Persuasion, Media Discourse, and Image Making; Critical Discourse Analysis of Arab Gulf Media

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Abstract: This comparative study aims to critically analyze the media discourse of Arab Gulf countries in terms of objectivity, persuasion, and national brands. It is also necessary to investigate the power relations in the Gulf media discourse and the ideologies adopted by the conflicting parties which aim to mobilize public opinion locally and internationally. Arab Gulf media outlets attempt to convince the masses of the legitimacy of the political agenda and foreign policies of Arab countries in the region. In many cases, the Arab Gulf regimes attempt to own hegemony and control over power relations by adopting an inflammatory media discourse capable of distorting the true image of other groups on the one hand and supporting the national brand and the foreign policies of the ruling families on the other. This complex relationship between the media discourse and the structures of power makes the task more difficult to uncover the deep link that constitutes the components of the adopted discourse and opens the door to many interpretations that need good textual and ontological analysis. Therefore, critical discourse analysis was used as a method of data analysis to understand the ideological attitudes during the online media coverage of both Aljazeera and al-Arabiya media networks. The stratified sample of this comparative study consists of 8 news reports retrieved from both websites. The comparative analysis reveals that the Arab media discourse employed by the conflicting parties is far from neutral especially when political crises arise between major powers as in the case of the Gulf dispute between Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, and other countries. Al-Arabiya English has used an inflammatory discourse against the Qatari regime to create a negative image of Qatar's foreign policies, while Al-Jazeera English has adopted the Qatari narrative to refute the claims of supporting terrorism, spreading hate speech, and marketing extremist ideologies. However, both media outlets funded by Arab Gulf countries manipulate media content and meaning to mobilize public opinion and convince the international community of the legitimacy of their political agenda, foreign policies, and national identities.

Keywords: Critical Discourse Analysis, Ideological Attitudes, Media Discourse, Arab Gulf Media, Foreign Policies

1. Introduction

The Arab Gulf region has been dominated by royal families for decades. However, there was a power struggle between these regimes like the dispute between Qatar and its neighboring countries. Many states in this region have adopted different strategies to protect their political entities and national sovereignty such as the strategy of regional and international alliances as well as building a national brand to market a legitimate foreign policy [32]. So, the media-politics relation remains a crucial concern for media and communication theorists. It is of the utmost importance to investigate the media manipulation and exploitation of discourse by examining how Arab Gulf media outlets cover

the ruling families in the Gulf region to market the legitimacy of their political agenda and impose ideological hegemony under the umbrella of fighting terrorism on the one hand, and protecting national security and maintaining their political images on the other.

It is reasonable to assume that the new relationships between Arab Gulf countries and middle east's countries in general have revealed major changes at various levels, especially the role of mass media during the political crises that threaten the security of the Arab Gulf region and these relationships have highlighted distinct notions and concepts such as terrorism, extremism, political agenda, national sovereignty, hate speech, and so on. Therefore, it would be difficult to understand the political situation in Arab Gulf

region away from ideology and power relations embedded in media discourse. In addition, political contexts cannot be analyzed without identifying the role of other actors in this complex process.

At this juncture it makes sense to assume that Arab Gulf media are biased towards the political agenda of Arab governments that basically finance these media institutions to be used as political devices of hegemony. The political contexts and the role of mass media in local conflicts after the Arab Spring raise a debate about the nature of this hegemony and the ability of mass media to mobilize public opinion and incite against Arab regimes and their foreign policies at the internal and external levels [30]. Consequently, it is better to spotlight on power abuse and manipulation by analyzing how propaganda techniques are used by Arab Gulf media to market the foreign policies of Arab regimes and convince the masses of the need to maintain national security by fighting terrorism and radical groups in the Middle East.

Van Dijk argues that power relations in modern societies are not based on coercion but rather rely on persuasion, so, it is an ideological process. He believes that ideology is an explanatory framework to understand the different social and political practices. He also points out that the rhetorical power of discourse has many persuasive techniques including arguments and promises that encourage recipients to build desirable representations. Controlling the media discourse is an important goal for the dominant group. This can be done by promoting the dominant discourse while at the same time confronting the opponent's ideology [29]. Ordinary People usually accept to obey some kind of power when they consider it legitimate, acceptable, recommended, and natural. The ability to manufacture ideology is a kind of control. The recipient's mind is controlled by trusted authorities such as media outlets and other political and social devices. This is also achieved by convincing the audience of selective perceptions without offering other alternatives and narratives. Therefore, opportunities for controlling the minds of masses will increase when they lack critical thinking skills to build their own views and positions [26].

Therefore, critical discourse analysis takes into consideration the production, reproduction, distribution, and consumption of social and political discourses [13]. Also, Van Dijk states that ideology shapes discourses at political, social, and cognitive levels. So, it is important to examine ideology within in-group's discourse taking into account the linguistic and social contexts, as well as other internal factors that influence the production of meaning. Ideology creates a strong interaction when the dominant power imposes it. In the same way, mass media impose its agenda on the audience and motivate them to reject or accept other groups (out group) in other parts of the world [26]. It can be said that critical discourse analysis has the deconstruction tools that are able to analyze different discourses in terms of power relations, domination, and exploitation of ideology. This process involves an important principle that the discourse analysis should not be separated from social and political dimensions and other practices in which these discourses grow. The

critical analysis of the media discourse is an analysis of the dialectical relations between the discourse units which include not only language but also semiotic units and the elements of social practice [13, 14]. Consequently, CDA aims to explain how the media discourse reflects socio-political relations and how hegemony is maintained in a particular society.

1.1. Research Background: Persuasion, Media Discourse, and Image Making

It is wrong to assume that most people are active in interpreting the media message objectively, so they build their own meanings and concepts in what they believe to be acceptable, legitimate, or at least recommended. When mass media represent a foreign country as a threat to the national interest, the image of that state becomes distorted in the receiver's mind [25]. In the same way, when a particular nation engages in a conflict with another country, mass media funded by the government systematically exploit the national discourse and exaggerate the demonization of the other party by focusing on the negative aspects of the issue. Price and Tewksbury point that the masses always prefer to assess their political leaders based on issues and events that have been given great attention in news reports. Mass media have become political devices to impose hegemony and mobilize public opinion in line with different expectations of political levels [24]. Thus, this active role played by mass media in both conflict and peace raises a debate about the nature of media discourse exploited by antagonists taking into consideration power relations reflected by media discourse, propaganda techniques adopted by media institutions, and ideologies promoted by dominated groups.

Foucault claims that "regimes of truth" can be constructed by discourse; therefore, an ideological statement may go further than its aim of changing attitudes to the extent of calling for action. Since discourse is shaped by relations of power and ideologies, critical discourse analysis helps analysts to reveal the ideological assumptions that are hidden in the words of written or oral texts [15, 12]. Therefore, mass media play a significant role in building power relations and promoting social, political, and cultural structures. It is a complex process in which internal and external variables produce the media discourse, its content, and its ideological hues [27].

Mass communication system is conceived as a selective process at many levels, so the sender who controls the flow of information is affected by different political and social contexts. Therefore, context analysis in some cases becomes more important than the text analysis itself [23]. In the same vein, Gee and Green emphasize that media discourse is a social practice and it is affected by various dynamic changes. Media discourse is not a single context; however, it is largely affected by other political and social factors. These overlapping discourses reflect contradictory social realities and conflicting political interests [16]. On the other hand, mass media can influence the political level by focusing on presenting negative news and directing

criticism towards a particular group of people without paying attention to media ethics or even contributing to problem solving, raising doubts about the negative images reflected by mass media [20].

It can be assumed that mass media in authoritarian regimes have the ability to change views and manufacture selective perception. Therefore, they become means of control aimed at spreading disinformation. In these regimes, mass media are not neutral; they are largely biased to one of the conflicting parties [31]. According to Herman and Chomsky, this media bias aims not only at protecting the existing power but also depriving people of the opportunity to understand the political circumstances around them. In other words, politicians use the media to demonize their opponents by using propaganda techniques and ideological manipulation [19].

Kunczik argues that the foreign policies of countries are based on image making. Because of the growing public interest in foreign policy, most governments have relied on mass media to promote political agenda and make decisions on national issues and foreign affairs. He also adds that media outlets are no longer just traditional institutions; however, they have become powerful political devices to convince the public of the foreign policies adopted by these governments [22].

Analyzing power relations and semantic shifts in the Arab media discourse illustrates how politicians and ruling families use mass media to build positive images of their actions and persuade other groups of their legitimacy. So, it has become clear that mass media have played a major role in the diplomatic relations between the major powers in the region. Therefore, this analytical framework makes it easy to identify the ideological hues and persuasion techniques adopted by Arab Gulf media from different perspectives. This study analyzes the media discourse of the Gulf media outlets which have adopted different ideologies aimed at mobilizing public opinion to build positive images and create positive stereotypes about foreign policies and ruling families in the region.

1.2. The Arab Gulf Countries Relations

It is important to state that Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates withdrew their ambassadors from Qatar in March 2014 as a result of what they called Doha's non-compliance with decisions of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). The main reasons for this dispute were the Qatari position from the military coup in Egypt and Qatar's support for the Arab Spring revolutions. The ambassadors of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and the Kingdom of Bahrain returned to Doha in November 2014 after the government of Qatar announced its commitment to some of the previously agreed decisions of the Gulf Cooperation Council. The Gulf dispute broke out again between Qatar and the four boycotting countries: Saudi Arabia, UAE, Bahrain and Egypt on June 5th 2017. Qatar News Agency broadcast statements attributed to the emir of Qatar, Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, criticizing what he called "anti-Iranian sentiment".

However, Qatari officials quickly denied the statements and they accused hackers of penetrating the official news agency. Despite this, Saudi and Emirati criticism has increased dramatically. The boycotting governments considered Qatar's political relations with Iran as a challenge for the Gulf States [17]. These countries claimed that Qatar supported extremist groups, including the Muslim Brotherhood, which is considered a terrorist organization in Gulf States, the Huthis, Al-Qaeda, and the organization of the Islamic State "ISIS". They also claimed that Qatar works to destabilize the security of these countries and incite against local Arab regimes [10]. However, the Qatari regime exerted great efforts in addressing this campaign by creating a positive image of its forging policies and mobilizing international public opinion for solidarity with the state of Qatar.

It is reasonable to assume that the Arab Gulf dispute has revealed major changes at various levels especially the role of mass media in the political crises that threaten the security of the Arab Gulf region and this dispute has highlighted other notions such as terrorism, national sovereignty, hate speech, and so on. Therefore, it would be difficult to understand The Arab Gulf countries relations away from ideological statements and power relations embodied in media discourse. In addition, political agenda cannot be analyzed without identifying the role of other actors in this context. Consequently, it is important to investigate the media manipulation and exploitation of discourse by examining how Al-Jazeera and al-Arabiya media channels covered the ruling families in the Gulf region to market the legitimacy of their political agenda and impose ideological hegemony in the Middle East.

2. Research Methodology

2.1. Data Collection

The sample of this current study was collected from Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya's websites. Al-Jazeera network, which is funded by the Qatari government, has a major role in influencing public opinion especially after the Arab Spring protests, while Al-Arabiya channel supports the Saudi-UAE alliance's agenda when it comes to their national brands and foreign policies in the Middle East [21]. So, this comparative analysis was basically conducted to understand Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya's media discourse after the outbreak of the Gulf dispute between Qatar and the rest of Gulf countries in 2017.

The Sampling frame is from Jun 5th 2017, to October 5th 2017. This study is based on a stratified sample of one constructed week by randomly choosing one Saturday, one Sunday, one Monday, one Tuesday, one Wednesday, one Thursday, and one Friday from the specified time period. A total of 568 news reports were collected from Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya's websites. Of the total, 237 news reports were retrieved from Al-Jazeera's website, while 331 were retrieved from Al-Arabiya's website. For the constructed week, 27 news reports from Aljazeera and al-Arabiya's websites were selected. The researcher finally selected 8

news reports from both media networks. All the news reports used for this study were originally written in English. The following table shows the selected sample from Aljazeera and al-Arabiya's websites.

***Table 1.** Selected sample from Aljazeera and al-Arabiya's websites.*

*	News report	Date
1	Qatar: Decision to cut ties violates our sovereignty. By Aljazeera English	5 Jun 2017
2	Qatar: 'No justification' for cutting diplomatic ties. By Aljazeera English	5 Jun 2017
3	Sheikh Tamim: Any talks must respect Qatar sovereignty. By Aljazeera English	22 Jul 2017
4	Saudi Arabia's war in Yemen "a strategic failure". By Aljazeera English	23 Aug 2017
5	Al Jazeera's "encyclopedia" labels extremists as "jihadis with a cause". By al-Arabiya English	27 Jun 2017
6	Abu Dhabi FM launches radio program "Qatar: A Policy of Darkness". By al-Arabiya English	10 Aug 2017
7	Anti-terror States: Measure taken against Qatar is "boycott" not "blockade". By al-Arabiya English	15 Sep 2017
	Egypt looks into role of former Qatar PM in Mursi espionage case. By al-Arabiya English	17 Sep 2017

2.2. Method of Data Analysis

Critical discourse analysis is one of the advanced methodologies to analyze different media discourses in which it deals with language as a form of social practice and examines how text and speech contribute to the creation of social and political power [27, 28]. Therefore, CDA has a significant role in revealing the characteristics features of media coverage based on several analytical levels. The first level, which is the semantic macro proposition, answers important questions in the news story. Who is the main actor? Where did the event take place? When? And what happened in general? With regard to the second level which is local meanings, it is important to analyze the media discourse from a linguistic perspective, taking into account the political, ideological and historical contexts, and other factors that control the narrative coherence. In other words, local meanings include the main participant's description and lexicalization [5]. The global superstructure summarizes the main story and its implications, what is present and what is missing, and it highlights the structural features and power relations in the news media discourse. Thus, CDA helps to approach the assumptions of this current study, and it also contributes to understanding if the Arab Gulf media outlets have covered this diplomatic and political dispute objectively. The following table shows the three levels of CDA [5, 11].

***Table 2.** Levels of Critical Discourse Analysis.*

*	Levels of CDA	Explanation
1	The Semantic Macro- Proposition	The semantic macro proposition reveals the main actors in the text. We need here to answer these questions: "who-where-when-what". Local meanings include main participant's description and lexicalization. a. Active/Passive b. Repetition of words and phrases c. Strong/ soft words d. Allusion/ Omissions
2	Local Meanings	What are the ideological hues in the media texts? a. Ownership b. Us - Others c. In - Out d. Audience e. The context of the discourse The main story and its implications
3	Global Superstructure	Summary What is present/ missing? Editorial policy

2.3. Theoretical Framework

The approach of CDA is to critically analyze the media discourse in terms of its ability to represent and stabilize elements of power and existing social and political structures. [27, 28]. The critical analysis of the media discourse is an analysis of the dialectical relations between the discourse units, which include not only language but also semiotic units and the elements of social practice [14]. Consequently, CDA aims to explain how the media discourse reflects socio- political changes as well as hegemony in society.

Van Dijk defines power as a control of one group over other groups. The basic process of reproducing power is through discourse. Controlling the discourse is not only a social practice but also a control over the minds of those who are subject to this power. In other words, the dominant discourse can control the public's knowledge, views, political positions, and ideologies [29].

Fairclough maintains that the media discourse represents a social conflict and it is one of the tools of cultural hegemony. Therefore, it reproduces ideological identities and power relations [14]. According to his model, analyzing any particular type of discourse, including the media discourse, should focus on two integrated aspects: social analysis and text structures. He takes into consideration the relationship

between various discourses and their linguistic units such as lexicon, semantics of grammar, logical coherence, and so on. This also requires the analysis of the discourse as a social practice which aims at revealing how the discourse is constructed and used, and examining the psychological and cognitive levels of how individuals respond to media discourse [12, 13]. Moreover, Fairclough uses deconstruction tools to understand social conflict and its linguistic manifestations within the media discourse especially in view of the elements of dominance and resistance. These tools are capable of analyzing the dialectical relations between the semantic elements -including language- and other elements of social practices [13].

Ideology has an important role in critical discourse analysis. Language is an ideological device and it is a social practice in terms of its structure and influence. Halliday emphasizes that lexical structure plays a significant role in the intellectual process of human beings; it represents a map of the themes, concepts, and meanings that discourse needs to convey. This approach helps to understand the lexicographical map of media discourse and its representation of different ideologies [18].

Van Dijk believes that ideology is an explanatory framework to understand the different social and political practices. He also points out that the rhetorical power of discourse has many persuasion techniques including arguments and promises that encourage recipients to build desirable mental representations. Controlling social cognition is an important goal for the dominant group. This is done by promoting its own discourse while at the same time confronting the opponent's ideology [29].

People usually accept to obey some kind of power when they consider it legitimate, acceptable, and natural. The ability to manufacture ideology is a kind of control. People's minds are controlled by trusted authorities such as media outlets and other political and social institutions. This is also achieved by convincing the audience of selective perceptions without offering alternatives. Therefore, opportunities for controlling the minds of masses will increase when they lack critical thinking skills to build their own views, judgments, and positions [26].

To a very great degree, CDA has the deconstruction tools that are able to analyze different discourses in terms of power relations, domination, and ideological exploitation. This process involves an important principle that the discourse analysis should not be separated from the social practices and other public institutions in which these discourses grow. In other words, critical analysis of the discourse takes into consideration the production, distribution, and consumption of social and political discourses [13].

3. The Analysis

There is a real need to understand the political situation in the Gulf region especially after the balance of power has been disrupted by regional changes. This can be achieved through the critical analyzing of media discourse because media discourse reflects different views and represents international and domestic positions towards crucial issues. Therefore, this comparative study aims to analyze the media discourse of Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya English. In order to understand the ideological attitudes and power relations, it is necessary to use the method of critical discourse analysis in an attempt to reveal the role of both media institutions in marketing the political agenda of Arab Gulf countries and mobilizing public opinion by exploiting image making and persuasion techniques.

This analysis is based on mentioning the title of the news report and then elaborating the three stages of critical discourse analysis which include the semantic macro-proposition, local meanings, and global superstructure.

Text 1) Qatar: Decision to cut ties violates our sovereignty. By Aljazeera English [6].

The semantic macro proposition

The semantic macro proposition reveals the main actors in the text. We need here to answer these questions: "who-where-when-what". Semantically, Who- Qatar represented by the Qatari Cabinet and the foreign ministry, where- in the Arabian Gulf region, when- the fifth of June after Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, and Bahrain decided to sever diplomatic relations with Qatar, what- this decision violates Qatar's sovereignty. A deep analysis shows the title indicates that a big political event affects Gulf Cooperation Council countries.

Local meanings

Local meanings include main participant's description and lexicalization. The main event in this news report is the Gulf rift in which three countries cut off diplomatic ties with Qatar. The words used to describe the crisis are "unjustified", "violate Qatari sovereignty", and "Push for isolation". The report, by quoting Qatari officials, asserts that Qatar's support for terrorism and extremist groups in the Middle East such as Hamas, Hezbollah, and ISIS is merely accusations and fabricated allegations by boycotting countries. Based on this description, the receiver can easily distinguish between claims and facts. Using specific words with negative connotations to refer to the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Bahrain refutes these "charges" against Qatar and its foreign policy in the Middle East. Consequently, the news report indicates that the cause of the Gulf crisis is "hacking of Qatar News Agency" and maintains that this "hacking" has really happened, while Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates insist that the statements attributed to Emir of Qatar Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani praising Iran's role in the region were not fabricated.

The global superstructure

This news report taken from Aljazeera English website summarizes the important events about Qatar diplomatic crisis from Aljazeera's perspective. It deals with statements by Qatari officials about the crisis as facts. In turn, it deals with statements by Saudi and UAE officials about Qatar's support for terrorism and extremist groups as "allegations". There is also a clear focus on Qatar's foreign policy of non-interference in the internal affairs of neighboring countries. This reinforces the Qatari narrative on this particular issue.

Text 2) Qatar: 'No justification' for cutting diplomatic ties. By Aljazeera English [7].

The semantic macro proposition

Qatar's foreign ministry issued a statement condemning the diplomatic crisis and its impact on Qatari citizens and the economic level including air traffic and landlines. In the same vein, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates considered these decisions as a result of Qatar's hosting of terrorist organizations and interference in the internal affairs of the Gulf States through the continued incitement of Al-Jazeera and its support for the Arab revolutions. Semantically, who- Qatar's foreign ministry, where- in the state of Qatar, when- on 5 of Jun 2017, what- the measures of the boycott countries, which include Saudi Arabia, UAE, Bahrain, Yemen, and Egypt, are illegal and unjustified.

Local meanings

This news report summarizes the most important statements related to the Gulf crisis. Regarding the lexicalization, boycotting countries focus on "protecting national security" when it comes to justifying sanctions on Qatar, while Qatar's Foreign Ministry denies accusations of support for extremist groups in the Middle East. The report describes the sub-actors in the event by using different sentences, For example, Yemen cut off diplomatic relations with Qatar due to Saudi and Emirati political pressure. Consequently, Aljazeera channel discusses Yemen's role in Qatar's diplomatic crisis by using positive phrases such as Yemen's backed by the international community. On the other hand, the news reports negatively points out that the Yemeni government doesn't hold the capital, Sanaa and suffers from a lack of sovereignty over large parts of the country. The news report also describes hacking of Qatar News Agency and broadcast of statements attributed to Qatar's emir urging support for Iran, Hezbollah and Hamas as "discredited story". It confirms more than once the denials of the Qatari Foreign Ministry and criticizes Sky News Arabia channel funded by the UAE and Al Arabiya channel funded by Saudi Arabia for "keeping running the discredited story".

The global superstructure

Al Jazeera channel throughout the diplomatic crisis aimed to cover the Gulf dispute from all political and economic aspects, as well as the diplomatic positions of the international community. The news of severing relations between the Gulf States and Qatar sparked a new wave of debate and tension in the Middle East. The political crisis also raised many questions about the reason for this sudden boycott, as well as adapting different interpretation of terrorism.

Text 3) Sheikh Tamim: Any talks must respect Qatar sovereignty. By Aljazeera English [8].

The semantic macro proposition

Since the political crisis erupted between Qatar and the Gulf countries due to the support of "illegal allies", Qatar's leaders preferred to address local and international public opinion to convince them of "the illegality" of the steps taken by Saudi Arabia and the UAE against Qatari citizens and the national security. Consequently, who- Prince of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad, where- in the capital of Qatar, Doha, when- on 22 of Jul during the speech of the Qatari emir on the diplomatic crisis and the effects of the Saudi-UAE sanctions on the Qatari people as well as Qatar's vision of the Gulf rift and negotiations between the two sides, what- the Qatari regime refuses diplomatic dialogue with "the nations of the blockade" as long as the sovereignty of Qatar is violated.

Local meanings

This news report covers the political speech that the Qatari emir addressed to three parties. The First party is the Qatari people. The second is the neighboring countries that impose a siege on Doha. The third is the international community and the mediators in the Gulf dispute. Accordingly, Qatari citizens were surprised by the measures of the Saudi-Saudi alliance against them. The main actor in the report describes these decisions as "unprecedented campaign" and it was "preplanned". However, the Qatari people were in solidarity with the Qatari regime and chose to support their government against the demonization campaign or "the smear campaign" led by Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, the UAE and Egypt.

On the opposite side, countries that impose a political and economic blockade on Doha including the UAE, which planned to penetrate the Qatar News Agency and publish "false statements" about Qatar's foreign policy, do not recognize Qatar's role in confronting extreme ideologies and terrorism in the Middle East. They urged Qatar's leaders to accept the Gulf conditions -"a tough 13-point list of demands" as described in the report- as the only solution to end the political dispute. With regard to the international community, especially the US position on Qatar's diplomatic crisis, the news report quotes the Emir of Qatar praising the international efforts to mediate between the Gulf States and settle "the outstanding problems". Moreover, Qatar is an important ally in "fighting terrorist" organizations. It has a "national list" of terrorist groups in the region. Therefore, the decisions of neighboring Gulf States against Qatar that affect the lives of its citizens were aimed at "undermining the sovereignty of Qatar".

The global superstructure

Al-Jazeera's media discourse aims at mobilizing public opinion by comparing the views on Qatar's diplomatic crisis and promoting the one which serves the foreign policy adopted by the Qatari regime. To illustrate this, the media channel has used the phrase "Islamic Group" to refer to the Muslim Brotherhood organization which is considered as a "terrorist group" by the boycotting nations in which they have asked Qatar to sever relations with its members. There is a difference between the use of the term "terrorist organization" and "Islamic group". The Arab or the Muslim receiver has Islamic backgrounds that motivate him to respect the cultural and historical heritage related to this context while refusing to link Islam with terrorism and manipulation of other concepts.

Text 4) Saudi Arabia's war in Yemen "a strategic failure". By Aljazeera English [9].

The semantic macro proposition

Qatar's diplomatic crisis sparked debate on several issues related to Saudi foreign policy; especially the effects of the war led by the Saudi-Emirati alliance in Yemen to restore territories controlled by the Houthis group and maintain security against attacks on the Saudi borders. Semantically, who- political analysts interested in the Yemeni war and its

impact on Saudi decisions, where- in the Yemeni capital, Sanaa, when- on 23 of August after the disclosure of leaked documents and emails prove "the strategic failure" of Saudi policies in Yemen and the inability of the Saudi Crown Prince to defeat the Houthi militias, what- the Saudi-led military alliance against the Houthis in Yemen has not met its goals of empowering legitimacy and peace.

Local meanings

This news report describes the main actor, Saudi Arabia, which leads a military campaign against the Houthis in Yemen, that its war is "a strategic failure". Similarly, the report uses the phrase of "Saudi military intervention" to refer to the Arab Coalition while the other party considers it to be "legitimate". In addition, the report quotes a Yemeni political analyst as saying that Saudi Arabia is responsible for the disastrous humanitarian situation in Yemen. The Saudi military campaign against the Houthis group has a major role in promoting "political divide" as a result of the power struggle between Iran and the Gulf states which has negative consequences for the Yamani people who largely suffer from poverty and diseases. In other words, this conflict has led Yemen to "the chaotic abyss".

Al-Jazeera's media discourse shows "the failure" of the military campaign led by the Saudi-led Arab Coalition in Yemen and indicates the desire of the Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman to get out of the war with the lowest human and economic losses. "A retreat means a defeat", the report quotes a Yemeni analyst. We can understand this ideological context by analyzing the dimensions of the Gulf political crisis that affected other issues in the Arab region including the conflict in Yemen where Qatar was a member of the Arab Coalition to" restore legitimacy" and fight the Houthis militias backed by Iran. However, after the Gulf States accused the Qatari regime of being involved in "financing illegal groups", the editorial policy of Al-Jazeera has shifted from focusing on the achievements of the Arab Coalition to focusing on "the humanitarian crisis" and the number of victims of this "military intervention" against the Yemeni people.

The global superstructure

Coverage of the conflict in Yemen by Aljazeera reveals major shifts in its media discourse regarding the terms used and whether the Arab military alliance led by Saudi Arabia against the Houthis group is legitimate or not. The focus on the negative effects of the Yemeni war and foreign policy of Mohammed bin Salman, which led to a humanitarian crisis, reflects the impact of Qatar's diplomatic crisis on the Gulf region, as well as the media discourse of the parties involved in the dispute and the ideological attitudes adopted by Gulf media outlets. In other words, Al-Jazeera's discourse is influenced by external factors that make it difficult to be neutral in covering the war in Yemen especially when it comes to Saudi Arabia and its political agenda in the Gulf region.

Text 5) Al Jazeera's "encyclopedia" labels extremists as "jihadis with a cause". By al-Arabiya English [1].

The semantic macro proposition

The semantic macro proposition reveals the main actors in the text. Semantically, Who- Al Jazeera network backed by the Qatari government, where- in the capital of Qatar, Doha, when- After the escalation of Qatar political crisis on 5 of Jun 2017, what- Aljazeera's encyclopedia manipulates information about extremist groups and their leaders around the world. In other words, Al-Arabiya website publishes a news report on the Al-Jazeera network claiming that it promotes extreme ideology through its media discourse and editorial policy.

Local meanings

It is well known that the terms used by media during the news coverage greatly influence the recipient's understanding about a particular issue. The main actors in this news report are Al Jazeera Network and prominent figures in jihadist organizations around the world including Osama bin Laden, the former al Qaeda leader in Afghanistan, and Ayman al-Zawahiri, the organization's second-in-command. It should be noted that the news report refers to these fighting groups in Iraq, Afghanistan and Yemen as "terrorist" while Aljazeera network refers to them in different names as mentioned in the report. The encyclopedia for example refers to bin Laden as a "Saudi jihadist" and to al-Zawahiri as "an Egyptian doctor and a fighter".

From the point above, we can clarify the difference between the word "jihadist" and "extremist". A" jihadist" word in Islamic and Arab culture is linked to a positive meaning taking into account the historical and religious contexts. This news report criticizes the Al-Jazeera network for using a "jihadist" word to identify leaders of military groups around the world and replace it with the word of "extremist" which has a negative connotation in the recipient's mind especially after the bloody attacks targeting several capitals in Europe and the Middle East.

The global superstructure

After the outbreak of the political dispute between Qatar and the Saudi-UAE alliance, mutual accusations by the two sides via mass media about supporting and funding extremist groups in Iraq, Syria, Yemen and Afghanistan have increased significantly. Al-Arabiya channel, by focusing on news reports that prove the involvement of the Qatari government in establishing relations with those groups, tries to convince the recipient of the legitimacy of the rest of Arab Gulf countries and their charges against Qatar.

Text 6) Abu Dhabi FM launches radio program "Qatar: A Policy of Darkness". By al-Arabiya English [2].

The semantic macro proposition

A debate was raised on Qatar's foreign policy especially after the Arab Spring revolutions and the role of Al Jazeera in inciting against Arab regimes. As a result, the UAE, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain launched a media campaign targeting the Gulf and global public opinion to distort the image of the Qatari regime and its political agenda in the region. Semantically, who- UAE media represented by Abu Dhabi FM, where- in Emirate of Abu Dhabi, when- on 10 of August 2017 during the media campaign led by the Saudi-UAE alliance, what- the UAE media outlets broadcast that the Qatari regime adopted a policy of darkness.

Local meanings

"The policy of darkness" in which the news report negatively describes Qatar's foreign policy includes compromising Gulf security and alliance with organizations classified by the Gulf states as "terrorist and extremist" groups such as Hezbollah and Houthis backed by Iran as well as Islamic state organization or as it is called "Daesh". In addition, the report describes the Qatari political situation after the closure of the border and the imposition of economic sanctions as a "state of confusion". The Gulf media campaign against Qatar aimed at revealing "stubbornness" and "contradictions" against neighboring countries of Qatar. This passive description of Qatar's foreign policies represents the features of the Saudi and Emirati political discourse after the suspension of diplomatic and commercial relations with Qatar. The Gulf media use the same words of political level to create negative stereotypes about the ruling regime in Qatar and its "interference" in the internal affairs of the region's countries.

The global superstructure

The omission of the other perspectives becomes an integral part of the media discourse because the recipient is influenced by internal factors urging him/her to reject other groups which destabilize security especially when it comes to the "sensitive issues". Gulf media are influenced by the political decisions of the Arab leaders. Therefore, these media outlets are complementary devices of hegemony. It is important, in light of charges, to promote existing differences and mislead the public opinion. In a crisis or deep rift, the propaganda of the ruling regime appears to be right and describes the other party as "responsible" for the bad political situation.

Text 7) Anti-terror States: Measure taken against Qatar is "boycott" not "blockade". By al-Arabiya English [3].

The semantic macro proposition

During the diplomatic and political crisis between Qatar and the Saudi-UAE alliance in 2017, there has been increasing condemnation by international institutions about the violation of human rights especially after the closure of sea, air, and land ports and the severance of economic relations with Qatari banks and companies. Consequently, who- Anti-terror States including the emirates, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Egypt, where- in Geneva, Switzerland, when- on 15 of September during the annual session of the Human Rights Council (HRC) in Geneva, what- Gulf States sanctions against Qatar are "a legitimate boycott" not "blockade".

Local meanings

A deep analysis shows that there is a difference between "boycott" and "blockade". For the Saudi-Emirati alliance, economic and political sanctions against the Qatari regime are a reaction to its foreign policies that target Gulf security and fund radical groups and ideologies. Therefore, these measures and diplomatic decisions are "legitimate". On the other hand, international laws condemn a state imposing a "blockade" on another country especially when it comes to harming citizens, not the ruling regime. The "blockade" is usually linked to human rights violations, while the state has the right to "boycott" another state if it intervenes in its internal affairs and tries to violate sovereignty. This news report points to mutual accusations between Qatar and UAE delegates at the Human Rights Council, quoting the UAE official that the Qatari regime is "responsible" for the suffering of the Qatari citizens as a result of hosting "terrorist" figures in Doha, as well as adopting "dual speech" to "mask the real causes" of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) dispute.

The global superstructure

Describing the Saudi-UAE alliance as "anti-terrorism states" demonstrates the "legitimacy" of measures taken against the Qatari regime and its strategic relations with other political entities. Moreover, the notions used by the Gulf States reflect the ideology of its discourse at the legal and political levels. It can be said that Al-Arabiya channel covers the Gulf conflict from a single perspective, focusing on the justifications of anti-Qatar countries for economic sanctions and the severance of diplomatic relations, as well as issues related to human rights violations and the imposition of foreign agenda.

Text 8) Egypt looks into role of former Qatar PM in Mursi espionage case. By al-Arabiya English [4].

The semantic macro proposition

During the Arab Gulf crisis in 2017, the charges against Qatar increased significantly including Aljazeera's incitement against the Egyptian regime, as well as the support of the Muslim Brotherhood organization and former president-elect Mohamed Morsi. Semantically, who- Hamad bin Jassim, the former prime minister of Qatar, where- Egypt and Qatar, when- on 17 of September after the re-investigation into the case of former Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi by the Egyptian Attorney General on the secret relations of the Brotherhood group with the Qatari regime during the Egyptian revolution, what- the Qatari government represented by Hamad bin Jassem is involved in the espionage case with Mohamed Morsi regarding important documents concerning Egyptian "national security" and military information.

Local meanings

The main actors in this news report are the Qatar regime and its media device, Al Jazeera network. This has taken place during the coverage of the Arab Spring protests; the former Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi was described as "conspiring with Qatar". The report quotes the Egyptian court's judgment on the "involvement" of the former Qatari prime minister in an "espionage case" that harmed Egypt's "national security" in addition to Qatar's interference in the internal affairs of the country. The Muslim Brotherhood is an Islamic entity considered as "terrorist organization" by the Saudi Arabia and the UAE which were key supporters of the military decision to remove Morsi from power. However, Al-Jazeera challenged this decision by criticizing his successor, President al-Sisi. The channel's support for the Egyptian demonstrations angered the new Egyptian government which played a major role in the Gulf diplomatic rift by imposing a political siege on Qatar and supporting the agenda of the Saudi-UAE alliance.

Describing the former Qatari prime minister as a "suspect" in the espionage case reinforces the ideological discourse of the Arab countries (we and others). Therefore, Qatar aims to

"destabilize" several Arab countries while the Saudi-UAE alliance aims to combat "terrorism" and support the peaceful transition of power. This is clearly shown in the negative words and phrases to describe Qatar's role in "damaging Egypt's military", prompting the receiver to judge the Qatari regime as being involved in the violence and spreading hate speech in the Middle East.

The global superstructure

The Gulf media, including Al-Arabiya channel during its coverage of Qatar's diplomatic crisis, had to mobilize the public opinion against Qatar's foreign policies especially in light of Al-Jazeera's support for the Arab Spring protests. Consequently, it was necessary to focus on the political and legal aspects that prove the involvement of the Qatari regime in provoking unrest in many Arab countries including Egypt which supported the measures of the Saudi-UAE alliance against Qatar at the political and diplomatic levels.

4. Conclusion

It is clear that the media coverage reflects different viewpoints and supports inconsistent political agenda in the Arab Gulf region. In order to understand the ideological attitudes and national identities, it was necessary to use critical discourse analysis in an attempt to reveal the role of Arab media institutions in marketing the political agenda of the Gulf countries and mobilizing public opinion. By analyzing the media coverage of the Arab issues, we note the Qatari media campaign aimed to create a positive image of Qatar's foreign policies and investment projects while the Saudi-UAE campaign aimed at demonizing the Qatari regime through allegations of supporting terrorist organizations and destabilizing the Gulf region.

This paper also shows that media discourse is used or exploited to influence the audiences and promote the political agenda and dominant ideology of the political level. In addition, it is important to articulate that media outlets funded by the dominant group are biased toward the agenda of political leaders and aimed at marketing the dominant ideology and mobilizing public opinion locally and internationally. Importantly, the conflicting parties in the region have adopted the game of demonization in order to influence public opinion and play a significant role in regional and international conflicts.

The media-ideology relation remains a crucial concern for media and communication theorists. So, it is of the utmost importance to investigate the media manipulation and exploitation of discourse by examining how ideology can affect the nature and structure of these discourses which basically aim to market the legitimacy of the political agenda and impose ideological hegemony under the umbrella of freedom of speech, professionalism, and media neutrality.

In most cases, media outlets of the Arab Gulf states are based on creating contradictions and misinformation and adopting fake news when it comes to the other group (outgroup), while at the same time, these news organizations adopt the official narrative of Arab political leaders as an integral part of "the truth". All these professional and non-professional practices significantly affect the nature of the editorial policy and ultimately lead to the creation of a false consciousness among the public on the one hand and among the Arab journalists themselves on the other. Mass media are interested in reporting events of a problematic nature in such a way that they become mobilization devices. Therefore, news coverage is based on subjective processes in which it is deliberately planned and constructed taking into account the interests of the sender and the dominant group.

Therefore, additional studies should be conducted to examine the role of ideology in constructing the media discourse at the internal and external levels. It is also important to conduct studies on news coverage of political issues by using critical discourse analysis because it is an effective method to reveal the abuse of power and uncover the hidden messages and ideologies embedded in the media discourse.

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