’ terror attacks, while another narrative portrays the rebels’ counter-offensives as desperate and inescapable choices to resist Qadhafi’s regime terrorism. Each accuses the other of rape offences, harbouring mercenaries, and encouraging terrorist activities. The

protagonists of these competing narratives would probably agree on every single event (including their parties, time, and place) that took place during the 2011 uprising; however, they differ strongly in terms of “how the events relate to each other and what motivates the actors in each set of events” (Baker, 2006a, p. 67).

We, as human beings, can change even our sturdiest stances depending on how given events are causally emplotted. Social actors can reconfigure an event that has been emplotted in a certain way to create another coherent pattern of casual emplotment accorded with a different narrative meaning. We then “draw from the new emplotment reasons for acting differently in the future from the way we have become accustomed to acting in our present” (White, 1987, p. 150). An example of this could be seen in religious or even political conversions “when a person who counts himself a liberal suddenly sees the light and embraces a conservative or radical ideology” (ibid.). As Baker (2006a, p. 67) claims, causal emplotment is the most significant feature of narrativity in that it unfolds a cause for events, which we do not only need for taking positions but also to consider the others who appreciate their “own sentiments and interests reflected in that choice of a social scene” (Bennett and Edelman, 1985, p. 160).

One of the aspects of causal emplotment is the weighting of events and granting them importance as “crises ... or as turning points in the context of the overall narrative” (Baker, 2006a, p. 68). Depending on the impulse of moralising, the weighting of events is likely to be reconfigured. Without ignoring other social agents’ interventions, translators and interpreters can also perform well in this process since they can subtly change the weighting of narratives to construct a different pattern of causal emplotment, as Baker (2006a, p. 69) argues.

In the development of the September 11 narrative, for instance, we can notice how events and experiences that were treated as a crisis at the beginning have become marginalised in our present narratives. For a specific impulse, the narrative has been weighted more profoundly by activating, via translation, a selected set of horrible stories of death and torture. It has, thus, been vigorously reconstructed as a turning point in modern history and has become a dominant representation of trauma (ibid., pp. 69–70), as is the case with the Holocaust narrative (Alexander, 2002, pp. 17–29).

Furthermore, drastic changes of causal emplotment may also be undertaken, intentionally or unintentionally, just through manipulating “the choice of equivalents in translation/(subtitling) and interpreting” (Baker, 2006a, p. 70).

3.6.4 *Selective Appropriation*

The various processes of reconfiguring causal emplotments can be intimately related to the last feature of narrativity, namely, *selective appropriation*. According to Somers and Gibson (1993, p. 29), this is also a vital feature of narrativity, which employs evaluative criteria: “the discriminatory principle” of narrative, as they define it. They argue that, from the countless sets of experiences, events and social aspects that impact our lives, “the evaluative capacity of emplotment demands and enables selective appropriation in constructing narratives” (Somers & Gibson, 1993, p. 29). As also highlighted by Polkinghorne (1995, p. 8), “plots ... function to select from the myriad of happenings those which are direct contributors to the terminal situation of the story”. For instance, if the causal emplotment in the construction of a story is about Qadhafi killing civilians, all actions, characters, and events relevant to the killing are carefully selected to be included in the highlighted pieces of the story. Other actions of everyday life (e.g., eating, playing, socialising) or the dates in which the killing was carried out, due to their insignificance to the plot, are likely to be set in the background or may be totally disregarded. Hence, “every narrative, however seemingly ‘full,’ is constructed on the basis of a set of events that might have been included but were left out” (White, 1987, p. 10).

For any given narrative to be coherently constructed, some elements of the event inevitably need to be privileged at the expense of others (Baker, 2010, p. 352). Yet, how do we conduct this process of selection? Some scholars (e.g., Somers, 1992, and Polkinghorne, 1995) propose that the theme or plot of the narrative, such as “‘woman must be independent above all’ will selectively appropriate the happenings ..., arrange them in some order, and normatively evaluate these arrangements” (Somers, 1992, p. 602). But apart from the thematic impulse of selection, there still can be more to add to this feature, as Baker (2006a, p. 72) argues. For instance, some historical events, such as catastrophes or battles, though very significant, are not

recorded in some annals, “representing a tendency of modern historians to rank events ... hierarchically from within a perspective that is culture-specific, not a universal at all” (White, 1987, p. 10). Hence, selective appropriation can also be driven by our position in time and space and the infinite variety of public, conceptual, and meta-narratives we come across, and which forge our sense of significance (Baker, 2006a, p. 72).

With the conventionally invisible involvement of translators/subtitlers and interpreters, selective appropriation driven by individual and/or institutional agendas plays a crucial role that can be controversial and troubling on most political occasions. At a high level of reframing³⁸, some media organisations select specific audio-visual texts, characters, and languages “to elaborate a narrative of a specific cultural group as extremist, dangerous or criminal” (ibid., p. 114). MEMRI, for instance, chooses to classify some languages as the source and some others as the target, which seems to be reconfiguring the features of selective appropriation and causal emplotment. It seems to be activating a larger narrative of terrorism vs security that embeds the division of the world into two groups. One group represents source languages (including Arabic and Persian) and engages in propagating stories of terrorism and violence that threatens Western democratic societies. This, therefore, should be monitored through translation by another group that represents the target languages (including English and others) and plays the role of international police to protect the “civilised West” (Baker, 2010, p. 355). In this public narrative, the former group is “emplotted as aggressor”, and the latter is “emplotted as victim” (p. 335-6).

The selection—or, as Baker (2006a, p. 75) occasionally calls it “invention”—of audio-visual material that contributes to elaborating domestic narratives of hostility across their linguistic and cultural borders “is [a] well-documented practice that often

³⁸ This alternatively refers to recontextualisation processes, which often occur prior to textual and paratextual manipulation (relevant examples of which will be analysed and discussed in Chapter Six).

relies heavily on the services of translators [subtitlers] and interpreters” (Baker, 2006a, p. 75). Furthermore, as Baker argues:

Selective appropriation is particularly important ... where the choice of whose voice, which text and which extracts from texts are translated and made to “represent” the values and ethos of communities in question, is as important as the accuracy with which the selections are rendered into English and other languages. (2010, p. 352)

Such patterns of selectivity are what makes translation/subtitling “far from being innocent” (Baker, 2006a, p. 75). The choice of translators/subtitlers with every assignment they are offered is basically ethical: to accept ideologies of the source text narratives and recirculate them or distance from them, either by rejecting to translate them or interpreting them in a different context (Baker, 2006a, p. 105). Knowing that “a translator has the option of refusing to provide a translation; accepting the work ... implies complicity” (Séguinot, 1988, p. 105). Although the above-mentioned selectivity “is not simply a function of translators/interpreters’ choices, in most cases, textual patterns of manipulation are arguably an inherent function of their work (Baker, 2006a, p. 71). Practically speaking, translator/subtitlers indeed employ various strategies to implicitly or explicitly reinforce or contest particular facets of narratives in the process of text manipulation. By using these strategies, they can distance themselves from “the narrative position of the author or speaker or alternatively, to signal their empathy with it” (ibid., p. 105).

The following section is, thus, dedicated to discussing the reframing strategies in translation to either maintain original narratives or create politically laden alternatives for the target audience. It also discusses the comprehensive concepts of *frame* and *framing*.

3.7 Frame and (Re)framing Strategies in Translation/Subtitling

The functionality of narrative features and the narrative constructedness of events are considerably contingent upon a magnitude of extensive work, which needs to be carried out by social actors responsible for narration. *Frame* and, more specifically, the dynamic concept of *framing*, can be fruitful in defining some of the strategies by which this extensive work is undertaken. Yet, the two can be conceived

differently: the former, most inactive conception (frame) can be attributed to some scholars, such as Deborah and Wallat, who see frames as “a sense of what activity is being engaged in, how speakers mean what they say” (1993, p. 60). By contrast, the latter, most active, conception (framing) can be attributed to the theories of social movements, which consider framing as “an active process of signification” (Baker, 2007, p. 155). In this sense, framing is very likely to be a product of activism, as Baker (*ibid.*, p. 156) argues; essentially, it enables activists to construct challenging narratives that stand defiant against dominant interpretations of a given event in a given society. However, the undermining of dominant narratives, such as the War on Terror and Protection of Civilians, is not the only purpose of framing; it also has a strategic ability to create networks and groups of activists for empowering social movements to develop and attract advocates (Baker, 2007, p. 156). Cunningham and Browning (2004, p. 348) similarly argue that “framing processes provide a mechanism through which individuals can ideologically connect with movement goals and become potential participants in movement actions”.

Baker draws on the concepts of reframing in analysing examples related to the construction of knowledge about Arabs and Muslims through translation, bearing in mind that translation choices are never arbitrary but rather “part of a larger mosaic that is embedded in and contributes to the elaboration of concrete political reality” (Baker, 2010, p. 353). Narrative theory allows us to understand the relationship between the concept of reframing and the elaboration of domestic, ontological and public narratives through translation, as well as to consider the meta-narratives in which texts can be embedded. This, as a result, allows us to treat translational choices not simply as a domestic strategy of tackling linguistic, cultural, and technical problems but as a broader key strategy that contributes straightforwardly to the construction of the narratives that forge our social reality and identity (Baker, 2007, p. 156). Reframing strategies can be deliberately selected to guide target conceptions by manipulating the narrative(s) constructed originally in the source text. Reframing, rather than the frame, is the concept adopted for the present study discussion.

Regarding sites and strategies of reframing, the process is practically undertaken by manipulating various linguistic or/and paralinguistic elements to create

a new interpretive context for the audience. Linguistic elements may include but are not limited to syntactic and semantic structures, and paralinguistic elements may include colours, signs and pictures, and layouts. In the political context, translators/subtitlers, as language users, can exploit these patterns of manipulation to renegotiate the narrative features (outlined above), which may ultimately “produce a politically charged narrative in the target text” (Baker, 2006a, p. 105). This reframing process can be carried out in the body of the text and, simultaneously, around the text of a translated message. For Baker (2007, pp. 158–163), the notion “around the text” can be divided more specifically into the space external to the text proper, including titles, images, and captions, and the paratext (mostly in book translation), including cover shapes, introductions, prefaces, footnotes, and blurb. The present study focuses specifically on subtitling and, therefore, paratext will generally refer to the notion “around the text”, including all the elements and sites of reframing mentioned above.

In-text reframing is a crucial site exploited “to suppress, accentuate or elaborate particular aspects of a narrative encoded in the source text or utterance, or aspects of the larger narrative(s) in which it is embedded” (Baker, 2006a, p. 114). Yet, it is necessary to distinguish between textual and paratextual reframing due to the textual accuracy and faithfulness followed in specific sensitive contexts, especially in political translation (Baker, 2007, p. 158). For media organisations such as MEMRI and Watching America, whose work focuses on carefully selecting controversial political issues, the accuracy of translations in the text is accorded priority. If translation errors, whether intentional or otherwise, were to be identified or publicised, then opponents would easily undermine their credibility. Therefore, their reframing acts are mostly undertaken in the paratext. Baker mentions that MEMRI and Watching America change titles and add images and links selectively for the sake of framing a distorted image of Muslims and Arabs as racists, terrorists and “threatening or simply ‘discursively alien’” (Baker, 2007, p. 158). An example is Watching America’s English translation of an article entitled “Oh America ... Oh, Empire of Contradictions”. The article was disseminated originally in Arabic by the Palestinian newspaper *Al-Hayat Al-Jadeeda*. A close back-translation of its title seems more familiar and realistic: “Signs on the Road: America and Democracy!!!” (ibid., p. 159).

As Baker (2007, p. 160) argues, paratext is significant as it allows a variant set of reframing, from temporal reframing (e.g., cutting, pasting, and reordering, implicit or explicit linking of temporally and spatially irrelevant narratives) to spatial reframing (e.g., adding titles, introductions, and footnotes). In his foreword to Gerard Genette's *Paratext: Threshold of Interpretation*, Richard Macksey (1997, p. xviii) defines paratext as any material added to the main text and presents it to the audience. Wolf (2006, p. 20) describes paratext as "a threshold to the main text of the work in question". Utilising the paratext in narrative reframing allows sufficient room for intervention that guides the audience's expectations and interpretations towards a given work. Baker attests to this by arguing that any attempt of temporal and spatial reframing, such as a "label used for pointing to or identifying a key element or participant in a narrative, then, provides an interpretive frame that guides and constraints our response to the narrative in question" (Baker, 2006a, p. 122). Subjecting the text to any pattern of addition or change could either be authorised (i.e., a frame made by the producer of the original text to construct and reinforce its narrative), or unauthorised (i.e., a frame made by an independent reproducer of the original text to accentuate or suppress its narrative) (Wolf, 2006, p. 18). This may imply that paratextual interventions of media organisations like MM, PMW, and MEMRI are most likely to be deemed unauthorised since they are not part of the original text and are undertaken by independent distributors.

In her volume *Translation and Conflict*, Baker (2006a, pp. 112–139) limits herself to only four (explanatory rather than comprehensive) overlapping framing strategies: *temporal and spatial framing*, *selective appropriation*, *framing by labelling*, and *repositioning of participants*.

Temporal and spatial framing refers to the strategy of embedding a particular selected text in a new temporal and spatial context that emphasises the narrative it represents and induces people to connect it to present narratives that are prevailing in their lives. In this manipulative process, events and characters could be reconfigured and embedded in a new temporal and spatial context entirely different from the original narrative. This narrative embeddedness, even in translation, does not necessarily need textual interventions, even though it also does not necessarily exclude it (Baker, 2006a,

p. 112). In terms of temporal framing, Dionyses Divares's translation of Brecht's political articles into Greek in 1971 is an example in point. Due to the brutal militants who ruled Greece, the Greek translation of Brecht's influential criticism of Nazi rule was elaborated as a public narrative that implicitly connects "the narrative of oppression in Nazi Germany to the oppressive practices of the fascist dictators who ruled" the translator's country (ibid., pp. 112–3). In terms of spatial framing, the translation of Huntington's *Clash of Civilisations* (discussed earlier: see p. 144) is an example where translators added their own introduction, resulting in reframing the original text negatively. They activated the public narrative hatred for Islam and Arabs for the Arab and Muslim readers before giving them a chance to identify, via translation, the actual narrative.

Selective appropriation refers to the strategy of selection upon which other reframing strategies draw at the textual level, without dismissing its higher level of contextual and paratextual selectivity substantiated above. At the textual level, this strategy can be operative "as evident in patterns of omission and addition that are traceable" as forms of selective manipulation (Baker, 2006a, p. 114). Moreover, the translators/subtitlers' choice to focus, add, or restrain and omit elements of the direct narrative is associated with the larger narrative in which the translation/subtitling is embedded. Thus, every choice decided by the translators/subtitlers can take part in elaborating this larger narrative (ibid., p. 122).

An example can be taken from the Arabic translation by the Libya Al-Watan Channel of a statement by US Secretary of Defence Patrick Shanahan. The original narrative constructed in the English source video depicts Libyan General Khalifa Haftar as a political and military partner whose role in fighting terrorism is significant and unquestionable³⁹. However, the Arabic subtitled version incorrectly quoted

³⁹ <https://www.france24.com/en/video/20190420-what-we-need-through-general-haftar-support-building-democratic-stability-region-us-secretary-defenc>

Shanahan as saying: “we support Haftar in terms of supporting Israel”. In fact, Shanahan made no such a claim in the English version, and what he literally stated was: “Field Marshal Haftar’s support in terms of his role in counterterrorism” (“A Libya Channel makes a gross mistake”, 2019). Being one of the political and ideological media opponents of Haftar, the Libya Al-Watan Channel seems to have contested Haftar’s source narrative and reframed it through omission and addition to possibly embed it in a larger public narrative as an agency to Israeli. Such a questionable public narrative that has hardened as a stereotype in Arab and Muslim societies can often be the motive behind generating and “fuelling the very conflicts that continue to tear [the Middle East] regions apart” (Baker, 2006a, p. 6).

Framing by labelling refers to “any discursive process that involves using a lexical item, term or phrase to identify a person, place, group, event or any other key element in a narrative” (Baker, 2006a, p. 122). Labelling through designations and titles is a particularly significant reframing strategy because it has “serious implications in the real world” (Baker, 2007, p. 157). In other words, to select a designation “is at once to make a claim about political and social legitimacy and to deny a rival claim” (Baker, 2006a, p. 124) and would also imply refusing the narrative of the other. Hence, when translating a text about a given event, translators must select from among competing labels, none of which should be linguistically challenging at their local level (Baker, 2007, p. 157). The 1997 event in Hong Kong, for instance, according to the English narrative, was translated as *The Handover of Sovereignty*, yet, according to the Chinese, it was translated as *The Return to the Motherland*. Furthermore, the designation of the Middle East events of 1956 is another example of a narrative that has been embedded differently between Western and Arabic discourses. The West refers to these events as The Suez Canal Crisis to serve the dominant power narrative depicting the events merely as a political crisis. In the Arab world, on the other hand, they are referred to as The Tripartite Aggression, which activates an entirely diverse narrative that is not embedded in the consciousness of the West but has a wide currency in the Arab speaking world, especially in the attitude of those who received the aggressive attacks (Baker, 2007, p. 157).

The labelling choice of dominant narratives might reframe events in a certain way; however, the outcome might be contested by reframing the same events in entirely different labels, hence a different narrative. Besides, translators can simply retain designations in the text yet subtly challenge them in the paratext (Baker, 2007, p. 157). They can exploit titles of literary or audiovisual products, such as stories and films, to reframe narratives. This is often accompanied by subtle textual shifts, “in line with the narrative position signalled in the new title” (Baker, 2006a, p. 130).

Repositioning of Participants refers to the “way in which participants in any interaction are positioned, or position themselves, in relation to each other and to those outside the immediate event”; reconfiguring these positions will unquestionably change “the dynamics of the immediate as well as wider narrative in which they are woven” (ibid., p. 132). Interestingly, translators/subtitlers can reposition the participants of the original narrative in relation to one another and to the viewers through an open-ended range of devices, including dialects, “epithets, and various means of self- and other identification” (ibid.). Baker (ibid., p. 136) uses Mustapha Safouan’s 1998 Arabic translation of *Othello* as an example of this reframing strategy. In addition to using the Egyptian vernacular throughout the text, Safouan also chose to write the introduction to the translation in the vernacular because he probably wanted to reposition himself and his readers within the same socio-political space. This configuration of positions can be an attempt to contest the public narrative of “a homogeneous collective Arab identity, a claim consistently made by numerous intellectuals and other translators of Shakespeare into Arabic, including earlier translators of *Othello*” (Baker, 2006a, p. 136). Examples of other devices used in the text, as well as in the paratext, will be discussed in Chapter Six.

3.8 Conclusion

Narrative represents all experiences we come across in our lives. The stories we tell and the stories we are told are all narratives. The deliberation of ontological, public, conceptual, and meta-narratives can be responsible for constructing, promoting, or even contesting source narratives through reconfiguring the narrative features. This reconfiguring process employs a range of interdependent strategies that

help reframe our social and political realities and identities. Through such highly questionable activities, social actors (wittingly or otherwise) can mitigate social, religious, and political conflicts or fuel them in line with particular ideologies and agendas, whether individual or institutional. As shown in the examples discussed in this chapter, the translator/subtitler and interpreter, as an “*intervenient being*” (Maier, 2007, p. 2), can play a particularly vital role in this respect, especially when knowing that most of our current conflicts are normally discussed on the international ground rather than being limited to specific local, monolingual communities. We are nowadays invaded with numerous public narratives and meta-narratives (e.g., terrorism and security, agency to Israel) constructed and disseminated by several dedicated media organisations (e.g., MEMRI) as well as individuals (e.g., activists). Both, despite their purported non-partisanship, are taking advantage of disseminating carefully selected translation/subtitling to participate in featuring particular regions and characters as violent natural-born terrorists.

Compared to other traditional theorisations, narrative theory allows us to recognise the implications and strategies of these suspicious translations in terms of institutional agendas and individual choices. Narrative theory helps us move beyond the linguistic elements of discourse and the technical constraints of subtitling to make sense of how renegotiating the narrative types and features can control our perception of the world. Furthermore, as discussed in many examples above, narrative theory gives us a chance to understand how conflicting narratives can be subtly elaborated by exploiting variant strategies of reframing, textually, paratextually and contextually. It allows us to interpret textual interventions at a broader level, where selecting the text and paratextually intervening are all linked together to elaborate a larger narrative possibly not articulated in the immediate text itself. The next chapter is dedicated to reviewing the study data and its media sources, and explaining the study methodology, analysis model, and data analysis procedure.

Chapter Four

Data and Methodology

4.1 Introduction

In Chapters One, Two, and Three, the present study discusses the most relevant theories and concepts on which the investigation will depend. Chapter Four thus represents the hinge that links the previous theoretical discussions with the analyses, discussions, and findings of Chapters Five and Six. It is significant because it contextualises the scope of the thesis, highlighting its relevance and pinpointing its methodology and objectives. Apart from its introduction (4.1) and conclusion (4.9), this chapter is further divided into eight sections.

Section 4.2 introduces the study data and its media sources: Monitor Mideast (MM)⁴⁰, Palestinian Media Watch (PMW)⁴¹, and Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI)⁴². Section 4.3 briefly reviews the previous academic research concerned with investigating the translation of the organisations in question. Sections 4.4, 4.5, and 4.6 discuss in depth the views of the variant parties engaged in the criticism, defence, and promotion of MM, PMW and MEMRI and their products. Section 4.7 introduces the study methods. It is divided into two subsections: Subsection 4.7.1 outlines and explains the data selection criteria; Subsection 4.7.2 discusses the difficulties encountered in accessing data sources. Section 4.8 explains the data analysis procedure and the analysis model, all of which are pursued in the following chapters, Five and Six.

⁴⁰ <http://www.monitormideast.com/en/>

⁴¹ <https://palwatch.org>

⁴² <https://www.memri.org>

4.2 Study Remit

Amidst the vast panorama of potential manipulations in the translation of audiovisual media production, the present study investigates the technical considerations of political media subtitling, which can have, to a large extent, ideological and political impacts on audience perception. It focuses on the (sub)genre of short political video clips, selected, manipulated, and subtitled from Arabic into English by MM, PMW, and MEMRI organisations. These video clips include the subgenres of political speeches, interviews, and debates by a range of different public figures (e.g., politicians, socialist activists, religious clerics) from several MENA countries, including Morocco, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia.

Based on the notion of translator visibility introduced by the new theorisation of the “culture turn” in translation studies⁴³, the present study attempts to raise awareness of the socio-cultural/political role of subtitling and subtitlers concerning the renarration of the MENA narratives in the target English-speaking medium. For this purpose, the study exclusively focuses on non-Arabic media organisations that mainly specialise in monitoring, selecting, and subtitling Arabic news and events. The specific choice of MM, PMW and MEMRI is because, as far as the study could establish, they seem to be the only non-Arabic online media outlets mainly concerned with political subtitling from Arabic into English. As stated on their webpages, their target audiences are Western, English-speaking communities—hence, is the importance of investigating to what extent the political narratives of Arabs in the sources are objectively represented or subjectively reframed in the target English subtitles.

Other media organisations, such as the Middle East Monitor Organisation (MEMO), are also monitoring middle Eastern audiovisual media, yet, they are not the

⁴³ Elaborated in Chapter One, pp. 36–41.

concern of the present study since translation and, more specifically, subtitling is not their major field of specialisation. For example, international news channels such as Al-Jazeera, CNN, and BBC are not of concern in the present study because, first, they are not mainly translation organisations and, second, when they do translate, they tend to opt for the interpreting mode for live broadcasting, and other voice-over modes (e.g., dubbing, commentary) for recorded films and documentaries—an industry that itself has witnessed a radical transformation in the last decade. Furthermore, many international media channels have recently launched branches in various languages. The provision of news, reports, and documentaries in the original language of the addressed viewer have consequently facilitated more news coverage and circulation. It has relatively decreased the need for translation, except for limited insertions of subtitling and dubbing when parts of some dialogues are uttered in a foreign language.

The following section briefly reviews the previous academic research concerned with investigating MM, PMW, and MEMRI's translations.

4.3 MM, PMW, and MEMRI in Translation Studies

In the first place, MM seems not to have been given any attention by translation scholars nor other intellectuals and critics in media circles. As aforementioned, information about the organisation and its production could almost be non-existent. PMW, in the second place, has also been given inadequate attention in translation studies (TS), except for some timid contributions by journalists and politicians, who have criticised PMW's productions generally but without examining in detail the integrity of the source text (ST), including the manipulation of their linguistic and extra-linguistic layers. When it comes to MEMRI, in the third place, the situation seems to be totally different. Critiques in political and media studies (mentioned above), and linguistic and translation studies, have all paid attention, though somehow varied in extent, to MEMRI's productions—an issue that deserves independent research to investigate the reason behind the inclination, especially in TS, of focusing specifically on MEMRI while neglecting the other organisations.

Most of the relevant TS stem from the traditional theories of linguistics and the notion of the translator's invisibility. In turn, comprehensively critical and realistic

studies, which should be concerned with the socio-cultural/political/ideological impact of MEMRI's translations, are still regrettably scarce. Only a few TS have examined the role that MEMRI plays—utilising (re)framing strategies—in decontextualising the Maghreb and the Middle East countries and their culture, and recontextualising it to suit its agenda in Western media. Hence (as is the purpose of the present study), more serious effort needs to be made into investigating possible examples of deliberate selections and/or inaccuracies in the translation/subtitling of MEMRI and, more importantly, the neglected MM and PMW. The available literature found so far on MEMRI's translations will be introduced below, in brief, by reviewing and addressing the most prominent issues discussed.

Despite all accusations, MEMRI is counted to be an invaluable source for variant milieus (e.g., media, politics, culture), which provides comprehensible archives related to Middle East issues selected and reproduced with accurate and reliable translations (Whitaker, 2002). Although the selective nature of its dissemination is usually treated with scepticism, the linguistic accuracy of MEMRI's translations is assumed to be hardly disputable (Baker, 2010, pp. 348–349). Yet, still, several extracts from its website elaborated in previous translation studies show examples of linguistic distortions and reframing of ST narratives. The narrative theorisation developed by Mona Baker comes at the top of the academic research, which adopts a comprehensive framework for analysing and interpreting MEMRI's translation in association with ideological and political reality. Throughout all her narrative-based works (Baker 2005, 2006a, 2006b, 2007, 2008, 2010), she keeps mentioning MEMRI and emphasising its media-critical role. She seems to be the first among other translation scholars to introduce MEMRI as an example of a mysterious translation organisation, the narratives of which need to be critically and realistically valorised. Baker (2010, p. 348) demonstrates several extracts from MEMRI's website showing examples of linguistic distortions and apparent inaccuracies in translation,

which she describes as “blatant mistranslations”⁴⁴. These mistranslations contribute directly to the inculcation of a narrative in MEMRI’s translation propaganda, identified first by Brain Whitaker (2002) and described later by Baker (2005, p. 11): “here then is a full-blown programme of demonisation of a particular group which relies almost totally on translation”. She emphasises that, although the translators’ role in this organisation is probably to enable communication, the narratives they selectively introduce are unlikely to serve positive intentions such as promoting peace and cultural coexistence⁴⁵ (ibid.).

Though still rare, several Arabic-English translation researchers have responded to Baker’s call to examine the socio-political role of MEMRI’s (and other organisations’) translations, drawing on her narrative theory. Boukhaffa (2017), for instance, in his work *Audiovisual Translation and Narrative (Re)framing: MEMRI’s Subtitling of Moroccan Political Narratives*, investigates the ideological manipulation found in four Moroccan political video clips subtitled and recirculated by MEMRI. In addition to his striking findings of paratextual and contextual narrative reframing, he also confirms some evidence of textual manipulation by referring to two significant textual distortions identified in MEMRI’s subtitling of the Moroccan king’s political speeches (Boukhaffa, 2017, p. 68). One of these two is the translation of the following Quranic verse:

Table 7

MEMRI’s Subtitling

ST	Boukhaffa’s LT	MEMRI’s TT
<p>(يأيتها الذين آمنوا ادخلوا في السلم كافة)</p>	<p>Oh you who believe, enter <u>peace</u> one and all.</p>	<p>Oh you who believe, enter <u>Islam</u> one and all.</p>

⁴⁴ More relevant examples are discussed in Chapter One, pp. 58–59.

⁴⁵ Baker’s narrative-based works are further elaborated in the foregoing chapters of the theoretical discussion.

The Arabic expression “سلم” [silm] “peace” is translated, intentionally or unintentionally, into “Islam” (relevant stretches underlined in the table). Boukhaffa (2017, p. 68) argues that some might consider this word alteration as an unwitting mistake, probably caused by a non-native speaker who is likely unable to figure out such similar sounds [silm] and [Islam], especially during fast-delivered speeches. Others, however, might interpret the TT message as calling for all people to embrace Islam forcibly, which can trigger a historical meta-narrative in which Muslims have been embedded as “conquering people who want to convert everyone in the world to their religion” (ibid.). Though invaluable, nevertheless, Boukhaffa’s comprehensive framework of analysing political subtitling offers a small range of data and is confined merely to MEMRI as a source, possibly due to the limitation set by the publishing journal. Therefore, he encouraged further investigations with larger corpora—including a variety of discourses from different Arab countries to disclose the actual tendencies of MEMRI—and also advised researchers that “to draw generalisable and replicable deductions about all digital media translations of political narratives requires a study of many media outlets active in the digital world” (ibid., p. 70). Hence, the present study is significant, as its investigation scope encompasses—in addition to MEMRI—two other translation organisations found so far: MM and PMW.

In his PhD thesis *Ideology, Media and Conflict in Political Discourse and its Translation During the Arab Spring: Syria as a Case Study*, Haj Omar (2016) investigates the English translation of different media outlets, including MEMRI, focusing on the Syrian revolution of 2011. He argues that MEMRI has attempted to serve its political interests and legitimise Israel’s actions by exploiting the Syrian people’s struggle and suffering (Omar, 2016, p. 251). He also argues that by monitoring videos disseminated by warring parties, MEMRI utilises translation/subtitling to recirculate them and ultimately achieve three main goals: firstly, to accentuate the ideology of extremist military factions, which embeds Syrian opposition fighters as terrorists; secondly, to suppress the revolution of the Syrians and their identity; thirdly, to legitimise the existence and actions of Israel in the Middle East (Omar, 2016, p. 252). Drawing on the theories of critical discourse analysis and narrativity, Omar asserts that, on many occasions, MEMRI has manipulated the

original message of the source material textually and contextually through translation to achieve its goals (Omar, 2016, p. 252). However, he seems to show no concern with the patterns of manipulation that play a crucial role at the paratextual level of the source message, as Baker (2006a) argues. Although Omar (2016, p. 190) mentions the importance of exploiting paratextual elements, such as footnotes, endnotes, introductions, and glossaries, in the ideological reframing of original narratives, he does not seem to discuss any extracts to substantiate this argument in his analysis chapters.

In her PhD thesis *Translation in the Service of Advocacy: Narrative Palestine and Palestinian Women in Translations by the Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI)*, Al Sharif (2009) investigates how MEMRI systematically reframes the public and ontological narratives of Palestinians in its translations. She argues that MEMRI “is aligned to and invested in promoting dominant narratives about the Middle East conflict, narratives which essentially cast Palestinians in the role of terrorists and Israel in the role of a law-abiding, democratic state that shares the values of the Western world” (Al Sharif, 2009, p. 224). She also argues that MEMRI seeks to elaborate degrading narratives in which Palestinians are generally embedded as “deranged terrorists” and Palestinian women are specifically embedded as “heartless mothers” who proudly celebrate their children’s martyrdom (ibid., p. 7). As she explains, the elaboration of this narrative depends mostly on “weaving translations of small stretches of text from many different sources into carefully constructed ‘dispatches’, hence selectively appropriating a range of different voices, decontextualising them, incorporating them into its own narrative of the conflict” (ibid., p. 228, emphasis in original).

Academic Studies inspired by Baker’s theorisation aside, other academic studies are concerned with analysing MEMRI’s translations traditionally from a linguistic perspective, focusing more specifically on the textual level of the source message. For instance, Qaddoumi (2008), in his paper *Translating Arabic Discourse of Commitment into English: Ideology in Political Speeches* discusses the notion of “the discourse of commitment” in political speeches and the issue of ideology in MEMRI’s translation. Likewise, Al Oyoun (2011), in her paper *Translation and*

Representation of Political Discourse in the Media, aims to examine the textual shifts in MEMRI's translations of Arabic political discourse into English.

Media information disseminated by MM, PMW and MEMRI comes in different genres (mainly political) and variant forms of translated text, ranging from written texts such as reports and analyses to audiovisual texts such as short video clips. Nevertheless, most of the previous translation studies, except for Boukhaffa's (2017) relevant study, have been primarily concerned with ideological manipulation in written texts, as reviewed above. Unfathomably, less attention has been paid to the notion of technical vs ideological manipulation in subtitling. This attitude seems peculiar because this mode of AVT has been particularly highly relied upon by the three organisations in recirculating their products. Baker (2006a) and Al Sharif (2009) discuss some examples of ideological manipulation (i.e., narrative reframing) from MEMRI's subtitled video clips, yet, they seem not to have addressed the technical constraints, which, at times, can be a real challenge, leading to what appears to be an ideological choice on the face of it while being purely technical.

In sum, despite the scathing criticism engaged in by variant parties (politicians, journalists, academic researchers) of the "pernicious role" MM, PMW, and MEMRI are playing in distorting the rivals' narratives, these organisations—especially MM and PMW—have, surprisingly, received insufficient or non-existent attention from previous academic research, especially at Arabic institutions. Therefore, as recommended by Baker (2005, 2007, 2010) and Boukhaffa (2017), the present study makes further efforts of critically investigating much larger data from the comprehensive framework of narrativity, attempting to draw more clear-cut conclusions about the notions of media objectivity, authenticity, reframing, and manipulation of subtitling MENA political narratives.

The following sections provide necessary background information about MM, PMW, and MEMRI organisations, their founders, funding sources, objectives, and nature of work. They also overview the accusations against them concerning credibility with the audience, objectivity in selecting topics, and accuracy of their translations. Regrettably, however, such information is not always available in open sources, but is often shrouded in secrecy for unknown reasons.

4.4 The Monitor Mideast (MM) Organisation

MM's provenance is unclear since there does not seem to be much information on it available, except for what is stated in the "About" section of its website, which reads as follows:

Monitor Mideast is a state-of-the-art initiative pursuing to improve the flow of information from the Middle East and the North Africa regions. The website attempts to reach the outside world by translating and writing all material into the current lingua franca, giving the general public an in-depth look into news and television from MENA territories. Monitor Mideast distinguishes itself from similar services by translating articles, videos and an array of other media within the realms of a single conduit.⁴⁶

Before the investigation of the present study takes place, the organisation seems not to have received due attention from the media and the press, and I found no evidence of research engagement in translation studies to scrutinise and assess its products, especially concerning its Arabic–English subtitling. MM emphasises its independence on the "About" page, yet, in terms of media transparency, it does not introduce any names of those involved in the organisation's work, neither on the "About" page nor on the "Contact" page. Although it promised, on the "Staff" page, to add a list of the respective information by May 2018,⁴⁷ there has been no information uploaded yet on the website concerning the founder, the current work team, or even the source of funding. Additionally, the date on which the organisation has been established is also unknown. Nevertheless, the earliest video clip uploaded dates back to 17 April 2012, which can serve as an approximation of the date of MM's establishment.

Scrutiny of the nature of MM's dissemination can detect the careful selection of specific video clips that attack and expose Bashar Assad's and Iran's enemies,

⁴⁶ <http://www.monitormideast.com/en/full-width-page/about/>

⁴⁷ <http://www.monitormideast.com/en/staff/>

including Israel and certain Sunni (religious and political) characters, regimes and sects. In turn, most video clips explicitly support the Assad regime, the Iranian republic, and Shiite politicians and militias, and promote their policies in the MENA regions. Therefore, as one might speculate, MM can most likely be thought of as being founded and funded by one of these parties, if not by all, due to the Shiite ideology with which they all affiliate. Hezbollah, the military wing of this sectarian alliance in Lebanon, may not be excluded from running this project.⁴⁸

With respect to its objectives, MM emphasises its unbiasedness by adding an italicised “reminder”, which reads as follows:

Monitor Mideast fully distances itself from promoting terrorism, hate speech, extremism, racism by translating television broadcasts or adding editorials. Selecting media or news segments are done on the basis of data obtained from our target audience.⁴⁹

Such a statement, however, should not be accepted at face value. It needs to be verified by examining the organisation production in terms of its objectivity and socio-political role, the integrity of the ST, and the translation/subtitling accuracy, which are the main foci of the present thesis. Results might either assist in reinforcing the truthfulness of the declared objectives or otherwise revealing the latent intentions beyond them. As far as examining Arabic–English subtitled video clips are concerned, an initial observation shows that all released videos could likely incite hostility and the propaganda of hate speech, regardless of the identity of the intended target viewers. Hence, contrary to what MM claims, it could be unwise to consider the careful selectivity of these video clips as a coincidence. Relevant analyses and discussions of the data stemming from different frameworks (theoretically elaborated in the previous

⁴⁸ For more on this ideological relation and alliance, see Shia movements in Lebanon: their formation, ideology, social basis, and links with Iran and Syria by Marius Deeb (2019).

⁴⁹ <http://www.monitormideast.com/en/full-width-page/about/>

chapters) will be conducted in Chapters five and six to substantiate the validity of such observations.

4.5 The Palestinian Media Watch (PMW) Organisation

Contrary to the case of the MM organisation, information about the PMW organisation is available to a certain extent. Many media outlets have promoted PMW, including the PMW website itself, along with similarly ideologised media holding political positions, as opposed to the very few other media opposing it. PMW was established in 1996. According to its “About Us” page, PMW is a “non-profit Israeli research institute known internationally for its in-depth research of Palestinian society from a broad range of perspectives” (www.palwatch.org). PMW focuses on a range of religious/political narratives, such as hate speech (including antisemitism and demonisation, libels about Jews/Israel), rewriting history (including fabricated Palestinian history, Holocaust denial and distortion), violence and terror (including justifying Palestinian terror, kidnap-for-hostage policy) and many more. PMW claims that it “spends countless hours monitoring, translating, and analysing PA⁵⁰-controlled newspapers, TV shows, radio programs, social media sites, and schoolbooks to understand the messages the Palestinian Authority and other Palestinian leaders send to their people” (<http://www.palwatch.org>). PMW confirms that, through the translation of such various material into English, it has documented a decades-long pattern of the Palestinian authority’s inculcation of violence-based public narratives, such as “seeking Shahada” and the “denial of Israel’s right to exist” (ibid.).

At the broad level of the narratives characterising the Israel–Palestine conflict, PMW argues that its re-narrations (i.e., translations) of events and news are “sought after by governments, legislators, media outlets, and decision-makers worldwide, and have played a central role in correcting inaccurate narratives”

⁵⁰ Palestinian authority.

(<http://www.palwatch.org>). Therefore, as PMW claims, such an effort has basically changed the traditional image of the Palestinian authority by reporting on its promotion of terrorism, “which includes paying salaries to terrorists; naming schools, sporting events, and public spaces after terrorists; promoting terror in children’s TV programs and schoolbooks, and so much more” (ibid.).

PMW pursues a transparency policy by disclosing its founder and director, Itamar Marcus, and its management personnel, including the senior analyst, Nan Jacques Zilberdik, and the director of legal strategies, Maurice Hirsch. The dissemination of such information gives the PMW organisation greater credibility and reliability with its target audience and explicitly reveals its objectives. The significance of this policy lies in the fact that the organisation’s audience mainly represents politically and economically influential elites on an international level and is not limited to the narrow scope of laymen. In response to a question put to him at the annual “Israel in Focus” conference regarding who the PMW audience is, Itamar stated that the material produced by his organisation aims at targets: first, “the most significant one is the Prime Minister of Israel’s office (who) quotes regularly from material we supply”, and second, “government and parliaments around the world, particularly the US and in Europe” (Wizenfeld, 2013). At the media level, the dissemination of the PMW supporters who cite its publications and rely on its translations is abundantly available online. These include but are not limited to the *Anti-Defamation League (ADL): Fighting Hate for Good*⁵¹, *StandWithUs: Supporting*

⁵¹ <https://www.adl.org>

*Israel Around The World*⁵², *The Jerusalem Post*⁵³, *Israel Hayom: This Is Where We Stand*⁵⁴, *The Times of Israel*⁵⁵, *Camera US*⁵⁶, *Camera UK*⁵⁷, *HonestReporting*⁵⁸.

In contrast, there are also opponents of the organisation. Asa Winstanley (2013), one of the bloggers of a news publication called The Electronic Intifada (EI), argues that PMW's accusations against Palestinian authority and its media are "highly selective, often exaggerated, misleading and downright deceitful". He adds that PMW's real concern is more likely to be "the opposite of what it claims to be — in fact, it promotes incitement against Palestinians" (ibid., para. 1). Khalidi⁵⁹ (2020) argues:

The more Israel is internationally criticised for its repressive and brutal practices against Palestinians, the more it creates circumvented malicious methods and means to cover and justify its behaviour and continue achieving its dreams. It shamelessly fabricates lies and spreads them as facts in order to defame and demonize Palestinians, tarnish their image, and portray their rejection of the repugnant Israeli occupation as terrorism. Of course, one of these means is PMW. (2020, para. 1)

Khalidi also criticises PMW's founder, Itamar Marcus, by describing him as "a settler who moved from New York to live in the Israeli colony of Efrat, which is built on stolen Palestinian land near Bethlehem in the occupied West Bank, a war crime" (ibid., para. 5). Winstanley also states that Marcus appeared as an interviewee in the Islamophobic documentary *Obsession*⁶⁰ and that he also contributes to Frontpage Mag, "the website run by David Horowitz — a key figure in the US Islamophobia industry" (Winstanley, 2013, para. 4).

⁵² <http://www.swuarchive.com>

⁵³ <https://www.jpost.com>

⁵⁴ <https://www.israelhayom.com>

⁵⁵ <https://www.timesofisrael.com/>

⁵⁶ <https://www.camera.org>

⁵⁷ <https://camera-uk.org>

⁵⁸ <https://honestreporting.com/>

⁵⁹ Issam Khalidi is a Palestinian scholar living in the US. The author of *One Hundred Years of Football in Palestine* and *History of Sports in Palestine 1900-1948*.

⁶⁰ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nkmkIPvdMIw&t=1685s>

Addressing the topic of “Israel Lobby and the ‘Peace process’” in a conference held in the US, Hanan Ashrawi, a PLO Executive Committee Member, also describes PMW as follows:

And then there are toxic organisations, as you know. They have been very effective in distorting the Palestinian message in reality ... You have the PM Watch [Palestinian Media Watch], which is also waiting for any Palestinian to open his or her mouth and they attack. (2017, para. 12)

Casting doubts on PMW’s transparency and credibility, Ashrawi (2010) accuses Marcus and Israel’s Deputy Foreign Minister Danial Ayalon of failing to acknowledge the fact that PMW is closely linked to the New York-based Central Fund of Israel, which is known for supporting some of the most extreme entities in Israel’s settler movement. One of these entities is “a yeshiva in a West Bank settlement that is home to Rabbi Yitzhak Shapira, who published a book last year justifying the killing of gentile babies on the grounds they might grow up to pose a threat to the state” (Ashrawi, 2010, para. 3). As a response to this, Marcus (2010) argues that Ashrawi’s accusation is “an attempt to distract [the US] Congress’s attention from a new Palestinian Media Watch (PMW) report documenting the Palestinian Authority’s terrorist glorification”. He adds that Ashrawi rushed to attack the report but without even allotting segments or even words from the report’s content to criticise (Marcus, 2010, para. 1).

Insofar as this report may bear importance and impact the public, institutions, and decision-making bodies, it does not seem to have received proper attention from researchers to adopt a realistic examination of its content. Likewise, for some reason, the PMW’s overall content of its productions does not seem to be investigated in Academia as much as it is contested or promoted in the media and press, as in the context of TS where there is hardly any contribution in this regard. A few hard-to-find references, often unsubstantiated and lacking critical analyses, have been the only sources of criticism found so far about PMW. This may reflect the negligence of the Palestinian Authority and its political and educational satellites towards PMW’s daily systematic practices—a key factor in re-narrating the Palestinian narratives. In other words, the PMW organisation is mentioned in some translation studies such as Baker 2010 and Al Sharif 2009, however, this mentioning falls within the context of merely

naming media organisations that seek “to promote the terrorism and security agenda through translation” (Baker, 2010, p. 349) without addressing and commenting on any excerpts of that translation. The academic arena lacks the critical analytical research (originally advocated by Baker, 2005) that pays attention to what PMW publishes, especially in terms of its English translation and subtitling, which it relies on for transferring the content of Palestinian media to its readers and viewers. Hence, part of the present investigation’s contribution to knowledge about this organisation is to analyse its subtitled products thoroughly, to see how the Palestinian narratives are reframed for the target audiences.

4.5 The Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI) Organisation

Compared to the two previous organisations, the information on MEMRI is the most easily accessible and widely available at all levels of presentation, promotion, analysis, and criticism. According to its website, MEMRI is a non-profit, independent and non-partisan organisation. It was co-founded by Yigal Carmon in 1998 and based in Washington, DC; it expanded later with several branch offices around the world. It monitors, translates and studies Farsi, Turkish, Arabic, Dari and Urdu-Pashtu media, and provides analytical reviews over political, religious, intellectual and social issues. The material is translated and subtitled mainly into English as well as other languages, including French, Spanish, Hebrew, Japanese and Polish. MEMRI has been considered the world’s most comprehensible archive, providing timely translations for Arabic and Islamic issues. The main projects it has been working on include: “The Jihad and Terrorism Threat Monitor Project”, “The Reform Project”, “The Anti-Semitism Documentation Project”, “The Arab and Iranian TV Monitoring Project”, “The South Asia Studies Project”, “The MEMRI 9/11 Documentation Project”, “The Iran Studies

Project”, “The Cyber Jihad Lab (CJL)”, and “The MEMRI Russian Media Studies Project”⁶¹.

The main objective, according to MEMRI itself, is to bridge the gap between the West and the Middle East by providing timely translations. Being a key tool that achieves this alleged objective, these translations have often been subject to a wide-ranging debate and various scholarly critiques. The biased nature of its material, especially when dealing with Middle East issues, has attracted the attention of social, political and media critics (e.g., Cole 2004; Ferguson, 2001; Fathi, 2011; Harris, 2003; Whitaker, 2002); therefore, it has been accused of producing “blatant mistranslations” and being deliberately selective of what to translate and how to translate it.

MEMRI also states that it opens a wide window for the Western world to recognise and understand the Arab and Muslim world⁶², which seems highly required because it assists in breaking down the language and cultural barriers between the two parties. Nevertheless, one might feel uneasy when questioning the variant reports and videos translated and disseminated by MEMRI, as it becomes certain that the organisation is somehow vague, and the actual objective of its translation goes far beyond the realisation of what is stated on the face of it (Whitaker, 2002). Whitaker (2002) suggests that despite the accuracy and professionalism of MEMRI’s translations, which are hardly disputable, more attention needs to be paid to its overall output.

The MEMRI TV project, for instance, includes sub-projects such as an anti-West sentiment project; a jihad and terrorism project; a hatred of non-Muslims project, including anti-Semitism, Holocaust denial and anti-Christian sentiment. The Reform Project includes women’s rights, pro-democracy activism, and promotion of liberal voices⁶³. These sub-projects focus mainly and most prominently on particular,

⁶¹ <http://www.memri.org>

⁶² <http://www.memri.org>

⁶³ <http://www.memri.org>

controversial issues that wittingly or unwittingly help distort the image of Middle Eastern countries. Some might speculate that MEMRI's objective of "bridging the gap" does not exist here and what can be perceived instead is an objective of portraying Muslims and Arabs in Western media as peace-threatening, so that any adverse reaction by the West, whether political or military, could be justifiable. When visiting the MEMRI website, as Baker (2016) argues, one can recognise how an entire project, including various translations, can be subtly dedicated to supporting racist and colonial projects oriented towards the purpose of demonising other societies.

As suggested by Fathi (2011, p. 178), more serious efforts are required to be made for contextualising the information obtained by MEMRI. The assumption that MEMRI's translation is neutral⁶⁴ should be critically questioned, since the standards of the whole project regarding the selectivity of data collection and news reporting per se seem to be lacking neutrality. Critics think that MEMRI is a pro-Israel advocacy group (Baker, 2010, p. 353) that adopts selectivity in dealing with the Arabic-speaking world and reflecting on the current issues of its societies. Harris (2003, para. 2) asserts that "MEMRI engages in the practice of publishing selective and decontextualised excerpts of the Arabic press in ways that can present opponents of occupation as religious extremists or anti-Semites". She believes that "this is a misleading practice and can serve to misrepresent individual journalists and the character of the Arabic press as a whole" (ibid.).

Critics continue to argue that the organisation attempts to impose its rightist political agenda by deliberately selecting the most audacious articles and editorial (Ferguson, 2001). Baker (2010, p. 359) also confirms MEMRI's intentional selection of narratives that feature Middle Eastern communities as extremists and a threat to the democratic West. Ferguson (2001, para. 9), states that MEMRI's "translations ... can be classified into two main categories: Outrageous anti-American, anti-Semitic

⁶⁴ <http://www.memri.org>

diatribes on the one hand, and self-critical articles about the Arab world on the other”. In his article “Intimidation by Israeli Linked Organisation”, Juan Cole (2004)⁶⁵ similarly argues that “MEMRI is selective and biased against the Arab press, and that it highlights pieces that cast Arabs, especially committed Muslims, in a negative light” (2004, para. 10).

Most of the issues obtained and regularly updated on MEMRI’s website are controversial, following “a familiar pattern: either they reflect badly on the character of Arabs, or they further, in some way, the political agenda of Israel” (Whitaker, 2002). Interestingly enough, the Arab-Israeli Conflict sub-project, for instance, that should supposedly be reinforcing the organisation’s objective of moderating Anti-Semitism, has been, in turn, inactive since 2003 (Graf, 2011, p. 198). Assuming the continuity of this sub-project, the activity it seeks to moderate hostility and hatred is likely to miss its target. It could arguably be accused of being tainted by manifest bias because of its double discriminatory standards when dealing with Arab and Israeli crises unevenly. What applies to addressing intolerance of Arabs and Muslims should also apply to addressing intolerance of their opposite party. Whitaker (2002) commented, in this vein, that the method of seeking moderation by mentioning only intolerance and extremism of Islamists is biased as long as it is not balanced, at least for the non-partisan consideration, with Israeli extremism in the Hebrew media.

In his controversially well-known article *Selective MEMRI*, Whitaker (2002) refers to Ibrahim Hooper in this vein—the spokesman for the Council on American Islamic Relations who declared to the Washington Times: “MEMRI’s intent is to find the worst possible quotes from the Muslim world and disseminate them as widely as possible” (Whitaker, 2002, para. 13). Purportedly astonished by this accusation, Carmon (2002), the co-founder of MEMRI, replied that Ibrahim Hooper is an

⁶⁵ The founder and chief of Informed Comment. A professor of History at the University of Michigan (www.juancole.com).

unreliable source of information because he is the spokesman of CAIR, the Council on American Islamic Relations, which is a biased party well-known for its strong support of Hamas. Whitaker (2002), however, does not only mention what MEMRI's opponents have already declared about it but also demonstrates several examples that confirm MEMRI's blatant partisanship. He argues that incidents of deliberately selecting such bad stories and twisting facts about Saudi Arabia should not be looked at individually but rather as part of a whole narrative constructed to feature the Kingdom as a threatening enemy instead of a strategical ally.

In one example, Whitaker (2002) mentioned MEMRI's translation of an article selected from the *Al-Riyadh* newspaper and written by a Saudi University Dr Umayma Ahmad Al-Jalahma on 10 March 2002. The article was criticised by David Mikkelson (2007, para. 19)⁶⁶ who claims that "virulent anti-Semitic, anti-American material is common fodder in the Middle Eastern press, even in state-controlled (or state-approved) newspapers of countries which receive massive amounts of financial aid and support from the U.S., (such as Egypt)". Riyadh's article, obviously based on an old anti-Semitic myth called "Blood Libel", tells that the blood of Muslim and Christian children is used by the Jews in making pastries for the Purim Festival⁶⁷. Whitaker (2002) added that the newspaper editor, Turki al Sudairy, immediately sacked the writer and apologised for not editing the articles before publication because he had been abroad. Whitaker (2002) argued that, to those who are regularly reading Arabic newspapers, this article demonstrates nothing but the ignorance of many Arabs, including the educated elites. Yet, it does not necessarily represent the overall orientation of the newspaper as much as it does irrefutably demonstrate MEMRI's selection of what goes in parallel with its agenda. Carmon (2002) considers this argument unacceptable. He wonders if Whitaker had considered the article of "Blood

⁶⁶ David Mikkelson, one of MEMRI's proponents, is the founder of the snopes.com website.

⁶⁷ A Jewish festival celebrated in spring to commemorate the defeat of Haman's conspiracy to slaughter the Jews, as mentioned in the book of Esther.

Libel” as an exceptional mistake because of mere ignorance, what he would think of the similar daily Al-Ahram newspaper whose editor-in-chief, Ibrahim Nafie, appointed by the Egyptian government, was facing trial in France and possibly in the UK for involving in the dissemination of anti-Semitic and violent materials.

Speaking of transparency, Whitaker (2002) described MEMRI as a “mysterious organisation” because it does not provide any names of people or office addresses to contact. It is astounding, as Baker adds, that MEMRI officials mysteriously do not have any regional offices from which they can closely monitor and collect material. They do, however, have many offices in different countries around the world, including Jerusalem (2010, p. 354). The reason for this is that “they do not want suicide bombers walking through the door on Monday morning”, as a former MEMRI’s employee stated to the Washington Times. Such an excessive precaution, as Whitaker (2002) wonders, seems to be strikingly contradictory for an institution that merely aims at melting the ice between the East and the West.

The lack of transparency and neutrality, and the vagueness of objectives are fundamental reasons behind the contradiction of MEMRI’s actual orientations towards the Islamic world. According to MEMRI, Islam as a religion is not disputable; however, Islamic fundamentalism is. Yet, as Boriqee (2010)⁶⁸ argues, the integrity of this stance could be a contradiction due to the shadows of doubt over MEMRI’s relationships with some “evangelical Christian organisations” well-known for their anti-Islamic orientations. Fathi (2011, p. 177) further mentions that MEMRI, stated previously on its website that it “emphasises the continuing relevance of Zionism to the Jewish people and to the state of Israel”. This statement, according to Graf, was deleted on 5 November 2001 and replaced after the war in Iraq by a new orientation depicting an ostensibly different objective. The objective now is to counter “the

⁶⁸ Ali Boriqee is an Islamic, political, and sociological researcher and the founder of the Boriqee Notes Website, Institutional Analysis on Geopolitical, Islam, Sociology, History, and the Global Secular Order.

stereotypes about Islam and the societies of the region” and to “support the Middle East peace process and democratisation and the reform processes in the Arab societies and Iran” (Graf, 2011, p. 202).

The more MEMRI is examined, the more contradictions and secrecy are disclosed. Commenting on the suspicious and non-transparent activities of MEMRI, Whitaker (2002, para. 6) ironically wrote: “its work is subsidised by US taxpayers because as an “independent, non-partisan and non-profit” organisation, it has tax-deducted status under American law”. Knowing the history and affiliations of the co-founder of MEMRI himself may cast doubt on the organisation’s transparency and neutrality. In turn, it may also justify the heavy funding and tax privileges it receives. Seeking such background information is certainly no easy task, yet it is a necessary undertaking. The co-founder of MEMRI and the registered owner of its web page is the Israeli colonel, Yigal Carmon. He worked for the Israeli military intelligence service and later was appointed as a counter-terrorism adviser to two former Israeli Prime Ministers: Yitzhak Rabin and Yitzhak Shamir (Whitaker, 2002).

After the 1992 elections, which brought the Labour party into power, Carmon criticised the Oslo peace accords and ended up describing it as a “historic disaster” (Ferguson, 2001). Again, the document, which proves Carmon’s criticism, was deleted from *The Jewish Daily Forward* website (Boriqee, 2010). In the same context, Cole (2004, para. 11) also states: “Colonel Carmon and Meyrav Wurmser, who run MEMRI, were both diehard opponents of the Oslo peace process, and so ipso facto were identified with the Likud rejectionists on that central issue”. Although he does not claim that “MEMRI or Colonel Carmon are ‘affiliated’ with the Likud Party”, he still argues that “MEMRI functions as a PR campaign for Likud Party goals” (Cole, 2004, para. 11). Whitaker (2002) also revealed another important page deleted from MEMRI’s website, showing a list of six names of MEMRI’s staff, including Carmon and two others described as having served in the Israeli Intelligence and Army. In his attempt to understate the seriousness of removing such names, Carmon (2002) responded by only mentioning that they have more than thirty employees from different countries—not only six—whilst turning a blind eye to the reason for deleting

three vital names, including his. Carmon's (2002) article is supposed to be rebutting all of Whitaker's allegations, but it inconclusively covered only some aspects, not all.

The debate over the selectivity of MEMRI's disseminations seems to be endless, but, for more on this topic, researchers can refer to a debate published on 15 August 2002 by "Democracy Now" between Ali Abunimah, Vice-President of the Arab American Action Network, and Yigal Carmon.⁶⁹ Political and media critiques aside, recent critical translation studies have also concluded that "MEMRI does not look for 'representative' discourse of the mainstream of culture or politics, but mainly 'controversial' religious discourses" (Boukhaffa, 2017, p. 68). Baker (2006a) analyses MEMRI's general discourse, discusses examples, and emphasises the allegations accusing it of being selective and biased, allowing scope for further critical and evaluative studies, including her later contributions, to investigate MEMRI's translations and to examine the possibility of any intended distortions in the source message.

Questions and allegations could vary in their levels of seriousness and importance; thus, answers, clarifications, and investigations need to be provided accordingly and whenever possible. The ignorance of opponents' attitudes and points of view could widen the gap between the West and the Middle East, which MEMRI claims to bridge. Variant allegations still seem to be disproved.

In sum, it seems that antagonists are intentionally or unintentionally trying to romanticise the critical role that the media outlets and organisations they defend could play in shaping our perception and guiding our actions. On the one hand, some or all of what the MEMRI organisation, for instance, is accused of may be true. By the nature of their media work, MM, PMW, and MEMRI will not take a neutral position in reporting and analysing media news and events. Instead, they will habitually support and promote (on solid grounds or otherwise) a particular party at the expense of

⁶⁹ https://www.democracynow.org/2002/8/15/selective_memri_a_debate_on_the

another based on the convergence of their interests and ideologies (further discussed in Chapter One). On the other hand, however, this does not negate the fact that some Arab and Islamic media outlets (e.g., the Al-Riyadh and Al-Ahram newspapers) may, at times, adopt an extreme discourse that expectedly leads to a launch of opposed or, perhaps, retaliatory campaigns. It would also encourage, in response to this, establishing media organisations to monitor and recirculate the Arab and Muslim media in new narrative frames, which may not always be representative but can often be distortive of the cultural and religious mainstreams and identity of societies.

4.6 Study Methodology

To answer the study questions mentioned in the introduction (p. 21), analysis in the present study will be conducted in two phases: first, a micro-level analysis phase to investigate the textual patterns of manipulation, and second, a macro-level analysis phase to investigate the textual, paratextual and contextual patterns of manipulation combined. This strategy calls for implementing a blend of approaches, which would provide a more comprehensive analysis of the study data and produce more objective interpretations of the subtitled material and its intended purposes. In the first phase, the study will draw on a descriptive approach to investigate the textual manipulation of subtitling technically through qualitative and quantitative analysis of the study data. This micro-level analysis will be conducted following the classification of Gottlieb's (1992) interlingual subtitling strategies: *transfer*, *paraphrase*, *expansion*, *imitation*, *condensation*, *transcription*, *dislocation*, *deletion*, *decimation*, and *resignation*. Gottlieb's classification is adopted because it seems to offer the broadest range of subtitling strategies, and because of the flexibility of his reduction strategy subsuming four more types (i.e., *condensation*, *deletion*, *decimation*, and *resignation*). Additionally, Chaume's (2012) categorisation of kinetic synchrony and isochrony will be relied on in investigating efficiency of the subtitles' synchronisation on the screen. Both steps are sought to enable a more effectively thorough investigation. To address any possible unconventional outcomes of this phase more critically, and to counter the traditional tendency towards mechanising research and narrowing critical analysis, the present study offers a macro-level analysis for the second phase, which adopts an

untraditional framework of interdisciplinary nature—a comprehensive framework that employs Baker’s narrative theorisation to draw attention to the macro-analysis of translated/subtitled text, paratext, and context, in association with the crucial social and political function of their narratives, as she argues⁷⁰ (Baker, 2006a, p. 20).

Establishing this new “serious limitation” in TS, Baker invites translation and linguistic scholars “to supplement the social theory approach to narrativity with textual methods of analysis in order to offer a productive application of narrativity within translation studies” (2006a, p. 20). It is in this very context, therefore, the present thesis attempts to investigate the reframing of the MENA political narratives via subtitling and the role that media translation organisations play in this respect. Again, this is not a traditional framework overtly adopted in the literature of social and communication theories or traditional linguistic and audiovisual theories. As mentioned in Chapter Three, the former’s entire focus is on the narrative’s functionality, while the latter’s entire focus is far too restricted to structural, linguistic, and technical classifications of analysis in mostly oral and literary individual narratives (*ibid.*).

During the stages of analysis, the study does not intend to make any in-depth comparisons between the three organizations because of the study scope mentioned earlier and the limitations imposed on the thesis length, which prevents any verbiage. The modest evaluative comparison mentioned in the study conclusion comes only within the secondary remarks on the results of the study analyses.

4.6.1 Selection Stages

The selection stages can be classified into (1) a selection of three media organisations, (2) a selection of 60 video clips, (3) a selection of examples of technical choices, (4) an identification and extraction of the ideological choice examples. First, MM, PMW and MEMRI organisations, as mentioned above, are the only Arabic–

⁷⁰ Further elaborated in Chapter Three.

English subtitling organisations found, hence the inclusion. Second, the selection of sixty video clips for the study analysis is based upon slightly different criteria. For MM, there are only twenty Arabic–English subtitled video clips uploaded on its website and YouTube channel, and thus, they are all included in the study data. MM’s video clips address different controversial narratives, which take place around the MENA conflicts that have followed the 2011 uprisings. To maintain a balance in investigating the products of the three organisations, twenty video clips are equally selected from PMW and MEMRI as well, including relatively similar re-narrations released on varied dates starting from 2011 till the present times. In the case of PMW, the video clips are released daily, covering specifically the Palestinian media. Therefore, the selection of the twenty video clips is based upon the public and meta-narratives circulating within the context of the Palestinian/Israeli conflict. For MEMRI, the video clips are also released daily but covering more widely different Arabic and Islamic media, thus, the selection of these twenty video clips is based upon the public and meta-narratives circulating within the context of the numerous MENA conflicts. Third, the examples of technical choices are selected to overview as many patterns of technical manipulation as possible. Fourth and last, the examples of subtitlers’ ideological choices are identified—rather than selected—and extracted throughout the transcription stage and the quantitative and qualitative analyses of Chapter Five. Since technically unjustified, these ideological manipulation extracts are then investigated within the comprehensive framework of narrative analysis, which is the main objective of Chapter Six.

4.6.2 Data Collection Limitations and Difficulties

The process of collecting the data has not been straightforward, but was fraught with some difficulties. Some video clips (of the TTs) could not be played, especially those released by MEMRI, and therefore, they are excluded from the analysis. Requesting those video clips from MEMRI requires payment. Some original videos (used as STs) could not be found online. Not finding them has made it challenging to observe and analyse their original verbal and non-verbal elements, which are often subject to various patterns of manipulation. In an effort to seek more details about

these videos, I inquired personally, as an academic researcher, with several messages to the contact page provided by the original producers (e.g., PA TV and their Facebook page) of these videos, yet failed to receive any response. In addition, the Corona epidemic that struck the world in 2019, and resulted in the imposition of quarantine for repeated periods, had a significant impact on travelling and conducting any direct face-to-face contact with officials of the PA media outlets. Moreover, in March 2020, the PA TV YouTube channel (one of PMW's sources of selected material) was terminated by the YouTube administration⁷¹. This action has entirely blocked access to the original videos (selected and subtitled by PMW), except for the twenty videos the present study had managed to collect, transcribe, and analyse before the termination took place.

Moreover, due to the limitations on the thesis length, transliteration had to be excluded from the analysis chapters as it would inevitably cause a significant increase in the word count. In this context, it is worth mentioning—for the readers' benefit—that some of the utterances of the video clips contain modern standard Arabic as well as different Arabic dialects, including Moroccan, Tunisian, Libyan, Egyptian, Saudi, Jordanian, Palestinian, Syrian and Iraqi. Thus, the spelling of some Arabic words might seem incorrect due to the colloquial uses of such dialects.

4.7 Analysis Procedure

The collection of the sixty video clips, as mentioned above, is related to the MENA conflicts for the study investigations to provide a broader perspective of how original ontological and public narratives of the respective regions are renarrated and reframed through the subtitling of political media. For the sake of comparing between the Arabic source text (ST) and the English target text (TT), I transcribed these sixty video clips in tables containing 1282 frames of the audio and visual presentations from

⁷¹ Discussed further in Chapter Six, pp. 404–405.

the selected videos of Arabic speeches, interviews, and debates as well as their pertinent English subtitles. I also added an arbitrary translation to those tables to provide a more literal translation (LT) and show to what extent the TT subtitles are matched with, or deviate from, the ST utterances. Rather than focusing on single words or sentences, I focused on the utterance frame and its subtitle as the unit of textual analysis—including any elements such as words, sentences, phrases, or verbal signs—in association with other preceding or following utterance frames and their subtitles.

As mentioned previously, the analysis is divided into two phases. The first phase in Chapter Five is a micro-level analysis at the textual level consisting of quantitative and qualitative analyses. The quantitative analysis, on the one hand, includes two statistical analyses. First, is a corpus-based statistical analysis (henceforth CBSA) comparing the word count to see whether the TT is unconventionally longer than the ST, as previously found and questioned by Boukhaffa (2017, p. 67). It is also encouraged to conduct because a general initial notice has been recorded in the observation stage of the video clips, which indicates the tendency of the three organisations to produce longer subtitles than the ST utterances. Second, is a strategy-based statistical analysis (henceforth SBSA) demonstrating the frequencies and percentages of the subtitling strategies' usage to identify which subtitling strategies are the most and least frequently adopted in the Arabic–English political subtitling, following Gottlieb's (1992) strategy classification.⁷²

This stage of analysis, however, requires further detailing. A general combined CBSA and SBSA will be illustrated first to discuss the overall findings of the three organisations combined, which might help identify the general subtitling conventions of the political genre. Then, the data of MM, PMW and MEMRI will be investigated separately to obtain findings as objective as possible, taking into consideration each organisation's specificities and capabilities: the subtitling strategies, the competence

⁷² Discussed in Chapter Two, pp. 75–78.

of translators, the funding, the ideologies and policies adopted, and the target parties of their respective propaganda.⁷³ For the same reason of objectivity and credibility, the political genre of the study data is classified further into three subgenres—speeches, interviews, and debates—taking into account the features that distinguish each one of them. In addition to conducting a combined CBSA and SBSA for each organisation separately, this data classification entails the conduct of a further separate CBSA and SBSA for each one of its subgenres.

The qualitative analysis, on the other hand, is conducted to discuss the CBSA and SBSA's findings from a technical point of view. This process includes finding justifications for the conventions of political subtitling and thoroughly investigating the subtitlers' choices and motives associated with those conventions. Stemming from Díaz-Cintas's (2012a) notion of necessity, the TT's length (caused by using expansion, paraphrase, imitation, dislocation, and transfer strategies) or shortness (caused by using condensation, deletion, and decimation strategies) will be technically examined. Then, any examples of textual manipulations (i.e., a cryptic choice of a strategy) that show no technical justification will further be interpreted more critically and in a broader framework in Chapter Six with the probability of being ideologically driven to reframe original narratives differently. In other words, the study will seek to find more realistic justification for subtitlers' choices where technical constraints seem to play no role, and subtitling strategies seem to be exploited for further—most likely, ideological—considerations.

Here lies the importance of the second phase detailed in Chapter Six. This is a macro-level analysis conducted at textual, paratextual, and contextual levels to critically explore, drawing on Baker's (2006a) narrative theory, any ideological (technically unjustified) manipulation resulting from an ideology constraint under the pretext of a technical necessity. The comprehensive analysis of narrativity will be

⁷³ Further elaboration on this in Chapter Five.

relied on in making connections amongst the components (i.e., text, paratext, and context) of MM, PMW, and MEMRI's narratives. Commenting on these sorts of connections, Bruner (1991, p. 8) argues: "a narrative consists of different parts that make up a whole, but the viability and coherence of that whole depends on how the parts 'mesh together', how they are 'made to live together'". The reframing strategies developed in her theory—namely, temporal and spatial reframing, selective appropriation, labelling, and repositioning of participants—will be used to explore any possible patterns of reframing/recontextualisation of the original narratives. Yet, before starting the narrative discussion of ideological manipulation, an illustrated elaboration of some of MM, PMW, and MEMRI's public and meta-accentuated narratives of the MENA needs to be conducted. This illustration seems significant as it explains how an immediate reframed narrative can be embedded in larger narratives not necessarily articulated within it, utilising subtle reframing strategies to carry out this almost unrecognisable process.

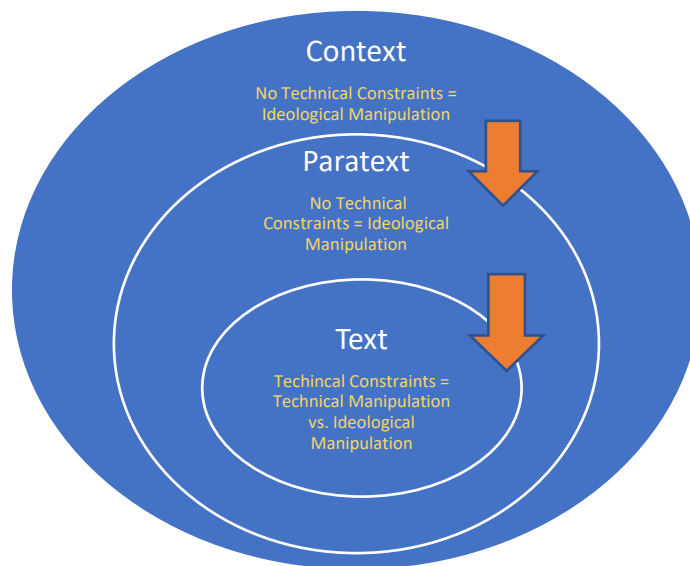
The sixty video clips are all analysed quantitatively and qualitatively in the first phase (Chapter Five); however, only twenty-five of them include examples of ambiguous subtitling choices intended to be analysed narratively in the second phase (Chapter Six). The rest of the sixty video clips are excluded from this analysis due to the lack of any serious textual pattern of ideological manipulation crucial for the thesis argument, which stems mainly from the notion of technical versus ideological manipulation in the subtitles, originally put forward by Díaz-Cintas (2012a). Therefore, as mentioned above, the data is supposed to be discussed within the boundaries of the text (i.e., subtitle) first; then, the results of the textual analysis will be linked, through a more comprehensive framework, to the higher-level elements of the TT narrative, which are the paratext and context. Although the qualitative analysis of Chapter Five is dedicated to identifying and extracting as many examples of ideological manipulation as possible from the twenty-five video clips, the extensive nature of the narrative analysis and discussion in Chapter Six has hindered the inclusion of them all. Therefore, the extraction criterion allowed discussing only examples of the most prominent cryptic patterns of manipulation identified, which

leave us with only eighteen video clips, including one to three examples from each subgenre (i.e., speeches, interviews, etc.) to be analysed.

The following model outlines the scope of technical manipulation related to subtitling technical constraints and the levels at which ideological manipulation can operate, leading ultimately to the ST recontextualisation and, strictly speaking, to a narrative reframing:

Figure 2

Model of Analysis



Technical vs. Ideological Manipulation

The manipulation process of MM, PMW and MEMRI's video clips most likely moves from the broadest to the narrowest level. As the orange arrows of the model illustrate, the process starts from the context, through the paratext, and lastly ends with the text, as will be further analysed and discussed narratively in more detail in Chapter Six.

4.8 Conclusion

This chapter has summarised what this thesis is all about, contextualising the scope of its investigation within the previous research of translation studies. It also introduced the MM, PMW, and MEMRI organisations, and discussed most of the criticism and defence they have received. Most importantly, the chapter established an important frame for understanding what is following in the rest of the thesis,

pinpointing the methodology, procedure, and model of analysis. The following chapter, Chapter Five, offers a technical analysis of the subtitling strategies utilised to manipulate the political subtitling of the recent Arab political media, with critical insight that identifies and extracts the cases in which these strategies are used unnecessarily, possibly serving other ideological purposes. The latter will be the subject of analysis in Chapter Six.

Chapter Five

Micro-Analysis: Technical Manipulation vs Ideological Manipulation

5.1 Introduction

In subtitling, the representation of original, spoken dialogues as coherent subtitles written within the limitation of the “semiotic conventions” (Delabastita, 1989, p. 203) of time and space is a real challenge, which often entails a simplification and reduction of the source text. Here lies the importance of adopting strategies to help subtitlers manipulate the source text appropriately in the target text so that it ultimately meets the audience’s expectations. In this process, the subtitler becomes a balancing actor whose task is to strive for a reduction of the ST, but, at the same time, for the coherent delivery of the possible maximum load of its linguistic features to the TT (Gottlieb, 1992, p. 166). This mode of AVT, however, can also be controlled by external constraints of politics and ideology (Díaz-Cintas, 2012a, p. 288). Subtitlers may resort to certain strategies (be they conventional or unconventional) to manipulate the ST, driven by their own ideological and political interests and/or those of their institutions. Accordingly, while internal technical constraints often lead to technical manipulation, external ideological constraints most likely lead to ideological manipulation, which probably encompasses blatant patterns of textual distortions. This sceptical stance comes from the fact that political texts can habitually be subject to ideological manipulation when they are reconstructed/translated, as similarly argued by Schäffner and Bassnett (2010, pp. 6–8).

To this end, this chapter is dedicated to investigating the technical manipulation of MM, PMW and MEMRI’s political subtitles for which two layers of analysis will be conducted: a quantitative analysis to explore and justify the conventions of the political subtitling genre, and a qualitative analysis to provide interpretations and justifications for the choices of subtitling strategies. The latter will draw on Díaz-Cintas’s notion of technical manipulation vs ideological manipulation to “clear the ideological smoke screen that confounds the original message in an attempt to see the silver screen behind it” (2012a, p. 283). In this sense, the extracted

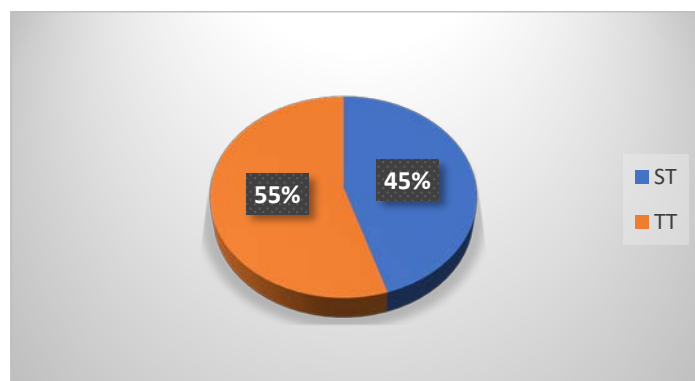
examples of textual manipulations that show no technical justification will be further interpreted, more critically, in Chapter Six to explore the probability of the translators having been ideologically driven to reframe the original narratives.

5.2 General Combined Corpus-Based Statistical Analysis (CBSA) and Strategy-Based Statistical Analysis (SBSA)

The following general combined CBSA and SBSA show the overall findings of the three organisations together, which helps identify the general conventions of their political subtitling⁷⁴. As illustrated in Figure 3 below, the unconventional length of the TT is a remarkable finding showing that the TT subtitles are 10% longer than their ST utterances.

Figure 3

General Combined CBSA



This shows 45% for STs versus 55% for TT subtitles

This finding is similar to Boukhaffa's findings, mentioned in Chapter Four (p. 192). Unlike other modes of translation, subtitling is conventionally expected to be

⁷⁴ This analysis of this chapter is explained in detail in the analysis procedure section of Chapter Four (pp. 172–176).

“nearly always a reduced form of the oral speech” (Diaz-Cintas, 2012b, p. 275)⁷⁵. According to Gottlieb (1992, p. 167), the necessity of manipulating the ST, especially when dealing with interview subtitles, introduces reduction as a strategy that “tends to condense the original dialogue by 20% – 40%”. He further argues that the subtitling of “a 100,000-word novel may keep only 20,000 words for the dialogue, leaving the semantic load of the remaining 80,000 words to the non-verbal semiotic channels – or to deletion” (Gottlieb, 2004, p. 86).

What the general combined CBSA of the sixty video clips shows, however, is, surprisingly, not in line with this convention; thus, it puts into question the reasons behind the general tendency of these three organisations to produce such remarkably long subtitles. It also emphasises the importance of investigating the strategies, which may explain this unconventional tendency in the genre of political subtitling. The following SBSA shows the general combined frequencies and percentages of the subtitling strategies adopted in MM, PMW, and MEMRI’s videoclips.

Table 8

General Combined SBSA: 60 Video Clips, 1264 Frames

Subtitling Strategies	Frequency	Percentage
Expansion	531	15%
Paraphrase	674	20%
Transfer	1049	30%
Imitation	338	10%
Transcription	0	0%
Dislocation	16	0%
Condensation	620	18%

⁷⁵ Discussed further in Chapter Two (p. 76).

Decimation	83	2%
Deletion	127	4%
Resignation	25	1%

The general combined SBSA shows that transfer (30%) is identified at the top of the adopted strategies, followed by paraphrase (20%), condensation (18%) and expansion (15%). At the top of the least-adopted strategies comes imitation (10%), followed by deletion (4%), decimation (2%), resignation (1%), and dislocation (0%). The transcription strategy, in particular, was never identified in the data. Apart from transfer, paraphrase, and condensation, the other strategies are unlikely to conform with Gottlieb's (1992) findings of feature film subtitling. He identifies higher percentages in decimation (8.1%) and deletion (7.4%) than in expansion (4.9%) (ibid., p. 167). Likewise, apart from transfer, the other strategies are unlikely to conform with Boukhaffa's (2017) findings of political subtitling—the most relevant to this study. He identifies very low percentages in condensation (5%), expansion (5%), and deletion (4%) followed by zero per cent in the rest of the strategies (ibid., p. 67). This may explain Boukhaffa's reluctance to link expansion to the lengthiness of the TTs he examined and consider transfer (85%) as the main reason behind it. As the general combined SBSA of this study shows, however, the high percentages of transfer, paraphrase and expansion can all, most likely, be the main cause of the surprising lengthiness identified in the general combined CBSA.

First, transferring a “full expression” (Gottlieb, 1992, p. 166) of the ST utterance into the TT subtitle often resulted, as also argued by Boukhaffa (2017, p. 68), in adding some linguistic devices to English unused in Arabic, as in a six-character expression “يلعبون” transferred into a fourteen-character expression “they are playing”. Second, explaining the ST utterance with an “expanded expression” (Gottlieb, 1992, p. 166) resulted in the production of many prolonged TT subtitles. Third, paraphrasing the ST utterance with an “altered expression” (ibid.), which, although proposed as a reductive strategy (Karamitroglou, 2003, p. 8), also resulted in some longer TT subtitles. The imitation's finding, which could be attributed to the excessive use of proper nouns, is also likely related to the general combined CBSA's finding because

it offers an “identical expression” (Gottlieb, 1992, p. 166) for the ST utterance. For this reason, Bianchi (2015, p. 15) argues that imitation can be considered a special case of transfer. This can be seen when transferring, for instance, the four-character Arabic name “خالد” into the six-character imitation of “Khalid”. The finding of reductive strategies could generally be attributed to the fact that these strategies might not always be a priority option when translating events and discourses that are prearranged, as is the case for most political speeches⁷⁶.

From initial observation, expansion and paraphrase strategies seem to be technically used, in many cases, to avoid any ambiguity resulting from the “fragmented nature” of subtitles, as they appear on the screen successively, in separation from one another (Diaz-Cintas, 2012b, p. 277). Expanding ambiguous utterances with explanatory additions and paraphrasing them into clearer, possibly shorter, structures (Karamitroglou, 2003, p. 8) are “golden rules to ensure that subtitles ... are semantically and syntactically self-contained” (Diaz-Cintas, 2012b, pp. 277–278). Both strategies can help the audience avoid “back-tracking to retrieve information” because “it is not a natural way to watch programmes” (ibid.). The linguistic coherence and cohesion they reinforce enhance the viewers’ ability for reading and enjoyment if found in such a genre as subtitling.

Apart from the technical interpretations, the unconventionality of these findings can also be interpreted as a result of exploiting subtitling strategies, as demonstrated in several examples below, for further ideological considerations—to suppress or accentuate the original narratives of the ST—rather than as a mere technical necessity. Sometimes, the ambiguity of the ST utterance, as Bannon (2013, p. 11) argues, can be intentional, and thus, the TT subtitle should be ambiguous too. Subtitlers should be aware of this and “resist adding anything” (ibid.), because, otherwise, what seems to be technically and linguistically expanded can be shrouded

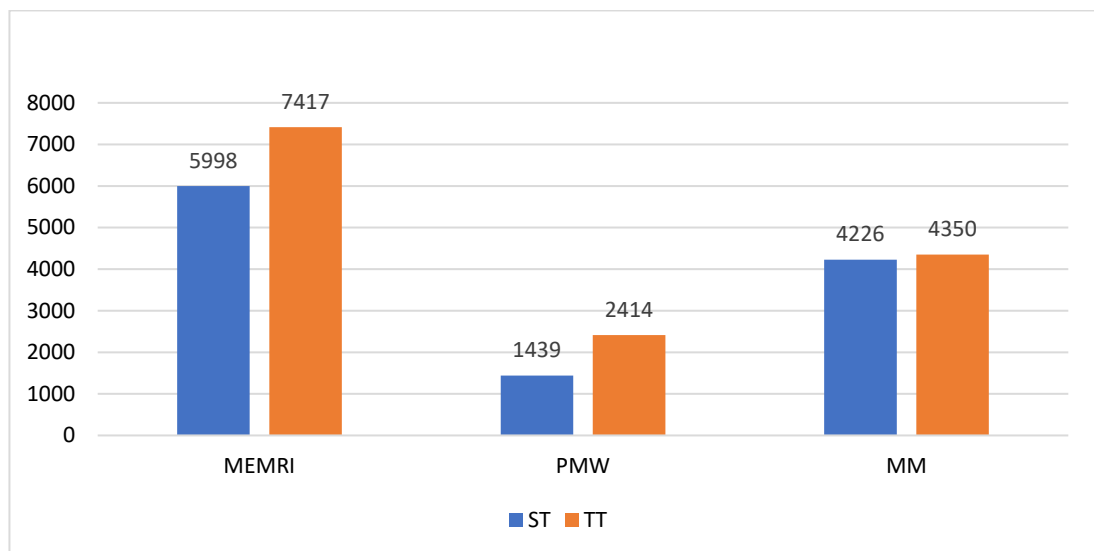
⁷⁶ See Chapter Two, p. 77.

in suspicion, which would unlikely be without ideological dimensions. Reduction can also be looked at from the same point of scepticism. As Diaz-Cintas (2012b, p. 277) argues, “over-reducing ... can lead to a negative perception by the viewers who have direct access to the original soundtrack. Wordy exchanges translated by short subtitles are bound to raise suspicion, as would laconic dialogue channelled into expansive subtitles”.

With deep scrutiny in the subtitling of the respective sixty video clips, it seems difficult to draw clear-cut, collective generalisations for the actual approach of manipulation of the three organisations combined. As illustrated in the general detailed CBSA (Figure 4), each organisation seems to have clearly uneven word-count results.

Figure 4

General Detailed CBSA



This shows an uneven word count resulting from analysing each organisation’s videos

Needless to say, media translation organisations are rather different from one another in terms of the subtitling strategies they use, the qualifications of the subtitlers they commission, and the political ideologies and agendas they propagate. The difference could also be noticed through the variant subgenres of their dialogues and the features that distinguish each one of them, in a way similar to Diaz-Cintas’s (2012a, p. 287) broad categorisation of “spontaneous” and “scripted” dialogues.

Therefore, for carrying out an objective investigation, I will deal with each of the three organisations separately, providing further separate CBSAs and SBSAs. Equally important, a distinction will also be drawn between the subgenres of the video clips before judging the length of subtitles and the nature of any pattern of manipulation carried out. The importance of this distinction lies in the fact that “each (sub)genre can have semiotic codes of its own” (Neves, 2004, p. 132). During the transcription of the sixty video clips, three main political subgenres have been identified: speeches/reports, interviews, and debates.

First, **speeches/reports** (by presidents, journalists) are delivered at a slow pace, which allows an opportunity to transfer the maximum load of the ST features onto the screen, as Díaz-Cintas (2012b, p. 278) argues. The discourse formality of this subgenre, often standardised and pre-scripted, which does not require much reduction, may allow as much rendering of the ST as possible. Although its informative and expository content is a burden, it entails an accurate translation “without giving anything away” (Bannon, 2013, p. 15). Speech dialogue, in particular, is almost similar to that of fictional works (e.g., cinematic films and drama series) whose dialogues are meant to show natural imitation of our spontaneous talks, but they are, as Chaume (2014, p. 408) describes, a “prefabricated orality”, because they are also thought of in advance and scripted by their authors. However, speech dialogues, as demonstrated below, are not always without redundancy caused by non-standard features, like dialect and colloquial characteristics. In sport analyses and reality TV shows, “impromptu speech is of the essence” and, therefore, the subtitling conventions traditionally proposed for pre-scripted audiovisual material can be fully inappropriate (Diaz-Cintas, 2012b, p. 278).

This issue brings us to the second and third like-structured subgenres, namely, interviews and debates. **Interviews** are conducted in a one-to-one or three-way form. Although they appear to be spur-of-the-moment, their dialogue is, most of the time, informative and instructive with a relatively moderate pace of delivery. All speakers are given, to some extent, enough opportunity to express their opinions without too much interruption. On many occasions, nevertheless, interview dialogues are not always totally redundancy-free, as shown in the discussed examples below. **Debates**

are conducted in a three-way form. Although they ought to be informative, their dialogue is highly tense due to their argumentative content and the competitive drive of each speaker to interrupt and overcome the other, often resulting in fast-paced dialogues full of redundancies.

In the following sections, the data of MM, PMW and MEMRI will be investigated separately. In addition to conducting a combined CBSA and SBSA for each organisation separately, a further separate CBSA and SBSA for each one of their subgenres mentioned above will be also conducted to obtain as many objective findings as possible.

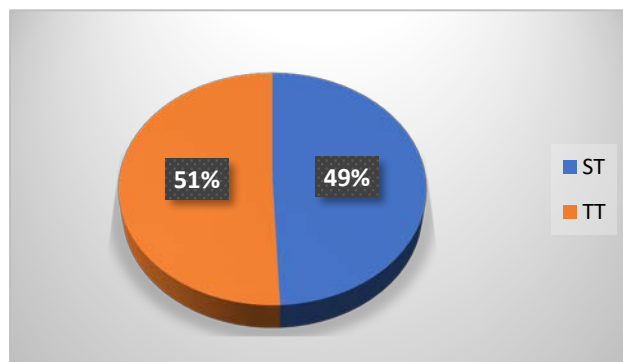
5.3 CBSAs and SBSAs of MM

5.3.1 Combined CBSA and SBSA of MM

The TT subtitles, as illustrated in MM's Combined CBSA (Figure 5), are 2% longer than their ST utterances, which is not in conformity with other subtitling conventions.

Figure 5

Combined CBSA of MM



This shows 49% for STs versus 51% for TT subtitles

The combined SBSA (Table 9) shows that expansion (21%) and paraphrase (21%) are identified at the top of MM's strategies, followed by transfer (16%) and condensation (16%). The other strategies show relatively low percentages of 0%–6%.

Table 9*Combined SBSA of MM: 20 Video Clips, 304 Frames*

Subtitling Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
Expansion	211	21%
Paraphrase	216	21%
Transfer	166	16%
Imitation	118	11%
Transcription	0	0%
Dislocation	0	0%
Condensation	166	16%
Decimation	57	6%
Deletion	72	7%
Resignation	20	2%

In general, this finding may explain the reason behind the TT's unconventional length. In order to carry out a more effective investigation, further CBSAs and SBSAs will be conducted for MM's subgenres separately. On scrutinising their content, MM's video clips can be categorised into the following three political subgenres (Table 10):

Table 10*MM's Video Clips*

MM's Video Clip Titles	Subgenres
1. <i>Egypt President Nasser: Shoe more Honorable than the Crown of Saudi Arabia</i> ⁷⁷	

⁷⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3YA96PG9Opc>

<p>2. <i>Christian Singer Appeals: ISIS, Israel different Sides of the Same Coin</i>⁷⁸</p> <p>3. <i>Al Jazeera Anchor Voices Admiration for Israeli Military</i>⁷⁹</p> <p>4. <i>Palestinian Cleric Defends Iran and its Nuclear Program</i>⁸⁰</p> <p>5. <i>Grand Sunni Mufti: ISIS Must be Stopped</i>⁸¹</p> <p>6. <i>Syrian President Assad on Gaza, Attacks Saudi Arabia and Arab Spring</i>⁸²</p> <p>7. <i>Syrian President Al-Assad: Thanks Hezbollah, Iran, China and Russia</i>⁸³</p> <p>8. <i>Sunni Palestinian Jihad Thanks Iran and Hezbollah</i>⁸⁴</p>	Speeches/ Reports
<p>9. <i>Saudi-Backed FSA Commander in Syria: Israel Gave us Arms, Medical Treatment</i>⁸⁵</p> <p>10. <i>Palestinian Spokesman: Saudi Arabia Supports Israel, Iran our Ally</i>⁸⁶</p> <p>11. <i>Lebanese MP: Saudi Arabia's Grand Mufti is a Retard</i>⁸⁷</p> <p>12. <i>Renowned Iraqi Sunni Cleric: ISIS Created by Jew, Al Baghdadi is a Dog</i>⁸⁸</p> <p>13. <i>Grand Iraqi Sunni Mufti Khalid Al-Mulla: 300 Sunni Clerics Slaughtered by Salafists of Al Qaeda and ISIS</i>⁸⁹</p>	Interviews

⁷⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-u9uMsWBmLo>

⁷⁹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oKuhoxGEC-E>

⁸⁰ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bcsW-EMDhpk>

⁸¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a8jz3AOggEY>

⁸² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gw28ZMOZY18&t=266s>

⁸³ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JR2E9jhF_aM

⁸⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xKHpTTvfAIQ>

⁸⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51jK1miaGAM&t=4s>

⁸⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dyeu60yBENg&t=15s>

⁸⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v3K5uWjSQXs>

⁸⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6UQSIgX0Eg>

⁸⁹ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rvNupoSw_u8

<p>14. <i>Senior Hamas Leader: Iran Assists us without Preconditions</i>⁹⁰</p> <p>15. <i>Sunni Imam of Aqsa Mosque to ISIS: Stop Deceiving Muslims</i>⁹¹</p>	
<p>16. <i>Lebanese MP Wiam Wahhab Walks off Studio after Clash with Saudi-Backed Cleric over ISIS</i>⁹²</p> <p>17. <i>Iraqi Baathist Academic: ISIS was creation of Syrian Government</i>⁹³</p> <p>18. <i>Lebanese Sunni Journalist: Salafists are Harmful to Islam</i>⁹⁴</p> <p>19. <i>Iraqi Writer Abu Firas Attacks Saudi Arabia and Qatar on Al Jazeera</i>⁹⁵</p> <p>20. <i>Iraqi Journalist: Al Jazeera Regulates Terror in Iraq</i>⁹⁶</p>	<p>Debates</p>

⁹⁰ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kdD2iECh-Dk>

⁹¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KtgGDq7tbwk>

⁹² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LTwIKeumajk>

⁹³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HhJQCNI2mIU&t=4s>

⁹⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LEK359nrxwc>

⁹⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JCEOX56TnpA&t=58s>

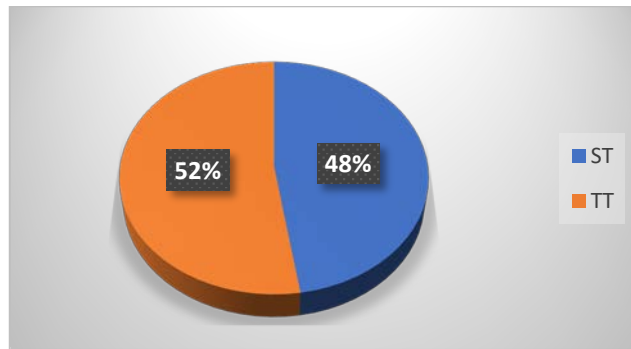
⁹⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6pdgAk5FOWM>

5.3.2 CBSA and SBSA of MM's Speeches

The speech subtitles (video clips 1–8), as illustrated in their CBSA (Figure 6), are 4% longer than their ST utterances.

Figure 6

CBSA of MM's Speeches

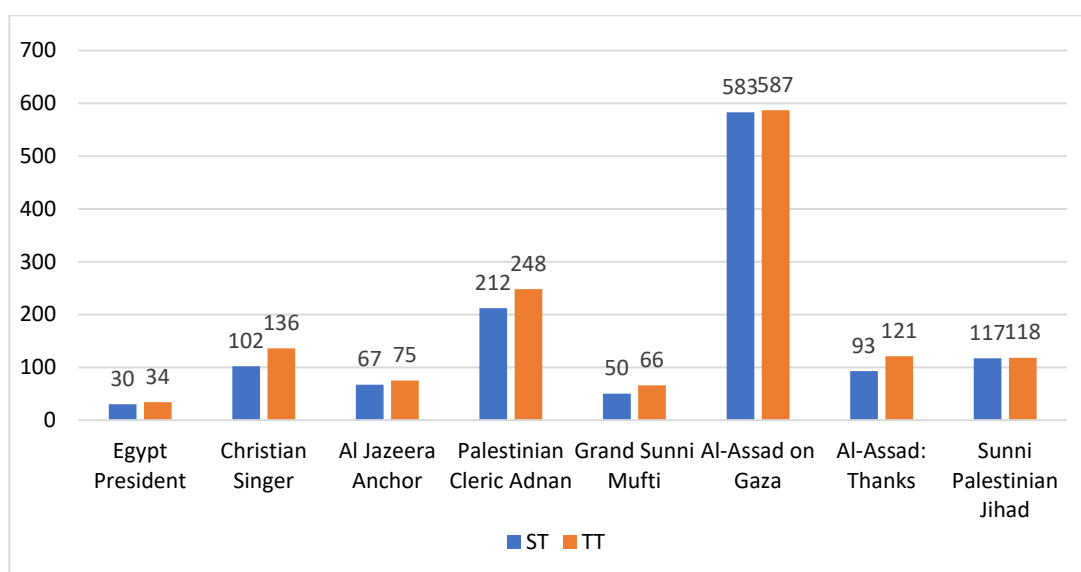


This shows 48% for STs versus 52% for TT subtitles

As similarly illustrated in the detailed CBSA (Figure 7), all video clips show longer TTs than STs. These findings could be attributed to the aforementioned features of discourse formality and delivery pace, where technical constraints do not impose major hurdles for fully transferring the ST.

Figure 7

Detailed CBSA of MM's Speeches



This shows the difference in length between ST and TT subtitles of MM's speeches

For these reasons, the strategies of expansion, paraphrase, and transfer may have been used more frequently than reduction strategies, hence the lengthiness. As illustrated in the speech SBSA (Table 11), expansion (24%) is identified at the top of the adopted strategies. Paraphrase (23%) comes second, followed by transfer (17%) and condensation (16%).

Table 11

SBSA of MM's Speeches: 1–8 Video Clips, 99 Frames

Subtitling Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
Expansion	69	24%
Paraphrase	65	23%
Transfer	50	17%
Imitation	16	6%
Transcription	0	0%
Dislocation	0	0%

Condensation	46	16%
Decimation	14	5%
Deletion	22	8%
Resignation	3	1%

The following table (Table 12) demonstrates some examples for MM's subtitler's strategies, which seem to be technically adopted:

Table 12

Technical Manipulation of MM's Speeches

Video Clip/Frame/Time	ST	TT	Strategies
1/1 00:10–00:20	ومن أول لغاية إمبراح الخسائر عندنا 136 ضابط وعسكري	Since the first day , till yesterday, our losses were 136 officers and soldiers.	Expansion and condensation
3/3 00:28–00:38	ألم يتوقف الفرنسيون وقتها عن قصف الثوار عندما كانوا يلجؤون إلى المناطق المدنية والمساجد احتراماً للمدنيين؟	Didn't the French hold fire when Syrian fighters hid in homes and mosques out of respect for the Syrian people?	Condensation, expansion, and paraphrase
4/9 00:48–00:49	تهدد من؟	To whom is Iran a threat?	Paraphrase

In the first example (1/1, 00:10–00:19, Screenshot 1), the utterance frame lasted for ten seconds. Unlike most speeches, some impromptu phrases full of redundancy and lapses permeated Nasser's speech. The expanded word in bold "day" (يوم) in Arabic is unuttered by Nasser, but it seems to be inadvertently dropped due to

his zealotry at the time. The length and slow pace of the utterance allowed enough time for MM’s subtitler to use the expansion strategy to compensate for this semantic loss in the TT subtitle. For a more concise product, in turn, the subtitler used the condensation strategy by omitting the ST redundant expression “عندنا” (we have). Although the TT subtitle is unconventionally twenty-five characters longer than its ST utterance, it is still technically conventional because of the condensation choice, which, in total, helped to produce only sixty-seven characters on screen.

Figure 8

Screenshot 1



Nasser’s speech in 1962 Dec 23 regarding the Yemeni revolution

In the second example (3/3, 00:28–00:38, Screenshot 2), the utterance frame lasted ten seconds. In the ST, Qassim mentions that the French army avoids targeting fighters out of respect for people. But he does not mention the nationality of those fighters, nor does he mention the nationality of the respected people. For avoiding this ambiguity in the TT, the subtitler expanded the subtitle with the word “Syrian” twice. The first expansion “Syrian fighters” was probably chosen to create a semantic coherence with the preceding subtitle in which Qassim explicitly blames the Syrian army for not learning from the French army and targeting civilians. The second expansion “Syrian people” was probably added for a pragmatic reason—that the involvement of Syrian civilians in hiding their fighters did not push the French army

to bomb their mosques and homes, so why did the Syrian army do so? The subtitler seemingly chose to make explicit what is implicit in Qassim's comparison. Furthermore, the subtitler condensed the length of the ST by omitting the ST padding expression "وقتها" (at the time) to save nine spaces on the screen. They also paraphrased the ST expressions "كانوا يلجؤون" (were hiding) and "المناطق المدنية" (civilian areas) into shorter forms: the past continuous "were hiding" and the nominal sentence "civilian areas" with the past simple "hid" and the noun "homes" respectively, to save fourteen spaces in the TT subtitles. Although the expansion choice resulted in adding twelve characters on the screen, the condensation and paraphrase choices helped produce a TT subtitle that is only three characters longer than the ST utterance. With an unusual total of ninety-two characters, the utterance frame could have been split into two subtitles due to its long duration. Such lengthy subtitles, however, seem to be

acceptable and fully readable for their politically interested audience—perhaps, due to the features of this subgenre⁹⁷.

Figure 9

Screenshot 2



Qassim criticises the Syrian Army for targeting civilians, 2013 December 18

In the third example (4/9, 00:48–00:49, Screenshot 3), the utterance frame lasted for one second only, which is the ideal minimum period of appearance for subtitles (Díaz-Cintas, 2012b, p. 276). In his Friday sermon, Adnan, the speaker, criticises the international position against what the latter describes as the threat of Iran’s nuclear programme and intervention in the Middle East. In the present utterance, he is questioning “تهدد من؟” (To whom is it a threat?) referring to Iran here. Yet, his utterance is still ambiguous because he previously mentioned Iraq as well. Therefore, MM’s subtitler seems to have avoided this ambiguity derived from the fragmented utterance by paraphrasing the pronoun “it” into “Iran”. Such a choice seems to be

⁹⁷ For more on viewer readability and acceptability, see Díaz-Cintas (2012b) and d’Ydewalle et al. (1985) cited on pp. 79–80. Additionally, the high percentages identified in the findings of the “viewer’s likes” analysis conducted in Chapter Six (p. 420) seem to support this argument strongly.

technically necessitated: it provided a clearer expression in the TT subtitle adding only two characters to a conventional total of twenty characters on the screen.

Figure 10

Screenshot 3



Adnan's defence of Iran in his Friday speech, 2012 April 08

Having interpreted the previous strategy choices linguistically and technically, other choices, as demonstrated in the following examples, are not as easily justifiable and seem to be made for further considerations—possibly, ideological⁹⁸.

Table 13

Ideological Manipulation of MM's Speeches

Video Clip/Frame/Time	ST	TT	Strategies
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⁹⁸ This will be examined in detail in Chapter Six.

1/3 00:27–00:32	كل واحد فيهم جزمته أشرف من الملك سعود والملك حسين.	Every one of their shoes has more honor than the crown of Saudi Arabia and Jordan.	Cryptic paraphrase
5/2 00:19–00:37	<u>أتوجه من خلال هذه القناة</u> إلى الشعب العراقي <u>أجمعين</u> ، وأطالبهم <u>مترجيا</u> الوقوف يدا بيد من أجل أن <u>تحقق الدماء، ومن أجل أن</u> <u>نلم شعث شعبنا</u> ،	We call on the people of Iraq to unite (against ISIS) in order to stop the bloodshed of the Iraqi people.	Deletion, cryptic expansion, and decimation
6/31 04:54–04:58	كلفتم بمهمة تمويل الفوضى تحت عنوان الربيع العربي،	This is why they were given the job to fund chaos under the guise of the so-called ‘Arab Spring’.	Cryptic paraphrase and expansion

In the first example (1/3, 00:27–00:32, Screenshot 4), the utterance frame lasted for six seconds. Although MM’s subtitler produced an adequately synchronised subtitle, the paraphrase strategy they used may raise a question. Conventionally, paraphrase is among the subtitling strategies that should provide a shorter, culturally acceptable and linguistically independent alternative, but without distorting the essence of the message. For some reason, however, the subtitler exploited this strategy to distort the twenty-two-character expression “King Saud and King Hussain” by altering it with the thirty-character generalising expression “the crown of Saudi Arabia and Jordan”. Such a cryptic choice can hardly be justified technically because of the lack of any related necessity, which does not rule out an intentional attempt of recontextualisation.

Figure 11

Screenshot 4



Nasser's insult to Kings Saud and Hussain in 1962 Dec 23 after the Yemeni revolution

In the second example (5/2, 00:19–00:37, Screenshot 5), the utterance frame lasted for eighteen seconds. The subtitler, however, made drastic omissions in the ST, whereas they added extra information between brackets —“(i.e., against ISIS)” —that is neither mentioned in the present ST utterance nor anywhere in the whole ST. Apart from the deletion of the less important elements underlined in bold, the subtitler also used the decimation strategy to omit the essential ST expression “ومن أجل أن نلم شعث “*وشعبنا*” (to reunite our people). This sentence, in particular, refers to what the Mufti is alluding to: that is, the Iraqi conflict between Sunni and Shia, and the foreign interventions. Technically speaking, the utterance frame, due to its lengthy duration, could have been split into two subtitles, as suggested by Díaz-Cintas (2012b, p. 276). It, then, could have transferred the important parts of the original message without the need to abandon them. The ambiguous choices of expansion and decimation, which

can barely be technical, has developed a new context in which ISIS's menace is presented as the main and only concern of the speaker.

Figure 12

Screenshot 5



The Iraq Mufti condemns the Sunni-Shia clashes, 2014 June, 14

In the third example (6/31, 04:54–04:58, Screenshot 6), the utterance frame lasted five seconds. This period, again, allowed MM's subtitler's to use the expansion strategy twice, which, probably for no particular technical reason, produced a seventy-nine-character TT subtitle: thirty-eight characters longer than the ST utterance. Apart from the addition of the first padding expression "This is why", the addition of the negatively loaded "the so-called" was likely to conform with the subtitler's political ideology. Moreover, the subtitler paraphrased the expression "تحت عنوان" (under the title of) into "under the guise of", which, technically, does not provide a shorter form than the literal translation but may exceed its neutral connotation to imply suspicion

of the Arab Spring concept. In sum, such choices of manipulation are more likely to be politically and ideologically driven than resorted to for technical reasons.

Figure 13

Screenshot 6



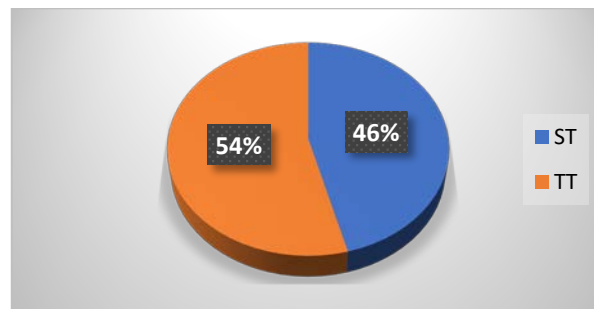
Assad 's inaugural speech on his election victory, 2014 July 16

5.3.3 CBSA and SBSA of MM's Interviews

MM's interview subtitles (video clips 9–15) are, interestingly, 12% longer than their ST utterances, as illustrated in their CBSA (Figure 14). Similar to speeches, the content of this subgenre is informative and expository, but their dialogues are mostly delivered in haste. Yet, the CBSA's finding shows, surprisingly, even longer subtitles than the speeches, despite being full of repetitions and hesitations due to the spontaneity of the interview dialogues.

Figure 14

CBSA of MM's Interviews

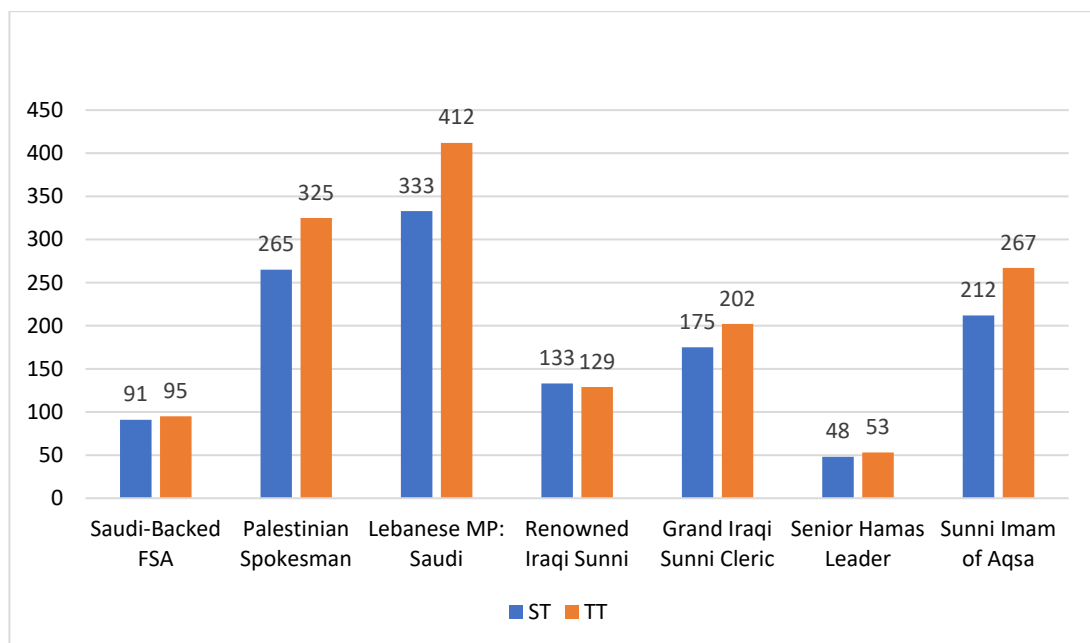


This shows 46% for STs versus 54% for TT subtitles

As illustrated in the detailed CBSA (Figure 15), the TT of all video clips is longer than the ST, except for video clip 12, in which redundancy prevails in most of the interviewee's speech and, therefore, it was subject to the greatest amount of reduction.

Figure 15

Detailed CBSA of MM's Interviews



This shows the difference in length between ST and TT subtitles of MM's interviews

Generally, even though the technical constraints seem to have a considerable effect in this subgenre, the expansion, paraphrase and transfer strategies are more adopted than reduction strategies, hence the lengthiness. As illustrated in the interview SBSA (Table 14), expansion (21%) and paraphrase (21%) are identified at the top of the adopted strategies, followed by transfer (19%) and imitation (14%). Condensation (15%), unconventionally, comes fourth, followed by deletion (6%), decimation (3%), and resignation (1%).

Table 14

SBSA of MM's Interviews: 9–15 Video Clips, 104 Frames

Subtitling Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
Expansion	71	21%
Paraphrase	74	21%
Transfer	64	19%
Imitation	50	14%
Transcription	0	0%
Dislocation	0	0%
Condensation	52	15%
Decimation	9	3%
Deletion	20	6%
Resignation	5	1%

Table 15 demonstrates some examples of MM's subtitling strategies, which seem to be technically adopted:

Table 15

Technical Manipulation of MM's Interviews

Video Clip/Frame/Time	ST	TT	Strategies
9/5 00:39–00:44	من أي شخص كان أنه ممنوع يقترب من الجدار إلا بالتسيق مع السلطات الاسرائيلية	No one was allowed to come near the Israeli fence without coordination with Israeli authorities beforehand.	Condensation and expansion
10/18 01:56–02:01	يخرجون علينا الآن ليحرفوا الصراع والبوصله، هؤلاء لا مقام لهم لا من قبل شعبنا	And now they come out and try to misrepresent the situation? They are not valuable to Palestinians.	Expansion, paraphrase, and condensation
11/12 01:04–01:06	أو يلبس مثل حكياته،	or dress in correspondence with his speech.	Transfer and paraphrase

In the first example (9/5, 00:39–00:44, Screenshot 7), the utterance frame lasted six seconds. Due to this ideal period, MM's subtitler used the expansion strategy twice by adding the unuttered words "Israeli" and "beforehand". Both expansions contributed to the production of a thirty-one-characters-longer TT subtitle than the ST utterance; however, the expansion "Israeli", in particular, seems to be technically adopted to remove the ambiguity of the ST expression "يقترب من الجدار" (come near the fence). Moreover, the subtitler condensed the ST for a more concise and adequately

synchronised TT subtitle by omitting the elements “מן” (from) and “أنه” (that it is) which saved eight spaces on the screen.

Figure 16

Screenshot 7



A soldier from the Free Syrian Army is interrogated on the Israeli Channel 2, 2014 August 13

In the second example (10/18, 01:56–02:01, Screenshot 8), the utterance frame lasted six seconds, which allowed the use of expansion and paraphrase strategies. First, MM’s subtitler expanded the TT subtitle with the unuttered word “And”; although this choice added four characters on screen, it seems to be semantically connected to the previous subtitle. Second, to avoid the ambiguity of the ST expression “من قبل شعبنا” (to our people) uttered at the end of this utterance frame, the subtitler chose to paraphrase it into the more explicit (though three-characters-longer) expression “to Palestinians”. However, for the sake of concision, the subtitler paraphrased the sentence “ليحرفوا الصراع واليوصله” (to misrepresent the conflict and compass) into the alternative “to misrepresent the situation”, which saved nine spaces. The subtitler also saved seven extra spaces by condensing the redundant element “لا” (neither). Overall, even though these patterns of manipulation seem to be technical, the TT’s length can yet be deemed

unconventional because it contains eighty-three characters, which is twenty-one characters longer than the ST utterance.

Figure 17

Screenshot 8



Palestinian Spokesman: Saudi Arabia Supports Israel, Iran Our Ally (English Subtitles)

A Palestinian spokesman is interviewed about the Saudi's warning of Iran's aid, 2014, August 06

In the third example (11/6, 01:04–01:06, Screenshot 9), the utterance frame lasted only three seconds. Despite the technical burden of this period, MM's subtitler chose to transfer the metaphor in full, maintaining the essence of the ST. The TT subtitle is twenty-two characters longer than the ST utterance; however, it seems conventional and adequately synchronised as it contains only thirty-seven characters in total. Furthermore, the subtitler refrained from compensating for the implicit doer (i.e., the Saudi Mufti) of the verb “dress”, probably to avoid producing a longer TT for this short utterance. The only reductive manipulation carried out—perhaps for a stylistic and technical reason—is the subtle saving of two characters (i.e., “es”) by

paraphrasing the plural form “حكيّاته” (his speeches) into the shorter, singular form “his speech”.

Figure 18

Screenshot 9



Wiam Wahhab defends Hezbollah on OTV, 2013 June 09

Having discussed some strategy choices from a technical viewpoint, other strategy choices seem to be taken, as demonstrated in the following examples (Table 16), for other—possibly ideological—considerations.

Table 16

Ideological Manipulation of MM’s Interviews

Video Clip/Frame/Time	ST	TT	Strategies
12/5 00:38–00:48	والله داعش <u>وماعش</u> والنصرة، حتى محمد عبد الوهاب أبو الوهابية، كلهم صناعة يهودية <u>بالميه ميه</u> <u>وخل يقتلونى ذا شوف.</u>	ISIS, Nusra, all these groups , including Mohammed Ibn Abdul Wahhab and all Wahhabis are Jewish creations.	Cryptic condensation, deletion, and paraphrase

13/2 00:16–00:26	نحن خاصة كأهل سنة في العراق عندنا تجربة مريرة مع القاعدة ووليداتها،	We, especially as Sunnis in Iraq, have a bitter experience with Al Qaeda and its ilk (Salafists) .	Imitation, cryptic expansion, and paraphrase
11/6 00:39–00:42	بدو يطهر تمه قبل ما يحكي عن مقاومين،	Therefore, he should purify his mouth first before uttering a word about brave resistance fighters.	Cryptic Expansion, transfer, and paraphrase

In the first example (12/5, 00:38–00:48, Screenshot 10), the utterance frame lasted ten seconds, which allowed ample space and time to produce an adequately synchronised subtitle. Splitting such a long utterance into two subtitles, for instance, would have been a good choice; however, MM’s subtitler chose to produce one subtitle maintaining what is most important to display. In so doing, they condensed the elements “والله” (by God), “ماعش” for “Ma`ish” a meaningless utterance rhyming with “داعش”, “Da`ish” referring to “ISIS”, and “بالمية مية” (a hundred per cent). They also deleted the less important element “وخل يقتلوني ذا شوف” (and let me see if they can kill me). At first glance, these choices seem to be technical as they saved fifty-two spaces. More critically, however, they may have been ideologically exploited to save space for what was left on the screen to be distorted until the end of the utterance.

Away from the concept of authenticity, the choice of the paraphrase strategy seems cryptic. In the ST, the speaker, Kubbaisi, describes Mohammed Ibn Abdul Wahhab⁹⁹ as the father of Wahhabism and accuses him of being similar to ISIS and

⁹⁹ An Islamic Saudi scholar (1703–1792) who attempted a return to the principles of Islam as practised by its early forbears (Salaf) (Britannica 2021).

Nusra¹⁰⁰ and that they are all Jewish creations. The subtitler paraphrased Kubbaisi's expression "محمد بن عبد الوهاب أبو الوهابية" (Mohammed Ibn Abdul Wahhab, the father of Wahhabism) into "Mohammed Ibn Abdul Wahhab and all Wahhabis". The subtitler carries a clear accusation from Kubbaisi to all Wahhabis, even contemporaries, of being a Jewish creation, though Kubbaisi makes no such declaration. Although this strategy ostensibly resulted in producing a seven-character-shorter structure in the TT subtitle, it has remarkably distorted the essence of the ST message. As a result, the whole manipulation, along with the production of a ninety-characters-long TT, can leave the viewer with a deep sense of suspicion about the actual motive behind MM's choices.

Figure 19

Screenshot 10



Kubbaisi condemns ISIS and Nusra Terrorists, 2014 August 06

In the second example (13/2, 00:16–00:26, Screenshot 11), the utterance frame lasted ten seconds at a relatively slow pace of delivery. In what initially seems to be a technical manipulation to avoid ambiguity, MM's subtitler opted for expanding the

¹⁰⁰ One of the largest and most powerful jihadist groups in the Middle Eastern conflict.

ST's expression "وليداتها" (its productions) by adding to it the unuttered label "(Salafists)". Yet, the label "Salafists" is neither uttered by the speaker, Khalid Al-Mulla, in the ST nor in the original video. The subtitler also ambiguously paraphrased the literal equivalent "its productions" of the ST expression "وليداتها" into "its ilk". These choices could, together, imply an intention of exploiting strategies to manipulate the ST messages to serve certain propaganda purposes.

A question that can arise here is that the political and sectarian arena in Iraq is extremely complicated. Al-Qaeda ideology alone encompasses several groups and characters, so why are Salafists selected in particular? A generous frame of ten seconds would easily allow for the inclusion of other extremist groups, such as ISIS. Furthermore, as mentioned by Al-Mulla himself, ISIS is more ideologically and chronologically appropriate to be described as Al-Qaeda's productions than the subtitler's choice of "its ilk".

Figure 20

Screenshot 11



Al-Mulla condemns Al Qaeda's crimes on Al-Mayadeen TV, 2014 July 01

In the third example (11/6, 00:39–00:42, Screenshot 12), the utterance frame lasted four seconds. What makes the subtitler's task more challenging within the technical limitations of this frame is that the interviewee's speech is fast and contains a proverb, the rendering of which might lead to a lengthy subtitle. MM's subtitler, nevertheless, chose to transfer the humiliating Arabic proverb "بدو يطهر تمه قبل ما يحكي"

(he should purify his mouth before speaking) into the TT as “he should purify his mouth first before uttering a word”, maintaining its original sense of humiliation. As a technical alternative of simplification, paraphrasing the original expression into a shorter, euphemistic structure such as “he should respect himself before speaking” would then save ten spaces on the screen. It could, however, be that the subtitler deliberately intended to pragmatically preserve the original sense of humiliation, as Karamitroglou (2003, p. 8) suggests, but this should not be at the expense of the technical consideration.

What reinforces the sceptical stance is that the subtitler also added a dysphemistic expression to the proverb by paraphrasing the word “يُحكي” (speaking) into “uttering a word”, which can imply a further sense of challenge and threat. For the same cryptic consideration, the subtitler used the expansion strategy to add the unuttered adjective “brave” to the resistance fighters, seemingly for the sake of glorification. With the other expansions of “therefore” and “first” in the TT, MM’s choices resulted in the production of a TT fifty-seven characters longer than the ST. A total of an eighty-five-character TT subtitle would be deemed unconventional and technically unnecessary. MM’s choices might indicate ideological motives that may cast doubts on the actual nature of its manipulation.

Figure 21

Screenshot 12



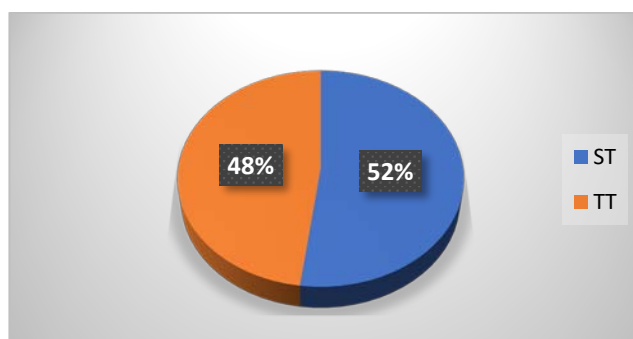
Wahhab defends Hezbollah on OTV, 2013 June 09

5.3.4 CBSA and SBSA of MM Debates

The debate subtitles (video clips 16–20) are only 4% shorter than their ST utterances, as illustrated in their CBSA (Figure 22). Spatial and temporal constraints have a great impact on this subgenre’s subtitling. Synchronisation is another challenge to be tackled in order to produce a subtitle that corresponds to speakers’ utterances¹⁰¹. Conventionally, therefore, debate subtitles should be at least 20%–40% condensed, as previously mentioned.

Figure 22

CBSA of MM Debates



This shows 52% for STs versus 48% for TT subtitles

As illustrated in the SBSA of debates (Table 17), however, this does not seem to be the case. Paraphrase (19%) comes at the top of the adopted strategies. Expansion (18%), interestingly, comes second, while condensation (17%) unconventionally comes third, followed by imitation (14%) and transfer (13%). For the rest of the reductive strategies, the SBSA of debates shows higher percentages than those identified in the speeches and interviews: decimation (9%), deletion (8%), and resignation (3%).

¹⁰¹ See Orero (2004, p. 48), discussed further in Chapter Two, p. 84.

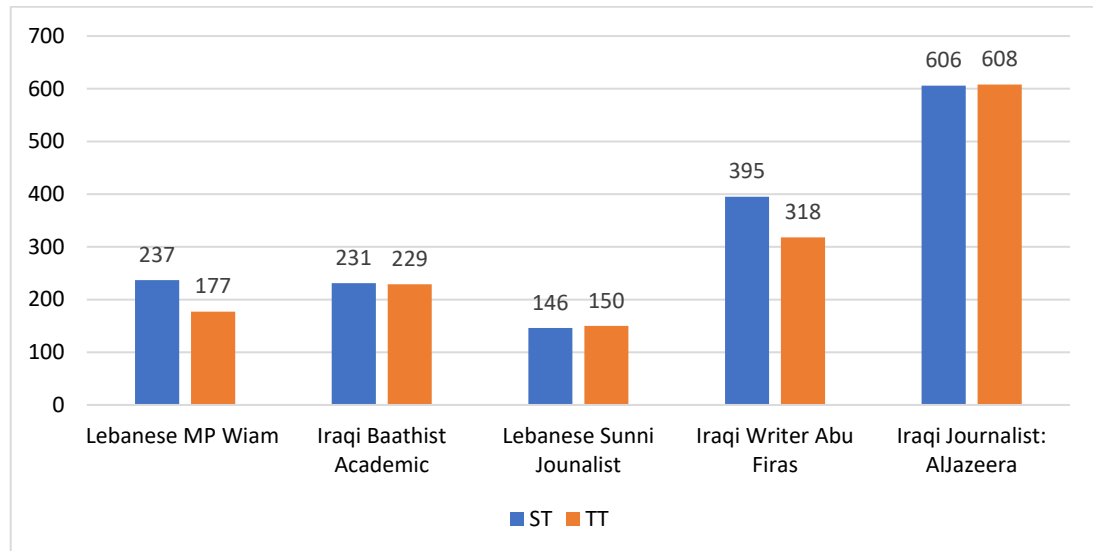
Table 17*SBSA of MM's Debates: 16–20 Video Clips, 101 Frames*

Subtitling Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
Expansion	71	18%
Paraphrase	77	19%
Transfer	52	13%
Imitation	52	14%
Transcription	0	0%
Dislocation	0	0%
Condensation	68	17%
Decimation	34	9%
Deletion	30	8%
Resignation	12	3%

A deeper analysis, as shown in the detailed CBSA (Figure 23), may explain why the 4%-shorter debate subtitles may not yet be seen as conventional.

Figure 23

Detailed CBSA of MM Debates



This shows the difference in length between ST and TT subtitles of MM's debates

First, the subtitles in video clips 17, 18, and 20 have a word count equal to the ST's due to the excessive use of expansion and paraphrase. Second, the subtitles in video clips 16 and 19 have a word count shorter than the ST. This is because they are drastically reduced using the qualitative reduction strategies of decimation, deletion, and resignation more than the quantitative reduction of condensation, which resulted in a critical loss of key semantic parts in the ST, as demonstrated below. Hence, the relative shortness of the TT may not only be a result of considering a conventional criterion of technicality, which is often tackled with condensation, but also of deliberate cuts carried out for further unacknowledged considerations. The following table demonstrates some examples of strategies that seem to be technically adopted:

Table 18

Technical Manipulation of MM's Debates

Video Clip/Frame/Time	ST	TT	Strategies
16/8 00:59–01:05	ما حدا ما حدا، لحظة يا شيخ لحظة يا شيخ... شيخ لحظة ما حدا قال عن... لحظة لحظة ما تبلش،	MP: We didn't say that you are terrorists. Hold on Sheikh, hold on... No one said that.	Expansion, condensation, imitation, and paraphrase
17/11 01:15–01:22	إنه المعروف الآن، هم فاتوا بهذا المشروع، وجابولنا بديل عن الجيش داعش	What I want to know now, they started this project and as an alternative to the national army they brought ISIS.	Paraphrase and expansion
18/1 00:10–00:16	أنا مسلم سني. أزور ضريح السيدة زينب عند كل فجر وعند كل ظهر وعند كل مغرب،	I'm a Sunni Muslim. And I visit the Zainab shrine every morning, afternoon and evening.	Transfer, resignation, imitation, and condensation

In the first example (16/8, 00:59–01:05, Screenshot 13), the utterance frame lasted seven seconds, which technically allowed the production of an accurate and adequately synchronised translation in the TT subtitle. Due to the unclear utterance of the speaker, MM's subtitler adopted various patterns of manipulation to get rid of the redundancies and compensate for the incomplete structures. With expansion, they added the unuttered word "PM" to link the subtitle to the right person moving on

screen, and hence, kinetic synchrony¹⁰² was successfully achieved. They also desperately needed this strategy to remove the ambiguity of the incomplete expression “... ما حدا” (no one ...) derived from this fragmented frame. Thus, the translator added the semantically self-contained sentence “no one said that you are terrorists”. The absence of the word “terrorists”, in particular, would require backtracking to the previous subtitle(s) to retrieve it, which may be impractical and unnatural, as Díaz-Cintas (2012b, p. 277) points out.

With condensation, the subtitler got rid of the PM’s meaningless utterances and repetitions with which he desperately interrupted the other guest’s speech. This reduction helped the subtitler save twenty-nine spaces, which, in total, resulted in conventionally producing a seventy-characters-long TT subtitle. With imitation, the subtitler succeeded in saving even more spaces by preserving the foreignness of the political/religious word “Sheikh” (شيخ) in Arabic instead of providing a longer explanation. At the end of the subtitle, the subtitler paraphrased the incomplete utterance “... لا تبش...” (do not start ...) into the complete sentence “no one said that”. The latter choice may be considered redundant because it is semantically similar to the

¹⁰² Correspondence between subtitles and body movements on the screen.

previous expansion “said that you are terrorists”, yet it could be important to pragmatically emphasise the MP’s repeated objection to the other guest’s accusation.

Figure 24

Screenshot 13



Wahhab debates Raad on the phone on Al-Jadeed TV, 2014 August 08

In the second example (17/11, 01:15–01:22, Screenshot 14), the utterance frame lasted for eight seconds. This period technically gave a chance to produce an unconventionally long subtitle containing ninety-two characters, though it could alternatively have been split into two shorter subtitles. The reason behind this lengthiness is likely to be the adoption of paraphrase and expansion strategies. With paraphrase, MM’s subtitler altered the ST expression “إنه المعروف الآن” (it is known now) with the TT expression “what I want to know now”, which, although it is six characters longer than the literal translation, is more semantically related to the questioning structure of the whole utterance. With expansion, the subtitler added the adjective “national” to the ST word “army” to remove ambiguity caused by fragmentation. Iraq’s conflict involves several national and international military parties; therefore, the choice of expansion would help explain which army the speaker specifically means. Both strategies resulted in producing a thirty-seven-characters-longer TT than the ST. Despite its lengthiness, the subtitle was kinetically and

isochronally¹⁰³ synchronised on the screen due to the long duration of the utterance frame.

Figure 25

Screenshot 14



Ghanem Al-Abed attacks IS and ISIS on Al-Jazeera, 2014 July 02

In the third example (18/1, 00:11–00:16, Screenshot 15), the utterance frame lasted six seconds. With an adequate synchronisation of the subtitle, MM’s subtitler managed to render the most important elements of the original message most accurately. For the less important elements and redundancy, they adopted various strategies of reduction. With resignation, the subtitler omitted the ST’s religious signifier “السيدة”, which refers to an Islamic rank given to female characters in terms of praise. Albeit important, the omission of this element did not affect the religious connotation of the original context because it was compensated for by retaining the ST word “ضريح” (shrine) in the TT subtitle. With imitation, the subtitler avoided using expansion to define who Zainab is because an explanation could result in lengthening

¹⁰³ Correspondence between the subtitle’s duration and the ST utterance.

the TT subtitle. With condensation, the subtitler used the three-time repeated word “كل” (every) only once in the TT subtitle. These choices can, hence, be justified as technical manipulations since they saved space and time for the conventional production of a seventy-three-characters-long TT subtitle.

Figure 26

Screenshot 15



Lebanese Sunni Journalist: Salafists are Harmful to Islam (English Subtitles)

Zahran defends Shiite rituals on OTV, 2013 May 01

Having discussed some subtitling choices from a technical viewpoint, the following examples (Table 19) will discuss other choices, which seem to be ideologically motivated under the excuse of technicality, and indicate some high-level patterns of selectivity. For this purpose, therefore, five (rather than three) examples will be provided.

Table 19

Ideological Manipulation of MM's Debates

Video Clip/Frame/Time	ST	TT	Strategies
16/1 00:10–00:15	معي <u>مباشرة</u> عبر الهاتف الشيخ أمير رعد عضو هيئة	We have a delegate of the (Saudi-	Cryptic paraphrase

	علماء المسلمين، صباح الخير.	backed) Muslim Scholar Committee, Amir Raad on the phone. Good morning.	and expansion; condensation and deletion
16/14 01:26–01:38	طيب تفضل ارجع لهون تتقدر <u>نحكي</u> ، خرينا نختم الحلقة <u>وارجع بيتكم</u>	Host: At the very least let me conclude the episode.	Expansion, paraphrase, and deletion
18/2 00:17–00:23	الفرق بيننا وبينهم أنهم يسينون للإسلام، <u>ويسوعون¹⁰⁴ الإسلام، كما لوانه،</u>	The difference between us (Sunnis) and them (Salafists) lies here. They harm Islam.	Condensation, deletion, and cryptic expansion
18/8 01:02–01:10	<u>... لحظة، لحظة، لحظة،</u> الإمام الخميني يا هشام، <u>هشام، هشام، هشام،</u> <u>هشام،</u>	One moment, one moment. Hisham, Imam Khomeini	Condensation and imitation
19/20 02:39–02:47	الميزان: <u>موللعصائب ومو</u> <u>لأبو الفضل</u> ولا هذول هاي كلها تطلع ولا المالكي خلي يطلعوا القانورات عملاء <u>إيران خليههم يطلعون ما</u> <u>يظلون.</u>	... Let those people (Shiites) and Maliki get out, they are agents of Iran!	Cryptic decimation and expansion

¹⁰⁴ This is how the speaker pronounced it. The correct grammar and spelling of this word, however, is 'يسينون' (They harm).

In the first example (16/1, 00:10–00:15, Screenshot 16), the utterance frame lasted six seconds. MM’s subtitler used condensation and deletion strategies to omit the ST padding expression “مباشرة” (directly) and the less important title “الشيخ” (Sheikh), which saved fourteen spaces. Although the reduction appears to be technically adopted, one can, more critically, interpret it as being an ideological choice, probably used to allow more space for other cryptic strategies to be exploited. For a clearer expression, MM’s subtitler used the expansion strategy to add the unuttered accusative description “(Saudi-backed)” to the TT subtitle. At first glance, the manipulation seems to be technical, probably for the sake of compensating for what is lost due to the technical fragmentation of utterances. However, neither the selected ST utterance nor the full original video shows the host, let alone her guest, making such a claim.

In terms of screen conventionality, the TT subtitle becomes unnecessarily lengthy, containing eighty-nine characters. One can argue, thus, that the addition of such a description is deliberate, intended to inculcate a specific image that crams Saudi Arabia into the Lebanese conflict and accuses the guest (i.e., Amir Raad) on the phone of collaborating with the Saudi authorities. Furthermore, paraphrasing the ST word “عضو” (member) into the TT word “delegate” raises a question, again, about the

technical necessity of such a choice, not to mention its implications. The next chapter will further discuss these examples of manipulation in a broader framework.

Figure 27

Screenshot 16



Al-Jadeed TV host presents Amir Raad on the phone, 2014 August 08

In the second example (16/14, 01:26–01:38, Screenshot 17), the utterance frame lasted fourteen seconds. Technically speaking, MM’s subtitler used the expansion strategy to add the word “Host” to the TT subtitle, probably to avoid viewers’ confusion about which speaker is being subtitled as another speaker hosted on the phone can be heard speaking at the same time. The subtitle was thus kinetically synchronised with the host, who appears speaking and moving. MM’s subtitler also used reductive strategies of paraphrase and deletion, which resulted in the production of a six-characters-shorter TT subtitle than the ST utterance. With paraphrase, the subtitler altered the ST expression “طيب تفضل ارجع هون تنقدر نحكي” (please come back here so we can speak) with the shorter TT expression “at the very least” saving sixteen spaces on the screen. With deletion, the subtitler got rid of the less important ST expression “وارجع بيتكم” (and go back home), saving an extra thirteen characters on screen.

Interestingly, however, the subtitle timing seems to be sloppy because isochrony was totally neglected. The guest on the phone was already speaking, more audibly, before and after the host’s intervention and, therefore, he should have been

included due to the long duration of the utterance frame that could have been split into more than two subtitles. Mysteriously, none of his important and audible utterances were subtitled. Technically, this manipulation could be attributed to the necessity of kinetic synchrony. More realistically, however, it could be interpreted as ideological selectivity, which does not occur in a vacuum but has reasons and consequences.

Figure 28

Screenshot 17



Al-Jadeed TV host speaks to Wahhab, who is leaving the studio, 2014 August 08

In the third example (18/2, 00:17–00:23, Screenshot 18), the utterance frame lasted seven seconds, which obviously allowed MM’s subtitler to expand the TT with two labels without fear of falling into an unnecessary prolongation. In this frame, the speaker appearing on the screen is comparing himself with his debater while pointing to him and accusing him of harming Islam, but without mentioning any labels. The only labels mentioned in other unselected scenes of the original video are “Sunni”, referring to the speaker, and “Jihadist”, referring to his opponent. Yet, in the present subtitle, the label “Sunnis” is similarly added, whereas the label “Jihadist” is not. For some ambiguous reason, the latter label was altered with “Salafists”, as seen in the screenshot below. Therefore, what seems, at first glance, to be expanded for technical necessity (to remove ambiguity), can be exploited for an ideological reconstruction that distorts the Salafist group.

In the same circle of ambiguity lies another question about the use of deletion and condensation strategies. Technically, it may have contributed to the production of a conventionally reduced and synchronised subtitle containing seventy characters only; the omission of both the less important sentence “ويسوءون الإسلام” (they are distorting Islam) and the incomplete utterance “كما لو أنه...” (as if it is ...) saved thirty spaces in the TT subtitle. However, from a critical point of view, such choices cannot be disconnected from the cryptic expansion of “Salafist”; they can be exploited to allow more space on the screen for similarly questionable patterns of manipulation.

Figure 29

Screenshot 18



Lebanese Sunni Journalist: Salafists are Harmful to Islam (English Subtitles)

Zahrán debates Bakri on OTV, 2013 May 01.

In the fourth example (18/8, 01:02–01:10, Screenshot 19), the utterance frame lasted for eight seconds of a vociferous three-way debate. When the host showed an intention to conclude the episode, the debate became more competitive and chaotic. On similar occasions, subtitlers conventionally tend to produce the shortest and most intelligible forms to draw attention to the most important utterances. MM’s subtitler used the condensation strategy to produce the thirty-nine-character TT, “One moment, one moment. Hisham, Imam Khomeini” instead of transferring a long, full translation. They also used the imitation strategy to save more space by rendering the religious

signifier “الإمام” as “Imam” instead of expanding it with some explanatory phrase such as “the religious leader”.

These patterns of manipulation seem to be resorted to for technical reasons, yet the selection of subtitling one debater and totally neglecting the other does not. These selections are more likely ideological, for several reasons: first, a potentiality of eight seconds can easily be employed to include both utterances in two separate subtitles; second, the selected and subtitled debater (Zahran) merely produces incomplete utterances full of redundancy, compared to the neglected debater (Bakri) who is more audible and relevant; third, unlike the example (16/14) mentioned above, the scene of this utterance frame is different in that it does not show only one person but two people speaking and moving at the same time. Thus, kinetic synchrony seems to have been wittingly ignored because not only is the neglected utterance more audible, more important, and more understandable, but it also starts before the selected utterance and continues for seconds after it. Yet, the subtitler ignores this and inserts the following subtitle too early.

Figure 30

Screenshot 19



Lebanese Sunni Journalist: Salafists are Harmful to Islam (English Subtitles)

Zahran (left) and Bakri (right) debate about Shiite beliefs, 2013 May 01

In the fifth example (19/20, 02:39–02:47, Screenshot 20), the utterance frame lasted nine seconds. Though full of redundancies, the content of the debater’s utterance seems politically sensitive because it contains some significant information. Hence, splitting the utterance frame into two four-second subtitles, for instance, can be an inevitable technical manipulation in such a case. In turn, MM’s subtitler chose to produce only one short subtitle containing sixty-two characters, which, at first glance, seems to be a successful technical manipulation. The subtitler deleted the less important element “قذورات” (rubbish) and condensed the ST’s repeated utterance “خليهم يطلعون ما يظلون” (drive them out, let them leave), which, together, saved thirty spaces in the TT subtitle. The subtitler also saved more spaces on the screen by imitating the word “المالكي” as “Maliki” without expanding with an explanation of who he is.

Critically speaking, however, one can be surprised by other patterns of manipulation that have probably been exploited for an ideological purpose. With the decimation (semantic reduction) strategy, the subtitler ignored a very significant part of the debater’s utterance (appearing on the right of the screen), in which he expresses his rejection of all militias in Baghdad, with particular mention of the Shiite groups Asa`ib and Abu Fadl. Besides this, the subtitler also distorted the debater’s utterance by exploiting the expansion strategy. While the speaker calls for expelling the militias, referring to them repeatedly as “ولا هذول” (and not those), the subtitler added the unuttered words “people (Shiites)”. What viewers might understand is that the speaker is mainly against civilians, particularly Shiites. These patterns of manipulation, which ostensibly appear to be technical, can critically be considered ideological. More scrutinisation shows that the synchronisation seems to be completely disregarded due to such character selectivity. The kinetic synchrony, for instance, is almost absent;

there is no correspondence between the subtitle and the debaters' movements, despite the technical flexibility available for that to be achieved.

Figure 31

Screenshot 20



Abu Firas (left) and Mizan (right) debate about the Iraqi conflict, 2014 June 18

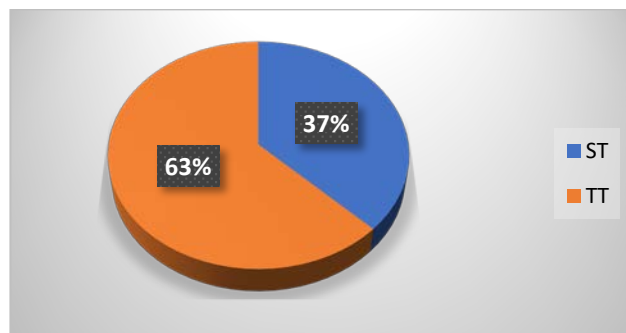
5.4 CBSAs and SBSAs of PMW

5.4.1 Combined CBSA and SBSA of PMW

The TT subtitles, as illustrated in PMW's combined CBSA (Figure 32), are 27% longer than their ST utterances, which is more surprisingly incongruent with other subtitling conventions than the findings of MM's CBSA.

Figure 32

Combined CBSA of PMW



This shows 37% for STs versus 63% for TT subtitles

In further investigation of this unconventional lengthiness, PMW's combined SBSA (Table 20) shows that transfer (33%) is identified at the top of the adopted strategies, followed by imitation (21%), expansion (19%) and paraphrase (15%). More interestingly, the rest of the SBSA's findings identify the most important subtitling strategy of reduction—condensation (7%)—in fifth place, followed by dislocation (3%), decimation (1%), deletion (1%), resignation (0%) and transcription (0%).

Table 20

Combined SBSA of PMW: 20 Video Clips, 229 Frames

Subtitling Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
Expansion	112	19%
Paraphrase	88	15%
Transfer	199	33%
Imitation	128	21%

Transcription	0	0%
Dislocation	15	3%
Condensation	44	7%
Decimation	8	1%
Deletion	4	1%
Resignation	2	0%

For the findings of the combined CBSA and SBSA to be more evidently and accurately interpreted, further analysis, substantiated with several examples, will be provided for each of the following PMW subgenres individually. On scrutinising their dialogues, PMW’s twenty video clips can be categorised into three political subgenres as follows:

Table 21

PMW’s Video Clips

Video Clip Titles	Subgenre
1. <i>PA TV Distorts History: Palestinian Fought the Romans in the Ancient Times</i> ¹⁰⁵	Speeches/ Reports
2. <i>PA Official Praises Terror Mom with Imprisoned Sons Who Murdered at Least 10</i> ¹⁰⁶	
3. <i>Fatah Official Promotes Martyrdom-Death to Youths</i> ¹⁰⁷	
4. <i>Fatah honours murderers in Bethlehem: “Loyalty to their rifle”; Murderer of 2 “created a legend”</i> ¹⁰⁸	
5. <i>Abbas confirms continued salaries to terrorist prisoners</i> ¹⁰⁹	

¹⁰⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8vqd-12W4nk>

¹⁰⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=40AM0sntUa4>

¹⁰⁷ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3-If_YfjCeQ

¹⁰⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yrVHevkXGNw>

¹⁰⁹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6InzkvzQFwE>

<p>6. <i>Abbas: Terrorists acted out of “national interest, not for personal reasons” – we must pay them</i>¹¹⁰</p> <p>7. <i>Abbas’ Deputy Calls for “Resistance”, Fatah Official Urges Palestinians to Learn from Intifadas</i>¹¹¹</p> <p>8. <i>Terrorist Murderer Dalal Mughrabi Represents “Palestinian Heroism”, Says Official PA TV Narrator</i>¹¹²</p>	
<p>9. <i>PA TV Honors murderer of 37 Dalal Mughrabi</i>¹¹³</p> <p>10. <i>Girl’s poem encourages violence: “Shoot, Shoot, in the name of God</i>¹¹⁴</p> <p>11. <i>PA names Mosque, Square, and Street After Murderer of 2 Israelis</i>¹¹⁵</p>	Speeches/ Reports & Interviews
<p>12. <i>Fatah Official: “Whenever There is a Problem in the World, Behind It is a Zionist Fingerprint”</i>¹¹⁶</p> <p>13. <i>Palestinian Women Prefer Wounded Terrorists with a lifetime PA Salary, over Jobless University Grades</i>¹¹⁷</p> <p>14. <i>Fatah Official Sends “Greetings” to Family of Murderer Omar Abu Laila, “may Allah Reward them”</i>¹¹⁸</p> <p>15. <i>“There is no such thing as Israel” – Israeli Arab Boy’s Message to Palestinian children</i>¹¹⁹</p>	Interviews

¹¹⁰ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=srKY8cf2pYU>

¹¹¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lsjofytdHSY>

¹¹² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qofOopg7DK8>

¹¹³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vkh9bIrnQaA>

¹¹⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y0IXr4WYU6M>

¹¹⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PzEHLT7cWk4>

¹¹⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5vMFY70xirU>

¹¹⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ngUeQUaV0Ow>

¹¹⁸ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VJ4p0jL8_II

¹¹⁹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4V5KA9-x5wA>

16. *Father of attempted suicide bombing: “All the prisoners are our sons... You are a source of pride for us”*¹²⁰

17. *The PA Rebuilds Demolished Homes of Murderers*¹²¹

18. *Parents Celebrate Terrorist Son’s “Martyrdom” as “Wedding”*¹²²

19. *Senior PLO Official: Killing Israelis is not “terror”; it’s not “criminal” – it’s “legitimate”*¹²³

20. *PA TV Quiz Denies Israel’s Existence: Regions in Israel are “Palestinian”*¹²⁴

¹²⁰ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q6Jx45B573U>

¹²¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bDZ-mJV-OXA>

¹²² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=URheuyc77Uw>

¹²³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-6DmDOeDO88>

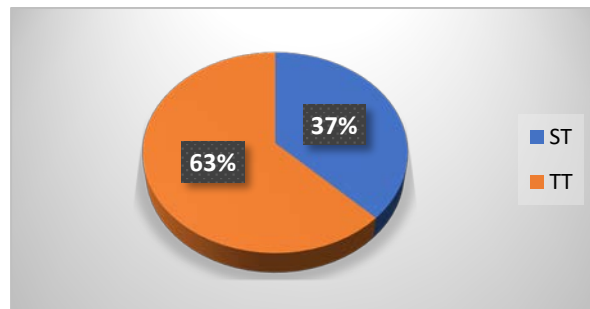
¹²⁴ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=evHR_4tRsZE

5.4.2 CBSA and SBSA of PMW's Speeches/Reports

PMW's speech/report subtitles (video clips 1–8) are 26% longer than their ST utterances, as illustrated in their CBSA (Figure 33).

Figure 33

CBSA of PMW's Speeches/Reports

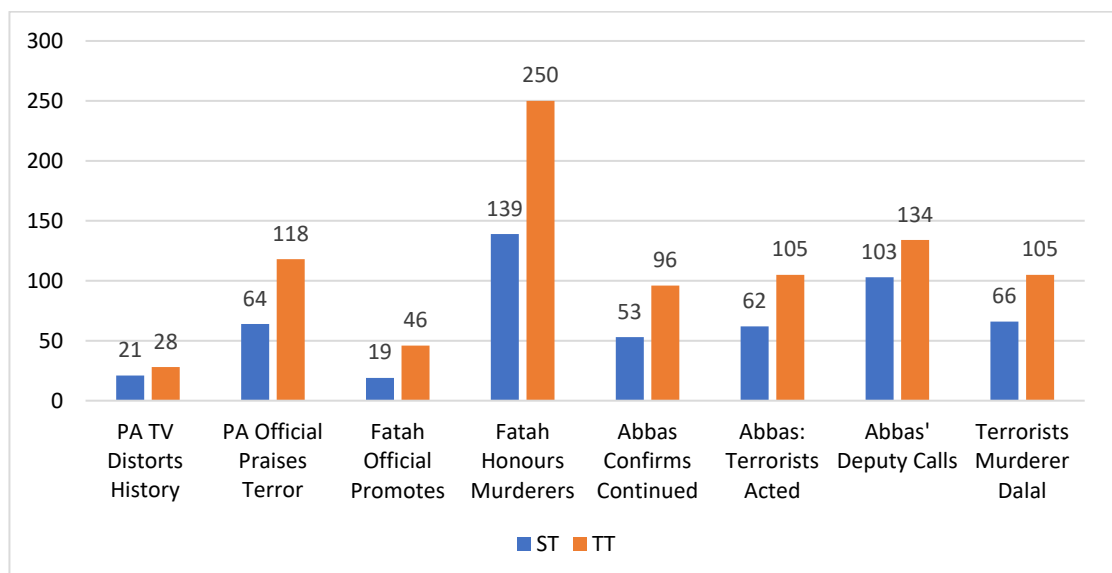


This shows 37% for STs versus 63% for TT subtitles

As similarly illustrated in the detailed CBSA (Figure 34), the TT of all video clips is longer than the ST. This lengthiness could be attributed to the nature of the discourse formality and delivery pace of this particular subgenre.

Figure 34

Detailed CBSA of PMW's Speeches/Reports



This shows the difference in length between ST and TT subtitles of PMW's Speeches/Reports

In this case, technical constraints are unlikely to present the translator of the ST utterance with the need to carry out any serious reduction. It is also the crucial role of the political media's sensitivity, and the significance of transferring its content with the highest degree of accuracy and integrity that might explain why the strategies of transfer, paraphrase, and expansion are used more than reduction strategies, and which probably justifies the lengthiness. As illustrated in the speech SBSA (Table 22), transfer (38%) is identified at the top of the adopted strategies, followed by imitation (21%), paraphrase (16%), and expansion (15%). Condensation (5%) unconventionally comes in fifth place, followed by dislocation (3%), decimation (2%), deletion (0%), and resignation (0%).

Table 22

SBSA of PMW's Speeches/Reports: 1–8 Video Clips, 85 Frames

Subtitling Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
Expansion	29	15%
Paraphrase	32	16%
Transfer	75	38%
Imitation	41	21%
Transcription	0	0%
Dislocation	5	3%
Condensation	10	5%
Decimation	3	2%
Deletion	0	0%
Resignation	0	0%

However, one cannot turn a blind eye to the choice of some strategies, which cast doubt on the actual motives behind certain patterns of manipulation. Several examples, extracted from the video clips (1–8), will be discussed to explore whether the subtitling strategies have been chosen for merely technical or, more critically, ideological reasons. First, the following examples will be dedicated to discussing the strategies that seem to be adopted for the sake of technicality.

Table 23*Technical Manipulation of PMW's Speeches/Reports*

Video Clip/Frame/Time	ST	TT	Strategies
2/8 00:29–00:32	هي الرمز صراحة لنساء فلسطين التي ناضلن.	Ramallah and El-Bireh Governor Laila Ghannam. She is truly a symbol for Palestinian women who have struggled.	Expansion and transfer
5/1 00:07–00:14	قامت مؤخرا باقتطاع جزء كبير من أموالنا التي تجيبها...	PA Chairman Mahmoud Abbas. [Israel] has recently begun to deduct a large part of our money that it collects...	Expansion and transfer
7/12 00:53–00:57	وإحنا بكل يوم في أمام الهجمة الأمريكية الصهيونية علينا	Every day [we face] the American Zionist attack against us	Condensation and paraphrase

In the first example (2/8, 00:29–00:32, Screenshot 21), the utterance frame lasted four seconds. In addition to its political nature, the thirty-three-character-short ST utterance may have been the reason why PMW's subtitler chose to transfer the ST utterance literally, without giving anything away. The TT subtitle was accurately synchronised, conventionally containing sixty-two characters. The extension of the TT is the result of using the transfer strategy, which added some linguistic elements essential to the formality of the English grammatical structure. For instance, the sentence “هي الرمز صراحة”، containing three elements with twelve characters in the ST utterance, is rendered as “She is truly a symbol”, containing five elements with seventeen characters in the TT subtitle. It is also a result of adding the headline

“Ramallah and El-Bireh Governor Laila Ghannam” in a smaller font above the main subtitle to identify who appears on the screen.

Figure 35

Screenshot 21



A mother of imprisoned sons in Israel boasted by Palestine TV, 2019 Oct 26

In the second example (5/1, 00:07–00:14, Screenshot 22), the utterance frame lasted eight seconds, due to the slow pace of the speaker’s speech. PMW’s subtitler, therefore, chose to transfer the ST utterance fully, along with the use of the expansion strategy, twice, to remove ambiguity. First, they added the headline “PA Chairman Mahmoud Abbas” in a smaller font above the main subtitle to identify who the speaker is. Second, to produce a semantically self-contained subtitle, they compensated the absence of the verb’s doer (subject) in the ST by adding the unuttered word “Israel”, the lack of which might have created confusion as to who the speaker is referring to. In total, as a result, the TT subtitle was unconventionally produced containing ninety characters. Although using both strategies resulted in producing a forty-five-

characters-longer TT than the ST, the TT subtitle was adequately synchronised with its utterance due to the time potentiality of this frame.

Figure 36

Screenshot 22



Abbas criticises Israel's financial deductions, 2019 May 01

In the third example (7/12, 00:53 00:57, Screenshot 23), the utterance frame lasted five seconds. Although the ST utterance contains only forty-six characters, PMW's subtitler used condensation and paraphrase strategies to produce a subtitle as reduced as possible, hence, the TT subtitle was synchronised accurately. With condensation, they omitted the ST conjunction “و” (and) uttered at the beginning of the utterance frame. With paraphrase, they altered the ST phrase “إحنا بكل يوم في أمام” (we are every day in front of) with the more stylistically acceptable TT alternative “Every day [we face]”. Technically, these strategies can be seen to be fruitful as they helped the subtitler save nine spaces and keep the TT subtitle as conventional as possible, containing only forty-nine characters in total. (The expanded headline “Jamal

Muhaisen Fatah Central Committee Member” does not count with this subtitle because it was added from the very beginning of the video clip.)

Figure 37

Screenshot 23



Muhaisen reminds Palestinians of Intifadas, 2019 Nov 24

Having interpreted some strategy choices from a technical viewpoint, other choices seem to be hardly interpretable except in the light of further ideological considerations, as demonstrated in the following examples.

Table 24

Ideological Manipulation of PMW’s Speeches/Reports

Video Clip/Frame/Time	ST	TT	Strategies
1/3 00:19–00:22	واستخدمه الثوار الفلسطينيين للاختباء أيام	The Palestinian rebels used it as a hideout during their war against the Romans...	Cryptic condensation, paraphrase and expansion

4/19 00:26–00:28	فلسطين من بحرها لنهرها	Palestine, from the [Mediterranean] Sea to the [Jordan] River (i.e., all of Israel)...	Cryptic paraphrase and expansion.
8/5 00:20–00:23	في عمليات باسلة، في الخالصة وبيسان	with bold operations (i.e., terror attacks) in Kiryat Shmona, Beit Shean,	Cryptic expansion and paraphrase.

In the first example (1/3, 00:19–00:22, Screenshot 24), the utterance frame lasted for four seconds. The subtitling challenge lies in the fact that the ST ends in an incomplete utterance that might need the use of the expansion strategy to produce a semantically self-contained TT subtitle. During the whole video clip, the reporter talks about an ancient cave used in different ages, first built by the Greeks and later used as a refuge by the Palestinian revolutionaries. But the information about from whom the revolutionaries were hiding and whom they were fighting is missing because the last part of the video clip is suddenly, and questionably, cut.

In what seems technically necessitated, PMW's subtitler added the unuttered complement "their war against the Romans", which contributed to producing a sixty-seven-character TT subtitle: thirty-one characters longer than the ST utterance. Although such a length is still compatible with subtitling conventions, the peculiar linkage between the Palestinian revolutionaries and the Romans cannot be without the possibility of an intentional distortion of the PA TV under the pretext of technicality. The subtitler also paraphrased the ST word "ثوار", literally meaning "revolutionaries", into "rebels". The choice can be justified technically: it contains only six characters compared to the fifteen characters of the literal choice. Ideologically, however, every choice can have its own textual and contextual connotation; "while rebellions are generally wrong, revolutions are always right" ("The New York Times", 1861). All these various choices can be linked together in a broader framework of interpretation to disclose PMW's objectives behind producing such video clips. Even the

condensation of the ST utterance “و” (and) can be interpreted more critically to allow more time and space for interventions.

Figure 38

Screenshot 24



PA TV reports on some archaeological site, 2015 Feb 24

In the second example (4/19, 00:26–00:28, Screenshot 25), the utterance frame lasted only three seconds. The ST utterance may not require any sort of manipulation because it seems linguistically sound and intelligible, containing only nineteen characters. Hence, even a transfer choice would not be technically problematic. Yet, PMW’s subtitler cryptically chose the paraphrase strategy to alter the ST expression “فلسطين من بحرها لنهرها” (Palestine, from its sea to its river) with the longer TT expression “Palestine, from the [Mediterranean] Sea to the [Jordan] River”. The choice is unlikely to be technically justifiable, as the paraphrase choice resulted in adding an extra twenty-three characters.

In further negligence of the technical constraints, the subtitler adopted the expansion strategy by ambiguously adding the expression “(i.e., all of Israel)”, which can be considered an ideological (rather than technical) manipulation, to complete the ST narrative. The unnecessary adoption of all these strategies resulted in producing a seventy-two-characters-long TT subtitle, which is, surprisingly, fifty-three characters longer than the ST utterance. The next chapter will be dedicated to explaining such

cryptic choices more realistically and linking them to other levels of manipulation: paratext and context.

Figure 39

Screenshot 25



Al-Masri honours some Palestinian figures in Bethlehem, 2019 May 16

In the third example (8/5, 00:20–00:22, Screenshot 26), similarly to the previous, the utterance frame lasted for three seconds. Although the ST utterance per se is short, containing only twenty-nine characters, PMW’s subtitler refrains from transferring an identical expression in the TT. They chose to expand the subtitle using “(i.e., terror attack)”, which, critically, seems to be intentionally exploited to ideologically manipulate the utterance “bold operations” boasted in the ST. They also added a small headline to highlight the media source of the narrator, which is, technically, probably unnecessary because it overwhelms the screen.

Likewise, using paraphrase can also be critically evaluated. It can be exploited ideologically to suppress a given linguistic usage essential to the ST by interjecting the TT with a more suitable substitution for its audience culture, regardless of its lengthiness. Refraining, or restrained, from using the economic strategy of imitation, PMW’s subtitler chose to replace the Palestinian names of places uttered in the ST with different, Israeli ones: “الخالصة” and “بيسان” imitated as “Al-Khalisa” and “Beisan”

with “Kiryat Shmona” and “Beit Shean”. This resulted in adding nine characters in the TT subtitle. In total, the use of all these strategies resulted in producing a thirty-five-character-longer TT subtitle than the ST utterance.

Figure 40

Screenshot 26



Terrorist murderer Dalal Mughrabi represents "Palestinian heroism," says official PA TV narrator

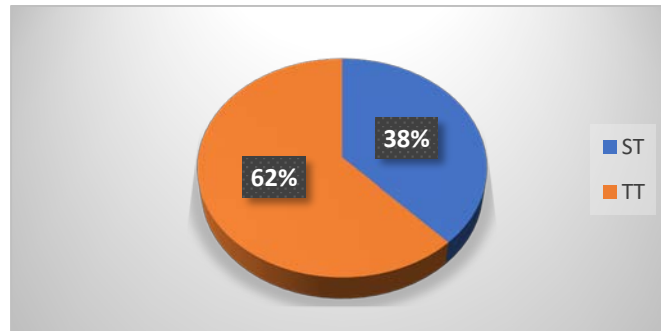
PA TV praises military operations against Israel, 2018 March 09

5.4.2 CBSAs and SBSAs of PMW's Speeches/Reports and Interviews

Speech/report and interview subtitles (video clips 9–11) are 24% longer than their ST utterances, as illustrated in their CBSA (Figure 41).

Figure 41

CBSA of PMW's Speeches/Reports and Interviews

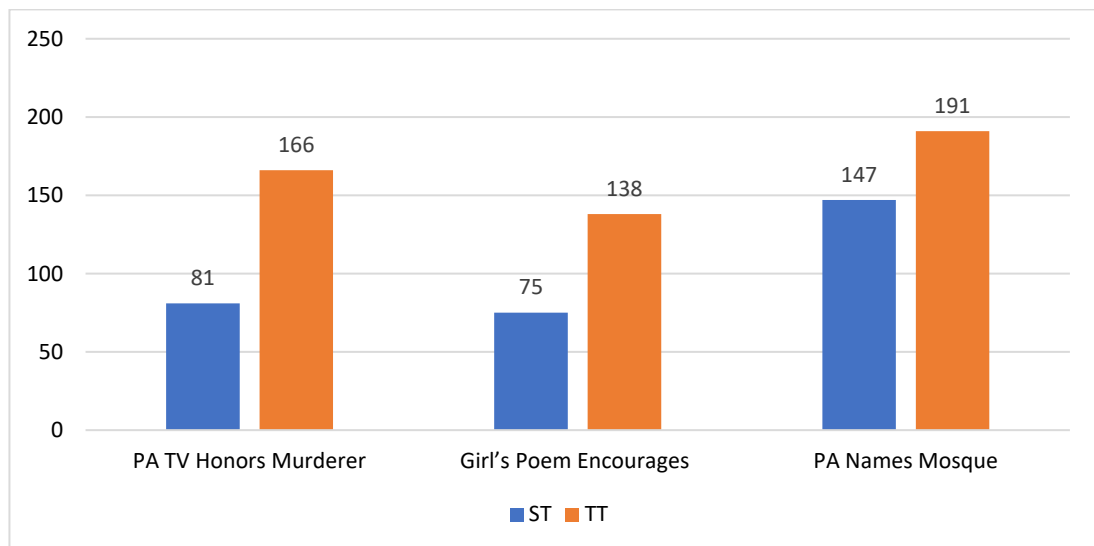


This shows 38% for STs versus 62% for TT subtitles

Even the detailed CBSA (Figure 42) shows that the TTs of all video clips in this subgenre are considerably longer than their STs.

Figure 42

Detailed CBSA of PMW's Speeches/Reports and Interviews



This shows the difference in length between ST and TT subtitles of PMW's Speech/Report and interviews

Expectedly, this finding shows a similar percentage to that of speech/report subtitles (i.e., 26% shown in Figure 33) because video clips 9–11 consist of two different subgenres: one of speeches/reports and the other of interviews. While the former is, most of the time, standardised and prepared in advance, the latter is usually full of redundancies due to the spontaneous nature of the utterances. Thus, when interviews take place, the technical constraints become more influential, hence the inevitable need for a textual reduction.

Generally, however, the dialogues are delivered at a relatively moderate pace, probably due to their informative and expository content and non-competitive nature. This may explain the priority given to transfer and expansion strategies over reductive strategies, including paraphrase. On the one hand, as illustrated in the SBSA (Table 25), transfer (33%) is identified at the top of the adopted strategies, followed by imitation (23%) and expansion (17%). On the other hand, condensation (11%) is identified at the top of the less-chosen strategies, followed by paraphrase (9%), dislocation (3%), decimation (2%), and deletion (2%).

Table 25

SBSA of PMW's Speeches/Reports and Interviews: 9–11 Video Clips, 46 Frames

Subtitling Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
Expansion	20	17%
Paraphrase	11	9%
Transfer	39	33%
Imitation	27	23%
Transcription	0	0%
Dislocation	3	3%
Condensation	13	11%
Decimation	2	2%
Deletion	2	2%
Resignation	0	0%

The following examples, extracted from the video clips (9–11), will be discussed to see whether the subtitling strategies are merely technically chosen or ideologically driven. The first examples will be dedicated to discussing those that seem to be adopted for the sake of technicality.

Table 26

Technical Manipulation of PMW's Speeches/Reports and Interviews

Video Clip/Frame/Time	ST	TT	Strategies
9/11 00:39–00:42	وأشكرهم على الدعم المتواصل إلنا كالأخوات دلال داخل الجامعات	and thank them for the ongoing support for us, the sisters of Dalal in the universities,	Condensation and transfer
10/2 00:12–00:14	أعلنها شيخ فلسطين:	The Elder of Palestine (i.e., Yasser Arafat) declared: ...	Expansion and paraphrase
11/9 00:34–00:38	من أجل، <u>يعني</u> ، التأكيد على <u>استمرار</u> ، استمرار الشعب الفلسطيني	in order to emphasise the continuation of the Palestinian people.	Condensation, dislocation and transfer
11/18 01:03–01:06	شارع الشهيد عمر أبو ليلي	Sign: “Martyr Omar Abu Laila Street”	Expansion, dislocation and transfer

In the first example (9/11, 00:39–00:42, Screenshot 27), the utterance frame lasted for four seconds. PMW's subtitler chose to transfer the ST utterance fully in an adequately synchronised TT subtitle because it is fragmented in a semantically independent structure, hence the lengthiness of the TT. The adoption of this strategy resulted in producing a seventy-three-characters-long TT subtitle: twenty-four characters longer than the ST utterance. Unlike their general tendency of expanding the names of people and places, PMW's subtitler refrained from expanding the name “Dalal”, probably because it is expanded more than once in preceding subtitles. The

imitation choice technically saved more space and time for the rest of the utterance to be maintained. For the same purpose, the subtitler condensed the redundant element “ك” (being), which likewise saved five spaces on the screen. The subtitler also used the dislocation strategy by adding a small-font headline as an equivalent for the verbal visuals appearing on the PA TV screen that identify the speaker. However, it is unlikely that these thirty-four characters added to the screen affect the subtitling readability because they exist from the beginning of the interview.

Figure 43

Screenshot 27



Sisters of Dalal Member honours Dalal Mughrabi, 2019 June 05

In the second example (10/2, 00:12–00:14, Screenshot 28), the utterance frame lasted three seconds. During this short period, the young girl, seen below, implicitly mentions the former PA Chairman Arafat in her poetry by referring to him as “شيخ فلسطين” (Sheikh of Palestine) or, as subtitled, “the Elder of Palestine”. For identifying the ambiguous character, PMW’s subtitler chose to expand the TT subtitle with the explicit reference “(i.e., Yasser Arafat)” between brackets. As a result, the subtitler added nineteen characters but produced an adequately synchronised subtitle containing only forty-eight characters in total. Another ambiguity derives from the girl’s use of the feminine singular attached pronoun “ها” (it) in “أعلنها” (declared it) referring to Arafat’s declaration in 2000. Although she cites the declaration in her

following utterance, she uses “it” in advance to adhere to her poetry rhyme, on the one hand, and to prepare the audience for what is coming, on the other. Due to the fragmented nature of subtitling, literal preservation of the ambiguous “it” would probably disrupt viewers because it sounds like referring to something already mentioned. Thus, for producing a semantically clearer subtitle, PMW’s subtitler chose to paraphrase the ST pronoun “it” by altering with the TT punctuation marks “: ...” to adequately prepare the viewers for the subtitling of Arafat’s declaration cited in the following utterance frame.

Figure 44

Screenshot 28



A little girl sings a poem in memory of the Intifada on PA TV, 2019 May 29

In the third example (11/9, 00:34–00:38, Screenshot 29), the utterance frame lasted five seconds. PMW’s subtitler used the condensation strategy to remove the ST redundancy; the padding word “يعني” (I mean) and the repeated word “استمرار” (continuation) were omitted since they were uttered spontaneously. Although the TT subtitle is six characters longer than the ST utterance, this reductive manipulation can nevertheless be technically justified, because it produced an adequately synchronised TT subtitle that conventionally contains only fifty-six characters in total. Furthermore, to identify the speaker, the subtitler chose to dislocate the ST verbal headline above the main subtitle, which added sixty-three characters. In addition to the main subtitle

characters, this choice seems disturbing for the viewers because it overwhelmed the screen with a total of a hundred and nineteen characters. Yet, the informative nature of the political genre may entail that the speakers identified in the ST should be likewise identified in the TT, no matter how overwhelmed the screen is. One may also argue that the translated headline may not remarkably affect the viewing because it is dislocated even before the present subtitle appears.

Figure 45

Screenshot 29



PA names mosque, square, and street after murderer of 2

Sahwil calls upon Palestinians to carry on defying occupation, 2019 May 15

In the fourth example (11/18, 01:03–01:05, Screenshot 30), the verbal sign frame lasted three seconds, containing no utterance apart from the information written on the white street sign that appears on the screen. The ST video talks about naming mosques, squares, and streets after the Palestinian martyr's name "Omar Abu Laila". To correspond with this narrative, PMW's subtitler chose to use the dislocation strategy to render, on the screen, the sign's relevant information in a conventional thirty-one-characters-long TT subtitle, even though it is eleven characters longer than the ST wording. The information was literally transferred except for the subtle

expansion “sign:”, which was probably added for the sake of obtaining kinetic synchrony between the sign and the subtitle.

Figure 46

Screenshot 30



PA names mosque, square, and street after murderer of 2

PA names places after their executed resistance figures, 2019 May 15

The following examples demonstrate strategy choices that can be more critically interpreted as having ideological intentions:

Table 27

Ideological Manipulation of PMW’s Speeches/Reports and Interviews

Video Clip/Frame/Time	ST	TT	Strategies
9/1 00:07–00:09	لما نتحدث عن دلال المغربية، <u>أنا</u> <u>شخصيا</u>	When we talk about Dalal Mughrabi (i.e., led murder of 37, 12 of them children)	Cryptic decimation and expansion
10/1 00:08–00:11	بانتفاضة الـ2000 كانوا القادة مجتمعين	In the Intifada of 2000 (i.e., PA terror campaign 2000-2005), the leaders were united.	Transfer, cryptic imitation and expansion

11/3 00:13 – 00:15	التي ارتقى فيها الشهيد عمر أبو ليلى	where Martyr Omar Abu Laila (i.e., terrorist, murdered 2) ascended [to Heaven],	Cryptic transfer and expansion
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In the first example (9/1, 00:07–00:09, Screenshot 31), the utterance frame lasted for three seconds. PMW’s subtitler decimated an important part of the host’s utterance “أنا شخصياً” (I personally) by which she expresses her own opinion. Ostensibly, this semantic reduction seems, at first glance, to be a technical manipulation, as it may have helped to produce a synchronised subtitle by saving eleven characters on the screen. Viewed more critically, however, it can be deemed ideological in that it may have affected the original message as well as allowed more space and time for other ambiguous choices. First, the subtitler added a small-font headline (not in the ST) identifying the host’s media affiliation: PA TV. Technically, this may not affect the text’s readability because it is added from the beginning of the video clip. However, with the aforementioned decimation, such addition may imply that everything the host states—including the present utterance—necessarily represents the propaganda of PA TV in general, not only that of her own. Second, the subtitler added the ideological expansion “(i.e., led murder of 37, 12 of them children)”, which may suppress Dalal Mughrabi’s ST narrative that glorifies her. Technically unnecessary, this pattern of expansion, in particular, added thirty-seven

characters, which, in total, resulted in a sixty-four-characters-long TT subtitle, thirty-three characters longer than the ST utterance.

Figure 47

Screenshot 31



PA TV hosts honour the suicide bomber Dalal Mughrabi, 2019 June 05

In the second example (10/1, 00:08–00:11, Screenshot 32), the utterance frame lasted for four seconds. For some reason, PMW’s subtitler maintained the foreignness of the ST term “انتفاضة” (the Palestinian uprising 2000–2005) by imitating it in the TT subtitle as “intifada”. For avoiding ambiguity, the subtitler expanded the term with the description “(i.e., PA terror campaign 2000–2005)”. At first glance, these patterns of manipulation seem to be technical, though they resulted in the production of a forty-eight-characters-longer TT subtitle than the ST utterance. With more scrutiny, however, the imitation choice can be considered ideological because it offered the potential for injecting the TT, through expansion, with an element that distorts the ST narrative. The injection of the negative word “terror” in the expansion is unlikely to be a technical choice; more likely, it is an ideological exploitation of a technical

subtitling strategy used to reposition the intifada narrative into the context of extremism.

Figure 48

Screenshot: 32



A little girl sings a poem in memory of the Intifada on PA TV, 2019 May 29

In the third example (11/3, 00:13–00:15, Screenshot 33), the utterance frame lasted for three seconds. Despite the shortness of this period and the fast pace of utterance, PMW’s subtitler chose to use the extensive strategies of transfer and expansion. With transfer, they rendered the ST utterance fully in the TT subtitle, preserving its religious references of “Martyr” and “ascended”. Paraphrasing this usage into a shorter alternative like “died”, for instance, could have been more subtitling-friendly. With expansion, however, they further emphasised the religious connotation of the verb “ascended” by adding, between square brackets, “[to heaven]”, which was missing from the newsreader’s intended expression “ارتقى إلى الجنة” (ascended to heaven).

Adopting these choices can be technically justified: they resulted in producing a clearer TT subtitle that, although thirty-nine characters longer than the ST, conventionally contains only sixty-eight characters in total. Nevertheless, the adoption of these choices along with the technically unnecessary expansion “(i.e., terrorist, murdered 2)” does not rule out the possibility of ideological manipulation also being

used to embed an intentional connection between the Palestinian narratives of resistance and the narrative of terrorism and religious war. Even on its own, the expansion choice seems to be adopted ideologically to expose Abu Laila's martyrdom and suppress the honorary image in which he has been depicted.

Figure 49

Screenshot 33



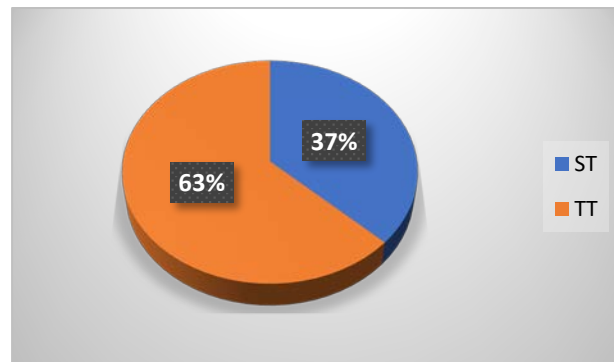
Palestine TV mourns a fighter executed by Israel, 2019 May 15

5.4.3 CBSAs and SBSAs of PMW's Interviews

PMW's interview subtitles (video clips 12–20) are 26% longer than their ST utterances, as illustrated in their CBSA (Figure 50).

Figure 50

CBSA of PMW's Interviews

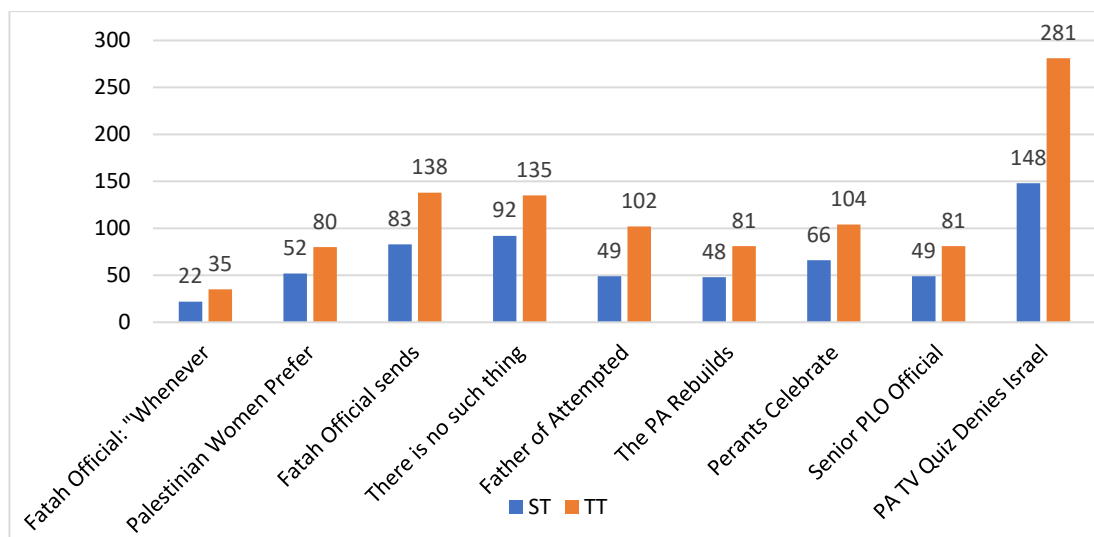


This shows 37% for STs versus 63% for TT subtitles

Similarly, the detailed CBSA (Figure 51) shows that, in all video clips, the TTs are considerably longer than their STs.

Figure 51

Detailed CBSA of PMW's Interviews



This shows the difference in length between ST and TT subtitles of PMW's interviews

This finding is unanticipated because of the relatively fast pace of this subgenre and the spontaneity of its utterances, being full of redundancies. Conventionally, reducing such utterances would be an inevitable necessity to tackle the technical constraints facing the subtitler.

As illustrated in the interview SBSA (Table 28), however, strategies of transfer and expansion are interestingly adopted more frequently than those of reduction. Transfer (29%) is identified at the top of the used strategies, followed by expansion (22%), imitation (21%), and paraphrase (16%). Unconventionally, condensation (8%) is identified at the top of the less-used strategies, followed by dislocation (2%), decimation (1%), deletion (1%), and resignation (1%).

Table 28

SBSA of PMW's Interviews: 12–20 Video Clips, 98 Frames

Subtitling Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
Expansion	63	22%
Paraphrase	45	16%
Transfer	85	29%
Imitation	60	21%
Transcription	0	0%
Dislocation	7	2%
Condensation	22	8%
Decimation	3	1%
Deletion	2	1%
Resignation	2	1%

For interpreting the choice of these strategies more lucidly, the following examples, extracted from the video clips (12–20), will be discussed to see whether the strategy choice is merely technical or, more critically, ideological. The first examples will be dedicated to discussing the subtitler choices that seem to be adopted for the sake of technicality.

Table 29*Technical Manipulation of PMW's Interviews*

Video Clip/Frame/Time	ST	TT	Strategies
12/2 00:08–00:08	كيف	(TV host): How?	Transfer and Expansion
13/6 00:20–00:23	... يعنى بالنسبة إليها أفضل	For [the woman], they [the wounded] are preferable	Condensation, expansion, and paraphrase
15/7 00:30–00:34	بس الفلسطينيين هناك لازم يأكدوا لكل أنه هاي المنطقة فلسطينية	but the Palestinians there need to emphasise to everyone that this area is Palestinian ...	Transfer

In the first example (12/2, 00:08–00:08, Screenshot 34), the utterance frame lasted for only one second, which is the ideal minimum period of appearance for subtitles. Yet, dealing with this frame was probably not a big challenge because the ST utterance per se is only one word “كيف؟” (how?) uttered by the TV host, and, therefore, PMW’s subtitler chose to transfer it. For reasons of kinetic synchrony, the subtitler could have ignored the host’s question because it does not match the moving character on the screen. However, it sounded important because the guest answered it immediately. For this importance, perhaps, the subtitler chose to produce a subtitle whose duration corresponds to the utterance of the host who was heard but not shown on the screen; hence, isochrony was achieved. Additionally, to avoid any possibility of confusing whom the subtitle belongs to, the subtitler added, between round brackets, the expansion “(TV host):”. Although this choice resulted in a ten-characters-longer

TT subtitle than the ST utterance, avoiding ambiguity is likely a matter of necessity and, therefore, the manipulation is technically justified.

Figure 52

Screenshot 34



Zaki is interviewed by PA TV, 2019 Oct 15

In the second example (13/6, 00:20–00:23, Screenshot 35), the utterance frame lasted for three seconds. The ST utterance “بالنسبة إليهم أفضل” (for them it is better) is ambiguous and, therefore, PMW’s subtitler used the paraphrase strategy to provide a more intelligible, coherent alternative. They altered the ST plural attached pronoun “هم” (them) in “إليهم” (for them) with the clearer, though longer, TT expression “[the women]” showing exactly whom the PA TV host is talking about. The subtitler also used the expansion strategy by adding the identifying TT expression “they [the wounded]”, showing whom the Palestinian women prefer. The adoption of these two strategies successfully resulted in producing a semantically clear and self-contained subtitle. They produced a twenty-one-characters-longer TT subtitle than the ST utterance, yet, the subtitle is still conventional as it contains forty-three characters in total. This might be due to the adoption of the condensation strategy, which omitted

the ST padding element “يعني” (I mean) and some other inaudible utterances, saving at least seven characters on the screen.

Figure 53

Screenshot 35



PA TV host emphasises the tendency of Palestinian women to marry wounded fighters, 2019 Sep 18

In the third example (15/7, 00:30–00:35, Screenshot 36), the utterance frame lasted for six seconds, which is the ideal maximum period of appearance for subtitles. The host’s utterance is relatively slow, devoid of any redundancies, and hence, technical constraints seem to have little impact on this subtitling. This is probably why PMW’s subtitler chose to render the ST utterance literally in the TT subtitle without giving anything away. As mentioned above, due to the extensive nature of transferring linguistic structures between Arabic and English, the adoption of the transfer strategy resulted in producing a seventy-four-characters-long TT subtitle which is twenty-two characters longer than the ST utterance. This includes the three dots used to indicate

the continuity of the host's speech. The expansive period of the utterance frame was enough for the synchronisation to take place adequately.

Figure 54

Screenshot 36



A Palestinian boy denies Israel on PA TV, 2019 May 16

The following examples demonstrate strategy choices that can be more critically interpreted as having ideological intentions:

Table 30

Ideological Manipulation of PMW's Interviews

Video Clip/Frame/Time	ST	TT	Strategies
14/6 00:25–00:28	(No utterance)	Zaki with poster of murderer Abu Laila.	Dislocation and cryptic expansion
19/1 00:05–00:10	نحن نرفض هذه القوانين، سنبقى إلى جانب عوائل	We reject these laws (i.e., to deduct terrorist salaries from PA tax money) ... We continue to stand by the families	Cryptic expansion

20/3 00:17–00:18	جنوب فلسطين	Southern Palestine. (i.e., the Negev is in southern Israel)	Transfer and cryptic expansion
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In the first example (14/6, 00:25–00:28, Screenshot 37), the scene frame lasted for four seconds with no utterance at all. It shows Zaki, a member of the Fatah Central Committee, holding a poster for Abu Laila (who was executed by Israel) and standing in the middle of his family during the rebuilding of their house. With adequate synchronisation, PMW’s subtitler dislocated the scene’s visuals into an unconventional left-aligned subtitle, describing Zaki and Abu Laila’s picture circled in red.

At first glance, this pattern of manipulation seems to be technically undertaken: the red circle attracts the viewers’ attention to the most important spot of the scene, which is dislocated, subtitled, and positioned so that it does not cover that spot. Critically, however, this manipulation also seems to have been ideologically exploited. The subtitler added the word “murderer”, apparently contesting the ST image that praises Abu Laila as a heroic martyr. Moreover, the link between Zaki and Abu Laila’s picture and this suspicious textual manipulation may imply an accusation: the Fatah Central Committee supports violence. As generally observed throughout PMW’s products, such a choice does not occur in a vacuum. Rather, it is related directly or

otherwise to choices taken at wider levels, which altogether can have associations and consequences in reality.

Figure 55

Screenshot 37



Fatah official sends "greetings" to family of murderer Omar Abu Laila, "may Allah reward them"

Zaki visits the family of the executed Omar Abu Laila, 2019 July 01

In the second example (19/1, 00:05–00:10, Screenshot 38), the utterance frame lasted for six seconds, which probably allowed PMW's subtitler to more freely choose, besides transfer, the expansion strategy, to add the descriptive clause "(i.e., to deduct terrorist salaries from PA tax money)". This choice resulted in producing an unconventional ninety-four-characters-long TT subtitle: thirty-two characters longer than the ST utterance. Ostensibly, it seems to be technically necessitated to explain what is meant by the word "laws". What does not seem to be technical, however, is the injection of the word "terrorist" into the expansion; the choice appears to have been

ideologically exploited to manipulate the meaning of these “laws”, which originally referred to the salaries given to the families of captives, martyrs, and the wounded.

Figure 56

Screenshot 38



Senior PLO official: Killing Israelis is not "terror"; it's not "criminal"- it's "legitimate"

Karake condemns Israel's deduction from PA money, 2018 Sep 02

Furthermore, PMW’s subtitler dislocated the ST headline identifying the guest and added it in a smaller-font headline above the main subtitle. But even this choice, as shown in the following table, did not remain unscathed from ambiguous manipulation.

Table 31

PMW's Subtitling of PA TV's Headline

ST Headline	TT Headline	Strategies
عيسى قراقع – وزير هيئة شؤون الأسرى والمحررين.	Director of PLO Commission of Prisoners' Affairs Issa Karake.	Cryptic paraphrase and decimation

The subtitler paraphrased the ST word “وزير” (Minister) into “Director”. Technically, there is no difference in terms of length as both translations contain eight characters. They also paraphrase the ST word “الأسرى” (captives) into “prisoners”. In this case, the TT translation is one character longer than the literal translation. Realistically, there could be an ideological/political agenda behind the selection of

these translations. Interestingly, as well, the subtitler decimated the word “المحررين” (the liberated) that seems to be important in the ST. What makes a subtitler produce such a long, unconventional subtitle should not prevent them from transferring that essential word unless it implies what clashes with their individual or institutional ideology.

In the third example (20/3, 00:17–00:18, Screenshot 39), the utterance frame lasted two seconds. Despite the spatial and temporal limitation of this frame, the subtitler chose to expand the TT subtitle by adding the explanation “(i.e., the Negev is in southern Israel)” in yellow. This choice seems to be technically unjustified because the ST utterance is clear and does not need further clarification; therefore, the production of a thirty-three-characters-longer TT subtitle than the ST utterance can be seen as unnecessary. In turn, this choice can more realistically be counted as an ideological manipulation to contest the narrative of the ST: the Negev is in Palestine. Even the choice of using yellow could accordingly be subject to the same critical interpretation.

Figure 57

Screenshot 39



PA TV host quizzes people in a Ramadan program, 2018 July 18

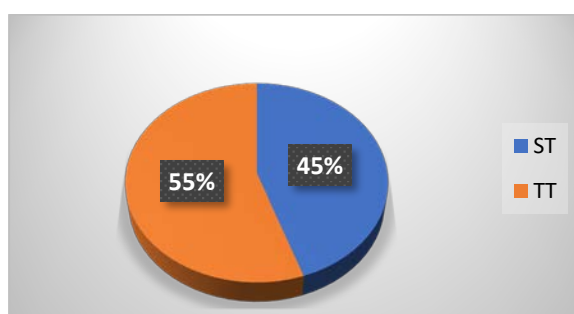
5.5 CBSAs and SBSAs of MEMRI

5.5.1 Combined CBSA and SBSA of MEMRI

The TT subtitles, as illustrated in MEMRI's combined CBSA (Figure 58), are 10% longer than their ST utterances, which is, again, incongruent with other subtitling conventions.

Figure 58

Combined CBSA of MEMRI



This shows 45% for STs versus 55% for TT subtitles

Having further investigated this unconventional lengthiness, MEMRI's combined SBSA (Table 32), shows that transfer (37%) is identified at the top of the most adopted subtitling strategies. Interestingly, unlike in the results of MM and PMW's SBSAs, condensation (22%) is identified in second place. Paraphrase (20%) comes in third place, followed by expansion (11%), imitation (5%), deletion (3%), and decimation (1%).

Table 32

Combined SBSA of MEMRI: 20 Video Clips, 731 Frames

Subtitling Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
Expansion	208	11%
Paraphrase	370	20%
Transfer	684	37%
Imitation	92	5%

Transcription	0	0%
Dislocation	1	0%
Condensation	409	22%
Decimation	18	1%
Deletion	51	3%
Resignation	3	0%

The conventional percentage of condensation matches with professionals' recommendations in the field (e.g., Gottlieb, 2004, p. 87). Nevertheless, the reason behind producing long subtitles is most likely the dependence of MEMRI on the transfer, expansion, and paraphrase strategies, hence the 10% difference. As discussed above, adopting such strategies often entails adding certain linguistic structures in the TT subtitle (i.e., English) unused in the ST utterance (i.e., Arabic).

For the main objective of the study, further analysis and discussion substantiated by some examples will be provided for each of MEMRI's subgenres individually to investigate the considerations (technical or ideological) for which the subtitling strategies are adopted. On scrutinising their dialogues, MEMRI's 20 video clips can be categorised into the following three political subgenres:

Table 33

MEMRI's Video Clips

MEMRI's Video Clip Titles	Subgenre
1. <i>Libyan Leader Mu`ammar Al-Qadhafi: If the Americans or the West Enter Libya, They will be "Entering Hell and a Sea of Blood"</i> ¹²⁵	

¹²⁵ <https://www.memri.org/tv/libyan-leader-muammar-al-qadhafi-if-americans-or-west-enter-libya-they-will-be-entering-hell-and>

<p>2. <i>Qadhafi Loyalist Abdel Hadi Moussa: Libya Is Colonized and Must Be Liberated; The Arab Spring Suckled Its Ideology from Qadhafi's 1969 Revolution</i>¹²⁶</p> <p>3. <i>Lebanese TV Host Juomana Haddad on Racism in the Arab World: We Are Tenth, not Third, World; We're Wallowing in Our Own Backwardness</i>¹²⁷</p> <p>4. <i>Egyptian President Al-Sisi: People in Our Countries Should Not Expect the West to Welcome Them</i>¹²⁸</p>	Speeches
<p>5. <i>Qadhafi's Cousin Ahmed Qadhaf Al-Dam, A former Libyan Official: Iran has a right to Nuclear Weapons and so do we</i>¹²⁹</p> <p>6. <i>Jordanian MP Yahya Saud: Our Trade Unions Wouldn't Even Tolerate their Members Saying "Hello" to a Jew; Arabs Must Pressure their Governments to Stop Normalizing Relations with Israel</i>¹³⁰</p> <p>7. <i>Tunisian President Kais Saied: Trump Peace Plan Is the "Deal of Injustice"; Anybody Who Normalizes Relations with Israel Is Guilty of High Treason</i>¹³¹</p> <p>8. <i>Mother of Islamic Jihad Terrorist: I Take Great Pride in My Son's Heroic Achievement</i>¹³²</p>	Interviews

¹²⁶ <https://www.memri.org/tv/qadhafi-loyalist-hadi-moussa-libya-colonized-liberated-arab-spring-suckled-1969-revolution>

¹²⁷ <https://www.memri.org/tv/lebanese-host-joumana-haddad-arabs-racist-backward-culture-shameful-tenth-world>

¹²⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mAPfHeqKtC4>

¹²⁹ <https://www.memri.org/tv/former-libyan-official-ahmad-qadhaf-aldam-libya-exonerated-of-lockerbie>

¹³⁰ <https://www.memri.org/tv/jordanian-mp-yahya-saud-trade-unions-tolerate-saying-hello-to-jew-arabs-pressure-normalization-israel>

¹³¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SW-RY-Hnb2I>

¹³² https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XbDCjj_5S-g

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>9. <i>Lebanese Researcher Rafik Nasrallah: Arabs Should Stop Procreating So That We Become Extinct; We Are a Nation Unworthy of Being Alive</i>¹³³</p> <p>10. <i>Released Palestinian Terrorist Ahlam Tamimi, Who Is on FBI Most Wanted List: Being in Jordan Gives Me Strength Because No Extradition Agreement with U.S.</i>¹³⁴</p> <p>11. <i>Former Lebanese Minister: Lebanon Is a Silly Adolescent Country That Still Needs Foreign Guardianship</i>¹³⁵</p> <p>12. <i>Jordanian Journalist Yousef Alawnah: Israeli Prisons Are Like Institutes of Education; I Am Ashamed by the Comparison to the Arab World</i>¹³⁶</p> <p>13. <i>Jordanian Businessman Senator Talal Abu-Gazaleh: The Arab Spring Was the Region's "Dark Ages"</i>¹³⁷</p> <p>14. <i>Saudi Painter and Sculptor Diyaa Aziz Criticizes 9/11 Conspiracy Theories: The Arab World Got Itself in a Mess Because of Its Ignorance</i>¹³⁸</p> <p>15. <i>Released Hamas Terrorist Ahlam Tamimi Recounts Her Role in Terror Attacks in Jerusalem in the Early 2000s</i>¹³⁹</p> <p>16. <i>Former Egyptian FM Ahmed Aboul-Gheit: The Arab Spring Is the Arab Destruction.</i>¹⁴⁰</p> | |
|---|--|

¹³³ <https://www.memri.org/tv/lebanese-researcher-rafik-nasrallah-calls-arab-stop-procreating-extinct-20-years-unworthy-living-duped>

¹³⁴ <https://www.memri.org/tv/sbarro-pizzeria-terrorist-hamas-ahlam-tamimi-fbi-most-wanted-jordan-no-extradition-agreement-thankful>

¹³⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7F1sPYyIAdQ>

¹³⁶ <https://www.memri.org/tv/jordanian-journalist-alawnah-compares-israel-prison-to-arab-world>

¹³⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rRaCPm7ir9c>

¹³⁸ <https://www.memri.org/tv/saudi-artist-arab-world-conspiracy-theory>

¹³⁹ <https://www.memri.org/tv/released-hamas-terrorist-ahlam-tamimi-recounts-her-role-terror-attacks-jerusalem-early-2000s>

¹⁴⁰ <https://www.memri.org/tv/former-egyptian-fm-ahmed-aboul-gheit-arab-spring-arab-destruction>

17. <i>Egyptian Novelist Alaa Al-Aswany: Our Problem Is That We Do Not Oppose Autocracy as a Concept</i> ¹⁴¹	
18. <i>Lebanese Researcher Dr. Nayla Abi Nader Calls to Reexamine Curricula, Stop Educating to Backwardness</i> ¹⁴² 19. <i>Former ICC Member Dr. Hadi Shalouf: The Arab Peoples are not Ready for Democracy; We are Living in the Dark Ages</i> ¹⁴³ 20. <i>French-Moroccan Professor Youssef Chiheb: “Israel is Not an Enemy of Morocco”; “The Arab World has been Brainwashed with Anti-Zionist and Anti-Israel Rhetoric”</i> ¹⁴⁴	Debates

¹⁴¹ <https://www.memri.org/tv/egyptian-novelist-alaa-al-aswany-our-problem-we-do-not-oppose-autocracy-concept>

¹⁴² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UwofPeiiDX0>

¹⁴³ <https://www.memri.org/tv/former-icc-member-shalouf-arab-peoples-not-ready-democracy-dark-ages>

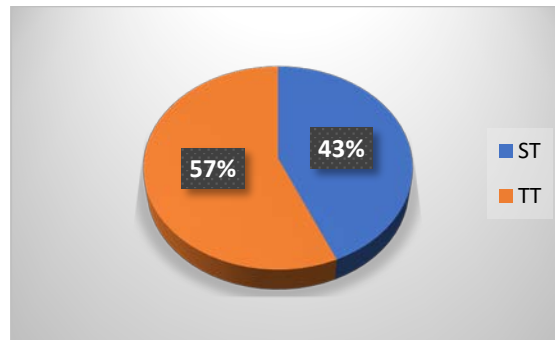
¹⁴⁴ <https://www.memri.org/tv/moroccan-academic-chiheb-israel-not-enemy-of-morocco>

5.5.2 CBSA and SBSA of MEMRI's Speeches

MEMRI's speech subtitles (video clips 1–4), as illustrated in their CBSA (Figure 59), are 14% longer than their ST utterances.

Figure 59

CBSA of MEMRI's Speeches

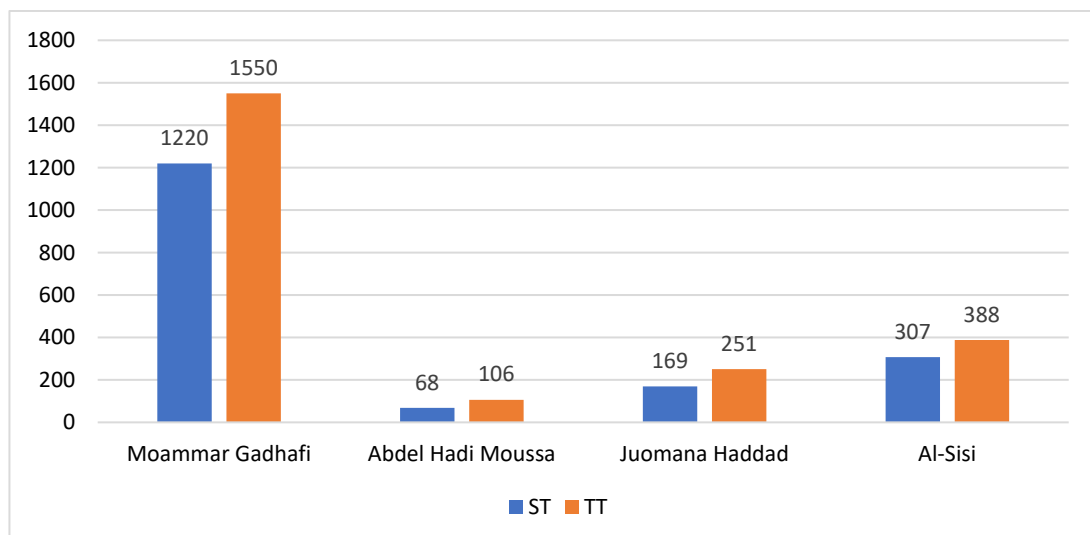


This shows 43% for STs versus 57% for TT subtitles

As also illustrated in the detailed CBSA (Figure 60), the TTs are longer in the four video clips, making MEMRI no different from the previously investigated MM and PMW in terms of subtitling conventionality.

Figure 60

Detailed CBSA of MEMRI's Speeches



This shows the difference in length between ST and TT subtitles of MEMRI's Speeches

The reason behind this unexpected lengthiness could be the sensitive nature of the political media products MEMRI is dealing with, such that the information revealed in the ST utterance is not easily relinquished. By virtue of the slow delivery and discourse formality of most of this subgenre’s dialogues, MEMRI’s subtitler tends to transfer and/or expand as much information as possible to the TT subtitle, which technically removes the ambiguity of fragmented subtitles and reduces the potentiality of carrying out any serious semantic reductions. As illustrated in the speech SBSA (Table 34), transfer (40%) is identified at the top of the strategies, followed by paraphrase (21%), condensation (20%), and expansion (10%). At the top of the less-adopted strategies comes imitation (5%), followed by deletion (3%) and decimation (1%).

Table 34

SBSA of MEMRI’s Speeches: 1–4 Video Clips, 238 Frames

Subtitling Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
Expansion	56	10%
Paraphrase	118	21%
Transfer	222	40%
Imitation	26	5%
Transcription	0	0%
Dislocation	0	0%
Condensation	112	20%
Decimation	5	1%
Deletion	15	3%
Resignation	1	0%

Technicality, however, is not always the excuse that justifies the strategy choice. Hence, several examples extracted from MEMRI’s video clips (1–4) will be discussed concerning the considerations for which manipulation, whether technical or

ideological, has been carried out. The first examples will be dedicated to discussing the subtitler's choices that seem to be adopted for technical considerations.

Table 35

Technical Manipulation of MEMRI's Speeches

Video Clip/Frame/Time	ST	TT	Strategies
1/114 08:31–08:34	هي اللي بتوقف الهجرة بالملايين عن أوروبا	It is Libya that stops the millions of immigrants from reaching Europe.	Expansion and transfer
2/6 00:41–00:45	هؤلاء الشباب لم يستفيدوا من ثورة الفاتح،	These young men did not benefit from (Qadhafi's 1969) Revolution,	Paraphrase
4/20 01:46–01:54	بتقفل حدودها <u>عشان هي</u> <u>قاعدة</u> تحمي مسار سنين طويلة <u>ووعي كبير شكلته</u> <u>جوه دولها!</u>	For closing their borders to protect the achievements of many long years?	Condensation, expansion, and deletion

In the first example (1/114, 08:31–08:34, Screenshot 40), the utterance frame lasted four seconds. The ST utterance is short and slow, and therefore, MEMRI's subtitler chose to transfer it in full in an adequately synchronised subtitle. At the beginning of the utterance frame, Qadhafi refers to his country, Libya, using the pronoun "it" because he mentions it elsewhere in his previous utterances. Maintaining the ST's use of "It stops" can cause ambiguity as to whom Qadhafi is exactly referring in this fragmented utterance frame. In addition to the inconvenience of "back-tracking to retrieve information" (Díaz-Cintas, 2012b, p. 277), this could be the reason why the subtitler chose to add the expansion "is Libya that" to the pronoun "it" so the ambiguity is removed. Although the TT subtitle was produced unconventionally, containing

seventeen characters more than the ST utterance, it can still be considered conventional as it contains only sixty characters in two semantically self-contained lines.

Figure 61

Screenshot 40



Mar 02, 2011

Share Video:



Libyan Leader Mu'ammur Al-Qadhafi: If the Americans or the West Enter Libya, They Will Be "Entering Hell and a Sea of Blood"

Qadhafi addresses his people on the "People's Authority" day, 2011 March 02

In the second example (2/6, 00:41–00:45, Screenshot 41), the utterance frame lasted five seconds, in which the speaker, Moussa, utters only one short sentence, hence the temporal and spatial flexibility. In the ST, Moussa talks about what he calls “ثورة الفاتح” (the Al-Fateh Revolution). Instead of opting for this eighteen-character literal equivalent, MEMRI’s subtitler paraphrased it into the longer twenty-five-character alternative “(Qadhafi’s 1969) Revolution”. Such a choice can be technically justified despite its lengthiness. Benefitting from the spatial and temporal potentials of this utterance frame, the subtitler apparently chose the clear expression “(Qadhafi’s 1969)”, to avoid the ambiguity that may result from the less common, literal equivalent

“Al-Fateh”. In total, this adequately synchronised subtitle can be received as conventional because it contains only fifty-six characters.

Figure 62

Screenshot 41



Moussa commemorates the 1969 coup, 2019 Sep 01

In the third example (4/20, 01:46–01:54, Screenshot 42), the utterance frame lasted nine seconds. This lengthy frame could have been split into two subtitles to maintain a full expression of the ST speech. Yet, unlike most presidential speeches, this speech is particularly full of redundant traits of colloquialism that may not be worth the subtitler’s effort. Hence, MEMRI’s subtitler chose to reduce the ST utterance by using two reductive strategies to produce a more linguistically concise subtitle. With condensation, the subtitler omitted the ST padding utterance “هي قاعدة” (it is still) to save nine spaces on the screen. With deletion, the subtitler has omitted the less important ST utterance “ووعي كبير شكلته جوى دولها” (and a great awareness they have created in their countries) to save fifty spaces. But to compensate for the meaning of success seemingly lost in this deletion, the subtitler subtly paraphrased the preceding ST utterance “تحمي مسار” (to protect the path) into the TT alternative “to protect the achievements” to include all that the speech’s intended countries have achieved. These patterns of manipulation can be considered purely technical,

especially with their conventional production of a sixty-two-characters-long TT subtitle that is, in total, only one character longer than the ST utterance.

Figure 63

Screenshot 42



El-Sisi addresses youth associations in Sharm El-Sheikh, 2018 Nov 04

The following examples demonstrate strategy choices that can be more critically interpreted as having ideological intentions:

Table 36

Ideological Manipulation of MEMRI's Speeches

Video Clip/Frame/Time	ST	TT	Strategies
1/56 04:39–04:41	طبعاً عدم مقاتلتهم	The fact that we did not fight (the insurgents),	Cryptic paraphrase
1/69 05:25–05:28	فأولادي هانوم اللي في بنغازي واللي دايرين خيمة واللي مش عارف شن دايرين ،	With regard to my children in Benghazi and Dar Al-Kheima	Condensation and cryptic paraphrase

2/10 00:55–00:58	ليس هناك سلم اجتماعي، <u>ليس هناك</u> تكافل،	There will be no social peace or solidarity.	Condensation and cryptic paraphrase.
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In the first example (1/56, 04:39–04:41, Screenshot 43), the utterance frame lasted only three seconds. Yet, MEMRI’s subtitler did not refrain from using the paraphrase strategy, which produced an eleven-characters-longer translation. In the ST, Qadhafi talks about fighting an Al-Qaeda group by referring to them using the plural attached pronoun “هم” (them) in “مقاتلتهم” (fighting them) because he repeatedly mentions them elsewhere in the original video. Due to the fragmentation of this utterance, a choice of transferring this pronoun literally may result in ambiguity regarding whom Qadhafi is referring to, hence the technical importance of labelling. Interestingly, however, instead of labelling Al-Qaeda gangs as “terrorists”, frequently used by Qadhafi himself, MEMRI’s subtitler ambiguously labelled them as “insurgents”, giving them a sort of revolutionary legitimacy—a choice that may not be technically justified since “insurgents” is as space-consuming on the screen as “terrorists”: both contain ten characters. Such a choice implies further considerations, probably of an ideological nature. A deeper investigation highlighting the correlation

between textual and other levels of manipulation can reveal the real motives behind this choice.

Figure 64

Screenshot 43



Mar 02, 2011

Share Video:



Libyan Leader Mu'ammarr Al-Qadhafi: If the Americans or the West Enter Libya, They Will Be "Entering Hell and a Sea of Blood"

Libyans are addressed by Qadhafi on the "People's Authority" day, 2011 March 02

In the second example (1/69, 05:25–05:28, Screenshot 44), the utterance frame lasted four seconds. Unlike most presidential speeches, Qadhafi's speeches always contain some non-standard, dialect and colloquial characteristics that may be challenging for some translators/subtitlers who are unfamiliar with the Libyan dialect. In substantiation, MEMRI's subtitler used two strategies: condensation and paraphrase. While the former seems to be technical, the latter appears completely ambiguous. With condensation, the subtitler saved forty-four spaces on the screen by omitting the ST utterances "هاذوم" (those) and "واللي مش عارف شن دايرين" (and those which I do not know what they are doing). With paraphrase, they ambiguously altered the ST utterance "دايرين خيمة" (set up a tent) with the TT alternative "Dar Al-kheima", which is not uttered in the ST, and nor is it basically a Libyan city as the subtitler assumes. Qadhafi does not mention any city other than Benghazi in which Libyan youngsters set up a bazaar tent to protest peacefully. The subtitler's choice, therefore, could be a mistranslation resulting from unawareness of the Northern-African

grammatical-specific root “دار” (did) or it could be for some other reason, but hardly technical.

Figure 65

Screenshot 44



Mar 02, 2011

Share Video:



Libyan Leader Mu'ammar Al-Qadhafi: If the Americans or the West Enter Libya, They Will Be "Entering Hell and a Sea of Blood"

Qadhafi addresses his people on the "People's Authority" day, 2011 March 02

In the third example (2/10, 00:55–00:58, Screenshot 45), the utterance frame lasted four seconds. Considering the sensitivity of the political text, a transfer choice of this utterance can be “There’s no social peace, there’s no solidarity”. Although such a choice might then be considered unconventional, being eleven characters longer than the ST, it could also be considered conventional in that it contains only forty characters in total. MEMRI’s subtitler, however, chose to reduce the ST by omitting the repeated utterance “ليس هناك” (there is no).

At first glance, this choice seems to be technical in that it saved nine spaces on the screen. More critically, however, it may have been to allow more space for an unpalatable translation that manipulates the ST narrative for an ideological reason. The subtitler paraphrased the ST neutral statement “ليس هناك سلم اجتماعي” (there is not social peace) into the violence-charged TT alternative “there will be no social peace”: a choice that clearly implies a threat of violence. This choice can hardly be justified on a technical basis since there is no technical necessity for its adoption. On the contrary,

it produced an alternative four characters longer than a literal transfer would have produced.

Figure 66

Screenshot 45



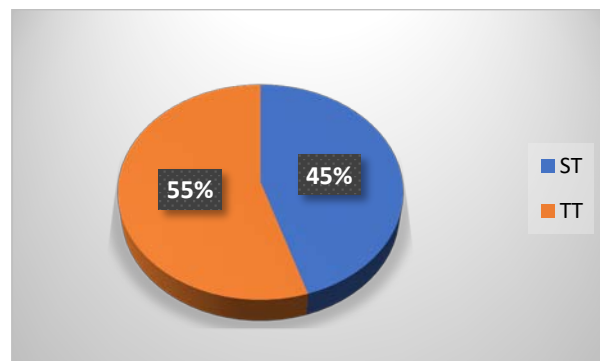
Qadhafi loyalists commemorate the 1969 coup in Cairo, 2019 Sep 10

5.5.3 CBSA and SBSA of MEMRI's Interviews

MEMRI's interview subtitles (video clips 5–17) are 10% longer than their ST utterances, as illustrated in their CBSA (Figure 67).

Figure 67

CBSA of MEMRI's Interviews

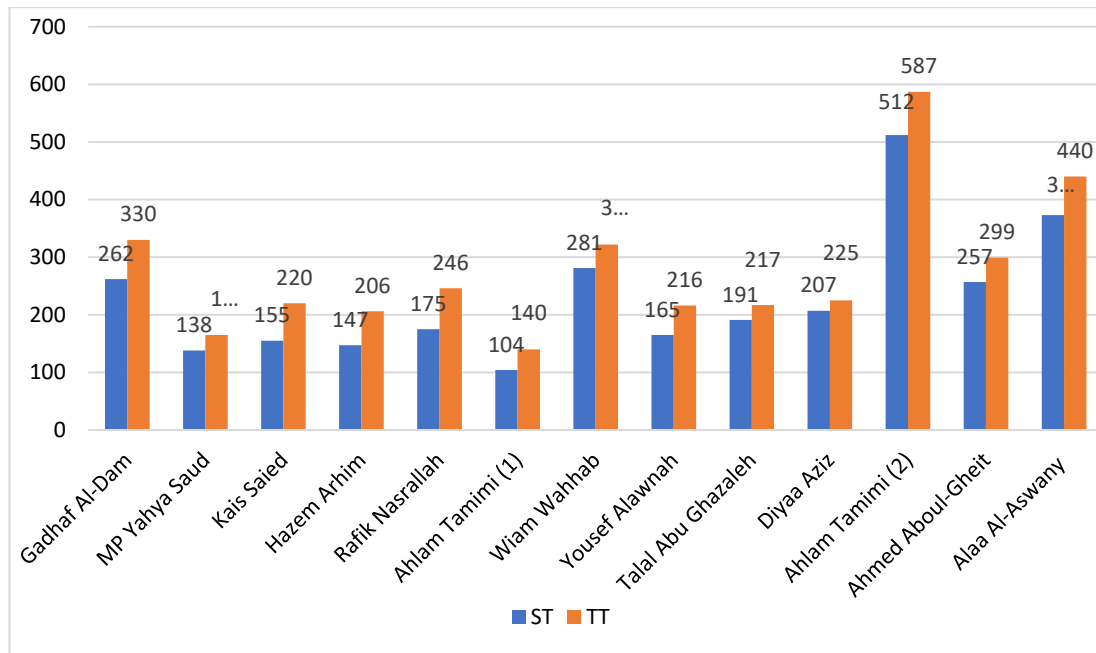


This shows 45% for STs versus 55% for TT subtitles

The detailed CBSA (Figure 68) similarly shows that the TTs are longer than the STs in all interview video clips despite the redundant nature of their dialogues. This can still be attributed to MEMRI’s dependence on the transfer strategy in the first place.

Figure 68

Detailed CBSA of MEMRI’s Interviews



This shows the difference in length between ST and TT subtitles of MEMRI’s Interviews

As illustrated in the SBSA (Table 37), transfer (36%) is identified at the top of the adopted strategies, followed by condensation (24%), paraphrase (19%), and expansion (12%). Compared to the aforementioned organisations, MEMRI’s subtitles are more likely to be in line with other movie subtitling conventions concerning the quantitative reduction of condensation. Apart from that, the qualitative reduction is still receiving the least usage: deletion (3%) comes first, followed by decimation (1%) and resignation (0%).

Table 37*SBSA of MEMRI's Interviews: 5–17 Video Clips, 344 Frames*

Subtitling Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
Expansion	105	12%
Paraphrase	170	19%
Transfer	323	36%
Imitation	51	6%
Transcription	0	0%
Dislocation	0	0%
Condensation	217	24%
Decimation	9	1%
Deletion	24	3%
Resignation	2	0%

For investigating the motive (whether technical or ideological) behind the strategy choices (the main aim of the study), several examples extracted from the video clips (5–17) will be discussed below. The following table demonstrates what seems to be adopted for technical necessity:

Table 38*Technical Manipulation of MEMRI's Interviews*

Video Clip/Frames/Time	ST	TT	Strategies
5/1 00:12–00:14	والغرب كان يخطط لإسقاط هذه الأنظمة منذ زمن.	The West was planning to topple these (Islamic) regimes from way back.	Expansion and transfer
7/10 00:58–01:01	<u>حتى التطبيع</u> ، مفهوم التطبيع مفهوم دخيل	The concept of normalization (of	Condensation and expansion

		relations with Israel) is foreign.	
9/12 00:54 – 00:57	ثم تخلوا عن هذا <u>ورحنا شفنا أنه</u> عاملين سايكس سبيكو	Britain then reneged on that and signed the Sykes-Picot Agreement .	Paraphrase, condensation, and expansion

In the first example (5/1, 00:12–00:14, Screenshot 46), the utterance frame lasted only three seconds, but MEMRI’s subtitler managed to transfer the ST utterance fully in an adequately synchronised TT subtitle. Not only that, but the subtitler also chose to expand the subtitle by adding the adjective “(Islamic)” to identify the speaker’s ambiguous utterance “هذه الأنظمة” (these regimes). In another part of the source video, the speaker refers to these regimes as “Islamic states”. This choice can be technically justified as it helped the subtitler to overcome the ambiguity caused by fragmentation. Although both choices resulted in producing an unconventional twenty-four-characters-longer TT subtitle than the ST utterance, the subtitle can also be considered conventional in that, in total, it contains only fifty-nine characters.

Figure 69

Screenshot 46



Oct 20, 2018 Share Video: [f](#) [t](#) [in](#) [t](#) [p](#) [v](#) [p](#) [c](#) [d](#)

Qadhafi's Cousin Ahmad Qadhaf Al-Dam, A Former Libyan Official: Iran Has a Right to Nuclear Weapons and So Do We

Qadhaf Al-Dam (right) talks about nuclear programs on Sada Al-Balad TV, 2018 Oct 20

In the second example (7/10, 00:58–01:01, Screenshot 47), the utterance frame lasted four seconds. The utterance per se contains the repetition “حتى التطبيع” (even normalisation) caused by the spontaneity of the dialogue. To get rid of that, MEMRI’s subtitler adopted the condensation strategy, which reduced the ST utterance quantitatively without jeopardising its essential semantics. Another purpose that the subtitler may have technically thought of is to allow more space to clear up the ambiguity caused by fragmentation. In previous utterances, the speaker and his hosts explicitly discuss the notion of normalisation with Israel; in this particular frame, however, the speaker does not mention Israel. Therefore, MEMRI’s subtitler chose the expansion strategy to add the TT expression “(of relations with Israel)” to clarify the speaker’s ambiguous utterance. Although this choice resulted in an unconventional twenty-three-characters-longer TT subtitle than the ST utterance, the condensation strategy saved seventeen spaces on the screen, which, in total, helped produce a conventional fifty-eight-characters-long TT subtitle.

Figure 70

Screenshot 47



Tunisian President Kais Saied: Trump Peace Plan Is the "Deal of Injustice"

Kais Saied in a presidential debate on Channel 1 (Tunisian), 2020 Feb 03

In the third example (9/12, 00:54–00:57, Screenshot 48), the utterance frame lasted four seconds. The speaker answers the host’s question about how the British government failed to recognise an independent Arab state and signed the Sykes-Picot

Agreement that clashes with the Arabs interests. The speaker, however, does not mention Britain by name, but refers to it by using the plural attached pronoun “وا” (they) in “تخلوا” (they reneged) because he already mentions it in a previous utterance. MEMRI’s subtitler, therefore, chose the paraphrase strategy to alter the ST’s vague expression “they then reneged” with the TT explicit expression “Britain then reneged”. Moreover, due to the unprompted utterances, the speaker refers to the signing of the Sykes-Picot agreement using the non-standard ST expression “عاملين” (doing) instead of the more stylistically appropriate “موقعين” (signing). For maintaining a more formal equivalent, the subtitler opted for the verb “sign” in its past simple form “signed” so that it grammatically coheres with the verb tense used in the first part of the utterance. For more linguistic concision, the subtitler condensed the utterance by omitting the padding expression “ورحنا شفنا أنه” (and we have seen that) which saved eighteen spaces on the screen.

Lastly, when the speaker mentioned Sykes-Picot in the ST, the word “agreement” was not uttered. Hence, the subtitler added it using the expansion strategy, to remove ambiguity from the TT. In sum, these manipulative choices can be technically justified because a semantically self-contained and adequately synchronised subtitle was ultimately produced. Although the TT subtitle is

unconventionally seventeen characters longer than the ST utterance, it is conventional in that it contains only fifty-seven characters in total.

Figure 71

Screenshot 48



Nasrallah discusses some Arab issues on Al-Jadeed TV, 2017 May 23

The following examples demonstrate strategy choices that can be more critically interpreted as having ideological intentions:

Table 39

Ideological manipulation of MEMRI's Interviews

Video Clip/Frame/Time	ST	TT	Strategies
10/20 00:23–00:28	تحررنا كان يعني فرحة عامرة بالنسبة لنا ، بداية حياة جديدة	Our release brought us great joy and was the beginning of a new life,	Cryptic paraphrase and condensation
14/20 01:56–01:58	أنا ما بتكلمش عن السعودية، بتكلم عن العالم العربي	I am talking not only about Saudi Arabia, but about the entire Arab world.	Cryptic expansion and paraphrase

17/25 02:07–02:10	وهي <u>مشكلة</u> متصلة بالتراث العربي الإسلامي.	which has a lot to do with the Arab and Islamic heritage,	Cryptic expansion
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In the first example (10/20, 00:23–00:28, Screenshot 49), the utterance frame lasted six seconds. MEMRI’s subtitler used the condensation strategy to omit the ST padding expressions “يعني” (I mean) and “بالنسبة لنا” (for us). This choice seems to be technically necessitated to produce a more concise subtitle that is adequately synchronised and devoid of redundancy, saving ten characters on the screen. In turn, the subtitler made a cryptic manipulation that can hardly be technical, especially with the temporal and spatial potential available to subtitle the longest and most complex utterances. With paraphrase, they altered the ST expression “تحررنا” (our liberation) with the three-character-shorter TT expression “our release”. The prevailing tendency in subtitling is to produce the minimum number of characters on the screen, which is, thus, achieved in the short TT choice “our release”. Yet, the literal choice “our liberation”, though longer, seems to be repeated intentionally in the source video, which indicates its significance and, hence, the importance of preserving it in the TT subtitle. Semantically, according to Merriam-Webster (2020), to liberate means “to free from domination by a foreign power”, while to release, more neutrally, means to set free from imprisonment. It seems, for this reason, that MEMRI’s subtitler ignored

the literal resistance-charged choice and opted for the one that corresponds to their own and/or institutional ideology, while clashing deeply with the speaker's ideology.

Figure 72

Screenshot 49



Tamimi talks about her liberation on Al-Jazeera TV, 2019 March 03

In the second example (14/20, 01:56–01:58, Screenshot 50), the utterance frame lasted only three seconds. However, MEMRI's subtitler interestingly chose the expansion strategy to add the unuttered expressions "not only" and "entire", which mainly contributed to producing an unconventional twenty-one-characters-longer TT subtitle than the ST utterance. Technically speaking, this pattern of manipulation seems to be unnecessary since the utterance is clear and complete. Ideologically speaking, a possible interpretation can detect an attempt to cram Saudi Arabia into the speaker's repeated accusations of the nearby Arab countries. The tone of the speaker's voice and the host's comment "كإنسان في النهاية" (as a human being in the end), which is ambiguously not subtitled, indicates both speakers' caution against getting involved in

accusing their own country. As a result, the ST narrative seems to be manipulated for the sake of specific, hidden agendas.

Figure 73

Screenshot 50



Aziz talks about his artistic career on Rotana Khalijiya TV, 2017 May 27

In the third example (12/25, 02:07–02:10, Screenshot 51), the utterance frame lasted four seconds. In the preceding frame, the speaker talks about how Arabs do not judge dictatorship as a concept but only its consequences. In this frame, he argues that this position has to do with the Arab and Islamic heritage but does not use any intensifier to emphasise it. For some reason, which can hardly be technical, MEMRI's subtitler expanded the TT subtitle by adding the four-character intensifier "a lot", which emphasised what had not been emphasised in the ST utterance. This manipulation partially contributed to producing an eleven-characters-longer TT subtitle than the ST utterance, four of which can be deemed ideological, to enhance a

specific narrative that possibly motivated the selection of this, and perhaps other, video clip(s).

Figure 74

Screenshot 51



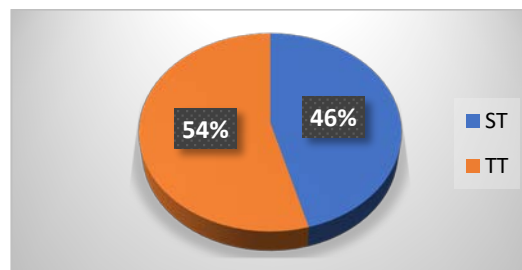
Aswany discusses Middle East political issues on BBC Arabic, 2016 Sep 12

5.5.4 CBSA and SBSA of MEMRI's Debates

MEMRI's debate subtitles (video clips 18–20) are 8% longer than their ST utterances, as illustrated in their CBSA (Figure 75). They are relatively shorter than the interview and speech subtitles because they are influenced more by technical constraints. As discussed amply above, this is attributed to their ST's unique characteristics, including the argumentative content, debaters' competitive drive, and fast-paced dialogues.

Figure 75

CBSA of MEMRI's Debates

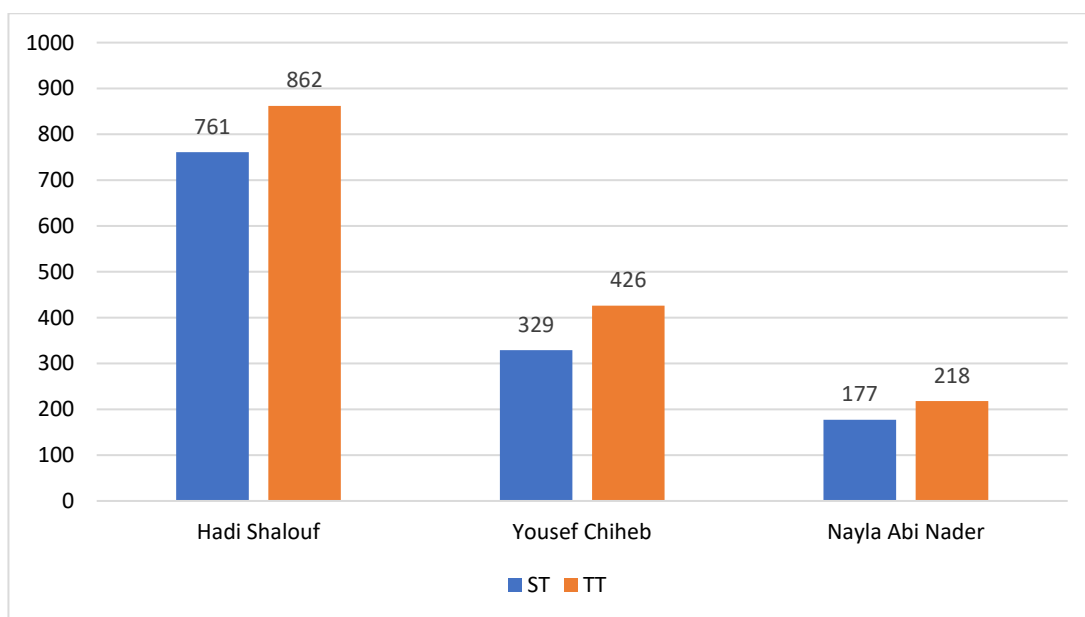


This shows 46% for STs versus 54% for TT subtitles

Furthermore, as illustrated in the detailed CBSA (Figure 76), the three debate video clips contain longer TTs than STs. This surprising finding can be attributed to MEMRI’s reliance on the transfer strategy in the first place.

Figure 76

Detailed CBSA of MEMRI’s Debates



This shows the difference in length between ST and TT subtitles of MEMRI’s Debates

The debate SBSA (Table 40) shows that transfer (36%) is identified at the top of the used strategies. Paraphrase (22%) comes second, while condensation (21%) comes third, followed by expansion (12%). At the top of the least used strategies, imitation (4%) was identified, followed by deletion (3%) and decimation (1%).

Table 40

SBSA of MEMRI’s Debates: 18–20 Video Clips, 149 Frames

Subtitling Strategy	Frequency	Percentage
Expansion	47	12%
Paraphrase	82	22%
Transfer	139	37%

Imitation	15	4%
Transcription	0	0%
Dislocation	1	0%
Condensation	80	21%
Decimation	4	1%
Deletion	12	3%
Resignation	0	0%

Compared to other subtitling genres (e.g., films, TV programmes) for which condensation of 20%–40% of the ST is conventionally suggested (e.g., Gottlieb, 1992, p.166), MEMRI's condensation finding can be considered conventional. In general, the adoption of any strategy depends on its necessity. The following table demonstrates some examples of what seems to be manipulated for technical considerations:

Table 41

Technical Manipulation of MEMRI's Debates

Video Clip/Frame/Time	ST	TT	Strategies
18/2 00:22–00:27	يعني هالإزدواجية وهذا الثنائية شطرت المجتمع <u>وشطرت</u> <u>الدماء</u> <u>وشطرت</u> التفكير.	this duality or dichotomy has split society, people , and ideologies.	Condensation and paraphrase
19/14 01:09–01:14	<u>إذا الحقيقة ماذا حصل؟</u> <u>حصل كما تكرمتم بأنكم قاتم</u> بيان الناس الذين وصلوا فيما بعد	What happened was that the people who then came (to power)	Deletion and expansion
20/15 01:10–01:14	رأينا بأن الأردن ومصر وقعتنا اتفاقية سلام مع إسرائيل	We saw that Jordan and Egypt have signed a peace treaty with Israel,	Transfer

In the first example (18/2, 00:22–00:27, Screenshot 52), the utterance frame lasted six seconds, allowing MEMRI’s subtitler to render the ST utterance in an accurate and adequately synchronised TT subtitle. For a more concise TT, MEMRI’s subtitler chose the condensation strategy to omit the redundant words “يعني” (I mean) and “وشطرت” (and it has split) in two positions. This choice saved thirty-one spaces, resulting in an adequately synchronised and conventional fifty-nine-characters-long TT subtitle three characters shorter than the ST utterance. Additionally, the subtitler chose the paraphrase strategy to avoid the literal equivalence of the ST peculiar utterance “وشطرت الدماء” (and it has split blood), which was uttered spontaneously as a result of the dialogue’s fast pace. The subtitler, thus, altered the ST word “الدماء” (blood) with the more stylistically appropriate (though one character longer) TT word “people”.

Figure 77

Screenshot 52



Lebanese Researcher Dr. Nayla Abi Nader Calls to Reexamine Curricula, Stop Educating to Backwardness

Abi Nader (Left) criticises Arabic issues and stereotypes on Alghad TV, 2018 May 30

In the second example (19/14, 01:09–01:14, Screenshot 53), the utterance frame lasted six seconds, which is, again, enough to transfer the ST utterance fully in an adequately synchronised TT subtitle. Regardless, MEMRI’s subtitler chose the deletion strategy to remove the less important elements from the ST utterance and produce the shortest structure on the screen. In so doing, they omitted the ST question

“إذا الحقيقة ماذا حصل” (what has happened, in fact?) and the ST expression “كما تكرمتم بأنكم” (as you have kindly said) which saved fifty spaces.

Technically necessitated, this manipulation also allowed more time and space for the subtitler to use the expansion strategy in order to remove the ambiguity derived from the fragmented utterance. Shalouf speaks about what happened when some people came to power, but, due to frequent interruption by the host and the other guest, he does not utter the word “power”, hence the ambiguity. Therefore, the subtitler added the missing word to produce a semantically self-contained TT subtitle. In terms of lengthiness, the TT subtitled was conventionally produced, containing only forty-eight characters: fifteen characters shorter than the ST utterance.

Figure 78

Screenshot 53



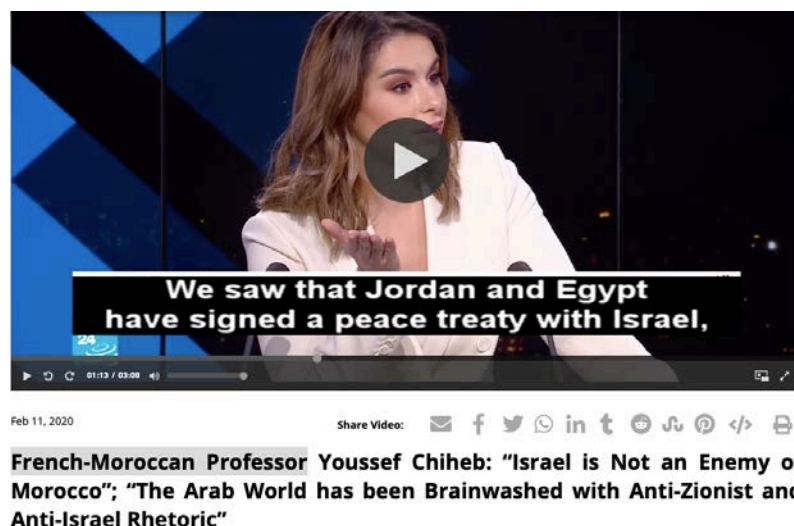
Shalouf discusses democracy in the Arab world on Al-Jazeera, 2017 July 11

In the third example (20/15, 01:10–01:14, Screenshot 54), the utterance frame lasted five seconds, which MEMRI’s subtitler exploited to transfer the ST utterance fully without giving anything away. As a result, the TT subtitle was unconventionally produced, thirteen characters longer than the ST utterance due to the extensive transfer of linguistic structures from Arabic into English, as previously discussed. Yet, the TT

subtitle can also be considered conventional in that it was adequately synchronised, containing only fifty-six characters in two lines.

Figure 79

Screenshot 54



France 24 Arabic TV host organises a debate on Morocco-Israel relations, 2020 Feb 11

The following examples demonstrate strategy choices that can be more critically interpreted as having ideological intentions:

Table 42

Ideological Manipulation of MEMRI's Debates

Video Clip/Frame/Time	ST	TT	Strategies
19/27 01:56–01:59	بكل تأكيد الشعوب لم تكن مهياًة، ولم تتعود على الديمقراطية أساساً.	The (Arab) peoples are undoubtedly not ready for democracy and are not used to it	Cryptic expansion and paraphrase
19/75 04:17–04:22	ولكن <u>أيضاً</u> الشعوب لم تكن مهياًة أيضاً فانقسمت إلى	But the (Arab) people were not ready, and	Deletion and cryptic expansion

	طوائف وإلى مجموعة أحزاب	they split into sects and parties,	
20/27 01:52–01:59	القضية الفلسطينية هي قضية بين الفلسطينيين وإسرائيل تحت تغطية العرب.	The Palestinian cause is between the Palestinians and Israel...	Cryptic decimation

In the first example (19/27, 01:56–01:59, Screenshot 55), the utterance frame lasted four seconds. MEMRI’s subtitler expanded the ST utterance “الشعوب” (peoples) by adding to it the word “(Arab)”. The speaker’s utterance seems completely comprehensible and does not suffer from ambiguity due to the clear context given by the video clip’s title. Therefore, technically speaking, there should be no need for this intervention, which produced an unconventional fourteen-characters-longer TT subtitle than the ST utterance. Nearly every utterance frame containing the word “people(s)” is treated similarly, casting doubt on the objective of this unnecessary, repeated emphasis.

Furthermore, MEMRI’s subtitler twice used the paraphrase strategy to transform the ST’s grammatical structure. The past tense expressions “لم تكن مهيأة” (were not ready) and “لم تتعود” (were not used to) were both paraphrased into the present tense expressions “are not ready” and “are not used to”. In the ST, the speaker argues that the peoples of Libya, Tunisia, Syria, Egypt, and Yemen were not ready for democracy before the Arab Spring because of the many decades they were bending their knees under the overwhelming weight of dictatorships. The subtitler’s choice, in turn, seems to have deconstructed the narrative of the past and reconstructed, instead, an exaggerated, distorted narrative of the present, which generally portrays Arabs as naturally inclined to backwardness and rejection of democracy and reform. Technically unjustified, these choices of manipulation are more likely to emphasise

the continuous claims (e.g., Whitaker, 2002) that accuse MEMRI of leading a campaign to distort the image of Arabs.

Figure 80

Screenshot 55



Shalouf discusses democracy in the Arab world on Al-Jazeera, 2017 July 11

In the second example (19/57, 04:17–04:22, Screenshot 56), the utterance frame lasted six seconds. Regardless, MEMRI’s subtitler used the deletion strategy for a more concise subtitle by omitting the less important expressions “أيضا” (also) and “إلى مجموعة” (to a group of). At first glance, this pattern of manipulation seems to be technically justified as it saved fourteen spaces on the screen. Yet, similar to the first example, it may have been adopted to allow more time and space for the subtitler to expand, again, the ST utterance “الشعوب” (peoples) by adding the unuttered word “(Arab)”, which added six characters, including the brackets. Despite the adequate synchronisation of the subtitle, such manipulation can arguably be regarded as technically unjustifiable. The speaker’s utterance seems to be semantically self-contained, and the context is indicated explicitly in the TT title at the bottom of the video clip. Thus, an identical transfer of the generalising expression “peoples” to the TT could have been more subtitling-friendly and faithful to the ST. In the ST dialogue of this frame, in particular, Shalouf’s usage of the general word “الشعوب” (the peoples)

seems to be intentional, encompassing the multi-ethnicities¹⁴⁵ that had lived in harmony until the 2011 uprising when they split into sects and parties. MEMRI's subtitler, however, chose to limit it to the Arabs, raising a question about the actual motive of such a choice and whether it occurs in a vacuum or has broader connections on the political level.

Figure 81

Screenshot 56



Jul 11, 2017

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Former ICC Member Dr. Hadi Shalouf: The Arab Peoples Are Not Ready for Democracy; We Are Living in the Dark Ages

Shalouf discusses democracy in the Arab world on Al-Jazeera, 2017 July 11

In the third example (20/27, 01:52–01:59, Screenshot 57), the utterance frame lasted eight seconds. Despite the adequate isochrony (i.e., correspondence between subtitle's duration and the ST utterance), the ST utterance suffered from a drastic pattern of semantic reduction. MEMRI's subtitler decimated the ST's important expression "تحت تغطية العرب" (under the Arab auspices), which the speaker used to describe how the relationship between Israel and Palestine is supposed to be. The

¹⁴⁵ Syria, for instance, which is the focus of this utterance, has seven main ethnic groups: Arabs, Kurds, Yazidi, Turkmen, Assyrian, Circassian, and Armenian (Sousa, 2018).

subtitler also used the condensation strategy to omit the repeated word “قضية” (a cause).

At first glance, these choices can be technically justified as they helped to save twenty-six spaces on the screen and, in total, produced a five-characters-shorter TT subtitle than the ST utterance. Yet, technical constraints cannot be an excuse for the specific choice of decimation because of the lengthy period of the utterance frame, which can easily be split into two frames temporally and spatially appropriate to transfer the ST utterance in full. With a more critical view, this manipulation can hardly pass unnoticed; the decimation of such an important utterance is more likely to be ideologically driven. It may have been adopted to construct a different narrative, depicting the relationship between Israel and Palestine as an utterly internal cause irrelevant to the rest of the Arab world.

Figure 82

Screenshot 57



Feb 11, 2020 Share Video: [✉](#) [f](#) [t](#) [in](#) [t](#) [@](#) [v](#) [p](#) [</>](#) [📄](#)
French-Moroccan Professor Youssef Chiheb: “Israel is Not an Enemy of Morocco”; “The Arab World has been Brainwashed with Anti-Zionist and Anti-Israel Rhetoric”

Chiheb argues about Morocco-Israel relations on France 24 Arabic TV, 2020 Feb 11

5.6 Concluding Remarks

Having conducted the general combined CBSA, it could be concluded that political subtitling seems to be an expansive genre of Arabic–English AVT. Unlike other subtitling genres, such as films, TV shows, and series, this genre generally tends

to produce remarkably longer TT subtitles than its ST utterances, containing, at times, eighty to a hundred characters in two lines. The individual combined CBSAs and the subgenres' CBSAs show similar findings with only a slight difference in percentages. What is interesting here is that although each of the subgenres has its own distinctive characteristics of dialogue, they all show lengthy TT subtitles regardless. Having conducted the general combined SBSA to understand this unconventional finding, it seems invalid to argue that the reason behind the TT's lengthiness is the transfer strategy alone. It also includes expansion and paraphrase strategies, which often resulted in adding cultural and linguistic elements to the TT language (i.e., English) that are not uttered or visualised in the ST language (i.e., Arabic). Expanding or paraphrasing some elements, for instance, was technically inevitable to produce more linguistically and culturally self-contained subtitles and avoid ambiguity derived from fragmented subtitles. It also does not exclude the less influential strategy of imitation. As the individual combined SBSAs and the subgenres' SBSAs confirm, the first three places of usage are mostly occupied interchangeably by transfer, expansion, and paraphrase strategies, followed by imitation. The extensive strategy of dislocation, however, does not seem to have a close association with the finding due to its low percentages, as in PMW and MEMRI, or an entire lack of use, as in MM. What is totally unrelated to the TTs' lengthiness are reductive strategies.

The general tendency of adopting extensive strategies and the high percentages of their frequencies contrast considerably with what Gottlieb (2004, p. 86) proposes for text reduction in cinematic subtitling, as mentioned earlier. This incompatibility could be attributed to four features identified via the data analysis: the first two being the genre-specific semiotic codes. First, political scenes were almost devoid of non-verbal elements—evaluated by other film enthusiasts—that might be disrupted by producing long subtitles. That is probably why, in most scenes, subtitles always appeared in a coloured box, either grey or black, covering almost half of the screen. Cameras were often pointed at the speaker(s) during scenes almost devoid of accompanying audiovisual effects, hence, kinetic synchrony was often adequately achieved. Second, many political utterances were often delivered at a slow pace, and some utterance durations were ample, ranging from seven to thirteen seconds, which

often helped the subtitler to transfer the ST in its entirety. Instead of splitting the long utterances into shorter units, as Díaz-Cintas (2012b, p. 276) suggests, the subtitlers chose to render them in correspondingly long subtitles. Hence, the isochrony was also adequately achieved. There were, however, a few examples where subtitles contained a small number of characters on the screen, which could then pose “a risk that the viewer will start re-reading the text” (Díaz-Cintas, 2012b, p. 276), but this is unlikely to occur in the political subtitling genre because the viewer’s attention is mainly attracted to the speaker, as mentioned in its first feature. Unless another scene or utterance emerges, it is unlikely for this risk to take place. Third, the education and cultural level, and the reading speed of the mature audience of political media can also be an advantage upon which subtitlers may have heavily relied. Fourth, the sensitivity of political materials, and the necessity and significance of transferring their content with the highest degree of accuracy and integrity may have also played a crucial role.

The last feature, in particular, brought about the notion of necessity, which was thoroughly investigated in the qualitative analysis of the subtitling manipulation, the main focus of this chapter. The substantiated qualitative analysis showed that some patterns of manipulation, especially expansion and reduction, seemed to be technically necessitated in some cases, while in other cases they seemed to be driven ideologically under the excuse of technicality. Reduction, for instance, was, on many occasions, exploited in different forms: condensation, which was the quantitative reduction of redundancy, and decimation, which was the qualitative reduction of some important, complete expressions that seemed to be intentionally ignored. More broadly, the careful selection of subtitling specific speakers and ignoring others was another ambiguous pattern of reduction, which interfered with the synchronisation and content of the ST. Commenting on the jeopardy of excessive patterns of reductions, Thawabteh (2017, p. 576) states that they “may give rise to a breakdown in communication as it may risk synchronicity of the image and subtitle”.

Expansion was also investigated with extra caution because, in addition to its ideological exploitation, responsible for part of the TT’s lengthiness, it seemed to receive mysteriously inconsistent treatment by the three organisations. In some cases, they use it visibly by putting it between round brackets. PMW, in particular, uses two

types: square brackets to compensate for what is intended to be said but lost due to video cuts or speech interruptions, and round brackets to insert what PMW feels they are required to add. In some other cases, however, they use it invisibly so that it can pass unnoticed by the viewers, which might have an impact, once identified, on the credibility of the organisations' products. The paraphrase strategy should also be treated with a similar level of scepticism due to the many examples where it seems to be ideologically exploited and resulted unnecessarily in lengthy TT alternatives.

A simple comparison (though not the main aim of this chapter) between the respective media organisations regarding the ideological manipulation of their subtitles showed an interesting result. At the textual level, MEMRI seemed to be more trustworthy than MM and PMW because it produces more accurate and authentic political subtitles, as Baker (2010, p. 347) indicated. The lengthiness of MEMRI's subtitles was likely due to its high percentages of the expansive strategies, which were used mostly for technical reasons. Moreover, the ambiguous patterns of manipulation extracted from MEMRI were the only examples identified during the textual analysis. In turn, the ambiguous patterns extracted from MM and PMW were merely the tip of the iceberg; there is still plenty that cannot be included in this chapter but accounts for the unconventional length of MM and PMW subtitles.

Textual manipulation aside, higher levels of manipulation were also identified in the subtitled material of the three organisations, without exception. Like the text, paratexts and contexts also seemed to be ideologically manipulated in association with textual distortions. Hence, the following chapter will attempt to address these multilevel patterns of manipulation more critically and realistically in association with the cryptic textual choices identified in the present chapter utilising narrative analysis. In so doing, a comprehensive framework will establish a connection between the text (including immediate, preceding, and following frames of subtitles), the paratext (including titles and introductions), and the context (including immediate and wider narratives) (a relevant illustration is offered in the analysis model and procedure of Chapter Four, pp. 172–176).

Chapter Six

Macro-Analysis of Ideological Manipulation: Narrative Account

6.1 Introduction

What narrative theory requires us to do ... is to think of individual choices as part of a larger mosaic that is embedded in and contributes to the elaboration of concrete political reality. (Baker, 2010, p. 353)

The analysis carried out in the previous chapter assisted in identifying and extracting several examples of ambiguous textual choices for which technical necessity seems to play no role. This usually indicates the subtitlers' ideological and political interests for which subtitling strategies have been exploited as a disguise to manipulate the ST utterance, as Díaz-Cintas (2012a, p. 285) similarly argues. The present chapter is dedicated to interpreting these ambiguous choices more critically and realistically within a multi-level process of reframing, drawing on Mona Baker's comprehensive narrative analysis. This analysis explores the different patterns of manipulation in the context, paratext, and the text, and how these levels are connected narratively in a coherent process of elaboration. Ideological choices (whether verbal or non-verbal) will be analysed and discussed in the light of Baker's overlapping key strategies of reframing: temporal and spatial reframing, reframing through selective appropriation, reframing by labelling, and reframing by repositioning of participants¹⁴⁶. Furthermore, the conceptual narrative of "subtitling authenticity" derived from the safety of the ST's originality will also be examined to see whether or not it is merely an illusion, as Chaume (2018, p. 96) describes¹⁴⁷. Yet, before starting the narrative discussion of ideological manipulation in Section 6.3, an illustrated

¹⁴⁶ Reframing strategies are discussed in Chapter Three, p. 155–161.

¹⁴⁷ Examining the safety of the ST's originality is significant because it is one of the main characteristics of subtitling, which many media outlets and organisations use to claim preference of subtitling over dubbing. More details are provided in Chapter Two, p. 93–96.

elaboration of some of MM, PMW, and MEMRI's public and meta-accentuated narratives of the MENA needs to be conducted in Section 6.2. The intent is to show how an immediate reframed narrative can be embedded in larger narratives not necessarily articulated within it, utilising subtle strategies to carry out this commonly unrecognisable process.

6.1 MM, PMW, and MEMRI's Public and Meta-Narratives

In political media (re)narrations, generally speaking, narratives can be reframed as accentuated or contested (Baker, 2006a, p. 114). In other words, every media organisation seeks to (re)frame and disseminate narratives that accentuate its ideological and political interests while competing with those of its rivals. In this process, narratives are not articulated only within a single text or utterance but go beyond that to be “embedded in and informed by broader narratives that cannot be located within individual stretches of language” (ibid., p. 19). The articulation of narratives is “by no means restricted to textual material but can also be realised through a range of other media” (ibid.). Immediate narratives can be embedded in broader narratives located in external texts, images, and caricatures, for instance, as illustrated below. Therefore, the adoption of the narrative analysis in this chapter “makes it possible to investigate the elaboration of a given narrative in an individual text or event as well as across several texts and events, and across different media” (Baker, 2010, p. 349).

Furthermore, narratives (whether ontological or public) can have a broad impact that extends its propagation beyond the local community in which they are articulated. However, as argued by Baker (2006a, p. 48), “narratives do not travel across linguistic and cultural boundaries, and certainly do not develop into global meta-narratives, without the direct involvement of translators (subtitlers) and interpreters”. Reflecting on the influential role that subtitlers, in particular, can play in this regard, Díaz-Cintas talks about “the power of subtitling in the dissemination and entrenchment of certain concepts and realities in other cultural communities” (2012b, p. 278). He asserts that “commercial forces and colonizing practices cannot be excluded from this debate, and what is alien to the receiving culture at a particular

moment in time can easily become commonplace after its reiterative presence through translation” (Díaz-Cintas, 2012b, p. 278).

Having investigated the MM, PMW, and MEMRI organisations that specialise in media translation, a range of public and meta-narratives have been identified. For understanding in more depth how these narratives are elaborated, “one must be conscious of agency issues ... and the way in which these have or will influence the final piece” (Neves, 2004, p. 132). These can include the conflict scope, the ideological affiliations of the parties to the conflict, the different narratives that have been constructed and indigenised by each party, and the geopolitical reality of the heated region of MENA¹⁴⁸ (more details in Chapter Four).

6.1.1 MM’s Narratives

In the case of the Monitor Mideast organisation, the contending poles in the Middle Eastern conflict that can be considered the main source of controversial narratives are Iran vs Saudi Arabia. On scrutinising its production, MM seems keen to accentuate its overall public narratives, which glorify Iran and its allies (i.e., Syria, Hamas, and Hezbollah) while competing what exalts Saudi Arabia and its regional allies (i.e., Egypt, Jordan, and the Gulf States), Israel, and the USA. This seems hardly surprising since the Shiite regimes and the Sunni Kingdom of Saudi Arabia are specifically known as bitter rivals who have been locked in a ferocious struggle for centuries (Marcus 2017). MM attempts to elaborate, among others, narratives of monarchy reactionism; agency to foreigners (e.g., Israel, the West, Saudi Arabia); high treason; Wahhabi¹⁴⁹, Salafi¹⁵⁰, and Saudi terrorism; Iran’s War on Terror. As follows,

¹⁴⁸ MENA: the Middle East and North Africa.

¹⁴⁹ Wahhabi and Wahhabism are used in relation to the works and legacy of Mohammad Ibn Abdu Al-Wahhab (Maher, 2016, p. 8).

¹⁵⁰ Salafi and Salafism refer to the philosophy of “progression through regression. The perfect life is realised only by reviving the Islam of its first three generations” (ibid., p. 7).

the explicitly like-minded Pure Stream¹⁵¹ depicts what MM’s public narratives seem to be ultimately embedded in:

Figure 83

Agency to Foreigners & High Treason of the Palestinian Cause



Note. This image is first displayed by ABNA, a Shiite website, to condemn what it describes as “the Deal of the Century and to emphasise that Jerusalem is the capital of Palestine, n.d.¹⁵²

¹⁵¹ <https://www.purestream-media.com/israel-saudi-relations/>

¹⁵² <https://ar.abna24.com/>

Figure 84

Saudi Terrorism & Agency to Israel



Note. This image was first displayed by Pure Stream Website to portrait “the Saudi-Israel Relations”, 12 April 2015.¹⁵³

6.1.2 PMW’s Narratives

In the case of the Palestinian Media Watch organisation, the poles representing the Palestine–Israel conflict that can be considered the main source of controversial narratives are Israel vs Palestinian Authority (PA), Fatah and Hamas. Generally speaking, PA media outlets strive to promote a sustainable discourse that reinforces its overall public narratives (e.g., the Palestinian cause and the resistance programme against the Israeli Occupation). In turn, the Israeli media outlets strive to promote a sustainable discourse that reinforces their overall public narratives (e.g., the right to exist, the legitimacy of Israel State, and the War on Palestinian Terror). Accordingly, as Black and Hugh (2008) argue, a Palestinian involved in killing Israelis can be

¹⁵³ <https://www.purestream-media.com/israel-saudi-relations/>

described in contrasting ways: glorified as a “hero to many ... Palestinians”; or can be “reviled in Israel as a despicable murderer” (p. 1).

PMW can be referred to as a concrete example of an Israeli activist organisation that seeks to suppress the Palestinian narratives of resistance by elaborating its alternative competing public narratives, and this is no secret. As claimed on its website, PMW claims that it attempts to expose terrorism, hate speech, and anti-Semitism excessively broadcast daily in the Palestinian media, particularly on PA TV¹⁵⁴. On scrutinising its production, PMW seemingly endeavours to elaborate, among others, narratives of the legitimacy of Israel State and its territories; Palestinian prisoners, not captives; terrorists and murderers not martyrs; PA’s support of terrorism; terrorism not resistance; terrorist exploitation of children. The following images show how PMW’s public narratives can be embedded in and informed by broader narratives, elaborated by other like-ideologised organisations:

Figure 85

PA’s Support of Terrorists



Note. This image was first displayed by Issues: Christians United for Israel to accuse the Palestinian Authority of increasing payments to terrorists, n.d.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁴ <https://www.palwatch.org/page/16253>

¹⁵⁵ <https://cufi.org/issue/palestinians-increase-payments-terrorists-403-million/>

Figure 86

Palestinian Terrorists' Exploitation of Children



Note. This image was first displayed by *JE SUIS L'OUEST* to show how “the Palestinians fight” and “use children in war”, n.d.¹⁵⁶

6.1.3 MEMRI's Narratives

In the case of the Middle East Media Research Institute, the poles representing the conflict that can be considered the main source of the controversial narratives are the West vs the Arab and Islamic world. MEMRI, unlike the other two organisations, has received more criticism concerning the narratives it elaborates¹⁵⁷. For instance, Ken Livingstone, a former Mayor of London, describes it as a heavily-funded organisation, “which specialises in finding quotes from Arab media for circulation in the West. The translation and selection of quotes tend to portray Islam in a very negative light” (2005, p. 4). On scrutinising its productions, MEMRI attempts to elaborate narratives of the ignorance, backwardness, and terrorism of Arabs and

¹⁵⁶ <https://markhumphrys.com/israel.conflict.crimes.html>

¹⁵⁷ This is discussed in more detail in Chapter Four

Muslims; the terror of Arab regimes; Arabs' inclination towards dictatorships and totalitarianism; Arab's hate speech and anti-Semitism; the legitimacy of Israel vs illegitimacy of Palestinian resistance; that the Palestine/Israel conflict is irrelevant to Arabs; and others. Some of MEMRI's public narratives are represented on a large scale in the visual material of other media organisations, as follows:

Figure 87

Terror of Arab and Islamic Regimes



Note. This image was first displayed by TODD STEELE to describe the terror of the former Arab regimes and how “centralised, authoritarian dictatorships were brought down” by the Arab Spring, n.d.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁸ <https://toddsteele8.wordpress.com/2015/10/12/arab-spring-الربيع-العربي-alrbye-alearabi/>

Figure 88

Arabs' Inclination towards Dictatorships and Totalitarianism



Note. This image was first displayed by Chip Bok's Editorial Cartoons to show, as the image demonstrates, the welcoming of the Egyptians to the "military coup", 04 July 2013.¹⁵⁹

In connection to such public and meta-narratives, MM, PMW, and MEMRI reframe/recontextualise opposing media productions by manipulating their non-verbal and verbal elements in an intricate process that highlights the intimate relationship between media and translation, as will be substantiated below. Non-verbal manipulation includes higher-level patterns of selective appropriation of specific videos for subtitling to elaborate a narrative in which rivals are emplotted as traitors, reactionists, extremists, terrorists, racists, and ignorant. Non-verbal manipulation also includes patterns of temporal reframing: cutting and rearranging original videos and cobbling together two original videos with different contexts to suit the new setting. Though, this is not to dismiss the interesting selectivity of the textual level in terms of subtitling and ignoring specific participants of the narrative. Verbal manipulation, on the other hand, includes parallel distortions at the textual level, and spatial and

¹⁵⁹ <https://www.cartoonistgroup.com/subject/The-Arab-Comics-and-Cartoons-by-Chip+Bok%27s+Editorial+Cartoons.php>

temporal reframing at the paratextual level. At the former level, some of what seem to be technically adopted subtitling strategies could arguably be deemed ideologically driven to reframe the ST narratives and produce different, politically charged TT narratives. At the latter level, different titles, introductions and video blurbs are simultaneously added with an injection of specific linguistic elements (e.g., labels and past information) to fit the accentuated narratives in question.

6.2 Ideological Manipulation via (Re)framing Strategies

6.2.1 *MM's Accentuated Narratives*

The non-verbal manipulation in the following examples includes higher-level patterns of selective appropriation: specific videos are selected to be embedded not only in MM's immediate TT narratives but also in its overall public narrative, which emplots Saudi Arabia, its allies, and religious and political symbols as pro-terrorists, and Iran, its allies, and religious and political symbols as innocent peace seekers and freedom promoters. The following examples demonstrate the establishment of these patterns of emplotment in more detail.

(a) Accentuated Narratives of “Agency to the British”, “High Treason”, and “Monarchy Reactionism”. The non-verbal manipulation of this example includes the high level of appropriately selecting two different videos (Figures 89 and 90) from different historical periods and cobbling them together in a short video clip. The reconfiguration of the temporality feature is unlikely to be haphazard. It seems to establish a pattern of relationality in which the original independent narratives are connected to reinforce MM's accentuated TT narrative that defames Saudi Arabia and the Egyptian president El-Sisi.

Figure 89

The First Part of MM's Video Clip 1



Nasser's insult to Kings Saud and Hussain after the Yemeni revolution, 1962 Dec 23.

Figure 90

The Second Part of MM's Video Clip 1



El-Sisi kisses King Abdullah's forehead, 2014 June 20

The first part (Figure 89) shows Nasser¹⁶⁰ humiliating, in Arabic (the ST language), the former Saudi King Saud and Jordanian King Hussein, while the second

¹⁶⁰ Former President of Egypt, Jamal Abdul-Nasser (1954–170).

(Figure 90) shows the Egyptian president El-Sisi kissing the Saudi King Abdullah's head. In the political context, some cultures may negatively see forehead-kissing merely as confusing or a sign of submission or humiliation. Yet, in Arab culture, it can have different—not necessarily negative—interpretations, depending on the factors at play in this situation. It can be a sign of respect and reverence, especially for the elderly (King Abdullah was thirty years older and suffering from diseases that ended his life seven months after the meeting¹⁶¹). While this could be what prompted El-Sisi to act accordingly, such an action can also be interpreted negatively, implying unjustified obedience and submissiveness¹⁶², which was the interpretation adopted by El-Sisi's opponents in Egypt at the time. Interestingly, MM chose to accentuate the negative narrative to support its patterns of temporality and relationality.

MM reawakened Nasser's 1962 past narratives of freedom from monarchies, and more specifically from what he designates *Saudi monarchy reactionism* "الرجعية السعودية"¹⁶³. The temporal trigger of the past narrative helps the manipulative weave of the video clip's two parts successfully accentuate MM's 2014 narrative of "high treason" in which El-Sisi is emplotted as a servile agent serving King Abdullah's interests. To reinforce this pattern of causal emplotment, a title and introduction are fitted accordingly in the paratextual space where participants are repositioned to

¹⁶¹ Alarabiya News published an article on 21 June 2014 arguing that, in non-Arab cultures, "heads of state do not usually kiss each other in this manner. They consider themselves to be peers". It is rather "enigmatic". However, in the Arab culture, "it is a sign of respect", especially with King Abdullah because "he is a father figure". Retrieved 24 May 2019, from <https://english.alarabiya.net/variety/2014/06/21/Sisi-kiss-on-Saudi-king-s-head-sparks-Twitter-buzz> Al-Matooq (2014) also considered El-Sisi's action as behaving "in line with the principles of a real Arab man" when he realised that King Abdullah was unwell.

¹⁶² This image stirred a little storm in the Egyptian public opinion, which refused to see the president of Egypt acting in apparent submissiveness to the King. Regardless of the Saudi King's age, the public saw this as symbolic of Egypt's changing position with Saudi Arabia. Akhbarak.net published an article on 6 March 2017 stating that "some bloggers objected to El-Sisi's reception of King Abdullah, kissing his forehead, and sitting bent over, which violated protocol in their view, to place the King in a higher position than the president" [My translation from Arabic]. Retrieved 19 November 2021, from <https://akhbarak.net/news/10451235/articles/24587267/15-كيف-انهارت-مكانة-مصر-الدولية-في-عهد-السيدي>

¹⁶³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1cvCE9II1CI&t=4362s>

include Saudi Arabia, the most relevant, while eliminating Jordan, the less relevant. For the title, MM ignored the original wording and, instead, carefully selected the most humiliating words Nasser uttered against Saudi Arabia during his two-and-a-half-hour speech, such that viewers are prepared to accommodate the new narrative reframed simultaneously in other sites of manipulation. In the introduction, MM also accuses Saudi Arabia of being assisted by the British against the Yemeni revolution. The injection of this information can further accentuate the “agency to the foreigner” narrative in which not only is Saudi Arabia targeted but also Al-Sisi is indirectly embedded. The following table illustrates these levels of manipulation:

Table 43

Video Clip 1: Non-Verbal and Verbal Manipulation in Paratext

MM's TT Title	ST Title (1 st part)	LT	ST Title (2 nd part)	LT
Egypt President Nasser: Shoe more Honorable than <u>the Crown of Saudi Arabia.</u> ¹⁶⁴	خطاب الرئيس جمال عبد الناصر في عهد النصر من بورسعيد ¹⁶⁵ 1962./12/23	President Gamal Abdel Nasser's Speech in Era of Victory, Port Said.	السياسي يستقبل الملك السعودي على متن الطائرة. ¹⁶⁶	El-Sisi Receives Saudi King on Board.
Date: 20/07/2014 Time: 00:00:63	Date: 23/12/1962 Time: 02:03:26. Source: Egyptian national TV.		Date: 20/06/2014 Time: 00:03:33. Source: Al Arabia.	

¹⁶⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3YA96PG9Opc>

¹⁶⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1cvCE9II1CI&t=4362s>

¹⁶⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Q0p94-3G1U>

Introduction: “While Saudi Arabia was bankrolling the royalists, and the British gave them covert assistance, the Egyptian army was assisting the Yemenis in promoting revolutionary reform against the Saudi-backed monarchy in Yemen”.

Simultaneously, textual manipulation is utilised (see Table 44), possibly to avoid any narrative incoherence resulting from the sole non-verbal manipulation, which shows the need “to make use elsewhere of certain other reductions or additions in order to safeguard character coherence, plot coherence, etc.” (Delabastita, 1989, p. 201).

Table 44

Video Clip 1: Verbal Manipulation in Text

Frame	ST	TT	LT
3	كل واحد فيهم جزمته أشرف من الملك سعود والملك حسين.	Every one of their shoes has more honor than <u>the</u> <u>crown (expansion) of</u> <u>Saudi Arabia and Jordan</u> (paraphrase).	Every one of their shoes is more honorable than King Saud and King Hussein.
4	مباحثات قمة بين الرئيس السيسي والعاقل السعودي.	(decimation)	Summit discussions between President El- Sisi and Saudi King.

As shown in Frame 3: LT, King Saud and King Hussein are mentioned by Nasser in the first part of the video clip. An accurate transfer of his utterance in the TT might create a narrative incoherence as a whole because the second part shows different participants, namely, King Abdullah and El-Sisi, which are MM’s targets in the first place. To make its accentuated narrative ultimately coherent, MM’s subtitler resorted to exploiting expansion, paraphrase, and decimation, which can hardly be technical but rather ideological.

First, using expansion and paraphrase (Frame 3, and Figure 89 above) resulted in a TT expression that is twelve characters longer than the ST utterance and nine characters longer than the LT. With expansion, the selective appropriation pattern of addition is used: putting the word “crown” in Nasser’s mouth invokes his past narrative, generally against the present Saudi and Jordanian monarchies rather than merely their former symbols. With paraphrase, a frame ambiguity to reposition the targeted participants is constructed: altering the specific expression “King Saud” with the general expression “Saudi Arabia”, pragmatically involves King Abdullah as a representation of the Saudi monarchy and El-Sisi as a servant of that monarchy, and hence, narrative coherence is achieved. Second, the ideological exploitation of decimation (Frame 4), or, more realistically, the selective appropriation pattern of omission, reinforced the previous frame’s ambiguity by concealing the visual heading (see Figure 91 below), which shows the actual reason behind the leaders’ meeting in the second part of MM’s video clip.

Figure 91

MM’s Video Clip 1: Frame 4



El-Sisi receives King Abdullah for the Arab summit, 2014 June 20

This multilevel process of manipulation has ultimately led to reframing the original narrative, as follows.

Table 45*Recontextualisation/Reframing Outcomes*

Original Context/Narrative (first part)	Original Context/Narrative (second part)	TT Context/Narrative
Presidential speech about the victory of the Egyptian Army.	A presidential receipt for a political summit in Egypt.	High treason for serving the reactionist Saudi monarchy and agency to the British.

(b) Accentuated Narrative of “Salafi Terrorism” vs “Shiite Peace”. MM has elaborated this narrative in several video clips, yet the study discusses only two examples.

First Example. The non-verbal manipulation of this example includes the high level of appropriately selecting the original video to be embedded in MM’s accentuated narrative of “Salafi terrorism vs Shiite peace”. The original video has been temporally reframed by selecting only a 1:39-long video clip from its whole duration to fit into the new causal emplotment. The original video was broadcast on OTV in March 2013 and recirculated with subtitles by MM more than a year later, on 22 June 2014, the same month in which the city of Mosul fell to ISIS (Strachan, 2017, p. 1). The reconfiguration of the temporality feature, here, seems to have an intentional implication: the 2013 narrative of the Lebanon–Syria conflict seems embedded (as will be substantiated in the following example) in the 2014 narrative of the Iraq-ISIS conflict elaborated in most of MM’s video clips. This embeddedness mainly emphasises the embroilment of the terrorist groups in all conflicts, no matter the time or place. But the inclusion of the labels “Salafists”, “Salafist cleric” and “Salafism” (underlined in the text and paratext) may generate an interpretive frame in which Salafists, in particular, are emplotted as dangerous terrorists, corresponding with a

broader narrative of Salafism, particularly dominant and “generally misunderstood in the public domain”, as Maher (2016) also argues (cited in Shackle, 2016). Although some scholars divide Salafis into purists, politicians, and jihadis (Maher, 2016, p. 9), MM seems to use the general terms of Salafists and Salafism intentionally, for political reasons.

To reinforce this causal employment, MM injects the TT title with the term “Salafist”, which does not exist in the ST title. Also, MM compares, in the added introduction (Table 46), between what it describes as a Sunni ideology that legitimises visiting shrines versus Salafi ideology that seeks to destroy them, resembling the ISIS terrorist meta-narrative of blowing up shrines.

Table 46

Video Clip 18: Non-Verbal and Verbal Manipulation in Paratext

MM's TT Title	ST Title	LT
Lebanese Sunni Journalist: <u>Salafists</u> are Harmful to Islam. ¹⁶⁷	إعلان الجهاد من بعض المشايخ اللبنانيين وخاصة الشيخ الرافي والشيخ أحمد الأسير بسوريا ردا على مشاركة حزب الله بالقتال دعما للنظام السوري. ¹⁶⁸	Declaration of Jihad by Some Lebanese Sheikhs, Especially Sheikh Al- Rafei and Ahmed Al-Assir in Syria in Response to Hezbollah's Participation in Fighting in Support of Syrian Regime.
Date: 22 June 2014 Time: 00:01:39	Date: 3 May 2013 Time: 00:40:05. Source: OTV.	

¹⁶⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LEK359nrxwc>

¹⁶⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b6B7BG3QS4I>

Introduction: “... Salem Zahran in a heated debate with Salafist cleric Omar Bakri on Lebanon’s OTV. Zahran emphasizes that visiting shrines such as the Zainab shrine in Damascus is a traditional Sunni custom in stark parallel with Salafism which seeks to destroy them. ... Zahran openly supports Hezbollah and the Syrian government.”

With such a pattern of addition, MM establishes a pattern of relationality which reconfigures the original narrative’s participants to encompass external—perhaps unconnected—parties in an interdependent relationship: ISIS terrorists, Al-Qaeda jihadists, Salafists. In the ST narrative, participants are positioned as the Lebanese jihadists of Al-Qaeda against the troops of the Syrian regime, whereas, in the TT narrative, they are repositioned as ISIS and Salafists (unuttered in the ST) fighting together against the Syrian and Iraqi regimes.

In correspondence with the ideological manipulation in the paratext, MM’s subtitler decides on some textual choices which seem to manipulate the ST narratives for the same ideological consideration. The following frames (Table 47) include the utterance of the debater, Zahran, who seems to be given priority by selecting him, on most occasions, to subtitle at the expense of his opponent, Omar Bakri¹⁶⁹.

Table 47

Video Clip 18: Verbal Manipulation in Text

Frame	ST	TT	LT
2	الفرق بيننا وبينهم أنهم يسيئون للإسلام،	The difference between us (Sunnis) (expansion) and	The difference between us and them

¹⁶⁹ Character selectivity is a reframing strategy previously identified in Chapter Five, pp. 240–241, the fourth example, 18/8, 01:02–01:10, Screenshot 19.

	ويسوؤون الإسلام، كما لون أنه،	them <u>(Salafists)</u> (expansion) lies here. They harm Islam.	is that they denigrate Islam,
4	"إذا كان رفضا حب آل محمد، فليشهد الثقلان أي رافضي"	"If loving Mohamed's family means that I am a <u>Shiite</u> , I am one _____ (paraphrase) (resignation) . <u>Let them be</u> <u>witnesses, I am a rejectionist</u> <u>Shiite (expansion).</u> "	"If loving Mohamed's family is Rafidism, then <u>let Jinn and</u> <u>mankind witness that</u> I'm a Rafidi."
5	الإمام الشافعي رد عليهم قبل منا، هؤلاء ليسوا جددا، إن الفكر،	Imam Shafei answered them <u>(Salafists)</u> (expansion) before us. They are not new in doing this.	Shafei responded before us. They're not new.

In Frame 2: Figure 92, Zahran compares what he considers moderate Sunni, including himself and his like-minded, and his opponent, who is a jihadi extremist "often accused of links with Al-Qaeda" (BBC News, 2014). These descriptions are repeated in more than one place throughout the original video; yet, as shown in the LT of this example, Zahran implicitly refers to these parties as "us" and "them" and does not mention any labels, which triggers a potential frame ambiguity that can involve any (relevant or irrelevant) party. In what ostensibly seems to be a technical manipulation, MM's subtitler ideologically exploited this frame ambiguity by using the expansion strategy, not to explain the actual parties of the comparison, but rather to deliberately add the unuttered, irrelevant label "Salafists". This choice of expansion positions Salafists instead of the original participants of the ST (i.e., jihadists of Al-Qaeda) in a hostile relationship with Sunnis. This text-level manipulation (i.e., a selective appropriation pattern of addition) narratively juxtaposes with the other previous levels of manipulation and solidifies the same causal emplotment that

characterises MM's accentuated narrative: Salafism and terrorism are two sides of the same coin.

Figure 92

MM's Video Clip 18: Frame 2



Zahran debates Omar Bakri on OTV, 2013 May 01

In Frame 4: Figure 93, Zahran mentions a verse of one of the Imam Ash-Shafii's¹⁷⁰ famous poems to reinforce his claim that the Imam is Shiite and supports Rafidah¹⁷¹ (Rejectionist) Shiites in particular, therefore, Shiites are far from terrorism. This exploitation, however, seems to be unpalatable for two related reasons. First, the poem per se does not semantically allude to this meaning, as transferred in the LT, because "if" is a conditional element used only for analogy. Ash-Shafii knows very well what Rafidi means, which brings about the second reason. Ash-Shafii himself was not known to have embraced such a belief, as he was quoted as saying explicitly:

¹⁷⁰ Abu Abd Allah ash-Shafi'i, (born 767, Arabia—died Jan. 20, 820, Al-Fustat, Egypt) was a Muslim legal scholar who played an important role in the formation of Islamic legal thought and was the founder of the Shafiiyah school of law (Britannica, 1998).

¹⁷¹ Rafidah (Arabic: "Rejectors") are, broadly, Shiite Muslims who reject (rafd) the caliphate of Muhammad's two successors, Abu Bakr and Umar (ibid.).

“I have not seen among the heretics a people more famous for falsehood than the Rafidi Shia” (Taimiyyah, 2020, p. 22). Using the high level of selective appropriation, the speaker, Zahran, temporally reframed Ash-Shafii’s past narrative by embedding it in his present, diverse, ontological narrative that promotes Shiism and Shiite regimes (e.g., Iran, Hezbollah, Syria, Iraq). Correspondingly, MM highlighted this promotion in the last sentence of its paratextual introduction¹⁷².

Committed to the same ideology that MM seems to endorse throughout its productions, the subtitler has linguistically twisted Ash-Shafii’s narrative (Frame 4: Figure 93) to match the new narrative Zahran probably intended to construct in the ST. The subtitler paraphrased the ST word “رفضاً” (Rafidism) into the more familiar alternative “Shiite”. They also reduced the ST utterance by resignating the religious-specific expression “فليشهد الثقلان” (let Jinn and mankind witness) (underlined in the LT) and paraphrasing the statement “I am a Shiite” into the shorter TT alternative “I am one”. These strategies seem, at first glance, to be technically chosen because they save thirty spaces on the screen. Nevertheless, the expansion “let them be witnesses, I am a rejectionist Shiite”, which added an unjustified forty-one characters on the screen,

¹⁷² Relevant stretches underlined in Table 46, p. 314.

leaves no room for that conventional interpretation. More realistically, the reduction was probably ideologically adopted to allow more space for the subtitler to intervene.

Figure 93

MM's Video Clip 18: Frame 4



Lebanese Sunni Journalist: Salafists are Harmful to Islam (English Subtitles)

Zahran defends Rejectionist Shiite, 2013 May 01

The TT expansion accentuates Zahran's ontological narrative about Shiism but also implies Ash-shafii's confession and confirmation on being a Rafidi (Rejectionist) Shiite, which is not what Zahran's original analogy implies. This example seems significant to ponder upon because it leads to a better interpretation of how the subtitles of Frames 2 and 5—where the label "Salafists" is injected—are connected to reframe the ST narrative and, ultimately, produce a politically charged narrative against Salafism in the TT.

In Frame 5: Figure 94, Zahran asserts that terrorists and extremists are not contemporary phenomena but date back to the time of Ash-Shafii, who used to debate them. To elaborate a coherent narrative, however, MM's subtitler distorted the ST wording again and exploited the expansion strategy to add the label "Salafists" as an explanation of the ambiguous expression "رد عليهم" (answered them). Instead of revealing the actual participants (i.e., jihadists of Al-Qaeda) of the ST narrative in the TT subtitle, the subtitler chose to position Salafists in a contentious relationship with Ash-Shafii. The repositioning of the ST narrative participants, as a whole, activates MM's public narrative which embeds Salafists as terrorists wherever and whenever

they exist, hence, making them politically or religiously mistrusted. In turn, Shiites, including Rafidis (Rejectionists), are trustworthy as they have been purportedly lent credibility by one of the most famous Sunni scholars. Furthermore, MM’s injection of its rival label “Salafists” does not exclude (albeit implicitly) its main target rival, Saudi Arabia, reframed often explicitly, as demonstrated in other examples of the analysis chapters.

Figure 94

MM’s Video Clip: Frame 5



Zahran quotes from Shafii’s book, 2013 May 01

Ultimately, this multilevel process of ideological manipulation has led to a new narrative, as shown below:

Table 48

Recontextualisation/Reframing Outcomes

Original Context/Narrative	TT Context/Narrative
The declaration of Jihad’s Fatwa by Lebanese jihadists in Syria.	The menace of terrorist Salafism to Islam and the peace and goodness of Shiism.

Second Example. The non-verbal manipulation of this example includes appropriately selecting the Al-Mayadeen TV video clip and disseminating it ten days after the dissemination of the previous video clip (Table 46). The reconfiguration of temporality and relationality featured in this example explicitly emphasises the causal emplotment of Salafists as terrorist actors in the 2014 Iraqi/ISIS conflict, accentuated implicitly in the previous example. Simultaneous choices of verbal manipulation identified at the paratextual and textual levels may confirm this. As shown in Table 49 below, a different title and an introduction are added in the paratext, with the label “Salafists” (unuttered in the ST) to the terrorist labels of “Al-Qaeda” and “ISIS” in the Iraqi/ISIS context.

Table 49

Video Clip 13: Non-Verbal and Verbal Manipulation in Paratext

MM’s TT Title	ST Title	LT
Grand Iraqi Sunni Mufti Khalid Al-Mulla: 300 Sunni Clerics Slaughtered by <u>Salafists</u> of Al Qaeda and ISIS. ¹⁷³	خالد الملا: مرتزق سني ينحر فقيها سنيا. ¹⁷⁴	Khalid Al-Mulla: Sunni Mercenary Slaughters a Sunni Cleric.
Date: 02/07/2014 Time: 00:02:07	Date: 01/07/2014 Time: 00/02/08. Source: Al-Mayadeen TV.	
Introduction: “Iraqi Sunni cleric Khaled al-Mulla on Al-Mayadeen TV expressed his concern over <u>Salafists</u> of Al-Qaeda and ISIS, stating that they had slaughtered over 300 Sunni clerics in Iraq”.		

¹⁷³ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rvNupoSw_u8

¹⁷⁴ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6qsl_LOywO4&t=33s

This selective appropriation pattern of addition can be the basis of an interpretive frame (Baker, 2006a, p. 122) that meshes the ideologies of these labels together, constructing a negative narrative against Salafism and strengthening its hold in viewers' perception. This narrative, at a broader level, seems to be accumulated throughout most of MM's video clips,¹⁷⁵ implicitly or explicitly embedding Saudi Arabia (the capital of Salafism)¹⁷⁶ as the main source of violence and terrorism in the Middle East, as further demonstrated below. In its title, MM also adds a label of reverence "Grand Mufti" (which does not appear in the ST title) to Al-Mulla¹⁷⁷, probably to lend credibility to his shocking news and reinforce the interpretive frame in question.

To link the narrative parts together, MM's subtitler(s) carried out similar interventions in the text that are, again, unlikely to be technical but rather ideological. Apart from his explicit accusation of Al-Qaeda, Al-Mulla takes an ambiguous stance against other terrorist groups by referring to them as "productions" of Al-Qaeda (Table 50: Frame 2: LT).

Table 50

Video Clip 13: Verbal Manipulation in Text

Frame	ST	TT	LT
2	نحن خاصة كأهل سنة في العراق عندنا تجربة مريرة مع القاعدة ووليداتها،	We, especially as Sunnis in Iraq, have a bitter experience with Al	We, especially as Sunnis in Iraq, have a bitter experience with Al

¹⁷⁵ This refers to the feature of narrative accrual, which is the "outcome of repeated exposure to a set of related narratives, ultimately leading to the shaping of a culture, tradition, or history" (Baker, 2006a, p. 101).

¹⁷⁶ For more on Salafism, Jihadi-Salafism, and Wahabis, see *Salafi-Jihadism* by Maher S. (2016).

¹⁷⁷ The speaker appearing on the screen, see Figure 94, p. 320.

		Qaeda and <u>its ilk</u> (<u>Salafists</u>) (expansion).	Qaeda and its productions.
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MM’s subtitler(s) exploited this frame ambiguity by adding (ostensibly expanding for technical reasons) the unuttered label “Salafists” to position them in relation to the participants of the original narrative, namely, Al-Qaeda terrorists (Figure 95). Subtly, the subtitler also paraphrased the literal equivalent “its productions” of the ST expression “وليداتها” into “its ilk”, possibly because the preservation of the literal equivalent would not be chronologically palatable, especially by the viewers of such a genre, who are likely to be politically and theologically aware that Salafism and Salafists are historically well earlier than Al-Qaeda. Hence, the “its ilk” choice is more likely to conform with the multilevel additions of the label “Salafists”—the targeted and distorted entity for which this video clip is specifically selected and reframed.

Figure 95

MM’s Video Clip 13: Frame 2



Al-Mulla condemns Al-Qaeda and ISIS’s crimes, 2014 July 01

The following table shows how, ultimately, this multilevel process of ideological manipulation can lead to a different narrative, as follows.

Table 51

Recontextualisation/Reframing Outcomes

Original Context/Narrative	TT Context/Narrative
Al-Qaeda and ISIS terrorism in Iraq.	Salafi, Al-Qaeda, and ISIS Terrorism.

(c) **Accentuated Narrative of “Hezbollah’s War on Saudi and Qatari Terrorism”**. The non-verbal manipulation of this example includes the high level of appropriately selecting an OTV video clip to be embedded in MM’s accentuated narrative, which implicitly exalts Iran by venerating its ally (i.e., Hezbollah) while explicitly defaming and demonising Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and their religious clerics. This pattern of selectivity contributed partly to the establishment of a new causal emplotment, which the reconfiguration of temporality feature has also played a vital role in accomplishing. As shown in Table 52 below, the original video was disseminated on OTV in June 2013 regarding Hezbollah’s intervention in Al-Qusayr to prevent the fall of Assad’s regime in Syria.¹⁷⁸ Almost a year later, MM recirculated the same video with English subtitles in August 2014, corresponding to the date of the deadly confrontations between the Lebanese army and Islamist militants in the Lebanese city of Aarsal¹⁷⁹ and the fall of the Iraqi city of Mosul to ISIS.

¹⁷⁸ <https://studies.aljazeera.net/en/reports/2013/05/201351583630252325.html>

¹⁷⁹ This event will be discussed further in the following example.

Table 52*Video Clip 11: Non-Verbal and Verbal Manipulation in Paratext*

MM's TT Title	ST Title	LT
Lebanese MP: Saudi Arabia's Grand Mufti is a Retard. ¹⁸⁰	أحداث القصير وتداعياتها الداخلية والخارجية. ¹⁸¹	Al-Qusayr's events and their internal and external repercussions.
Date: 08/08/2014 Time: 00:02:49	Date: 09/06/2013 Time: 01:02:37. Source: OTV	
Introduction: ... Wiam Wahab called <u>Saudi Arabia's</u> Grand Mufti a "Retard" on OTV, a Lebanese television channel. The attack was directed at Abdul-Aziz ibn Abdullah Al ash-Sheikh and Muslim Brotherhood cleric Youssef al-Qaradawi and called on the two to "clean their mouths before talking about <u>Hezbollah's resistance</u> ."		

MM reframed the original narrative temporally by selecting only 2:49 minutes in which the guest, Wiam, uses the most hurtful descriptions to humiliate his opponents and the best descriptions to glorify his proponents. MM also reframed the original narrative spatially through a paratextual addition of a new title and an introduction that fit the appropriately selected clip. Together, these reframing strategies seem to have helped MM construct an interpretive frame that guides the viewer's perception towards the participants of the accentuated narrative, not only the humiliated antagonists but also Hezbollah, whose intervention in Syria is proudly described as "resistance" (underlined in MM's introduction).

¹⁸⁰ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v3K5uWjSQXs>

¹⁸¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ty4hFzYiR6Q>

In the original video, the main participants of Al-Qusayr's narrative are Hezbollah and Assad's regime against the Syrian opposition¹⁸². Therefore, the embeddedness of the past narrative of Al-Qusayr's 2013 events in the TT's present narrative of Aarsal's 2014 events may have entailed a repositioning of some original participants in relation to other participants dictated by the setting of the accentuated narrative. According to one of MM's public narratives (interpreted in many examples), Middle Eastern conflicts are being fuelled by specific actors, the most active of which is Saudi Arabia through its support of terrorist groups. In MM's video clip, therefore, the participants are repositioned to be Saudi Arabia and the Muslim Brotherhood's Muftis, who are embedded as foreign aggressors and intruders supporting terrorism in Syria and Iraq, vs Hezbollah militants, who are embedded as legitimate cross-bordered resistance fighters. Such a causal emplotment is not merely elaborated in this immediate narrative but also in other narratives¹⁸³ outside the contexts of the Lebanon-Syrian and Iraqi/ISIS conflicts.

The verbal manipulation also included textual interventions to elaborate a coherent narrative. These interventions are made through exploiting the paraphrase and expansion strategies in what, critically, seems to be an ideological rather than technical manipulation.

Table 53

Video Clip 11: Verbal Manipulation in Text

Frame	ST	TT	LT
6	بدو يطهر تمو قبل ما يحكي عن مقاومين،	Therefore, <u>he should purify</u> <u>his mouth first before uttering</u> <u>a word (paraphrase)</u> about	He should wash his mouth first before

¹⁸² <https://studies.aljazeera.net/en/reports/2013/05/201351583630252325.html>

¹⁸³ The Saudi/Houthi and Palestine/Israel conflict, for instance.

		<u>brave (expansion)</u> resistance fighters.	speaking about resistance fighters...
32	من؟ الخليج والدول العربية؟ قادر يوصل لهونيك حزب الله؟!	- Who do you mean? Arab countries in the <u>Persian (expansion)</u> Gulf? All of them.	- Who? The Gulf and Arabic countries?! Is Hezbollah able to reach there.

In a single frame of utterance (Frame 6), MM’s subtitler was able to elaborate the accentuated narrative in question. In the ST, Wiam used the proverb “بدو يطهر تمه” (he should purify his mouth before speaking) to humiliate Saudi Arabia’s Mufti. Despite Wiam’s hastened speech being recurrently interrupted by the host¹⁸⁴, the subtitler rendered the proverb mostly literally to maintain the humiliation of Saudi Arabia in the TT (see also Figure 96). Ignoring the lengthening of the subtitle, the subtitler also interestingly paraphrased the word “يحكي” (speaking) into the dysphemistic longer expression “uttering a word”, which can imply a further sense of challenge and threat. It seems difficult for such a choice to take into consideration the technical constraints of this particular utterance. What makes it even more difficult is the other technically unjustified choice: the selective appropriation pattern of adding

¹⁸⁴ Discussed technically in Chapter Five, see pp. 208–209, Screenshot 12.

(ostensibly expanding) the unuttered adjective “brave” to glorify the resistance fighters of Hezbollah.

Figure 96

MM’s Video Clip 11: Frame 6



Wahhab glorifies Hezbollah fighters on OTV, 2013 June 09

MM’s subtitler makes another choice that signals the organisation’s ideology for which they are working. In the ST (Table 53: Frame 32), the host asks Wiam if Hezbollah’s intervention can reach some further Arab countries, including those of the Gulf, like Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and Qatar, as shown in the LT. The controversial term *the Gulf*, and whether it is the Arabian Gulf or the Persian Gulf, has long been the basis of a geopolitical struggle between the Arabs and Iranians. It forms a dilemma for journalists talking about it and, therefore, they prefer to take a neutral position by simply calling it “the Gulf” (Whitaker 2010).

Although OTV’s host maintains this neutrality in the use of the term, MM’s subtitler chooses to take a subjective position adding (ostensibly expanding) the unuttered label “Persian” to the TT subtitle (Frame 32 and also Figure 97). Retrieving from the context of the dialogue, the term is unambiguous, and one can easily assume that the interlocutors are not talking about the Mexican Gulf. Such patterns of selective appropriation and labelling allow MM’s subtitler to position themselves ideologically on

the side of Iran’s geopolitical cause and the right of its ideological ally, Hezbollah, to intervene on its lands usurped by Arab governments.

Figure 97

MM’s Video Clip 11: Frame 32



OTV host asks Wahhab about the Arabs’ ability to repel Hezbollah’s attack, 2013 June 09

This multilevel process of manipulation has ultimately led to the following TT narrative:

Table 54

Recontextualisation/Reframing Outcomes

Original Context/Narrative	TT Context/Competing Narrative
Qusayr’s events and their internal (in Syria) and external (in Lebanon and the Gulf States) repercussions.	Degradation of the Saudi Mufti and glorification of Hezbollah.

(d) **Accentuated Narrative of “Saudi Terrorism”.** The non-verbal manipulation of this example includes a high level of appropriately selecting Al-

Jadeed TV video in its full version to be embedded in MM’s accentuated narrative, which emplots Saudi Arabia as a central actor in the exacerbation of the Middle Eastern conflicts. For strengthening this pattern of causal emplotment, verbal manipulation at paratextual and textual levels take place, as shown in Table 55 below.

Table 55

Video Clip 16. Non-Verbal and Verbal Manipulation in Paratext

MM’s TT Title	ST Title	LT
Lebanese MP Wiam Wahhab Walks out of Studio after Clash with <u>Saudi-Backed Cleric</u> over ISIS. ¹⁸⁵	الوزير السابق وئام وهاب يغادر استوديو الحدث اعتراضا على اتصال من شيخ في هيئة علماء المسلمين. ¹⁸⁶	Former Minister Wiam Wahhab Leaves Al-Hadath’s Studio as an objection to a call from a sheikh in the MSC (Muslim Scholar Committee).
Date: 09/08/2014 Time: 00:02:12	Date: 08/08/2014 Time: 00:01:52. Source: Al-Jadeed YouTube Channel.	
Introduction: A Lebanese MP exits the studio after a Sunni cleric from the <u>Saudi-backed Muslim Scholars Committee</u> called the show on Al-Jadeed TV. ... The Scholars Committee of Lebanon has been under fire lately due to their <u>Saudi backing</u> . During a deal last week <u>brokered by Saudi Arabia</u> , the Grand Mufti of the Committee was ultimately selected Last week, a number of <u>Saudi-backed Sunni clerics</u> were dispatched to Arsal, Lebanon during clashes between the Lebanese Army (LAF) and ISIS. ... However, <u>Saudi Arabia is often accused as a key sponsor of ISIS</u> by various Lebanese political factions.		

¹⁸⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LTWIKeumajk>

¹⁸⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AENWBzydIOY>

A different title and an introduction are added in the paratext with a multifaceted injection of the unuttered label “Saudi”: “Saudi-backed”, “brokered by Saudi Arabia”, and “Saudi Arabia is often accused” (relevant stretches underlined). The spatial reframing initiates an interpretive frame in which a pattern of relationality is established; hence, it juxtaposes the ideology of Saudi Arabia and the terrorist ideology of ISIS and its ilk, accentuating a negative narrative against Saudi Arabia in the viewers’ perception.

In what seems to be a technical manipulation, MM’s subtitler makes some cryptic choices, which are most likely unconventional reframing strategies, to ideologically manipulate the text in coherence with the broader level of manipulation.

Table 56

Video Clip 16: Verbal Manipulation in Text

Frame	ST	TT	LT
1	معي مباشرة عبر الهاتف الشيخ أمير رعد عضو هيئة علماء المسلمين، صباح الخير.	- We have a delegate of the <u>(Saudi-backed)</u> (expansion) Muslim Scholar Committee, Amir Raad on the phone. Good morning.	Live via phone, I have a Muslim Scholar Committee’s member, Sheikh Amir Raad. Good morning.
13	معيب جدا بحقنا كعلماء، بدل ما يُشكر علماؤنا عحقن الدماء... إذا بتريد... من حقنا جدا أن علماءنا دفعوا دمائهم من أجل هؤلاء العناصر الذين تم سحبهم	(decimation)	Raad: This is an abuse to the clerics. Instead of being thankful for them as they gave their blood to rescue the captured,
	المذبة: طيب تفضل ارجع لهون تنقدر نحكي، خلينا نختم الحلقة وارجع بيتكم.	Host: At the very least let me conclude the episode.	Host: Please, let me conclude the episode and go.

	يبطلع جزاءنا أن نحن إرهابيين! هذا الكلام عيب لا يجوز.	(decimation)	Raad: The reward is that we are terrorists! This is unacceptable.
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In a gross violation of the ST utterance, the subtitler (Frame 1) used the selective appropriation pattern of addition for injecting (ostensibly expanding) the unuttered label “Saudi-backed” in the TT subtitle to expose the on-phone guest, Raad (see also Figure 98). Such a choice reinforces the causal emplotment textually embedding the Lebanese Sunni Muslim Scholar Committee in one of MM’s public narratives (i.e., agency to foreigners), which emplots the Committee as a Saudi stooge.

Figure 98

MM’s Video Clip 16: Frame 1



OTV host presents Amir Raad on the phone, 2014 August 08

Textual manipulation does not end there but further includes selective appropriation patterns of omission under the pretext of reducing the ST utterance for synchronisation needs¹⁸⁷. Although the subtitle (Frame 13: Figure 99) appears to be

¹⁸⁷ Discussed technically in Chapter Five (16/14, 01:26–01:38, Screenshot 17, pp. 220–221).

synchronised kinetically with the host, who is moving on the screen, the timing, which continued for six seconds, seems to be sloppy because of the partial negligence of isochrony. The more audible and important utterance of Raad, which started before and continued after the host's utterance, is totally decimated, despite the generous fourteen seconds that could have been split into more than one subtitle. This choice highlights MM's character selectivity.

Figure 99

MM's Video Clip 16: Frame 13



OTV host asks Wahhab to stay while Raad is still speaking, 2014 August 08

Away from the conventional explanations stemming from the technical restrictions of subtitling, more realistic interpretations stemming from the ideological constraints of the subtitler can reveal further considerations. Following Arsal's event in August 2014 (mentioned above), Al-Jadeed TV broadcast this special episode hosting two Lebanese antagonists, Wiam and Raad. As seen in the LT (Frame 13), Raad shows his dissatisfaction with the Lebanese media accusing the Sunni Committee of terrorism, and asks for gratitude rather than denial of its members' sacrifices and efforts in helping the Lebanese army and rescuing its captives from the terrorists. Such statements, nevertheless, do not seem to comply with MM's narrative, in which Raad and the institution he represents are emplotted as ISIS agents who are fulfilling Saudi plots in Lebanon. This terrorist image is emphasised especially in the last sentence of the introduction (underlined in Table 55), hence the ideological impulse of such a

correspondingly drastic reduction in the text. Ultimately, the multilevel process of ideological manipulation has produced the following new narrative:

Table 57

Recontextualisation/Reframing Outcomes

Original Context/Narrative	TT Context/Narrative
A clash between two Lebanese guests: a politician and a cleric.	A clash between two Lebanese guests: a patriotic politician and a Saudi-backed terrorist cleric.

(e) **Accentuated Narrative of “Saudi and Qatari Terrorism” and “Iran’s Innocence of Terrorism”**. The non-verbal manipulation of this example includes the high level of appropriately selecting Al-Jazeera’s video to be embedded in MM’s accentuated narrative in which Iran is emplotted as innocent, and Saudi Arabia and Qatar are emplotted as terrorists. This pattern of causal emplotment is reinforced by reconfiguring the temporality feature of the original narrative, which includes selecting specific parts from the original time of the video, selecting another (unavailable online) short video showing the joy of Abu Firas’s family with his “heroism”, and cobbling them together (Figures 100 and 101) to set up a new context. The order in which the two video clips are positioned elaborates a narrative in which Abu Firas (a Shiite journalist) is embedded as a hero received by his people after defeating his “Saudi, Qatari and ISIS-backed terrorist” Sunni debater Mizan.

Figure 100

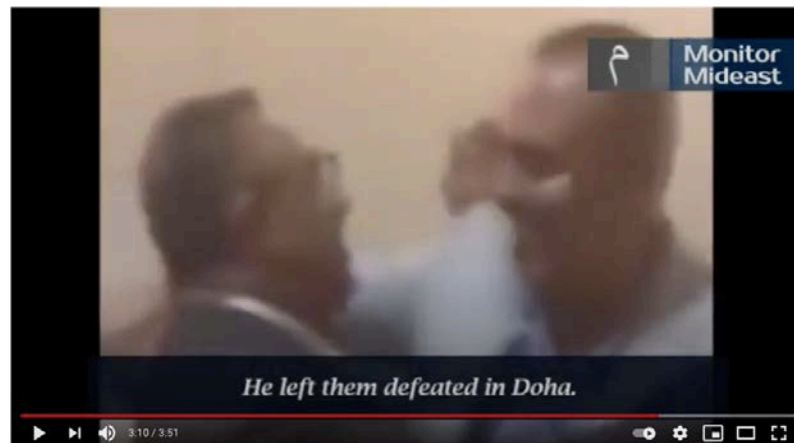
The First Part of MM's Video Clip 19



A debate between Abu Firas (left) and Mizan (right) organised by Qassim on Al-Jazeera, 2014 Jun 17

Figure 101

The Second Part of MM's Video Clip 19



Abu Firas (right) is celebrated by his tribe in Iraq, n.d.

In terms of verbal manipulation, the ST narrative is spatially reframed by the addition—as a pattern of selective appropriation—of a new title and introduction in the paratext, initiating an interpretive frame that guides the viewer's perception in line with the non-verbal manipulation. Rival labels of Saudi Arabia, Qatar, al-Qaradawi, and Ibn Baz (underlined in Table 58 below) are repositioned to be the main participants of the accentuated narrative in question.

Table 58*Video Clip 19: Non-Verbal and Verbal Manipulation in Paratext*

MM's TT	ST Title (1 st part)	LT	ST Title (2 nd part)
Iraqi Writer Abu Firas Attacks <u>Saudi Arabia</u> and <u>Qatar</u> on Al Jazeera. ¹⁸⁸	اشتباك بين ضيفي "الاتجاه المعاكس" بحلقة حول العراق. ¹⁸⁹	A Clash between Guests of "The Opposite Direction" in an Episode about Iraq.	Untitled
Date: 20/06/2014 Time: 00:03:02	Date: 17/06/2014 Time: 00:44:37. Source: Al-Jazeera		Date: Unknown Time: 00:00:47
Introduction: Abu Firas ... took every chance to attack <u>Saudi Arabia</u> , <u>Qatar's Emir</u> and prominent religious clerics <u>Yusuf al-Qaradawi</u> and <u>Ibn Baz</u> in those countries. Abu Firas returned to Iraq, where he received a hero's welcome. Iraq has formally pointed to <u>Saudi Arabia</u> and <u>Qatar</u> as sponsors of the insurgency group <u>ISIS</u> .			

For such a narrative to be wholly woven, MM's subtitler seems to have exploited the decimation and expansion strategies as a disguise for textual patterns of selective appropriation (i.e., omission and addition) (see Table 59). Technically, it could be argued that the subtitler had to reduce some lexical items to cope with the speed of the debate dialogue and add some others to link the fragmented subtitles semantically and syntactically. A narrative analysis, however, precludes such an excuse and reveals notable findings of ideological manipulations. Debaters, particularly Mizan, can be clearly heard uttering important information, the identical

¹⁸⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JCEOX56TnpA&t=58s>

¹⁸⁹ <https://www.aljazeera.net/programs/opposite-direction/2014/6/17/اشتباك-بين-ضيفي-الاتجاه-المعاكس-بحلقة-حول-العراق>

transfer of which might contradict MM’s broad, positive narrative about Iran and other like-ideologised regimes and groups. This information does not even seem to ideologically comply with MM’s accentuated and competing narratives of the immediate context of the video clip in question. The accentuated narrative embeds Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and their religious symbols—including their backed debater, Mizan—as main supporters of ISIS who seek to exclude other antagonists in the Iraqi political scene. The competing narrative defends Iran and embeds the like-ideologised debater, Abu Firas, and his ilk from amongst the Shiite parties, headed by Maliki (former Iraqi president), as national activists and patriots who do not accept foreign aids or dictates. For a coherent elaboration of both narratives, MM’s subtitler opted for ambiguous patterns of manipulation and oscillating choices, as shown below.

Table 59

Video Clip 19: Verbal Manipulation in Text

Frame	ST	TT	LT
18	أبو فراس: لا يا أخي أني أقول لك ما طب بغداد. أقسم بالله ما طب بغداد. ولا واحد يطب بغداد.	I swear <u>ISIS</u> (paraphrase) will not step in Baghdad (decimation).	Abu Firas: No brother I tell you. You won’t enter Baghdad; I swear by Allah. You won’t enter Baghdad. <u>Nobody will enter Baghdad.</u>
	أبو فراس: المالكي منتخب من ربع الشعب العراقي.	Maliki is elected by people of Iraq (decimation).	Maliki was elected by <u>a quarter of Iraqis.</u>
	الميزان: بغداد للعراقيين.	(decimation)	<u>Mizan: Baghdad is for Iraqis.</u>
	الميزان: العراق جميعاً عرب ومنهم السنة أنت، مو جاي والله والله بغداد ما طب بغداد!	(decimation)	<u>Mizan: Iraq is for all Arabs including Sunnis.</u>

			<u>You can't stop us from entering Baghdad.</u>
19	<u>الميزان: بغداد لكل عراقي شريف مو لحضرتك.</u> <u>أبو فراس: ومو لداعش، مو لداعش، هذا الحكي ما بصير، مو لداعش</u>	(decimation)	<u>Mizan: It's for every dignified Iraqi not you.</u> <u>Abu Firas: Not for ISIS. This is unacceptable.</u>
	<u>الميزان: ومو للعصائب.</u>	(decimation)	<u>Mizan: And not for Asa'ib.</u>
	<u>أبو فراس: مو لداعش ومو للعصائب.</u>	(decimation)	<u>Abu Firas: Not for ISIS nor for Asa'ib.</u>
	<u>الميزان: مو للعصائب ومو لأبو الفضل ولا هذول هاي كلها تطلع ولا المالكي خلي يطلعوا القاذورات عملاء إيران خليم يطلعون ما يظلون.</u>	- (decimation) Let those people (Shiites) (expansion) and Maliki get out, they are agents of Iran!	<u>Mizan: Not for Asa'ib not for Abu Fadl, not even for Maliki. Let them go out. They're all rubbish, Iran's agents and must leave.</u>

In Frame 18, MM's subtitler chose to decimate Abu Firas's expression "Nobody will enter Baghdad" (underlined in the LT) while paraphrasing the rest of his utterance into the TT subtitle "I swear ISIS will not step in Baghdad". Ostensibly, these choices can be technically justified, as they saved sixty-four spaces on the screen. But the eight-seconds-long utterance frame and the positioning of ISIS here instead of the original participants (i.e., nobody) casts doubt on the actual motive. Being embedded in MM's competing narrative, these choices can probably be interpreted more realistically as being chosen to avoid undesirable implications, such as the political exclusion of rival civil parties, for instance. Hence, the utterance was reframed by sacrificing the label "ISIS" whose exclusion (not only political) does not harm, but rather is something everyone wishes. In the same context of embeddedness, the decimation of the ST expression "ربع" (quarter) (underlined in the LT) can

critically be considered as a pattern of selective appropriation that carries a consideration further than the ostensible technicality: maintaining the limited figure “quarter” of electors in the TT may affect the popularity of Malaki, whereas rendering the ST as “elected by people of Iraq” would, otherwise, lend him more political legitimacy.

As evidence of their oscillating position, the subtitler’s professional sensitivity—seen in treating Abu Firas’s utterances—surprisingly fails to find its way to the utterances of Mizan, the immediate target of the accentuated narrative and the representative of the broader targets (Saudi Arabia and Qatar) of MM’s overall public narrative. In Frame 18, Mizan emphasises that Baghdad is all for Iraqis, including Sunnis, but Abu Firas repeatedly insists that it is not for ISIS. He seems to be indifferent to what Mizan is saying, and so does MM’s subtitler. Infuriated by Abu Firas’s negligence, Mizan (Frame 19) responds, “and not for Asa’ib and Abu Fadl” (multinational Iranian-funded Shiite militant organisations controlling Baghdad and accused of war crimes against Sunni Iraqis¹⁹⁰). Interestingly, MM’s subtitler

¹⁹⁰ <https://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/military/2016/1/19/المليشيات-الشيعية-بالعراق-سلطة-فوق>

completely decimated these utterances from the TT, though they seem semantically crucial for an accurate interpretation of the debate (see Figures 102 and 103 below).

Figure 102

MM's Video Clip 19: Frame 18



Iraqi writer Abu Firas attacks Saudi Arabia & Qatar on Al Jazeera (English Subs)

Mizan emphasises that Baghdad is all for Iraqis, 2014 June 17

To avoid any gesture that would associate Iran with terrorism, the subtitler also decimated Abu Firas's utterance in which he admits that Baghdad is "not for Asa'ib" (Frame 19: Figure 103).

Figure 103

MM's Video Clip 19: Frame 19



Iraqi writer Abu Firas attacks Saudi Arabia & Qatar on Al Jazeera (English Subs)

Abu Firas admits that Baghdad is not for Asa'ib, 2014 June 17

Technical constraints are unlikely to be an excuse for such an extreme qualitative reduction because Mizan’s utterance, for instance—the most audible—continued for twenty-six seconds: a sufficient time that can be split into at least three long subtitles. Yet, selectively, the subtitler only subtitled the last part of Mizan’s utterance (double-underlined in the ST and LT: Table 59: Frame 19), in which he yells for the expulsion of Iran’s agents (also see Figure 104 below). The decimation of Asa’ib and Abu Fadl¹⁹¹ from this part, and the preservation of the expression “خاييطلعوا” (Let them go out), prompts a frame ambiguity which allowed MM’s subtitler(s) to render it as “Let those people (Shiite)”.

Figure 104

MM’s Video Clip 19: Frame 19



Iraqi writer Abu Firas attacks Saudi Arabia & Qatar on Al Jazeera (English Subs)

Mizan (right) yells for the expulsion of all Iran’s agents, 2014 June 17

This cryptic expansion has repositioned Mizan against all civilian Shia outside this immediate event instead of the original militant participants decimated in the TT. Accordingly, the transfer of “they are agents of Iran” seems to be unproblematic for

¹⁹¹ For more on Iranian-backed Shiite militias, see *Mapping Militant Organizations* (2018).

MM, in this case, as the utterance has been associated with civilians and, therefore, is an accusation lacking evidence rather than an unequivocal conviction of monitored Iranian-backed militias. Ultimately, as shown in Table 60, these cryptic choices together help reframe a narrative that accentuates the Saudi and Qatari Terrorism against Iraqis, specifically the Shia, and another that contests the Iranian Terrorism in turn.

Table 60

Recontextualisation/Reframing Outcomes

Original Context/Narrative	TT Context/Narrative
Collapse of Iraqi forces. Maliki sectarian. ISIS terrorists. Sistani’s Fatwa of holy jihad. Iran’s intervention in the Iraqi crisis.	A victory of a heroic Iraqi writer on pro-terrorist entities who are against Iraqi Shiites and Iran.

In the rest of the video clips, where MM’s subtitlers seem to refrain from intervening to reframe narratives at the textual level, narrative reframing takes place at higher levels of non-verbal and verbal manipulation (including paratextual titles and introductions). Intriguingly, all reframed narratives in these video clips are embedded in the same overall public narrative, which embeds the examples discussed above. Due to the focus of the present study on the function of textual manipulation in the whole elaboration of narratives, the use of higher levels of reframing will be demonstrated in the two following examples only:

(Example 1) Accentuated Narratives of “Saudi/Salafi Terrorism” and “Agency to Israel”. The non-verbal manipulation of this example includes the high level of appropriately selecting a video disseminated by the Israeli Channel 2 and Al-Mayadeen to be embedded in MM’s accentuated narrative of Saudi/Salafi terrorism and agency to foreigners. For establishing a new pattern of causal emplotment that achieves this embeddedness in the TT, verbal manipulation also took place as follows.

Table 61*Video Clip 9: Non-Verbal and Verbal Manipulation in Paratext*

MM's TT	ST Title	LT
<u>Saudi-Backed</u> FSA Commander in Syria: Israel Gave us Arms, Medical Treatment. ¹⁹²	تعاون كتيبة الحرمين مع إسرائيل وفق اعترافات مصورة. ¹⁹³	The Collaboration of Al- Hamein Battalion with Israel, According to Video Confessions.
Date: 18/08/2014 Time: 00:00:55	Date: 16/08/2014 Time: 00:00:55. Source: Israeli Channel 2 and Al- Mayadeen.	
Introduction: As-Safouri, a <u>Saudi-backed Salafist</u> commander of the Free Syrian Army's Al-Hamein Battalion, admitted to ... to meet with <u>Israeli</u> officers who later provided him with Soviet anti-tank weapons and light arms		

MM reframed the ST narrative spatially by adding—as a pattern of selective appropriation—a different title and an introduction in the paratext with an injection of rival labels, such as “Saudi-backed” and “Saudi-backed Salafist”. This injection shows how Saudi Arabia and Salafism (outside this event) are positioned as focal participants in a suspicious relationship with the original participants of the ST narrative, namely, the *terrorist* militants of the Syrian Free Army and Israel. Such patterns of reframing help MM embed Saudi Arabia and Salafists as pro-terrorists and Israeli agents and trigger an interpretive frame that guides the way viewers make sense of the subtitles accordingly, even without the subtitles being linguistically distorted. Table 62 shows how the original context/narrative has been distorted in the TT.

¹⁹² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51jK1miaGAM&t=4s>

¹⁹³ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c_FJ8H6oc4A

Table 62*Recontextualisation/Reframing Outcomes*

Original Context/Narrative	TT Context/Narrative
Syrian rebel's collaboration with Israel.	Saudi Arabia's and Salafists' collaboration with Israel.

(Example 2) Accentuated Narrative of “Iran, the Saviour”. The non-verbal manipulation of this example includes the high level of appropriately selecting Al-Alam TV video to be embedded in MM's accentuated narrative, which ennobles Iran and its allies while defaming Israel and its allies. For reinforcing the TT narrative emplotting Iran as a saviour, the original video was also temporally reframed. Only 32 seconds were selected in which the Hamas leader thanks and exalts Iran for its financial and military support. Other parts, opposed to the organisation's ideology (briefed in Table 64), were eliminated. The ST narrative has also been reframed spatially through the paratextual addition of a new title and an introduction containing elements that appropriately comply with the new causal emplotment (relevant stretches underlined in Table 63).

Table 63*Video Clip 14: Non-Verbal and Verbal Manipulation in Paratext*

MM's TT	ST Title	LT
Senior Hamas Leader: Iran Assists us without Preconditions. ¹⁹⁴	لقاء خاص مع الدكتور محمود الزهار. ¹⁹⁵	Special meeting with Dr Mahmoud Al-Zahar.

¹⁹⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kdD2iECh-Dk>

¹⁹⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pdXgDY17inQ>

Date: 09/08/2014	Date: 24/05/2014
Time: 00:00:32	Time: 00:28:28. Source: Al-Alam TV.
Introduction: ... Hamas leader stated that <u>Iran supports the movement militarily and financially</u> . The Hamas leader further emphasized that <u>Iran and Hamas are part of a regional ‘resistance program’ aimed at halting the Israeli and Allied advance</u>	

Such analysis may help interpret how the temporality feature of the original narrative was reconfigured in the TT. May 2014, when Hamas leader was interviewed, witnessed the deadly consequences of the US-mediated peace failure between Israel and Hamas¹⁹⁶. The narrative of this past event, which depicts Iran as a devoted saviour, is embedded in the TT present narrative disseminated in August 2014, a date that accommodates a range of extreme violent events in Lebanon, Syria, and Iraq¹⁹⁷. This embeddedness often alludes to an expected conclusion and a pattern of relationality; the common factor that represents the saviour’s role in both narratives is Iran. Israel and its allies, in turn, represent the villain role which fuels violence. Such emplotment does not occur in a vacuum but corresponds to other interpretive frames triggered in most, if not all, of MM’s public narratives. It ultimately leads to the following TT context/narrative.

Table 64

Recontextualisation/Reframing Outcomes

Original Context/Narrative	TT Context/Narrative
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¹⁹⁶ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/nov/18/israel-palestinian-violence-timeline>

¹⁹⁷ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/aug/04/-sp-middle-east-politics-2014-egypt-syria-palestine-iraq-gaza>

<p> Hamas’s Dispute with Fatah. Positive Relationships with Iran and the Egyptian president El-Sisi.</p>	<p>Iran’s exceptional and sole support of the Palestinian resistance programme.</p>
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A broad insight shows that MM strengthens its overall public narrative by grouping most of its video clips under titles that explicitly accentuate the demonisation of Saudi Arabia, its allies, and Israel, and the glorification of Iran and its allies. The following titles attest to this narrative feature¹⁹⁸:

- *Palestinian Cleric Defends Iran and its Nuclear Program*
- *Christian Singer Appeals: ISIS, Israel different Sides of the Same Coin*
- *Syrian President Assad on Gaza, Attacks Saudi Arabia and Arab Spring*
- *Syrian President Al-Assad: Thanks Hezbollah, Iran, China and Russia*
- *Sunni Palestinian Jihad Thanks Iran and Hezbollah*
- *Palestinian Spokesman: Saudi Arabia Supports Israel, Iran our Ally*
- *Renowned Iraqi Sunni Cleric: ISIS Created by Jew, Al Baghdadi is a Dog*

6.2.2 PMW’s Accentuated Narratives

The non-verbal manipulation of the following examples includes higher-level patterns of selective appropriation of specific videos disseminated by the Palestinian Authority (PA) TV to be embedded in PMW’s immediate, accentuated TT narratives. These videos are also embedded, on a larger scale, in PMW’s overall public narrative, where PA media and the resistance programme of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) and its factions (e.g., Fatah) are emplotted as pro-terrorist organisations. Consequently, all narratives that are deeply rooted in the Palestinian

¹⁹⁸ The feature of narrative accrual, which is the “outcome of repeated exposure to a set of related narratives, ultimately leading to the shaping of a culture, tradition, or history” (Baker, 2006a, p. 101; also see Chapter Three for more details).

moral and national system, such as martyrdom, captivity, resistance, and support, are contested and accentuated differently—often in terrorist/religious-based narratives. Israel, on the other hand, is emplotted—though often implicitly—as the legitimate state and oppressed victim who sustains the most casualties and losses in the conflict despite its political and military dominance. The following examples demonstrate these patterns of causal emplotment in more detail.

(a) Accentuated Narratives of “Terrorists and Murderers, not Martyrs” and “Fatah, a Terror Organisation”. The non-verbal manipulation of this example includes the high level of appropriately selecting this video to be embedded in PMW’s accentuated narratives in which what Palestinians describe as a martyr is emplotted as a terrorist and murderer and what they describe as a legitimate faction of resistance (i.e., Fatah) is emplotted as a terror organisation. These patterns of causal emplotment are reinforced by the reconfiguration of the temporality feature, which includes the temporal and spatial reframing of the elements that construct the original narrative. As shown in Table 65, PMW reframed the sequence of the original video temporally by selecting a short video clip in which one of Fatah’s leaders, Al-Masri, is mourning the *martyrs* of Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades.

Table 65

Video Clip 4: Non-Verbal and Verbal Manipulation in Paratext

PMW’s TT	ST Title	LT
Fatah honours <u>murderers</u> in Bethlehem: “Loyalty to	عاشت ذكرى استشهاد قادة كتائب شهداء الأقصى. ²⁰⁰	Long live the anniversary of the Martyrdom of Al-

²⁰⁰ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G8CVZyDnKMk>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yrVHevkXGNw>

their rifle”; <u>Murderer</u> of 2 “created a legend”. ¹⁹⁹		Aqsa Martyrs Brigades Leaders.
Date: 16/05/2019 Time: 00:03:06	Date: 04/04/2019 Time: unknown. Source: PNN Palestine News Network.	
<p>Introduction and Blurb: Omar Abu Laila – 19-year-old Palestinian <u>terrorist</u> who stabbed and murdered Israeli soldier Gal Keidan, and shot and murdered Rabbi Achiad Ettinger</p> <p>Hussein Abayat – ... was involved in ... the murder of Sgt. Max Hazan and the injuring of border policeman Shimon Ohana. ...</p> <p>Atef Abayat – Tanzim (Fatah <u>terror</u> faction) commander ... who was accused of murdering Sarit Amrani</p> <p>Raed Abu Freiha – Raed Abayat – Palestinian <u>terrorist</u>, a member of the <u>Fatah</u> Al-Aqsa Martyrs’ Brigades <u>terror</u> organization, who murdered 15-year-old Israeli Avi Boaz ... and Israeli police officer Moshe Dayan</p> <p>Dalal Mughrabi – female Palestinian <u>terrorist</u> ... she and other Fatah <u>terrorists</u> hijacked a bus ..., murdering 37 civilians, 12 of them children, and wounding over 70.</p> <p>Ayyat Al-Akhras – ... A member of Fatah, Al-Akhras carried out a suicide bombing attack ..., murdering 2 and wounding 28.</p>		

The ST is also reframed spatially by adding—as a pattern of selective appropriation—a different title, and an introduction and blurb in the paratext with an injection of the labels: “murderer”, “terrorist”, and “terror” (underlined in Table 65). Serving the purpose for which the video was likely carefully selected, the three sites additionally highlight important information documented in the past about the mourned *martyrs*, and PMW seems to be employing it to contest their embellished

¹⁹⁹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yrVHevkXGNw>

image of the present original video. Ultimately, these patterns of verbal manipulation may help initiate an interpretive frame for the viewers that constraints their judgement of the ST according to the new causal emplotment established in the TT.

For a coherent elaboration of the accentuated narratives in question, PMW’s subtitler carried out simultaneous manipulation in the text that can hardly be seen as technical but must be ideological. The subtitling strategies of expansion and paraphrase seem to be exploited to contest the original narratives of the ST shown in the LTs of Table 66.

Table 66

Video Clip 4: Verbal Manipulation in Text

Frame	ST	TT	LT
11	ليخرج شبل	And here a lion cub (<u>i.e., terrorist, murdered 2</u>) (expansion) ,	And here lion cub...
19	فلسطين من بحر ها لنهرها	Palestine, from the [<u>Mediterranean</u>] (paraphrase) Sea to the [<u>Jordan</u>] (paraphrase) River (<u>i.e., all of Israel</u>) (expansion) ...	Palestine, from its sea to its river.
28	والمغربي وآيات الأخرس	[<u>Dalal</u>] (expansion) Mughrabi (<u>i.e., led murder of 37</u>) (expansion) ... and Ayyat Al-Akhras (<u>i.e., suicide bomber, murdered 2</u>).” (expansion)	And Mughrabi and Ayyat Al-Akhras.

In Frame 11: Figure 105, PMW’s subtitler transferred the ST description “lion cub” identically but, at the same time, contested it by exploiting the expansion strategy

to appropriately add the unuttered expression “(i.e., terrorist, murderer 2)”. Far from any explanatory reason, such an expansion is more likely to reframe the heroic image of the original participant differently in the TT—even more so, as the specific injection of the label “terrorist” may embed the immediate TT narrative in the meta-narrative of the “War on Terror”. In other words, the new causal emplotment may imply that any Israeli reaction to Palestinian resistance can be justified by the legitimacy of the war.

Figure 105

PMW’s Video Clip 4: Frame 11



Al-Masri mourns Palestinian fighters executed by Israel, 2019 April 04

In Frame 19: Figure 106, PMW’s subtitler has exploited the expansion and paraphrase strategies for another ideological reason: to accentuate Israel’s territories and contest the contradicting narrative of the ST regarding them. In the ST, as shown in the LT, Al-Masri refers to what he considers as Palestine’s territories “من بحرها” (from its sea to its river). In what ostensibly seems to be a technical expansion, PMW’s subtitler chose to paraphrase the repeated pronoun “its” into the labels “Mediterranean” and “Jordan” to remove ambiguity from the speaker’s utterance about Palestine’s territories. More critically, however, the labelling choice should not be considered separately but linked to the other reframing choice: the selective appropriation of the expansion “(i.e., all of Israel)”. It, then, could be realistically interpreted as an ideological choice deliberately intended to contest, in the TT, that the

lands located within the labelled territories all belong to Israel: not as the ST narrative claims²⁰¹.

Figure 106

PMW's Video Clip 4: Frame 19



Al-Masri denies Israel's existence, 2019 April 04

In Frame 28: Figure 107, PMW's subtitler seems to have exploited the expansion strategy in three places for the same ideological purpose. Although, in the first place, the expansion "Dalal" seems to identify who Mughrabi is, in the two other places, the expansions (underlined in Frame 28) seem to be exploited to expose the honoured participants of the ST narrative.

²⁰¹ The accentuated narrative of Israel's territories has been widely elaborated in other selected video clips discussed below in this chapter.

Figure 107

PMW's Video Clip 4: Frame 28



Al-Masri glorifies two Palestinian suicide bombers, 2019 April 04

This multilevel process of ideological manipulation has ultimately produced the following TT context/narrative:

Table 67

Recontextualisation/Reframing Outcomes

Original Context/Narrative	TT Context/Narrative
Fatah's honouring of martyrs in the 17 th anniversary of their martyrdom.	Terrorist Fatah's honouring of the killing of Palestinian terrorists and murderers.

(b) Accentuated Narrative of “Terrorism, Not Resistance”. The non-verbal manipulation of this example includes the high level of appropriately selecting this video to be embedded in PMW's accentuated narrative in which what Palestinians believe as a legitimate resistance led by patriot fighters is emplotted as a terrorist activity led by terrorists. For further establishing this pattern of causal emplotment (likewise realised in the previous example), the temporality feature of the original narrative seems to be reconfigured using the strategies of temporal and spatial reframing. As seen in Table 68, PMW carefully selected only a thirty-seconds-long

video clip from the original time, which contains what is believed to be relevant to the accentuation of the narrative in question.

Table 68

Video Clip 8: Non-Verbal and Verbal Manipulation in Paratext

PMW's TT	ST Title	LT
<p><u>Terrorist Murderer</u> Dalal Mughrabi Represents "Palestinian Heroism", Says Official PA TV Narrator.²⁰²</p>	<p>فلسفة الصبر حياة تروي قضية.²⁰³</p>	<p>The Philosophy of Patience; A life Narrates a Cause.</p>
<p>Date: 28/05/2018 Time: 00:00:30</p>	<p>Date: 09/03/2018 Time: 00:39:21. Source: PA TV YouTube channel.</p>	
<p>Introduction and Blurb: Dalal Mughrabi led the most lethal <u>terror</u> attack in Israel's history, ... she and other Fatah <u>terrorists</u> hijacked a bus ..., murdering 37 civilians, 12 of them children, and wounding over 70.</p> <p>Kiryat Shmona Massacre – Three <u>terrorists</u> ... Palestinian Munir Al-Mughrabi "Abu Khaled," Syrian Ahmed Mahmoud, and Iraqi Yassin Al-Houzani "Abu Hadi" – ... murdered 18 Israelis – 16 civilians, 8 of them children, and 2 soldiers – and wounded 16 on April 11, 1974.</p> <p>Beit Shean attack – three <u>terrorists</u> ... murdered 4 Israelis and injured more than 20 on Nov. 19, 1974. The <u>terrorists</u> were killed by Israeli special forces during the attack.</p>		

²⁰² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qofOopg7DK8>

²⁰³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nlmy3yZDrZs>

In this multifaceted process, verbal manipulation takes place as well. PMW adds a different title, and an introduction and blurb in an attempt to reframe the ST video clip spatially, as another pattern of selective appropriation. As similarly done in the previous example (Table 65), the present introduction and blurb, in particular, seem to have been added to provide information documented in the past so that PMW can employ it to contest PA TV’s present public narratives of “patriotic resistance”, “resistance fighters”, and “brave operations”. This may also explain the reason behind injecting the labels “terrorist(s)” and “terror”, which, again, trigger the meta-narrative of the “War on Terror” in which Israelis are emplotted as the soldiers of the war while Palestinians are emplotted as the cause of terror. Such various reframing patterns can automatically prompt an interpretive frame that guides the viewer’s perception towards the accentuated narrative throughout the TT subtitles without the need to distort them linguistically.

Nevertheless, PMW’s subtitler (individually or institutionally) does not seem to dispense with simultaneous manipulation at the textual level: often, ostensibly, this comes as an excuse for a technical necessity that needs specific strategies to tackle. Critically, however, deeper insight can reveal further considerations—namely, ideology. The following table shows different patterns of textual manipulation.

Table 69

Video Clip 8: Verbal Manipulation in Text

Frame	ST	TT	LT
5	في عمليات باسلة، في الخالصة وبيسان	– with bold operations (<u>i.e.</u> , terror attacks) (expansion) in <u>Kiryat Shmona, Beit</u> <u>Shean</u> (paraphrase),	with brave operations, in Al-Khalisa and Beisan,

In Frame 5: Figure 108, PMW’s subtitler seems to have exploited the expansion “(i.e., terror attacks)” not to avoid ambiguity but to compete with the ST narrative, which boasts the military operations led by Fatah’s fighters.

Figure 108

PMW's Video Clip 8: Frame 5



PA TV praises Military operations against Israel, 2018 March 09

The subtitler also dislocated the heading “Official PA TV Narrator” on the screen, probably to identify the voice and affiliation of the narrator. Yet, such a choice can have serious consequences when accompanied by the present subtitle. Both selective appropriation patterns of addition, especially with the injected label “terror”, can ultimately help to not only embed the utterance in PMW’s immediate narrative and the meta-narrative accentuated in the paratext but also signals its overall public narrative emplotting the PA media outlets and PLO as terrorist organisations.

What also draws attention in Frame 5 is that PMW’s subtitler seems to have exploited the paraphrase strategy, as well, to reframe the ST narrative differently. The substitution of the Palestinian Arab labels “Al-Khalisa and Beisan” with the competing Israeli Hebrew labels “Kiryat Shmona and Beit Shean” triggers PMW’s narrative of Israel’s territories. It may accordingly reposition the participants of the original narrative (i.e., Palestinian fighters) in relation to the event: they are no longer patriots defending their own lands but rather outsider aggressors who intrude on Israel’s territories, hence the legitimacy of Israel’s military response. Reframing by labelling, introduced by Baker (2006a), is a core strategy in elaborating narratives and, thus, is discussed further in the following examples. Such a comprehensive process of manipulation has ultimately led to the following TT context/narrative.

Table 70

Recontextualisation/Reframing Outcomes

Original Context/Narrative	TT Context/Narrative
Documenting the operations of the Palestinian resistance and glorifying their heroic Martyred fighters.	Documenting the Palestinian terrorist attacks and glorifying their dead terrorists.

(c) **Accentuated Narrative of “Israel’s Territories”**. The non-verbal manipulation of this example includes the high level of appropriately selecting this competition programme to become embedded in PMW’s accentuated narrative, in which what Palestinians believe to be their land is emplotted conversely as belonging to Israel’s territories—the Land of Promise²⁰⁴—proving their right to exist. For reinforcing this pattern of causal emplotment, PMW also reconfigured the temporality feature of the original narrative through spatial and temporal reframing. As seen in Table 71, PMW carefully selected a collection of separate clips from the original video and cobbled them together into a short video clip that only contains what ideologically serves the accentuation of the respective TT narrative.

²⁰⁴ See <https://mfa.gov.il/MFA/MFA-Archive/2003/Pages/The%20Land%20of%20Promise-%20The%20Covenant%20of%20Abraham%20-%20The.aspx>

Table 71*Video Clip 20: Non-Verbal and Verbal Manipulation in Paratext*

PMW's TT	ST Title	LT
PA TV Quiz Denies Israel's Existence: Regions in Israel are "Palestinian". ²⁰⁵	ريجان ريجان. ²⁰⁶	Winner Winner.
Date: 18/07/2018 Time: 00:01:52	Date: 18/07/2018 Time: 00:26:07. Source: PA TV YouTube channel.	

Yet unchanged, the original title sounds odd to the new setting; therefore, a spatial reframing also had to be carried out. This reframing includes adding an entirely new title in the paratext, initiating an interpretive frame that would create two diverse attitudes in the viewers' perceptions: an attitude sympathetic with the Israeli cause and one of outrage against what is reframed as the Palestinian falsification of place names. Moreover, commencing the title with the channel's name (i.e., PA TV) would highlight that the PA officials—not only the Palestinian laymen—are also involved and operate largely within this interpretive frame. The embeddedness of the PA officials can be recognised (explicitly or otherwise) in many examples throughout PMW's products, as demonstrated below.

The ideological manipulation continues to include various patterns of textual distortion under the pretext of technicality. In the ST (Table 72: Frames 3, 20, 23, 33), the host and the quiz contestants keep referring to the place names of Negev, Caesarea, Safed, and Julis as belonging to Palestine, not Israel. PMW's subtitler chose to transfer this claim literally, a choice that may discharge their duty to be faithful to the ST narrative since the utterances are transferred identically rather than suppressed.

²⁰⁵ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=evHR_4tRsZE

²⁰⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XFprY8D6NMU>

Table 72

Video Clip 20: Verbal Manipulation in Text

Frame	ST	TT	LT
3	جنوب فلسطين.	Southern Palestine. (<u>i.e., the Negev is in southern Israel</u>) (expansion)	Southern Palestine.
20	قيصرية.	Caesarea (<u>i.e., Caesarea is in northern Israel</u>) (expansion)	Caesarea.
23	تقع في شمال فلسطين.	It's located in northern Palestine. (<u>i.e., Safed is in northern Israel</u>) (expansion)	It's located in northern Palestine.
28	وادي الزرقاء، وادي الحولة، وادي غزة.	The <u>Taninim</u> (paraphrase) River, Hula [<u>Lake</u>] (Expansion) , or <u>Besor</u> (paraphrase) River.	Az-Zarqa River, Hula River, or Gaza River.
33	جولس.	Julis. (<u>i.e., in northern Israel</u>) (expansion)	Julis.

Ideologically speaking, such a choice may have been taken to expose the Palestinian narrative, which PMW describes in the title as the PA's denial of Israel's existence. Yet this narrative was not left unchallenged. PMW's subtitled exploited the expansion strategy as a pattern of selective appropriation to add, between brackets, extra information (relevant stretches underlined) that unequivocally indicates their

commitment to the Israeli narrative: the respective areas are part of Israel, not Palestine (also see Figures 109, 110, 111, 112).

Figure 109

PMW's Video Clip 20: Frame 3



PA TV host asks people where the Negev is, 2018 July 18

Figure 110

PMW's Video Clip 20: Frame 20



PA TV host asks people where Caesarea is, 2018 July 18

Figure 111

PMW's Video Clip 20: Frame 23



PA TV host asks people where Safed is, 2018 July 18

Figure 112

PMW's Video Clip 20: Frame 33



PA TV host asks people where Julis is, 2018 July 18

Furthermore, the respective placenames were not altered in the brackets because they are used identically in both the Jewish and Arab narratives. When place names are different, ideological alterations can be realised through the narrative reframing strategy of labelling or, more specifically, what Baker (2006a, p. 123) calls the rival systems of naming. Defining this system, MacIntyre states that “to use a name is at once to make a claim about political and social legitimacy and to deny a rival

claim” (1988, p. 378). In Frame 28: Figure 113, PMW’s subtitler exploited the paraphrase strategy to alter the ST place name Az-Zarqa River into Taninim, and Gaza River into Besor River.

Figure 113

PMW’s Video Clip 20: Frame 28



PA TV host asks people where Az-Zarqa River, Hula River, and Gaza River are, 2018 July 18

Such a choice seems to explicitly contest the rival Palestinian narrative of the ST place names, emphasising Israel’s territories and its right to defend them. Such an intervention, as Baker (2006a, p. 128) argues, “will not necessarily be welcomed by all readers or listeners ..., but it does allow the translator/(subtitler) or interpreter to signal their position in relation to the narrative in question”. Ultimately, the multilevel process of manipulation has led to the following new context/narrative in the TT:

Table 73

Recontextualisation/Reframing Outcomes

Original Context/Narrative	TT Context/Narrative
Quizzing Palestinian people in a Ramadan competition programme.	Palestinians denying Israel’s existence and territories.

(d) Accentuated Narrative of “Palestinian Prisoner(s), not Captive(s)”.

The non-verbal manipulation of this example includes the high level of appropriately selecting this interview video to be embedded in PMW’s accentuated narrative, in which what is labelled originally in the Palestinian (broadly Arab) public narrative as a captive of legitimate resistance against Israel’s occupation forces is emplotted conversely as a prisoner of terrorism against the legitimate state of Israel. Semantically, the two terms are different: the latter refers to a person arrested and confined in prison by law, and hence, it fits the Israeli narrative better; the former refers to a person taken by force by an enemy in a war, and hence, it fits the Palestinian narrative better.²⁰⁷ In all its subtitled video clips, therefore, PMW keeps signalling its position with the Israeli narrative by opting for the term “prisoner” as an equivalent for the Arabic term “أسير” instead of the term “captive”. This ideological choice is most likely taken to contest the *legitimacy* of the Palestinian resistance, giving it a rebellious hue against the *legitimacy* of Israel’s dominance. In this context, Hanna Issa (a professor of International Law and secretary-general of the Muslim-Christian Association for the Protection of Al-Quds and the Holy Places) challenges this particular pattern of label reframing by affirming:

The term “captive” applies to everyone arrested by opponents and enemies, whether in a fight or raiding him in his own home. The term “prisoner”, on the other hand, applies to everyone arrested by their state law for committing a legal violation, offence, or crime of any sort. Despite successive Israeli governments denying Palestinian captives as captives of war, the rules of international law ... confirm that they are captives of war in the broad and narrow sense of the legal term. This concept is an integral part of the Palestinian cause, and no solution can be achieved, with the Israelis, except by closing the captives file, which is one of the Palestinian national constants. (“News Legal Analysis”, 2009)²⁰⁸

²⁰⁷ See <https://comparewords.com/captive/prisoner>

²⁰⁸ Translated from Arabic into English by the researcher.

For reinforcing its new causal emplotment, PMW reconfigured the temporality feature of the original narrative through patterns of spatial and temporal reframing. As shown in Table 74, it carefully selected a collection of separate clips from the original video and cobbled them together into a short video clip highlighting only what ideologically serves the accentuation of the TT narrative in question.

Table 74

Video Clip 19: Non-Verbal and Verbal Manipulation in Paratext

PMW's TT	ST Title	LT
Senior PLO Official: Killing Israelis is not “terror”; it’s not “criminal” – it’s “legitimate”. ²⁰⁹	صادق الكنيست الإسرائيلية بالقراءة النهائية على قانون نهب مخصصات الشهداء والأسرى من ميزانية السلطة الفلسطينية وما يتم تحويله من أموال تجبيها إسرائيل لصالح السلطة الفلسطينية. ²¹⁰	The Israeli Knesset has finally approved the law of <u>looting the martyrs’ and captives’ allocations</u> from the Palestinian Authority’s budget and tax money collected by Israel.
Date: 02/09/2018 Time: 00:00:25	Date: 03/07/2018 Time: 00:09:19. Source: PA TV YouTube channel.	
Introduction and Blurb: ... Israeli law <u>to deduct and freeze</u> the amount of money the PA pays in salaries to imprisoned terrorists and families of “Martyrs” from the tax money Israel collects for the PA. Should the PA stop these payments for a full year, the Israeli government would have the option of giving all or part of the frozen money to the PA. ...		

²⁰⁹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-6DmDOeDO88>

²¹⁰ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l4u3RCrfc-A>

To make sense of the non-verbal manipulation of PMW's video clip (or what is supposed to be the ST) we must recognise that several patterns of verbal manipulation also took place. PMW spatially reframed the ST by adding—as a pattern of selective appropriation—a new title and an introduction and blurb in the paratext. Although the title does not explicitly trigger PMW's immediate, accentuated narrative, it is created in such a way as to correspond, on a larger scale, to its overall public narrative of “PA and PLO are pro-terrorist organisations”. Additionally, the title seems to implicitly accentuate the immediate narrative of “prisoners, not captives” in that it criticises the legitimacy by which Palestinian fighters attack and kill Israelis.

The introduction and blurb, in turn, show how PMW explicitly signals its position with both the immediate and large narratives through an injection of particular expressions (relevant stretches underlined in Table 74). They also show how PMW exploits these paratextual sites to contest the degrading narrative of the ST expression “قانون نهب” (law of plunder) (underlined in the ST and LT titles) by altering it with the TT expression “law to deduct and freeze” (double underlined). Such reframing patterns together trigger the Israeli public narrative “the legitimacy of Israel's State” and initiate a different interpretive frame for the viewers who depend on English subtitles to understand and appreciate the ST narratives.

For elaborating a coherent narrative, PMW's subtitler decides on some textual choices, most likely adopted for ideological reasons; the strategies highlighted in Table 75 can hardly have been adopted for any technical necessity.

Table 75

Video Clip 19: Verbal Manipulation in Text

Frame	ST	TT	LT
1	عيسى قراقع – وزير هيئة شؤون الأسرى والمحررين.	Director of PLO Commission of <u>Prisoners'</u> (paraphrase) (decimation) Affairs Issa Karake. (dislocation)	Issa Karake—Minister of Commission of Captives and Liberated Affairs.

	نحن نرفض هذه القوانين، سنبقى إلى جانب عوائل	We reject these laws (i.e., to <u>deduct terrorist (paraphrase) salaries from PA tax money</u> (expansion)... We continue to stand by the families	We reject these Laws. We'll keep supporting the families
2	الأسرى والشهداء والجرحى، لن نتخلى عنهم.	of the <u>prisoners (paraphrase)</u> (i.e., terrorists) (expansion), the Martyrs (i.e., terrorists) (expansion), and the wounded. (deletion)	Of the prisoners, the Martyrs and the wounded. <u>We won't abandon them.</u>

In Frame 1: Figure 114, PMW's subtitler dislocated the ST heading above the subtitle to identify the speaker, but with some necessary adjustments. They exploited the paraphrase strategy to alter the literal equivalent "the captives" of the ST label "الأسرى" with the TT label "prisoners". As a pattern of selective appropriation, they also decimated the ST label "محررين" (the freed), probably because it does not conform to the Israeli narrative, which emplots them as legally detained: thus, they may only be released under Israeli law, not freed by the force of resistance. This semantic reduction may have also been undertaken to shorten the heading so that more space on the screen is left for the subtitle, which was indeed expanded with the forty-six-character expression (i.e., to deduct terrorist salaries from PA tax money). Although

such an expansion seems to be technical as it explains what the ambiguous ST utterance “القوانين” (laws) means, it may not be without an ideological dimension.

Figure 114

PMW's Video Clip 19: Frame 1



Karake condemns Israel's deduction of the PA salaries, 2018 July 03

According to the Palestinian narrative, the salaries deducted by Israel are for Palestinian families of martyrs, captives, and wounded. In turn, PMW's subtitler signalled his position towards this narrative by exploiting the ambiguity frame of the ST utterance, mentioned above, to alternatively inculcate Israeli public narratives in the TT. Thus, the labels in question were paraphrased into “terrorists”. Technically, one can argue that the “terrorist” choice is shorter in characters, yet more objective alternatives such as fighters or rebels would have also sufficed. Realistically, therefore, the subtitler's choice can be interpreted as an attempt to embed the ST narrative not only in the immediate narrative of “terrorists, not martyrs” but also in the unarticulated meta-narrative of the “War on Terror”, which can ultimately validate the issuing of such laws.

Emphasising this embeddedness, PMW's subtitler adopted similar choices in Frame 2: Figure 115. The ST label “الأسرى” (the captives) was, again, paraphrased into “the prisoners”. The TT labels “prisoners” and “martyrs” were accompanied with the expansion “(i.e., terrorists)”. With the sceptic perspective of this narrative analysis, even the deletion choice (underlined in Frame 2: LT) can be said to have been wittingly

adopted to leave more space for ideological manipulation disguised as technical expansion.

Figure 115

PMW's Video Clip 19: Frame 2



Senior PLO official: Killing Israelis is not "terror"; it's not "criminal"- it's "legitimate"

Karake asks for the rights of the captives, martyrs, and wounded, 2018 July 03

The multilevel manipulation has led the following TT context/narrative:

Table 76

Recontextualisation/Reframing Outcomes

Original Context/Narrative	TT Context/Narrative
Criticism of Israel's law of plundering the martyrs' and captives' allocations from the PA.	PLO's support of terrorists and its objection to Israel's law to deduct terrorists' salaries.

(e) **Accentuated Narratives of "PA, a Pro-Terrorist Organisation" and "Muslim/Jew Religious Conflict"**. The non-verbal manipulation of this example includes a higher-level pattern of selective appropriation of this video to be mainly embedded in PMW's accentuated narrative of "PA, a pro-terrorist organisation", which is painstakingly elaborated in numerous video clips of its daily dispatches. Additionally, the video seems to be embedded in one of PMW's public narratives,

which emplots the cause of Palestine/Israel not merely as a political conflict over legitimacy, territories, and resources but, ultimately, as a religious conflict between Muslims and Jews. For reinforcing these patterns of causal emplotment, the temporality feature of the original narrative has been reconfigured. PMW (Table 77) reframed the original narrative temporally by carefully selecting a thirty-seven-seconds video clip that suits the accentuated narratives in question and excludes the least relevant segments. Also, PMW reframed the original narrative spatially by adding a different title and introduction and blurb in the paratext.

Table 77

Video Clip 14: Non-Verbal and Verbal Manipulation in Paratext

PMW's TT	ST Title	LT
Fatah Official Sends "Greetings" to Family of <u>Murderer</u> Omar Abu Laila, "may Allah Reward them". ²¹¹	عضو اللجنة المركزية لحركة فتح عباس زكي يتفقد أعمال البناء في المنزل الجديد لعائلة <u>الشهيد</u> عمر أبو ليلي. ²¹²	Fatah Movement Central Committee Member, Abbas Zaki, Visits Constructions of New House of Family of <u>Martyr</u> Omar Abu Laila.
Date: 16/07/2019 Time: 00:00:37	Date: 01/07/2019 Time: 00:00:51. Source: PA TV YouTube channel.	
Introduction and Blurb: Omar Abu Laila – ... Palestinian <u>terrorist</u> who ... murdered Israeli soldier Gal Keidan, and ... Rabbi Achiad Ettinger "Allah, let his spirit dwell in the bodies of green birds flying as they please in Paradise" – the text on the poster refers to the Islamic tradition that Martyrs in Paradise reside in the bodies of green birds, see for example this Hadith: "Narrated		

²¹¹ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VJ4p0jL8_II

²¹² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gAjfNhgghTM>

Ka'b bin Malik: From his father that the Messenger of Allah said: 'The souls of the martyrs are in green birds, suspended from the fruit of Paradise, or the trees of Paradise.'" [Jami'at-Tirmidhi 1641].

In the ST title, the member of the Fatah Central Committee, Zaki, appears as a political official who performs a national duty to support a family of a martyr of resistance (as described by the PA and its people), whereas, in the TT title, he is embedded as supporting a criminal on a religious rather than political and national basis. This religious implication is noted through the injection "may Allah Reward them", a religious usage (foreign to TT culture), which may be unintended by Zaki's utterance, as discussed further below. The introduction and blurb, on the other hand, emphasise the new patterns of causal emplotment explicitly and connect to the religious implications made in the title. In the first passage, PMW reframed Abu Laila's original narrative by labelling him as a terrorist murderer, which then implies PA's encouragement of terrorism. In the second passage, PMW provided, from the Islamic tradition (i.e., Hadith²¹³), an explanation for the poster appearing in one of the parts it selected for its video clip (See Figure 121 below), which may also have an association with what, in its title, PMW assumes that Zaki has said.

Together, these ideological choices help trigger an interpretive frame in which the Palestine/Israel conflict is emplotted for the viewers as a purely religious conflict between Muslims and Jews, implicitly condoning the other Arab religious groups. Beyond the question of intelligibility, this pattern of causal emplotment can be recognised through PMW's "blurring of distinctions between ... the categories of 'Arab' and 'Muslim'" through its overall output, as Baker (2010, p. 359) also argues regarding the like-ideologised MEMRI. In fact, the "Arab" category is not specific to Muslims only, but also includes Christians, Druze, and other smaller minorities

²¹³ Hadith refers to the "sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, revered and received as a major source of religious law and moral guidance" (Britannica.com).

(Bickerton, 2020). For Palestinian Christians, for instance, resistance is likewise a legitimate national cause for which they struggle. Giovanni attests to this by stating: “As Palestinians, Christians tend to embrace the national narrative that advances a political discourse opposed to Israel’s policies and, at times, also questions its right to exist as a Jewish state” (2019, p. 1). This further implies that the resistance per se is not exclusively religious, let alone only Islamic.

In the same context, the findings of Banat’s study show that “the motivations of martyrdom (a Palestinian public narrative) are nationalist, religious and humanitarian” (Banat, 2010, p. 2). Analysing various Palestinian stories of resistance, Banat confirms that the drives for martyrdom are mainly “nationalistic and are closely associated with the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories and the daily suppressive practices against the helpless and unarmed Palestinian people” (ibid., p. 12). Mahmoud Abbas, the Arab Muslim president of PA, confirms the national

narrative, as seen in the subtitles of the following screenshots (Figures 116 and 117) of PMW's video clip²¹⁴:

Figure 116

PMW's Video Clip 6



Abbas at the Arab League conference in Cairo, 2019 May 12

Figure 117

PMW's Video Clip 6



Abbas confirms the nationalistic narrative of Palestinian resistance, 2019 May 12

PMW, nevertheless, attempted to compete with this rival narrative and accentuate its Israeli version. For elaborating the latter most coherently, PMW (as in

Table 78) also intervened at the textual level by exploiting some subtitling strategies for ideological reasons.

Table 78

Video Clip 14: Verbal Manipulation in Text

Frame	ST	TT	LT
2	لعائلة الشهيد عمر أبو ليلي	of Martyr Omar Abu Laila's Family (i.e., <u>terrorist, murdered 2</u>) (expansion)	of Martyr Omar Abu Laila's family
6		<u>Zaki with poster of murderer (expansion) Abu Laila (dislocation)</u>	
7	الله يجبر صواب أهله، لأن كل اللي بنسويه	<u>May Allah (imitation) reward [Abu Laila's] family, (paraphrase) because all that we are doing</u>	May Allah grants his family patience, because everything we do

²¹⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=srKY8cf2pYU>

9	<p>أنه يجي في بال أبوه أو أمه. "اللهم اجعل روحه في حواصل طير خضر تطيروا في الجنان حيث يريدوا".</p>	<p>when he enters the thoughts of his father or mother. <u>Text on poster of murderer Abu Laila: "Allah, let his spirit dwell in Paradise".</u> (dislocation)</p>	<p>he comes into his father or mother's thoughts. 'Allah, put his spirit in green giblets dwelling in Paradise wherever he wants'.</p>
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In Frame 2: Figure 118, PMW's subtitler exploited the expansion strategy to add the TT expression "(i.e., terrorist, murdered 2)" as a pattern of selective appropriation. In addition to the mention of the murder, Abu Laila's public narrative of patriotism was negatively reframed by labelling him as a terrorist.

Figure 118

PMW's Video Clip 14: Frame 2



PA TV coverage of Zaki's visit to Omar Abu Laila's family, 2019 July 01

In Frame 6: Figure 119, the ST scene was silent, yet, the most important spot, which shows Zaki holding a poster of Abu Laila (highlighted in PMW's introduction and blurb), was circled in red and dislocated into a left-aligned subtitle, so it does not cover that spot. With the injection of the label "murderer" in this subtitle, the dislocation seems to be exploited to contest Abu Laila's heroic image accentuated in

the ontological religious narrative (invoked in the poster made by his family) and in the public narrative (invoked by the PA's TV). By highlighting Zaki with Abu Laila's poster, the strategy also implicitly accentuates a blatant accusation of Fatah as a religious-based organisation supporting terrorist martyrdom.

Figure 119

PMW's Video Clip 14: Frame 6



Fatah official sends "greetings" to family of murderer Omar Abu Laila, "may Allah reward them"

Zaki (in the red circle) takes a picture with Abu Laila's family during his visit, 2019 July 01

In Frame 7: Figure 120, the subtitler chose to transfer the ST expression “الله” into “Allah” using the imitation strategy instead of translating it into a more familiar TT equivalent: “God”. This choice highlights PMW’s general tendency²¹⁵ to preserve religious references, which ultimately seems to feed into its religious-based narrative around the Palestinian resistance. Moreover, what PMW’s subtitler rendered in the TT as “May Allah reward [Abu Laila’s] family” does not seem to be accurate and, thus, seems, more critically, to feed into the same narrative. In the ST, Zaki’s utterance “الله يجبر صواب أهله” refers to an Arabic cultural (not necessarily Islamic) expression wishing

²¹⁵ See also Chapter Five: 11/3: Screenshot 33: Figure 49 on pp. 249–250.

Abu Laila's family patience for their loss. In the TT, however, the subtitled's choice (i.e., paraphrasing the utterance) refers specifically to a religious (mostly Islamic) expression asking Allah to reward Abu Laila's family.

Figure 120

PMW's Video Clip 14: Frame 7



Zaki (right) wishes Abu Laila's family patience for their loss, 2019 July 01

In the TT, praying for Allah's reward implies encouragement and pride in violent activities. This might explain the inclusion of Abu Laila's poster in the video clip, which was also elaborated in the paratext (i.e., introduction of Table 77) and dislocated in the TT subtitle (Frame 9: Figure 121).

Figure 121

PMW's Video Clip 14: Frame 9



A poster of Omar Abu Laila shown during Zaki's visit, 2019 July 01

Such a multi-levelled process of manipulation, therefore, is likely to reframe the Palestinian narrative of a “national resistance” as a narrative of a religious conflict in which PA, PLO and their factions are emplotted as religion-centred pro-terrorist organisations.

Table 79

Recontextualisation/Reframing Outcomes

Original Context/Narrative	TT Context/Narrative
Fatah’s condolence and support for the families of martyrs.	Condolence of terrorist Fatah to families of terrorists, and its support of terrorism.

The various patterns of reframing, including the selective appropriation of adding elements, which often have no presence in or around the ST, have established a pattern of relationality, as argued by Baker (2010, p. 361), “in which what might otherwise be seen as unconnected elements are brought together and made to look like interdependent phenomena”: in this case, a demonisation of Islam (prompted by the mention of Hadiths); terrorism; Palestinian resistance; martyrdom; and PA, PLO, and Fatah as pro-terrorist organisations.

6.2.3 MEMRI’s Accentuated Narratives

The non-verbal manipulation of the following examples includes higher-level patterns of selective appropriation of specific videos from different Arab and Muslim media outlets to be embedded not only in MEMRI’s immediate TT narratives but also, on a larger scale, in its overall public narrative—a narrative in which Arabs and Muslims and their governments are emplotted as backward, ignorant, violent, and aggressors, while Westerners are emplotted (usually implicitly) as innocent victims, peace seekers, and freedom and democracy promoters. The following examples demonstrate these patterns of causal emplotment in more detail.

(a) **Accentuated Narrative of “Terror of Arab Regimes”**. The non-verbal manipulation of this example includes the high-level pattern of selective appropriation of Qadhafi’s video embedded in MEMRI’s accentuated narrative of “Terror of Arab Regimes”. Qadhafi’s message, which addresses many parties but mainly Al-Qaeda terrorists, armed rebels, and peaceful protesters in Libya, is emplotted in MEMRI’s TT as a threatening message addressing foreign intruders, particularly America and NATO. To reinforce its new causal emplotment, MEMRI has reconfigured the temporality feature of the original narrative through patterns of spatial and temporal reframing. While excluding the many issues Qadhafi has mentioned in the original video, MEMRI carefully selected a collection of twenty separate clips and cobbled them together into a short video clip, as seen in Table 80, to focus only on what ideologically serves the accentuation of the TT narrative in question.

Table 80

Video Clip 1: Non-Verbal and Verbal Manipulation in Paratext

MEMRI’s TT	ST Title	LT
Libyan Leader Mu`ammar Al-Qadhafi: If the Americans or the West Enter Libya, <u>They will be “Entering Hell and a Sea of Blood”</u> . ²¹⁶	احتفالية الفاعليات الشعبية بالعيد (34) لإعلان قيام سلطة الشعب. ²¹⁷	Popular Activities Celebrating the 34 th Anniversary of Establishing the “People’s Authority”.
Date: 02/03/2011 Time: 00:12:51	Date: 02/03/2011 Time: 02:35:39. Source: Al-Jamahiriyah TV.	

²¹⁶ <https://www.memri.org/tv/libyan-leader-muammar-al-qadhafi-if-americans-or-west-enter-libya-they-will-be-entering-hell-and>

²¹⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=816ajcBLtbQ>

As a pattern of selective appropriation, MEMRI added a new title, very different from that of the ST, invoking a new interpretive frame that guides the viewer's perception towards the new emplotment. The ST title was completely ignored, though it was emphasised by Qadhafi at the beginning of his speech. The TT title, in turn, explicitly repositions the secondary participants of the original narrative, namely, America and NATO, to be primary participants in relation to Qadhafi's threat, which included the most intimidating words uttered during his long speech.

For elaborating a coherent narrative, MEMRI's subtitler has opted for some strategies, as shown in Table 81, to manipulate the ST in line with the paratextual and contextual verbal and non-verbal manipulation.

Table 81

Video Clip 1: Verbal Manipulation in Text

Frame	ST	TT	LT
2	احتفالية الفاعليات الشعبية بالعيد (34) لإعلان قيام سلطة الشعب.	(decimation)	Popular Activities Celebrating the 34 th Anniversary of Establishing the "People's Authority"
56	طبعا عدم مقاتلتهم	The fact that we did not fight (the insurgents) (paraphrase)	Of course, not to fight <u>them</u> (he means terrorists)
69	فأولادي هاذوم اللي في بنغازي واللي دايرين خيمة واللي مش عارف شن دايرين،	With regard to my children in Benghazi and <u>Dar Al-Kheima</u> (paraphrase) –	With regard to my children in Benghazi who have set a tent
83	ويحترموا أنفسهم وما يفتحوش هذا الباب	The (insurgents) (paraphrase) should	They (my children) should respect

		beware not to open this door,	themselves and not open this door.
145	راهي ماهيش، ماهيش ماهيش بسيطة لما نحن نتركهم ونرجى النتيجة	What <u>(the insurgents</u> (paraphrase) are doing) is not something trivial that we can ignore,	Ignoring <u>them</u> (he means terrorists) and waiting for the result isn't simple.

In Frame 2, the subtitler seems to have exploited the decimation strategy as a pattern of selective appropriation to neglect the ST's heading displayed on the screen because it does not comply with the elaboration of the new narrative. In Frame 56: LT, Qadhafi talks about Al-Qaeda terrorists, using the ambiguous pronoun "them". MEMRI's subtitler chose to paraphrase the pronoun into "insurgents" (see Figure 122) though in the rest of his unselected speech Qadhafi referred to them as "terrorists".

Figure 122

MEMRI's Video Clip 1: Frame 56



Qadhafi speaks about Al-Qaeda terrorists amongst the protesters, 2011 March 02

In Frame 69: LT, Qadhafi talks about civil protesters and considers them peaceful; this is why he addresses them as "my children in Benghazi who have set a tent". Interestingly, the ST expression "دايرين خيمة" (who have set a tent) was translated inaccurately into what sounds like a city of Dar Al-Kheimia (underlined in the TT, see

also Figure 123), which does not exist in Libya. It could be that the subtitler was unaware of the Northern-African grammatical-specific root “دار” (did) so they opted for a word similar in pronunciation to the ST utterance. More critically, however, it could be that the subtitler intentionally wanted to add another city to maximise the area of peaceful protests that Qadhafi wanted desperately to limit to Benghazi during his speech.

Figure 123

MEMRI's Video Clip 1: Frame 69



Qadhafi sends a message to protesters in Benghazi, 2011 March 02

In Frame 83: LT, Qadhafi warns these peaceful protesters of getting involved in the 2011 uprising and bringing in external parties that can be new colonialism, a successor to the Italians who shed their blood and plundered their country. By using

the same label, MEMRI's subtitler chose to paraphrase the ST pronoun "them" as "insurgents" (Figure 124) though they are originally embedded as peaceful activists.

Figure 124

MEMRI's Video Clip 1: Frame 83



Qadhafi warns protesters not to deal with foreigners, 2011 March 02

MEMRI's subtitler seems to have ideologically exploited the ambiguity frame derived from Qadhafi's ambiguous utterances (underlined in Table 81: Frames 56 and 145) to use the more euphemistic label "insurgents" as a substitute for "terrorists", as seen in Figure 125.

Figure 125

MEMRI's Video Clip 1: Frame 145



Qadhafi warns the world from the danger of terrorists, 2011 March 02

As Baker (2006a, p. 123) argues, such usage of euphemism thrives in the political sphere for various purposes. In this example, Qadhafi’s narrative of “War on Terror”, which encompasses Al-Qaeda terrorists as one of its main participants, was contested by using the reframing strategy of labelling to single out only one general participant in the accentuated narrative: insurgents. In sum, the original narrative, which depicts Qadhafi, in some cases, as a fighter of Al-Qaeda terrorists, has been reframed in MEMRI’s public narrative alternatively. He is emplotted as an immediate danger not only to the legitimate insurgents who received NATO support²¹⁸ but also to the West, and hence, requiring a prompt counter intervention.

Table 82

Recontextualisation/Reframing Outcomes

Original Context/Narrative	TT Context/Narrative
A political speech on the 34 th anniversary of the “The People’s Authority”, and on the 2011 uprising.	Qadhafi’s threat to America and the West from the consequences of intervening in Libya’s affairs.

Tacitly, therefore, it is unlikely to exclude the direct or indirect involvement of MEMRI’s subtitled videos in the Western 2011 intervention in Libya due to the influence of their public narratives on the political and military levels. MEMRI itself attests to the international functionality of its re-narrations within the decision-making bodies: “Every single day, MEMRI receives requests for its research from U.S. government, military, and legislature, and from governments worldwide. ... From the halls of government to the briefing rooms of the military, MEMRI is a vital component in the West’s fight against terrorism”.²¹⁹

²¹⁸ For more on this, see Green, M. (2019) <https://www.e-ir.info/2019/02/06/to-what-extent-was-the-nato-intervention-in-libya-a-humanitarian-intervention/>

²¹⁹ <https://www.memri.org/fight-against-terrorism>

(b) **Accentuated Narratives of “Terror of Qadhafi Loyalists” and “Arab Spring and Qadhafi’s 1969 Coup are two Sides of the Same Coin”**. The non-verbal manipulation of this example includes the high-level pattern of selective appropriation of Moussa’s video to be embedded in MEMRI’s accentuated narratives in which Qadhafi loyalists are emplotted as advocates of violence and war. The Arab Spring is also peculiarly emplotted in them as an event whose participants are fuelled by the ideology of Qadhafi’s 1969 Revolution. For reinforcing these patterns of causal emplotment, MEMRI temporally reframed the original narrative by selecting from it a short video clip consisting of only the moments that suit the new setting. It also carried out a spatial reframing in the paratext by adding a title and an introduction, as shown in Table 83.

Table 83

Video Clip 2: Non-Verbal and Verbal Manipulation in Paratext

MEMRI’s TT	ST Title	LT
<p><u>Qadhafi Loyalist Abdel Hadi Moussa: Libya Is Colonized and Must Be Liberated; The Arab Spring Suckled Its Ideology from Qadhafi’s 1969 Revolution.</u>²²⁰</p>	<p>احتفالات المهجرين وأنصار الفكر الجماهيري في القاهرة بعيد الفاتح الـ 50.²²¹</p>	<p>Celebrations of the Displaced and Supporters of “Massive Thought” on the 50th Fateh Day in Cairo.</p>
<p>Date: 01/09/2019 Time: 00:01:13</p>	<p>Date: 01/09/2019. Time: 00:02:12. Source: Al-Jamahirya TV.</p>	
<p>Introduction: ... Abdel Hadi Moussa, <u>a loyalist of ... Muammar Qadhafi</u>, said ... that the Libyan tribes and the men of the Republic of the Masses continue to “<u>adhere</u></p>		

²²⁰ <https://www.memri.org/tv/qadhafi-loyalist-hadi-moussa-libya-colonized-liberated-arab-spring-suckled-1969-revolution>

²²¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y9e4oji1jE4>

to their commitment” to the spirit of the Arab Spring. He said that the youth of the Arab Spring had “suckled” from the ideology of the “great Muammar Qadhafi” and his 1969 Revolution, and that there will be no social peace or solidarity Moussa addressed Qadhafi loyalists in Cairo who celebrated the 50th anniversary for the September 1, 1969 coup.

According to the LT, the TT title is different from the ST title; while the latter describes the event in general, the former focuses more specifically on two issues, as a pattern of selective appropriation, to trigger the accentuated narratives in question. The first is to identify the speaker by labelling him as a “Qadhafi Loyalist” and highlighting his objective to launch a war to liberate colonised Libya. The second is to interestingly juxtapose the ideologies of the Arab Spring and Qadhafi’s 1969 Revolution.

In the introduction, MEMRI emphasises these issues, but it elaborates further on the second issue with information (relevant stretches underlined) that it refrains from including in the TT subtitles, probably to account for credibility with its clients. First, MEMRI claims that “the Libyan tribes and the men of the Republic of the Masses continue to adhere to their commitment to the spirit of the Arab Spring”. However, as seen in Figure 126: Frame 2, the added expression “to the spirit of the Arab Spring” was not mentioned in the subtitle. The reason is that, in the following utterances, the

Libyan tribes and the men of the Republic still appear to be in covenant with the Qadhafi regime, which is fundamentally opposed to the Arab Spring.

Figure 126

MEMRI's Video Clip 2: Frame 2



Moussa confirms the Libyan Tribes' adherence to the 1969 revolution, 2019 Sep 01

Second, MEMRI claims that “the youth of the Arab Spring had ‘suckled’ from the ideology of the ‘great Muammar Qadhafi’ and his 1969 Revolution”. However, again, as seen in Figure 127: Frame 7, the added expression “the Arab Spring” was not mentioned in the subtitle.

Figure 127

MEMRI's Video Clip 2: Frame 7



Moussa confirms that new generations have suckled from Qadhafi's thoughts, 2019 Sep 01

Last but not least, MEMRI signals its position against Qadhafi's 1969 Revolution by labelling it as a coup, which again does not show in the subtitle, as seen in Figure 128: Frame 6.

Figure 128

MEMRI's Video Clip 2: Frame 6



Moussa disassociates Qadhafi's loyalists from any interests that might falsify their loyalty, 2019 Sep

MEMRI's linguistic accuracy in the subtitles mentioned above seems unquestionable, which is expected of an organisation with such international fame and reliability. Nevertheless, what is subtly going on in the paratext requires further scrutinisation since there is no original soundtrack to follow on this site. The repositioning of the original participants of Moussa's immediate narrative with the outside narrative of the "Arab Spring" is a blatant verbal manipulation that creates a political association. It can activate a pattern of relationality by which viewers would make interdependent connections between the parties: Arab Spring ideology, the Qadhafi 1969 Revolution, violence and terror, Libyan tribes, the men of the Republic of the Masses, and the youth of Arab Spring.

The awkward portrayal of the youth of the Arab Spring as suckling from Qadhafi Revolution ideology and threatening the social peace and solidarity in Libya may require no further manipulation in the text; however, this does not necessarily rule out such manipulation. In Table 84: Frame 10, Moussa merely describes the situation

in Libya, complaining about the current lack of social peace and solidarity caused by the militias that are wreaking havoc everywhere.

Table 84

Video Clip: Verbal Manipulation in Text

Frame	ST	TT	LT
10	ليس هناك سلم اجتماعي، ليس هناك تكافل،	<u>There will be no</u> (paraphrase) social peace or solidarity.	There's no social peace or solidarity,

By exploiting the paraphrase strategy, MEMRI's subtitler changed the ST literal equivalent "there's no" into the TT alternative "there will be no", as underlined in the TT (see also Figure 129). The subtitler's choice contains an overt threat that Moussa—representing Qadhafi and Arab Spring ideologies, according to MEMRI's peculiar narrative—will not allow peace and solidarity to take place in the Libyan conflict.

Figure 129

MEMRI's Video Clip 2: Frame 10



Moussa confirms that there is no more social peace in Libya, 2019 Sep 01

Such textual manipulation was most likely carried out ideologically, corresponding appropriately with the pattern of relationality established in the paratext and leading ultimately to a new TT context/narrative, as follows:

Table 85

Recontextualisation/Reframing Outcomes

Original Context/Narrative	TT Context/Narrative
Celebrations of the 50 th anniversary of the Al-Fatah Revolution, and commitment of the Libyan tribes and their new generations to its spirit.	Commitment of the Libyan tribes and their new generations to the spirit of the Arab Spring which suckled from Qadhafi's violent ideology.

(c) **Accentuated Narratives of the “Legitimacy of Israel” and “Illegitimacy of the Hamas Resistance”**. The non-verbal manipulation of this example includes the high-level pattern of selective appropriation of Tamimi's video to be embedded in MEMRI's accentuated narrative, which, on the one hand, emplots Israel as a legitimate state having the right to imprison whom it considers as terrorists. On the other hand, it emplots Palestinian (particularly Hamas') resistance as a terrorist group supposed to submit to Israel's authority. Consequently, Al-Jazeera's accentuated narrative of Hamas' resistance and patriotism was contested by this new causal emplotment, which seems to be reinforced by MEMRI's reconfiguration of the temporality feature using both temporal and spatial reframing strategies, as shown in Table 86.

Table 86

Video Clip 10: Non-Verbal and Verbal Manipulation in Paratext

MEMRI's TT	ST Title	LT
Released Palestinian Terrorist Ahlam Tamimi, Who Is on FBI Most Wanted List: Being in Jordan Gives	نزار وأحلام.. زوجان تلاحقهما "الأغلال" رغم	Nizar and Ahlam. A Married Couple Pursued by the “Shackles” Despite

Me Strength Because No Extradition Agreement With U.S. ²²²	خروجهما من سجن المحتل. ²²³	their Exit from Occupier's Prison.
Date: 28/03/2019 Time: 00:00:54	Date: 28/03/2019 Time: 00:03:24. Source: Al-Jazeera Net News	
Introduction: Ahlam Tamimi, <u>a Hamas terrorist sentenced to 16 life sentences for her involvement in the 2001 Sbarro pizzeria suicide bombing in Jerusalem</u> Tamimi is currently wanted by the U.S. government for conspiracy to use a weapon of mass destruction against U.S. nationals abroad, and the FBI, which considers her to be armed and dangerous, has placed Tamimi on its list of most wanted terrorists and offers a reward of up to \$5 million for information leading to her arrest or conviction. <u>For more about Ahlam Tamimi, see MEMRI TV Clips No. 3539, No. 3157, and No. 5951.</u>		

First, MEMRI selected a collection of clips from the original video and cobbled them into one short video clip that serves a particular motive. Second, MEMRI utilised the paratext to add a new title and an introduction as a pattern of selective appropriation. MEMRI's TT title narrates a narrative different from Al-Jazeera's ST title narration. As seen in the LT, the ST title triggers the family meta-narrative, which emplots Tamimi and Nizar as an oppressed married couple to gain viewers' sympathy. It also triggers the Palestinian public narrative of "captives, not prisoners" by using the expression "تلاحقهما الأغلال" (pursued by shackles). Ultimately, it contests the Israeli public narrative of state legitimacy by labelling Israel as an "occupier" and using the

²²² <https://www.memri.org/tv/sbarro-pizzeria-terrorist-hamas-ahlam-tamimi-fbi-most-wanted-jordan-no-extradition-agreement-thankful>

²²³ <https://www.aljazeera.net/news/politics/2019/3/28/-التميمي-وأحلام-نزار-محمران-أسيران-الأردن-أسيران-محمران-نزار-وأحلام-التميمي-> أميركا-تهديدات

expression “خروجهما” (their exit) (implying free will) instead of the more common, Israeli expression “their release” (إطلاق سراحهما) (implying an adjudication).

The TT title, in turn, contested these narratives and accentuated MEMRI’s narrative utilising reframing strategies. As a pattern of selective appropriation, Nizar was excluded while Tamimi was repositioned as the only participant of MEMRI’s narrative. Tamimi was labelled as a “Released Palestinian Terrorist” and, hence, Al-Jazeera’s narratives in its title were all subtly suppressed in one single expression. MEMRI further provides “who is on [the] FBI[’s] most wanted list” to defame Tamimi and reframe her original image in the TT title. This choice, in particular, seems to tap into the meta-narrative of the “War on Terror” in which Israel, besides the US, is embedded as a crucial partner of the war, whereas Jordan, via the appropriately selected utterance “Being in Jordan Gives Me Strength...”, is embedded as a pro-terrorist state. In addition to emphasising the TT title’s narration, the introduction provides more information (relevant stretches underlined) dug up from MEMRI’s past documentation regarding Tamimi’s *crimes*, which MEMRI seems to be employing to contest Al-Jazeera’s embellished image of Tamimi in its present narrative.

To achieve a coherence that encompasses all levels of reframing, MEMRI carried out some textual distortions that correlate ideologically with the contextual and paratextual manipulation, as underlined in Table 87.

Table 87

Video Clip 10: Verbal Manipulation in Text

Frame	ST	TT	LT
1	طبعا <u>تحررنا</u> بصفقة وفاء الأحرار في شهر 2011/10	(My husband and I) <u>were released</u> (paraphrase) in the October 2011 <u>prisoner swap</u> (paraphrase) deal.	We liberated by the October 2011 Free Fulfilment Deal.
2	<u>تحررنا</u> كان يعني فرحة عامرة بالنسبة لنا، بداية حياة جديدة	<u>Our release</u> (paraphrase) brought us great joy and	Our liberation was a great joy for us and the

		was the beginning of a new life,	beginning of a new life,
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In Frame 1 and 2: LT, Tamimi uses the expressions “تحرُّرنا” (We were liberated) and “تحرُّرنا” (Our liberation) to activate the “captive, not prisoner” narrative. Yet MEMRI’s subtitler paraphrased Tamimi’s utterances into the TT expression ‘were released’ and ‘Our release’ (see also Figures 130 and 131).

Figure 130

MEMRI’s Video Clip 10: Frame 1



Tamimi speaks to Al-Jazeera about her liberation from Israel, 2019 March 03

Figure 131

MEMRI's Video Clip 10: Frame 2



Tamimi expresses her joy of being liberated, 2019 March 03

In Frame 1: LT, Tamimi also labels the deal that freed her and her husband as “the free fulfilment deal” to activate one of the “Palestinian resistance programme” narratives. Yet again, MEMRI’s subtitler signalled their position towards this narrative by paraphrasing Tamimi’s label into the TT label “the prisoner swap deal” (see Figure 130). More ideological than technically necessitated, the subtitler’s choices seem to have exploited the paraphrase strategy to contest the rival narratives of the ST and opt for more appropriate expressions that help accentuate the narratives of “the legitimacy of Israel” and “illegitimacy of Palestinian resistance”. Together, all these levels of manipulation have led to the following new context/narrative:

Table 88

Recontextualisation/Reframing Outcomes

Original Context/Narrative	TT Context/Narrative
Liberation of two captives, the Palestinian married couple Nizar and Ahlam.	Release of two terrorist prisoners, the Palestinian couple Nizar and Ahlam.

(d) **Accentuated Narrative of “Arabs’ Inclination Towards Dictatorships and Totalitarianism”**. The non-verbal manipulation of this example includes the high-level pattern of selective appropriation of Al-Aswany’s interview on the BBC to become embedded in MEMRI’s accentuated narrative, which emplots Arabs as a reactionist people that incline to autocracy and absolute power while averse to democracy, pluralism, and freedom of speech. To reinforce this pattern of emplotment, MEMRI reconfigured the temporality feature of the original narrative by using both temporal and spatial reframing. From the original video, MEMERI selected a short clip to reinforce the accentuation of the narrative in question and exclude the irrelevant segments. MEMRI also added as another pattern of selective appropriation—a new title and an introduction in the paratext, for which it carefully selected from Al-Aswany’s utterances the most explicit descriptions (underlined in Table 89) to initiate an interpretive frame that guides the viewers’ perception towards the TT emplotment.

Table 89

Video Clip 17: Non-Verbal and Verbal Manipulation in Paratext

MEMRI’s TT	ST Title	LT
Egyptian Novelist Alaa Al-Aswany: <u>Our Problem Is That We Do Not Oppose Autocracy as a Concept.</u> ²²⁴	الكاتب والروائي والناشط السياسي علاء الأسواني في المشهد. ²²⁵	Writer, Novelist, and Political Activist Alaa Al-Aswany in Al-Mashhad.
Date: 12/09/2016 Time: 00:03:17	Date: 12/09/2016 Time: 00:40:31. Source: BBC Arabic	

²²⁴<https://www.memri.org/tv/egyptian-novelist-alaa-al-aswany-our-problem-we-do-not-oppose-autocracy-concept>

²²⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Tmks2LYDG4>

Introduction: ... Egyptian novelist Alaa Al-Aswany said that the problem of the Arab and Islamic world was “that we do not oppose autocracy as a concept.” ... Al-Aswany, ... said that his opposition to Al-Sisi and his predecessors stemmed from his belief that Egypt and the Arab world in general “cannot make any progress without a true democratic system.”

To elaborate a coherent narrative, MEMRI made a linguistic intervention in the subtitles that seems to be correlating ideologically with the higher patterns of verbal and non-verbal manipulation, as seen in Table 90: Frame 25.

Table 90

Video Clip 17: Verbal Manipulation in Text

Frame	ST	TT	LT
25	وهي مشكلة متصلة بالتراث العربي الإسلامي.	Which has a <u>lot</u> (expansion) to do with the Arab and Islamic heritage.	which is related to the Arab and Islamic heritage.

In the preceding Frame 24, Al-Aswany claims that Arabs do not judge dictatorship as a concept but only evaluate its consequences. In Frame 25: LT, he argues that this position is related to the Arab and Islamic heritage, but without emphasising it, opening the door to the influence of other possible factors. The MEMRI’s subtitler, however, signalled their position towards this ontological narrative by exploiting the expansion strategy, as a pattern of selective appropriation,

to add the four-character-intensifier “a lot”, which emphasised what was not emphasised in the ST utterance (Figure 132).

Figure 132

MEMRI’s Video Clip 17: Frame 25



Aswany criticises some Middle East issues on BBC Arabic, 2016 Sep 12

As Table 91 shows, this choice is likely to be ideologically driven—rather than technically necessitated—to ultimately reinforce MEMRI’s new context/narrative.

Table 91

Recontextualisation/Reframing Outcomes

Original Context/Narrative	TT Context/Narrative
Political opposition and literary activities of Alaa Al-Aswany.	Arabs’ tendency towards autocracy and aversion to democracy.

(e) **Accentuated Narrative of “the Palestinian Cause is Irrelevant to Arabs”**. The non-verbal manipulation of this example includes the high-level pattern of selective appropriation of Chiheb’s debate on France 24 to be embedded in MEMRI’s accentuated narrative in which Arabs and their governments are emplotted as irrelevant to the Palestinian cause. To reinforce this causal emplotment, which

quickly circulated in many Israeli media outlets²²⁶, MEMRI reframed the original narrative temporally and spatially, as shown in Table 92. From the original, it carefully selected two clips and cobbled them together into a short video focusing only on specific parts of Chiheb’s utterances where he calls for normalising with Israel and accuses Arabs of being brainwashed with anti-Zionist and anti-Israel Rhetoric.

Table 92

Video Clip 20: Non-Verbal and Verbal Manipulation in Paratext

MEMRI’s TT	ST Title	LT
French-Moroccan Professor Youssef Chiheb: “Israel is Not an Enemy of Morocco”; “The Arab World has been Brainwashed with Anti-Zionist and Anti-Israel Rhetoric.” ²²⁷	المغرب: هل تسقط المصلحة الوطنية مبدأ الدفاع عن القضية الفلسطينية؟ ²²⁸	Morocco: Will National Interest Drop Principle of Defending Palestinian Cause?
Date: 21/02/2020 Time: 00:02:19	Date: 11/02/2020 Time: 00:39:40. Source: France 24 Arabic	
Introduction: French-Moroccan Professor Youssef Chiheb said ... that the attitude of the Arab world towards Israel is “archaic” and that the Arab world needs to rethink its attitude towards Israel in light of other emerging dangers such as Iran.		

²²⁶ See Israel Hayom at <https://www.israelhayom.com/2020/02/26/the-arab-way-of-thinking-towards-israel-has-become-archaic/>; The Time of Israel at <https://www.timesofisrael.com/french-moroccan-professor-tells-arabic-tv-that-regions-view-of-israel-archaic/>; JNS at <https://www.jns.org/the-arab-way-of-thinking-towards-israel-has-become-archaic/>

²²⁷ <https://www.memri.org/tv/moroccan-academic-chiheb-israel-not-enemy-of-morocco>

²²⁸ <https://www.france24.com/ar/20200211-المغرب-هل-تسقط-المصلحة-الوطنية-مبدأ-الدفاع-عن-القضية-الفلسطينية-228>

As further patterns of selective appropriation, MEMRI then added, in the paratext, a new title and an introduction. Unlike the ST title, they both contain explicit references to Chiheb’s selected utterances, initiating an interpretive frame that traps the viewers within the boundaries of MEMRI’s new causal emplotment.

The other utterance parts, on the other hand, which appeared to be irrelevant, were excluded. They include, for instance, Chiheb’s overall position, articulated in the period between 00:04:14–00:04:44 of the original video, where he encourages the Moroccan role in supporting what he labels “the legal rights of the Palestinian cause”. Yet, with this pattern of exclusion, MEMRI repositioned Chiheb in relation to the participants (i.e., Israel and Palestine) of the narrative: from a diplomatic politician who emerges as a mediator, equidistant from contending parties, to a pro-normalisation activist who totally denies the Arab role in the conflict.

For elaborating a coherent narrative, the selective appropriation pattern of exclusion (or omission) has been directly echoed in the subtitles under the pretext of a technical reduction, as seen in Table 93.

Table 93

Video Clip 20: Verbal Manipulation in Text

Frame	ST	TT	LT
27	القضية الفلسطينية هي قضية بين الفلسطينيين وإسرائيل <u>تحت تغطية</u> <u>العرب</u>	The Palestinian cause is between the Palestinians and Israel (decimation) ...	No, it’s between the Palestinians and Israel <u>under an Arab</u> <u>cover</u> .

Part of Chiheb’s included utterance (underlined in Frame 27: LT) indicates his overall moderate position, which unequivocally conflicts with the interpretive frame of MEMRI’s narrative. Therefore, the subtitler exploited the decimation strategy, as a textual pattern of selective appropriation, to make a semantic qualitative reduction by getting rid of this particular part of the utterance (Frame 27: TT and Figure 133). In so doing, the subtitler seems to have manipulated the ST utterance ideologically (rather

than technically) to fit it within the boundaries of MEMRI’s frame, signalling their position as contesting the original narrative.

Figure 133

MEMRI’s Video Clip 20: Frame 27



Chiheb argues that the Israel-Palestine conflict should be anchored by the Arab League, 2020 Feb 11

Critically speaking, there is a possibility of holding the subtitle—whether individually or institutionally—accountable for such a questionable choice because it can simply lead to the speaker becoming vulnerable to threats from extremists. Ultimately, the whole process of manipulation has led to the following new context/narrative:

Table 94

Recontextualisation/Reframing Outcomes

Original Context/Narrative	TT Context/Narrative
Normalisation with Israel in exchange for US recognition of Moroccan sovereignty over Western Sahara and its consequences on the Palestinian cause.	Arabs are brainwashed and irrelevant to the Palestinian cause and Israel is not an enemy.

Drawing on Baker's (2006a, p. 101) feature of narrative accrual, a broad insight shows that MEMRI endeavours to strengthen its public narratives by repeatedly grouping most of its video clips under titles²²⁹ that explicitly accentuate the demonisation and degradation of the former Arab governments and their loyalists, the Arabic Spring and its activists, Arabs, and Palestinian resistance.

6.3 Concluding Remarks

The comprehensive concept of narrative (re)framing has assisted in investigating MM, PMW, and MEMRI's reconfiguration of the features of MENA political narratives. Explicitly or otherwise, each of these organisations has subjectively elaborated politically and religiously loaded narratives using reframing strategies to suit the ideology of the target context. This elaboration is achieved coherently by exploiting various patterns (verbal and non-verbal) of manipulation in context, paratext, and text. In every way possible, the original videos have been subtly recontextualised in a new setting and, hence, the originality of what is supposed to be the ST—according to which the notion of subtitling authenticity is assumed—has probably ceased to exist even before the insertion of subtitles. This finding endorses Chaume's (2018) notion of "transcreation" (discussed in Chapter Two), which refers to the illusion of authenticity resulting from the distortion of the ST's originality.

The text—the main site of investigation in the present study—is remarkably utilised by the subtitlers to contribute to the composition of this contaminated formula²³⁰, which ultimately represents a distorted version of the original narratives in the TT subtitles. Subtitling strategies conventionally proposed to tackle linguistic and technical constraints of audiovisual products are often exploited as narrative reframing

²²⁹ All are mentioned in Chapter Five on pp. 262–265.

²³⁰ Baker likewise argues that "translating a narrative into another language and culture inevitably results in a form of "contamination", whereby the original narrative itself may be threatened with dilution or change" (2006a, p. 62). This issue is covered in more detail in Chapters Three and One.

strategies serving specific ideologies and political interests. The conventional interpretations of translation studies aside, fidelity to a political or religious ideology seems to have required, at times, a betrayal of the ST narratives in the form of textual interventions that sidestepped, contested, or altered the Arabic utterances to subtly create different, more convenient TT narratives through the English subtitles. Consequently, one can conclude, subtitling translation can be, arguably, not merely interpretive and technically restrictive but also a practice of activism, resistance, and critique that is ideologically and politically motivated and constrained.

Reflecting upon the reframing strategies that explain how such an intricate process works, the present study has formed some analysis-based conclusions about the subtitling strategies exploited in this regard. In addition to omission and addition, suggested by Baker (2006a) as reframing patterns of selective appropriation, the strategy of paraphrase is another reframing pattern introduced by the present study. Mostly unrecognisable by viewers, this strategy is exploited to make linguistic alterations selectively appropriate to the accentuated narratives of the TT subtitles instead of transferring the ST expressions. Extensively discussed in this chapter, this reframing pattern thrives most when used to contest the labels of rival ideologies, which Baker (2006a, p. 123) describes as the intriguing strategy of “counter-naming”, and that is worth investigating further. Another subtitling strategy that has drawn attention is dislocation, whose textual analysis revealed some oscillation patterns regarding the subtitlers’ choices. PMW’s subtitlers, for instance, show inconsistency in dealing with the visual information appearing on the screen of PA TV videos, choosing to dislocate it in the TT subtitles on some occasions and neglect it on others. Such an oscillation often seems deliberate because some information may not comply with the ideology and political agenda of the commissioners.

It is worth mentioning that, textually, ideological manipulation is conducted differently by MM, PMW, and MEMRI. Although it is not the aim of this study, a simple comparison between the three organisations regarding their ideological manipulation has disclosed some relative distinctions. They are all similarly concerned with manipulating the context and paratext, though the patterns that determine this manipulation might vary. More relevantly, however, they seem to show differences

concerning both their manipulation of the text itself (how far it is distorted) and its (presumed) technical strategies. For MM, first, textual manipulation seems to be a broad concept that ideologically allows any linguistic distortion in the TT subtitle. Apart from the few examples where MM uses brackets for expansion, most interventions (via most strategies, including expansion) are made to be unnoticeable and are blatantly distortive. This finding is hardly surprising, given that it is an organisation of an unknown origin, as mentioned in Chapter Four. Thus, it does not seem to be interested in losing its credibility as much as it seems to be concerned with misleading unaware viewers and trapping them inside the interpretive frames of its accentuated narratives.

For PMW, textual manipulation seems to be a relatively restricted concept in that it shows a sort of transparency regarding the expansion strategy. Although most expanded expressions are utterly different from the ST utterances, the viewers can still notice the change because the utterance per se is often identically transferred, and the expansion is between brackets. Ostensibly, this may discharge PMW's duty to be faithful to the ST utterance since the utterance is transferred rather than suppressed; however, regarding its other strategies of paraphrase, decimation, and dislocation, the notion of transparency may not, and perhaps cannot, exist. As discussed in many examples, it is most likely the ideology and politics that steer subtitlers' choices, and, consequently, may undermine the organisation's reputation and credibility with its audience.

With MEMRI, textual manipulation seems to be a concept fraught with a lot of caution and precision. Unlike the many examples of the two previous organisations, MEMRI's examples are all that is identified through the subtitle analysis of its twenty randomly selected video clips. Such an observation attests to what Mona Baker (one of the staunchest scholarly opponents of MEMRI) states:

Blatant mistranslations aside, it is important not to lose sight of the fact that organisations such as MEMRI are generally very careful about the "accuracy" of their translations and invest heavily in elaborating an image of themselves as non-partisan, trustworthy and highly qualified. (2010, p. 349)

In the context of this elaboration, PMW and MEMRI, unlike MM, often attach the following Disclaimers to the video clips they disseminate:

Views expressed in this video do not represent those of Palestinian Media Watch. PMW monitors and exposes this material, in order to educate and eliminate hate and terror promotion. (PMW's disclaimer)

... Material about the statements of terrorists and extremists is provided to alert the public to threats and in no way constitutes an endorsement of such activities. (MEMRI's disclaimer)

In so doing, they attempt to distance themselves from the suspicious taint of being involved in the issues they monitor, especially those related to terrorism. However, the subtitled material they provide for their (mainly Western) audience re-narrates, for instance, the Palestinian resistance, emplotted as a legitimate right in the original narratives and as a source of religious-based terrorism and hate in the TT narratives. At face value, it is true that MM, PMW, and MEMRI monitor and expose narratives disseminated by Middle Eastern media outlets, but, from a critical perspective, they also manipulate, contest, and introduce them under fabricated interpretive frames. Thus, it seems legitimate to argue that the output indeed represents these organisations and, therefore, that they cannot be completely exonerated from the responsibility of any consequences.

Focusing on the functionality of re-narration advocated by many scholars (e.g., Bennet and Edelman, 1985; Neves, 2004; Baker, 2006a), the following tables (94, 95, 96) and charts (1, 2, 3: Figure 134) show the quantity and percentages of the viewers' likes and dislikes regarding MM, PMW, and MEMRI's subtitled video clips. They also show how, ultimately, viewers can be unconsciously affected by the narratives/utterances reframed/manipulated via subtitling to match the agenda and ideology of the TT entities, including subtitlers, organisations, and societies.

Table 95

Viewers' Reactions to MM's 20 Video Clips

Likes	Dislikes
8521	854

Table 96

Viewers' Reactions to PMW's 20 Video Clips

Likes	Dislikes
176	44

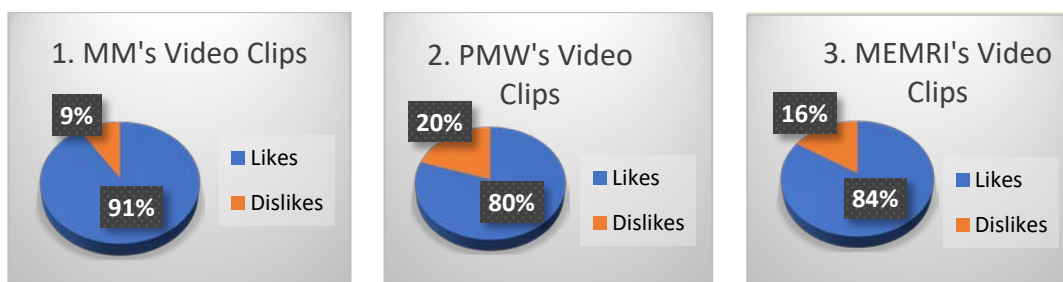
Table 97

Viewers' Reactions to PMW's 20 Video Clips

Likes	Dislikes
1684	319

Figure 134

Percentages of Viewers' Likes and Dislikes



Generally speaking, the results, ranging between 80%–91%, show that the majority of viewers do like and accept the content of the subtitled material regardless of how much it is (textually, paratextually, and contextually) distorted and diverted from the original message²³¹. Therefore, the way narratives are multifacetedly

²³¹ One can argue that 'likes' and 'dislikes' on YouTube are not necessarily representative of the actual distribution of public opinions on the video clips. For one thing, many people rarely give any reaction to a video clip, and when it comes to giving 'dislikes', that number would be even fewer as people who dislike a video clip will often simply stop watching it rather than bother to give it a 'dislike'. In this sense, the 'likes' and 'dislikes' can be considered an unreliable indication of public opinion. Nevertheless, the 'likes' finding at least gives us an indication of how unseen patterns of manipulation can motivate many viewers to give 'likes' and even to comment, at times, guiding their opinions and forging their attitudes towards the others.

reframed merits serious consideration by researchers because it softly inculcates distorted concepts in the viewers' perception that may not necessarily have any association with reality. It can forge (mature or otherwise) attitudes upon which individuals and communities can be judged, marginalised, or even entirely erased. Boasting the worldwide functionality of its narratives, PMW states, on its "About Us" page:

PMW's yearly presentations to the Israeli government, US Congress, and many parliaments have led to numerous parliamentary debates, policy decisions, and legislation concerning the Palestinian Authority. PMW's work has been instrumental in propelling Australia, Belgium, Britain, France, Holland, Norway, the US, and other countries to publicly condemn the PA for glorifying hate and terror and to cut funding to the Palestinian Authority and Palestinian projects promoting or glorifying terror as a means to pressure the Palestinian Authority to change.²³²

In this particular paradigm, competing narratives are unlikely to mitigate the Palestine/Israel conflict but are likely to provoke resistance vs dominance relations between rival groups. Such an observation, as Hollis argues, "is well explored in the literature on the discourses of imperialism, where narratives serve the coloniser to justify dominance" (2019, p. 3).

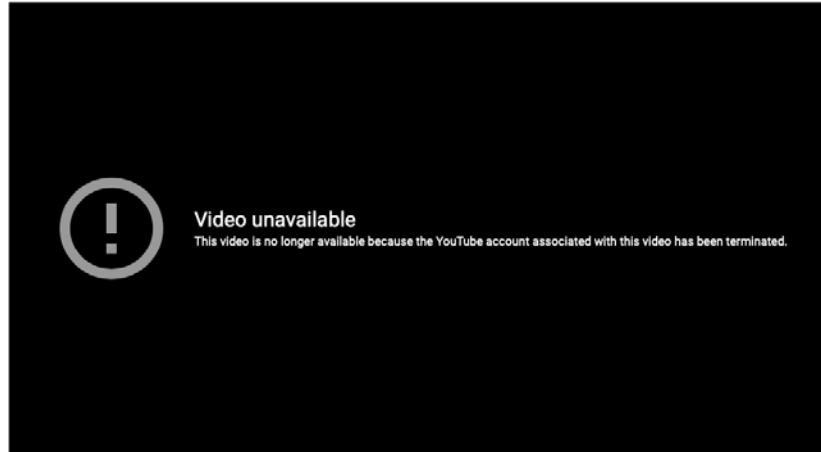
It also seems worth mentioning, in this vein, the powerful impact that PMW's productions may have had on international social media platforms such as YouTube. Around the middle of March 2020, the YouTube administration decided to terminate

²³² <https://www.palwatch.org/page/16253>

the PA's official YouTube channel. As a result, clicking on the links of the original videos gathered for this study would lead to the following screenshot (Figure 135):

Figure 135

YouTube Message of Termination



Conclusion

This study set out to investigate the manipulation of MENA political narratives renarrated via subtitling and whether such manipulation has been driven and controlled by ideological motivations rather than necessitated for technical reasons. The analysis focused on MM, PMW, and MEMRI's Arabic–English subtitles as case studies, exploring, from a narrative point of view, the subtitlers' choices and (often oscillating) behaviour that seem to have been decided ideologically rather than technically. It offered concrete examples extracted from the three organisations, where ideology and political agendas manifested in the subtitlers' choices, emphasising Díaz-Cintas's (2012a) concept of technical vs ideological manipulation. But before delving into the major findings of this analysis, I will offer a summary of the main arguments reviewed and discussed in the theoretical discussion of Chapters One, Two, and Three. This overview is intended to refresh the reader's memory of the key concepts, methods, and strategies relied upon in the current study in order to facilitate a better understanding of the main results of the analyses carried out in Chapters Five and Six (which will be summarised in the later sections of this conclusion).

Chapter One discussed the socio-cultural and socio-political role played by social agents in media and its translations. It asserted that notions of objectivity and unbiasedness are not always likely to find room in the conducting of these activities. The issue of selectivity can threaten the credibility and objectivity of organisations due to the selection of a specific party to highlight, translate, and broadcast its news and turn a blind eye to others. When media organisations report local or national political news, they often alter the original stories for the sake of specific policies and ideologies. Therefore, translation is no longer seen as merely a literal transmission of language but rather a broader manipulative process in which the interests of translators and the institutions for which they work can strongly resonate.

For subtitling, more specifically, the outcome can be considered objective and unbiased, even if some changes—which may be drastic—are made to the source text, as long as they fall within the context of technical necessity. Otherwise, they will unequivocally lead to unpalatable choices that will not escape academic criticism, even

if they have succeeded in deceiving the audience. This argument prompted Chapter Two to be mainly dedicated to discussing—among other relevant issues—the AVT mode of subtitling, its constraints, and the significant notion of technical vs ideological manipulation.

Chapter Two discussed the polysemiotic nature of AVT and its technical challenges, with a special focus on subtitling and dubbing and their (dis)advantages that can influence the preference of one over the other. Scrutinising the preference factor of authenticity, the chapter concluded that what counts in the political realm of AVT could arguably be the socio-cultural/political factor that can exceed the creativity scope to reveal the actual motives of any given decision made by individuals or media organisations.

Furthermore, the chapter discussed several categorisations of the technical strategies to overcome the technical constraints of subtitling. It also highlighted the unconventional constraints of ideology, culture, and politics, whose power can exploit technical constraints as an excuse to deliberately recontextualise/reframe, via subtitling, the ST's verbal and non-verbal elements. Scholars of the *Manipulative School*²³³ designate this type of intervention as ideological manipulation, as opposed to technical manipulation. This type of manipulation is not only limited to the text but falls within a comprehensive framework that also includes manipulation of paratext and context, reaching, ultimately, a new coherent narrative that can be quite different from the original. Such multi-level patterns of manipulation can accordingly put the authenticity notion, which is a significant factor in the choice of subtitling, at stake. Even with linguistically accurate subtitles produced by some media organisations like MEMRI, the authenticity notion can still be illusory due to the often-unrecognisable higher-level manipulation of extra-linguistic elements. These unconventional patterns

²³³ Elaborated further in Chapter One, p 38.

of manipulation led to the adoption of Baker's narrative theory and its in-depth analyses in this regard, discussed in Chapter Three.

Chapter Three explained Baker's comprehensive theoretical framework which investigates the narrative reframing and socio-political roles in association with textual analyses of the technical and ideological patterns of manipulation, especially in political translation and subtitling. The chapter also discussed how the process of reconfiguring narrative features elaborates variant narrative types, which ultimately contributes to the reframing of our social and political realities and forging identities.

To explain the choice of narrative theory as the theoretical framework used for Chapter Six's analysis, Chapter Three discussed the theory applications and advantages compared to the deficiencies of some other traditional translation studies. The chapter emphasised the ability of narrative theory to explain how conflicting narratives within translated/subtitled texts can be accentuated or suppressed by exploiting variant reframing strategies textually, paratextually, and contextually. The theory allows us to interpret textual patterns of manipulation at a broader level, linking it to high-level patterns of text selection and paratextual interventions to ultimately elaborate a larger narrative, possibly not articulated in the immediate text itself.

Chapter Four explained the study approaches, outlined the analysis model and procedure, and pinpointed the technical and narrative strategies elaborated in Chapters Two and Three and later drawn on in the micro/macro-analyses and discussions of Chapters Five and Six. The major findings of Chapters Five and Six fall within the scope of the study questions and can be briefed as follows.

Chapter Five: Micro-Analysis Findings

The micro-analysis of Chapter Five is dedicated to answering the first two of the study questions. The first question is about the TT lengthiness noticed during the data observation stage. The chapter's findings identified, through detailed quantitative and qualitative analyses (i.e., CBSAs and SBSAs) of MM's, PMW's, and MEMRI's video clips, interesting points showing that political subtitling of these organisations tends to be an expansive rather than a reductive genre within the specific context of Arabic–English AVT. Conventionally, this finding is incompatible with the text

reduction principle suggested and followed by scholars and experts in entertainment genres.

Most interesting is that all the political dialogue subgenres, including speeches, interviews, and debates, each showed lengthy TT subtitles regardless of their particular distinctive features²³⁴. As the analyses' percentages and frequencies indicate, the cause of this lengthiness is the overuse of the transfer, expansion, paraphrase, and imitation strategies, which often added cultural and linguistic elements to the TT language (i.e., English) that are not uttered or visualised in the ST language (i.e., Arabic). Transfer and imitation aside, the expansion or paraphrasing of some elements, for instance, was technically necessary to produce more linguistically and culturally self-contained subtitles and avoid ambiguity derived from the intrinsic fragmentation of subtitles.

More broadly, political texts have both internal and external features that allow, and sometimes even necessitate, the subtitler to adopt expansive strategies, which may have ultimately led to this unconventional finding. The study presented four features. The first three are internal, representing the genre-specific semiotic codes: first, political scenes were almost devoid of the non-verbal elements, evaluated by other film enthusiasts, that might be disrupted by producing long subtitles; second, most political utterances, especially in speeches, were delivered at a slow pace with ample periods (seven to thirteen seconds) for allowing the transfer of the ST in its entirety; third, the sensitivity of political materials is also an internal feature, and the necessity and significance of transferring their content fully with the highest degree of accuracy and integrity may have also played a crucial role. Fourth, the education and cultural levels and the reading speed of the mature audience of political media are external features that can also be an advantage upon which subtitlers may have heavily relied.

The notion of necessity, mentioned in the third feature, was thoroughly investigated in the qualitative analysis of subtitling manipulation. Stemming from

²³⁴ These features are explained in Chapter Five on pp. 184–185.

Díaz-Cintas's argument of technical vs ideological manipulation, the chapter is also dedicated to answering the second of the study questions, examining subtitlers' (expansive or reductive) textual choices to see if they were technically necessitated or ideologically driven under the pretext of technical constraints. The qualitative analysis substantiated showed that some patterns of manipulation indeed seemed to be technically necessitated in some cases. In other cases, however, they seemed to be driven ideologically under the excuse of technicality. A considerable part of the TT lengthiness seemed to be a consequence of exploiting the expansion and paraphrase strategies for specific ideological concerns. Although paraphrase is introduced basically as a structure-altering reductive strategy, it should not escape a similar level of scepticism, due to the many examples where it seemed to be exploited ideologically and with no apparent necessity, resulting in lengthy TT alternatives. Another higher level of investigation showed that the careful selection of specific speakers to subtitle and those to ignore was another ambiguous pattern of manipulation, which upset the synchronisation and content of the ST.

In their subtitled video clips, MM, PMW, and MEMRI manipulated their ST narratives contextually and paratextually in what seemed to be associated with textual manipulation. This observation led to adopting Baker's narrative theory and its reframing strategies to investigate these levels in a comprehensive macro-analysis in Chapter Six, answering the third and fourth study questions.

Chapter Six: Macro-Analysis Findings

The macro-analysis of Chapter Six is dedicated to answering the third and fourth study questions. The third question is about the diverse media elaboration of MENA political narratives and the strategies they utilised to reframe these narratives. Coherently woven, the narrative elaboration exploited different patterns of manipulation, not only in the text but also in the paratext and context. In addition to the verbal manipulation, which included the addition of different titles, introductions, and blurbs in the paratext, there were also higher-level patterns of non-verbal manipulation, which included the reconfiguration of the ST's narrative features. Together with textual manipulation, these manipulation patterns ultimately led to the

recontextualisation/reframing of the ST narratives in the TT.²³⁵ One can also argue that those strategies and reframing processes leaned toward highlighting the MENA conflicts and reframing opponents in a negative light.

The unconventional findings and examples of technically unjustified textual distortions identified in Chapter Five highlighted the importance of embracing a more realistic and critical investigation into the technical excuses of the subtitling strategies used. Drawing on Baker's narrative approach, Chapter Six revealed a range of ideological considerations behind what should be otherwise technical work. Subtitlers seem to have excessively exploited the expansion and reduction strategies as reframing patterns of selective appropriation.

The present study also introduced the paraphrase strategy, which has seemingly been exploited for the same reframing purpose. Extensively discussed in Chapter Six, this reframing pattern thrives more in the particular cases of subtitlers contesting the rivals' labels in the ST, showing many examples of technically gratuitous substitutions. Another subtitling strategy that drew attention is dislocation, whose textual analysis indicated some ambiguous choices and revealed some oscillation patterns in the subtitlers' behaviour. Subtitlers tended to show inconsistency in dealing with verbal visuals, choosing to dislocate them in the TT subtitles on some occasions and neglecting them on others.

In this comprehensive, coherent narrative reframing process, MM, PMW, and MEMRI have been producing and inculcating public narratives that depict their rivals as ignorant, violent terrorists and reactionists. MM renarrates, for instance, Sunnis—emplotted in many media outlets as a moderate Islamic sect—as terrorists slaughtering civilians and blowing up shrines in Iraq, Syria, and other places. The subtitled material PMW and MEMRI provide for their (mainly Western) audience renarrates, for instance, the Palestinian resistance—emplotted as a legitimate right in the original

²³⁵ For more details on this general finding, see Chapter Six, pp. 306–307.

narratives—as a source of religious-based terrorism and hate in the TT narratives. Those narratives, whether accentuating or contesting, do not only function within their immediate AVTs but also in association with larger narratives (i.e., public and meta-narratives) that are articulated in other forms of media and circulating locally and globally²³⁶. For instance, many media public narratives—triggering meta-narratives of the “War on Terror” and “protection of civilians” in which they embedded—have most likely contributed to war declarations and justified cross-geographical interventions, as occurred in Libya, Syria, and Iraq.

This argument helped answer the fourth study question about the subtitlers’ functionality being positively embedded in a conceptual narrative depicting translation/subtitling as a bridge of intercultural communication that brings peoples and nations together. The study argues that the TT viewers can be unconsciously affected by the narratives/utterances reframed/manipulated via subtitling to match the agenda and ideology of the TT entities, including subtitlers, organisations, and societies. The unguine concepts inculcated in this reframing process seep into the viewer’s perception without necessarily being accurate to reality. They can become part of our daily fabric of life, forging attitudes (rational or otherwise) upon which individuals and communities can be judged, marginalised, or even entirely eradicated. The negative political impact PMW’s subtitling has had on the international funding of the Palestinian Authority is a case in point²³⁷. Hence, the way narratives are multifacetedly reframed by media outlets, especially in political subtitling, merits serious consideration by AVT researchers.

In sum, one may conclude that ideological manipulation in political subtitling is a process where subtitlers are willing—or enforced by their organisations—to explicitly and implicitly accentuate and contest narratives subjectively. In this very

²³⁶ Relevant images and caricatures displayed at the beginning of Chapter Six, pp. 301–306.

²³⁷ For more on this, see PMW’s about us page, Itamar’s section.

process, it seems impossible to privilege a narrative from a view of absolute neutrality. The renarrators—strictly speaking, the subtitlers— “cannot stand outside the narrative” (Baker, 2006a, p. 129). Whether individually or institutionally, they are obliged by a range of political, commercial, cultural, and religious forces. In compliance with these pressures, subtitlers are willing to distort the ST at every level. Realistically, subtitlers, like any social actors, are not invisible but are key participants in constructing our social and political reality. They are responsible for what they produce on the screen: romantically, they can be seen as building bridges but, more realistically, they can also blow them up by spawning narratives of conflict and/or fuelling existing ones.

Study Contribution and Recommendations for Future Research and Translators

Having identified the gap in the previous TS, the present study offered the following main points of contribution:

(1) The study showed, through its unconventional findings of the textual analyses (i.e., CBSAs and SBSAs), that political subtitling seems to be an expansive genre of Arabic–English AVT.

(2) The study investigated the textual manipulations technically, first, before drawing any conclusions on their ideological implications. This is what distinguishes the current study from its predecessors. Baker (2006a) and Al Sharif (2009) discuss examples of ideological manipulation from MEMRI’s subtitles, yet, they seem not to have addressed the technical constraints, which, at times, can be a real challenge, leading to what appears to be an ideological choice on the face of it while being purely technical.

(3) The study is, arguably, the first Arabic–English study—at PhD level—that responds to Díaz-Cintas’s (2012a) call in his paper *Clearing the Smoke to See the Screen: Ideological Manipulation in Audiovisual Translation*, and Boukhaffa’s (2017) call in *Audiovisual Translation and Narrative (Re)Framing: MEMRI’s Subtitling of Moroccan Political Narratives*.

(4) The study is the first attempt to adopt Baker’s comprehensive narrative analysis for reflecting upon MM, PMW, and MEMRI’s subtitlers’ textual choices and

interpreting them ideologically in association with paratextual and contextual patterns of manipulation. It reveals the organisations' immediate narratives, accentuated and contested in their video clips, and links them with other larger public and meta-narratives in which they are embedded. The study contextualised MM, PMW, and MEMRI's video clips and subtitles within a wider scope of comparable organisations' work.

(5) The study argues that, in many cases, the result is not so much ideological mediation as ideological hegemony with which the TT producer subjects the ST narratives to distortion so that the values and narratives of the target audience prevail.

(6) The study studied, in depth, the subtitles of two understudied organisations, namely, MM and PMW. Although Baker (2006a) and Al Sharif (2009) have mentioned PMW in their research, they do not seem to have addressed and commented on any excerpts of its translation/subtitling. It also studied MEMRI's subtitling in more depth than previous studies and analysed a wider sample of its subtitling translations.

(7) This study also stands out because it has reached solid conclusions about the degree of bias and the type of accentuated/contested narratives in MM, PMW, and MEMRI's subtitles based on a systematic word-by-word and context-by-context analysis of a far more substantial amount of data than previous studies have offered, and it widened the TS focus to encompass MENA political conflicts (including those in Libya, Morocco, Tunisia) instead of being merely limited to the Middle East regions.

In light of the analysis findings mentioned above, the present study motivates future research, particularly in the Arabic–English subtitling domain, to embark on current issues relating to the representation and manipulation of MENA political and religious narratives in the media. The narrative analysis adopted in the present study is very excessive and elaborative, and a single paper or thesis would hardly be sufficient to address such aspects individually. In this vein, the study encourages TS researchers to pay particular attention (through critique and comparison) to the political subtitling of media organisations, especially PMW and MEMRI, for several specific reasons: the huge number of the products they daily recirculate, the variety of controversial topics and conflictual regions they cover, the worldwide impact they

have on decision-making bodies and the public, and the audience demand for polysemiotic more than monosemiotic media, specifically through the YouTube and social media platforms.

The study also encourages future research to leave aside “the translational wisdom” of traditional AVT studies and be more critical, questioning “the power of subtitling in the dissemination and entrenchment of certain concepts and realities in other cultural communities”, as Díaz-Cintas (2012b, p. 278) argues. Neglecting such sensitive research aspects will equivocally have dire consequences because what the audience of the target culture considers bizarre and, perhaps, offensive at a given moment in time can simply become familiar after its repeated presence through translation/subtitling. This debate highlights the responsibility of translators/subtitlers and interpreters in this respect, especially in the political context. Although they pride themselves on their creativity in dealing with linguistic features of the text, translators/subtitlers are often unconscious of the socio-political context in which they are embedded (Baker, 2006a, p. 123). For instance, the term “prisoner” (discussed in Chapter Six), condemned by Palestinians and their media, seems acceptable for many Arab media translators to be used as an equivalent for the Arabic expression “أسير” (captive), without considering the political Israeli public narrative in which they are embedded. Therefore, translators/subtitlers should be aware of such issues in their practice to avoid the unconscious elaboration of narratives at odds with the ST message and its context.

TS researchers also can become unconsciously involved in this narrative elaboration by traditionally focusing too much on textual analyses and ignoring—wittingly or otherwise—other higher-level sites of manipulation. Due to the semiotic composite of audiovisual media, future research should focus on the types of analyses that connect the textual choices to the paratext and context without missing any element—verbal or non-verbal—essential in manipulating the ST and its narratives. Adopting the principles of scepticism and criticism in investigating this multi-level process of manipulation is very important, especially when it comes to political texts, which are, most of the time, predominantly controlled by ideological factors and subjective standards. Just like trust-based conceptual narratives, derived from the

bridge-building metaphor, have prevailed in the translation and interpretation community, scepticism-based narratives, derived from the “iron hands hidden in velvet gloves” metaphor, should likewise be adopted to balance research on translation and produce more objective, realistic, and critical frameworks of analysis.

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