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The Discursive and Social Power of News Discourse: The case of Aljazeera in comparison and parallel with the BBC and CNN

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Abstract

This study pursues a textual analysis of the online news output produced mainly by Aljazeera in comparison and parallel with the online news output of both the BBC and CNN. But it steers away from mainstream CDA literature by focusing on aspects other than texts. The analysis triangulates CDA with ethnographic research which includes observation, stories, field visits, interviews and important secondary data such as media reports and samples from style guidelines. The ethnographic angle is found to be crucial in unraveling both the social and discursive worlds of Aljazeera, the BBC and CNN as it has helped in the drawing of conclusions that extend and occasionally contradict commonly held views on how the three networks create and disseminate hard news and the ideas and concepts mainstream CDA literature employs to explain and understand these processes. The research first lays down the theoretical and methodological framework through a concise overview of the literature and the thinkers CDA scholars have relied on in shaping the discipline. Then the study discusses CDA's limitations before detailing the scope of issues and questions it wants to answer. Thereafter, it deals with the issues of method and data before moving to a detailed critical analysis of Aljazeera, comparing and paralleling the findings with previous research and in the context of its major two international rivals, namely the BBC and CNN.

1. Introduction

Mainstream Critical Discourse Analysis (henceforth CDA) literature focuses excessively on different segments of textual material, considering news discourse in terms of mainly grammatical features, topics, or themes to sort out textual materials and organize discussions (c.f. Fowler 1991; Fowler and Kress 1979; Kress 1994; Fowler et al. 1979; van Dijk 1988a, 1988b; Fairclough 1995, 1989, 1998). In this study, I argue that for the sake of plausibility, critical readings of media texts, particularly the hard news type, have to be grounded in the interplay between the discursive and the social mainly through ethnographic observation and analysis. CDA scholars have long acknowledged the importance of discourse practices at the levels of production and the need to understand the social world of discourse ethnographically by closely observing the experiences of those creating it (c.f. van

Dijk 1988b; Gee et al. 1992; Gee 2001; Hodge 1979; Fairclough 2003; Martin and Wodak 2003; Blommaert 2005; Flowerdew 2008;). But reliance on the language of the text as a final product to reveal how ideological power is discursively enacted in media organizations producing it has persisted despite warnings from prominent thinkers and analysts of the inadequacy of the approach (Bourdieu 1990; Thompson 1991).

This study focuses on aspects other than textual material produced mainly by Aljazeera (henceforth the term is used to refer to the network's English and Arabic channels) in comparison and parallel with the textual output of both the BBC and CNN. The analysis triangulates CDA with ethnographic research through observation, stories, field visits, interviews and important secondary data such as media reports and samples from style guidelines. The ethnographic angle has helped the researcher to draw conclusions that extend and occasionally contradict commonly held views with regard to how hard news is created and disseminated and the ideas and concepts mainstream CDA literature employs to explain and understand these processes. I will start first by laying down the theoretical and methodological framework of the study through a concise overview of the literature and the thinkers CDA scholars have relied on to develop the discipline. Then I discuss CDA's limitations before detailing the scope of issues and questions the study wants to answer. Thereafter, I deal with the issues of method and data before moving to a detailed critical analysis of Aljazeera, comparing and paralleling the findings with major international rivals, namely the BBC and CNN.

1.2 Voices and discourse

CDA pays due attention to the context in which the discourse is used as well as the manner in which discoursal voices are represented. When discourse is contextualized, voices taking part in it do not enjoy equal opportunity to power, emphasis and authority. Hard news discourse is an 'amalgam' of voices, as we shall see, and to understand how these voices operate I will turn to the Russian philosopher Bakhtin (1994; 1984). Discourse for Bakhtin is not a set of shapes or structures. It is always material and social practices and to understand it properly one has to examine how people use it. Central to Bakhtin's theory are notions of *dialogism* and *heteroglossia* in which utterances or discourses even at the micro level of single words are an interaction of voices situated in their contexts. He contrasts both notions with *monologism* or *monoglossia*, the discourse of a single and unified source. Two other important Bakhtinian notions, I find quite appropriate in analyzing news, are the discoursal forces, which he terms *centripetal* and *centrifugal*. Both, he says, are in operation, when language is used, with the centripetal force prone to bring elements, whether social or discursive, closer to the central monologic point, while the centrifugal force having the

propensity of spreading these elements towards a multiple, varied and dialogic central point (Bakhtin 1981).

We are aware that hard news discourse is of multiple voices but need to see how these voices are represented, their delineations, how discoursal forces tend to navigate within media organizations producing discourse and whether these voices push the social and discursive elements towards the center of power in organization or in different directions. Bakhtin does not specifically speak about news discourse in his theory. His focus is literature, particularly the novel genre. He uses the concepts in his own work of literary theory. But they do not apply only to literature as for Bakhtin language in itself operates in dialogical relationships and can be realized not only in entire utterances but also in any meaningful fragment, be it a single word , "if we hear in that word another person's voice" (1973: 152). Voices in the news have at least four discursive levels at their disposal to use for expression (Barkho 2007) but since they are discursively and socially contextualized within the news discourse, this transformation, Bakhtin (1984: 78) tells us, in one of his often-quoted statements, must invite a new reading:

> The speech of another, once enclosed in a context, is – no matter how accurately transmitted – always subject to certain semantic changes. The context embracing another's word is responsible for its dialogising background, whose influence can be very great.

1.3 Role of power in news discourse

Another key theoretical paradigm underpinning this study, besides Bakhtin, relates to the theoretical and methodological framework French sociologist Bourdieu has developed to clarify relations of power in language and discourse. I argue that a marriage between Bakhtin's dialogism and Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, field and symbolic violence is most suitable to clarify and understand the workings of discourse in global broadcasters like the BBC, CNN and Aljazeera. The divisions between the novel, Bakhtin's object of analysis, and hard news discourse, the core output of these global broadcasters, necessitates augmenting Bakhtin with Bourdieu's notions of the dynamic relationships between the discursive and social elements of discourse. Bourdieu is not only a theorist. He is also a methodologist and field analyst who relies on extensive ethnographic observation to formulate his concepts.

Bourdieu's advice to CDA scholars is that reliance on textual material alone is not enough to clarify the role of symbolic violence, hegemony and common sense that occur in discourses, including the mass media. A proper understanding of discourse requires investigating the institutional contexts in which it is produced:

> It follows that any analysis of ideologies in the narrow sense of 'legitimizing discourses' which fails to include an analysis of the corresponding institutional mechanisms is liable to be no more than a contribution to the efficacy of those ideologies (Bourdieu 1990: 133).

Bourdieu believes, and so argues this author, that two stages will have to be involved to unravel the powers and ideologies of discourse. Hard news discourse has at least two main types of actor: the actors with power to issue discursive instructions and the actors with lesser power who are to transform the instructions into news reports. Bourdieu uses the example of a game where the players, though under obligation to comply with the rules, still have some room to improvise:

> The source resides neither in consciousness nor in things but in the relationship between two stages of the social, that is, between the history objectified in things, in the form of institutions, and in the history incarnated in bodies, in the form of that system of enduring dispositions which I call habitus (Bourdieu 1990: 190).

Thompson (1991: 28-29), in the kind of a 'veiled warning' which unfortunately CDA scholars have apparently ignored, summarizes Bourdieu's position as follows:

> it would be superficial (at best) to analyze political discourses or ideologies by focusing on the utterances as such, without reference to the constitution of the political field and the relations between this field and the broader space of social positions and processes. This kind of 'internal analysis' is commonplace … as exemplified by … attempts to apply some form of semiotics or 'discourse analysis' to political speeches … all such attempts … take for granted but fail to take account of the sociological conditions within which the object of analysis is produced, constructed and received.

Fairclough agrees with Thompson and the quotation above is prominently highlighted in his seminal *Language and power* (1989: 177). He says mainstream CDA literature has overlooked many aspects of Bourdieu's concepts by failing to operationalize them properly. But he later argues (2003) that while social theorists (such as Bourdieu, Derrida, Bernstein, Foucault, Giddens, Gramsci and Habermas) draw particular attention to the crucial role of language in society, they do not examine the linguistic features of texts. My argument is that Bakhtin extensively examines the discourse of the novel genre and other thinkers, particularly Bourdieu go as far as questioning the validity of analyses solely based on textual evidence. Therefore, this study holds that a critical analysis of the discursive features and practices of discourse has to add empirical evidence that goes beyond the textual materials

if the analysis is going to have the required reliability and validity to be fed back to the objects under investigation. Therefore, CDA should also examine how media organizations arrive at the sets of social assumptions and discursive practices and what prompts them to make specific textual choices. In other words we need to know how editors and journalists make sense of their world and how they experience that world in their discourse. As Fairclough (2003: 2) himself says, "It often makes sense to use discourse analysis in conjunction with other forms of analysis, for instance ethnography or forms of institutional analysis".

1.4 Power and 'systems'

How 'systems' control people's lives play an important part in Habermas's analysis of modern capitalist society (1984; 1989). Habermas in fact uses the word 'colonization' to characterize the way these systems, i.e. institutions or organizations, their power and money and even discourse control and shape our life. One could easily add, and this can be gleaned from Hamermas's analysis, that words or discourse for certain institutions are as important in the process of 'colonization' as physical power, money and armies.

In a modern capitalist society, Habermas says, our lives are not free as we are made to believe because of the power the 'systems' play in having us do and do not do things. We rarely are aware of how the holders of this power control our lives. We grow to accept what the "systems" impose on us as natural and common-sense. In this respect, the concept of hegemony (Garfinkel 1967; Forgacs 1988, Gramsci 1971) is also helpful as a theory of power and domination. It emphasizes that there are two major ways through which individuals and organizations exercise their power - coercion and consent - it is the latter to which power holders normally resort in reinstating their cultural and social dominance, mainly through discourse (Said 1979). The hegemony model in media organizations has mostly been analyzed and arrived at in the light of how diverse discursive practices of discourse are articulated and how they can be linked to those sustaining relations of power. I argue that for one to see how consent, which is a form of hegemonization, is expressed or rather represented, it is necessary to examine the strings connecting the holders of editorial power with the holders of political and economic power and the struggle of both on how to win the consent of the mass of reporters and audiences.

2. Limitations of Critical Discourse Analysis

Critics charge that discourse scholars read too much into the language of the texts they analyze and in order to arrive at the major features of power they examine a wide array of linguistic structures whose ideological power consequences appear to be the same in

different texts (Simpson 1993; Fish 1981). More criticism has also centered on the narrow perspective to textual material as most studies would select two or three stories to identify their discursive features and links with the sociocultural context (c.f. Bell 1991; Fowler 1991, 1985; Fairclough 1995; Kress and Hodge 1979). Other problems, which critics say are plaguing CDA, include the almost total reliance on the First World with regard both to the theorists furnishing the conceptual frameworks and the selection of material for analysis. In other words, as Blommaert (2005) argues, CDA has become almost the exclusive arena for the voices of the First World while those from the Third World are almost totally ignored

Even harsher criticism has come from Schelgloff (1997), Widdowson (1995, 1998, 2000) and Toolan (2002), warning against the dangers of bias in CDA and charging that CDA makes it possible for researchers to arrive at foregone conclusions due to their own ideological positions, and the selection for analysis of only the textual samples backing that particular position via complex analyses which only a few can understand.

CDA scholars are aware of the criticism but some like van Dijk (2001: 96) remain unperturbed. Since CDA is concerned with social problems, then it must be represented as "discourse analysis with attitude … CDA does not deny, but explicitly defines and defends its own sociopolitical position. That is, CDA is biased – and proud of it," he says. Other CDA scholars agree (c.f. Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999; Meyer 2001). They counter that since it is rather difficult to conduct research that is free from ideological assumptions and judgments, CDA has to start from a pre-ordained ideological position.

But most recently, scholars have begun taking the criticism seriously and have attempted to devise new methodological frameworks to respond to CDA limitations. Bhatia et al (2008) and Flowerdew (2008), for example, see CDA as of a controversial nature since analysts have so far failed to argue that their results and findings should be of some practical use so that they can be relayed to the objects of their analyses. They contend that feeding the findings back to the objects of analysis is not yet possible because there is more to be done for the findings to be right.

The undue emphasis on the part of critical analysts on the analysis of textual material and lack of practical procedures to alleviate the risk of bias has alienated members of media practitioner community, who see little 'credibility' in the results and findings of these analyses since they apparently overlook the real processes involved in how texts are actually produced. "You take one or two of our stories and write several thousand words about them while we produce hundreds of stories every day," says BBC World's Head of News Richard Porter. BBC College of Journalism's Director Vin Ray says academics overlook many

aspects of news discourse in their studies. "They (academics) are critical but they rarely come up with an alternative means of telling … stories."

2.1 Issues to solve

The preceding review raises numerous issues on the conceptual, business, operational and practitioner levels. This study's theoretical and methodological framework is set in a manner to respond to these issues. These are summarized in the 10 points below which also represent the type of questions this study raises and attempts to answer:

1. What kind of relationship exists between the internal and external holders of discoursal power?

2. How is discoursal power opposed or resisted in media organizations and does this discoursal power struggle take place within or outside the organization?

3. How is power enacted among the two major actors holding it?

4. What strategic perspective does a media firm assume in its approach and how does this strategic positioning influence the discoursal power and authority?

5. How are the dialectal ties of discourse played out with regard to certain discursive practices ? How is this relationship established in terms of coercive and persuasive power?

6. How are social structures and discursive patterns shaped in media discourse with relation to editorial power holders, discourse producers and consumers?

7. When and how does a change or twist in media-related social structures occur and what impact will that change have on discursive practices and the interests of power holders?

8. How are discursive practices employed through the different tiers of discourse in terms of social and linguistic consciousness?

9. What degree of power do the mass of reporters exercise in media institutions and how do editorial power holders see and assess their position?

10. How hidden and unclear are power relations enacted in media discourse and at which levels of discourse they can be described as covert?

3. Data and method

This study pursues CDA as a major method to analyze Aljazeera's online news output and compares it, whenever possible, with that of the BBC and CNN. The approach is designed to respond to as many of the criticisms of CDA as possible. So is the scope of the data. The

aim is first to answer the research questions and then provide a new perspective which is more credible in the eyes of discourse practitioners with regard to the sociocultural and institutional links and contexts and the selection of discursive features. It tries to respond to the criticism lodged against CDA and which opponents have used to pillory the discipline. Moreover, it attempts to allay the misgivings practitioners have about CDA and the questions they raise regarding its research methods, data and findings.

For an adequate CDA of media discourse to be practical it has to be selective in its choice of analytical framework and settle on a limited number of desiderata of functional grammatical categories rather than include as many of them as possible. This study concentrates essentially on lexis and occasionally draws on a few other functional linguistic features when vocabulary fails to address the issues raised in section 2.1. Focusing only on a limited number of discursive features will enable the analyst to spend more time triangulating data and method for the sake of validity and reliability (Denzin and Lincoln 2000).

Politicizing has been one of the main charges lobbed at CDA which the critics attribute to the lack of triangulation in analysis. Weiss and Wodak (2003: 22) have attempted to respond to the criticism by suggesting a triangulatory approach comprising four levels or stages of analysis. They urge analysts to tackle extra-linguistic and broader socio-political and historical issues in investigating a text's language and its intertextuality. The fact that three international broadcasters are included in the study along with three sets of data and the fact that it focuses on a giant Third World broadcaster, namely Aljazeera, hopefully solidifies the triangulatory approach, helping the researcher "to ask the same questions of another body of data, to explore whether things work the same way there" or differently (Johnstone 2007: 22).

3.1 Textual material

To boost the study's validity and reliability, hard news stories dealing with Israeli-Palestinian issue and the Iraq war published by Aljazeera, the BBC and CNN websites for a period of over 130 days(15 March to 31 July, 2007), were collected and subjected to a critical analysis. Aljazeera Arabic (henceforth AljA) had 203 stories on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and 295 stories on the Iraq war; Aljazeera English (henceforth AljE) had 116 on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and 117 on the Iraq war; The BBC had 183 stories on Iraq and 176 on Israel and Palestine; BBC Arabic had 199 stories on Iraq war and 221 stories on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; CNN Arabic had 286 stories on Iraq and 90 on the Palestinian and Israeli issue; while CNN International stories were 131 on Iraq and 88 on Israel and Palestine (Table 1). The aim was two fold: first to provide a quantitative comparison of the

volume of related material the three broadcasters put out in both Arabic and English and also shed some light on the frequency of how some discursive features have been produced over this period. CDA has rarely been about counting (Gee 2001) but indicating even a crude form of frequency of occurrence may signal some sort of consistency in the way media represent certain groups and the kind of ideology and power they espouse.

Table 1: Frequency of stories

	Israel/Palestine		Iraq	
	Number of articles	Column Percentage	Number of articles	Column Percentage
BBC	179	20.0	183	15.3
BBC Arabic	221	24.6	199	16.7
AljA	203	22.6	295	24.7
AljE	116	13.0	117	9.8
CNN Inter.	88	9.8	131	11.0
CNN Arabic	90	10.0	268	22.5
Total	897	100	1,193	100

At face value, Table 1 above indicates that BBC Arabic has more Israel and Palestine stories (221) than AljA (203) and CNN Arabic (90). Similarly AljA has more Iraq related stories (295) than CNN Arabic (268) and BBC Arabic (199). But frequency counts like these, no matter how accurate, rarely give an even-handed picture of how voices in the story are represented. Even a count of the sources that are mentioned, or volume of space given to each, will fail to assess equity and balance of reporting (Fairclough 1995). It is the assessment of how different voices are represented in discourse, the social and cultural implications of such representations at the levels of discourse and discursive practices and their motivations, which matter.

3.2 Interviews

During my visits and observations (seven days at the BBC, 14 days at Aljazeera and one day at CNN), I held semi-structured interviews with senior editors of the three channels. The questions were to determine the type of strategic perspective the three broadcasters pursue and the power, motivations and reasons behind their discursive options. Excerpts from the interviews with the three broadcasters will also be used to augment the analysis and to help readers envisage how the three multilingual global broadcasters position themselves in terms of ideological power strategies and their manifestations in their discourses in comparison with Aljazeera.

Here is a list of the editors quoted in this study along with their positions in their respective outlets. Their first and second names as well as their titles will be mentioned when first referred to in the text and then they will only be referred to by their last names:

1. Nick Wren, Managing Editor – Europe, Middle East and Africa (CNN)
2. Susann Flood, Director of Press, Europe, Middle East and Africa (CNN)
3. Tom Fenton, Executive Producer, Europe, Middle East and Africa (CNN)
4. Malcolm Balen, Senior Editorial Adviser (BBC)
5. Jeremy Bowen, Editor, Middle East (BBC)
6. Hosam El Sokkari, editor in chief (BBC Arabic)
7. Adel Sulaiman, Editor, Day News Program (BBC Arabic)
8. Jerry Timmins, Head of Region, Africa and Middle East (BBC)
9. Richard Porter, Head of News, BBC World (BBC)
10. Vin Ray, Director of College of Journalism (BBC)
11. Kevin March, Editor, College of Journalism (BBC)
12. Ahmad Sheik Editor-in-chief (AljA)
13. Aref Hijjawi, Director of Programs (AljA)
14. Ayman Gaballah, Deputy Chief Editor (AljA)
15. Gaven Morris, Head of Planning (AljE)
16. Ibrahim Helal, Deputy Manager, director, News and Programs (AljE)
17. Russel Merryman, Editor-in-chief, Web and and New Media Department (AljE)
18. Sameer Khader, Program editor (AljA)
19. Wadah Khanfar, Managing Director (Aljazeera)
20. John Pullman, Head of Output (AljE)

The following sections provide a concise critical analysis of the news output of both AljA and AljE. The analysis incorporates the interviews and visits by the author not only to Aljazeera but also the BBC and CNN. The study correlates and corroborates the analysis and findings with those of the BBC and CNN to see whether the three broadcasters produce discourse the same way or differently, whether they view the social world of objects of the study in the same way or differently and finally to see whether they employ similar or different discursive strategies and patterns in representing similar events.

4. Analysis - AljA

4.1 The interface of editorial power and political power
There are persistent attempts on the part of the editors to persuade the relevant power holders of the consequences [of what?] should their 'independence' be dented. The Qatari

royals, who finance Aljazeera, occasionally deploy their power to nip at the network to force it to follow changes in their strategic political alliances (New York Times, 2008). Editors sense the pressure though it is hard to have them admit it. "Our main concern is our integrity, editorial integrity … Actually the present policy is (that) we are not going to compromise," says Editor in Chief Ahmad Sheikh. The compromise he has in mind relates to both commercial and political pressure from the host country. Besides losing the 'channel', the Qatari power holders are bound, according to Ibrahim Helal, Deputy Manager, director, News and Programs (AljE), to forsake their influence in the Middle East and beyond if they tried to control editorial output:

> Qatar … doesn't have a lot of influence in the region. So to keep having Aljazeera as an objective, accurate source of information is like having a nuclear weapon … And to enjoy the power of having a nuclear weapon you stop thinking of using it, because once you use it you lose it.

There are struggles and contradictions in the relationship between the political order under which Aljazeera works and the discursive practices it employs to represent the world of the events it covers particularly when it concerns sensitive issues with political repercussions. The tension is there in the sense of 'insecurity' the employees feel with regard to their jobs and editorial independence. Many employees, including senior editors, are certain that they owe their jobs to the political order of the host country and that nothing is stable in politics particularly in a volatile and unpredictable region like the Middle East. But it has to be noted that the political order is also aware of the 'interface' in the struggle for power, with editors warning that the politicians are also bound to lose if they exercised their economic and political clout to 'tame' AljA and AljE. Asked what would happen if the political order meddled in Aljazeera's editorial policy, Ayman Gaballah, AljA's Deputy Chief Editor said:

> The equation is very simple. You give freedom, you get the channel. You take freedom, you lose it. There are some other channels in the region and they lost. If someone tries to play with the freedom, they lose the channel. It is very simple.

During my two-week stay at both AljA an AljE, editors would boast of their editorial independence and how the political order financing the network has steered away from meddling in their editorial decisions. They reiterated that the editorial business of *dos and don'ts* was theirs and the Qatari royals had nothing to do with it. "We never had any interference during the most sensitive time of our history; we never had it," says AljE's Helal. Helal was a former editor-in-chief of the AljA. Asked whether AljA and AljE faced any political

constraints editorially, Wadah Khanfar, the network's Managing Dirctor said, "Aljazeera has learned during the last 10 years that the political and financial are not really constraints."

Qatar and its 'nuclear bomb'

Many Aljazeera executives, editors and journalists believe that the host country, Qatar, cannot dispense with their services and will not go back on promises of granting them what they see as 'total' editorial independence. Helal compared the power of Aljazeera in the hands of the Qatari royals to that of a 'nuclear bomb'. Gaballah said meddling in the channel would mean losing it for ever. Khanfar said he did not foresee any 'political' problems ahead.

Four months after my May visit, the Qatari Emir visited Saudi Arabia, Aljazeera' main opponent in the region, and the target of its investigative reporting. As the Saudis either own or control most pan-Arab Media in the region (Hammond 2007), Aljazeera was the only source for its nearly 40 million viewers on the 'secretive' world of the Saudi monarchy. Early 2007, it aired and issued a daring report on secret payments of hundreds of millions of pounds U.K.'s biggest arms dealer, BAE systems, had made to Prince Bandar bin Sultan, a powerful ruling family figure (BBC, 7 June 2007). During interviews, editors bragged that the second part of the same program would be aired by the end of the year with further 'damning' evidence of how 'corruptive' the Saudi Royal family is. But that program remains to be aired and may never hit the airwaves.

The rival monarchs, the Qatari Emir and Saudi Arabian King, resolved their political differences in the October 2007 unprecedented visit. Qatar will prevent Aljazeera from criticizing the Saudi monarchy and Saudi Arabia would tell its extensive television and print network to halt attacks on Qatar.

"Repercussions were soon felt at Aljazeera," writes the New York Times. "Orders were given not to tackle any Saudi issue without referring to the higher management," one Jazeera newsroom employee wrote in an email. "All (Saudi) dissident voices disappeared from our screens."

When the Associated Press (10 February 2008) rans a report that a federal judge blocked a portion of the same prince's property in the U.S. worth hundreds of millions of dollars on charges of corruption, that story, which topped international news highlights, was shunned in the Arab world, and strangely enough by both AljA and AljE.

4.2 Lexis and power

According to Fowler (1991: 80), the use of vocabulary to classify media voices and participants "amounts to a map of the objects, concepts, processes and relationships" through which media producers experience and see the world of the events they carry. This map, Fowler adds, sorts out classes of the social assumptions, common senses and concepts reporters, writers and speakers entertain concerning the communicative events they deal with. For Halliday (1973, 1995, 1970), the British linguist whose systemic theory critical discourse scholars take as the base for their critical analysis, the vocabulary of a language is instrumental in revealing speakers' or writers' ideas, stands and viewpoints of their own world and that around them. But apparently media discourse differs from other discourses and Halliday's theory as well as CDA's major names such as Fowler, van Dijk, Fairclough, Kress, van Leeuwen and Wodak, among others, have overlooked the degree of discursive control editorial power holders exert on the selection or rejection of lexical items, particularly those of a controversial, emotive or loaded nature. The lexical options made in media discourse may not necessarily express the writer or speaker's world. On the contrary, they may be in opposition to it (see 4.7, 5.2 and 5.3).

Let us investigate the issue of vocabulary and how AljA employs it as a vehicle to carry out its ideological strategies of power and control and how these are manifested in its discourse. AljA pursues what Fairclough terms (1989: 113) 'oppositional' wording practices in its coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict though the oppositional discourse is much less discernible in its Iraq reporting. Palestinian acts are worded from the perspective that they are the 'prey' of a state exercising massive and disproportionate power and, nonetheless its 'repressive' policies have the West's blessing. When it comes to vocabulary, particularly in the representation of Palestinians and Israelis, we are confronted with two 'adversarial' discourses. The discursive patterning is not arbitrary, natural or commonsensical because, as Sheikh explains, AljA cannot treat both sides on a plane level because one of them, the Palestinians, is a 'victim' while the other, the Israelis, is the 'victimizer:

We on our behalf we know that this is the sort of conflict that we have in this region. And we know who the victim is and who is being victimized.

The concept of 'victim' and 'victimizer' permeates AljA's lexis. The Palestinians who fall in fighting Israel are *martyrs*, their suicide bombing attacks are *martyrdom operations*, and their opposition of Israeli occupation is invariably described as 'muqama' or *resistance*. Palestinian groups use names with cultural, historical and religious connotations and these are frequently repeated by AljA giving Arab Muslim audiences the impression that the

discourse is meant to serve some religious purpose: *Islamic Resistance Movement*, *the Jihad Movement*, *al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades*, *al-Quds Battalion Activists*, *Saladin Brigades*. Palestinian groups generally adopt terms immersed in Islamic religion and Arab history to describe themselves and their actions. The crude missiles they fire at Israeli towns, for example, are named after *Qudus*, or *Aqsa*, (one of the holiest shrines in Islam). A frequency count of the 203 Arabic stories on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict issued over 130 days reveals that terms with religious and historical implications occur more than 1000 times, that is about five for each story.

Aljazeera's mission, according to Khanfar, is to give "voice to the voiceless" and one way of carrying out that mission is through the selection of vocabulary. The issue of which word or term to use and not to use with regard to the Middle East is "very sensitive and pivotal for [international] media in general and the Aljazeera in particular," he adds. Why is it so important particularly for Aljazeera, I asked. He said:

> The way to use expressions and labeling is of paramount importance … because of the prestige they have among Arab viewers and their fondness of them … Aljazeera always seeks to have a clear scientific, historic or artistic reference for the selection of this expression or that label.

When analyzing AljA's Iraq reporting, the sense of 'victim' and 'victimizer' is not as easily discernible as the channel's coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian issue. The word 'occupation' for example is very rarely used and Iraqis U.S. troops kill are not called *martyrs*. Groups fighting the U.S. are not *resistance* and their men are *armed men* rather than *resistance fighters*. Names of different Iraqi armed groups, most of them coined with religious and historical reference in mind, are used as they are without epithets whether negative or positive e.g. *Islamic Army*, *al-Qaeda*, *the Mahdi Army*, *Sadr supporters*. Al-Qaeda's fiery rhetoric is mediated to suit its discourse when covering speeches by its leaders with plenty of scare quoting (c.f. Barkho 2006; 2008b).

Aljazeera, like the BBC and CNN 'strives' to avoid 'value-laden' or 'loaded words' in its discourse. These words reveal a certain degree of bias for their semantic potential of characterizing speakers or voices in media either negatively or positively. For example, lexical items such as *terrorist*, *jihadist*, *militant*, *insurgent*, *fundamentalist*, *Islamist*, etc. all have pejorative or negative connotations in English. But once rendered into Arabic, they lose their derogatory character – of course apart from *terrorist*. AljA, unlike BBC Arabic and CNN Arabic, has no problem with translation, as almost all of its Middle East news output is

originally written in Arabic. The situation is different for AljA's rival Arabic services of the BBC and CNN where a high proportion (approx. 70%) of news output is translated.

4.3 Lexical strategy

AljA's strategy, whether with regard to discursive practices or commercial interests, is based on the cultural, religious and historical systems emanating from the region where it has most of its audiences and exercises the most influence. It pays particular attention to the social systems of the environment it targets. For its manager and editors the discoursal strategy will make little sense if it is dissociated from the socio-cultural composition of audiences. They firmly believe that they owe their success to their respect of and association with the cultural, social and religious systems prevalent in their region. The following excerpts, from the responses I had in relation to whether AjlA respects and adheres to the social, cultural, religious and local system of the region it targets, confirm this viewpoint:

> Of course, of course, if you do not respect one of these actors that you have mentioned, you start losing a segment of your audience. (Sameer Khader, Program Editor)

> It is the need of the region … When it comes to religion we must have in mind what our viewers would say … Yes, it is very important to us, the Islamic, Arabic culture is something important. (Aref Hijjaw, Director of Programs Department)

> We understand the thinking. We understand how the people in this part of the world think. We have an advantage over them [rivals] because we are part of this culture. (Sheik)

The best way to exercise ideological power in a conservative region like the Arab Middle East, where Aljazeera is most influential, is to learn how to traverse language with the social power by relying on cultural and religious signs. This is what makes AljA's culture and religion-based discourse legitimate and natural in the eyes of millions of its viewers.

Let us now turn to how Israelis are represented at the level of vocabulary. AljA's discourse represents the Israelis as 'oppressors' and 'victimizers'. For example, Israelis who have opted to live on occupied Palestinian land are called 'mustautinoun' a word with colonial implications in Arabic. There is also *jidar al-fasil* or Segregation Wall a reminder of the regime of apartheid in South Africa. But perhaps AljA's most striking discursive practice is the way the word *ihtilal* or occupation is used. This is one of the commonest representations

of the Israelis. The word enters into a variety of noun and adjectival combinations and is transferred metaphorically to mean different things (Hodge and Kress 1979).

Here are a few examples: occupation forces, occupation prisons, occupation soldiers, occupation troops, special occupation forces, occupation army, occupation radio', etc. And occupation is personified, thus metaphoric instances like occupation kills, occupation maims, occupation detains, occupation invades, fighting or resisting occupation, martyred by bullets of occupation are quite common. A survey by the author of the 203 stories on Palestinian-Israeli conflict reveals that the word ihtilal and its derivatives are mentioned about 800 times, nearly four times for each story. In only one story (28 February 2007) they are repeated 18 times. What prompts AljA to highlight the 'negative' colonial representation of Israel-related discourse and the 'positive' religious and cultural representation of Palestine-related discourse?

> It is unethical, it is unacceptable, (and) it is unprofessional to equate the victim with the victimizer. The Palestinian people are the only people on this planet under occupation and who are being punished at the same time. It is the first incident of its sort in the history of mankind. (Sheik)

The Arabic services of both the BBC and CNN have yet to develop their own discursive strategy. While there is no obvious discursive attempt to 'scorn' Islamic or Arabic religious or cultural symbols, both broadcasters dissociate themselves from AljA's discursive patterns treating such symbols with deference. Measured against AljA, the BBC's and to a great extent CNN's Arabic versions seem contrary to the reality of the situation in Arab and Muslim eyes and 'incompatible' with the type of lexis they see as 'common sense', 'natural' and 'legitimate'. The BBC as a giant multilingual broadcaster – it currently broadcasts in 33 languages – is much less sensitive to the religion, culture and traditions of its Arabic audiences for example. It strives to have a unified discursive strategy across all services particularly with regard to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict regardless of audience and language. Balen, the top BBC 'wise man' on the region, says:

> And we certainly in the Middle East have had a much more concerted attempt to have one BBC language … We have now reconciled the language and the policy … Does (this) apply to other conflicts in the region well not specifically. This is a language that has been drawn up for the long-running Israeli and Palestinian conflict.

The three broadcasters have glossaries especially prepared for the coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The only difference is that while Aljazeera has two separate

vocabularies for the conflict, one for AljA and one for AljE (see 5.2 and 5.3), the BBC and CNN have one unified list of words and phrases each, which their discursive policy makers would like to see used across regions and languages. Susanna Flood (Director of Press, CNN Europe, Middle East and Africa) says "In all our channels, whether English or those broadcasting in other languages, we do talk the same language and we use the same language" (see The Power of Atlanta and 5.3). The lists by the BBC and CNN, as well as the one by AljA, categorize the voices in the conflict differently. For AljA, as we have seen, it is a matter of 'ethics and principles"; for the BBC and CNN it is a matter of power (c.f. Barkho 2007; 2008a). Asked why CNN cannot treat both adversaries (Palestinians and Israelis) on an equal discursive level, Tom Fenton, CNN Executive Producer and former Jerusalem bureau chief said:

> Because one is a state and one is a people that aspires to become a state. There is a difference between a state and an organization. It is a conflict between a state and people under occupation.

4.4 Rival discourses

The representation of both conflicts at the discursive and social levels on the part of AljA even splits Arab and Muslims into two different categorizations. The Palestinians who are Arab and Muslim have greater human and moral value discursively than the Iraqis who are also mostly Arab and Muslim. The bifurcation of negative/positive or benign/malignant and the context of these asymmetrical power relations represented in 'us/them' or 'self/other' (Schieffelin and Doucet 1998) is here a distinctive feature of discourse not only when pitting Arabs and Muslims against their enemies but also in representing Arabs and Muslims themselves. Arab and Muslim audiences have come to see AljA's binary discourse in representing them also as natural and commonsensical, evidenced by the persistent high status the channel enjoys among Arab viewers.

The analysis accords with Bourdieu's concept of the divisions of power even at the level of monolingual ideologies in language and discourse and how the audiences, through their complicity, see this discursive and social split in representation as natural and therefore hardly worth paying any attention to. But the discoursal categorization (see 4.7, 5.2 and 5.3) is not that invisible and natural to its creators and here the analysis departs from Bourdieu's theory. Following Bourdieu, CDA analysts have mostly viewed discoursal power as invisible and that it can only be brought to the surface through the 'preying' eyes of critical scholars. But that is not the case with the creators and practitioners of discourse in the BBC, CNN and Aljzaera where the discoursal bifurcation of voices is so deliberate and visible that reporters

have learned what they need to do when moving from one outlet to another (see 6.7). The hegemonic ideology is intentionally produced by these organizations and to have it practiced they have devised their own 'gate-keeping' procedures in the form of style guidelines, quality units, editorial advisers and policy makers whose main task is to ensure that these discursive divisions are maintained and adhered to in discourse.

4.5 Reporters as speakers

In reporting news objectively, reporters ostensibly strive to distance themselves from the speakers or voices they report. In Fairclough's words (1995: 81), they maintain "boundaries between representing discourse and the represented discourse – between voices of the reporter and the persons reported." For Van Dijk (1988a: 191) this is "one important clue about the perspective of the media" as it tells the occurrence and identity of who is allowed to speak.

Reporters have two discursive tools at their disposal through which people can air their voices, namely quoting and paraphrasing, each with its distinctive discursive and cognitive constraints (c.f. Quirk et al. 1985). But hard news reporters do not only quote or paraphrase. Barkho (2007) identifies two more discourse layers – comment and background – which reporters resort to and which they can easily 'manipulate' to air their own voices.

But it seems there is no limit to the reporters' 'insatiable desire' to have their voices heard in the story. It is no longer unusual to come across quotations and paraphrases telling reporters' speech and thought in order to render, summarize and transform their own discourse into news. In paraphrasing normally very little remains of the authorial and orthographic clues of the original discourse apart from the source which now can also be that of the reporter. Note the following examples from AljA:

Aljazeera correspondent said the occupation troops mounted a wide campaign in search of two young people hurling burning bottles on Israeli vehicles and arrested 13 Palestinians from the village of Aur … (13 April 2007)

Aljazeera correspondent in the West Bank has maintained that three Israelis have been injured when their patrol came under fire in the colony of Mualiya Adomeem … (17 April 2007)

These are good examples of how reporters occasionally assume the role narrators of literary fiction play, changing position from outside the text to within the text (Genette 1980). Such positioning and switching from external to internal reporting roles (c.f. Fowler 1985 and

Uspensky 1973) is another major source of bias in news besides contrasting lexical categorization. Reporters say (as advised by their style guidelines) that they do their best to stay outside the communicative event or the story they are covering. But the frequent occurrence of reporters reporting themselves in the story is surging. For example, AljA relies on its own discourse (via comment or reporting) 329 times in the 203-story corpus on Israel-Palestine conflict.

This role is even more evident at the comment layer of discourse where reporters express overt opinion in news towards one of the protagonists. The slanting is obvious once the comment is transposed and made to apply to the other speaker or side in the story (Barkho 2007). It is unlikely that AljA would deploy similar discursive comment to represent the Israelis in the following:

> Huge numbers of Israeli troops stormed the city of Nablus amid random shooting and began a campaign of arrests and house raids. (4 April 2007)

> Occupation troops had killed five Palestinians in the West Bank city of Jenin and its camps most of them affiliated to al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades and one from al-Qudus Battalions. Among yesterday's martyrs was a 17-year old girl who became a martyr when occupation troops barged into her family house in search of her brother and when they did not find him there opened fire in the house killing the girl. (9 May 2007)

Reporters insert their own statements into the hard news discourse, sometimes turning themselves into illicit or covert speakers – comment has no reporting verbs as it is unsourced. Their statements carry authority with no attempt of employing some hedging devices to tone them down. They as speakers are as assertive as the speakers they report. The degree of interest reporters display to be represented in the story is no less emphatic than that of the speakers involved in the communicative act (c.f. Brown and Levinson 1978).

How is power enacted at the different layers of the hard news discourse? One particular layer, namely paraphrasing, is of considerable interest here and is now attracting greater attention from discursive policy makers in global media outlets such as the BBC, CNN and Aljazeera. Attribution is now almost 'a must' in CNN. It is there in the style guidelines and editorial power holders are keen to impose it. Nick Wren, CNN's Managing Editor – Europe, Middle East and Africa, says:

> We do not do opinion. CNN International does not do opinion. For our journalists, reporters and editors to avoid opinion they need to attribute, attribute and attribute. I

certainly try to make sure that almost everything in a story is attributed. These are the rules.

But most of CNN's attribution, as is the case with Aljazeera and the BBC, is at the paraphrasing layer where the speakers' words and possibly ideas are refined by reporters so that they can pass through the 'sieve' of editorial guidelines and controls. Besides comment, paraphrasing is the layer where the ideological power struggle in news discourse is enacted, as it illustrates how reporters first try to subject speakers' statements they do not want to quote to the 'perforated metal' of editorial control.

The role of quotation is receding in news discourse. There are only 66 quotations in AljA (37 quote Palestinian sources and 29 quote Israeli sources). It is being replaced by paraphrasing which reporters reserve for the discursive practices they prefer not to pass through their editorial 'sieve'. (AljA has 1315 instances of paraphrasing, 551 for Israel and 764 for Palestine; and 261 instances of scare quotes, 184 for Palestine and 77 for Israel). Note the following examples:

> The remark was in response to the U.S. embassy spokesman in Tel Aviv in which he said the U.S. was ready to deal with the unity government ministers who do not belong to Hamas which Washington considers "a terrorist organization." (19 March 2007)

> Israeli occupation troops have announced that they have foiled what they described as "a big terrorist attack?" that was to be carried out by a car bomb in Tel Aviv last month. (10 April 2007)

What rhetorical effects do editors or journalists produce by putting expressions like *a terrorist organization* or *a big terrorist aggression* in scare quotes and what impact do they have on readers? First, reporters want to warn readers that these expressions are problematic and at the same time quite representative of the speaker's discursive patterns. Second, they want to distance themselves from these expressions, making it quite clear that they are not their own property. The use of scare quotes vindicates the reporter from the inclusion of such expressions in news discourse. The media outlet cannot be held accountable for the use of scare quoted expressions. The BBC, CNN and AljE include the voices of their reporters in the field mainly through paraphrase and occasionally through quoting and comment. AljA does not include its reporters' voices in its Iraq copy because it has no presence there as its team was thrown out of the country two years ago.

4.6 Schematic structure

Viewed schematically, AljA's online hard news seems to have developed some optional and some obligatory discursive stages that set it apart from counterparts in the BBC, CNN or AljE (see 5.2 and 5.3). To analyze discourse in terms of steps, stages or structures is an essential component of critical analysis normally referred to as genre studies (c.f. Labov and Waletzky 1967; van Dijk 1988 ; Fowler 1985). The genre or schematic structure of a news article, according to Fairclough (1995: 85) for example consists of "Headline + Lead + Satellites + Wrap-up. The order of these four stages is fixed". But AljA's news output shows a rather different routine and a formulaic schematic structure, reducing the events it covers to news formats which, though still somewhat rigid, are unlike traditional news genres. AljA tends to go for complex headlines with two different pegs or elements worthy of attention. For example:

A

    Palestinian ceasefire accord and one martyr in raid on Gaza (Headline, 3 June 2007)
    Lead + seven satellites
    Martyr and threats (sub-headline)
    Lead + nine satellites

B

    Four U.S. soldiers killed and Zaibari admits slow pace of reforms (headline, 15 June 2007)
    Lead + three satellites
    Security developments (sub-headline)
    Lead + two satellites
    Samarra explosions (sub-headline)
    Lead + two satellites
    Slow reforms (sub-headline)
    Lead + six satellites

The two elements in the complex headlines above have very little in common and would normally be treated as two different stories or at least one of them would have been turned into a sub-headline by AljE and the Arabic and English services of both the BBC and CNN. The AljA Lead would usually summarize one of the two pegs or elements of the lead, mainly the initial one. The headline's second peg is turned into a sub-headline with its own Lead and satellite paragraphs which may follow immediately as in A or with new sub-headlines inserted in between as in B. The 'Wrap-up' which is normally optional, is usually turned into another sub-headline with its own lead and satellite paragraphs giving the story a rather complex and diversified schematic view:

    Headline (two pegs) + **Lead** (first peg) + **Satellites** (first peg)
    + **Sub**-**headline** (second peg) + **Lead** (second peg) + **Satellites** (second peg)

+ **Sub**-**headline** (new peg) + **Lead** (new peg) + **Satellites** (new peg) …

This schematic structure is not rigid as *Sub-headline (new peg)* may be inserted between *Headline (two pegs)* and *Sub-headline (second peg)*. Note we may sometimes have more than one *Sub-headline (new peg)* separating them as in B. This format is quite common in AljA. Of the 203 headlines on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict 83 of them were of the two peg type. Of the 293 Iraq war stories, 167 of them had the same schemata.

While critical analysts have the tools to unravel the news formats journalists reduce world events into, the social assumptions behind these structures still need to be tested. The schematic structure of news is of particular importance "both in production and in the reception of news reports" (Van Dijk 1988a: 188). One can easily assume that elements like **Headline**, **Leads**, **Sub-headlines** and **Sub-leads** would attract most attention from readers and hence they are given informationally prominent positions in the story since readers, as Van Dijk says, would normally read these elements first. It is to be noted that the schematic layout above is peculiar to AljA and is not shared by the BBC, CNN or AljE.

Aljazeera and Royal Decree

May 22, 2007, was not a usual day for AljA. Almost everyone was looking for a copy of the Qatari al-Watan newspaper. The Information Department where I had my desk was bent on translating an Emiri Decree and an accompanying comment into English. But the topic the officials wanted to treat somewhat stealthily.

When I went to my hotel I asked for al-Watan. On the front page there was the Emiri Decree reshuffling Aljazeera board of directors, denying the Palestinian-born Managing Editor Wadah Khanfar membership. The comment was harsh on the network, accusing Khanfar of turning AljA into a 'nest for Palestinian journalists' and urging the Emir to "Qatarize" the network.

The next day the decree and the comment were part of the conversations I had with my respondents. "Those people here at this newspaper, those people have a personal grudge against him," said Sheikh. His deputy Gabalah said: "If we pay attention to every word written on us in the newspapers we should have stopped working in this field."

But in a region whose information ministers convened a meeting in February, 2008, on how to control pan-Arab media particularly satellite television and issue orders that criticizing Arab world's symbols whether religious, cultural or political, including heads

of state and governments was no longer permissible (al-Qudus al-Arabi 8 Februay 2008), al-Watan's glee and comment on the network could not have come without official sanction.

There is now change in the map of historical Palestine which Aljazeera would show without the name 'Israel' on it. Israel is now included as a state within the pre-1967 international borders. And, as the New York Times (4 January 2008) tells us, Aljazeera's coverage has "gradually evolved and grew moderate, partly for internal reasons and party in response to American pressure."

4.7 'Discursive' power holders

How are relations of power and ideology enacted in AljA's discourse? These relations, particularly at the level of vocabulary, which critical analysts see as the most outstanding in exhibiting power and control, are not arbitrary in news-producing media as critical analysts for long have said. They are deliberate because the textual indicators referring to them are chosen among a host of options the language provides. Not only that, these choices are 'engraved in tablets' in the form of guidelines which reporters and journalists will have to adhere to. A further illustration is when journalists move from one media outlet to another, let us say from AljA to BBC Arabic or vice versa, where the choice of language to describe both conflicts particularly at the level of lexis is very different mainly due to style guidelines which are mostly kept for internal use. Here are a few examples from AljA guidelines which mainly deal with the choice of words, some of them were read out for me from the system by the editor-in-chief since they were sent out electronically very recently:

1. When referring to the embargo or sanctions in occupied territories you must say, 'The embargo against the Palestinians and not the embargo against the Palestinian government of Hamas'. The embargo is not confined to the government. Everybody is affected in Palestine. I need everybody to abide.
2. Do not say the Indian Kashmir or the Pakistani Kashmir. Say the Indian-controlled Kashmir …
3. When we have two stories, the editor-in-chief should be asked to choose which to go first.
4. We use 'martyr' to refer to Palestinians killed by Israel. Refrain from using the term in other conflicts involving Arabs and Muslims like Iraq and Afghanistan.
5. When talking about the current affairs in Gaza and the clashes between Palestinian groups some say that Palestinian fighters are armed men. This does them injustice.

Therefore we have to refer to them as being the 'men of resistance' or 'resistance people' at least.

6. Instead of saying the kidnapped or captured Israeli soldier, we would better say 'Israel kidnaps' and not 'seizes eight or ten ministers.' They 'kidnapped' them; they did not 'arrest' them.

7. Do not say 'Amman government, Cairo government or Khartoum government. This is pejorative. Say the Jordanian government, the Egyptian government and the Sudanese government.' This can be kind of political bias against that government. It is politically charged.

8. Sunnis and Shiites. When talking about Sunnis and Shiites in Iraq, our policy is to refer to the two words as follows: We do not say 'Arab Shiites or Arab Sunnis. It suffices to say Sunnis and Shiites.

9. 'You cannot show this sort of story. It is inhuman. You want to kill that animal, kill it in a friendly manner as the Prophet once said 'Be as merciful as possible when you butcher an animal.' You cannot show this on air. It is not good for our nation and our people.

10. Write short sentences. They are easier to read. They are easier to cut for pictures. They go to mind easily. I do not have to remind you once again of the saying in our tradition, 'The best speech is the one which gives the best meaning in a fewer number of words.'

11. Do not say 'Hamas government' say 'Palestinian government'.

12. Your headline should not exceed maximum eight words.

13. Do not use words like 'probably, likely, perhaps' in the headline.

14. Economize on the use of prepositions in the headline.

15. Do not use foreign words in the headline unless necessary.

16. You must comply with editorial policies and guidelines.

Simpson (1993:46) argues that the 'feel' of a text depends on the type of point of view it shows and which a critical analysis can reveal from the text's linguistic features. The use of modal auxiliaries such as *should* in 3 and 12, *must* in 1 and 16, *have to* in 5 and 10, *cannot* in 9 indicates that for the person with the editorial power the propositions are nothing but the truth with the expectation that they will be viewed and (heeded to) from that perspective by the addressees (reporters). In Halliday's linguistics this is a major exponent of the language's 'interpersonal' function.

Journalists brag about their 'factual' and ostensibly objective reporting which is generally void of features of language which point to interpersonal propositions such as the lexical items inferring shades of modality and other language means conveying subjectivity and

point of view. That is not the case in the journalists' guideline discourse where lexical and grammatical features expressing the writers' 'authoritarian' attitude towards their interlocutors and their subject matter is quite evident. The discourse of AjlA and AjlE's guidelines (see 4.7 and 5.2) or the BBC for that matter (see 5.3) bears many traces of the conversations that take place between a doctor and a patient, a teacher and students in the classroom and can even be compared to that between a police officer and a suspect or an army officer and cadets. The style guideline writers, like teachers, doctors, police officers and army officers address their interlocutors from a vantage point of authority who expect their words not to fall on deaf ears. The exercise of power is not hidden in the guideline discourse with bare infinitive such as *do not*, *write*, *refrain* and *economize* as in 1, 4, 10 and 14 marking how the holders of discoursal power express their authority explicitly through imperative sentences in the form of demands and requests. And note how *dos* and *don'ts* with regard to lexis and other related issues are expressed through *say* in 2, 3 and 7 and *do not say* in 2, 7, 8, 11, 13 and 15. A comprehensive critical analysis of the AljA's guidelines is beyond the scope of this study but their overt 'authoritarian power' is quite clear.

4.8 The dialogism of style guides

Media organizations, namely those dealing with news reporting, usually keep their style books or guidelines away from public eyes and scrutiny. That is the case with the BBC, particularly its Middle East guide of terminology, just as with CNN and Aljazeera. They are meant for internal use and electronically they are only accessible to the concerned organizational members. And as the AljA sample and other samples analyzed in this study (see 4.7, 5.2 and 5.3) show, they mostly deal with controversial, evaluative and loaded discourse which clearly exhibits both discursive and social traits these organizations prefer to use with regard to certain voices.

Once the style book discourse is inserted in the body of the story it assumes further significance due to its dialogic power which shapes and re-shapes the social world from the outlet's point of view (Bakhtin 1973). This is an important feature of political and media discourse since it relies heavily on reporting what other voices say which often makes it difficult for analysts to draw a line between the discourse being reported and the discourse doing the reporting. Moreover, reporters are constrained in their discursive options by their own style guides which they have to refer to when writing their stories. Voloshinov, a contemporary of Bakhtin whose writings some believe were authored by Bakhtin himself, describes such discourse as "speech within speech, utterance within utterance, and at the same time also speech about speech, utterance about utterance" (1973: 115). The dialogism of voices is ostensibly rather intricate in news but it is centripetal in Bakhtin's terms as it

drives almost all discourse forces towards the centre which in our case is represented in the style guidelines and the holders of the strings of editorial and political power who attempt to bring elements, whether social or discursive, towards their central monologic point.

One important dialogic aspect of hard news discourse is the type of dialogic relationships that exist between the representing or reporting discourse and the represented or reported discourse in news. For both Bakhtin (1994) and Voloshinov (1973) the discourse of report*ed* voices is effective and real when it meets the discourse of the report*ing* voice (the author in the novel genre and reporters in hard news) and both enter into some sort of mutual constitution whereby they shape, inform and are shaped and informed by each other. But hard political news differs from the novel in several aspects with balance of shaping and informing the discourse tilting drastically towards its creators in the newsroom guided by their style handbook and the presence of quality monitors who in the case of the three broadcasters report directly to the editorial or political power holders.

Language furnishes a variety of options particularly when it comes to vocabulary. Particular options at the level of lexis or vocabulary are made by editors and written in style guides, which provide the preferred sets of the lexical categories to use and not to use. Languages have different ways of how to word a social reality and it is our particular selection from among so many available choices that characterizes voices and participants in the discourse differently from different ideological perspectives. The options indicate representations of the world from the networks' ideological viewpoints often determined by those holding the reins of power.

As the BBC and CNN strive to speak the same language their Arabic services do not have their own special glossaries or style guidelines. Their editors say they have put in place some electronic form of guidelines but these are mostly translations of their English counterparts. Only AljE has drawn its own glossary and style guidelines which are different from those of AljA., the mother company.

The following dwells mainly on AljE, analyzing its discourse and a sample of its style guidelines in the context of rival English online services of the BBC and CNN.

5. Analysis

5.1 Alj: One logo two discourses
AljE is the sister company of AljA. Its mission, according to Khanfar, is also to give "voice to the voiceless" in English particularly to countries in the south (the developing world). The two

companies' logos are the same but there are marked differences in their discourse. AljA's discursive strategy as illustrated above is to respond to the social, cultural and religious needs of the region where it is most influential – the Middle East and North Africa. AljE's strategy is to be immersed in the cultures of the south with the Middle East as an important part. The two channels are separate with two, albeit very close, but quite different premises; different budgets; different editorial policies and guidelines. What brings them together is the fact that both owe their existence to a generous donation from the Qatari royal family.

AljE is not an English copy of AjlA. It has its own style guide which as we shall see differs a great deal from that of AjlA particularly at the level of vocabulary. There is tension in relations, with AjlA editors very reluctant to comment on AljE which they euphemistically call "the channel over the road". There is evident jealousy of the sudden glamour AljE enjoyed the moment it was launched and the extensive media coverage with which it was received while the world-wide influence, reputation and brand were already firmly established by AljA and its Arabic journalists. None of my AljA's respondents was willing to answer AljE-related questions while AljE's editors were very forthcoming when asked on relations with AljA. Asked whether AljE feels attached to the culture and traditions of the Middle East the way AljA does, Atef Dalgamouni, AljE's Middle East consultant said:

> You cannot apply that to English because the mission of the English Channel is worldwide and transmits to the world. It cannot be a copy of the Arabic Channel because the viewers are different; they do not have the same feeling about Arab issues as the Arab public do.

Gaven Morris AjlE's Head of Planning puts it succinctly:

> We have different ideas about the content of issues we put on air …We are not just 'over the road'. We are in two separate buildings, conducting our operations in two different kinds of way. That is the way they set this place up because they wanted the two channels to have distinct identities because we are serving different audiences.

AljE editors – and style guideline – do not shy from declaring their independence with regard to strategy. They attribute their insistence on their 'distinct identity' which they do not want to share with AljA both discursively and socially to the difference in language and audience and the power holders seem to be happy with the autonomous turf the channel has carved out for itself. But the Arabic services of both the BBC and CNN cannot claim to enjoy this degree of autonomy, though in the case of the former, Arabic broadcasting has been one of the oldest foreign language services. BBC's Arabic radio began broadcasting in 1938, 16 years

after the founding of the corporation. Adel Sulaiman, Editor, Day News Program (BBC Arabic), says:

"We don't have guidelines specific to Arabic by the way. We are governed, ruled by one BBC editorial guideline." Hosam El Sokkari, Editor in Chief of BBC Arabic Service, says: "We are not independent from the BBC values and guidelines" but at the same time "we have different audiences to cater for and have competition that is working side by side with us now". The introduction to the BBC guidelines on the Net says: "The BBC Editorial Guidelines apply to all of our content whoever creates or makes it and wherever and however it is received" (Editorial guidelines: **http://www.bbc.co.uk/guidelines/editorialguidelines/edguide/aboutguidelines/**

5.2 AljE's style guide

One better way to examine AljE's 'distinct identities' is first to investigate some discursive characteristics of its style guideline and then see how they respond to the channel's social world. The investigation attempts to find out how AljE responds to the instructions in the guidelines in relation to vocabulary and how these instructions are embodied in its discursive practices. Here are a few excerpts from the short introduction written by John Pullman, AlJE's Head of Output:

- We need to speak with one voice.
- We must watch every word we say.
- It is the responsibility of every journalist to understand our in-house guidelines.
- Read and remember what is written here.

Here are some samples of guidelines on the use of vocabulary:

- **Extremist** – avoid characterizing people.
- **Fundamentalist** – do not use. The word has been hijacked.
- **IDF** – do not refer to the IDF or Israeli Defense Force. Call it the Israeli army.
- **Martyr** – we will NOT use.
- **Militants** – do not use unless the subject agrees with the description.
- **Disputed territories** – Israel prefers the term. We will not use.
- **The Wall** – we will refer to the barrier Israel is erecting along its borders as a barrier or wall. Calling it a fence does not convey its purpose adequately.
- **Suicide bomber** – this phrase is not always used by the Arabic channel. The reasons are complicated … These issues do not arise in English. We will use the term suicide bomber.

- **Fatwa** – is simply a legal degree in Islam by a religious authority or court and issued by a mufti. (It is NOT a death sentence).
- **Jihad** – means an inner spiritual struggle for perfection NOT a holy war. It is not by tradition a negative term. It also means the struggle to defend Islam, to rally against things challenging it. It does not always need translating – we can simply use the word jihad.
- **Resistance** – do not use when talking about Iraq. Use armed groups, fighters etc. instead.
- **Settlements** – the settlements established by Israelis in land occupied by Israel in 1967 are illegal settlements. That is what we will call them.
- **Different** – Doha is very different from Dublin, not different to.

The sentences above are a classic example of what Fowler calls "context of authority-differential" (1991:189) grammatically represented in the use of command signals through imperative structures *do not*, *avoid*, *call* etc. Note the obligatory use of modals such as *will, must* and *need*. The samples are tantamount to *dos* and *don'ts* and the guidelines whether for AjlE or AjlA, the BBC or CNN are a good example of how guideline discourse producers believe that they are endowed with greater authority and superior knowledge than other members of the organization. It borders on 'authoritarian didacticism' in the discursive practice of which editorial power holders resort to the discursive repertoire of the instructional ideology of language. Note how explanations are imposed on journalists not only through imperatives but declarative sentences as in the last example on the use of *Different* which is an elementary form of instruction found in elementary grammar books written for those whose knowledge and proficiency of language is very poor.

It is not difficult to see how the first four sentences, for example, are written in opposition as if they respond to or anticipate participation from the voices they target i.e. reporters involved in the final output before it is disseminated. Although they are short single utterances which lack subjects and reporting verbs necessary for quoting or paraphrasing, they are involved in what Bakhtin describes as "hidden dialogism" which is difficult to tell from the surface structure of guideline discourse. The utterance of the writer is there but the response of the other is discursively absent. Nonetheless, the reader can sense the conversational character of the discourse as the writer targets other discursively hidden voices and one can sense that the writer even anticipates what their responses would be:

Although only one person is speaking, we feel that this is a conversation, and a most intense one at that, since every word that is present answers and reacts with its every

fibre to the invisible interlocutor, it points outside itself, beyond its own borders to the other person's unspoken words (Bakhtin 1973: 163).

Besides, the guideline discourse takes into consideration opposite discursive patters of rival channels, particularly AljA, the BBC and CNN. It is contentious and argumentative and in Bakhtin's terms (1994: 108) "internally polemic" in a visible discursive bid to distinguish itself from 'others' and in a sense rejecting the validity of their discursive options in explaining terms like *Militants, The Wall Fatwa* and *Jihad* for example. In Bakhtin's terms , the AljE guideline writer(s) is aware of how 'others' employ similar terms and is in a kind of dialogue with them:

The individual manner in which a person structures his own speech is determined to a significant degree by his peculiar awareness of another's words (Bakhtin 1994: 108).

Also note the insistence with which the guideline writer(s) 'inculcates' editorial power holders' position of what is incumbent on journalists to pursue in case they come across a similar situations in the future as in the explanations regarding the use of words *suicide bomber* and *Jihad*. To show that editorial power holders are serious, note the repetitive use of *NOT* in upper case *We will NOT*, *It is NOT* demonstrating they are the ones who have the power to decide. The authoritarian discourse of the guidelines is illustrated in the absence of the kind of modal verbs or other lexical items indicating probability or equivocal expressions such as *may*, *might*, *probably*, *possibly*, *likely*, *maybe*. Thus there are no markers of tentativeness in the short snap sentences and even the verbs in the declarative are indicators of an omniscient writer who is so certain and knowledgeable about the subject as in *It is the responsibility of every journalist to …, That is what we call them*, *These issues do not arise in English*. These features coupled with modality of obligation give the addressees (journalists) no room to argue, question or negotiate whether the explanations, orders or claims are true, representative of the reality of the communicative events or not.

It is to be noted that discursive parallels are quite easy to draw when comparing the discourse of AljE's guidelines with those of the AljA, the BBC and CNN. The only difference is that AljE's guidelines, unlike those of AljA, the BBC or CNN which are voluminous, are condensed in about 20 pages. But this is due to the very short period AljE has been in business. The longer a media organization is operational, the bigger the size of its guidelines.

This begs the question however, why it is that only AljE has its style guidelines while the Arabic services of both the BBC and CNN have yet to design their own? AljE is still in its

infancy when compared with BBC Arabic which was the first language BBC World Service launched beyond English nearly 70 years ago. We can explain this through Bourdieu's (2000; 1991) notions of symbolic power and domination which says that powerful and 'universal' languages have more value, prestige and consideration than lesser powerful languages and varieties. Not only are some language varieties considered to be of greater worth (standard English), but also some languages are universally seen as more valuable than others. A lingua-franca like English belongs to dominant groups while Arabic is the language of dominated groups. Symbolically and linguistically less powerful groups accept the hegemony of linguistically more powerful groups.

This explains why AljE has its separate style guide while both BBC Arabic and CNN Arabic have to rely on the guidelines originally designed for the English services. AljE enjoys as much power as AljA. It is in fact established as a fully independent and separate entity and it operates solely on its own with its separate and independent news gathering and broadcasting services, special salary-scale and more importantly its own distinctive discourse. The Arabic services of the BBC and CNN operate within the orbit of their mother English channels and still a large portion of their output is merely a translation of the English text (Barkho 2006; 2007). At Bush House in London, languages beyond English are usually referred to as 'periphery broadcasts'. AljE is not on the 'periphery' of AljA. It is truly independent editorially, administratively and operationally from the 'hegemony' of the AljA, the mother channel.

The BBC's four 'wise men'

In the corridors of the BBC's Bush House or the White City in London, no talk about Middle East reporting, and especially the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, is possible without the euphemistic phrase 'the four wise men'. So who are these 'four wise men' and how is their 'wisdom' in the selection of words and terms to describe the conflict used and received by the corporation?

The 'wise men' are Malcolm Balen, Senior Editorial Adviser; Jerry Timmins, Head of Region, Africa and Middle East; Jeremy Bowen, Editor, Middle East and Hosam el-Sokkari, Head, Arabic Service. Under Balen's supervision, the four editors have compiled the Israeli-Palestinian glossary, the first list of words ever drawn up by the BBC for an on-going conflict. I met each of the four editors separately and they were keen to indicate that BBC's reporters and editors were not under obligation to stick to their 'suggestions'.

"I don't send tablets of stone on how to cover stories," said Bowen. "I am not here as a sort of a dead hand on the shoulder of editors, saying, do this do that." The glossary for Timmins represents "the current collective wisdom in the organization … but we never say you must use this word or you must not use this word."

But the reality of the situation is different. The discursive analysis of BBC output shows that the vocabulary is strictly adhered to. Secondly, the glossary is still for internal use and only 24 terms have been made public so far. Thirdly, a critical analysis of the guidelines reveals that journalists are under obligation to follow the rules (see 5.3).

Moreover, the glossary's unquestionable 'authoritarian' character is manifested in the significance the BBC College of Journalism attaches to it. It makes up the bulk of the Middle East module, according to Ray, the college's director. For the right answers to questions, exercises and multiple choices, students are referred to this massive glossary of hundreds of terms. "It is a straight forward quiz actually where you are asked questions, and given four options and then you either get it right or don't get it right," says Ray.

5.3 BBC guidelines

The BBC, unlike newspapers and other media outlets, does not have a single style guide. According to Kevin March, Editor, BBC College of Journalism, there are six style guides within the BBC, ranging from online services to marketing and publicity. The portions that are accessible electronically are not hugely different. But none of these has generated the kind of interest and controversy at the same time like the guidelines related to the Middle East coverage. The giant public broadcaster has persistently resisted demands to make this particular handbook known as *Guide to Facts and Terminology on Israel and the Palestinians: Key terms* public. And of the hundreds of words, phrases and terms, the BBC has only agreed to publicize 24 following recommendations from a key panel BBC Governors had set up to look into the impartiality of BBC coverage of the conflict. Here are a few samples and excerpts from their explanations as they appear on BBC website along with some others which the author obtained through private conversation (BBC 2006).)

- **Targeted killing** - The phrase "targeted killing" is sometimes used by Israel and should be attributed.
- **Barrier** -… BBC journalists should try to avoid using terminology favored by one side or another in any dispute ...
- **BORDER -** Be careful with this word. Do you mean boundary? See **Green Line**.

- **EAST JERUSALEM - …** For example, the Foreign Office says it "regards the status of Jerusalem as still to be determined in permanent status negotiations between the parties … Avoid saying East Jerusalem "is part" of Israel or suggesting anything like it. Avoid the phrase "Arab East Jerusalem", too, unless you also have space to explain that Israel has annexed the area and claims it as part of its capital …

- **GREEN LINE - …** In describing the situation on the ground take care to use the most precise and accurate terminology … To that end, we can call the Green Line "the generally recognized boundary between Israel and the West Bank" …

- **Intifada - …** So, for example, it is preferable to say that "Sharon's visit and Palestinian frustration at the failure of the peace process sparked the (second) intifada or uprising" rather than it "led" to it or "started" it … Generally it's a good rule to question the use of any adjective. Use it only if it is vital to the understanding of the story and you are confident that it precisely applies in this context ...

- **OUTPOSTS** – Be careful that you don't mean settlements. They are very different. Some of these outposts are called "unauthorized outposts" by the Israeli government – generally meaning no permission was granted for them. You can describe an outpost as unauthorized by the Israeli government …

- **PALESTINE - …** So be careful with the use of the word "Palestine" as its meaning can depend on the context.

- **SETTLEMENTS - …** Settlements are residential areas built by Israelis in the **occupied territories**. They are illegal under international law: this is the position of the UN Security Council and the UK government among others - although Israel rejects this.

- **Legal position of the settlements -** The U.N. believes that settlements have no legal validity and obstruct the peace process (e.g. Security Council Resolution 446, 22 March 1079) ... The Foreign Office gives this statement on its website: "Our policy on settlements is clear: settlements are illegal under international law and an obstacle to peace … continuing illegal Israeli settlement activity threatens the prospects for a two-state solution and is an obstacle to peace."

- **SETTLER NUMBERS -** Because of disputes and sensitivities about the status of East Jerusalem, the following construction is useful: "There are thought to be around 430,000 Israeli settlers living in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and another 20,000 in the Golan Heights."

- **TERRORISTS -** We should try to avoid the term, without attribution. We should let other people characterize while we report the facts as we know them. We should convey to our audience the full consequences of the act by describing what

> happened. We should use words which specifically describe the perpetrator such as "bomber", "attacker", "gunmen", "kidnapper", "insurgent" or "militant."

- **Eretz Israel -** This phrase literally means the Land of Israel (Hebrew: Eretz Yisrael) and refers to the ancient kingdoms of the Bible. According to the Bible, the Kingdom of Israel was the nation formed around 1021 BC from the descendants of Jacob, son of Isaac, who was given the name Israel, meaning struggles with God.

- **Dome of the Rock -** Islamic tradition says that the Prophet Muhammad ascended to heaven from the post market by the Dome of the Rock.

The major discursive difference between BBC's Middle East guidelines and those of AljE is in their detail. While AljE's explanations are short, BBC's 'four wise men' have apparently put much more effort to prove that the selected lexis is 'correct' and 'legitimate'. One important issue needs highlighting before giving a short analysis of the samples above. The BBC has no such glossary in place except for the Middle East and it has come into being in response to power struggle and lobbying inside and outside the corporation (Barkho 2008a). The struggle culminated in the imposition of a specific discursive and social vision of the world of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict which the BBC sees as 'legitimate' and in line with the international law. The glossary, which has almost become non-negotiable and authoritative in the corporation's ranks, is meant for internal use with only a few terms made accessible through the Web. A detailed critical analysis of these 'key' terms in BBC's Middle East discourse is beyond the scope of this study, but it is worth to underpin a few points.

First, Fowler's (19901) "authority differential" is as vividly displayed here as in AljE or AljA's guidelines. Note the 'warning' nature of the command and instruction discourse *Be careful*, *avoid saying*, *avoid the phrase*, *take care to use*, *use it only if*, *so be careful with the use*, etc. Note likewise the frequent use of obligatory modal verb *should* (five times). But more important is the way the writer or writers of vocabulary guidelines assume the role of omniscient 'scholars' with the ability to suggest how Middle East reporters should write and what to include in their reports e.g. the suggestions on how to describe *INTIFADA*, and occasional clausal 'prescriptions' in the form ready-made sentences (quotes) for the reporters to use such as the suggested quotations in *GREEN LINE, INTIFADA* and *SETTLER NUMBERS*.

Secondly, the BBC discursive policy, as editors unanimously point out, is to shun the use of 'emotional' or 'judgmental' words such as 'TERRORISTS' unless attributed. But the guidelines are not consistent in this regard as they allow the use of lexical items which are no less loaded such as *militant*, *insurgent*, *Islamist*, *kidnapper*, *bomber*, etc. But what is striking about these value-laden words is that they surface mainly in the discourse describing

the Palestinians fighting Israeli occupation and Iraqis fighting foreign troops. They and others like *extremist*, *fundamentalist*, etc. are not deployed to characterize other voices in discourse even if those voices carry out events or harbor ideologies that are not so much different from those of Palestinian or Iraqi groups that are normally labeled as such.

Thirdly, what is more striking is the emphasis the BBC places on the 'religious' character of the conflict. Note the explanation about **Eretz Israel** which is wholly based on Biblical texts which despite their being 'unauthenticated', the BBC guideline discourse views them as historical 'fact'. The 'historicity' of Israeli claim to the land is dated to 1021 BC. Similarly, note the definition of the **Dome of the Rock** and the story of the Prophet Muhammad which the BBC attributes to Muslim tradition but in fact it has its roots in the Quran, Muslims' holy book. Of course there must be many other expressions, where the BBC assumes the role of a 'religious' mentor to explain their meanings to its army of nearly 10,000 reporters, in the Middle East glossary which still remains one of the corporation's most guarded secrets. These include the *Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif*; Western or Wailing Wall; Al-Aqsa mosque among others**.** It is worthwhile to compare this portion of the guidelines with those of AljA where the editor-in-chief quotes from the Quran and the Prophetic Tradition (see 4.7).

Finally, the style guideline is straightforward about the role of political power, the British government which decides the license fee and the Foreign Office which finances the World Service. Note how their opinion counts with regard to the information the BBC wants to pass to its reporters in relation to *SETTLEMENTS*, *legal position of settlements* and *EAST JERUSALEM*. Note how the guidelines permit reporters to use the word *unauthorized* with regard to outposts and *authorized* with regard to settlements which may leave the reader with the impression that the activities carried out by the hundreds of thousands of Israeli settlers are benign and ordinary. There is little in the BBC discourse that gives the settlers a semblance of 'malignant' discursive practices other than that their presence on occupied Palestinian land is illegal, while there is an abundance of such discursive practices with regard to Palestinian groups.

The power of the 'Foreign Office'

In the aftermath of 11 September 2001 attack on the U.S., BBC World Service received clear instructions from the Foreign Office – as well as financial support – to upgrade its Persian and Pashto services – the key languages of Afghanistan. Shortly after the end of the war in Afghanistan in October 2001, the Foreign Office faxes a statement to the Head of the BBC Eurasia Region.

The statement was a speech by the then Foreign Office Secretary Jack Straw. Minutes later the Eurasia Region head receives a call in which he is instructed to have the statement translated into Persian and Pashto, read out as it is and as many times as possible, without editing, over the BBC services directed at Afghanistan. The order was implemented immediately.

"This was a scandal. That should not have happened in the BBC. Do they want to turn periphery services into propaganda tools?" wondered a senior BBC World official who only agreed to speak on condition of anonymity.

There are many in the Middle East who now fear the newly launched BBC Arabic television will be part of 'Western propaganda' since it is being financed directly by the Foreign Office. The only difference in the funding of the new BBC channel and AljA or AljE is in the source of finance – the Foreign Office in the case of the former and the Qatari royal family in the case of the latter.

The BBC Arabic Television comes into being following a grant of more than $50 million and the closure of several World Service radio channels in Eastern Europe to fund the new venture (The Times 6 March 200). It is not the first Western satellite news channel directed at the Middle East. The U.S., France and Russia have their own Arabic television services. They try to chip away at AljA growing and influential market but apparently they have all but failed (Barkho 2006).

AljA's success in the Arab Middle East where, according to BBC's Richard Sambrook, Global News Director, "events … affect all of us in some way, from terrorism and war, to oil prices and trade" is not due to the Qatari royals' coffers but mainly attributed to the channel's distinct discursive and social strategy which rivals are not willing to adopt in order to compete.

The Grant-in-Aid and a say in key appointments clearly give the British government some leeway to exercise some influence. "There is still some issue over the BBC independence," says one senior editor with a pivotal role in Middle East reporting who asked not to be identified. BBC Middle East guidelines often refer to Foreign Office attitude (see 5.3) in a tacit reminder that its voice counts, too.

5.4 Shaping others' discursive and social worlds

The frequent references to international law, U.N. Security Council resolutions and the British government are part of the writers' attempt to weave the discursive options into a

'sensible' world despite the fact that the corporation's habitus and field might be viewed quite 'insensible' by the voices that see the discursive patterns representing them as negative and 'malignant'. But as Bourdieu (1990: 66) says the most powerful at various levels of the society see "everything" as "sensible: full of sense and objectivity directed in a judicious direction." How is power enacted in discourse? Power is most evident and visible in discourse when the use of discursive patterns (or even a language or a variety for that matter) is backed by regulations and instructions. In the case of the three broadcasters, their style guidelines assume such role and their power is almost tantamount to that of law (c.f. Bourdieu 2000).

The effects of texts "inculcating and sustaining" power and changing ideologies has received a great deal of attention from CDA (Fairclough 2003: 9). But in media firms like the BBC, CNN and Aljazeera the causal effects of texts promoting, sustaining and maintaining ideological power is deliberate and intentional and the question of intent hitherto overlooked in the critical analysis of texts (c.f Blackledge 2005; Fairclough 2003; Eagleton 1991; Thompson 1984; Van Dijk 1998b) is a crucial factor in the creation and dissemination of news discourse. The style guidelines are written with a special intent and purpose in mind which the power holders, editorial or political, are keen to see manifested in discourse both discursively and socially. Of course the issue of intention at the level of discursive strategy will remain obscure and hidden if we merely restrict our analysis to the text itself and derive what we know about its world through its intertextual relationships to other texts, discourses and genres.

5.5 The interface of discursive and social strategy
The presence of two distinct style guidelines in Aljazeera and the presence of cross-channel guidelines in the BBC and CNN show that even within the types of field that can be identified in social world, according to Bourdieu, there are certain sub-divisions. The different structures and set of rules churning out different products, discursively and socially, produce the type of habitus that is only suitable to the particular field the broadcasters position themselves in. Thus it follows while Aljazeera has developed for itself two field structures (AljE and AljA) and two sets of rules, or habitus, to respond to those structures, the BBC and CNN, despite their multilingual and global character revolve within the structures of one field and their style guides impose one unified set of rules of habitus to respond to it (Bourdieu 1999; 2000).

One important question to address here is what happens if the habitus of the members of an institution runs contrary to the structures of the field? In organizational settings where

discourse is the core business, it is not necessary for the members' habitus to share the structures of the field in order to become effective participants. Those with alternative habitus systems in these organization, unlike in other social settings, have the chance for effective participation despite the discrepancy that may be found in relation to the values and beliefs normally associated with discursive patterns they have grown to accept as part of their field.

Thus, the production and reproduction of social order as represented in institutional media discourse may not always give the illusion of common sense as Bourdieu (2000) and CDA scholars have argued. The players (reporters) of the field in media are quite aware of the discursive and social constraints imposed on them. As a dominated group journalists are, as Bourdieu says, in complicity with the dominating actors and their attempts to impose their set of rules. But this 'consent' is not commonsensical for them, as evidenced in AljE discourse, whose creators and participants less than two years ago were 'in complicity' with different habitus that was inscribed for them in the set of rules consistent with the social field of their former dominating discursive and social groups.

This is better illustrated through the analysis of Aljazeera discourse since most of the actors now holding the discoursal power have flocked to the network from institutions where relations between habitus and field were different, namely the BBC for AljA and both the BBC and CNN for AljE. It is also clearly seen in the movement of journalists from one institution to another, particularly from the BBC and CNN to Aljazeera and vice versa. For example, Salah Najem, the renowned Arabic editor, started first with the habitus and field of the BBC, then moved and established AljA as editor-in-chief, and has spearheaded the launch of the BBC Arabic Television with the social arena of BBC habitus and field once again. Khader has moved back and forth between the BBC, AljA and other news networks. He says with every move, he had to be prepared for a different 'mindset' and his main guide in this has been the outlets' style guides. I asked if he could elaborate, he said

> Every situation has its own merits and it is judged on its own merits. For example each situation has a short handbook of style which describes to every journalist in the institution what kind of vocabulary and terminology one should use in dealing with a particular event … For example, it is allowed here (AljA) to say 'a battle between Shiites and Muslim factions in Iraq. It is not allowed to say 'there is a battle between Jews and Muslims in Palestine.' It is not allowed to say 'the Shiite Hizbollah'. It is just 'Hizbollah'. So for every situation we have a particular set of terminology.

Khader's statement illustrates that he had in fact to transform his common-sense as he moved from one organization to another. And the transformation, for him, has occurred at the levels of both habitus and field as he had to 'transform' his habitus, his way of being, with every move he made, in order to familiarize himself, first with the habitus, through the discursive rules in the style handbook and then the field, the organization's social arena. The relation between the discursive strategies of the habitus and the social strategies of field may not have been part of his common-sense social reality but with every move he tries to acquire the habitus by learning the rules necessary to adapt to the new field.

This process of transforming one's 'mindset' *habitus* in the light of the 'situation' *field*, in Khader's words, is evident in the discourse of the three global media firms. How can we then explain Bourdieu's symbolic violence under which hegemonic ideology and power are both socially and discursively reiterated until they become part of the common-sense that members of the field take for granted? Media discourse of the BBC, CNN and Aljazeera, like any other discourse, reinforces hegemonic ideologies, but this discoursal hegemony and power assume different relations in news since they are produced and reproduced by reporters not necessarily arbitrarily and as part of their common sense but in fact consciously and deliberately since they know exactly what they are doing.

The production and reproduction of symbolic violence through discourse for the BBC, CNN, AljA and AljE is not all the way through "an illusory representation" neither implicit nor taken-for-granted consent, as Bourdieu (2000: 181) says. Symbolic domination in discourse can be visible as it has been for Khader and Salah as they move from one media outlet to another as they accept to 'inscribe' new habitus rules to meet the new social fields they happen to be in. Bourdieu's notion of symbolic value and violence are echoed by Gramsci (1971) who uses 'hegemony' as an equivalent term. Both philosophers speak of symbolic domination in discourse and say that discoursal power relations are invisible and go without saying for interlocutors; however they instantly add that total reliance on textual evidence is not enough to unravel these relationships.

The way discoursal power is enacted and context formed in the BBC, CNN, AljA and AljE shows that van Dijk's (2004:349) notion of "mental representation or model" is not suitable to clarify the different intent and motivation of the three broadcasters' strategy to link their habitus with field and the manner they exercise their symbolic power and violence. Individual reporters will have to transform their mental models, expressed discursively, regardless of the social, cultural and historical dimension of which these models have been constructed if they want to be consistent with the habitus and field of their institutions. Institutional and

organizational mental models, in terms of habitus and field, might be very much different from what the reporters have constructed for themselves as part of their historical, cultural and linguistic development.

For the writers of the style guidelines (see the BBC's four wise men, for example) the discursive options they make are the 'best' and most 'appropriate' and 'impartial' ones language provides them with. The purpose of the guidelines, as Balen says, is to "reconcile language and policy" which to editorial power holders is natural and commonsensical so long as it expresses the corporation's ideological strategy. That is, the discursive strategy and policy is rational as it is the only option that is linguistically 'available' and suitable from among scores of others the language may provide. This is the kind of discourse which Fowler (1991: 52) describes as a façade for "consensual ideology." The option to choose the set of rules that make up the habitus of the three broadcasters is in the hands of a few individuals and is imposed on thousands of journalists (about 10,000 in the case of the BBC) but is presented as if it has a 'unanimous' character while this unanimity, as Bourdieu (2000) tells us, is nothing but an illusion.

5.6 'Unnatural' before now 'natural'

AljE, now in its second year, is a classic example of how the lure of position and economic benefits may coax media workers to move to organizations whose 'ideational' experience of the world runs contrary to those of the institutions they used to work in. AljE has lured big names from both CNN and BBC whose habitus and field (discursive patterns and social world) differ a great deal from those of Aljazeera. And for many it is a new world of discourse which previously they had seen as 'illegitimate or unnatural' but once experiencing it, it became 'legitimate' and part of the 'common sense'. I asked Russel Merryman, AljE's editor-in-chief (Web and New Media), and a former BBC senior editor, what he thought of the 'cognitive or ideational' and discursive relationships in the new place in comparison with those he had at the BBC:

> When you were with the BBC that was the mindset there. When you came here you had to change the mindset or to adapt it to the traditions of this place.

This 'mindset' Khanfar describes as giving "voice to the voiceless. The Arabic Channel started that and the English Channel is following in the same direction," he says. Khanfar has overseen the growth of Aljazeera from a single Arabic Channel into a giant broadcaster with multiple services.

How does Aljazeera gives 'voice to the voiceless' of the Third World and how does it practice the motto the level of discursive strategy? It is done in two main ways. Firstly, by selecting the type of discursive practices to show the channel is not a copy of the BBC and CNN. Morris, a former CNN's News Editor puts it this way:

> We've got to come up with a different angle. We've got to report this from the people and from a perspective that is very different from the English perspective perhaps sort of the Anglo-American axis that I think exists between the BBC and CNN.

Secondly, AljE has followed AljA's strategy of relying on indigenous reporters as far as possible to give its coverage the cultural and social nuances of the regions it covers mainly the Middle East, Africa and Latin America. Helal, who oversaw AljA's recruitment, says:

> AljE tries to paint the world differently from other networks whether CNN, BBC, Sky or whatever … It means reporting from people, by people, which means we have correspondents, producers and editors from different societies and different religious backgrounds, different ethnic backgrounds and different cultural backgrounds.

The 'power of Atlanta'

Who holds the reins of discursive power in CNN? Who decides that almost every mention of Israeli army must be "Israel Defense Force" regardless of the kind, place and nature of the military operation they undertake? Who decides on how and when emotional and value-laden words and expressions such as "militant, extremist, terrorist, jihadist, Islamist, militant group, extremist Muslim groups" should be used? Who decides on the language and content of every story before it is being aired?

While it was difficult to gain access to CNN's closely guarded internal style guide, some inkling on how discursive power and strategy are enacted in the giant broadcaster can be gleaned from the interviews.

No piece in the field is broadcast unless it is first checked for language and balance by Atlanta, says Fenton. CNN, like the BBC, has developed its own Middle East glossary, he adds. It is this glossary which makes it incumbent on reporters to say *security barrier* or *security fence* in describing what AljA calls *segregation wall* and the BBC merely terms *barrier*. I asked Fenton, a former Jerusalem bureau chief, if he really thought *security fence* was appropriate from his own experience, he said: "Well, even if

it is a fence it is nothing like a garden fence. You could see how it prevents a Palestinian family who could no longer go to their field."

Why would 'Atlanta' exercise such a domineering discursive and social role that almost strips correspondents of the power to use their own language? "We are extremely careful with language. Choice of language and terms and expressions is in the hands of Standards and Practices Department in Atlanta. The people there deal with our language. Every package has to go there to ensure it meets the rules of objectivity and balance," says Wren.

6. Conclusion

One has to draw a distinction between internal and external power relations in the composition of discursive practices particularly at the level of lexis or vocabulary. These relations are not dialectical. Journalists and editors have to respond to the needs, whether political or economic, of those to whom they owe their existence regardless of their 'ideational' assumptions. Communication between the holders of political and discoursal power in the case of the BBC, CNN and Aljazeera on the one hand and the journalists and editors involved in discourse production on the other hand is mostly one way. This does not mean there is no room for tension and even some form of 'resistance' on the part of the newsroom people, but power holders always have it their own way and experience as well as empirical evidence show that journalists occasionally are 'coerced' rather than 'persuaded' in carrying out power holders' discursive policies.   Discoursal 'complicity' between media and politicians is an area which critical analysts have tackled extensively, but their assumptions have always been that of hidden power relations based on commonsensical 'consent'.

The study illustrates how instrumental vocabulary is in conveying the ideological power of media. The categorization of Palestinians and Israelis on the one hand and of the different voices in the Iraq reporting on the other divides up the reality of the protagonists in the light of the ideological representations the networks make of them. Editors and reporters deny that they work as an agency for ideological power but the 'compulsory' nature of their internal guidelines and the editorial mechanisms they have in place show the opposite.

Language furnishes a variety of options particularly when it comes to vocabulary. Particular options at the level of lexis are made by editors and written in style guides, which provide the preferred sets of the lexical categories to use and not to use. Languages have different ways of how to word a social reality and it is our particular selection from among so many

available choices that characterizes voices and participants in the discourse differently from different ideological perspectives. The options indicate representations of the world from the networks' ideological viewpoint which is often determined by those holding the reins of power.

How can we then approach the problem of power relations in global media firms like Aljazeera, the BBC and CNN? Fairclough (1995), drawing on Bourdieu, raised the same question more than a decade ago and his answer was (and it is still seen as valid in the mainstream literature) that traces of power and ideology are hidden in media texts and the more they are hidden the most effective they become. But what about the 'commands' Sheikh sends out now and then? What about the way he intersperses his 'discourse of command' with sayings from the Prophet and Arabic and Muslim tradition? What about the overt tilt by the BBC on the Bible to drive home to its reporters its own inherent social assumptions of the conflict between Israel and Palestine?   What about the frequent references the BBC makes to Foreign Office's political stand to drive its discursive and social 'message' home to its reporters? What about the three networks' guidelines bearing obvious 'authoritarian' discursive features that are linguistically akin to the language of the Biblical '10 Commandments'? The power of discourse is visible to media people and is consciously 'manipulated' in terms of representation. And moreover, media people themselves believe that they and, to a certain extent, their audiences are aware of this power 'manipulation'. This straightforward exercise of discoursal control by power holders is discernible in the corridors of power in the three global multilingual media organizations.

Aljazeera's vocabulary is a case of one organization with two divergent discourses selected from a host of options to address issues of power relations and ideology. It is indeed a conscious attempt by the power holders to respond to the realities of the English speaking audiences in the case of AljE and Arabic speaking audiences in the case of AljA. The Arabic services of the BBC and CNN are not seen as 'valuable' by their power holders as AljE is to Aljazeera as a network. BBC and CNN's Arabic services adhere to style guidelines written for the main English service. They, from both social and discursive strategic perspective, are peripheral orbits in the domineering English habitus and field.

The strategic perspective particularly of AljA is embedded in its discourse as the selection of lexis – names, labels and other terms – is rooted in the culture, religion and tradition of the region. AljE attempts to draw on the same discursive tradition but bears in mind that discursively it has to address English language speakers. It is less embedded than AljA but its systemic positioning drives its discourse quite apart from that of the BBC and CNN.

In organizational settings, powerful actors in Habermas's 'systems' exercise their authority in a manner that is largely invisible and hardly felt by lesser powerful actors. But reporters are usually aware of how the holders of power in organizations like the BBC, CNN and Aljazeerra control their lives. Journalistically speaking, they have not grown to accept the 'systems' imposed on them as natural or commonsensical as Gramsci and Garfinkel argue because they feel the weight of power all around them.

While the three global broadcasters exercise discoursal power almost in the same way, they do discourse differently due to the huge discrepancy between their style guidelines particularly at the level of vocabulary. The discursive divergence is mainly shaped by the disparate views and perspectives they have of the social world of the Middle East. The differences have also helped shape the social world of their listeners, readers and viewers of Middle East conflicts. But the institutional context of three broadcasters does not allow for a dialectical relationship between discourse and world. The power relationship between the discourse that shapes and represents the world and the discourse that is shaped and represented by the world is not equal. The actors in charge of discursive practices in the three broadcasters have greater authority and power to shape the world of reporters and audiences than the other way round.

Selection of discourse particularly at the level of lexis is 'deterministic' as reporters are under obligation not to steer away from their style guidelines when manufacturing the news. Therefore, the choice may run contrary to the common sense prevalent among the members of the organization or 'systems'. Choices at levels other than lexis could be nothing but arbitrary; however empirical evidence shows that the bifurcation of discourse at the level lexis into positive/negative and benign/malignant could be a factor for similar divisions at higher levels particularly nominalization and agency (Barkho 2008a).

Following Bourdieu, CDA analysts have mostly viewed discoursal power as invisible and that it can only be brought to the surface through the 'preying' eyes of critical scholars. But that is not the case with the creators and practitioners of discourse in the BBC, CNN and Aljzaera where the discoursal bifurcation of voices is so deliberate and visible that reporters have learned what they need to do in order to practice it when moving from one outlet to another. The hegemonic ideology is intentionally produced by these organizations and to have it practiced they have devised their own 'gate-keeping' procedures in the form of style guidelines, quality units, editorial advisers and policy makers whose main task is to ensure that these discursive divisions are maintained and adhered to in discourse.

AljA has developed a peculiar schematic structure where more than two news pegs may be present in a headline and developed separately, each with its own leads and satellite paragraphs.

A striking feature is the emphasis the BBC and AljA place on the 'religious' character of the Palestinian and Israeli conflict in their style guidelines. AljA relies on the Quran and Prophetic Tradition to force the 'consent' of reporters with regard to lexical and other choices. Similarly, the BBC relies heavily on the Bible to explain lexical options with regard to Israel and to a lesser degree on Islamic tradition with regard to Palestinians.

There is a clear tendency to discursively bring the reporting or representing voice to the surface as the three networks rely more on paraphrasing, keeping quoting to the minimum. Bakhtin's 'hidden dialogism' is discernible mainly in the discourse of style guidelines and the comment layer of news discourse. But despite the presence of multiple voices, there is a clear tendency in hard news discourse of the three broadcasters to steer discoursal elements (lexis and other layers) towards the centre of power, employing centripetal rather than centrifugal force so that discursive patterns and social assumptions point towards the central themes of style guidelines.

Once the style book discourse is inserted in the body of the story it assumes further significance due to its dialogic power which shapes and re-shapes the social world from the outlet's point of view. This is an important feature of political and media discourse since it relies heavily on reporting what other voices say which often makes it difficult for analysts to draw a line between the discourse being reported and the discourse doing the reporting.

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