Ideology and Translating Human Rights News

A Critical Discourse Analysis of the Cases of Three Saudi Activists

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The candidate confirms that the work submitted is his own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

This thesis is dedicated to the soul of my brother

Faiz

I still remember you teaching me my first English letters. Thank you for your wholehearted support during my worst times, and for your enthusiastic support for my achievements. I miss you every day…

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Abstract

Human rights discourse is an under-researched topic in translation studies, especially in the Arab World. Since the so-called Arab Spring of 2011, human rights discourse has gained great momentum.

This study deals with the effect of ideology on the cross-linguistic representations between Arabic and English of human rights discourse in the news in the context of Saudi Arabia's domestic political and ideological conflict. It uses a modified model of critical discourse analysis (CDA) as a methodological framework to study the manipulation shifts in translations and the implications of news translation in the light of ideological influence. It employs news reports from two news agencies with different ideological orientations as its data source, namely: Al Arabiya (from Saudi Arabia); and Al-Alam (from Iran). The selected data includes news reports both in Arabic and English on the stories of three Saudi activists from the year 2011 to 2017.

The study covers the question of ideological influence by applying different levels of analysis: the translation shifts and editing that occur at the level of lexis and visual semiotics; the historical, social and political contexts; and the discursive strategies. This research has compared and analysed human rights news reports between English and Arabic and concluded that news reporting differs based on the ideological and linguistic dimensions.

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Table of Transliteration System from Arabic to Latin

Consonants			
ء	ʾ	ض	ḍ
ب	b	ط	ṭ
ت	t	ظ	ẓ
ث	th	ع	ʿ
ج	J	غ	gh
ح	ḥ	ف	f
خ	kh	ق	q
د	d	ك	k
ذ	dh	ل	l
ر	r	م	m
ز	z	ن	n
س	s	هـ	h
ش	sh	و	w
ص	ṣ	ي	y

Vowels		
Long	آ or ى	ā
	و	ū
	ي	ī
Doubled	يّ	iyy (final form ī)
	وّ	uww (final form ū)
Short	◌َ	a
	◌ُ	u
	◌ِ	i

List of Abbreviations

(ACPRA) The Saudi Civil and Political Rights Association

(AFP) Agence France-Presse

(CDA) Critical Discourse Analysis

(CL) Critical linguistics

(CPVPV) The Committee for the Promotion of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice

(DA) Discourse analysis

(DHA) The discourse-historical approach

(GCC) Gulf Cooperation Council

(IHEU) The International Humanist and Ethical Union

(IRIB) Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting

(ISNA) The Iranian Students News Agency

(MBC) Middle East Broadcasting Centre

(MCDA) Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis

(MENA)The Middle East and North Africa

(NGOs) Non-governmental organisations

(OHCHR) The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

(OPEC)The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries

(PMF) The Popular Mobilization Forces

(SFL) Systemic functional linguistics

(SPA) The Saudi Press Agency

(UAE) The United Arab Emirates

(UDHR) Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background and Motivation for the Study

Since the 2011 protests that became known as the Arab Spring, human rights discourse has gained significant momentum in Saudi Arabia. This political atmosphere raised expectations in many Arab countries that reforms in domestic politics would soon occur. In Saudi Arabia (widely known as “the Kingdom” in the region and occasionally referred to by that term below), many activists and journalists called for or highlighted reforms regarding different human rights issues. These calls were faced by several internal ideological conflicts in which human rights discourse was demonised within the local Saudi dialogue by a large section of the Saudi community. The concept of human rights is often used by both supporters and opponents of reform to strengthen their side’s argument. While human rights are often seen as a positive and humanitarian notion, they are also often described as a political tool that is used by imperialist powers to pressure other countries and governments (Al-Jabri, 2008).

Although Saudi Arabia and some Muslim-majority countries have not adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), these countries have signed and adopted several other domestic and international declarations, conventions, and treaties that they perceived as not contradictory to their cultural, religious, political, and ideological beliefs and principles. However, not all the countries that signed such treaties actually fulfil their promises and abide by those conventions, indicating that the concept of human rights remains an issue in the Saudi political discourse, if clearly a controversial one.

To understand the way human rights news can be shaped and influenced by certain ideologies, this study focuses on certain conflicting human rights issues that impacted the media during the period from the beginning of the Arab Spring, which sparked my interest in the issue of human rights. The Arab uprisings of 2011 began while I was developing my research

proposal. Like most Arabs, I was watching the news closely, but as a translation studies postgraduate student, I soon found myself paying particular attention to the way that news was reported in English and Arabic. This field of research captivated me as an academic, and I began focusing on Saudi Arabia. The present study focuses on news reports as a linguistic product.

1.2 Aims and Research Questions

The ultimate objectives of this thesis are as follows: first, to understand and compare the representation of selected events, concepts, and ideas related to the human rights discourse in the reports produced by two different news agencies with conflicting ideologies in order to examine the role of language, ideology, and power relations in the news translation process; second, to offer a wider perspective on multilingual news agencies; and third, to describe from translation studies perspective the analysis of activism and human rights movements. The comparative analysis focuses on two dimensions: linguistic (Arabic and English) and ideological (Saudi vs. Iranian). Thus, the data will be divided into four categories based on these two dimensions. This study sets out to answer the following overarching question: How does ideology influence the cross-linguistic representations of human rights discourse in the news about Saudi activists? To answer this question, the following three questions will be investigated:

1. What are the lexical and semiotic variations found in the four categories?
2. What are the differences between the discursive strategies applied to reporting the same story in the four categories?
3. How do historical, social, and political contexts affect human rights discourse in the news?

These questions are investigated using a corpus of texts produced by two news agencies, Al Arabiya and Al-Alam, from the beginning of 2011 through the end of 2017, the description and justification of which will be explain in detail in Chapter 4. The methodology is based on critical discourse analysis (CDA), which is helpful in ensuring a close reading of the historical, social, and

political contexts in which the targeted stories were reported as will be explained and justified in Chapter 3.

1.3 Significance of the Study

Human rights discourse is an under-researched topic in translation studies, especially in the Arab world. As far as the author is aware, this study is the first of its kind in the context of Saudi Arabian human rights activism. One contribution is uncovering the manipulation in human rights discourse in the media by presenting a comparative analysis of human rights news reports between English and Arabic. As little research has been done in this regard, this thesis presents an additional viewpoint behind the universality vs relativity of “Islamic” human rights by including the translational, linguistic, and ideological factors. Additionally, it provides a specific cross-linguistic understanding of media dynamics, as it covers the ideological influence in two different languages within the same multilingual news agency. Finally, and most importantly, the thesis paves the way for future research with respect to human rights and media discourses in translation studies, for which this study may serve as a useful reference.

1.4 Structure of the Thesis

The thesis starts with an introduction (Chapter 1) that details the research aims and questions. It also provides brief remarks that make explicit the significance of the thesis. This chapter concludes with an overview of the structure of the thesis.

Chapter 2 presents a detailed literature review of relevant concepts. It begins by introducing the concept of news, media discourse, and the field of news translation. After that, it explores relevant concepts such as “ideology” and “institutional translation”. The chapter, then, explores the concept of human rights philosophically offering a historical background of its development. Chapter 2 concludes with a literature review of previous research that studied the translation of human rights discourse.

The following chapter (Chapter 3) introduces and discusses the methodological framework. It provides a background understanding of CDA and a genealogy of the concept of “discourse”. It, then, provides a theoretical map of CDA including some of the most important and relevant concepts. The chapter concludes with introducing the model of analysis adopted in this research.

This is followed by Chapter 4, which introduces the selected data. It provides an overview of the selected news agencies. After that, it discusses the justifications for the choice of corpus along with a detailed overview of the selected news reports.

Chapters 5 to 7 present the analysis of the data, with each chapter using a different level of analysis. Chapter 5 presents an analysis of the socio-cultural level. It deals with the historical, political, and legal contextualisation of the studied cases. Chapter 6 provides an analysis of the text level. This level deals with a micro analysis of the selected news reports. Chapter 7 presents and analysis of the discourse level, which deals with various intertextual elements of the news reporting of the selected cases.

Finally, Chapter 8 concludes the thesis by outlining the main findings, answering the research questions, addressing the study’s limitations, and offering recommendations for future avenues of research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the main theoretical concepts that are employed in this thesis. It starts with an overview in section 2.2 of the concept of news: its definition, its history, and news in the Arab World. This overview discusses the concept of newsworthiness and the factors that make a story worthy (or not worthy) of being reported as news. After that, a historical periodisation of the news industry traces the main developments in the field, exploring the features of each period and the main differences between them.

In section 2.3, a theoretical overview of the main concept of media discourse is introduced, with a particular focus on the methodological approach undertaken in this study.

Next, the chapter covers in section 2.4 the field of news translation and some of the main contributions of translation studies that help explain the context of this research. It discusses in detail the features of news translation and the process thereof, followed by a discussion of some of the main theoretical terms and concepts that describe this process.

The chapter then addresses issues of ideology and translating institutions in section 2.5 with a special focus on news agencies as translational institutions. This is followed by a brief overview of the effect of new media on the news translation field in section 2.6.

Finally, the chapter covers the concept of human rights, its philosophical and historical background, the universality debate of human rights, and concluding with a literature overview of the research about human rights in the media and translation studies.

2.2 The Concept of News

It is difficult to get a precise definition of the term “news”, but among those which have been tried are the classical Bleyer {, 1923 #517@18}, who defines it as "anything timely that interests a number of persons”, and more recently Stephens {, 2007 #61}, who sees news as the presentation of new information.

There are two main types of news: hard and soft. Although there is no scholarly agreement about the precise difference between the two, hard news generally refers to topics such as wars, disasters, accidents, and crimes, while soft news includes topics like biographical features, opinion pieces, editorials, and special-interest pieces. In addition to recency, there is a tendency in news selection towards issues that appear unusual, deviant, or at least out of the ordinary {Shoemaker, 2005 #93}.

{Harcup, 2001 #42@@author-year} explain that, in daily practice and through knowledge gained on the job, there are ground rules that give journalists a practical sense of what is newsworthy. These ground rules are not necessarily written or codified by news organisations; rather, they become known through the observing and adopting the norms followed in the newsroom.

The academic approach to answering the question of newsworthiness seeks to understand the news selection process to identify the factors involved in the selection of any given story. The earliest attempt to provide an academic and systematic definition of newsworthiness was Galtung and Ruge's 1965 paper, "The Structure of Foreign News" {Palmer, 1998 #106}. This paper has long been considered by many scholars to be the leading, seminal study of news selection {e.g. \Bell, 1991 #34;Harcup, 2001 #42;Watson, 1998 #472}. For example, Herbert says that their work continues to be recognised as a prerequisite of news selection, even in the twenty-first century {, 2000 #102}. More recently, {Meissner, 2015 #146@@author-year} has argued that Galtung and Ruge's news values "seem to remain a good theoretical concept to explain" news selection decisions in contemporary media.

{Galtung, 1965 #100@@author-year} seek to explain how events, particularly foreign events, become news. They investigated news reports from four Norwegian newspapers on two issues; the 1960 Congo and Cuba crises and the 1964 Cyprus crisis. The outcome of their study showed that there are certain standards that an event must meet to be selected as news. They presented a series of 12 values or factors that make an event newsworthy: frequency, threshold, unambiguity, meaningfulness, consonance, unexpectedness, continuity, composition, reference to elite

nations, reference to elite people, reference to interesting persons, and reference to something negative {O'Neill, 2009 #109}.

At the beginning of their work, Galtung and Ruge make clear that "no claim is made for completeness in the list of factors" {Galtung, 1965 #100@64 - 65}. Since it first appeared, their taxonomy has been criticised for various reasons, including its focus on foreign events {Herbert, 2000 #102} and its neglect of the visual elements of a story {Tunstall, 1971 #101}. Moreover, many additional or alternative lists of news factors have since been suggested. For example, logistics (which refers to whether the production staff and technical resources are ready and available to cover a certain story) was added by {Schlesinger, 1987 #473@@author-year}, while {Bell, 1991 #34@@author-year} added predictability.

Almost four decades after the publication of Galtung and Ruge's list, {Harcup, 2001 #42@@author-year} revisited their list and the subsequent literature to update the list to reflect the advancements in media and modern communication technologies. Their study used news published in three national daily British newspapers: the broadsheet *Daily Telegraph*, the tabloid *Sun*, and the middlebrow *Daily Mail*. They recommended reducing the list to 10 news values, which are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 News values (adapted from Harcup and O'Neill, 2001)

Value	Explanation
The power elite	Events concerning powerful people or organisations.
Celebrity	Events regarding famous people.
Entertainment	Events about show business, drama, humour, or witty headlines.
Surprise	Events containing an element of surprise and/or contrast.
Bad news	Negative events, such as war or tragedy.
Good news	Positive events, such as rescues, inventions, and cures.
Magnitude	Events considered significant because of either the degree of impact or the number of people concerned.
Relevance	Events about topics that appear relevant to the audience.
Follow-up	Stories that discuss events already in the news.
Newspaper agenda	Stories containing issues that match the news agency's agenda.

However, Harcup and O'Neill's study is questionable because the selected data involve three right-wing newspapers, which raises the question of its credibility. The corpus used in the current study is more balanced in terms of representing two sides of a conflict.

Newsworthy events are usually relevant to a particular public. For instance, it would likely be impossible for a news agency not to cover a war that poses a personal danger to its direct audience. This means that when there is a war in a given country, events related to that war will make it to that country's news as rapidly as possible. Nevertheless, {Hartley, 2013 #99@@author-year} argues that a concentration on news values alone could mask ideological factors behind the choice of certain events as news, which can indicate a distinction between newsworthiness proper and the stance of the organisation delivering the news. This view evokes a broader picture of news as driven by political, ideological, socio-cultural, and financial factors and challenges the argument that news reporting always follows (or always should follow) ethical values like impartiality, neutrality, and objectivity {Heyd, 2012 #110}. The landscape of news has been in constant revisions and redefinitions, especially with the advent of the concept of "fake news" which is defined as "fabricated information that mimics news media content in form but not in organizational process or intent" {Lazer, 2018 #509@1094}. Fake news is a phenomenon that has dominated the social media and open the door to what is called "the world of post-truth" {Rabin-Havt, 2016 #510}.

Recently, Caple and Bednarek {, 2015 #138} revisited the concept of news values and criticised such largely deterministic approaches to analysing the newsworthiness of events. They argue that "the concept of news values has been continually widened to include vastly different conditions that affect the production and dissemination of the news to the extent that it risks becoming ineffectual as an analytical approach" {Caple, 2015 #138@2}. As a remedy, they suggest a complementary discursive approach that pays attention not only to textual, verbal, and semiotic elements but also to other essential elements like images and page design. The present study adopts Caple and Bednarek's discursive approach to news values, which is essential

for understanding the type of news stories that are reported, translated, or even ignored by the news agencies selected for analysis. Some scholars have criticised such views due to the nature of news reporting itself. {Vasterman, 1995 #141@@author-year} argues that these views of news reporting presume that journalists only report events, even though “news is not out there, journalists do not report news, they produce news. They construct it, they construct facts, they construct statements and they construct a context in which these facts make sense. They reconstruct ‘a reality’”. In her narrative approach, Baker {, 2006 #26} emphasises the concept of constructedness and how translators construct and promote certain narratives. With this in mind, the journalist and to some extent the news translator may not be seen as passive in the news-making process.

2.2.1 The Genesis of News

News gathering, selecting, editing, translating, producing, and disseminating have developed along with the course of human civilisation. Major economic, political, scientific, and technological factors have led to leaps in the development of news. {Chalaby, 2005 #83@@author-year} suggests that the global media have experienced three phases: internationalisation, globalisation, and transnationalisation. Building on Chalaby’s work, {Rantanen, 2007 #62@@author-year} adds an earlier fourth phase, cosmopolitanisation. The details of these four phases are as follows:

1) **Cosmopolitanisation:** This period, which started in about the fifteenth century, witnessed the increase of news exchange between cosmopolitan cities, mainly for economic and political reasons {Rantanen, 2007 #62}. Hand-written news exchange had been the norm in most of the world until the invention of the printing press in China in the early years of the last millennium, followed by Gutenberg’s press in Europe in about 1440. This invention opened the door for the mechanical printing of books and later newspapers {McNeill, 2003 #98}. Before that invention, the collection of news involved investment by wealthy merchants, who were responsible for turning news into a commodity {Rantanen, 2007 #62}.
2) **Internationalisation:** This period, which began in the nineteenth century, witnessed the increase of news exchange on an international level. Along

with the building of telegraph and railway lines, global colonisation contributed to communication and news exchange among countries and empires that spanned continents {Briggs, 2010 #96;Heimbürger, 1938 #97}. With the growing production of the written press and an increase in the number of readers, newspapers became the first mass medium and the first cultural medium of modern journalism. News agencies published news as politically neutral and colourless papers containing information rather than opinions, like France's La Presse, which was established in 1836 {Motte, 1999 #148}. One of the first news translation agencies was Bureau Havas, which opened in 1832 to translate foreign newspapers for the French media {Bielsa, 2008 #147}. Three years later, it became the first news agency (Agence Havas). One of its subeditors, Julius Reuter, launched his own news agency in London in 1851, naming it Reuters after himself {Bielsa, 2008 #147}. Other pioneer news agencies established during this period include the American Associated Press (AP) in 1848 and the German Wolff in 1849 {Bielsa, 2008 #147}. News agencies blossomed in this era, when the first telegraph-driven news agencies were founded, and were followed by the launch of international electronic networks that connected countries on different continents by means of submarine cables {Rantanen, 2007 #62}. Thus, the news industry developed in a more organisational manner, and news gathering and dissemination became a very popular and profitable commodity.

3) **Globalisation:** According to Rantanen {, 2007 #62}, this period started during the twentieth century with advancements in computing and telecommunications, along with changes in global political and economic realities. However, these changes are argued by Held et al. to have been largely concentrated between 1850 and 1945, a period that witnessed an enormous acceleration in the establishment and spread of international networks under the control of colonial powers, which led to the formation of an international infrastructure for communications {, 1999 #149}. These advancements paved the way for a number of news agencies to expand their reach and target global audiences. Reuters, for example, opened its Special India and China Service in 1859; it has continued its expansion and was operating in 130 countries by the start of the third millennium

{Bielsa, 2008 #147}. Agence France-Presse (AFP) was founded in Paris in 1944, building on the heritage of Agence Havas, and became a news distributor in forty countries within five years. This number increased to 125 countries by 1960 and to 165 countries by 2008 {Bielsa, 2008 #147}. Major political conflicts, such as the world wars and the polarisation of the Cold War, changed the nature of news production and the nature of news reception. {Schudson, 1981 #150@@author-year} argues that the naive belief in journalism's neutrality and objectivity has been challenged since the First World War, the kind of major event that changes the nature of journalism and the role of journalists.

4) **Transnationalisation:** This period began at the end of the twentieth century with the penetration of satellite television channels and the Internet. News agencies and their audiences have become denationalised due to the nature of modern global communications. {Bielsa, 2008 #147@@author-year} argues that news agencies ushered in the decentralisation period during the 1980s in order to make global news agencies more responsive to regional needs by establishing regional headquarters. {Stephens, 2007 #61@@author-year} notes that one of the most obvious changes was that new media provide access to news more quickly, which made slower news media (such as traditional print media and television news channels) focus more on analysing and discussing events rather than on simply reporting them.

The development of the history of news and news agencies has generally been discussed from a Western perspective. As for the Arab world and countries from the so-called Third World, there have been fundamental criticisms about how Western global agencies represent these countries. These criticisms were raised in the UNESCO debate on a New World Information and Communication Order in the 1970s {Bielsa, 2008 #147} and helped lead to the establishment of non-Western media competitors like Al Jazeera, which is primarily an Arabic-language news agency, in addition to non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that provide special types of news like Human Rights Watch and the well-known human rights organisation Amnesty International. These news agencies are posing new challenges to the hegemony of global news agencies.

Before the cosmopolitisation phase, news exchange and news translation did not occur on a significant scale, because news was generally confined to limited communities. After the internationalisation phase and the establishment of global news agencies, the news industry became more translingual and transcultural. The news industry developed gradually to become a commodity that governments or news agencies could use to obtain wealth, power, influence, or some combination thereof. Since the advent of the globalisation phase, news agencies have become more aware than ever of the multilingual and multicultural nature of the world. {Tuchman, 1978 #151@@author-year} argues that news agencies during the globalisation phase required institutional processes and practices by professional employees who found, gathered, and disseminated news to the public. Commercial pressure also played a role in changing the nature of news organisations and their news content. Along with these changes, translation departments began to be established in many news agencies to keep up with global demand. For three reasons, the transnationalisation and globalisation phases are considered in this study under the single concept of globalisation. First, the term “globalisation” is more common in the context of this study to refer to multilingual news agencies. This term is also used by a seminal work by Cronin on the issue of globalisation in the field of translation studies {, 2013 #515}. Second, the features of the transnationalisation phase, from the perspective of this study, are not profoundly different from globalisation. Third, the study focuses on today’s global news agencies, not necessarily on their historical meaning.

2.2.2 History of Arab Media

As discussed above, global news and the news industry have evolved through three phases (cosmopolitanisation, internationalisation, and globalisation/transnationalisation). However, news and media in the Arab world have their own distinctive history and characteristics. Based on several works on the history of Arab media and mass communication from its establishment in the mid-eighteenth century {Mousa, 2001 #179;Ayalon, 1995 #180;Ayish, 2001 #181;Rugh, 2004 #182}, {Al-Jaber, 2014 #194@13@author-year} conclude that “Arab media have evolved through

four phases: control, rise, containment and inundation". The details of these four phases are as follows:

1) **Control:** The printing press came to the Arab world when it was under the rule of the Ottoman Empire. However, because of an Islamic advisory opinion against the printing press, the ruling elite rejected the invention until the eighteenth century. After the French colonisation of some Arab regions, the first newspapers in Arabic were published in 1800 (in Egypt) and in 1847 (in Algeria). Later, newspapers were published in several major Arab cities under other colonising powers or the Ottomans {Al-Jaber, 2014 #194}. The role of newspapers was to represent the government's viewpoint and offer its guidance while avoiding the dissemination of any critical perspectives. According to {Ayalon, 1995 #180@@author-year;Rugh, 2004 #182@@author-year}, the Ottomans, colonial powers, or dissident rulers like Muhammad Ali Pasha in Egypt aimed to subjugate Arab thought to the authorities' vision, controlling and directing it to be submissive to their ideas. This approach can be traced back to the Ottoman Printing and Publication Law, which was enacted in 1857 and modified in 1865 {Al-Jaber, 2014 #194}.
2) **The Rise:** The Ottoman and colonial powers were challenged by Arab journalists who called for the liberation of Arab peoples, especially after a 1909 law which restricted freedom of expression. Before that, Arab journalists, mainly from the Egyptian and Lebanese press, including Adib Ishaq, and Abdul Rahman Al-Kawakibi, had made significant contributions to this movement during the second half of the nineteenth century and called on people to challenge the corrupt occupying powers {Ayalon, 1995 #180}.
3) **Containment:** Arab peoples gradually gained independence from the Ottomans and European powers after the First World War. This period witnessed the entry of radio and then television into Arab media. However, the media landscape was not devoid of suppression by the new governments or the residual influence of colonial powers. For instance, some pro-nationalist and pan-Arab newspapers were suspended; their journalists were arrested or otherwise punished {Al-Jaber, 2014 #194}. Some countries even suppressed pan-Arab or pan-Islamic newspapers in

order to control the media discourse on politics. It may not be surprising that newly independent regimes would try to maintain political stability by suppressing critical opinions. In some Arab countries, the press was privatised and regulated by publications laws, while in others, it was nationalised and controlled directly by the authorities by means of ministries of information or ministries of media {Al-Jaber, 2014 #194}. Moreover, there were some news agencies that were established or recruited by the authorities to provide them with a stream of certified official news. Due to the high percentage of illiteracy among the population, the authorities were successful in completely containing the media, which served the existing regimes by promoting their policies and prohibiting criticism. According to {Mousa, 2001 #179@@author-year} and {Rugh, 2004 #182@@author-year}, the Arab world was dominated by the Egyptian media until 1967, with a few exceptions like Lebanon, Kuwait, and Morocco, countries that did allow various media outlets to broadcast different viewpoints.

4) **Inundation:** This phase started in the mid-1980s, when major changes occurred in the media landscape; the emergence of satellite television stations was followed by the spread of the Internet. These changes allowed private media outlets and news agencies to appear. Many features of the Arab media have changed during this phase:

> Censorship and direct guidance became less effective due to the advent of many satellite TV stations transmitting across national borders, some of which criticised other regimes while turning a blind eye to flaws in the system of the country where the channel had its operational base. {Al-Jaber, 2014 #194@15}.

This development has been also described as a different kind of revolution in the Arab world, as it created regional and supra-governmental means of communication that were more adroit and effective than their governmental counterparts {Alterman, 2000 #196}. The media in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries overtook the Egyptian media during this period {Mousa, 2001 #179;Rugh, 2004 #182}.

These four phases provide an overview of the media landscape in the Arab world, with a particular emphasis on the relationship between media and power. The current phase, inundation, is witnessing the arrival of new types of media beyond satellite television and websites. With the advent of Web 2.0, the Arab media, like media in general, are facing major challenges and undergoing dramatic changes.

2.2.2.1 Media Freedom in the Arab World

One key topic in discussion of the media is the issue of freedom. As this thesis focuses on human rights discourse, freedom of speech and freedom of expression are nothing less than crucial factors in discussing the freedom of the press. An overview of the state of freedom in the Arab media is necessary in order to analyse human rights discourse. As the discussion above makes clear, the notion of independent media in the Arab World is new and still finding its way in the overall landscape. Although many Arab governments have made efforts to silence their citizens' viewpoints, a few voices deemed appropriate have to some extent been allowed to appear in the media in order to counter international and national concerns about freedom of the press. According to Sakr {, 2007 #193}, governments tend to exercise centralised control of the media, and this phenomenon is hardly restricted to the governments of the Arab world. To achieve this goal, governments not only pressure the media by limiting freedom of expression but also by strengthening their grip on the formulation of trends in public opinion {Zayani, 2005 #185}.

Freedom of expression is a constitutional right in many Arab countries. However, it is often curbed by procedural and legal restrictions {Rugh, 2004 #182}. This paradox between the freedom and curbing of expression is a persistent challenge for Arab governments {Al-Jaber, 2014 #194} Consequently, media have been used as a substitute for democracy by offering pseudo-democracies marked by marginal freedom of expression {Amin, 2001 #197;Rugh, 2004 #182}. Local Arab news agencies have largely been complicit, with their main function to "assist the government in disseminating its information and controlling the incoming news from foreign sources" {Mellor, 2005 #198@30}. One of the most obvious and blunt tools

used to control the Arab media is explicit censorship. {Mellor, 2005 #198@@author-year} argues that governmental censorship, inadequate technology, and a lack of access to information were the main reasons why many Arab news agencies, newspapers, radio, and television stations began to publish or broadcast from outside the Arab world.

The media in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region have often been cited as having the lowest levels of freedom. Freedom House is an NGO that is concerned with the state of freedom around the world. Since 1980, it has offered a number of analytical reports and numerical ratings for the state of freedom in different countries. Its *Freedom House Reports* (2003; 2011; 2012; 2013; 2014; 2015; 2016; and 2017)have consistently indicated that the MENA countries, most of which are Arab, lag behind other areas of the world on four crucial metrics: the rights of women, adherence to democratic standards, independent media, and the rule of law. Some Arab countries have recently experienced tentative improvements in civil liberties and political rights. The new media in this period have borne witness to reformist trends in governments and activism by citizen groups {Al-Jaber, 2014 #194}. However, according to the *Freedom House Report* {, 2014 #202}, most of the 17 Arab countries in the MENA region are still “not free”, with the exception of a few “partly free” countries like Tunisia, Lebanon, Morocco, Libya, and Kuwait. As for Saudi Arabia, which is the focus of this thesis, it was second from the bottom, ahead of only war-torn Syria. In the subsequent reports, there has been no significant improvement.

With the advent of the Web 2.0 and social media, a new form of media control emerged to combat the decentralisation of media. Arab countries funded cyber armies to control the virtual world in the social media, especially after the Arab Spring. Saudi Arabia’s cyber army is increasingly controlling the social media discourse using fake accounts, bots among other techniques {Cherkaoui, 2018 #516}.

Finally, these developments in the nature of news and media in general have attracted many scholars from different disciplines to study news-related issues: media studies, linguistics, cultural studies, sociology, political

sciences, and so on. This interest has led to studying the linguistic features of the news, the media discourse, and ultimately news translation.

2.3 Media Discourse

There are several well-known studies on the language of news {e.g. \Van Dijk, 1991 #57;Bell, 1991 #34;Fowler, 1991 #37;Fairclough, 1995 #66}. These studies were undertaken within a wider analytical scope to examine the language used in the news, a field known as media discourse. It has been studied in various linguistics fields, including critical linguistics (CL), sociolinguistics, pragmatics, narratology, and speech act theory. The concept of discourse includes not only the purely linguistic dimension but also the role of language in social structures and practices. Discourse has been defined by {Fairclough, 1992 #122@64@author-year} as “a practice not just of representing the world, but of signifying the world, constituting and constructing the world in meaning”. So, media discourse has been described as the reality that is constructed by visible and audible types of media (such as newspaper, radio, television, and websites). Due to the unquestionable power of media, different discourse analysts, especially critical discourse analysts, have focused on a wide range of aspects of media discourse: political discourse, nationalism, sexism, racism, and so on. The concept of discourse is investigated further below in section 3.3.

CDA (which will be discussed in detail in Chapter 3) is one of the main approaches to studying media discourse in relation to social, political and ideological structures; it was developed in the late 1980s. In CL, an earlier version of CDA, several scholars employed Halliday’s systemic functional linguistics (SFL) theory to reveal the implicit ideologies of news producers in support of the political establishment {Fowler, 1991 #37}. Fowler argues that Halliday’s SFL {, 1985 #139} is “the best model for examining the connections between linguistic structures and social values” {, 1991 #37@68}. The Hallidayan model of language involves a top down relation of influence between the different levels of language (see Figure 1). In this view of language, there is “a strong interrelation between the linguistic choices, the

aims of the communication and the sociocultural framework" {Munday, 2013 #1@143}.

The level of sociocultural environment operates at the highest level which influences the genre level, which is viewed in SFL as the text type that is interrelated with a specific communicative function {Halliday, 2013 #524}. The genre level also influences other elements in the model such as register. Register in the Hallidayan model is a more complex concept than the standard understanding of register as formal or informal. The register analysis deals with three important elements: Field (the what) or the subject matter of the text), Tenor (the who) or the relation between the communication actors, Mode (the how), or the form of communication {Munday, 2013 #1}.

There are three major functions of language, or "discourse semantics", which are associated with register analysis: ideational, textual, and interpersonal (Munday, 2013, p. 144). These are also known as "metafunctions" {Halliday, 2013 #524}. These metafunctions are formed by various linguistic elements such as lexis, grammar and syntax. Moreover, other lexicogrammatical patterns such as transitivity, modality, thematic structure and cohesion are also helpful in revealing how the discourse semantics built in a text {Eggins, 2004 #526}. Transitivity, for instance, deals with the various categories of lexical verbs and their different purposes and usages in the discourse. Nominalisation has been analysed in terms of the influence that ideology has on news discourse {Van Dijk, 2008 #58}. It can be used to hide an agent in a news headline or title for specific political reasons or to influence an implicit presupposition in the audience. For example, when the word "confrontation" is used instead of the verb "confront", there could be a discursive effect. This could implicate that the subject of the verb "confront" was deliberately omitted to avoid a negative connotation to that subject. However, many of the studies in this field have disregarded the role of translation in the news and in the media discourse, focusing instead on the discursive structure of news and how particular expressions might impact public opinion {Palmer, 2009 #64}. Some of these features are used as essential analytical tools as will be discussed in detail in the model of analysis in section 3.4.

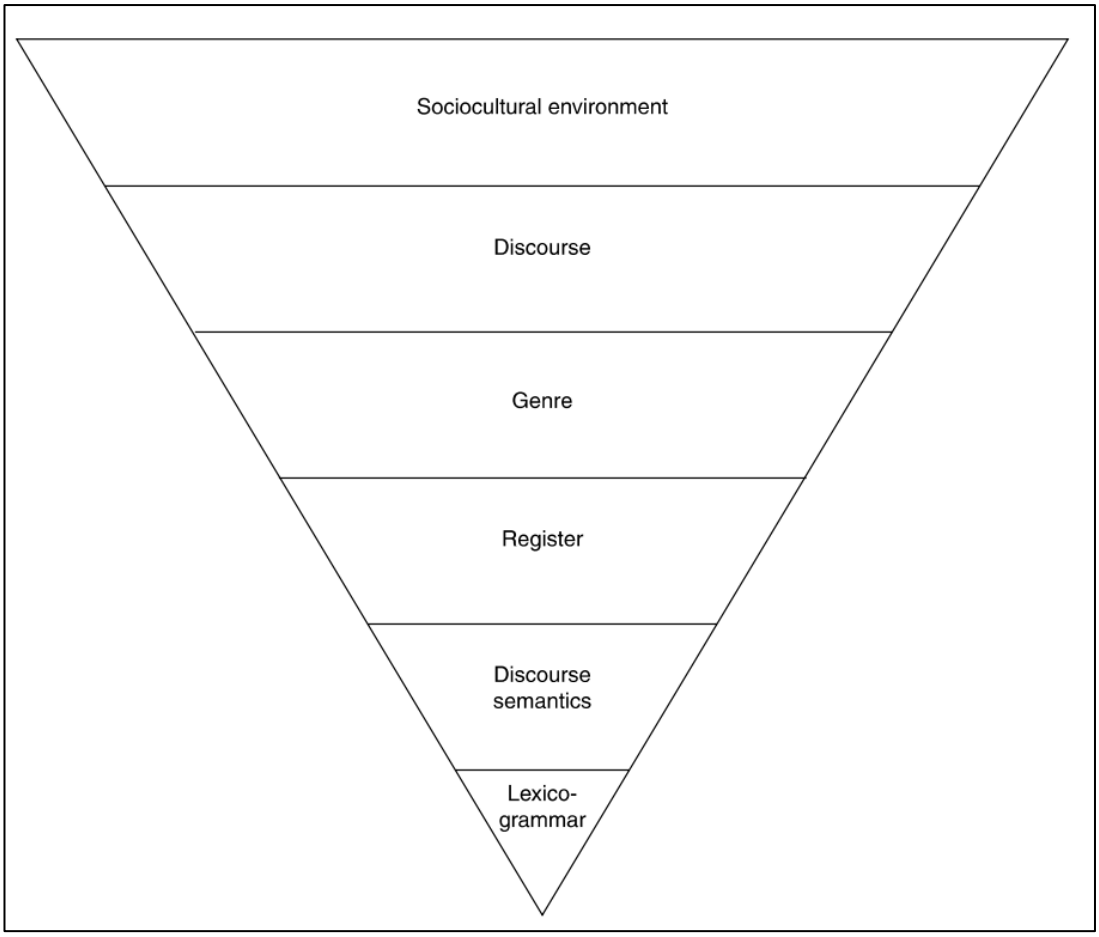

Figure 1 The Hallidayan model of language {Munday, 2013 #1@143}

2.4 News Translation

Several terms have been used to refer to the field of news translation that investigates translation in global media, such as “media translation/localisation” {e.g. \van Doorslaer, 2012 #82}, “press translation” {e.g. \Schäffner, 2012 #52}, “news gathering and dissemination” {e.g. \Palmer, 2009 #64} and, most commonly, “news translation” (e.g. Valdeón, 2015). Whatever its name, the field covers the process of translation in news production from the gathering stage to when the news reached the public. For {Abdel-Hafiz, 2002 #33@@author-year} and {Bani, 2006 #65@@author-year}, news translation is the process of rewriting stories in a new language for a new audience. This concept of rewriting refers to the act of reproducing different versions of the same news story in different languages.

Generally, this field deals with two main concerns: the relationship between the source and target texts and the nature of the translation process

{Palmer, 2009 #64}. If the first is taken in isolation from the second, it may not appear very different from translation in other contexts {Palmer, 2009 #64}. The second, however, focuses on the nature of the news agencies that deal with news translation, the people who do the translating, the contexts, and the purposes of the translations {Schäffner, 2010 #53}.

Several studies have focused on the relationship between globalisation, localisation, and news translation {e.g. \Bielsa, 2005 #35;Orengo, 2005 #75;Gambier, 2006 #475;Valdeón, 2014 #476}. This movement created a demand for transnational linguistics to address cross-cultural and cross-linguistic issues. As a result, translation studies began to include news gathering and dissemination, since the act of translation itself is a key player in the transfer of meaning across national boundaries {see \Baker, 2006 #26;Kang, 2007 #43;Schäffner, 2005 #51;Valdeón, 2005 #56}.

Although {Vasterman, 1995 #141@@author-year} sees the news as a constructed reality, the nature of the journalistic text itself, especially in the context of translated news, shows that being informative and effectively communicative are essential features of these texts. The functional approach within translation studies thus relates to the different types of journalistic texts. Some of the major theoretical issues discussed in this field from the translation studies viewpoint are fidelity to the source text, the invisibility of the translator, and objectivity. As to fidelity, translators in this field are not usually required to maintain the precise form and content of the source text, as is true of literary works {Bielsa, 2009 #36@65}. Rather, the main issue for the news translator is objectivity to the source, since one of the main purposes of news translation is to convey information about an event concisely and precisely {García Suárez, 2005 #67}. As to invisibility, the instant communication between different cultural and linguistic contexts and the assumption of transparency are two key factors that make the process of news translation invisible {Bielsa, 2009 #36@23}. These issues suggest that the field of news translation has several distinctive features that set it apart from other fields of translation.

2.4.1 Features of the Field

The main purpose of news translation, it has been argued, is to transmit information clearly and quickly so that it can be received effectively by an

audience {Bielsa, 2009 #36@63}. In addition to the cross-linguistic and cross-cultural aspects involved in the process of news translation, this type of translation differs from other forms of translations in several ways. For instance, translation of the news is restricted by journalistic factors such as time, space, and genre, so translating the news could entail temporal restrictions that may affect any number of translational choices. {Bielsa, 2009 #36@@author-year} suggest the following five main features that distinguish the process of news translation {based on \Tapia, 1992 #68}:

1) The transmission of information is the news translator's main objective.
2) The language of translated news must be clear and direct because it aims at a mass audience.
3) News translators are conditioned by the specific geographical, temporal, and cultural contexts in which they work.
4) News translation is subject to temporal and spatial limitations.
5) News translators are mostly proof-readers and back translators.

In addition to these characteristics, news translators are usually expected to have a certain degree of flexibility to help them deal with different types of topics, from politics and the economy to sports and the arts. The main features of the target text in news translation often require domesticating and acculturation as translation strategies. The source text in this process is subjected to certain modifications before the target text can be published. The news translator's most frequent interventions are changing the title and lead, eliminating needless information, adding any essential background information, changing the order of paragraphs, and summarising the overall text {Bielsa, 2009 #36@64}.

2.4.2 The Process of News Translation

In news agencies, the process of news translation depends on two factors: the inner structure of the agency and the nature of its clientele. According to {Palmer, 2009 #64@@author-year}, the editorial practices in news agencies in which translation may occur can be classified into three stages:

1) **The reporting stage** involves the primary gathering of news. In international reporting, translation frequently occurs when a reporter cannot linguistically access relevant news sources. These cases have

become more common with the globalisation of media, which has driven international correspondents to move from one country to another for short periods of time in response to newsworthy events {Kalb, 1990 #73@xiv}. Hess notes that foreign reporting is becoming the product of transnational "hubs" that contain a group of reporters who gather information about and report on the affairs of a group of nations {, 1996 #74@99 - 100}. {Baumann, 2011 #142@@author-year} use the term "transporting" for this stage, which involves feeding information into the news agency's headquarters and/or its regional desks and hubs around the globe. They argue that transporting is one of four distinct journalistic practices: transporting, translating, transposing/transediting, and transmitting {Baumann, 2011 #142}.

In some cases, translation can be done in several stages. For example, it could be carried out between a local language and a widely known national language and then to the target language. {Ostian, 2004 #478@@author-year} notes that during the civil war in Sudan's Darfur region, some news reports involved translations between a local language in Darfur and Arabic by a local interpreter; then, the Arabic was translated into the target language by another interpreter or translator.

2) **The editing stage** involves transforming several original reports into the target text**.** In this stage, journalists usually gather documents from different sources, including reports from other agencies. This gathering process may well entail translation, which is carried out by a journalist who must have the relevant bilingual ability. This translation is usually done by journalists because they see translation as only one element of the larger process of transferring the news from one agency to another {Orengo, 2005 #75;Schäffner, 2005 #51;Tsai, 2005 #54}. The news at this stage is often translated and gathered from more than one original text and thus involves summarising and amalgamating.
3) **The dissemination stage** involves transferring reports among various news agencies. Here, translation can be carried out in either the output or the reception process. The output for some agencies is in both the national language of the agencies' nation and a transnational language. For instance, English, French, Spanish, Arabic, and Russian are used as

transnational languages at several news agencies. In the Arab world, Arabic serves as a national, regional, and sometimes translational language, since Arabic is a national language for all 22 countries in the Arab League. In addition to its role as a global language, English also serves as a national, regional, and sometimes translational language in certain English-speaking areas. According to {Palmer, 2009 #64@@author-year}, many global news agencies translate and disseminate some of their own material in English in addition to the original agency language. For instance, the Xinhua News Agency (China) began broadcasting news to a global audience in English in 1944 {Hoare, 2005 #143}, while it was not until 2006 that a news agency from the Arab world (Al Jazeera English) was launched to broadcast to a global audience.

2.4.3 Transeditor or Journalator

News translation is often regarded as a form of rewriting. Some scholars have studied news translation as “transediting”, following Karen {Stetting, 1989 #76@@author-year} coinage for composite translating and editing. As translation in the news process is not radically different from the act of editing, which includes checking, correcting, modifying, polishing, and preparing for publication, she intended this term to describe “the grey area between editing and translating” (Stetting, 1989, p. 371). To explain the act of transediting, Stetting offers examples like translating “miles” into “kilometres” and the omission of details that are irrelevant to the audience. According to {Stetting, 1989 #76@373 - 374@author-year}, transediting is practiced in any of the following five cases:

1) Shortening of text passages for subtitling.
2) Making the text of an interview with a politician idiomatic and well structured.
3) Cleaning up what appear to be inadequate manuscripts.
4) Drawing on material in other languages for the creation of texts.
5) Extracting information from multiple documents to produce corporate promotional material in another language.

She also admits that a certain amount of editing is one of the transeditor’s duties when dealing with cultural and situational dissimilarities. In some cases,

poor manuscripts may need to be cleaned up. According to {Stetting, 1989 #76@377@author-year}, there are three distinct areas of transediting:

1) Cleaning up, which involves the adaptation to a standard of efficiency in expression.
2) Situational transediting, or adaptation to the intended function of the translated text in its new social context.
3) Cultural transediting, which is adaptation to the needs and conventions of the target culture.

{Stetting, 1989 #76@@author-year} also argues that transediting is broadly practiced in various forms of translation to fulfil audience needs, as in audiovisual translation and many educational materials.

This term “transediting” has been used a great deal in the field . Despite the popularity of this term in the field of news translation, some scholars do not agree with its use. For instance, Bielsa and Bassnett (2009) do not employ it in *Translation in Global News*, arguing that the use of such a term might imply that there is another form of translation in the news (Bielsa and Bassnett, 2009, pp. 63 - 64).

The process of news translation is very complex (Schäffner (2012). Translators must bear in mind the requirements of the target audience, any in-house rules, and the ideological and cultural affiliations of the news agency, all of which combine to make translation in this context a difficult journalistic task. Schäffner (2012, p. 880) acknowledges that Stetting’s original purpose in choosing to introduce the term “transediting” was to illustrate that translation is not merely the substitution of a source text by its equivalent target text. Stetting was trying to change people’s narrow view of translation, stating that she hoped “that this new term will contribute towards opening up for a discussion of the legitimacy of improving and, to a certain extent, changing texts in the translation process” (Stetting, 1989, p. 373). Schäffner, however, argues that Stetting

> seems to be influenced by equivalence-based theories that were dominant at the time. This is evident, for example, when she speaks of straight translation or when she says that transediting is different from translation—despite her claim that there is no

> clear dividing line between translating and transediting. (2012, p. 868).

According to Schäffner (2012), Setting's arguments are similar to the functionalist approaches that precede her work; they regard translation as conditioned by the purpose of the target text, according to the client's needs.

The nature of the news translation process is very complicated and overlaps with other tasks in the field, as explained above. The role of the news translator, therefore, cannot be clearly distinguished. Translation in this field is not always carried out by people trained in translation and interpreting but by personnel (in certain contexts, such as in military interpreting, they are called "fixers") who try to bridge the linguistic gap (Tumber and Webster, 2006, pp. 106 -115; Palmer and Fontan, 2007). It is often assigned a secondary position in the process of creating the news. Stetting (1989) challenges the inferior position of news translators by casting them in the more influential role of the transeditor, who has more responsibility and authority than does a mere translator.

In the news-making process, it has been argued that the duties of the journalist include rewriting news texts and making them suitable for the audience's language, culture, and geographical context (Bielsa and Bassnett, 2009). Thus, it is difficult to draw sharp borders between the responsibilities of translators and those of journalists. The same blurriness exists between such concepts as translation and transfer and the related concepts of localisation and rewriting (van Doorslaer, 2012). Many news agencies do not deal with translation as an isolated task, since translation in this process is interdependent with several journalistic factors. In fact, most journalists look down at the term "translation", since they usually associate it with the concept of literal translation (Bielsa and Bassnett, 2009, p. 1). The overlaps between these tasks and meanings led to the concept of "international journalists", a term often used by translator-journalists in the field to avoid the narrow linguistic connotation of "translator" in the minds of many in their profession (Bielsa and Bassnett, 2009, p. 2).

The complex nature of the translator's job in this context inspired van Doorslaer to coin the term "journalator" to describe these interventionist

newsroom employees (2012). This is due to the extensive translating, rewriting, transferring, reformulating, and recreating that they tend to perform in the newsroom setting to produce informative, concise, and clear texts for their audience. Van Doorslaer's full definition of "journalator" is "a newsroom worker who makes abundant use of translation (in its broader definitions) when transferring and reformulating or recreating informative journalistic texts" (van Doorslaer, 2012, p. 1049). His journalator differs from Stetting's transeditor in many aspects. Van Doorslaer (2012) explains that the transeditor was not necessarily located in newsroom settings, unlike his journalator, who is visibly present in the linguistic forms of translation in the newsroom. His term also aims to point out the active interventionist attitude of the journalator, which an "ordinary translator" may not have (van Doorslaer, 2012). This means that the issue of the translator's invisibility in news translation is explicitly challenged by van Doorslaer's suggestion; he argues that a translator in the newsroom setting is in fact more active and present than the traditional view may have held. However, the translator's visibility in the newsroom does not necessarily entail visibility in the target text.

In conclusion, the terms "transeditor" and "journalator" provide the field of translation studies with non-traditional theoretical perspectives that call attention to the distinctive role of the translator in news production. However, in this thesis, I use the term "translation" because, as Schäffner (2012) and Bielsa and Bassnett (2009) point out, using two different neologisms would imply that there are different types of translation. More importantly, I am focusing specifically on the textual translation aspect of the work, which is more closely related to the traditional sense of "translator".

2.5 Ideology and Institutional Translation

Many translation studies researchers have considered the role of organisations in the translating process (e.g. Mossop, 1988; Hajmohammadi, 2005; Koskinen, 2008). This area of research was first described by Mossop (1988) as "institutional translation"; he also uses the term "translating institutions" to refer to organisations that provide translating processes or for which translations are made. According to Mossop (1988; 2006), Colin and

Morris (1996), and Davidson (2000), institutional translation involves the structural, organisational, relational, historical, or ideological aspects of a translating institution, the influence that these aspects may have on translators, and the process and product of translation. Mossop (1988, p. 65) states that institutional translation had been a “missing factor in translation theory”. It was thus important to study institutional translation using different approaches that share the assumption that translation is a socially situated practice.

Several theoretical frameworks have been employed in studies addressing institutional translation (see Inghilleri, 2003; Tahir-Gürçağlar, 2003; Blommaert, 2005; Hung, 2005; Rudvin, 2006). These works utilise a variety of theoretical approaches such as discourse analysis (DA), Bourdieu’s concepts of habitus, field and capital, norms, and culture.

As for the approaches that relate to this thesis, Berk-Seligson (2012) examines the translator’s work routines, status, and issues of power and control. Koskinen’s works (2000; 2008) focus on the translation within the institutions of the European Union which is “the largest translation agency in the world” (Koskinen 2008, p. 69). Her seminal work (2000) focuses mainly on the Finnish translation unit at the European Commission as an ethnographic case study, which investigate the relation between institutional goals and ideology. Kang (2007) focuses on the translation of news discourse, especially with regard to the recontextualisation of discourse across the limits of language, culture and institutions. Her work deals with a comparison of news stories on North Korea. The current research follows similar lines to Kang’s work in terms of investigating ideological influences in the news.

The work modes in institutional translation vary significantly across institutional and cultural boundaries between in-house departments and outsourcing structures (see Dollerup, 2000; Pym, 2004). Therefore, the translation process in an institutional setting involves a network of humans and technological tools. The network of human agents often involves collaborative and complex work among editors, translators, experts, revisers, and so forth.

The hybrid task of selecting, translating, and editing news and the influence of in-house guidelines are some of the key topics of discussions in this area, along with the ideological and cultural factors that govern the context in which the news is produced (Pan, 2014, p. 85). The influence of in-house guidelines is among the most controversial issues in the field. Mossop (1988) argues that translating institutions are key players in translation studies, since institutional settings have an enormous impact on translators. There are many reasons for this influence, including the possibility that the owner(s) of a news agency may be part of an ideological or literary movement which aims to convey certain beliefs. Mason (2004, p. 470), however, doubts that the institutional in-house rules have such a large impact on "actual translational practice". Munday (2007, p. 213) agrees, arguing that any institutional influence on the translator's choices is over and above the powerful effects that arise from the translator's "unique experience of the two languages".

The research on institutional translation covers several issues, one of which is studying the textual features of translations (e.g. vocabulary, syntax, and style) (Trosborg, 1997). Another addresses institutional culture, which includes the "intraculture" and "interculture" approaches (see Pym, 2000; Wagner et al., 2002; Koskinen, 2008). Mason (2004, p. 481) argues that "the whole issue of institutional cultures of translating… is worthy of a more systematic exploration, across a range of institutions and language pairs".

Ideology has become a more relevant topic in translation studies since what is known as "the cultural turn" (Bassnett and Lefevere, 1990; Bassnett, 1998). Although the cultural turn focuses on literary translation, some of the issues it raises are also applicable to news translation. According to Bassnett (1998, pp. 123 - 124), "translation always takes place in a continuum, never in a void, and there are all kinds of textual and extra-textual constraints upon the translator". These constraints can include the translator's own and common ideologies, feelings of superiority or inferiority, the expectations of dominant institutions, prevailing rhetorical rules, and public opinion (Alvarez and Vidal, 1996). These constraints were summarised by Fawcett (1995) as cultural and political pressures that affect that translator's role. Most people are not entirely aware of these factors, so translators may, without negative intentions, "unconsciously manipulate the text in an attempt to make it more

accessible for the target culture" (Gentzler, 2002, p. 196). Venuti (1995) points out that it is not only the textual level of translation that is exposed to manipulation, but all translation-related processes, including the choice of texts to be translated, editing, and reviewing.

Some scholars have highlighted the importance of being aware of these manipulations and of being able to see through them (Alvarez and Vidal, 1996). For example, Gentzler (2002) believes that translation studies can develop strategies to analyse and determine such manipulations. André Lefevere's theory of "translation as rewriting" is among the first attempts at doing so. One of Lefevere's concerns is the function of translated texts and their impact on the target culture. According to Lefevere and Bassnett (1990, p. 8), rewriting is "an attempt to make the target text function in the target culture the way the source text functioned in the source culture".

According to Lefevere (1992), there are two major constraining factors that affect translations: the prevailing rhetoric and the society's patronage system. While rhetoric is determined by the authorities and experts in the literary system (reviewers, critics, editors, translators, etc.), patronage is a much more complicated concept that demands deeper analysis. Lefevere (1992, p. 15) defines "patronage" as powerful people or institutions that are able to "hinder the reading, writing, and rewriting of literature" to some extent. Political parties, religious bodies, a royal court, publishers, and the media itself can all be part of the patronage system, depending on local circumstances. Lefevere also points out that patronage consists of three interacting elements: ideological (which he considers the most significant), economic, and status. A context in which several parties share power over these three components is called "differentiated patronage", while "undifferentiated patronage" exists when all three components are in the hands of a single, effectively omnipotent patron.

Many scholars interested in the influence of ideology on translation and language in general must address the problem of what the term "ideology" means, given its wide-ranging scope and conflicting definitions (see Fairclough, 1989; Simpson, 2003; Munday, 2007). According to Munday (2007), definitions of the term have often been linked with notions of

manipulation, distortion, or rewriting. Fairclough (1989) highlights the irony behind the different definitions of “ideology” by pointing out that each definition is in fact derived from its creator’s ideological position.

Gentzler (2002), Munday (2007), and Al-Mohannadi (2008) agree that translational choices are influenced by ideology, both unconsciously and consciously. Munday (2007) notes that the unconscious aspects of ideology in translation are of particular interest for translation studies as they are often hidden, while conscious aspects are more easily recognised.

2.6 News Translation in Age of Globalisation

As Section 2.2.1 shows, we are witnessing a post-globalisation period in which communication technologies are advancing at a breath-taking pace. These innovations have challenged the traditional roles of news agencies and the media more broadly. We have entered a new era of “self-mediation” in which individuals have more control over news consumption and production (Chouliaraki, 2010). The Internet and social media have helped the public to interact more deeply and frequently regarding the issues that interest them. More than a decade ago and thus before Web 2.0, Manovich (2001, p. 19) had argued that we were progressively moving towards “computer-mediated forms of production, distribution, and communication” in order to communicate everyday life events. This progress led to new concepts such as “crowdsourcing journalism”, which has also been described as networked or participatory journalism (Sutherlin, 2013).

There are several factors that have contributed to the advancement of online news, including rapid advances in technology (e.g. smartphones, tablets and e-book readers), changes in media use, wireless networks, new business models, and new Internet intermediaries (OECD, 2010). Moreover, certain social factors have encouraged a shift to online news, such as increasing mobility and participation in the creation of online content. Although television and newspapers have been the dominant sources of news since onset of the globalisation phase, they appear to be quickly losing ground to the Internet, especially among younger people. Therefore, most news agencies have directed resources to new media, establishing websites,

Twitter accounts, Facebook pages, and so forth. Table 2 shows how well-known news agencies have adapted to the new media and how major events started to be covered by means of crowdsourcing.

Table 2: The progress of news agencies on prominent social media platforms (adapted from de Torres et al., 2015)

Year	Open Platforms	News media opening steps	Crowdsourced news
2001	Wikipedia		
2004	Facebook, Flickr		
2005	YouTube		
2006	Twitter	"You Witness News" Reuters/Yahoo	
2007		"Now Public" AP "Yo Periodista" El País	London bombings Virginia Tech massacre
2008		"I Report" CNN	Bombay bombings
2009		The Guardian Investigate MPs	#Iranelection Honduras crisis
2010	Instagram	"Open Stories" CNN Crime Citizen Map Citizen Incident/map BBC	Haiti earthquake Chile earthquake London strike
2011		Sarah Palin emails HuffPost	Japan Tsunami
2012		NBC Instagram/Elections	Arab Spring Hurricane Sandy

Over the last decade, an increasing number of studies of news translation have discussed the relationship between globalisation and recent technological changes, along with "transworld simultaneity" and the growing "instantaneity" of media flows (Scholte, 2005; Pérez-González, 2014). These changes have caused researchers to shift their attention away from long-established discussions about "the complexities involved in overcoming cultural and linguistic barriers" (Bielsa and Bassnett, 2009, p. 18) to more pressing concerns. Examples include the role of English as the lingua franca of modern news, which has decreased the linguistic and cultural differences among Internet users (van Leeuwen, 2006). Monolingualism has been the focus of other research on the flow of global news as a universal digital language (Livingstone, 2004). These issues are vital to understanding the challenges and changes that are confronting news agencies and the field of news translation in general.

The nature of news translation in this era has taken on novel and ever-changing forms. Different kinds of collaborative journalism have recently

emerged, which involve collective work between professional and amateur journalists (Pérez-González, 2014) and pose a strong challenge to the traditional news agencies. These collaborations often include translating processes undertaken by professional or amateur translators.

As a result of ideological, political, and technological factors, a resistance form of journalism has emerged to defy the key powers behind governmental and organisational news agencies (Pérez-González, 2014). The democratisation of media is a utopian ideal that has become a goal of peoples repressed by contemporary ideological propaganda. The Internet has provided a potential resolution to the philosophical question with regard to the connection between media and the Habermas' "public sphere" (Habermas, 1991). Hauser (1998, p. 86) defines the public sphere as "a discursive space in which individuals and groups congregate to discuss matters of mutual interest and, where possible, to reach a common judgment". This is to say that the public sphere is a space in social life that enables people to gather, away from the authorities' influence or control, in order to shape public opinion. This concept has been discussed extensively in the media studies field, especially with recent advances in social media, which at least purport to offer the public the ability to create ideal virtual societies. As a result of all these recent developments, some of these websites and news production groups, such as Translators for Peace, Translators United for Peace, Translator Brigades, and Tlaxcala: The International Network of Translators for Linguistic Diversity (Baker, 2012), have been established by like-minded individuals who gather in order to network, communicate, and take advantage of their "collective intelligence" (Levy, 1997). According to Christensen et al. (2011), the main objectives of such websites are as follows:

1) Reporting news that does not meet the news values of (commercial or governmental) mainstream news agencies but is of local interest.
2) Reporting grass-roots views of news.
3) Providing language-related services such as translation.

In these groups, the role of translation and translators has thus been redefined yet again. The changing nature of these news producers makes them more difficult to study than news agencies. The role of translators in this context

challenges other constructs, including the transeditor and journalator notions discussed above. Baker (2012) studied activist journalistic groups in Egypt after the start of the Arab Spring. She refers to translators in such groups as “activists”, since their translations constitute political undertakings. Pérez-González (2014) does not use that term to refer to these translators because of the different focus of his case study, which holds that not all contemporary translators in this era are translating as part of their activism. One of the main issues regarding translators discussed in this context is their level of professionalism and any formal training they have received, which is not always true of non-professional translators. Regardless of the specifics of the activism of any given translator, collaborative translation has undoubtedly become a central theme in today’s news translation context.

The news agencies examined in the present study post news reports on their websites, along with interactive features such as a comments section that follows most news reports. This research, however, focuses mainly on the news reports produced by the agencies themselves, in addition to the effect of such comments on the agencies and the discourse.

2.7 Human Rights and Translation

2.7.1 Conceptualising Human Rights?

Human rights are defined by *The Stanford encyclopaedia of philosophy* as “norms that help to protect all people everywhere from severe political, legal, and social abuses” (Nickel, 2014). These norms or moral principles of human behaviour are supposed to be protected as legal privileges in both national and international law. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) describes human rights as follows:

> Rights inherent to all human beings, whatever our nationality, place of residence, sex, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, language, or any other status. We are all equally entitled to our human rights without discrimination. These rights are all interrelated, interdependent and indivisible. (OHCHR, 2019).

Despite these features, there is ample evidence of significant confusion, debate, disagreement, and suspicions around this view of human rights. It has often been dismissed as a slogan that is raised everywhere but with different aims and implications (Al-Jabri, 2008, p. 175). These suspicions demand the legitimate inspection of the historical, philosophical, and political background of the concept to understand the motives and considerations of those who wield it. Some Western media use “human rights” as a slogan against any people, group, or regime that is hostile to Western influence or those who refuse Western dominance. For instance, some Western powers repeatedly invoked human rights and human rights abuses as a weapon against the Soviet Union during the Cold War, in addition to using it against other nations and governments that were part of the Communist bloc (Al-Jabri, 2008). For example, the Soviet Union was criticised frequently with regard to the freedom of expression, the freedom of religion, and the freedom to vote. However, human rights discourse is not always as it appears in some Western media, which “have remained silent over other states which repeatedly, intentionally and blatantly violate human rights – to a degree that has made such violation a fixed policy of those states” (Al-Jabri, 2008, p. 175). When the issue of a double-standard attitude towards human rights is discussed, the human rights violations in occupied Palestine are almost always the first example cited. Israeli violations, committed both by military and civilian authorities, are rarely condemned or even described violations in these media outlets (Shupak, 2018). In addition to the unfair media coverage, the current state of international law is also a very problematic environment for human rights, as the United Nations Security Council’s five permanent members (China, France, Russia, the UK, and the US) have veto power, which enables any one of them to prevent any UN legal, military, or diplomatic action against any country that violates international law. As a result, a single permanent member’s objection can negate the votes of a majority – even a large majority – of the world’s countries. Mearsheimer and Walt (2007, p. 31) have criticised this situation, stating that “since 1982, the US has vetoed 32 Security Council resolutions critical of Israel, more than the total number of vetoes cast by all the other Security Council members”. This is another clear example of the

political will and interference by the USA, which is perceived as biased treatment of the idea of human rights in the international arena.

This manipulation of the use of the term “human rights” has made the concept more and more debatable; as a result, many have campaigned for stricter and fairer implementation of human rights, while others have sought newer understandings and interpretations of the concept. In summary, the idea of human rights is very appealing, but it is nonetheless very vague. It is necessary to understand the basic historical and conceptual background of this concept in order to establish a point of reference for two important concepts in this thesis: human rights activism and human rights violations. The description of such terms, of course, is debatable because the concept of human rights is so deeply contested.

2.7.1.1 Historical Background

The idea of human rights has existed in one form or another since the dawn of humanity, though it has differed from one culture to another, from one time period to another, and from one society to another. The concepts of human dignity, justice, political legitimacy, and so forth can be traced to ancient societies and any number of traditions around the world (Donnelly, 2013). Human beings have undertaken many attempts to develop increasingly humane means to solve their differences and live in safer and more tolerant societies. There have been a number of attempts in different civilisations to formulate human rights documents, including the Constitution of Medina (622), Al-Risalah al-Huquq (late seventh to early eighth century), Magna Carta (1215), the German Peasants’ War Twelve Articles (1525), the English Bill of Rights (1689), the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen (1789), and the Bill of Rights in the US Constitution (1791).

Regardless of these attempts, the modern understanding of human rights is attributed by many scholars to the early modern era. Ishay (2008) argues that the modern theory of human rights developed as a result of the European Renaissance (from the fourteenth to seventeenth centuries), the Protestant Reformation in the sixteenth century, the Enlightenment, the secularisation in Europe of Judeo-Christian ethics, and the disappearance of feudal authoritarianism and religious conservativism.

In the modern world, the commonly understood points of reference for the contemporary understanding of human rights are the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and several subsequent human rights treaties and documents in the UN, the Council of Europe, the Organization of American States, and the African Union and other international organisations (for the history of the Universal Declaration, see Lauren, 1998, and Morsink, 1999, Glendon, 2001; for the recent history of international human rights, see Moyn, 2010 and Cohen, 2012).

2.7.1.2 Philosophical Background

One of the most important dimensions in any discussion of human rights is the philosophical background of this idea. Many philosophers have discussed different facets of human rights: their existence, content, nature, universality, justification, and legal status (Nickel, 2014). Some key early philosophers were Francisco Suarez (1548–1617), Hugo Grotius (1583–1645), Samuel Pufendorf (1632–1694), John Locke (1632–1704), and Immanuel Kant (1724–1804).

Although the idea of human rights has been alleged to depend on religious ethics, others have argued that it is based on more universal values upon which most of humanity can agree. Since the early modern era, many European philosophers have opposed the dominant powers that oppressed their peoples, particularly religious authorities (Al-Jabri, 2008). In holding their views, they relied largely on three philosophical premises that are universal, comprehensive, independent, rational, and transcendental. These three premises, according to Al-Jabri (2008, p. 179), are (i) the correspondence between the rational and the natural systems, (ii) a hypothetical “natural law”, and (iii) the “social contract”. A brief explanation of each premises follows.

(i) Since the European Renaissance began, humanity has witnessed many substantial scientific breakthroughs, such as Copernicus’ theory of heliocentrism (1543) and Newton's theories of motion and gravitation (1686). These advances upended the existing philosophical conceptions and epistemological systems, leading to the Age of Enlightenment. The new laws and theories described nature in a rational way, which caused people to “correlate the natural with the

rational, on the assumption that whatever existed in nature is subject to a precise system just like the parts of a machine being subject to the machine as a whole, which makes the natural easy to grasp by reason" (Al-Jabri, 2008, p. 179). This view changed the way that the mind was regarded; it was to be used to discover what is natural in every field of inquiry, which led to a correspondence between the rational and the natural.

(ii) The second premise refers to the hypothetical concept of natural law or a natural condition, one of the oldest philosophical concepts related to human rights in Western thought. It was generated from a variety of religious and philosophical foundations. The main argument points to the idea that there is a natural state of humanity that existed before the political and social structures of even the earliest human societies. John Locke (1632–1704), the English philosopher, was one of the main developers of this hypothesis and of its potential for universal authority. In this hypothesis, the natural state of people was to be free and equal with one another before the advent of various authorities and social structures limited both freedom and equality. This was not merely an imaginary idea; rather, it was based on the newly adopted understanding of nature that saw a correspondence between the rational and the natural, as supported by modern science, which was newly emerging. Thus, the rights based on this philosophy are truly "natural" rights, or as Al-Jabri explains (2008, p. 181):

> It is clear that the reference to 'nature'… means basing those rights on an authority prior to any other, as nature came before any culture or civilization, any society or state. Consequently, it is a total and absolute authority and the rights based on it are equally total and absolute.

(iii) The third premise is the idea of a social contract, under which human rights and other moral behaviours are a "social product developed by a process of biological and social evolution (associated with Hume, and also sentimentalist, subjectivist, or naturalistic approaches) or as a sociological pattern of rule setting (as in the sociological theory of law and the work of Weber)" (Marks, 2009, pp. 216 - 217). The idea of a

> social contract, according to Rawls (2009), draws on the notion that the legitimacy of human rights stems from the fact that the social contract offers protection and economic benefits to the individual in exchange for acceptance of its authority. Holding to the natural condition would create chaos, where anyone could exercise his or her natural rights, even at the expense of others. There was thus a need for a social contract that established certain accepted norms to govern humans' natural tendencies. This concept would help, as Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778) argued in his seminal *The Social Contract*, with the sociological and political transition from the natural state to the civil society.

The rise of the civil state is founded on a social basis, since there is no other authority that endorses freedom and equality; this kind of state derives its legitimacy from being ostensibly representative of the public will of the majority of a society's population. This philosophical approach bypasses all cultural particularities, as it sees human rights as part of humanity's original state, before culture and before civilisation. The problem with this approach is that it claims universality even though it is almost entirely the product of European philosophers. The following section discusses the issue of the universality of human rights.

2.7.2 Universality vs. Particularity

Recent developments in contemporary politics have been heavily influenced by European political hegemony mainly as a result of colonisation and economic domination. This has affected the current status of international law and the reception and acceptance of the UDHR by many nations around the world. The claim of human rights universality is present in the very title of the UDRH, but this claim has been challenged by several critics. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR, 2019) states the following:

> The principle of universality of human rights is the cornerstone of international human rights law. This principle, as first emphasized in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights in 1948, has been reiterated in numerous international human

> rights conventions, declarations, and resolutions. The 1993 Vienna World Conference on Human Rights, for example, noted that it is the duty of States to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms, regardless of their political, economic and cultural systems.

Despite attempts like this to universalise the concept of human rights, many have rejected the enforcement of such a debatable concept in international law. The UDHR was adopted as Resolution 217 by the United Nations General Assembly on 10 December 1948. There were 58 members of the assembly at that time; 48 voted in favour, while none voted against. However, eight countries abstained from voting, including Saudi Arabia.

This overview of the main debates about the issue of universality and particularity of human rights is divided into three parts. The first part glances at some of the central debates in the Western tradition that are continuing academic debates in Europe and North America. The main question at this level regards the extent to which human rights are universal despite being based only on the Western intellectual tradition.

Second is the debate in the Islamic tradition, following a similar comparative approach. However, the focus here is largely on the religious and theological interpretations of human rights. Western culture refers to its roots in Christianity and Judaism (and, of course, Greek philosophy). These religions, which originated in what used to be known as the “Orient”, have been deeply influenced by the philosophical debates in the West over the centuries. Like Christianity and Judaism, Islam is an Abrahamic religion. However, history has led Islam to be cast in the role of the “other” for many in the West, so Islam has had very little influence on Western debates. This factor is important for understanding the conflicting situation of human rights, especially in the Arab World, which is the focal point of this research.

The third part involves philosophical debates from other traditions outside the Western and Islamic contexts. Here, the discussion focuses on the intellectual arguments produced by Western culture and those developed by non-Western and non-Islamic cultures. The main feature of this level of is

that it is largely cultural, with perspectives coming from sub-Saharan Africa to Southeast Asia in addition to many Western intellectuals.

2.7.2.1 The Western Tradition

There have been many philosophical, political, and legal debates in the Western tradition regarding the universality of human rights. One of the main critics is the French philosopher Joseph de Maistre (1753–1821). When commenting on the French constitution of 1795, stating that, like the previous constitutions, it

> was made for Man. But there is no such thing as man in the world. In my lifetime I have seen Frenchmen, Italians, Russians, etc.; thanks to Montesquieu, I even know that one can be Persian. But as for man, I declare that I have never in my life met him; if he exists, he is unknown to me….
>
> This constitution might be offered to any human association from China to Geneva. But a constitution that is made for all nations is made for none; it is a pure abstraction, an academic exercise made according to some hypothetical ideal, which should be addressed to man in his imaginary dwelling place. (de Maistre, 2003, p. 53).

He refers to the abstraction of a central concept like the “human”, on which the entire concept of human rights hinges. De Maistre’s argument has proven attractive to and useful for many intellectuals critics of liberalism, such as Carl Schmitt, who have been influenced by his work.

Another major criticism arises from a Marxist perspective. The leftist Marxist critic is similar to the rightist de Maistre’s criticism in the assessment of the concept of human rights. Marxism does not completely reject human rights; rather, it views them with reference to the “class struggle” and “the materialist conception of history” (Boyd, 2009). Marxism regards the individual rights and freedoms claimed by bourgeois democracies as merely imaginary, without any genuine content, because the working class, unlike the bourgeoisie, lacks the economic and intellectual means to protect its rights from being violated. This is what makes Marxism see theoretical concepts of human rights like equality as merely veiling the manifestations of real

inequality between the working class and the bourgeoisie. These manifestations of inequality are only a reflection of the class struggle in society. From this angle, Marxism sees the elimination of class discrimination as the key to eradicating inequalities and the first step towards self-realisation and emancipation from exploitation (Boyd, 2009). To eradicate social inequalities, Marxism focuses its criticism on the two main factors of these inequalities: private property and the state.

Another major criticism comes from the French philosopher Gilles Deleuze (1925–1995). His opposition to the universality of human rights stems from his philosophical arguments against liberalism and capitalism. Deleuze argues that we live in an endless abstraction imposed on us by the values of the constitutional liberalism in which we believe. These values have acquired a sense of permanence in the era in which we live, which is a reflection of the obedience and loyalty we have voluntarily declared to these values (Lefebvre, 2005). Deleuze does not entirely reject the concept of human rights. However, like De Maistre and Marx, he criticises the abstraction of the concept. The problem of human rights to Deleuze is a jurisprudential problem that deals with calamities, not a theoretical problem that deals with abstract concepts or axioms, or as Lefebvre (2005) paraphrases:

> Deleuze recommends jurisprudence to address specific user groups that negotiate how to live with a problem. Instead of a general and transcendent rights-bearing subject, we have life and the problems of life that proceed only case-by-case, something for jurisprudence to unravel and honour. Jurisprudence addresses the situation to make it liveable, it resists coding it with transcendent evaluations of abuse. Justice and Rights do not exist. Only jurisprudence exists and it alone is capable of creating law. (pp. 111 - 112).

It is notable that these Western criticisms do not support the universality of human rights because they adopt or rely on different philosophical perspectives.

2.7.2.2 The Islamic Tradition

Most of the arguments and objections to human rights in the Islamic tradition emerge from the fact that Islam has a unique status for Muslims. Islam is the most powerful spiritual and cultural force in Muslim-majority countries because it is considered by its followers to be the highest and ultimate authority. So, from an Islamic perspective, any political and economic arguments regarding human rights could only be considered to play secondary roles.

Some Islamic objections to human rights include a challenge to their universal recognition. *Shari'a* (usually translated as "Islamic law" but also widely Anglicised as simply "Sharia") has often been cast as conflicting with the Western notion of human rights due to the fact that it is a positive (i.e. human-made) law. For instance, the UDHR was criticised by Iran's UN representative in 1981 because it is "a secular understanding of the Judeo-Christian tradition which could not be implemented by Muslims without trespassing the Islamic law" (Adnan, 2016, p. 126). This issue has been raised many times in the UN by delegates from Arab and Islamic states throughout the organisation's history. Examples include representatives Jamil Murad Baroody of Saudi Arabia, Omar Lutfi of Egypt, Bedia Afnan of Iraq and, more recently, Halima Embarek Warzazi of Morocco (Waltz, 2004).

Pluralism is an overwhelming problem in the Muslim-majority countries with regard to human rights (Moussalli, 2003). The reason is that when pluralism is raised from the perspective of religion, it becomes more extreme than when it is based on other cultural foundations. Occasionally, an extreme understanding of certain religious jurisprudential issues could lead to linking this understanding with the divine, leaving no room for disagreements. From this perspective, any criticism of such understandings would mean disobedience to the divine, which could force people to reject all clauses in human rights instruments. But, the problem to Al-Ghannouchi (2012) is that such understanding sees human rights within a system of duties rather than a system of rights. Slavoj Žižek (2000, p. 115) makes a similar point regarding Christianity, in which "the universe of established ethical norms (mores, the substance of social life) is reasserted, but only in so far as it is 'mediated' by Christ's authority". Žižek explains that people are urged in Christianity to reject

everything that is dear to them and then reclaim it in the name of Christ, quoting Luke 14:26 to elaborate his point: “If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and his mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters – yes, even his own life – he cannot be my disciple”. According to Žižek (2000), this quote reveals a paradox; religious morality, even if it is compatible with other human morality, remains an exceptional *kind* of morality because it is based on orders and duties. This is the issue that leads to the deep tensions between religious and human rights discourse in Muslim-majority countries.

2.7.2.3 Other Traditions

The arguments raised in other cultures about the issue of human rights are primarily from Southeast Asia and Africa. Despite the many differences between the communities in these areas, their criticisms of human rights are similar in that they are largely cultural criticisms, even when they appear to be economic or political. Even though there are Africans and Asians arguing about or denying the existence of human rights, there are other intellectuals who defend their existence and call for its universality. Regarding Asian intellectuals, for example, the Dalai Lama wrote the following:

> Some Asian leaders say that democracy and the freedoms that come with it are exclusive products of Western civilization. Asian values, they contend, are significantly different from, if not diametrically opposed to, democracy. They argue that Asian cultures emphasize order, duty, and stability, while the emphasis of Western democracies on individual rights and liberties undermines those values. They suggest that Asians have fundamentally different needs in terms of personal and social fulfilment. I do not share this viewpoint. (1999, p. 5).

The Asian and African objections to the concept of human rights can be summed up in the cultural, economic and political objections described below.

Cultural objection: One of the most prominent cultural criticisms is rejecting its excessively individualistic feature in defence of more collective attitudes. In collective societies, some rights, including freedom, are not considered to be individual rights. The freedom of any individual is restricted

by the group's customs and traditions, because the group is prior to the individual and determines the limits of this freedom.

Economic objection: In the economic sphere, Asians and Africans regard development as one of their most important goals. There is much literature that deals with the relationship between development and human rights (Fukuyama, 1997). Much of the research by Asians and Africans focuses more on economic and social rights like the right to food, health care, and education, rather than on abstract and intellectual liberties. However, they do not fundamentally object to human rights, as long as economic and social rights have the same importance as civil and political rights.

Political objection: Most political criticisms are based on the issue of internal and external scrutiny. This, in the eyes of Asians and Africans, may justify the use of repressive methods by governments to maintain stability. Internal and external stability are both essential in these countries since many were established comparatively recently, which means that regimes and borders between countries are not yet strong and well established. In addition, the people in these countries are often ethnically and religiously heterogeneous, which necessitates certain actions that conflict with the Western conception of human rights in order to maintain stability and security.

The current research focuses on three cases that have been described and reported as human rights violations (see section 5.3). These violations cover a range of human rights issues such as freedom of expression, freedom of speech, freedom of religion, women's rights in addition to other political rights. When used as a point of reference, the UDHR (UN General Assembly, 1948) contains a range of articles that highlights such violations.

2.7.3 Human Rights and the Media

The issue of human rights receives widespread coverage in today's global media due to its importance to contemporary citizens. Another factor that makes it appealing to news agencies is the strong influence it has on politics. In addition to political and legal studies, human rights discourse has been dealt with in many fields of study, including cultural, linguistic, and media studies. Nash (2009, p. 51) describes media as the overarching forum in which a range of stakeholders participate and struggle to define the meaning

of human rights. These stakeholders include politicians, judges, public administrators, and other reformists and activists. Papademas (2011) reviews a wide range of studies on the human rights and media in her thorough introduction.

Human rights discourse has been studied in media and journalism studies by many scholars from different perspectives. Some scholars have focused on the importance of human rights NGOs. For instance, Forsythe (1990) examines the Red Cross, while Scoble and Wiseberg (1974) and Shestack (1978) examine Amnesty International. The power of the media to shape public opinion has been utilised by many political and social forces seeking to influence the masses (see Le Bon, 2017). For their part, news agencies have reported human rights news for very different reasons. Exposing violations arouses the public, which could have an effect on politicians and legislators (Reisman, 1984; Keenleyside, 1988; Pritchard, 1991; Claude and Jabine, 1992).

Human rights issues are covered in the media for different reasons and different ways, so it is difficult to evaluate objectively how good this coverage is. News coverage of human rights is often linked with politics, ideology, and manipulation (Klein, 2011). Many scholars have criticised news coverage of human rights; for instance, it has been accused of being biased against “open” societies (Reisman, 1984) and biased against communist societies (Herman and Chomsky, 1988). One major work to investigate and criticise the way that Western media have presented news about the Islamic world is Edward Said’s *Covering Islam* (1981). Said argues that, since knowledge is power, those who control media in its all forms are those with the most power and who dictate public opinion, preferences, and so forth. This could also be applied to the coverage of human rights news, as some cases receive exaggerated attention in the media, while more dire cases may go completely unnoticed. This thesis refers to this point in its analysis of the nature of the selected human rights cases and the momentum they received in the news.

2.7.4 Translating and Human Rights Discourse

In the translation studies field, there has been very little research on the issue of human rights and even less on human rights discourse. One of the earliest

publications was by Francisco Gomes de Matos (1991), who discusses language learners' right to translate with a human rights approach. Haualand (2009) examines sign language interpreting from a human rights point of view, considering it to be an accessibility right in the context of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities. Romagnuolo (2014), meanwhile, investigated the Italian translation of the so-called torture memos that were released by the US Government after 9/11 to legitimise the CIA interrogation programme applied to unlawful combatants (p. 313). She uses an appraisal framework to analyse the different rhetorical strategies employed in such legal documents, which means dealing with the issue of the ideological manipulation of translation, and that question is deeply relevant to the present study. Brownlie (2013) approaches the translation of human rights documents from a memory studies perspective, highlighting "the role of translation in diachronic networks of texts and in memorial construction" (p. 48).

Marianne Garre is among the translation studies researchers who have dealt with human rights translation. *Human rights in translation: Legal concepts in different languages* (1999), which won the Vinay-Darbelnet Award, is based on her Ph.D. dissertation, *Cognitive translation of international human rights texts*. This interdisciplinary work tackles an issue that straddles the two fields of translation studies and legal studies. It also deals with the issue of human rights by drawing on several disciplines, including cognitive linguistics, psycholinguistics, and linguistic culturology. Khairoulline (2002) states that there "have hardly been any previous publications that combined translation studies and human rights". Her work comprises a study of the complications of cognitive models on the translation of international human right texts. Garre (1999) deals with three aspects of human rights translation: the legal space, the translation space and the language policy space. Her main aim was to "determine how international human rights texts can be translated in a way which makes it possible to protect and promote universal human rights in countries around the world" (1999, p. 5). This work provides a prominent exploration of the communicative, cognitive, and legal aspects of the translation of human rights texts.

The most recent publication in this field, to my knowledge, is an article by Pan (2015) that focuses on human rights discourse in news translation,

making it deeply relevant to this research, as it shares a similar focus and common objectives. Pan investigates the way several English news reports on China's human rights issues were translated by "a Chinese authoritative state-run newspaper devoted to translating foreign reports for the Chinese reader" (2015, p. 215). The current research builds on Pan's work and focuses on the news reporting by two conflicting news agencies both in English and Arabic which represents the gap that this research aims to fill.

2.8 Conclusion

For its theoretical framework, this study draws from interdisciplinary fields in translation studies, such as news translation, ideology and translation, and institutional translation. However, its main goal is to problematise the field of news translation by investigating the phenomenon itself. To begin with, the simple term "translation" in the concept of "news translation" could not be used in this thesis for a crucial reason. The traditional sense of translation from source to target cannot be used, nor can the concept of transediting, because it was impossible to track down and pinpoint source texts or target texts in the selected data. The way that news reports are formulated and published in the studied corpus involves using almost unrelated Arabic and English news reports. The two selected news agencies publish news reports in a non-concurrent fashion. A news report that is published in Arabic may not be found in English and vice versa. Sometimes, the Arabic and English news reports from the same news agency about the same story have totally different structures, timing, sources, and so on. Thus, the present study uses the more cautious term "cross-linguistic representation" in phrasing a research question to refer to this phenomenon. The focus of this study is on the way some human rights stories are covered in two languages by the same news agency and comparing them with the reports in another news agency that has a conflicting ideological bias.

Chapter 3: Methodological Framework

3.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the methodological approach and model of analysis used in this thesis. The chapter begins with a brief introduction about the framework, its theoretical background, main approaches, and limitations. It then explains the proposed model used to analyse the selected data.

The methodological approach followed in this thesis is CDA, a contemporary interdisciplinary approach that studies discourse in the context of different social structures. It views language as a linguistic form of social practice (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997). CDA holds that both linguistic and non-linguistic forms of social practice constitute one another, which helps us examine how social power relations are formed and endorsed through language and discursive strategies. CDA devotes serious consideration to the context of language use (Benke, 2000; Wodak, 2000). Rogers (2011) offers a review of three different terms used to refer to this field: Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA, all uppercase), critical discourse analysis (cda, all lowercase), and critical approaches to discourse analysis. However, it is the CDA acronym that has been most widely used, so it is used in this thesis. Fairclough and Wodak (1997, p. 258) define CDA as an approach that analyses (written and spoken) discourses with the aim of revealing (a) the relationship between language and society and (b) the relationship between analysis and the practices analysed.

The main objective of CDA is emancipatory and politically engaged; it endeavours to resist power by uncovering the ideological assumptions that lie behind a given discourse. Such ideological assumptions appear natural to most people because they are concealed as embodied manipulative structures of the discourse (Teo, 2000). According to van Dijk (1993b), CDA aspires to investigate the relationships between the structures of discourse and of power. It seeks to study how ideology constructs discourse in such a way that it serves the interests of a particular group. Wodak and Meyer (2001, p. 2) point out that “CDA aims to investigate social inequality as it is expressed, signalled, constituted, legitimized and so on by language use”. According to

Kress (1990), CDA differs from other forms of DA that focus on understanding the socio-cultural aspects of texts because of its overtly political agenda, which directs its attention to the production, internal structure, and overall organisation of texts. The main feature of CDA is thus the critical dimension that it provides in its descriptive and theoretical accounts of texts. CDA can be both deconstructive and constructive. It can deconstruct a discourse by disrupting and analysing its underlying ideologies and power relations, and it can construct a more equitable distribution of discourse resources (Fairclough, 1992). Fairclough (1989, p. 1) offers a brief account of the aims of CDA in the introduction of his influential *Language and power*: to "increase consciousness of how language contributes to the domination of some people by others, because consciousness is the first step towards emancipation".

CDA emerged in the late 1980s as a "programmatic development in European discourse studies led by Norman Fairclough, Ruth Wodak, Teun van Dijk, and others" (Blommaert and Bulcaen, 2000, p. 447). In the years that followed, CDA became one of the most important and most influential branches of DA (Jaworski and Coupland, 2014). The success of this approach is not difficult to observe. In the introduction to *Discourse in late modernity*, Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999, p. 1) state that

> Critical discourse analysis… has established itself internationally over the past twenty years or so as a field of cross-disciplinary teaching and research which has been widely drawn upon in the social sciences and the humanities (for example, in sociology, geography, history and media studies), and has inspired critical language teaching at various levels and in various domains.

CDA can be treated as part of the school of language critique, which combines linguistics with critical social sciences into a specific theoretical and analytical framework (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999). CDA has often been referred to as CL, a term used to identify a predecessor of this theory. What makes CDA critical is that it explicitly adopts the inevitability of ideological influence on discourse (Rogers, 2011). However, this issue is considered one of the critiques addressed below in section 3.3.5. This view draws on

Habermas' assertion that "language is also a medium of domination and social force. It serves to legitimize relations of organized power. In so far as the legitimations of power relations … are not articulated … language is also ideological" (Habermas, 1977, p. 259 cited in Wodak, 2001, p. 2). Therefore, CDA is critical in the way it deals with social issues by analysing how they are represented in a discourse that is constructed by social factors. This usually involves "having distance from the data, embedding the data in the social context, taking a political stance explicitly, and having a focus on self-reflection" (Wodak, 2001, p. 9).

The late 1970s witnessed the publication of two exceptionally influential books that have inspired scholars to approach the problematic intersections of language and society in a new way: *Language and ideology* by Kress and Hodge (1979) and *Language and control* by Fowler, Hodge, Kress, and Trew (1979). These volumes became cornerstones in establishing CL and thus CDA, their authors, whose backgrounds were largely in the UK and Australia, have shaped the current focus of studying language and discourse (Fowler et al., 1979; Mey, 1985).

Since, as Fairclough states (1989), ideological power is exercised in discourse and since "discourse is a textual manifestation of the speaker's ideology" (Al-Mohannadi, 2008, p. 530), CDA is one of the most significant methodological tools concerned with exposing the hidden ideology that is "reflected, reinforced, and constructed in everyday and institutional discourse" (Mayr, 2008, p. 10). Munday (2007) believes that CDA can uncover subtle ideological influences on translations. Therefore, the study of discourse is essential to the understanding of ideology.

3.2 Theoretical Origins of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

The theoretical origins of CDA can be traced back to several influential theories and philosophies from different disciplines. CDA is based on philosophical and linguistic foundations ranging from social theory to textual linguistics. According to Rogers (2011), the study of "discourse" can be traced to social theorists and language philosophers from as far back as the

beginning of the twentieth century, including Bakhtin (1981), DuBois (1903/1990), Pecheux (1975), Voloshinov (1973), Said (1979), Kristeva (1980), Spender (1980), Foucault (1967; 1972), and Wittgenstein (1953). To review the theoretical basis of CDA, a brief exploration of the main theoreticians and concepts that have influenced this approach is offered below.

In some ways, Karl Marx is a primary influence behind CDA. His influence takes four forms: first, his critique of how capitalism exploits the working class; second, his historical dialectical method; third, the way he defines ideology as the superstructure of civilisation (Marx and Engels, 1845/2001); and fourth, his notion of language as “product, producer, and reproducer of social consciousness” (Fairclough and Graham, 2002, p. 201). CDA has been described as neo-Marxist in the sense that it argues that, on top of economic considerations, the cultural dimensions of social practices are important in constructing and preserving power relations (Titscher et al., 2000).

Louis Althusser is also a major source of the theoretical basis of CDA, as the concept of ideology is essential in CDA. According to Thompson (1990), the term “ideology” first appeared in France during the eighteenth century. However, it has since acquired a wide range of definitions and connotations. CDA draws heavily on Althusser’s views on ideology and his concept of interpellation (Althusser and Brewster, 1971; 1972; Althusser, 1976; 1984). His views of ideology stem from the weakness he finds in Marx's account. Althusser defines ideology as “'a ‘representation' of the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence” (Althusser, 2012, p. 123). Althusser argues that ideology controls individuals through two types of ideological apparatuses: first, repressive state apparatuses (RSAs) like governments, courts, armies, and prisons, and second, ideological state apparatuses (ISAs) like religion, education, family, culture, and the mass media. Althusser holds that this control is exercised through the concept of interpellation, where “ideology hails or interpellates concrete individuals as concrete subjects, by the functioning of the category of the subject” (1971, p. 173). This notion illustrates how individuals who are constructed within a discourse can become a part of someone else’s utterances. Althusser argues

that studying ideology helps to investigate how meaning is composed and delivered by a variety of symbolic forms.

According to Fairclough (1989), Althusser sees ideology as material social practices in social institutions, as a way of positioning people as social subjects. Therefore, CDA studies the ideology that is invested in discourse as a means of constructing and preserving uneven power relations.

The Russian philosophers Mikhail Bakhtin and Valentin Volosinov present their linguistic theory of ideology, which argues that all cases of language are part of a sphere of class struggle that is always ideologically influenced. It also acknowledges the intertextual nature of language use, which entails that each text functions as a part of a group of texts, reacting and referring to other texts. CDA has been especially influenced by Bakhtin's genre theory, which regards linguistic signs as dependent on socially predetermined lists of genres that can be mixed in different innovative ways (Bakhtin, 1981).

Antonio Gramsci made a significant theoretical contribution that is often referred to in CDA. His famed concept of "hegemony" has been enormously influential; it can be seen in the way power is practiced through discourse in order to confirm the "natural" or "universal" order of things. Many CDA scholars have been influenced by Gramscian hegemony (1971), which considers discourse to be a type of ideological social practice. His theory highlights the political and social role of ideology and studies the correlation between political and social constructions (Blommaert and Bulcaen, 2000; Titscher et al., 2000). Based on Gramscian theory, power and domination can be employed "not only through repressive coercion, oppression and exploitation, but also through the persuasive potential of discourse, which leads to consensus and complicity" (Tenorio, 2011, p. 188).

As discussed above, CDA can be traced back to CL; both have been heavily influenced by the critical theory of Jürgen Habermas and the Frankfurt School, which dates to before the Second World War (Rasmussen, 1996). According to Rogers (2011), critical theory discards naturalism (which holds that social practices represent reality), naturality (which holds that truth is a result of science or logic), neutrality (which holds that truth does not reflect

particular interests), and individualism. This implies a dialectic relation between individual agency and social determinism (Rogers, 2011). Habermas' ideas regarding the correlation between linguistic and other semiotic or social processes is a core reference for many CDA scholars (Habermas, 1971; 1983; 1988; 1990). Habermas' fundamental contribution in *The theory of communicative action* (1981) is the notion of "validity claims", which he holds to be universally presupposed in all discourse. His work inspired many CDA scholars to become aware of the way that mainstream ideology and power relations mediate social problems through discourse in everyday life. Self-reflection is a Habermas-influenced conception from his work on critical science; this concept is crucial to CDA, as Fairclough (1989) notes that CDA itself needs to be looked at as a discourse in which the implications of the analyst's own ideologies, biases, and interests must be considered.

Michel Foucault's work on orders of discourse, power relations, and power-knowledge (Foucault, 1967; 1972; 1974; Foucault, 1990) has been a cornerstone of the study of DA. CDA draws on Foucault's and other poststructuralist hypotheses about the way discourses play a constructive role in shaping our identities and actions. Unlike Marx and Habermas, Foucault (1972) believes that the social production process is determined by consciousness. He claims that individuals are involved in the practical realisation of power relations, which contributes to establishing discourses, especially by individuals who have the right to use all resources (Jäger and Maier, 2009).

In addition to Foucault's contributions, Pierre Bourdieu's work on power relations has been immensely influential on both the theory and method of CDA. One of his assumptions employed by CDA is that textual practices turn out to be embodied forms of what he calls "cultural capital" (Thompson, 1990; Blommaert and Bulcaen, 2000).

Discourse analysis generally, and CDA specifically, depends heavily on a number of areas of study in linguistics: phonology, morphology, semantics, syntax, pragmatics, narratology, speech act theory, and so on. However, SFL, as developed by Michael Halliday using the work of earlier

scholars like John Firth, is the main linguistic base for CDA. Halliday's conceptualisations show the systematic links between language use and its social contexts and functions. Using SFL in DA began in the late 1970s, when literary theorists and linguists like Hodge and Kress (1979) focused on linguistic choices in literature, media discourse, and other forms of texts of relevance to the public sphere (Fowler, 1986). SFL was developed to focus more on analysing the social injustice in media and other forms of discourse, which later became CDA's arena.

To summarise, CDA is a methodological and theoretical framework that seeks to uncover the discursive foundations of inequality, dominance, and bias and in the way these foundations are created, preserved, reproduced, and changed within specific social, economic, political, and historical contexts (van Dijk, 1988). It is a multidisciplinary analytical approach that is derived from a variety of philosophical, political, sociological, and linguistic theories, which gives CDA the ability to explore the text along with its contextual, discursive, and social structures. CDA is largely a problem-oriented approach that studies specific social or political problems such as racism, injustice, hate discourse, or sexism with the aim of emancipating underprivileged people. Thus, CDA studies usually deal with data like media discourses (news reports, interviews, analysis, talk shows, and so forth) that address these social and political problems.

3.3 Discourse, Discourse Analysis (DA), and CDA

This section explores the essential theoretical foundations on which CDA has been built. First, a brief overview of the concept of discourse is provided, along with the different approaches used to analyse it. After that, the term "critical", which distinguishes CDA, is reviewed by examining the CL field. The section concludes with an overview of some of the best-known methods used in CDA.

3.3.1 What is Discourse?

This term "discourse" can be traced to the philosopher Michel Foucault, who introduced it, most significantly in his prominent work, *The archaeology of knowledge* (1972). This use of the term does not refer to semiotic signs; rather, it is an abstract concept that refers to the way semiotic signs give meaning

and shape communication (Foucault, 1972). Fairclough (2014, p. xi) sees discourse as “language viewed in a certain way, as a part of the social process (part of social life) which is related to other parts”. According to Harvey’s dialectical view of the social process (1996), discourse is one of six elements: power, social relations, institutions, beliefs, material practices, and discourse. The term is one of the most challenging concepts in CDA due to the various meanings it can carry. Bloor and Bloor (1995) explore different meanings of the term “discourse” and provide a taxonomy of the six main definitions. Their taxonomy is summarised by (Tenorio, 2011, pp. 184 - 185) as follows:

- discourse-1 is the highest unit of linguistic description; phonemes, morphemes, words, phrases, clauses, sentences and texts are below;
- discourse-2 is a sample of language usage, generally written to be spoken, that is, a speech;
- discourse-3 refers to the communication expected in one situation context, alongside one field and register, such as the discourse of law or medicine;
- discourse-4 is human interaction through any means, verbal and non-verbal;
- discourse-5 is spoken interaction only;
- discourse-6 stands for the whole communicative event.

According to his socio-cognitive theory, Teun van Dijk sees discourse within the discourse-historical approach (DHA) as “structured forms of knowledge and the memory of social practices, whereas ‘text’ refers to concrete oral utterances or written documents” (Reisigl and Wodak, 2001, p. 6). There are several ways to define discourse, but the following definition has become very popular in CDA:

> CDA sees discourse (or semiosis) as a form of social practice. This implies a dialectical relationship between a particular discursive event and the situation(s), institution(s) and social structure(s), which frame it: The discursive event is shaped by them, but it also shapes them. That is, discourse is socially

> constitutive as well as socially conditioned – it constitutes situations, objects of knowledge, and the social identities of and relationships between people and groups of people. It is constitutive both in the sense that it helps to sustain and reproduce the social status quo, and in the sense that it contributes to transforming it. Since discourse is so socially consequential, it gives rise to important issues of power. Discursive practices may have major ideological effects – that is, they can help produce and reproduce unequal power relations between (for instance) social classes, women and men, and ethnic/cultural majorities and minorities through the ways in which they represent things and position people. (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997, p. 258).

3.3.2 Approaches to DA

DA is often regarded as the study of language above the sentence level and how different linguistic factors shape communicative meaning. More comprehensively, DA has been described by Stubbs as

> the linguistic analysis of naturally occurring connected speech or written discourse. Roughly speaking, it refers to attempts to study the organization of language above the sentence or above the clause, and therefore to study larger linguistic units, such as conversational exchanges or written texts. It follows that discourse analysis is also concerned with language use in social contexts, and in particular with interaction or dialogue between speakers. (1983, p. 1).

Based on Stubbs' description, three main conclusions about DA can be made. First, it deals with naturally occurring discourse; second, it deals with linguistic elements above the word, clause, or sentence; and third, it deals with the text in its social context.

There are different DA schools and approaches that come from different academic disciplines, including philosophy, sociology, ethnomethodology, psychology, sociolinguistics, and linguistics. Several scholars have offered comprehensive reviews of these approaches (Levinson,

1983; Coulthard, 1985; McCarthy, 1991; Schiffrin, 1994; Eggins and Slade, 1997). This section draws on Eggins and Slade's typology (1997) as modified by Schmitt (2013) to provide a brief introduction to the main DA approaches. Figure 2 shows a classification of approaches based on their disciplinary origins in sociology, sociolinguistics, philosophy, linguistics, and artificial intelligence (Schmitt, 2013). In Eggins and Slade's typology (1997), the five classifications are ethnomethodological, sociolinguistics, logico-philosophic, structural-functional, and social semiotic. Schmitt (2013) has merged structural-functional and social semiotic under the fourth type (linguistic), uses sociology instead of ethnomethodological, and replaces logico-philosophic with philosophy.

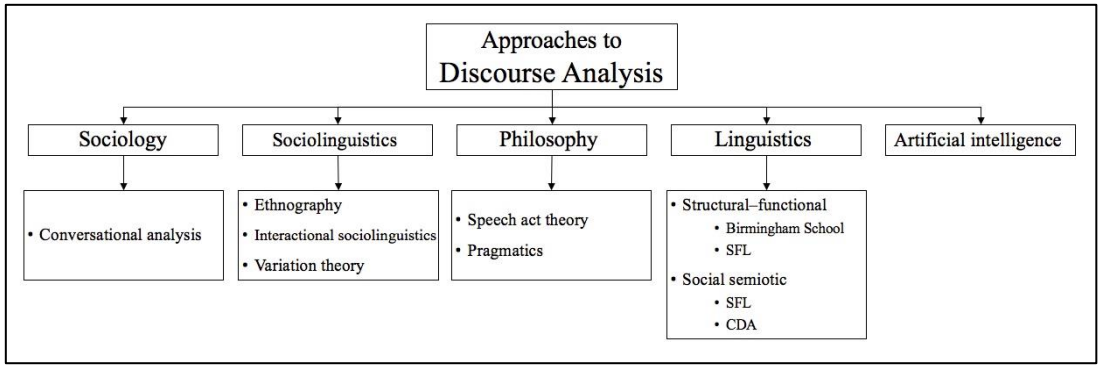

Figure 2: Approaches to DA according to disciplinary origins (Schmitt, 2013)

According to Schmitt (2013), sociology is the primary disciplinary contributor to the study of discourse, especially in the conversation analysis approach. Conversation analysis examines in detail the way everyday interaction is structured and organised, focusing mostly on "dialogic, spoken discourse of a fairly informal character" (Schmitt, 2013, p. 58). This approach was inspired by Garfinkel's (1967) ethnomethodology and Goffman's (1974; 1981) frame analysis. It was developed in the 1970s into a distinctive approach by Sacks, Schegloff, Jefferson, and others (Jefferson, 1972; Schegloff, 1972; Sacks et al., 1974; Schegloff et al., 1977; Sacks, 1992).

Eggins and Slade (1997) include three sociolinguistic approaches that analyse discourse: ethnography, interactional (socio-)linguistics, and variation theory. As for ethnography, it was inspired by the work of Dell Hymes (1972b; 1972a; Saville-Troike, 1989). Hymes argues that ethnographic approaches to

DA focus on “the situation and uses, the patterns and functions, of speaking as an activity in its own right” (1974, p. 3); it sees language use and communication as cultural behaviour. Interactional (socio-)linguistics originated mainly from the work of the anthropologist John Gumperz (1982), based on the work of the sociologist Erving Goffman (1959; 1967; 1974; 1981). Interactional (socio-)linguistics pays attention to the importance of context in text production and in the interpretation of discourse, seeking to understand how social and linguistic meaning is created during interaction (Eggins and Slade, 1997). As for variation theory, which was mainly influenced by the work of Labov and Waletzky (1967), it examines the structure of spoken narratives to analyse discourse. It deals mainly with structural categories of texts and how form and meaning in clauses help to define text (Schiffrin, 1994).

Speech act theory and pragmatics are the main DA approaches that come from philosophy, especially the philosophy of language. These approaches are primarily concerned with the way people interpret certain utterances. The main influences on speech act theory are the two prominent scholars Austin (1962) and Searle (1969; 1976), who introduced the notion of the illocutionary force of speech acts. This approach is largely concerned with communicative acts performed by speech. Pragmatics is based on the work of Herbert Paul Grice and his followers (Grice, 1975; Leech, 1983; Levinson, 1983). Gricean pragmatics use the widely recognised Grice’s maxims for analysing discourse: quantity, quality, relation, and manner. This approach is mainly concerned with understanding what individual utterances mean in hypothetical contexts.

From structural-functional linguistics, both the Birmingham School and SFL provide a theoretical basis for DA. As for the former, Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) developed a model of analysing classroom discourse. SFL is classified by Schmitt (2013) as both structural-functional and social semiotic. This approach shows the systematic links between language use and its social contexts and functions. Using SFL in DA began in the late 1970s, when literary theorists and linguists such as Hodge and Kress (1979) focused on the linguistic choices in literature, media discourse, and other forms of texts of relevance to the public sphere (Fowler, 1986). SFL is one variety of

functional linguistics; what makes it distinctive is its concern with studying the internal order of language regarding the functions that it has developed to serve (Halliday, 1978; 1985/2014). This type of linguistics, which also applies to CDA, is socially oriented; it is concerned with the way language, text, and social life are interrelated (Schmitt, 2013). The SFL approach is primarily concerned with understanding conversational structure in relation to other units, levels, and structures of language.

The CDA approach falls under social semiotics in Eggins and Slade's (1997) typology. What distinguishes CDA from the many other DA approaches is its focus on the way that language, ideology, and power influence one another (Fairclough, 1989) and how discourse and socio-cultural change are related (Fairclough, 1992). According to Fairclough (2003), there are approaches to DA that do not pay attention to the textual features of discourse, while other approaches are focused on the linguistic features of discourse. CDA thus aims to transcend the division between these two approaches by engaging both social and linguistic aspects in the analysis of discourse.

3.3.3 Critical Linguistics

Another element that distinguishes CDA from other DA approaches is that it is highly influenced by CL, a subfield of linguistics (Fowler et al., 1979; Hodge and Kress, 1979). This movement is characterised by viewing "the world as social structures manifesting different ideologies and [studying] the way language use reflects these" (Johnson and Johnson, 1998). The term "critical' refers to critiquing the broader social connotations of using certain linguistic elements. This critical approach seeks to unveil the dynamics and mechanisms of reproducing the power asymmetries in society. Other fields of study may share the same endeavour, such as philosophy, anthropology, and communication studies. Being critical in this context does not necessarily mean being judgemental; as Jäger and Maier (2009, p. 36) state, this kind of critique "does not make claims to absolute truth".

3.3.4 CDA: Methods and Approaches

Just as there are various DA approaches, so there are several methods and approaches that fall within CDA (Figure 3). However, these approaches cannot be categorised into a strict typology, due to the multiple points of

convergence between them (Rogers, 2011). The different approaches and methods depend on individual researchers and the particular methods they use. Some of CDA's best-known approaches are the socio-cognitive approach (van Dijk, 1993b), multimodal critical discourse analysis (MCDA) or the social semiotic approach (Hodge and Kress, 1988; van Leeuwen, 2008; Kress, 2009), the discourse-historical method (Van Leeuwen and Wodak, 1999; Wodak, 2001; 2005), and the critical ethnography of communication (Blommaert, 2001; Collins and Blot, 2003). Rogers (2011) refers to French discourse analysis (e.g. Foucault, 1972; Pecheux, 1975) and the SFL approach (Fairclough, 2003; van Leeuwen, 2008) as deeply relevant CDA approaches.

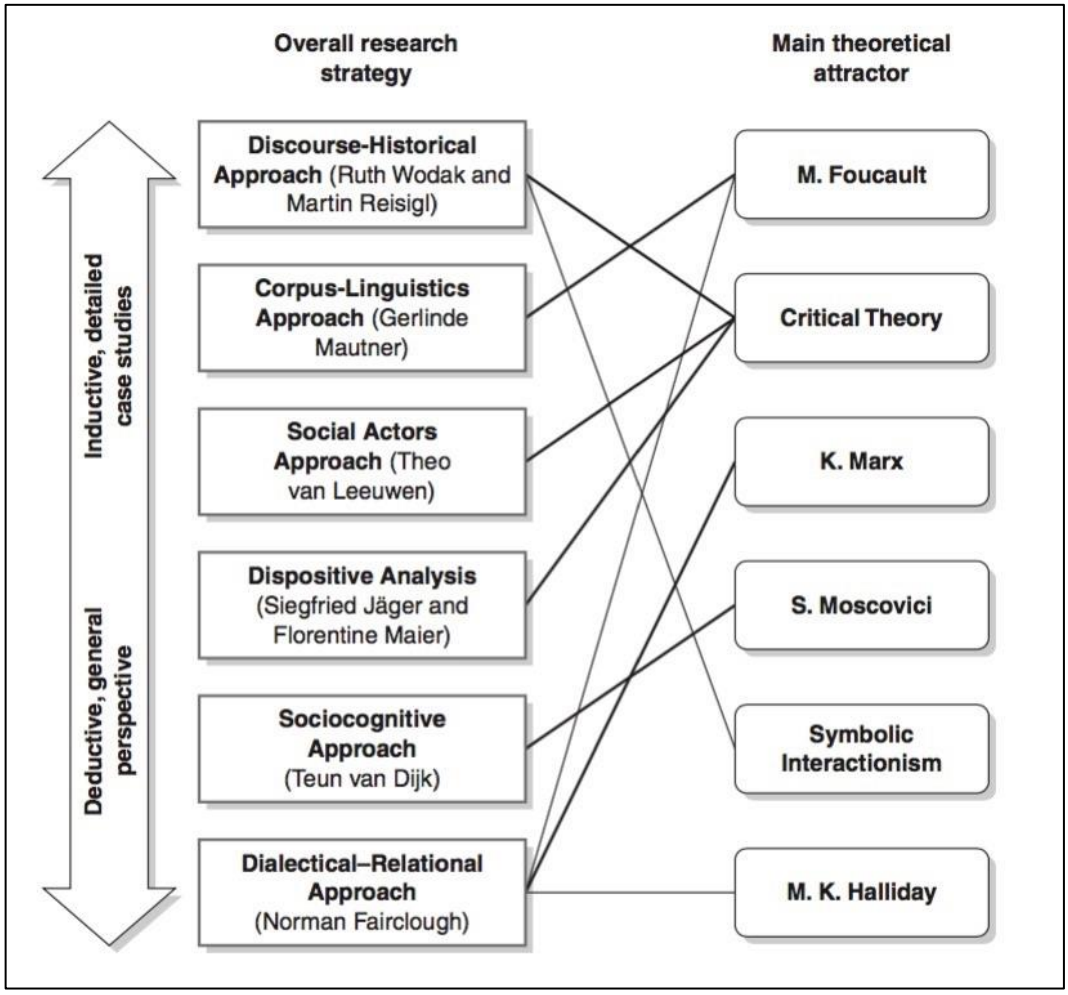

Figure 3: Overall research strategies and theoretical background (Wodak and Meyer, 2015, p. 20)

One of the most important CDA approaches for the current study is MCDA, especially the analysis of visual mediational means introduced by Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) which is essential in the analysis of visual

semiotics in section 6.3. Moreover, The three most renowned approaches, Fairclough's, Wodak's and van Dijk's, are the ones that influenced the most the model of analysis adopted in the current research. Below is a brief overview of each one.

3.3.4.1 Fairclough's CDA

Beginning in the 1980s, Norman Fairclough became interested in CL and started developing this field with his examination of the relationship between discourse and power. His *Language and power* (1989) along with later works such as *Discourse and social change* (1992), significantly advanced the theoretical and methodological framework of CDA and the structures of a social theory of discourse (Blommaert and Bulcaen, 2000). Fairclough defines CDA as follows:

> Discourse analysis which aims to systematically explore often opaque relationships of causality and determination between texts, discursive practices, and wider social and cultural structures; and to investigate how such practices, events and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggles over power; and to explore how the opacity of these relationships between discourse and society is itself a factor securing power and hegemony. (1993, p. 135).

After Fairclough explored the main approaches to DA, he noticed their lack of critical engagement. Therefore, he suggested the CDA approach, which aims to link linguistics and other areas of social theory in order to build a robust social theory of discourse (Fairclough, 2003).

As noted above, there are a number of scholarly and theoretical influences on Fairclough's approach. From Bakhtin's theory of genre, Fairclough draws on the concept of productivity, creativity, and textual realisations of discourse practice and the concept of intertextuality. As for Gramsci's theory of hegemony, it has been used to describe the political and ideological aspects of discursive practice. Foucault's work has a major influence on Fairclough's approach to CDA, which is inspired by Foucault's view of the constitutive nature of discourse. This view holds that discourse has a constructive role in the social including subjects and objects. Foucault's view

of the importance of intertextuality and interdiscursivity is also relevant to Fairclough's approach. Since Fairclough's main focus is the linguistic aspect of DA, the central influence on his approach is Halliday's SFL, which provides Fairclough with a framework for investigating and analysing the relationship between the linguistic and non-linguistic elements of social life.

Fairclough's approach aims "to bring together linguistically-oriented discourse analysis and social and political thought relevant to discourse and language" (1992, p. 62). Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999) argue that CDA seeks to show the systematic connectedness between discursive features and the social dimension and to show the semiotic and linguistic aspects of the social dimension. According to Fairclough (2003, p. 2), CDA is "based upon the assumption that language is an irreducible part of social life".

This entails that language can be both action and demonstration in the social interaction and that discourse not only represents social "reality" but also contributes to creating it. This dialectical nature of discourse and social structure pays heed to the way that discourse simultaneously forms and is formed by the social structure. Fairclough, in his earlier work (1992), specifies three aspects of the way discourse constructs the social world: constructing social identities, constructing social relationships, and constructing knowledge and belief systems. To Fairclough, CDA is a theoretical and methodological framework for the investigation of how language is related to power and ideology.

Fairclough's approach is illustrated in his well-known three-dimensional analytical framework (1992; Figure 4), in which discursive events are analysed as textual practices, discursive practices, and social practices, while the three interwoven dimensions are the textual, the discursive, and the social. Figure 4 demonstrates the way Fairclough's three-dimensional framework is structured, with the three layers of analysis embedded in one another.

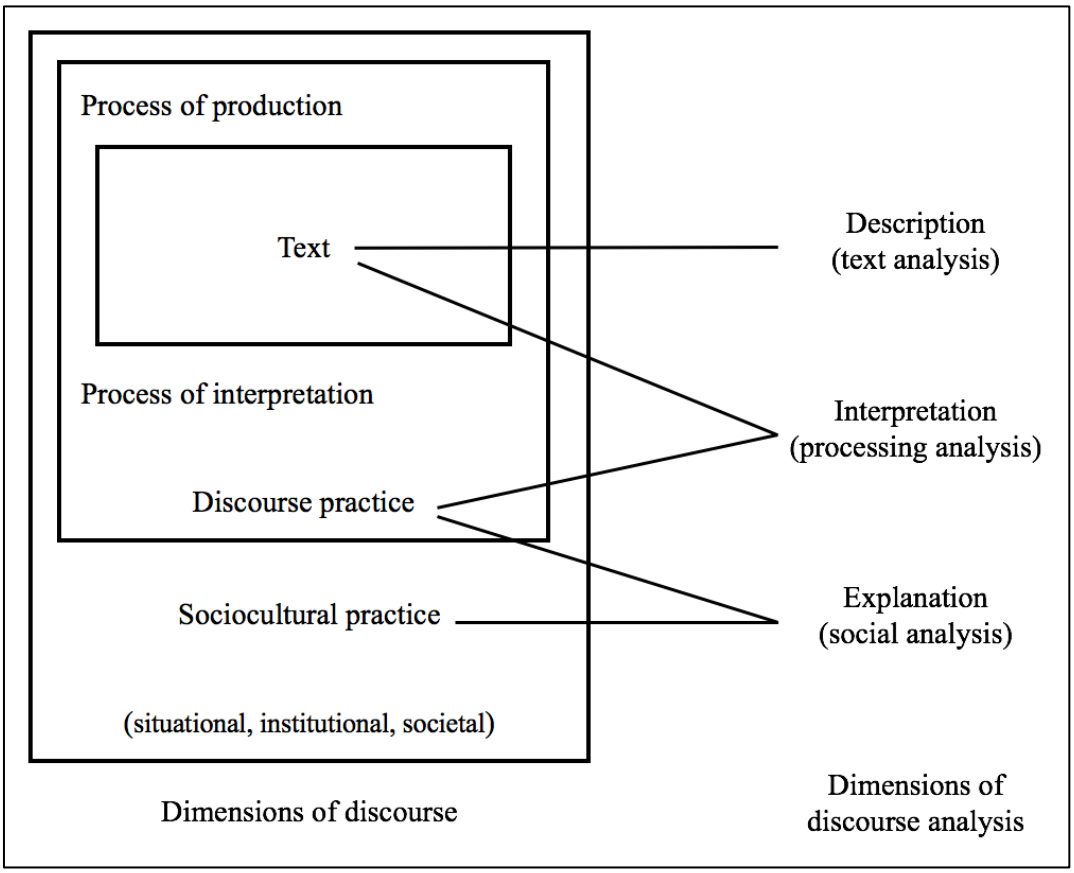

Figure 4: Fairclough's (1992) three-dimensional framework for analysing discourses

As for the analysis of the first layer (the textual dimension), Fairclough proposes studying the linguistic structure and features of the text. He suggests that the analysis should focus systematically on the textual features that are potentially ideological, such as the lexical choice of an utterance or the way a sentence is grammatically structured. Moreover, the analysis should also examine the textual elements that can be indicators of certain socio-cultural relations and processes. The analysis of these elements rely on the features of SFL register analysis as described above in section 2.3. Fairclough emphasises the importance of absent textual features as much as present ones, because of the implied meanings and indications that they could provide; for example, the passivisation feature could reveal an ideological motive behind omitting the subject.

When it comes to analysing the second layer (the discursive dimension), Fairclough suggests the study of discourse as a discursive practice, which refers mainly to a processing analysis. This layer represents the link between textual and social practices and involves an investigation of

how text is produced, distributed, and consumed. The analysis also includes the way texts are produced and interpreted by participants in discourse.

Finally, in analysing the third layer (the social dimension), the focus is on the link between discourse and ideology and power. Fairclough suggests that the analysis at this level should aim at interpreting the ideological and socio-cultural influence on discourse. However, he disagrees with the way CL scholars look at the textual view of the location of ideology (Fairclough, 1992, p. 88). He believes that the meanings of certain texts are open to diverse interpretations that can be ideologically influenced. Therefore, his view of the relationship between text and ideology is located both in the structure of the discourse and in the events themselves. Fairclough (2003, p. 9) sees ideologies as “representations of aspects of the world which can be shown to contribute to establishing, maintaining and changing social relations of power, domination and exploitation”.

Fairclough’s approach to CDA has evolved through different stages since the late 1980s. Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999) provide an outline of the CDA method that has developed from Fairclough’s previous approaches to CDA (1989; 1992; 1995). Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999) aim to place CDA within the theoretical map of social theory and to explore the theoretical origins of CDA in linguistics and other disciplines.

Fairclough’s (1992) three-dimensional framework for analysing discourses is the main methodological framework that the model of analysis of this study depends on. In fact, the model of analysis in section 3.4 is a modified version of this model, which has been created to suit the needs of this research.

3.3.4.2 Wodak’s CDA

In Ruth Wodak’s CDA, discourse is regarded as historical and cannot be understood without its context, which indicates that the text and its context have a systemic interrelationship (1996). Wodak developed the DHA with her colleagues at the Vienna School, where they applied it to studying anti-Semitism in Austria. This approach is influenced by several fields of study like critical theory, sociolinguistics, and cultural studies. Some of the main theoretical influences are Wetherll and Potter’s (1988) constructivist

approach, Quasthoff's (1978) sociopsychological assumptions, and the positive self-representation and negative other-representation of van Dijk (1989).

Wodak began moving in the direction of CDA by attempting to link sociolinguistics with social theory. She had to connect the textual content with its context and discourse with its social structures, which demands a grand interdisciplinary approach that can facilitate such efforts; CDA fits the bill. Wodak sees CDA as a heterogeneous technique which encompasses several theoretical and methodological methods or as a theoretical synthesis of conceptual tools (Wodak, 2002). This mixture of theory and technique is what gives CDA its strength to allow researchers to shape an imaginative and dynamic theory (Wodak and Weiss, 2003, p. 9).

The DHA was first developed for a study that analyses how anti-Semitic stereotypes were constructed in public discourses during the 1986 Austrian presidential campaign of Kurt Waldheim, the former UN secretary-general who had long concealed his connections to Austria's Nazi past (Wodak et al., 1990). In that research, four notable features of the DHA became apparent: interdisciplinarity, teamwork, triangulation, and applied orientation. Several other studies, such as Matouschek et al.'s (1995) examination of discrimination against Romanian migrants in Austria (see Wodak and Meyer, 2001) discussion of the discursive construction of the Austrian nation and its national identity, both developed and elaborated on the DHA. Wodak views discourse as socially constitutive, since it is vital in producing certain social settings in addition to its role in reproducing, supporting, promoting, and maintaining other conditions. This shows the ability that discourse possesses to change, challenge, or even dismantle and destroy the status quo.

The DHA includes comparing linguistic indicators of biases or preconceptions regarding a certain issue with its historical facts. It aims to "integrate systematically all available background information in the analysis and interpretation of the many layers of a written or spoken text" (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997, p. 266). This means that it includes the textual, contextual, intertextual, and interdiscursive features of the discourse under study, in addition to the appropriate background information (Wodak and Ludwig, 1999;

Reisigl and Wodak, 2001). It is also important to note that this approach to CDA is problem-oriented, which means that it shifts constantly between theory and analysis of the different elements of the issue being studied in order to find relations and links between the various genres and discourses. What is particularly essential in Wodak's DHA approach is studying the historical context. The historical dimension of a certain discourse is explored through analysing the diachronic shifts of certain genres and discourses (Reisigl and Wodak, 2001; Wodak and Meyer, 2001). The DHA tries to avoid, as much as possible, avoiding methodological bias by facilitating a range of approaches in a mixed-method and empirical way.

Since the post-war Austrian studies of anti-Semitism and discriminatory stereotyping, the DHA and its principles have undergone a significant evolution. Wodak (2015, p. 2) summarises the 10 most important principles of this approach as follows:

1. The approach is interdisciplinary. Interdisciplinarity involves theory, methods, methodology, research practice, and practical application.
2. The approach is problem-oriented.
3. Various theories and methods are combined wherever integration leads to an adequate understanding and explanation of the research object.
4. The research incorporates fieldwork and ethnography (study from "inside") where this is required for a thorough analysis and theorizing of the object under investigation.
5. The research necessarily moves recursively between theory and empirical data.
6. Numerous genres and public spaces as well as intertextual and interdiscursive relationships are studied.
7. The historical context is taken into account in interpreting texts and discourses. The historical orientation permits the reconstruction of how recontextualization functions as an important process linking texts and discourses intertextually and interdiscursively over time.
8. Categories and tools are not fixed once and for all. They must be elaborated for each analysis according to the specific problem under investigation.

9. “Grand theories” often serve as a foundation. In the specific analyses, however, “middle-range theories” frequently supply a better theoretical basis.
10. The application of results is an important target. Results should be made available to and applied by experts and should be communicated to the public.

In her problem-oriented CDA approach, Wodak looks at discourse in a specific problem or issue as the starting point in a certain field of action; she then turns to another. In this approach, she also supports a focus on the analysis of genres of a certain discourse before beginning detailed analysis. However, the fact that discourses, genres, and texts are in constant overlap make them refer to one another and connected socio-functionally; these phenomena are often described as intertextuality and interdiscursivity.

This approach has influenced the present study in terms of the historical contextualisation of the cases studied in the current research. Chapter 5 below involves historical contextualisation of the socio-cultural aspect of the Saudi society (section 5.2), the stories of the three activists (section 5.3), and the Saudi-Iranian conflict (section 5.4).

3.3.4.3 Van Dijk’s CDA

As noted above, Teun van Dijk is one of the three most prominent contributors to the development of CDA. The main difference in Van Dijk’s approach to CDA is in its view of discourse. In addition to the previously mentioned theoretical origins of CDA, van Dijk’s approach is also influenced by ideas that range from Aristotle to recent feminist-driven theories (van Dijk, 1993a).

Van Dijk deals with similar concerns as theorists, such as socio-political and intertextual elements of discourse. However, he focuses more on certain issues like ideology, dominance, and inequality. His definition of CDA is as follows:

> A type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context. With such dissident research, critical discourse analysts take explicit position, and thus want to

> understand, expose, and ultimately resist social inequality. (van Dijk, 2001, p. 352).

CDA is regarded by van Dijk as a multidisciplinary approach where the relations between different elements like power, ideology, discourse, social cognition, politics, and culture are studied. He also argues that power and dominance are major factors in the social aspect, where there is usually an institutionalised and organised avenue for power elites to exploit discursive means like media to control others and manipulate their views (van Dijk, 2001). In addition to the various methods of manipulation, this privileged group seeks dominance through naturalisation, by other routine measures of controlling people's minds, and through daily discourses that appear perfectly natural. So, the naming of individuals strengthens the public's view towards these individuals. Naming people, or labelling, is one of the elements that are used in this study to investigate such manipulations (see section 6.2.1). CDA, therefore, aims to uncover these manipulative and naturalising discursive techniques that legitimate imbalanced power relations. In van Dijk's approach, CDA should include a critique of the political procedures and their discourses that involve preservation and confrontation of dominance. Hence, CDA researchers should explicitly engage in the socio-political field to display solidarity with the less powerful and most vulnerable. They can assess their success by the degree to which they have contributed to or participated in emancipation or at least improving the situation in areas such as racism, class struggle, and xenophobia.

One of the most important concepts in van Dijk's approach is social cognition; it consists of "the mental operations underlying social interactions, which include the human ability to perceive the intentions and dispositions of others and the cognitive processes that subserve behaviour in response to others" (Brothers, 2002, p. 367). This refers to the collective social representations with which a certain society views its relations, arrangements, and various mental operations like thinking and interpretation. Van Dijk's approach regards social cognitions as mediators between two levels in a society: the micro and the macro, which are equivalent to the discourse and the action or the individual and the crowd. Due to its adoption of the concept

of social cognition in discourse, Van Dijk's CDA approach is often called the socio-cognitive approach (van Dijk, 1993b).

One more important feature of van Dijk's approach is its analysis of ideology, which he defines as "the basis of social representations shared by members of a social group" and views as a schema for how the in-group or out-group represent themselves; they can be also viewed as the "us" versus "them" social groups (van Dijk, 1998, p. 8). Van Dijk also argues that "ideologies are typically, though not exclusively, expressed and reproduced in discourse and communication" (1995, p. 17).

The ideologically influenced attitudes and strategies for (re)producing dominance in our societies are justified and legitimised through either accepting the dominance as something that is natural or necessary or by denying that the dominance really exists. This can be observed, for example, in the media discourse formed by political speeches, which can justify one group's dominance through positive self-representation combined with negative other-representation. The in-group ("us") is often generally accorded positive attributes and justified in such discourse, while the out-group ("them") is represented negatively or even condemned, which contributes to the formation of schemata (mental models) that characterise a certain group. This is usually achieved in these discourses through the use of persuasive strategies like lexicalisation, argumentation, and rhetorical figures.

In van Dijk's approach, the analysis of discourse in the socio-cognitive model aims to reveal how power relations are shaped and demonstrated and how a certain group is controlled and manipulated by the use of discursive strategies. There are two major dimensions of the (re)production of dominance discourse: interpretation and production. Interpretation is shaped in a subtle manner, while discourse production is a more straightforward phenomenon. Therefore, the socio-cognitive model is used to study discourse interpretation, while discourse production is analysed by studying discourse structures and social cognitions. The discourse structures are analysed by examining various subtle indicators for dominance in the discourse at any linguistic level: lexical, semantic, syntactic, stylistic, rhetorical, and so on.

3.3.5 Critiques of CDA

CDA has been widely used in many research areas over the past three decades. However, CDA has been criticised by several scholars for a variety of reasons, including content, cognition, partiality, and the linguistic model employed. Most of the criticism of CDA is directed at weaknesses like the entanglement of its theoretical grounds, the inconsistency of the concepts and categorisations used, and its eclecticism, which can cause contradictions (Tenorio, 2011). Breeze (2011) reviews the published criticism of CDA and categorises it as follows: the underlying premises, the method, the reader's reception and response, the context, negative attitudes, and CDA as an intellectual orthodoxy. As for the underlying premises, criticism has been directed at the philosophical basis upon which CDA is built. For instance, Hammersley is critical of the three philosophical bases on which CDA is founded:

> Marxism and Frankfurt School critical theory, decisionism, and the universal pragmatics of Habermas. I argued that none of these positions is convincing as it stands. Yet, it is characteristic of CDA, and of much 'critical' work in the social sciences, that its philosophical foundations are simply taken for granted, as if they were unproblematic. This reflects the fact that, in many ways, the term 'critical' has become little more than a rallying cry demanding that researchers consider 'whose side they are on'. As I noted earlier, the term 'critical' began life as a euphemism. (1997, p. 244).

Hammersley (1997) also argues that the Marxist theory is now discredited and has been discarded by philosophers, historians, and economists, due to the fact that most of its concepts and philosophies are "mechanistic, unfounded and irrelevant to an understanding of society today" (Breeze, 2011, p. 498). In response to this point, Fairclough and Graham (2002, p. 29), among other scholars, insisted that "Marx's earliest critique remains relevant".

As for the method, much CDA research has been criticised as having deep methodological flaws. The main issue here is a lack of strictness or

rigour. For instance, Fairclough (1992) himself examined 20 articles that dealt with CDA and observed that, if more attention has been paid to the textual and intertextual elements, the analysis in these articles would have been more convincing. This flaw has been detected by many scholars in the field, such as Rogers et al. (2005, p. 385), who state that 10 of the 40 articles they reviewed did not include any discussion of language theory, while the other 30 referred in general terms to SFL, CDA, and discourse theory. Other scholars have indicated that CDA's methodological shortcomings are mainly due to the way the data are obtained and thus interpreted. Widdowson (1996; 1998; 2005), who is one of the most outspoken detractors of CDA, criticises the unsystematic tendencies of many CDA practitioners; he cites Fowler's (1996, p. 8) remark that "critical linguists get a very high mileage out of a small selection of linguistic concepts such as transitivity and nominalisation", which Widdowson explains by stating that "analysis is not the systematic application of a theoretical model, but a rather less rigorous operation, in effect a kind of ad hoc bricolage which takes from theory whatever concept comes usefully to hand" (Widdowson, 1998, p. 136). This criticism claims that CDA research will accept any method of analysis that gives the desired results.

The third point – the reader's reception and response – has received the most criticism. Widdowson (1998), among others, highlights the seemingly naïve linguistic determinism that the CDA paradigm can involve. Another major shortcoming is the circularity of CDA's argumentation. For instance, Stubbs argues that trying to understand what people think based on what they have heard or read must rely on obtaining non-linguistic evidence about their beliefs or examining their behaviour; "if we have no independent evidence, but infer beliefs from language use, then the theory is circular" (1997, p. 6).

The fourth point is the context. The idea that CDA offers an interpretation of the social world has been influenced by conversation analysis, the ethnography of communication, and pragmatics (Breeze, 2011). However, these research areas tend to differ from CDA in their emphasis on adopting a bottom-up approach (Peace, 2003, p. 164) and in their rigour:

> Both conversation analysis and ethnography require meticulous data-gathering techniques involving the use of recordings and

> detailed transcripts, and both disciplines are committed to the notion that interpretations should emerge from the data. (Breeze, 2011, p. 512).

To overcome this issue, there is a tendency in the CDA paradigm to use triangulation, or the gathering of various perspectives of the studied phenomenon (Reisigl and Wodak, 2001; Rogers et al., 2005; Van Dijk, 2006; Wodak, 2007), or even maintaining "constant movement back and forth between theory and data" (Meyer, 2001, p. 27).

The fifth point is CDA's negative attitude. This paradigm aims to make the world a better place through emancipation and the empowerment of the oppressed. Despite this apparently positive goal, CDA practitioners are usually keener on deconstruction than on construction. Martin is one of the main scholars who call for more positive work in the field of discourse analysis, criticizing CDA for having such a negative, deconstructive approach (2004). In his work, Martin uses the terms "CDA realis", which refers to "exposing language and attendant semiosis in the service of power" (2004, p. 179), and "CDA irrealis", which refers to a secondary aspect concerned with constructive social action.

The last point charges CDA with demanding an intellectual orthodoxy that presents itself as a linguistic approach that aims to challenge old orthodoxies. CDA has become very successful in the past few decades; it is now virtually a school in itself, which some scholars have argued to be a deliberate effort by CDA researchers (Verschueren, 2001, p. 67). Billig's (2002) criticism of the way CDA presents and regards itself emphasises that using the acronym "CDA" appears to be a branding technique that serves as an academic rhetorical strategy to market the field as a theoretical product. Billig (2002) notes that this strategy has been successful in other fields like social identity theory in sociology or, as Breeze (2011) adds, SFL in linguistics.

In general. CDA's criticism discussed various aspects of this paradigm. CDA scholars responded to these critiques in many publications to justify their various approaches to analysis. One of the most notable responses is Fairclough's (1996) response to Henry Widdowson's criticism. Regardless of the philosophical debates, I have proposed a modified detailed model of

analysis based on Faircloughian CDA, which could serve to be as systematic as possible with regard to the purpose of the current research. Moreover, I have been conscious of the criticisms and tried to avoid eclecticism and overgeneralisation in my analysis. Despite of its critiques, CDA is still very functional and effective as a theoretical and a methodological approach for the current study because it is a multidisciplinary approach which offers systematic links between language, discourse and the social world. As for other critiques regarding the issues of branding, being problem-oriented, or negative attitude, they seem marginal points that do not cause major weakness to the model of analysis.

3.4 A Proposed Model of CDA

The discussion above has shown that there are several approaches to CDA, along with countless methods of analysis. A particular variety can be chosen by the researcher based on several factors, including the nature of the data and the research objectives. In the present study, the analysis requires the development of a modified version of CDA that includes certain aspects of the main CDA approaches and certain categories from various applications of CDA.

The most prominent concepts in most approaches are ideology, power, historical background, and textual, intertextual, and contextual elements. The model used here is a modification of Fairclough's three-dimensional model (see section 3.3.4.1 above) and includes an investigation of the triangulation of three levels of analysis: the socio-cultural, semiotic, and interdiscursive levels. The order of the levels in Fairclough's model attempts to follow a systematic bottom-up approach that starts with linguistic features and ends with the social interpretation of the context of the discourse. The modified approach employed in this thesis starts with the socio-cultural level in order to give the reader enough understanding about the different historical, cultural, and political backgrounds of the selected case studies. The analysis of the selected cases may not be adequately understood without first familiarising the reader with detailed contextualisation of the historical and socio-cultural background within which the other levels analysis can be understood. Starting

with Fairclough's third level makes the discussion at the other two levels more relevant and comprehensible. The second addition to the model is selecting certain analytical tools for each level (Figure 5). The selection of these tools is justified by the nature of the data itself. Given that the data consists of news reports about three human rights activists, the most relevant choices at the semiotic level are the lexical choices used to frame the activists, along with the ones used to direct accusations at them and the visual semiotic choices included in the news reports. At the interdiscursive level, intertextuality is one of the most important indicators. It is analysed by investigating the sourcing of the news, along with intertextual tools like quoting verbs and tags.

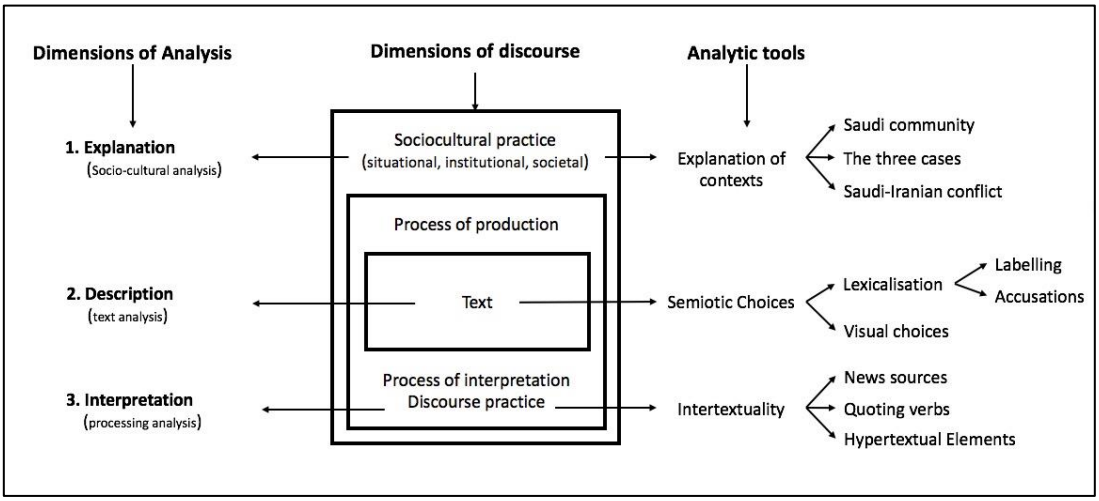

Figure 5 Proposed modifications to Fairclough's three-dimensional model

In summary, at the first level (as explained in Chapter 5), the analysis explores three aspects of background contextualisation which helps highlight the legal, political, and socio-cultural details of the three cases, along with the ideological conflicts surrounding the studied phenomenon.

The second level (as explained in Chapter 6) involves a textual analysis of the lexical elements of the news reports, focusing on the labelling of the activists and the wording of the accusations against them. Moreover, there is an analysis of the visual semiotics used in the news reports.

The third level (as explained in Chapter 7) deals with an intertextual analysis of the news reports that begins by discussing the sources of news used in these reports, which is followed by an analysis of the quoting verbs used in the corpus. The analysis uses the classification of meaning potentials

for quoting verbs proposed by Caldas-Coulthard (1994), described in detail in section 7.3. After discussing the different types of used quoting verbs, other intertextual elements like tags and hyperlinks are analysed.

Chapter 4: Data

4.1 Introduction

The data used in this study contains hard news reports on Saudi human rights activists from the beginning of the Arab Spring in 2011 through the end of 2017. The Saudi activists included in this study are those who have been detained by the Saudi government during this period as a result of their activism. The reports were obtained from two news agencies: Al Arabiya, which is based in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and funded by Saudi Arabia, and Iran's Al-Alam. Both news agencies provide news reports from around the world, including Saudi Arabia, and the news reports that are discussed in this study are in both Arabic and English. These news agencies have been chosen to make it possible to compare the way the same event is represented in each agency, bearing in mind their differing ideological positions on that event and its relationship with their target audience. Thus, the way *Al Arabiya* presents a news report for Arabic readers is compared with how it presents that report to an English readership; another dimension of the comparison is the way the same event is presented by the other agency in those two languages.

The news reports in the study corpus were obtained from the official websites of the two agencies: *Al Arabiya* [http://www.alarabiya.net (Arabic) and http://www.english.alarabiya.net (English)]; and *Al-Alam* (http://www.alalam.ir). There are several reasons for focusing on online material rather than on television news reports by the same organisations. First, there are significant delays, costs, and difficulties in collecting and analysing audio-visual material. The second reason is the multimodal nature of electronic media, where reports can (and usually do) include hyperlinks to related reports, in addition to colour pictures and other audio-visual elements. This multimodality can contain discursive elements that may imply certain ideological influences as frames for the translated text. Third, interactivity with the readership (as occurs in comments sections) makes it an important dimension to the analyses presented here.

The data are classified into four categories based on the two dimensions of language and news agency:

1- *Al Arabiya* in Arabic
2- *Al Arabiya* in English
3- *Al-Alam* in Arabic
4- *Al-Alam* in English

The detail of the news reports will be explained in section 4.5. In order to understand the features of each news agency and the rationale for choosing it, the background of the two agencies selected is presented below.

4.2 *Al Arabiya*

Al Arabiya is a commercial news channel that broadcasts as a free-to-air satellite television channel. The name means “The Arabic One”, and it targets Arab audiences by broadcasting in Modern Standard Arabic. *Al Arabiya* was originally a channel of the private Saudi Middle East Broadcasting Center (MBC) group. It began broadcasting from London in September 1991 as the first Arab satellite TV station serving Arabic-speaking audiences living outside the Arab world (Fandy, 2007; Lahlali, 2011). The channel’s headquarters were transferred to Dubai Media City in the UAE in 2005 after King Fahd of Saudi Arabia ended funding for the station. In 1992, ARA Group International, which owns MBC, bought United Press International to expand its news service and sought to maintain the global nature, credibility, and reputation of that news agency (Cochrane, 2007). Today, MBC’s chairman is Sheikh Waleed Al Ibrahim, a Saudi businessman and close relative of King Fahd.

In February 2003, Al Arabiya’s satellite TV channel began transmission. The idea of launching a specialised news channel had been discussed within MBC for several years, but implementation was rushed by a succession of major events, including the 11 September 2001 attacks, the 2002 Palestinian uprising, and the 2003 invasion of Iraq (Zayani and Ayish, 2006; Lynch, 2010). Although Al Arabiya’s TV channel broadcasts in Arabic, its website is available in four languages. The official Arabic website was launched on 21 February 2004, followed by an English version in August 2007 that was intended to bridge the gap between the Arabic-language TV channel

and English-speaking audiences. Finally, Urdu and Farsi versions were launched in 2008 (Al-Arabiya, 2019). The topics covered on these websites include politics, business, and sports.

4.3 *Al-Alam*

Al-Alam is a satellite TV channel that specialises in news. It was launched in April 2003 and transmits from Tehran, Iran (Al-Alam, 2019). Although Farsi is the official language of Iran, this TV channel targets Arabic-speaking audiences by broadcasting in Modern Standard Arabic, and its name is Arabic for “the world”. This channel is institutionally managed and financed by the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB), a state-owned media corporation under the direct control of the Iranian government (Pahlavi, 2012). The goal of this channel is to “present Islamic views, break the Western monopoly of news channels, and fill the vacuum in the existing news transmissions in the world” (Al-Alam, 2019). Moreover, it aims to maintain the independence and security of Islamic countries (Pahlavi, 2012). The channel launched an English-language website in November 2004 to gain credibility among global audiences and to demonstrate its impartiality (Pahlavi, 2012). Farsi and Arabic versions of the website were later launched to extend its influence on a wider audience through translation (Al-Alam, 2019).

Frequently, a news agency publishes more than one version of the same story in each language. The Arabic and English versions of the same story are often not published on the same date or in the same way, which can reveal how the news is rewritten or reproduced to suit different readerships.

4.4 The Focus of the News Reports

There are three human rights activists whose conflicts with the Saudi authorities were the subject of news reports that comprise the study corpus. All three activists were chosen for four main reasons:

1) International and national journalistic attention, as indicated by the availability of numerous news reports in both Arabic and English. A simple online search with the name of the activist

leads to a long list of significant content, ranging from blogs and news reports to photos and audio-visual materials.

2) The availability of the human rights aspect of the case. The details had to represent what would be widely considered human rights activism or a human rights violation. In this context, the UDHR concept of human rights is employed.
3) The conflict-laden nature of the case. Human rights cases that do not conflict directly with the Saudi authorities cannot be considered as ideal cases for investigating any ideological influence on the creation of the news. For example, human rights violations that are committed in Saudi Arabia by a citizen or a non-governmental group will not be problematic or noteworthy enough to investigate the way conflicting ideologies could affect the coverage of such news. Therefore, all three cases chosen caused diplomatic and humanitarian pressures on the Saudi authorities.
4) The timeframe of the unfolding of the news. Cases that occurred prior to the selected timeframe (such as Saud al-Hashimi) or after (such as Jamal Khashoggi) could not be included for practical reasons.

The three selected cases represent three different aspects of human rights. The first activist is Raif Badawi, who is often connected with freedom of expression, freedom of speech, and freedom of religion, having been accused of apostasy. The second is Loujain Al-Hathloul, a female activist who is widely associated with women's rights, especially women's right to drive, which had long been banned in Saudi Arabia. The third activist is Nimr Al-Nimr, often linked with political and religious rights; he was a leading Shia scholar who became a symbol of the rights of the Shia minority in Saudi Arabia. These human rights aspects are often debated and many philosophical and religious objections are often raised in critique of such issues as mentioned in sectioned 2.7.2.

4.5 The Selected News Reports

The data corpus includes news reports about the three activists taken from the two news agencies and appearing from the beginning of 2011 through the end of 2017. This timeframe was chosen for several reasons. First, the selected period starts with the Arab Spring, which began in January 2011. Human rights discourse leapt to an unpresented level in the Arab world amid a wave of political, economic, and socio-cultural reforms demanded by human rights activists and the citizenry they influenced. Saudi society was also affected by this wave and witnessed many debates, initiatives, protests, and so forth; much of this activity was featured in the virtual world of social media and the Internet more broadly. The level of political criticism has increased dramatically since the Arab Spring began. Second, this period coincides with the time of this doctoral research duration, which allowed the researcher to witness the unfolding of the news reports even as the data were being collected. Although the initial plan was to end the timeframe in January 2015, with the death of King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia, the timeframe was extended to the end of 2017 to include more news reports in the data. The additional three years witnessed very important milestones in the three activists' stories, and being able to include those news reports was of great value to the present study.

There are 278 news reports included in this research; details on the number of reports per category and per activist are shown in Table 3. The search results using the activists' names were retrieved using several search engines, including the news agencies' own websites, Google™, and the Wayback Machine™, which is a digital partial archive of the Internet. Some reports, as detailed below, focus on issues that are not directly related to the stories of the activists, but they did include an activist's name for one reason or another. It is essential to investigate why a name was (or names were) used and how the activists were intertextually linked and framed by the relevant news agency. Searches used both Arabic and English variations of the activists' names, some of which have different spellings, such as "Raef" and "Raif". This also happens with some Arabic spellings; for example, the name

“Badawi” was spelled (بدوي) and (البدوي). The search results in Table 3. include all these variations.

Table 3: Total search results for the three activists

	Al Arabiya		Al-Alam		
	Arabic	English	Arabic	English	Total
Raif Badawi	2	11	65	7	85
Loujain Al-Hathloul	2	2	8	2	14
Nimr Al-Nimr	46	47	52	34	179
Total	50	60	125	43	278

A list of the 278 news reports is in Appendix A below. Although these reports were used to investigate some analytical features such as lexicalisation (section 6.2), it is important to note that not all news reports were considered representative of the studied discourse with regard to certain analytical tools. For instance, photos used in the news reports that do not focus on the stories of the activists cannot be studied in the same way as those in news reports that do focus on the activists. Therefore, subgroups of the corpus, including only those reports in which one of the three activists was the central focus, were used in the analysis This was determined based on several factors, such as the name of the activist appearing in the headline or using his or her photo as a central core feature of the report. The total number of news reports, after these steps were taken, was 167, with details shown in Table 4.

Table 4: The number of reports that focused on the three activists

	Al Arabiya		Al-Alam		
	Arabic	English	Arabic	English	Total
Raif Badawi	2	6	35	3	46
Loujain Al-Hathloul	1	2	4	1	8
Nimr Al-Nimr	27	29	25	32	113
Total	30	37	64	36	167

The number of news reports varies across the case studies according to several factors. For instance, the news of the execution of Al-Nimr was more intense both nationally and internationally, which explains the increase in number of reports. However, the variation in the length of the news reports compensated for the variation in the number of reports.

Chapter 5: Explanation (Socio-Cultural Level)

5.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the contextualisation of the three cases, which requires a brief historical background of the major sociological shifts in Saudi Arabia. Then, detailed explanations and timelines of the three cases are presented, with a focus on the trials and the contextual human rights understanding in each case. Another important overview addresses the ideological conflict between Saudi Arabia and Iran, which is the major ideological influence under investigation in this thesis.

This chapter provides a macro-level analysis of the socio-cultural factors that influence the production of human rights news and the construction, suppression, or utilisation of human rights discourse. The discussion of the main narratives surrounding the cases provides a roadmap for understanding the textual, semiotic, and discursive choices found in the reports.

5.2 A Socio-Cultural Background of Saudi Arabia

The geographical, cultural, and political contexts need to be explored before reviewing the timelines of the three cases. The pre-Saudi history of the region is a challenging task for this thesis, as it focuses on changes in what has been known as Saudi society since the founding of the modern country in 1932. Prior to that, different parts of the region were under the rule of various other powers, each of which left its own influence. Over the past century, there have been many significant changes in the Middle East that affected the nations of the region on many levels. Saudi Arabia, as one of the largest Middle Eastern countries, has its own particular issues based on its own religious and political narrative, beyond the complexities of its social structure.

The following timeline of Saudi Arabia offers key milestones that can offer a better understanding of the current competing narratives, discourses, and ideologies. The history of Saudi Arabia is best understood in the context of the regional history of the Arabian Peninsula, which predates the Islamic

era. However, for the purpose of this thesis, the earliest relevant historical features are linked to the advent of Islam, when the two greatest powers in the region were the Byzantine and Sasanian Empires. The clash between the Islamic caliphates with the Sasanian Empire, which resulted in the latter's destruction, is still referred to in today's discourse regarding the Saudi–Iranian conflict.

The long history of the region during the different caliphates, dynasties, kingdoms, and other tribal authorities stretched for centuries. The Saudi dynasty began in the eighteenth century with the first Saudi state, which ruled between 1744 and 1818. A second Saudi state existed from 1824 to 1891. The modern Saudi state, the Third Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, started with King Abdul-Aziz bin Saud's quest to regain the lost kingdom when he retook Riyadh, the modern capital of Saudi Arabia, in 1902. What is referred to as the unification of Saudi Arabia was completed after he recaptured other areas in the Arabian Peninsula, such as Al Hijaz, Asir, and Al Hasa. In 1932, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was established, with Abdul-Aziz bin Saud proclaimed its king. Since that time, Saudi society has witnessed dramatic socio-cultural change due to the technological, scientific, economic, political, educational, and other factors that have affected the entire world over the last hundred years. However, the shift in Saudi society is among the most radical changes because of Saudi Arabia's specific characteristics. For example, it has gone from being a marginal actor in the political and economic spheres to becoming a key player in the contemporary world. Two central factors caused this particular socio-cultural shift in Saudi Arabia: conservatism and urbanisation. An overview of the history and influence of these two factors, the human rights context, and how the three studied cases can be understood in the light of these factors is presented below.

5.2.1 Conservatism

The history of Saudi Arabia is inseparable from Islam. Saudi Arabia presents itself to its own citizens and to the world as a profoundly Muslim country. Even its flag has an Arabic inscription of the *shahada* (the Islamic declaration of faith): لا إله إلا الله محمد رسول الله (There is no god but Allah: Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah). Moreover, the Saudi government's website proclaims

that it is an “Islamic state based on principles prescribed by the Qur'an (Islam's Holy Book) and the Sharia’s (Islamic law)”. In addition, Saudi Arabia is widely revered by Muslims around the world as the birthplace of the Prophet Muhammad and home to the two holy mosques in Mecca and Medina (Chaudhry, 2014).

5.2.1.1 The Beginning

The Saudi dynasty, known as the Al Saud, began in 1744 with its founder Muhammad ibn Saud, a local leader in central Arabia, who employed the then-conventional system of ruling in Arabia (Al-Rasheed, 2010, p. 14; Bowen, 2014). The Saudi royal family formed an alliance with the religious reformer Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab, the founder of the Wahhabi movement (Bowen, 2014). Both men took an oath to achieve their common goal, which sought to purify “Islam from… innovations and [apply] a strict interpretation of the sharia” (Al-Rasheed, 2010, p. 15). Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab was a religious scholar from a family of religious scholars, who distinguished himself as a reformer by emphasising the concept of monotheism, denouncing any kind of mediation between the Muslims and Allah, and upholding the obligation to answer the call for holy war (Abu Hakima, 1967). This alliance granted the ideological impetus to the Saudi–Wahhabi expansion, which facilitated the recruitment of many people who believed in the reformist movement and its religious message and thus enlarged the Saudi–Wahhabi fighting forces (Faksh, 1997). The alliance was sealed with many marriages and political relations over the years, starting with Muhammad bin Saud's son’s marriage to the daughter of the Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab; these connections have helped maintain the pact between the two families through the present day (Al-Rasheed, 2010).

5.2.1.2 The Rise of *Mutawwa*

Two kinds of religious people have been recognised during the first and second Saudi states: العلماء (*ulama*) and المطوع (*mutawwa*), although many people do not draw a distinction between the two (Al-Bassam, 1978). The term *ulama* means “scholars”, which is used in this context to describe mainly students of traditional Islamic subjects like theology, Islamic jurisprudence, and Quranic studies. Linguistically, *mutawwa* implies both obedience and

compulsion. It is used to refer to “a volunteer who enforced obedience to Islam and performance of its rituals” (Al-Rasheed, 2010, p. 47). Al-Rasheed also notes that the term should not be confused with “scholars”, as *mutawwa* are experts in Islamic rituals and worship; she describes them as “ritual specialists” (2010, p. 47). These ritual specialists had an important role during the three Saudi kingdoms. In addition to enforcing a ritualistic interpretation of Islam, they helped to implement a system of discipline and punishment with an Islamic reference which was “essential for domesticating the Arabian population into accepting the political authority of Ibn Saud” (Al-Rasheed, 2010, p. 47).

Following the teachings of the *mutawwa*, a new distinct “religious” group was essential to the formation of the third (present) Saudi state. This group, called the الإخوان (*al ikhwan*), literally means “the brethren”. The Saudi army that unified the tribes of Arabia and formed the Saudi kingdom consisted of tribal confederations, but the main force was the *ikhwan*, who were the first organised semi-permanent military force recruited from the tribal confederations (Al-Rasheed, 2010, p. 57). They became a decisive force in the wars of unification. However, the *ikhwan* uprising against Abdul-Aziz led to their destruction and the killing or jailing of their leaders, and the movement ended.

After the official creation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 1932, the country witnessed a number of key economic development and socially progressive steps during the reigns of Abdul-Aziz and his successors. However, many religious groups did not like the direction in which the country was going: the rapid pace of technological innovations, the modernisation of the educational system, the reliance on foreign non-Islamic entities like the US, and the openness to welcoming expatriates as workers in the rapidly developing country all caused concerns among the more traditional elements of Saudi society.

5.2.1.3 The Grand Mosque Seizure

The influence of this powerful trend could not be ignored, especially after the seizure of the Grand Mosque in Mecca at the end of 1979. This conflict was initiated by insurgent religious extremists. Their leader, Juhayman Al-Otaibi,

was the grandson of Sultan bin Bajad Al-Otaibi, one of the most important leaders of the *ikhwan* movement that was defeated by Abdul-Aziz in 1929. The seizure had several goals. The insurgents rejected the position of the religious scholars appointed by the government “and began advocating a return to the original ways of Islam, among other things: a repudiation of the West; abolition of television and expulsion of non-Muslims” (Wright, 2001, p. 152). They rejected the Saud family’s policy of Westernising the country and declared that the royal family had lost its legitimacy due to its alleged corruption, ostentatious lifestyle, and Westernising policies that were damaging Saudi culture.

The seizure lasted for around two weeks; it included the taking of hostages, hundreds of deaths, and massive damage to the Grand Mosque, Islam’s holiest place. This event shocked Saudi society and the broader Islamic world. The Saudi government soon changed its attitude towards several of the issues raised by the insurgents. Over the next decade, it began giving the *ulama* and religious conservatives more power in order to restrict the power of the *mutawwa* and other religious extremists. Khaled, the king at the time, believed that “the solution to the religious upheaval was simple–more religion” (Lacey, 2011, p. 50). A number of resolutions were issued to respond to the Grand Mosque incident and to reclaim the religious legitimacy of the Saudi dynasty, such as bans on picturing females in newspapers and on television, closing cinemas and music shops, increasing the amount of religious studies in school curricula, removing subjects like non-Islamic history, imposing greater gender segregation, and empowering the religious police to become more assertive (Lacey, 2011).

5.2.1.4 The *Sahwa* Movement

The 1980s witnessed another shift in the relations between the Saudi government and powerful religious trends. Following the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran, there were a few protests among Shia Muslims in the eastern region of Saudi Arabia. The Soviet–Afghan War, which lasted from 1979 to 1989, was also very influential on several Saudi religious movements. During this war, Saudi Arabia, along with other countries such as the US, opposed the Soviet invasion and supported the native Afghan *mujahideen* (a

military force engaged in jihad) financially and, more importantly, by facilitating Arab *mujahideen* to join an Islamic Jihad against the Soviets (Bergen, 2002). The jihad discourse became widespread in Saudi Arabia during the 1980s. Ultimately, the increased number of Saudi and Arab *mujahideen* joining the Afghani jihad resulted in the establishment of Al-Qaeda by Osama bin Laden and Abdullah Azzam, aided by many Arab volunteers (Gunaratna, 2005).

This war, along with the new governmental attitude towards religious curricula, opened the door to a major religious socio-cultural trend known as الصحوة (*Sahwa*), which literally means “the awakening”. *Sahwa* is a peaceful reformist movement that gained fame and overwhelming public support. The teachings, lectures, leaflets, and other publications of some of its representatives became very popular all over Saudi Arabia, especially amongst the educated youth. The ideological origin of this movement is debatable, however, as there is another source that influenced the *Sahwa* movement; beyond the traditional Wahhabi influence, the Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt became a very important force. The Egyptian authorities had been strongly opposed to both the Brotherhood and Saudi Arabia for decades. Thus, Saudi Arabia welcomed many of the Brotherhood’s leaders who were seeking refuge from persecution; they were allowed to live, work, and, in some cases, teach in Saudi universities during the 1950s and 1960s. The *Sahwa* movement thus was a hybrid result of cross-pollination between Wahhabism and the ideology of the Muslim Brotherhood.

The manifestations of the *Sahwa* movement gradually increased from religious preaching towards more political efforts (Al-Rasheed, 2010). For instance, some of the most prominent *Sahwa* figures began to criticise the Saudi royal family’s wealth and demanded more transparency in the economy. They also sought more authority for the clergy, deeper religious trends, and fewer Western cultural influences. The movement reached its peak around the Gulf War of 1990–1991; the *Sahwa* were more active in dissenting from the government after a vast number of American troops were stationed on Saudi soil. In response, the Saudi government jailed many of the most prominent *Sahwa* figures.

The effect of this conservative ideology on the Saudi socio-cultural atmosphere has been immense, and the understanding of human rights in that country is deeply shaped by its rhetoric. In this thesis, the case of Badawi will be used to discuss freedom of expression, Al-Hathloul's for women's rights, and Al-Nimr's for political and religious freedoms.

First, freedom of expression has long been regarded with suspicion because it could lead to blasphemy, apostasy, profanity, and other religiously denounced discourses. Thus, the issue of freedom of speech or expression is often linked with liberal values, where "liberalism" has a deeply negative meaning; sometimes, its values are viewed as directly contradictory to Islam.

Second, women's rights have suffered from many strict interpretations regarding the role of women in Islam and the legislation that has been informed by those interpretations. These laws paved the way for a series of women's rights violations. For example, the Islamic concepts of قوامة (*qiwamah*) and ولاية (*wilayah*) have been interpreted and implemented in Saudi law in a very controversial manner, resulting in what is now criticised under the name of "male guardianship". The male guardianship laws in Saudi Arabia are applied to enforce obedience of females towards their male guardians with regard to issues as diverse as employment, education, travel, health, and nationality. As to the issue of women driving, as is discussed in detail below, religious grounds were long used to justify the ban on women driving. Moreover, there are issues with women's dress code, segregation, economic rights, employment, sports, and other legal matters that have been influenced by this conservative ideology.

Third, the matter of freedom of religion and other political freedoms touches on some of the most urgent issues in the area of human rights. As for the religious aspect, Shia in Saudi Arabia have faced several kinds of religious discrimination. There have been complaints of suppression of many of their religious practices, with their commemorations of the Day of Ashura and visiting graves of imams are not permissible due to Wahhabism, the official interpretation of Islam in Saudi Arabia. This has been accompanied by discrimination in education, where the only religious material allowed is Wahhabist. These materials have also been also criticised as hostile towards

not only Shia but also other Islamic sects, let alone other faiths. Another example of discrimination occurs in the workforce, as Saudi Shia are not allowed to work as teachers of religious subjects, judges, military or police officers, mayors, ministers, or ambassadors.

5.2.2 Urbanisation

The history of cities and settlements in the Saudi region dates back to ancient times. However, when focusing on the urbanisation of Saudi Arabia, Al-Hathloul and Edadan propose four main stages in the evolutionary process of settlement growth: “the trade and pilgrim routes of the pre-national unification period, the sedentarisation process of the unification period, the oil discovery and extraction period of the early 1960s and the oil boom and development planning period of the 1970s” (1993, p. 31).

Urbanisation is a hallmark of the rapid economic and civil development in Saudi Arabia over the past five decades. It began with the advent of oil production in the region as a whole. The first oil well, Dammam No. 7, was discovered in 1938 after several disappointing attempts since 1935 (Al-Rasheed, 2010, p. 89). It was not until 1938 that oil was produced in commercial quantities. The influence of oil in Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries can never be ignored. However, the visible effects of the industry were largely limited to urban areas like Riyadh, Jeddah, and Dhahran in the early years of the newly established country.

It was not until the 1970s, especially the oil boom of 1973, that the face of Saudi society changed dramatically in both urban and rural areas. The boom, known in Arabic as الطفرة (*Al-Tafrah*), was caused by the radical increase of oil prices during and after the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. It started on 19 October 1973 when the Arab states in the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) followed Saudi Arabia in placing an embargo on oil sales to Western countries that supported Israel in that war (Bowen, 2014, p. 116). These countries were shocked and suffered significantly from the embargo, since they had grown dependent on a steady supply of cheap oil since the end of World War II (Bowen, 2014, p. 116).

Crude oil prices increased more than 300% by January 1974, from $3 to $11 per barrel (Bowen, 2014, p. 116). This led to a major shift in the nature

of Saudi citizens after the oil boom. For instance, before the boom, less than 20% of Saudis lived in urban areas (UN DESA, 2014). The dramatic increase in wealth changed the face of the Saudi society in just two generations, as around 49% of Saudis lived in cities in 1970; by 2005, almost 90% resided in cities (Gresh, 2006). However, it was not the only major factor in shaping the socio-cultural face of Saudi Arabia, as ultra-conservativism is what differentiates Saudi society from its rich, oil-exporting neighbours.

5.2.3 The Arab Spring and Vision 2030

Since 2011, major changes have occurred in Saudi society. As to human rights, there have been both positive and negative changes. This could be due to the momentum of the Arab uprisings, to other effects, or to a combination thereof. However, the influence of the Arab Spring cannot be ignored. Positively, there have been major political initiatives and new, more inclusive discourse from the Saudi authorities, in addition to many activist movements that have shocked the Saudi public sphere. On the negative side, a violent response to activists, dissidents, reformers, and others is claimed to be a part of an ongoing counter-revolution led by Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and other regimes in the area. In general, the Arab Spring uprisings contributed to major shifts at many levels of Saudi society and other Arab countries.

The recent major changes in the Saudi political, economic, socio-cultural, and legislative spheres support the claim that the influence of a conservative ideology and the oil boom have been problematic for some people. In response, Saudi Arabia has begun to take rapid and even radical action to repair and reform the socio-cultural sphere, along with the economic and financial aspects. This attitude to the established conservative ideology was clearly announced by Mohammed bin Salman, the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia, who promised to work to “return the country to a moderate Islam”:

> What happened in the last 30 years is not Saudi Arabia. What happened in the region in the last 30 years is not the Middle East. After the Iranian revolution in 1979, people wanted to copy this model in different countries, one of them is Saudi Arabia. We didn’t know how to deal with it. And the problem spread all over the world. Now is the time to get rid of it.… We are simply

> reverting to what we followed – a moderate Islam open to the world and all religions. 70% of the Saudis are younger than 30, honestly we won't waste 30 years of our life combating extremist thoughts, we will destroy them now and immediately. (Chulov, 2017).

This desire for returning to a moderate Islam has been deeply questioned, especially as it is difficult to claim that Saudi Arabian society was especially open or moderate before 1979. Moreover, recent practices implemented by the Saudi government in the treatment of activists, journalists, preachers, intellectuals, and dissidents have caused many observers to be suspicious of the Saudi government's credibility (Pellegrino, 2018).

As for the effect of the effects of oil boom and urbanisation, it is now considered a major national challenge that needs to be addressed in the new government plan known as Vision 2030, which seeks to reduce the Kingdom's dependence on oil, diversify the economy, and advance public service sectors such as infrastructure, education, health, and tourism. Mohammed bin Salman also made the following declaration:

> We have developed an oil addiction in the kingdom of Saudi Arabia, among everyone…. That is dangerous, and that is what has hampered the development of many different sectors in recent years. (Hubbard, 2016).

The Saudi socio-cultural reality one finds today appears to be undergoing a major transition due to the rapid political and economic changes in Saudi Arabia and the broader region. The relevant question for this thesis is how human rights and human rights discourse might be affected.

5.3 Contextualising the Three Cases

The above historical background has paved the way to discuss the three cases in detail. Each is a human rights story that has been much debated and discussed both nationally and internationally. Below is a detailed account of each case that introduces the activists, describes their trials, outlines the prosecutions, and reviews the national and international reception of the

news. I use the term “activist” in all three cases, although I do not intend to either support or denounce any side in these debates; the term is chosen for purely functional reasons. The three activists are Raif Badawi (section 5.3.1), Loujain Al-Hathloul (section 5.3.2), and Nimr Al-Nimr (section 5.3.3).

5.3.1 The Case of Raif Badawi

The first activist is رائف بن محمد بدوي, or Raif bin Muhammad Badawi. He was born in Khobar, Saudi Arabia on 13 January 1984 to a Saudi Muslim father, Muhammad Badawi, and a Lebanese Christian mother, Najwa. He is married to Ensaf Haidar and the father of three. All their children were born in Saudi Arabia, but they are now with their mother, who took refuge in Canada due to the claim that they were constantly threatened in Saudi Arabia (Almirsal.com, 2015).

Badawi is known for being a controversial blogger who started a website called (الشبكة الليبرالية السعودية الحرة), the “Free Saudi Liberals Network”. He started this website along with some friends on 13 August 2006. It soon became controversial and made headlines after users who participated in this forum published much controversial material. There was strong criticism of the religious elite and the strict interpretations they propose and are implemented in Saudi Arabia. Some of these issues involve the situation of women and religious rights and freedoms. This website reached around 2,000 members by the end of 2007 and was regularly critical of how the authorities governed the country. Given these writings happened in the reign of King Abdullah who is considered by some as “liberal”, no strong action by the official security forces occurred, but the Committee for the Promotion of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice (CPVPV), the religious police, detained Badawi for a few hours and interrogated him. He was then released without charge. The conservative forces continued harassing him, as they joined his father in posting a series of YouTube videos criticising him and his ideas, in addition to many televised debates and critical writings which led to a series of accusations and trials that are detailed below.

It is important to note that the meaning of the term “liberal” has very specific connotations in the Saudi context. Al-Ghathami (2013) argues that this term has developed its own meaning in Saudi Arabia’s intellectual and

cultural atmosphere. It cannot denote traditional “philosophical liberalism” due to the absence of any scholarly philosophical reference in the Saudi liberal sphere, which is a largely virtual medium. It cannot also refer to “political liberalism”, since there is no liberal party, union, or organisation in Saudi Arabia, or even a liberal bloc, whether public or secret, although there have been nationalist and leftist organisations (Al-Ghathami, 2013). He also excludes “economic liberalism”, as he holds that the economy in Saudi Arabia was based on the free market and other liberal economic basis, with Islamic economic theory not introduced until recently. Therefore, Al-Ghathami (2013, p. 175) concludes that the real use of this term is what he calls “journalistic liberalism”. This conception, he argues, began in the 1960s with Western journalists who reported news from Saudi Arabia and encountered only officials and sheikhs who spoke with a high degree of reservation and limited disclosure. Outside these two groups, however, these journalists met people who spoke differently and openly; they did not know how to categorise them as anything other than “liberals”. This term, in one way or another, continued to be used in Saudi culture to refer to modernist writers, thinkers, and intellectuals who were not recognised as Islamists (Al-Ghathami, 2013).

5.3.1.1 The Trials and Human Rights Struggle

Badawi’s encounter with the legal system started in 2008 when he was detained for apostasy charges, although he was released the next day after being questioned. However, his and his wife’s bank accounts were frozen, and he was prevented from leaving the country. His wife’s family also filed a court action requesting the court to divorce her forcibly due to his alleged apostasy.

After that difficult period, a second, harsher episode of legal prosecutions began in 2012. Badawi’s website and writings featured strong criticism of the religious elites in general and some of their leading figures in particular. He even described Imam Muhammad ibn Saud Islamic University as a “den for terrorists” (An7a.com, 2013). Badawi was arrested on the grounds of insulting Islam through electronic media on 17 June 2012.

On 17 December 2012, his trial started in a district court in Jeddah. After that, the judge referred the charge to a higher court as he was not able to rule on any crime, such as apostasy, that could lead to the death penalty.

However, the apostasy case was refused by the General Court in Jeddah and was referred back to a lower court.

The following year, the verdict was announced by Saudi media; Badawi was sentenced to seven years of imprisonment and six hundred lashes (Human Rights Watch, 2014). The court ordered his website to be shut down by 30 July 2013. Badawi appealed and sought a reconsideration of his sentence, but a few months later the appeal court actually increased his sentence. On 7 May 2014, he was sentenced to 10 years in prison, 1000 lashes, and a fine of 1 million Saudi riyals (about £200,000). The flogging started on 9 January 2015; the plan was to administer 50 lashes every week for 20 weeks. The first episode of flogging was carried out publicly in front of hundreds of spectators near the Al-Jaffali Mosque in Jeddah (McDowall, 2015). The case was referred to the Saudi Supreme Court in mid-January 2015 to be reviewed after it had received unprecedented international condemnation. Badawi is still in jail in Jeddah and has not been flogged since that first episode.

5.3.1.2 The Aftermath of the Case

The above timeline outlines the main milestones in Badawi's story. However, the trial was surrounded by enormous journalistic battles and intense controversy at each step. His case was debated heavily both nationally and internationally, in Arabic and in English, with many "liberal" Saudi columnists writing essays in defence of Badawi or at least minimising the attacks he suffered from the conservative majority. The issue soon became a symbol of human rights violations in Saudi Arabia.

Badawi's lawyer Waleed Abu Al-Khair, who is also married to Samar Badawi, a well-known Saudi women's rights activist and Raif's sister, was also prosecuted during that time. Abu Al-Khair had been active in several human rights causes. For instance, he was involved in the Jeddah reformers case as a member of the defence team. He was also among those who signed a petition called "Toward a State of Rights and Institutions". He was the first person in Saudi Arabia to organise a hunger strike campaign for human rights. Most importantly, in 2008 he founded an independent human rights organisation called Monitor for Human Rights in Saudi Arabia and participated

in the establishment of another, more controversial organisation, the Saudi Civil and Political Rights Association (ACPRA). Abu Al-Khair was prosecuted by a non-Sharia court newly established in 2008 and called المحكمة الجزائية المتخصصة, or "The Specialized Criminal Court", which was primarily created to deal with terrorism cases. Abu Al-Khair was charged with several offenses, including "undermining the regime and officials", "inciting public opinion", and "insulting the judiciary" (Al Jazeera, 2014). Abu Al-Khair was sentenced to 15 years in jail to be followed by a 15-year ban on travel, in addition to a fine of 200,000 Saudi riyals, which is about £31,110 (Al Jazeera, 2014). It is hardly unreasonable to link the trial of Abu Al-Khair with Badawi's case, since the former was the latter's lawyer. Regardless of the certainty of any apparent connection, it is one of the major human rights stories usually linked with Badawi's. Therefore, Abu Al-Khair is also widely considered a human rights activist and hero.

Amnesty International issued a statement on Badawi's case, saying it considers "him to be a prisoner of conscience, detained solely for peacefully exercising his right to freedom of expression" (2012). Philip Luther, the Director of Amnesty International's Middle East and North Africa Programme, made the following remarks:

> Even in Saudi Arabia where state repression is rife, it is beyond the pale to seek the death penalty for an activist whose only 'crime' was to enable social debate online.… Raif Badawi's trial for 'apostasy' is a clear case of intimidation against him and others who seek to engage in open debates about the issues that Saudi Arabians face in their daily lives. He is a prisoner of conscience who must be released immediately and unconditionally. (Amnesty International, 2012).

Since the beginning of his trial, many human rights organisations and international officials have found common cause with Badawi's plight and condemned the Saudi legal system for the charges and verdicts. For instance, Kacem El Ghazzali, the representative of the International Humanist and Ethical Union (IHEU), condemned Badawi's sentence, describing it as a "gratuitous, violent sentence" (IHEU, 2014). Human Rights Watch was one of

the most active organisations; it has issued many news releases and commentaries about the case since its early stages in 2008 (Human Rights Watch, 2008). It also published around a dozen different reports between the beginning of the trial in late 2012 and the initial sentencing in July 2013.

The story also became a sensation in the international media, as many news agencies reported various elements of the story. By and large, the media coverage adopted a discourse that depicted Badawi as unjustly prosecuted and the Saudi legal system as regressive and corrupt. While there may have been exceptions, the bulk of the discourse was very supportive of Badawi's cause internationally, while the official Saudi and popular domestic attitudes towards the case were completely different, as there was public discourse promoted by Saudi news agencies denouncing Badawi's actions and criticising the international momentum that the case had garnered. Matters became so heated that the Foreign Ministry of Saudi Arabia issued a statement warning against meddling in the country's internal affairs.

After Badawi received the first 50 lashes, there was a wave of journalistic reports about the case, accompanied by a massive international campaign calling for him to be freed. This campaign involved letters to the Saudi government and other international officials, street protests, and, obviously, social media activities. For instance, the #jesuisraif hashtag on Twitter, echoing the French movement "Je suis Charlie", trended in January 2015. Many prominent figures have supported Badawi's cause, especially in the West, which may have led his case to be seen in the context of the West vs. Islam; ironically, that may have actually hindered his cause. One of the most notable incidents occurred when Philip Hammond, the UK's foreign secretary, discussed with the Saudi ambassador the issue of Saudi doctors who performed the required medical assessments before the flogging, which some see as involving themselves in acts of torture. The UK also denounced "the use of cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment in all circumstances" (Black, 2015). The UK spokesperson added that UK officials

> have previously raised Mr Badawi's case and will do so again directly with the Saudi authorities. The UK is a strong supporter of freedom of expression around the world. We believe that

> people must be allowed to freely discuss and debate issues, challenge their governments, exercise the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, and speak out against violations of human rights wherever they occur. (Black, 2015).

In addition, 18 Nobel laureates used an open letter to urge Saudi academics to condemn Badawi's flogging. According to *The Independent* (Green, 2015), many prominent scientists in the West are concerned about the position of Saudi academics, who may be internationally marginalised for not standing up on this issue.

On 3 March 2015, a bipartisan letter was sent to King Salman of Saudi Arabia by 67 members of the US Congress shortly after he ascended to the throne. The letter encouraged King Salman to "advocate for human rights and democratic reforms" (US Bipartisan Congress Letter, 2015). Its authors stressed the issue of freedom of religion and mentioned the cases of Badawi, Abu Al-Khair, and ACPRA as examples of violations of such human rights values, adding that they were

> aware of cases of persons who have been charged with apostasy or deported for practicing minority Muslim or Christian faiths. Others have received harsh sentences for exercising basic rights. One example is Raif Badawi, who was sentenced to ten years in prison and a thousand lashes for founding a website that encouraged religious and political debate. In his case, representatives of the U.S. government have called upon your country to cancel the sentence, and have also expressed concern with the 15-year sentence and the travel ban imposed on his lawyer, Waleed Abu Al-Khair. Another example is that of the independent human rights organization, the Saudi Civil and Political Rights Association (ACPRA), whose founders have all either been wrongfully imprisoned or put on trial. (US Bipartisan Congress Letter, 2015)

In March 2015, tensions with other countries arose regarding the Badawi case. For instance, German officials complained to Saudi Arabia regarding corporal punishment. Saudi-Swedish relations also deteriorated

after Margot Wallström, Sweden's foreign minister, spoke publicly about Badawi's case and other human rights activists, leading to a diplomatic quarrel.

One of the most recent major developments in Badawi's case is the 2018 Saudi-Canadian dispute. On 2 August 2018, a tweet by Chrystia Freeland, Canada's foreign affairs minister, expressed her concern that Samar Badawi had just been imprisoned in Saudi Arabia. She added that "Canada stands together with the Badawi family in this difficult time, and we continue to strongly call for the release of both Raif and Samar Badawi' (Freeland, 2018). On 3 August 2018, another tweet from the Canadian foreign policy official account (@CanadaFP) stated the following:

> Canada is gravely concerned about additional arrests of civil society and women's rights activists in #SaudiArabia, including Samar Badawi. We urge the Saudi authorities to immediately release them and all other peaceful #humanrights activists (@CanadaFP, 2018).

In response to these tweets, Saudi Arabia expelled Dennis Horak, the Canadian ambassador, declaring him persona non-grata and demanding that he leave the country within 24 hours. Saudi Arabia also froze all trade with Canada and recalled its ambassador, cancelled direct flights to Toronto by Saudi's state airline, and planned to bring all Saudi citizens living in Canada back home (Williams, 2018). The story of Badawi remains intense and open-ended even as this thesis is being written.

Since his arrest, Badawi's popularity has continued to grow, and he has become a symbol for concepts like freedom of speech. He has also received countless awards, honours, and nominations from around the world. Below is a list of just some such accolades, according to The Raif Badawi Foundation for Freedom website (2018):

- Awarded the Freedom of Speech Award 2015 from *Deutsche Welle*
- Awarded the Courage Award 2015 from the Geneva Summit for Human Rights and Democracy

- Awarded the Aikenhead Award 2015 of Scottish Secular Society
- Awarded the One Humanity Award 2014 From PEN Canada
- Awarded the Netizen Prize of Reporters without Borders 2014
- Honorary Member of PEN Canada
- Honorary Member of PEN Denmark
- Honorary Member of PEN German
- Nominated by Spain's Individual Freedom Party (P-LIB) for the 2014 Freedom Award
- Nominated for the 2014 International Publishers Association's Freedom to Publish Prize
- Awarded The Honour of the City of Strasbourg, 2015
- Nominated with Waleed for The Nobel Peace Prize, 2015
- Nominated for The Sakharov Prize, 2015

To sum up, the Badawi case has become an icon of the issue of Saudi law and human rights violations. With the more recent exception of the notorious issue of Jamal Khashoggi on 2 October 2018, it is the most heavily covered journalistic story about a Saudi citizen. This case was often linked with another controversial story when criticising Saudi Arabia's human rights profile: the ban on driving by women, which is discussed below.

5.3.2 The Case of Loujain Al-Hathloul

The second case is about the activist لجين الهذلول, or Loujain Al-Hathloul. She was born in Jeddah on 31 July 1989. She is a Saudi social media figure and women's rights activist. She came to fame as a social media figure on a Canadian social networking site named Keek in 2012 while studying French literature at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver (Khalaf, 2017). During this time, she became one of the most followed Saudi Keek users by posting videos of herself containing what was seen by many Saudis as divisive and controversial content. For instance, her videos showed her face and hair uncovered, in addition to the fact that she used her real tribal name, which some regard as offensive to tradition and conservative culture. Some followers

were supportive of the way she showed her identity in a direct challenge to her opponents. Others thought that this was a way of imposing Western values on Saudi society and that she had been brainwashed by the West (Khalaf, 2017). On the other hand, Al-Hathloul was seen as one of the bravest and most notable Saudi women's rights activists as she participated in many campaigns, was involved in numerous causes, was interviewed by several international media agencies, and was jailed and prosecuted more than once for her activism and other defiant actions. Above all, her name became synonymous with the ban on women driving, as she performed some of the most daring acts in the history of the Saudi women's rights movement. To understand Al-Hathloul's case and the timeline of her many trials, it is important to provide the context of Saudi women's rights and especially the ban on women driving. After that, a detailed account of Al-Hathloul's case is provided.

5.3.2.1 The Position of Women in Saudi Society

A good point to start the context of the driving ban is to understand how the position of women has changed in Saudi society in recent decades. Following the major economic and religious influences discussed above, Saudi women have found themselves in a very different position than previous generations. Al-Khateeb's (2007) study outlines some of the most critical changes that have happened to Saudi families since the discovery of oil, especially the changes that have affected the role of women and their situation in modern society. On one hand, official female education schooling started in 1959. On the other hand, women have been gradually disconnected from the public sphere. Many reasons contributed to the fact that women did not have to work with their male counterparts, including the use of expatriates who were paid much less than Saudis and controlled by a sponsorship system called الكفالة (*al-kafāla*), used by Saudi sponsors to monitor migrant labourers. In addition, the newly imposed conservativism also restricted women's movement and employment options. However, women began gradually regaining or claiming what they viewed as their rights due to a variety of factors, notably education. After official female education started in 1959 (35 years after male education), the number of female students kept increasing, and it now exceeds the number

of male students. The issue of female education is a cornerstone in the Saudi women's struggle for rights. Highly educated and employed Saudi women were those who began opposing "unjust" – or at best, unnecessary – restrictions enforced upon them by law. One of the major issues is the ban on women driving, which was formerly linked with references to the fact that Saudi Arabia was the sole country in the world to bar women from driving. Below is the story of the ban on women driving and the resistance movements it faced until it was finally repealed.

5.3.2.2 The Timeline of the Ban on Women Driving

It is difficult to specify the beginning of the ban on women driving, as it appears to have developed as a socio-cultural taboo rather than a legally enforced rule. In any case, the Saudi government did not have a means of issuing driving licences for female drivers, which was a *de facto* legal framework for this ban (Commins, 2006). In response, the ban was challenged by many in society in order to allow women to obtain driving licences and thus drive legally. It is worth noting that women regularly drove in some rural areas in Saudi Arabia. It was the women in urban areas who needed to challenge this taboo, as they depended on male drivers, either a family member or a hired private driver. The trajectory of the ban on women driving has four major milestones: the first attempt to drive in 1990, developments in the middle of the first decade of this century, the post-Arab Spring initiatives, and the end of the ban. These milestones are discussed in depth below.

5.3.2.2.1 The first attempt

The first campaign that attempted to defy the ban on women driving is described in detail in the 2013 book *السادس من نوفمبر المرأة وقيادة السيارة* (*The Sixth of November: Women and car driving*) by Aisha Al-Mana and Hissah Al-Asheikh (Al-Sheikh and Al-Mana, 2013), two of the forty-seven women who participated in the protest. The book is written as a documentation of the context and the details of the protest itself, along with the legal and social effects the protesters experienced. The book consists of four chapters: the first deals with the socio-cultural atmosphere before the protest and the conditions that paved the way for it. The second discusses the planning, preparations, and execution of the protest before the women were arrested.

The third chapter discusses the arrest and the harassment these women suffered after the protest. The fourth chapter contains several personal narratives from participants, who describe their motivations for participating and the hardships they suffered after taking part.

To understand what happened on that day, we need to understand the main participants, their motivations, and their goals. One of their central aims was to challenge the existing ban on women driving. The number of participants was 47, including a number of PhD holders and teachers; these were all educated women. Some female shoppers also joined the protest. They were modestly dressed, in accordance with Saudi community standards at that time. The women drove 14 cars. The plan was to gather at the Tamimi markets in Riyadh and drive the cars along a specific route over Riyadh's major streets on the afternoon of 6 November 1990. They drove their cars, stopping briefly after finishing one circuit of the full route, and then began driving on the route for a second time, surrounded by curious onlookers. They were stopped by traffic police and the CPVPV, also known as the *Hai'a*, or "religious police". They were taken into custody for an investigation at the traffic police station. They had to sign a pledge stating that they would not drive anymore and released at dawn the next day.

It is notable that this protest occurred during the tense months after Iraq invaded Kuwait on 2 August 1990. Just a few hours after this surprise attack, the UN Security Council held an urgent meeting that condemned the invasion via Resolution 660. The driving protest happened during the seven-month Iraqi occupation of Kuwait, when the Saudi government was focused on that situation and preparing for a major war. Saudi Arabia felt threatened after the invasion, especially after Iraqi troops approached the Saudi border. On 29 November 1990, the Security Council adopted Resolution 678, which gave Iraq until 15 January 1991 to unconditionally withdraw its forces from Kuwait.

This situation affected many aspects of the Saudi community, including the economic element. The Saudi government devoted nearly all its efforts to dealing with this political dilemma, and most of the foreign workers in Saudi Arabia had left for their home countries, leaving the Kingdom in a difficult situation. Many foreign workers who did stay demanded large salary increases

of as much as 300%. Private drivers were among these expatriates, and their relative scarcity made mobility more difficult for Saudi women.

After their first attempt, these women's rights activists faced a terrible backlash. They underwent public shaming from the conservatives who represented the majority of Saudi society and controlled the public sphere. They were also a powerful political tool in the hands of the government and used to maintain the status quo internally and justify the existence of the Saudi monarchy. In many mosques around the Kingdom, conservatives published leaflets and pamphlets and made audio cassettes warning the people about these protests; they listed the names of the participants, along with their cars' models and licence numbers. They were targeted by some preachers in mosque speeches and insulted repeatedly: they were called sluts, whores, pimps, Westernisers, infidels, secularists, and so forth, with some people demanding that the women face trial. As for legal actions against them, some were suspended from their jobs, others had their passports confiscated, and all were barred from talking to the media. A year later, they returned to their jobs and their passports were returned. However, they were kept under surveillance and overlooked for promotions (Al-Huwaider, 2009). Three days after the protest, a fatwa against women driving was issued by Abdul Aziz bin Baz, the Grand Mufti of Saudi Arabia, stating that the issue of women driving:

> is known that this is a source of undeniable vices, inter alia, the legally prohibited "khilwa" [meeting in private between a man and a woman] and abandonment of "hijab" [women's veil]. This also entails women meeting with men without taking the necessary precautions. It could also lead to committing "haraam" [taboo] acts hence this was forbidden Pure "Shari'a" also prohibits the means that lead to committing taboo acts and considers these acts "haraam" in themselves… Thus, the pure "Shari'a" prohibited all the ways leading to vice… Women's driving is one of the means leading to that and this is self-evident. (ibn Baz, n. d.-b)

In support of this fatwa and to legalise the ban, Interior Ministry issued an official statement strictly barring women from driving in the Kingdom of Saudi

Arabia and warning that any woman disobeying this statement would be punished (Wahab, 2011).

5.3.2.2.2 The first decade of the twenty-first century

In this period, two key changes affected women's rights and the issue of women driving. The first was the influence of new media – the Internet, Web 2.0, and digital satellites – that became major players in the Saudi community. The second was the advent of the somewhat liberal King Abdullah in 2006 after the death of the more conservative King Fahad. The Internet opened the possibility to activists of virtual meetings and the dissemination of censored materials that could not possibly appear in the government-run media. During this period, the 9/11 attacks occurred, which caused tremendous embarrassment for Saudi Arabia both nationally and internationally. During the first years of this century, Saudi Arabia witnessed some of the deadliest terrorist attacks in its history. This was accompanied by international pressure on Saudi Arabia to change its educational curricula since there was a strong link between 9/11 and Saudi Arabia, with 15 of the 19 hijackers being Saudi nationals. This fact raised suspicions about the discourses with which Saudi youth were being indoctrinated. The Saudi government took gradual steps to investigate this problem and to tone down the extremist elements of its ideological education.

After 9/11, the Iraq War saw the occupation of Iraq, acts that were seen by many Arabs and other Muslims as deeply unjust. Moreover, the so-called War on Terror was viewed as a war on Islam by many citizens of Muslim-majority countries. It was also seen as a new form of colonialism. There were also some economic interpretations of the occupation, and many simply did not believe the link between 9/11 and the two wars or accept the slogan of "democratising the Middle East". This was reflected in the many protests that swept the streets of most cities in the Arab and Muslim worlds and in acts of terror carried out by extremists.

There were major internal changes in Saudi Arabia, represented by the accession of King Abdullah and an effort to tone down the extreme religious rhetoric that had been adopted by the Saudi government since its inception. This came partly as a response to the 15 Saudis who were among the 19 9/11

hijackers (Wurm, 2008) and forced the Saudi government to agree to some extent to modify its religious curricula (Wurm, 2008). The religious preachers gradually faced some restrictions and a more moderate interpretation of Islamic culture began to be adopted. Moreover, the government started to introduce reforms like very limited elections at the local level, along with an increase in scholarships to Western and other countries for graduate and postgraduate studies.

The socio-cultural situation had changed since the first attempt in 1990 to defy the ban on women driving. Society in the Kingdom was more open to the external world more than it had previously been. The Internet also opened many channels of communications with the outside world. Saudi people began to integrate with other cultures.

Women became more active in society, a trend that enjoyed significant momentum during this decade. Women became more educated, on average, and more deeply involved in the government, media, education, business, and other areas of life. This reopened the dialogue about women's rights. This decade witnessed several important steps that advanced the movement of women's rights.

Some of the major steps in this period were topics in both social and mainstream media, along with some governmental developments. For instance, the Shura Council (a non-elected advisory council with no legislative powers) witnessed a few controversial discussions. After Ibn Hamid, the head of the council, forbade the council from discussing the issue of women driving in 2003 and after the government prevented the use of international driving licences by female Saudis and foreigners (Al-Mogren, 2004), a member of the Shura Council caused a great stir after he made a recommendation to the council on 23 May 2005 that included 18 justifications for ending the ban on women diving (Marwi, 2005). This recommendation was issued after the topic was first introduced in the council by another member, Dr Abdullah Bukhari, earlier that year (Dohyyan, 2016). He argued that around 12 billion Saudi riyals were paid annually to roughly a million foreign male drivers. However, the council refused (Zidan, 2005) to discuss it, and the issue was buried at that stage (Ambah, 2005). This media controversy was stopped by Prince

Nayef, the Minister of Interior, who stated after a few days that the issue of women driving was a social matter and that the controversy about it should thus be stopped (Al-Ghoneim, 2005).

The year 2006 witnessed major improvements in the way the issue was discussed. Although the Shura Council had rejected the recommendation due to its religious nature, the head of the council sought a decision from The Council of Senior Scholars (Al-Ghamdi, 2006). This led some council members to deny the jurisdiction of The Council of Senior Scholars on this topic (Al-Mogren, 2006). They rejected the notion that the issue of women driving was a religious matter that required a fatwa or religious debate. Abdul-Jalil Al-Saif, a member of the council, insisted that the issue of women driving was a purely social matter and that there was nothing in Saudi traffic laws to prevent women from driving (Al-Nawfal, 2006). He also explained that the traffic law system was 36 years old (at that time) and thus in need of some reform to keep up with the social and cultural changes that Saudi Arabia had undergone.

The official narrative from the government is easy to determine from the statements of many officials in the highest positions of power. For instance, King Abdullah regularly responded to questions of women driving by saying that, with time, everything is possible (Al-Hwaiti, 2005). Crown Prince Sultan, meanwhile, stated that the matter could be resolved based on public demand, adding that the government was trying to respect the wishes of the people. Prince Saud Al-Faisal, the Exterior Minister, stated that he personally supported the right of women to drive in Saudi Arabia, not for political or ideological reasons, but for merely practical purposes, since it was not a religious matter and did not qualify as an Islamic principle or foundation.

The year 2007 saw more promising initiatives, with a group of women activists called The Association for the Protection and Defense of Women's Rights in Saudi Arabia, which was led by Wajeha al-Huwaider and Fawzia Al-Uyyouni, demanding women’s right to drive. This initiative tried to submit a petition with 1,100 signatures to the King in September 2007, requesting the retraction of the ban on women driving (Aafaq, 2007). This petition was ignored by the King and received no official response (DRL, 2009). However,

after a mild reception from the royal officials, the group went to the traffic police of Dammam to raise their case there. This was not successful, as they received no reply. This new organisation was not approved by the Saudi government, which refused it a licence; moreover, it was warned not to call for demonstrations or protests (DRL, 2009). Another initiative by the association was the “No to the Oppression of Women” campaign, launched in 2008 and aimed at giving victims a voice by urging oppressed Saudi women to speak about the violence they suffered. They uploaded their stories on YouTube while maintaining anonymity (Aafaq, 2008).

As for the driving ban, Al-Huwaider posted a short clip on YouTube of her driving in Saudi Arabia, which captured a great deal of international media attention; the clip was posted on International Women's Day in 2008.

5.3.2.2.3 The post-Arab Spring phase

The influence of the Arab uprisings of 2011 on the activist atmosphere in Saudi Arabia was immediately and profoundly apparent. There were many changes in the human rights arena, particularly in women’s rights activism. As it was not possible for Saudi community to gather physically and plan activism due to political restrictions and legal oppression of the public, social media proved to be very effective, as it was in other countries, with the Arab protests in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Yemen, Syria and Bahrain. Madawi Al-Rasheed (2013) notes much of the activist youth had migrated to virtual forums where they could call for reform and even the overthrow of the ruling family. Some of the issues that dominated the media during this period were the free-speech activist Raif Badawi and ACPRA, the peaceful opposition initiative. A more vocal opposition made up of young, educated, and tech-savvy Internet users became more visible on social media, thus making the human rights discourse more prominent. Saudi youth had become more engaged in political discussion and more interested in the future shape of their country. In this atmosphere, women activists brought the ban on women driving back to the table.

Due to the political tension throughout the region, the Saudi government reacted with fierce anger to this activism. The pressure felt by many Arab leaders and regimes backfired on the peoples of the Arab

countries, as some governments used military force to quell the protests. Some used excessive force, which led to civil wars in Syria and Libya. On the other hand, many Arab regimes did not choose to oppose their peoples' desires. Jordan and Morocco, for example, enacted major reforms that contributed to a positive resolution to tensions in those countries. Saudi Arabia, however, tried to control dissent both online and on the ground through a variety of techniques.

Many peaceful activists were imprisoned after the Arab uprisings. All of the founders and members of ACPRA were jailed and sentenced to long prison terms, while many other activists were prohibited from publishing their opinions or even tweeting (Amnesty International, 2019). Women activists were no exception, as some of the women driving activists faced the harshest punishments since the first protest against the driving ban.

In 2011, a group of women started a Facebook campaign called علمني القيادة لأحمي نفسي (Teach me how to drive so I can protect myself) (Al-Shihri, 2011), which used the #Women2Drive hashtag in English. The use of English was more common because it was a Twitter hashtag that spread easily, and the hashtag feature was not yet available in Arabic. Choosing English as the primary mode of communication could also have been a tactical choice to garner international attention and support for the campaign, which in turn might lead to pressure on the Saudi government. The campaign called for the rights of women by encouraging women to drive their own cars on 17 June 2011 (Shubert, 2011). One of the most notable organisers was Manal Al-Sharif, who did not want the campaign to be viewed as merely a protest; instead, she insisted that they were acting within women's rights (Al-Sharif, 2017). Other important activists like Wajiha Al-Huawider began to support this campaign.

Al-Sharif became an icon after she posted a video, filmed by Al-Huwaider, of her driving her own car to YouTube and Facebook (Galliot, 2011). The video shows her driving in the city of Khobar in late May, chatting with Al-Huwaider about the campaign and urging Saudi women to learn how to drive, if only for times of emergency. The video went viral in Saudi Arabia, reaching more than a million views by 23 May 2011 (Stewart, 2011), but two

days earlier, the CPVPV had already arrested Al-Sharif. They released her after six hours, but she was arrested again the following day and released on bail eight days later (Al-Shihri, 2011).

This campaign was heavily influenced by the Arab Spring protests in neighbouring countries. Foreign media outlets like the AP and the *New York Times* drew connections between the driving campaign by Saudi women and the wider context of the Arab Spring, noting that the detention of Al-Sharif was longer than usual, due to the Saudi government's "fear" of protests (MacFarquhar and Amer, 2011). Najla Hariri, who drove her car in Jeddah in response to the campaign, confirms this:

> Before in Saudi, you never heard about protests... [But] after what has happened in the Middle East, we started to accept a group of people going outside and saying what they want in a loud voice, and this has had an impact on me. (Buchanan, 2011)

Hariri's remarks show how individuals felt a sense of political solidarity and the ability to take the initiative to change their reality.

After Al-Sharif's episode, many women filmed themselves to show support and solidarity with her and for the campaign's goal. Although many were detained and/or attacked by the media, more and more women posted online videos of themselves driving during that period (Michael, 2011).

On and after the day designated for the campaign, 17 June 2011, more than 70 cases of women driving were reported or otherwise documented (Al-Nafjan, 2011). Some drove in the streets of Jeddah, Riyadh, and Dammam; others took to the roads of small towns. Many were arrested, stopped, or given tickets by the traffic police. Al-Nafjan (2011) believes that the 2011 campaign was more significant than the 1990 protest because "the 1990 protest was only fourteen cars that had 47 passengers, [from] June 17th and onwards there have been about seventy documented cases of women driving".

By the end of 2011, there were more developments on the issue of women driving. In September, a harsher attitude faced Shaima Jastania when she drove in Jeddah; she was sentenced to 10 lashes (Hussain, 2011). In November, Al-Sharif's driving licence application was rejected by the General Directorate of Traffic, so she filed a claim against the decision with the

Grievances Board (Al-Sharif, 2017). This lawsuit was then referred to the Ministry of Interior. In December, a report was submitted to the Shura Council by one of its members, Kamal Al-Subhi, warning of the consequences of women driving: “letting women drive would increase prostitution, pornography, homosexuality and divorce” (Usher, 2011).

The year 2012 ushered in important new names in the Saudi women’s rights struggle. One was Samar Badawi (Raif Badawi’s sister), who had driven many times since 2011 and then followed Al-Sharif’s lead of filing a complaint on 4 February 2012 against the General Directorate of Traffic that challenged the dismissal of her driving licence application. On the anniversary of the 2011 campaign, a member of another women’s rights group called حقي كرامتي (My Right to Dignity) celebrated the occasion by driving her car in the streets of Riyadh (Al-Sharif, 2017). She also stated that she and a hundred other women had been driving their cars in the streets many times since the first campaign (Al-Sharif, 2017). The rest of 2012 witnessed numerous debates, discussions, leaflets, tweets, articles, hard and soft news reports, and television shows that dealt with the ban. The issue also became an everyday topic among the Saudi public, where it gained unexpectedly powerful momentum by the end of 2012.

In 2013, the activists raised the bar to a new level, calling for an organised protest drive for the first time since 1990. They announced their intention to defy the ban by driving their cars on 26 October 2013 (Jamjoom, 2013a). This movement gained substantial support from prominent activists and captured enormous media attention, both domestic and international. The call for protest was covered by major global news agencies such as BBC and AFP, and the Saudi government was faced with an organised dissent movement that it viewed as a threat, because these types of calls and demands might provoke other political and economic protests. Therefore, the authorities began repressing the campaign, first by blocking the campaign’s website and social media accounts and then by contacting the leaders of the campaign individually and warning them not to drive or encourage the 26 October protest (Jamjoom, 2013a). The Ministry of Interior also issued a statement before that day, warning that any women caught driving and anyone engaging in demonstrations would be subject to punishment (Jamjoom, 2013a). Maj. Gen. Mansour Al-Turki, Saudi Arabia's Interior Ministry

spokesman, stated that literally “all violations will be dealt with – whether demonstrations or women driving…. Not just on the 26th. Before and after” (Jamjoom, 2013a). These and other efforts by the Ministry of Interior to intimidate people and discourage them from participating in the protest appear to have worked, at least to some extent. However, the next day, 27 October, saw around a dozen videos posted online showing Saudi women driving on day before, despite the government warnings. However, they did not reveal their identities in the videos.

5.3.2.2.4 Lifting the ban

In 2018, the story of the ban on women driving came to an end. The issue had caused many difficulties for both Saudi citizens (male and female) and the Saudi government, which could offer no reasonable grounds for the ban when asked about it in the international arena. After much consideration, the government has undertaken a sweeping wave of changes since the accession of King Salman in 2015. There was a clear attitude to put an end to some laws and regulations that had been adopted under pressure from the powerful conservative elite. The key move was on 26 September 2017, when a statement by King Salman announced that he recognises women’s right to drive as long as it is in keeping with Sharia. This was followed by a decision to issue driving licences to women beginning on 24 June 2018. About a month before that day, a group of women’s rights campaigners, including Loujain Al-Hathloul, were detained by the Saudi authorities. This could have been an effort by the Saudi government to claim the sole honour of lifting the ban. Despite these detentions, many women with driving licences began driving legally on 24 June 2018, which was covered by the media as a victory for women. However, the women activists remain imprisoned without legal representation or any charges laid against them.

5.3.2.3 Timeline of Al-Hathloul’s Case

Loujain Al-Hathloul is an important name in the struggle for lifting the ban on women driving. She became involved in this issue in the year 2013. On 23 October of that year, Al-Hathloul became visible as an activist when she arrived at King Khalid Airport in Riyadh and drove her father’s car from the airport to her house as her father filmed her. This video was later posted online

and became a trending clip. In the video, she is heard criticising the “outdated” ban on women driving and stating that, in ten years, people would look at the video and laugh at the situation (Saudiwomeen, 2013). She also encouraged her followers in another video to support and participate in the 26 October protest, saying that “if you didn't get the chance to participate in 1991 or 2011, here's your new chance – on October 26, 2013. I hope that a huge number of girls take part this time” (Jamjoom, 2013b). The government did not arrest her, but it did ask her father to sign a pledge to abide by the law (Jamjoom, 2013b). This meant that he had to stop his daughter from defying the ban or encouraging others to do so.

One year later, Al-Hathloul unearthed the campaigning spirit that had remained buried since the official warning and had been visible only as a topic for the media. She gained unprecedented attention when she started another individual protest drive on 30 November. She drove her car from the neighbouring UAE with a driving licence obtained from there (Nureldin, 2017). She announced that she would be filming and live-tweeting the entire trip from the UAE to Saudi Arabia, especially when crossing the border. She emphasised that she had been issued a UAE driving licence, and that there was new legislation allowing drivers from GCC countries to use their driving licences in Saudi Arabia. Her point was that she could legally drive in Saudi Arabia since there was no legislation banning her from doing so, and that she had a valid driving licence that she could not have obtained in Saudi Arabia at that time. After she arrived at the border, she was stopped and spent 24 hours waiting for a decision. She tweeted that ”they won't give me back my passport and they won't let me pass through and no word from the Ministry of Interior. Complete silence from all the officials“(Nureldin, 2017). She was then arrested and disappeared for some time. She spent 73 days in jail without charges (Nureldin, 2017). During her imprisonment, her case was transferred to a terrorism court (Mendelsohn, 2014). Ultimately, she never had a trial and she was released on 12 February 2015.

Al-Hathloul was arrested a second time two years later. On 7 July 2017, she was detained at King Fahad Airport in Dammam. She was in custody for several days without having been told the reason for her arrest. She was also subject to interrogation many times during her imprisonment. She was then

arrested a third time on 15 May 2018 and remains in prison at the time of writing. This arrest was part of a roundup of a group of the most prominent Saudi women's activists and feminists, such as Aziza al-Yousef, Eman al-Nafjan, Aisha al-Mana, and Madeha al-Ajroush. Their names and photos were published in official newspapers, which reported that they had been accused of treason. The State Security Department issued an official statement announcing the arrest of a "spy cell" (Batrawy, 2018). However, Human Rights Watch argues that the real reason for their arrests is to frighten "anyone expressing skepticism about the crown prince's rights agenda" (Carey, 2018).

Recent developments regarding the case indicate that she may have been tortured or molested, along with other female detainees. Her father was also recently jailed after sharing a painful tweet complaining of the mistreatment his daughter faces.

5.3.2.4 Recent Developments

When I began this thesis, the driving ban issue was unresolved; indeed, the ban was in place until 2018. However, I have argued that the driving ban was subject to constant pressure, since the official attitude towards the issue was made clear by the statements many of the highest authorities in the country. Some of the most important comments were delivered by the current Crown Prince, Mohammad bin Salman, who stated that "women driving is not a religious issue as much as it is an issue that relates to the community itself that either accepts it or refuses it" (Staufenberg, 2016).

In a 19 February 2017 statement by the Saudi foreign minister at the Munich Security Conference, the same view was stressed: "When it comes to issues like women's driving, this is not a religious issue, it's a societal issue" (Variyar, 2016). So, the government position – at least its public position – remains that it is up to society to decide. However, it has been noted that there are no means for Saudi society to represent or express itself and that the ban was a legal issue that had been enforced by the government against the many women who had tried to drive. I have also argued that the government had aimed to remove the ban, possibly step by step, as the structure of Saudi society and many of its facilities are not prepared for a sudden change.

5.3.3 The Case of Nimr Al-Nimr

The third and final case is نمر باقر النمر, or Nimr Baqir Al-Nimr. He was a leading Saudi Shia sheikh (an Islamic religious honourific term that is often translated as “cleric”). He was born on 21 June 1959 and executed on 2 January 2016. He was an influential and controversial public figure. Based in Al-Awamiyah in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia, he was one of the most (in)famous actors in the country’s Shia political history.

5.3.3.1 The Shia Minority Movement

There are Shia communities in a few places in Saudi Arabia. While there are minorities in Medina and Najran, most Shia live in the cities and towns of Saudi Arabia’s Eastern Province. The clash between the Saudi dynasty and Shia communities can be traced to the first Saudi state. The influential Wahhabi rhetoric harbours doubts that Shia are genuine Muslims, a position held by many Wahhabi followers to this day. They are usually referred to among the Wahhabi community as رافضة (*Rafida*), which means “rejecters”, a derogatory term that refers to the Shia attitude towards a specific historical incident. Shia are seen by many Saudis as deviants who imported un-Islamic rituals into the religion, such as building mosques on graves (Commins, 2006). One of the most important incidents was the attack on Karbala, Iraq, a city that is considered holy by Shia, by the first Saudi state in 1802. This attack was reported by the famed Saudi chronicler Uthman ibn Bishr as a jihad waged against Shia. Ibn Bishr (1929) reports that “Muslims” (the term he uses for Wahhabi followers, because he did not believe that Shia were Muslims) climbed the walls of Karbala and entered the city, killing the majority of its people in the streets, markets, and homes. In 1913, Al-Hasa, an area with a large Shia community on the Eastern Province, was captured by the Saudi monarchy, and the Shia were treated very harshly (Teitelbaum, 2010). Shia scholars and religious leaders were forced to vow to close their places of worship, cease celebrating their religious holidays, and stop the pilgrimage to Karbala and other holy sites in Iraq. The Wahhabi scholars ordered the demolition of some Shia mosques and started lecturing and preaching in other Shia mosques with the aim of converting members of the Shia society to Sunni Islam. This approach was later changed, and Shia scholars returned to their

mosques. The Wahhabis wanted to eradicate any remnant of Shia religiosity, a goal that was supported to some extent by the Saudi authorities, especially in Medina.

The Saudi Shia community has been profoundly influenced by the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran. This revolution overthrew the pro-Western monarch, Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, and replaced his regime with an anti-Western theocratic Islamic republic led by Ayatollah Khomeini. Many Iranian scholars wanted to export their revolution to neighbouring countries. They had an anti-monarchical ideology in addition to a desire to unite Shia minorities and emancipate them everywhere. To appeal to Saudi Shia, the Iranians used leaflets, audio cassettes, and radio broadcasts that featured attacks on and criticism of the Saudi government's corruption and hypocrisy and incited the Shia community to act. In November 1979, Saudi Shiites celebrated Ashura for the first time in decades in a challenge to the Saudi government, which had long banned such religious commemorations. This act of defiance elicited two kinds of response from the Saudi government: some participants were arrested, and more hospitals and schools were built in Shia-majority areas.

Less than a decade later, the intensity of the clashes between Shiites and the Saudi government increased with an incident involving demonstrations by Iranian pilgrims to Mecca in 1987. In this clash, 402 people were killed: 275 Iranians, 85 Saudis, and 42 pilgrims of other nationalities, with many more injured (Lacey, 2011). The response from Ayatollah Khomeini was powerful, as he denounced the Saudi government and described its officials as murderers. Moreover, he incited all Saudi Shiites who were loyal to him to riot and try to overthrow the House of Saud. The next year, some oil pipelines in the Kingdom were blown up. After the Saudi government accused Shiites of this bombing, they suffered restrictions on their freedoms and rights. This was accompanied by fatwas from leading Saudi scholars denouncing Shiites as apostates and giving the green light to violence against them (ibn Baz, n. d.-a).

The relations between the Saudi government and Saudi Shiites improved dramatically after the 1991 Gulf War. There was a general amnesty

for Shia leaders, who were allowed to return from exile or released from jails. Young Shiites were granted access to more jobs in the private and governmental sectors (Bradley, 2015).

Another improvement began in 2003 with the establishment of “National Dialogues” that were part of a progressive initiative undertaken by the Saudi government that aimed to open dialogue between different Saudi groups: Shiites, Sufis, women, liberals, and so on (Commins, 2006). This initiative was not welcomed by Wahhabi clerics and was followed by more demands by the Shiites, with 450 Shia academics, intellectuals, writers, and other activists presenting a petition to the Saudi government requesting legal rights like the right to have Shia courts (Bradley, 2015). Later in the decade, there were some sectarian tensions between Shiites and the Wahhabi establishment after some conservative clerics circulated a petition that calls for sectarian violence against the Shia. Further tensions arose after the Arab Spring, with many Shiites protesting by calling for greater political rights and supporting the major uprisings in Bahrain, which were dominated by Shia activists and were only stopped by the intervention of Saudi and GCC military forces.

5.3.3.2 Timeline of Al-Nimr’s Legal Case

Al-Nimr began clashing with the Saudi government in the first decade of the twenty-first century. He was briefly arrested in May 2006 after returning to Saudi Arabia from Bahrain, where he was attending an international conference on the Quran. His second arrest occurred on 23 October 2008, after the Saudi government was criticised by Saad Al-Faqih, a controversial Sunni dissident living under asylum in the UK, for not dealing with Al-Nimr because he was allegedly protected by Iran, which resulted in clashes and tensions in the region. In 2009, Al-Nimr was arrested for remarks about certain events and calling for the separation of the Eastern Province because of discrimination against Shiites. This was the beginning of harsher and more political rhetoric by Al-Nimr.

On 26 June 2012, after the death of Prince Nayef bin Abdul-Aziz Al Saud, Al-Nimr delivered a speech that called for and justified a celebration of his death. He also criticised the appointment of Prince (now King) Salman as

a crown prince. Al-Nimr was arrested for the last time on 8 July 2012 in a clash with the police that resulted in his being injured and taken to hospital.

Al-Nimr's trial began on 25 March 2013 in the Criminal Court for Terrorist Crimes. The court announced Al-Nimr's death sentence on 15 October 2014 on the charges of "firing at security forces on 8 July 2012", "disobeying the ruler", "inciting sectarian strife" and "encouraging, leading and participating in demonstrations" (McHugo, 2018, p. 341). The execution of 47 prisoners, including Al-Nimr, was carried out on 2 January 2016.

5.3.3.3 The aftermath of the case

The execution of Al-Nimr caused a lot of controversy since its announcement, and more so after it was administered. A few weeks after the announcement of Al-Nimr's execution, London witnessed a demonstration in Downing Street requesting the UK government to intervene to stop the execution (Gatten, 2016). One week after that, there was another demonstration in New York in front of the United Nations building contained Muslims from different nationalities: Afghan, Iranian, Indian, Pakistani, Iraqi, and Lebanese against Al-Nimr' execution and calling for the freedom of political prisoners in Saudi Arabia (Vinograd, 2016). During the year 2015, there were dozens of protests condemning the Saudi authorities for the execution sentence in various countries around the world such as Nigeria, Germany, Bahrain, India, in addition to Saudi Arabia and Iran. Moreover, there was a number of petitions and movements that were organised by various NGOs. For instance, on 20 November 2015, 15 NGOs from different communities and religions have cooperatively demanded the US Secretary of State to contact and urge the King of Saudi Arabia to waive the execution sentence (Loveluck, 2016).

After the execution, huge protests, demonstrations, and condemnations started in many areas around the world expressing the anger of the thousands against the Saudi authorities. Some of these areas include Iran, Iraq, Bahrain, Lebanon, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Turkey, Australia, the UK, and USA. Some governments and organisations have made further steps. Iran, for example, renamed a street near the Saudi Embassy in Tehran to "Martyr Ayatollah Nimr Baqer Al-Nimr" (Van Mead, 2016). Inside Saudi Arabia, people in the Shia majority town of Al-Awamiyah protested in the

streets marching to Qatif while chanting: "Down with the Al Saud" (McDowall, 2016).

5.4 The Saudi–Iranian Conflict

The relationship between Saudi Arabia and Iran is a deeply problematic rivalry. The contemporary ideologically conflicted relationship can be contextualised within three major themes: religious, political, and economic.

Religiously, the two major sects of Islam, Sunni and Shia, have had a long history of conflicts that date back more than a millennium. While the details of these complicated theological, political, historical, and legal disputes are well beyond the scope of this thesis, it is essential to understand that the conflict is still used by many to contextualise contemporary Saudi–Iranian disputes. Historically, there were several countries, dynasties, and caliphates that predate modern Saudi Arabia and Iran that used the Sunni-Shia conflict as ideological cover for political disagreements. At the same time, before the current regimes were in place, there were long periods of Sunni and Shia living in harmony, in addition to the well-known conflicts.

The beginning of the tensions in the Saudi context was due to its political and religious narrative, which was criticised as being an “extreme” Sunni interpretation of Islam. This narrative began with the pact between Muhammad bin Saud and Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab to adopt a monolithic interpretation of Islam. The alliance waged expansive wars against neighbouring tribes and societies, including Shia communities in the Arabian Peninsula, and sometimes beyond, as when Karbala (now in Iraq) was attacked.

Politically, the creation of modern Saudi Arabia and Iran was finalised to a large extent after World War II. Exchanges between the two countries were limited, with the exception of regulating Iranian pilgrims coming to the two holy cities of Mecca and Medina (Keynoush, 2016). The region was supervised by the British Residency before World War II, which was gradually replaced by the US political and financial influence after British control faded in the wake of the war. The Cold War opened a new chapter in the region’s history, as US military arms exports to Saudi and Iran were part of the “Twin

Pillars" policy under the Nixon administration to combat the spread of communist ideologies in the Middle East (Keynoush, 2016). However, Iran had a larger economy and a better-trained army at that time, which gave it a leading role in the region. Iran, under the rule of Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, was the favoured partner under the policy, but his disagreements with American intervention in Iran's internal affairs caused some tensions in the relationship. Saudi Arabia was not comfortable with the situation, and the Shah's exposure to Soviet influence eventually led the Saudis to become the Americans' favoured regional ally (Keynoush, 2016). This situation fluctuated during the 1970s due to issues like the oil crisis during the October War of 1973, when Saudi Arabia led the Arab members of OPEC to reduce oil production by 5%, which was followed by an oil embargo against the US increasing the oil prices which caused the oil boom described in section 5.2.2 above (Macalister, 2011). The fact that Saudi Arabia and Iran were (and are) two of the world's largest oil exporters gave them a major role in the global economy, in addition to their strategic importance in the region. Oil revenues also help both countries fund their ideological goals.

The major turning point in the history of the Saudi–Iranian conflict was the Islamic Revolution of Iran in 1979, which overthrew the Pahlavi dynasty and abruptly ended the Twin Pillars policy. The leader of the revolution and later the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ayatollah Khomeini, declared that the revolution aimed to free the region from Western influences, which included radical solutions such as overthrowing other pro-American rulers, referring mainly to certain Arab states. This anti-imperialist attitude was accompanied by powerful Shia religious rhetoric that shaped the political narrative of today's Islamic Republic of Iran. This rhetoric has been successful in attracting Shiite support for the aspiration to unite as a single nation across different geographical locations. These minorities saw in the Iranian example a role model to be followed. One of the most strategically important Shia minorities is the Saudi Shia minority, which this influence had reached, causing many problems for the Saudi authorities. Table 5 summarises the major milestones in the history of Saudi–Iranian relations since the Islamic Revolution in Iran.

Table 5: A timeline of Saudi–Iranian relations

Date	Event
1979	Iranian Islamic Revolution
1980–1988	Saudi supports Iraq's eight-year war against Iran
1987	Iranian-led demonstrators in Mecca
1988	Saudi ban on Iranians at the Hajj; Saudi diplomat killed in Tehran; Saudi Arabia severs relations with Iran
1990	Improvement: both condemn the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait
2003	US occupies Iraq: Shia political forces enjoy Iranian support
2004	Emergence of a "Shia Crescent" (Iran, Shia-led Iraq, Syria, and Lebanese Hezbollah)
2007	Iran's increasing influence in Iraq and Shia minorities in the Persian Gulf
2011	Iranian-backed Shia protestors in Bahrain, inspired by the Arab Spring
2011	Two Iranians accused of attempting to assassinate Saudi ambassador to the US
2011–2015	In Syria, Iran sends fighters to support the Assad regime; Saudi Arabia supports the opposition
2012	Shia cleric Nimr al-Nimr is arrested after leading anti-government protests in Qatif
2014 Sep	The Iranian-backed Shia Houthi militant group captures large portions of Yemen
2015 Mar	A Saudi-led coalition begins a military campaign aimed at reversing Houthi gains in Yemen
2015 Jul	Iran and the P5+1 group of nations sign a landmark deal on Iran's nuclear energy program
2015 Sep	Deadly stampede in Mecca; Tehran accuses Saudi Arabia of negligence and downplaying the death toll
2015 Oct	Representatives of both countries meet in Vienna to discuss the conflict in Syria
2016 Jan 2	Saudi Arabia executes prominent Shia cleric Nimr al-Nimr
2016 Jan 3	Saudi Arabia severs diplomatic ties with Iran

This rivalry has tapped into the resources of both countries in order to dominate the other. There has been significant military funding for groups that are ideologically loyal to one country or the other. For instance, Iran's state sponsorship of Lebanon's Hezbollah is a clear example of investing in non-state actors in nearby countries; on the other side, there were close Saudi connections with Rafiq Hariri, the late prime minister of Lebanon (Nizameddin, 2006; DeVore, 2012). The rivalry took different shapes and forms, from lobbying in the US to spreading ideology, with Saudi Arabia keen on preaching its "Wahhabi Mission" (Commins, 2006) and Iran on "exporting the Islamic Revolution" (Ram, 1996).

The most important rivalry in the context of this thesis is the media war; both countries control several governmental and semi-governmental news

organs. Al Arabiya, as explained above, is one of the Saudi soft power tools while Al-Alam is Iran's. Both news agencies publish news in Arabic, English, and Farsi online, in addition to their Arabic television channels. This rivalry was very active during the timeframe selected for this thesis (2011–2017). Thus, the investigation of the news created and reported by these two agencies can be contextualised as part of the broader Saudi–Iranian conflict.

5.5 Conclusion

The analysis in this chapter has three main contextual aspects. First, the historical background of the socio-cultural nature of Saudi society is discussed in detail, including the main shifts in influence. The issue of conservatism revealed the nature of most of Saudi society towards which Arabic news reports are targeted. This shows what kind of values, morals, and expressions they expect from news reports and from the government (which is shown in the way Arab audience commented on the news reports in section 7.4.2). Of course, this is not true of the entire population of Saudi Arabia, but the account offered here does give an important and useful indicator of the prevailing atmosphere. The issue of the rapid urbanisation and financial wealth gives another dimension to the context within which the gender role of women has changed radically, in addition to the gradual deconstruction of tribal traditions and the modern reshaping of Saudi society. This is important in understanding the nature of the relation between the different aspects of society and the government, along with the issue of minorities, women, and non-Muslims.

The second aspect of the contextualisation was introducing the three cases by profiling the activists, their backgrounds, the context of the accusations against them, their trials, and the aftermath of each of their stories. The chapter ends with the important context, delivered as briefly as was reasonable, of the Saudi–Iranian rivalry. This rivalry is the main ideological conflict that *Al Arabiya* and *Al-Alam* are presumed to adopt. This macro-level analysis of the cases helps understanding the stance of each news agency with regard to the cases. It provides a context of the micro-level analysis in chapters 6 and 7 below.

Chapter 6: Description (Text Level)

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the semiotic choices made in the news reports are analysed through the investigation of lexicalisation, connotations, and visual elements, all of which are essential to the expression of ideologies in media discourse and often serve to indicate the attitudes and positions of the news agencies reporting on stories. Lexicalisation and other semiotic elements are very effective at constructing a mental image of a certain story. Indeed, Fowler (1986, p. 27) argues that "linguistic codes do not reflect reality neutrally; they interpret, organize, and classify the subjects of discourse". Therefore, semiotic elements play a major role in shaping audiences' attitudes to stories about selected cases and, by extension, their attitudes to the overall human rights discourse. Section 6.2 deals with two lexicalisation aspects, namely, labelling (section 6.2.1) and accusations (section 6.2.2), while section 6.3 deals with visual semiotics.

The first analytical tool at the text level is based on the lexical choices used to represent each of the activists in the three case studies. The second tool analyses the way each news report presents the reason for the punishment issued by the Saudi government. At this level, the connotations and grammatical structure of the reports are analysed to enable an investigation of the different discursive manifestations that could result. The third tool covers the other semiotic choices used in the news reports, such as images and other visual elements.

As shown in Tables 3 and 4 at the end of Chapter 4, there are four categories: *Al Arabiya* in Arabic, *Al Arabiya* in English, *Al-Alam* in Arabic, and *Al-Alam* in English. The number of news reports is one preliminary indicator of which category chose to report which news story. For instance, *Al-Alam* mentions Badawi in 78 Arabic news reports, while *Al Arabiya* only mentions him in a pair of such reports. Closer investigation reveals that one of these two reports is not even a report on Badawi's case. Rather, it is merely an official statement from the Saudi Foreign Ministry condemning media reporting of Badawi's case.

The different reporting methods in the two news agencies is not only unsurprising but entirely to be expected. However, the tables also reveal another interesting dimension: the attitude evident in the English reporting differs from the Arabic in all three case studies. One preliminary hypothesis is that this is due to differing readership or target audiences for each of the languages; in other words, the interests and/or expectations of each audience are taken into consideration by the news agency in its reporting decisions. Moreover, any political influence intended by the news agency could be also a major factor in this equation and is examined more closely in the present study.

To investigate the above issues in detail, the analysis below of the textual elements in these reports uncovers more tangible and measurable indicators that can be compared to test the hypotheses discussed in the above paragraph. The first analytical tool at the textual level is lexicalisation.

6.2 Lexicalisation

Two main types of findings are extracted from the news reports to compare the way these three activists were presented and framed. The first is how each activist was labelled, in either the title or the body of the report. The second is how these reports present the accusations raised against each activist or the reason for the imprisonment (or other punishments) each received.

6.2.1 Labelling

In each case, the news reports tend to present the person in a particular way in order to introduce him or her to the readers. A variety of adjectives and labels can be used to refer to a person, instead of or in addition to first and/or last names. The use of these labels may have negative, positive, or neutral intentions. In the three cases under study here, the reports under review feature an enormous number of adjectives.

6.2.1.1 The Case of Badawi

For Raif Badawi, 11 labels are used to describe him; Table 6 presents the most notable labels in each of the four categories.

Table 6: Labels used to refer to Badawi in the selected reports

	Al Arabiya		Al-Alam	
	Arabic	English	Arabic	English
(Human rights) activist		3	23	2
Blogger		9	75	7
Liberal		1	6	1
Arrested/jailed/sentenced			11	1
Web manager			2	2
Co-founder of “Free Saudi Liberals Network”	2	2	11	
Citizen	1	1		
Journalist			2	
Tweeter			1	
Dissident writer			1	
Laureate of the Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought			2	

The distribution of these labels obviously tracks well the number of news reports in each category. However, a closer inspection of the labels chosen could suggest that a specific readership is being addressed in a consistent and thus deliberate manner. Specifically, *Al Arabiya* in Arabic, which only published one report on the issue, uses just two labels of interest, namely, “citizen” and مؤسس الليبرالية (*muʾassis al-Libraliyya*). In the latter case, the word *muʾassis* can be translated into “the founder of”, and the word *al-Libraliyya* has two different meanings that could cast Badawi in two different ways. The first might mean Badawi as the founder of *al-Shabaka al-Libraliyya*, which is the name of his website الشبكة الليبرالية السعودية الحرة (Free Saudi Liberals Network). In this case, the word *al-Libraliyya* is an Arabic adjective meaning “liberal” and referring to his website. However, the word *Shabaka* (network) appears to have been omitted from the headline to achieve a specific effect. This omission could be due to the often elliptical journalistic style, or it could have been done intentionally to draw attention to the second label, “the founder of liberalism”, and thus highlight the very negative meaning of “liberalism” to a conservative audience like the Saudi public. The label *muʾassis al-Libraliyya*

can be translated literally as “the founder of liberalism”, just as *al-Libraliyya* could be expressed using the noun “liberalism”. To some extent, this kind of framing would be considered a condemnation of Badawi among conservative Saudi readers, an attitude that is rife in the comments section of the news report (available in the Arabic but not the English version of the Al Arabiya website), where there are many angry comments accusing Badawi of being a liberal. *Al Arabiya* exhibits two different attitudes in reporting this story: a pro-government attitude with an authoritative tone in the Arabic coverage and a somewhat more neutral attitude with a journalistic tone in the English. The first label, “citizen”, could refer to the fact that Badawi is a Saudi citizen who was prosecuted in a fair legal trail. Referring to him as a “citizen” could also intimate that this was an internal legal issue in which nobody from outside the Kingdom should interfere.

In the second category, the two previous references are used again, but with a slight difference. The ambiguity of the label *muʾassis al-Libraliyya* does not exist in English and therefore would not serve to condemn Badawi, since the concept of “liberalism” is not demonised among English speakers to the same extent as it is in Arabic and Saudi discourse. In addition to these two terms, there are, surprisingly, three references to Badawi as an “activist”, as well as other, more neutral labels such as “blogger” and “liberal”. The use of the “activist” label by *Al Arabiya* in its English version seems to have provoked a human rights discourse against the Saudi government in the international community, and this is unlikely to have been the news agency’s objective. In each instance where this term is used, it is notable that it is used as reported speech with reference to another source. For example, in two news reports, the paragraph that contains the term ends with the phrases “AFP said…” and “…told AFP”. In the third instance, the paragraph ends with “…the BBC reported”. This linguistic technique indicates, to some extent, the way that Al Arabiya distances itself from directly reporting news on Badawi. Another possibility could be that the news was copied from AFP, BBC, or another news agency with limited censorship or editing, which often happens due to the nature of journalism in the Middle East.

In the third category, *Al-Alam* refers to Badawi in Arabic using several human rights-related labels like “activist”. A total of 23 different instances of

this term refer to Badawi. *Al-Alam* is clearly trying to report the news as a human rights violation and thus invoke human rights discourse in Saudi society. The label used most often is “blogger”, and the same is true of the second category. This label is the most neutral and illustrative term used to describe Badawi, in that this is exactly what he was known for. However, the extensive use of the term may have given rise to the perception that the sentence Badawi received was too harsh for an “unfortunate blogger”. What is interesting in this category is that *Al-Alam* uses several terms to label Badawi, one of which is a direct reference to human rights, namely, “Laureate of the Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought”, which is used twice.

The fourth category was surprisingly different from the third, as *Al-Alam* addresses the news to an international audience, where demonising the Saudi government as an objective is arguably a common theme in news agencies. One might assume that the best strategy for achieving such a goal would be to promote the current narrative of Saudi Arabia as a human rights violator. However, the Badawi story appears many times with only two references to him as an activist. Using the terms “blogger” and “web manager” could achieve the same effect without the need to mention the issue of activism, as these terms might depict Saudi Arabia as an unjust and even brutal regime in the minds of some readers. Avoiding the use of human rights discourse could also be due to the fact that Iran also does not have the best human rights history, and it has often been criticised for violations against several of its own “activists”.

6.2.1.2 The Case of Al-Hathloul

As to the second case study, Table 7 shows that five terms are used to label Al-Hathloul.

Table 7: Labels used to refer to Al-Hathloul in the selected reports

	Al Arabiya		Al-Alam	
	Arabic	English	Arabic	English
(Human rights) activist			8	2
Girl			3	
Woman		4		2
Driver		1		

Scholarship student	2		3	

The first category in Table 7 shows that Arabic *Al Arabiya* uses only one interesting label, which appears twice in one report, namely, 'مبتعثة' (*mubta'athah*), a term that usually refers to any Saudi citizen who studies abroad on a government scholarship. This label has many connotations in Saudi society, as there has been a major wave of students travelling abroad over the past decade as part of the many socio-cultural and political changes in Saudi Arabia. There is a tendency to target returning students as bad influences on Saudi traditions and culture, under the presumption that they have been deeply influenced by Western values and culture. The above label is also used heavily in the Saudi media to suggest other connotations like "educated". This could be the reason why Al-Alam, in the third category, uses it three times in its Arabic reporting, as the label seems to have value for Arabic readers, especially the Saudi audience. The main connotation associated with *Al Arabiya*'s use of this label could have been to highlight that the student in question had been funded by the Saudi government and should not have embarrassed her government by engaging in public protests.

In the second category, *Al Arabiya* uses the English labels "women" and "driver" fairly neutrally. There are also many instances where Al-Hathloul is referred to simply by her first and last names. These labels are not used in the Arabic versions. In the third category, *Al-Alam* uses the label "activist" in eight instances. Al-Hathloul, in many such cases, is associated with the Saudi women's rights movement that called for an end to the ban on women driving. The reporting of the incident involving Al-Hathloul clearly insinuates that she has suffered a human rights violation. In the fourth category, there are also two references to Al-Hathloul as an "activist" in English. One describes her as a "women's rights campaigner", and the label "woman" is used twice.

6.2.1.3 The Case of Al-Nimr

The labelling in the third case involves the most number of labels. For Al-Nimr, Table 8 reveals the large number of terms used to describe him.

Table 8: Labels used to refer to Al-Nimr in the selected reports

		Al Arabiya		Al-Alam	
		Arabic	English	Arabic	English
Activist			1	1	1
Peaceful dissident				5	7
Islamic honorifics	Sheikh	4	6	114	110
	Cleric/preacher	10	22	26	43
	Allamah			3	
	Ayatollah			24	2
	Imam				1
	Shaheed			20	2
Terrorist		27			
Pro-Iranian		6			
Convicted		5	2	3	
Anti-government protest leader		4	3	1	

It is clear that many diverse and even contradictory references are used for this controversial figure. The labels run the gamut from references to human rights activism and various Islamic honorifics to negative labels such as “terrorist”. As expected, Al-Alam uses the label “activist” in both its Arabic and English versions, once in each case. What is interesting is that Al Arabiya also uses it in one of its English reports. However, like the other cases, the report is attributed to other sources, in this case AFP Turkey. Al-Alam also uses labels referring to Al-Nimr as a “peaceful dissident”, often accompanied by the word “political”. This appears with similar frequency in the Arabic and English versions but is not used at all in *Al Arabiya*. Although a large number of news reports are part of this research, the number of such references is surprisingly low and contrary to expectations, especially in the Arabic reports. However, this could be due to the fact that Al-Nimr was labelled in a more effective way for the target audience, which would have been intended to provoke a religious sectarian discourse stronger than the human rights discourse. This is discussed further below.

Generally, Al-Nimr was best known for his religious position or status, and a number of Islamic religious labels are used to refer to him. The label

“cleric” or “preacher” is used in all four categories, with Al Arabiya using it 10 times in Arabic and almost double that in the English coverage. Al Arabiya tends to reduce the number of references to him as a religious figure as much as possible, opting instead for more accusatory terms such as “terrorist". Al-Alam uses the above label 26 times in Arabic and 43 times in English, and Al-Nimr is rarely mentioned without a properly respectful title, unlike in *Al Arabiya,* in which he is called by name without any labels. It is worth noting that the labels “cleric” and “preacher” are frequently accompanied by adjectives such as “prominent”. The honorific label most used by *Al-Alam* is “sheikh”. This Arabic term has many meanings, such as “the head of an Arab tribe”, “an honoured old man”, and “a high priest or religious figure”. Although Al-Nimr was often called a “sheikh” among his supporters, *Al Arabiya* tries to use this term as little as possible, since it has an honorary connotation that may have contradicted the government’s view of him. Al-Alam, however, uses it extensively in both Arabic and English, which gives an indication of how that agency wanted to present him. In addition, Al-Alam uses other highly prestigious labels that are familiar in the Islamic tradition. For example, he is named “Allamah” (a very high-ranking religious scholar), “Ayatollah” (one of the highest-ranking titles given to the Twelver Shia scholars), and “Imam” (an Islamic leadership position, which has sacred connotations among Shia Muslims). One of the attention-grabbing, and perhaps most sentimental, labels is “Shaheed”, which can be translated, more or less, as “martyr”. Al-Alam uses this term extensively, especially in its Arabic reports, which may indicate the way he was perceived by that news agency. Clearly, the term “Shaheed” is given to a person who has sacrificed his life for a noble cause. In this case, Al-Nimr was revered as a martyr who was killed for a just cause. This label would, of course, be more effective and relevant when used in the publication’s Arabic coverage, as the narrative would be more relevant to the target audience. More details on how each news agency presented the reasons why the subjects of the case studies were persecuted are presented below.

Al Arabiya, on the other hand, uses a few very negative labels to describe Al-Nimr. The labels “terrorist” and “pro-Iranian” were used many times in the Arabic reports, with twenty-seven uses of the label “terrorist” and

six of “pro-Iranian”. The attitude in this example needs no elaboration, as Al-Nimr was widely regarded as a criminal worthy of the label, which is among the most serious attacks used in today’s media. Other labels appear, such as “convicted” and “anti-government protest leader”, that also convey a condemning attitude; they are used a great deal by Al Arabiya but very few times in the Arabic *Al-Alam*.

6.2.2 Accusations

Another lexical choice is the presentation of the accusations against the three activists. The lexical choices and their connotations exhibit diverse attitudes, and the same story is re-formulated, transedited, and reported differently in each news report. Many journalistic, linguistic, and translational factors may have necessitated the use of one lexicalisation or another.

6.2.2.1 The Case of Badawi

Table 9 shows the different ways in which the accusation against Badawi is formulated.

Table 9: Labels used to refer to the accusations against Badawi

	Al Arabiya		Al-Alam	
	Arabic	English	Arabic	English
Apostasy	1		3	1
Insulting Islam	1	9	21	1
Criticising scholars and religious police		1	23	4
Establishing a website			13	
Disobeying his father			2	1
His ideas			2	
Promoting free speech		2	3	
Cyber crimes			5	1
Criticising the government			1	
Undermining security		3		

In this case, it is noteworthy that *Al Arabiya* mentions only two very serious accusations in its Arabic reporting. Although Saudi Arabia has no penal code,

these accusations, “apostasy” and “insulting Islam”, are regarded as criminalised acts under Saudi law, and several people have been convicted of such crimes (Postawko, 2001). The way they are presented is straightforward and direct, and the same accusation of “insulting Islam” appears nine times in *Al Arabiya*’s English coverage. However, the translation of the label would not have the same effect on a different audience, as its meaning to them could differ from the agency’s intent. For instance, the accusation of “apostasy” would evoke great anger among the general Saudi Muslim population since it remains a conservative Muslim society, most of whose members see apostasy as a major sin, if not an actual crime. On the other hand, English-speaking audiences are not expected to share the same understanding of this accusation or to have the same reaction. Therefore, not mentioning this accusation and instead using the accusation of “insulting Islam” could play a more effective role in this context, which may be why the accusation is used nine times in the English *Al Arabiya*. Regardless, it appears in very specific contexts, either between quotation marks or as reported speech. *Al Arabiya* uses a further accusation that some would see as very mild, “criticizing scholars and/or religious police”; it too is attributed to another news source. The accusation that is mentioned only in the English *Al Arabiya* is “undermining security”. While some might regard this as a very negative accusation, it is only reported with a reference to the BBC. The last accusation is “promoting free speech”, which many audiences would see as a very positive position for which Badawi did not deserve the sentence he received. Interestingly, English *Al Arabiya* and Arabic *Al-Alam* use this accusation in different ways. *Al Arabiya* mentions the expression only twice in a translation of an AFP report, while *Al-Alam* uses it extensively in several places in its many reports. Although it reports “promoting free speech” as an actual accusation only three times, it relies on the concept of freedom of speech throughout its reporting, either as a contextual element or as a sub-heading within a report, which suggests a human rights narrative running through this case. In addition to the above accusation, Arabic *Al-Alam* attributes Badawi’s sentence to many causes. Some of the accusations appear to be very mild or even neutral, suggesting how unfair his trial was. For instance, the accusations of “establishing a website” and “his ideas” do not appear to be

crimes at all. For the Arabic-speaking audience in Saudi Arabia, the more negative accusation of “apostasy” is mentioned three times in a distinctive manner. The accusation is mentioned once and followed by an explanation that Badawi was accused of apostasy for criticising certain religious scholars. Another mention of the term is associated with the label “activist”. These linguistic associations may be intended to suggest the level of injustice inherent in the Saudi legal system, in cases where the reports link harsh accusations with positive or at least neutral positions.

6.2.2.2 The Case of Al-Hathloul

In terms of the second case study, Table 10 shows that six accusations were the reason for Al-Hathloul’s prosecution.

Table 10: Labels used to refer to the accusations against Al-Hathloul

	Al Arabiya		Al-Alam	
	Arabic	English	Arabic	English
Defying driving ban		2	1	
Driving		1	1	1
Tried to drive (from neighbouring country)		2	3	2
Posting video				1
Activism			1	
Disobeying the law	1			

In this case, the only accusation mentioned by *Al Arabiya* in its Arabic report is that Al-Hathloul broke the law by driving to Saudi Arabia. While it is not clear whether she broke a specific law, it is certainly clear that she was challenging the driving ban for women by tweeting about her act of opposition to the ban. This accusation was clearly chosen to condemn her act. There is no mention of women’s rights or the modernisation discourse that *Al Arabiya* tends to represent in local discourse. This might be due to the fact that Al-Hathloul’s act of “activism” daringly defied the Saudi government, and the Al Arabiya news agency would not want to be seen to endorse such an act. In total, English *Al Arabiya* uses three accusations, two of which refer to her driving or trying to drive as the reason for her prosecution. The third accusation is defying the driving ban for women.

Al-Alam reports the same three accusations in its Arabic version, in addition to another accusation referring frankly to her activism as the act that led to her prosecution. *Al-Alam*'s English version has one different accusation, namely, the act of tweeting and posting videos of herself while driving, which was a major reason why Al-Hathloul's act garnered so much local and international interest.

6.2.2.3 The Case of Al-Nimr

Regarding the third case study, Table 11 shows that Al-Nimr's prosecution involved 12 accusations.

Table 11: Labels used to refer to the accusations against Al-Nimr

	Al Arabiya		Al-Alam	
	Arabic	English	Arabic	English
Terrorism	23	4	1	5
Helping "terrorists"			1	
Attacking/killing police	13		1	
Vandalism and leading protests	13	5	2	
Undermining security	13			4
Organising militia and possession of weapons	4			
Iran/foreign meddling	5	2		
Disobeying the Guardian and insulting the government	4		5	4
(Sectarian) sedition and incitement	8	3	6	3
Political activity			2	4
Adopting radical ideas			2	
Trumped-up charges			1	

In the first category, Arabic *Al Arabiya* repeatedly uses an extensive range of very negative accusations. The most frequent is "terrorism", among the worst accusations possible both locally and internationally in the current era. Al-Nimr was treated by the government as a terrorist and was sentenced to execution as a terrorist. *Al Arabiya* makes this clear over and over again, usually with

lists of other accusations that “prove” his involvement in terrorism, such as the additional accusations mentioned in Table 11 (“attacking and killing policemen”, “vandalism”, and “organising militia”). Another accusation mentioned only by Al Arabiya, but in both Arabic and English, is that Al-Nimr was found guilty of encouraging “foreign meddling”. This accusation is presented as an act of high treason deserving of capital punishment. The English *Al Arabiya* does not feature as many accusations as the Arabic version, focusing instead on four of the most negative charges.

In *Al-Alam*, Al-Nimr’s story is presented from a different perspective completely and targets the injustice of the accusations and sentences against him. Both the Arabic and English reports mention various accusations in either a contemptuous or sardonic way. The terrorism accusation is often placed inside scare quotes or framed by disapproving comments. Other accusations are mentioned derisively, such as “disobeying the Guardian”, which is linked to the death sentence to show how unreasonable the Saudi regime had been. There are also some accusations that might be regarded as positive acts and are cited as the real reason for his prosecution, notable “political activism”. English *Al-Alam* also adopts a disapproving tone in its discussions of the various accusations.

6.3 Visual Semiotics

Visual semiotics are essential aspect of MCDA as mentioned in section 3.3.4 above. The most important aspect of the visual semiotics in this research is the use of photos in the online news reports under investigation. There are numerous photos in the selected corpus, so it was challenging to study and analyse each of them individually. However, some particularly powerful examples can be discussed here. Moreover, there is a discussion of certain photos that were used to cover the same news story in all four categories; in other words, cases where a certain news story was reported in all four categories using similar headlines and dates.

In each of the three cases, a number of visual elements accompany the news reports. Although all the news reports refer to the activist by name, not all of them focus on his or her case as the main element to be reported.

Therefore, there are three groups of news reports that demand examination. The first group is comparable news reports, cases where the same news story was reported in all four categories. These news reports may be the most representative and comparable in terms of visual selections. The second is a group of reports dealing mainly with an activist's case in one way or another. For instance, the activist's name or his or her sentence may appear in a headline. Additionally, these reports may have appeared at different times in the various categories; in some cases, one category included reports that had no translation or comparable version in the other linguistic category for the same news agency, let alone at the other news agency. The selection of images in this group is discussed using selected examples from the three case studies. The third group consists of news reports featuring the activist's name or case as something other than the main topic. This group are not likely to be very useful as an analytical tool, since images are typically selected to support the central points of the reports in which they appear. For example, one report that mentions Badawi is substantively about trending topics on Twitter. The accompanying image in this report is a photo of a smartphone with a Twitter logo on the screen. The same phenomenon occurred in all three cases, so I will not mention any examples from this group, as there are no relevant or representative examples that could reasonably be linked to the issue under review.

6.3.1 The Case of Badawi

In the Badawi case, Arabic *Al Arabiya* uses only two news reports, with one image in each. The first (Figure 6) is an iconic photo of Badawi that has been widely used by many news agencies, websites, and social media accounts that have reported on his case. The other news report is an official statement from the Saudi government objecting to "foreign meddling [in Badawi"s case] in the name of human rights" by foreign officials, journalists, or activists. This report includes one image, a large Saudi flag under the headline.

Figure 6: Iconic photo of Raif Badawi

In *Al Arabiya*'s English version, there are six reports on Badawi, accompanied by six images. Three are the same iconic photo used in the Arabic version (Figure 6). The fourth is a similar photo of Badawi but in traditional Saudi dress. The fifth is a close-up image of a prison cage showing two hands holding the cage bars – a stock image that could be used for any news report referring to imprisonment. The last image is a photo of the Saudi ambassador to the UK. This photo accompanies an official statement by the Saudi Arabian embassy in London, the aim of which was to respond to a variety of statements made by several countries and international organisations about Badawi's case.

There are 34 reports in Arabic *Al-Alam* covering Badawi's story, the highest number in any of the four categories. A wide range of selected images accompanies the reports. The most commonly used image is a photo of Badawi showing him in *Ihram* (ceremonial) clothing standing with his three children after performing Umrah in the Holy Mosque of Mecca. This photo presents him as a father of three and a practising Muslim in Islam's holiest place. Most Muslim readers could readily relate to this photo, which adopts a deeply personal perspective of family, parenthood, and worship (Figure 7). It is used in a story that was reported in all four categories, a report on the announcement of Badawi's second conviction. The other three categories report the news using the iconic photo mentioned above (Figure 6). Thus, the

choice of this photo by *Al-Alam* could not have been unintentional, and it is used in six other reports by the Arabic version of *Al-Alam*.

The second most frequent visual representation of Badawi is a group of photos whose poses and gazes portray him as a thinker or intellectual. Some show him reading the book *Prisoner 32*, the biography of Mohammad Said Tayeb, a Saudi political activist who was jailed in the 1960s and 1970s for his political activism. The book details 50 years of political activism in Saudi Arabia. Another visual selection includes images of protests in places outside Saudi Arabia, such as Canada and Germany. Some of the images contain photos of other detained political activists, such as the founders of ACPRA, who were also jailed. Other images include a photo of his wife, a photo of the Saudi Minister of Interior, and a screenshot from a leaked video of Badawi's flogging.

Figure 7: Raif Badawi in Mecca

In the English version of *Al-Alam*, three news reports focus on Badawi's story. One has the iconic photo mentioned above (Figure 6), while another is a photo of him looking away from the camera in a contemplative pose. The last report uses an image from a protest in front of a Saudi embassy and shows a man wearing a mask of the Saudi Minister of Interior while apparently

flogging another protestor who has a flogging mark on the back of his Saudi dress.

6.3.2 The Case of Al-Hathloul

There were fewer news reports and images in the case of Loujain Al-Hathloul. The best comparable story was the news of her release after her second arrest. This story was covered in all categories except Arabic *Al Arabiya*, which only featured one news report about her, the story of her first arrest. In this report, *Al Arabiya* uses a screenshot image of her from a video she posted on her Keek account. Her father was filming her and talking to her about the ban on women driving and their dream of ending it. The English version of *Al Arabiya* uses one image in its two news reports, which is also a screenshot, this one from another video she posted while driving the second time from the UAE, just before she was arrested (Figure 8).

Al-Alam has four Arabic news reports about her case. The comparable report uses an interesting photo that shows Al-Hathloul and her detained friend holding their driving licences (Figure 9). This photo highlights a very important element in the case, which is that Al-Hathloul's driving was legal according to the recently promulgated law allowing GCC citizens to drive in Saudi Arabia using a valid driving licence from any GCC country. This means that she was, in fact, allowed to drive using her valid UAE-issued licence. Another report is accompanied by the video clip she posted that led to her first arrest, while a further photo of her is a screenshot portrait of one of her Keek clips. Other reports use various images of groups of unidentified Saudi women driving, working, or gathering.

Figure 8: Al-Hathloul driving her car before the arrest

Figure 9: Loujain Al-Hathloul (left) and Maysaa Alamoudi (right)

In the *Al-Alam* English version, there is one news report focused on Al-Hathloul's case, which uses a photo of an unidentified Saudi woman driving her car. The other news report contains a video documentary centred on exposing the abuses of the Saudi government.

6.3.3 The Case of Al-Nimr

The third case, Al-Nimr, features the largest number of news reports and images. Generally, there are major differences in the way this case is reported. For instance, after Al-Nimr was executed, several protests broke out

in many places, including some in Iran, where protestors attacked and burned the Saudi embassy in Tehran and the Saudi consulate in Mashhad. Most of Al Arabiya's coverage focuses on the attacks and on the diplomatic disturbance they caused, as the attacks were widely considered to be violations of international law. Conversely, Al-Alam's coverage largely emphasises the execution and the anger it caused; it included several reports on the protests and the human rights violation that had been perpetrated.

Arabic *Al Arabiya* mentions Al-Nimr's name in 46 reports, only 33 of which treat his case as the main topic. The most oft-repeated image in these reports is a photo of the attack on the Saudi Embassy in Tehran (Figure 11). This image is used eight times, sometimes with other images of the attacks in the same report. This shows that, from *Al Arabiya*'s perspective, the diplomatic attack was the bigger news, with Al-Nimr's execution reported merely as a single case among 47 people convicted of terrorism. Photos of Al-Nimr appear in six reports. Three of these were not high definition but still have an impact on the viewer. One is a photo of Al-Nimr alongside a photo of Hassan Nasrallah, the current Secretary General of the Lebanese political and paramilitary party Hezbollah, which has been classified by Saudi Arabia and other countries as a terrorist organisation. This image is accompanied by a headline describing Nasrallah as "the devil's advocate". One of the most interesting images is the mugshot of Al-Nimr that was used with the headline نمر النمر.. سيرة راسخة في الارهاب والتحريض على الفتن, which can be translated as "Nimr Al-Nimr: A well-established biography of terrorism and incitement to sedition". This photo was the one broadcast by the official media when the execution news was announced. Among the most interesting visual choices is the use of government logos, such as the Ministry of Interior, or even the use of a photo of the front of the Saudi Supreme Court and another of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Other photos include official international figures and bodies, such as the UN and the Turkish president. The UN is used three times alongside reports focussing on Iran's violations of international law. In addition, there are two photos of Al-Awamiyah, a Saudi town in the Eastern Province, which is notorious for the conflicts with the Saudi security forces that have taken place there. This town has witnessed many demonstrations and protests, and Al-Nimr was a primary force in many of them. The first photo of

Al-Awamiyah is of some demonstrators burning tyres, and the second is a map of Al-Awamiyah with specific visuals that could paint the town in a negative light. The colour map, surprisingly, is black with a red pointer to Al-Awamiyah and large text in red at the centre of the image that translates to "Al-Awamiyah's cells". This image is under the headline خلايا العوامية... تاريخ من التطرف واستهداف السعوديين, which can be translated as "Al-Awamiyah's cells... a history of extremism and targeting of Saudis". Conversely, the Al-Alam agency chose very different photos of Al-Awamiyah, as discussed below. The *Al Arabiya* reports also use many photos that demonise Al-Nimr and Iran in this context. For instance, one image relating to the case is a collage of five photos showing five people: Hassan Nasrallah of Hezbollah; Abdul-Malik al-Houthi, leader of the Ansar Allah movement (Houthis), which is at war with Saudi Arabia in Yemen; Ali Khamenei, Iran's current Supreme Leader; Nouri Al-Maliki, the prime minister of Iraq from 2006 to 2014, who has been criticised for sectarian bias against Sunnis and Kurds; and Abu Muhammad Al-Maqdisi, an Islamist jihadist writer best known for being the spiritual mentor of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. The association between these figures produces a powerful visual element: a group of anti-Saudi politicians who share similar anti-Saudi agendas. This photo appears under the headline إيران والقاعدة.. صوتان يرفضان تنفيذ القصاص بالإرهابيين, which can be translated as "Iran and Al-Qaeda: Two voices rejecting the execution of terrorists". The association between Iran and these groups is surely deliberate and could be understood as a way to pre-empt any criticism from those quarters. Another photo shows Iranian protestors holding a photo of an Al-Qaeda theorist on a signboard, stating that he is a "Shaheed" (Figure 10).

Figure 10: Iranian protestors

Figure 11: The Saudi Embassy in Tehran after the attack

The English coverage of *Al Arabiya* was similar to the Arabic version to some extent. Of the 47 reports that include Al-Nimr's name, 26 discuss his case in detail. Like the Arabic coverage, the most commonly used image is the photo showing the attack on the Saudi Embassy in Tehran (Figure 11). There is also a similarly targeted image linking the attacks with a number of international officials who had condemned those attacks; for example, there are photos of foreign ministers from Oman, Qatar, and Egypt, among others, with each featured in a separate report that includes his statement and photo.

The main news report in which *Al Arabiya* treats the execution is accompanied by the image in Figure 12, which shows the spokesman for the Ministry of Interior answering journalists' questions. This photo has the visual elements of an authoritative attitude, which serves to emphasise the hard-line purpose of the news report that it accompanies. The only photo of Al-Nimr in English *Al Arabiya* is the one in Figure 13, which is a criminal mugshot of him displayed on the official Saudi state television channel, framed by the Ministry of Interior's logo and underlined with Al-Nimr's name and nationality. The red news ticker below his image describes Al-Nimr and the other convicts in a deeply negative fashion and details their crimes.

Figure 12: Saudi Interior Ministry spokesman Mansour Turki during a press conference

Figure 13: Saudi state television displays an image of Al-Nimr

By contrast, the perspectives and use of visuals in *Al-Alam*'s Arabic coverage are completely different. Al-Nimr's name is mentioned in 53 news reports, though only 28 deal primarily with his case. Photos of Al-Nimr preaching or lecturing are the visual element used most frequently; there are nine such instances. Some of the photos are taken from his mosque (Figure 14), while one of the most interesting visual choices is Al-Nimr's photo alongside King Abdullah (Figure 15). This photo is deeply striking in its profoundly explicit presentation of Al-Nimr as an opponent of King Abdullah. Al-Nimr's image is larger and shows him standing and shouting into the distance. King Abdullah, on the other hand, is looking into the camera from a distance with a sad or angry expression. He is not the main focus of the photo and occupies a comparatively small part of it.

Figure 14: Al-Nimr during a sermon

Figure 15: Al-Nimr (left) and King Abdullah (right)

The protests against Al-Nimr's execution provide another popular visual topic, and many reports include photos or video footage, accompanied by commentary clearly condemning the Saudi government for its actions. An example of these photos is Figure 16, which shows a protest by families, including women and children, holding photos of Al-Nimr. These photos are evidence of peaceful protests and highlight the influence of Al-Nimr's execution on this community. Other photos attempt to focus attention on the

brutality of the Saudi government's reaction to these protests by showing buildings in Al-Awamiyah that were destroyed during clashes between the Saudi forces and militant groups. In total, there are three photos of the destruction of Al-Awamiyah.

Figure 16: A protest in Al-Awamiyah

Al-Alam also uses some highly graphic photos, depicting the wounded body of a teenager who had been killed in the clashes. Another image includes photos and names of five people referred to as "martyrs" next to a photo of Al-Nimr. Some reports include video footage instead of photos, and this footage includes summaries of the accompanying report. One report features a documentary on Al-Nimr's life, and another video highlights the issue of human rights directly in a report regarding the criticism levelled by Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch against the increase in human rights violations in Saudi Arabia. This video contains many clips of Al-Nimr protesting and lecturing, in addition to some clips of public executions and floggings, including a video of Badawi's flogging.

In the last category, *Al-Alam*'s English coverage contained different types of photos in fewer reports. In total, 34 reports use the name of Al-Nimr, and he is the main topic in 30 of them. In terms of the visual elements chosen for these reports, the focus is primarily on international officials and protests

in many Western countries, such as Germany and the UK. In many instances, video reports are used instead of photos; they emphasise the aftermath of the execution and clashes with Saudi forces, along with the resulting destruction and further protests. One of the striking facts about these visuals is that there are only three photos of Al-Nimr. However, his image appears in other depictions of the protests. One is a powerful journalistic statement: a child holding a poster of Al-Nimr (Figure 17), which is used only in the English version. Figure 18 shows another photo of Al-Nimr being held by protesters in Iraq.

Figure 17: A child holding Al-Nimr's photo

Figure 18: Iraqi protestors holding Al-Nimr's photo

Another visual feature – beyond the images chosen – is notable in the first category, where *Al Arabiya* uses a striking green frame for news about Saudi Arabia. *Al Arabiya*'s standard theme colour is purple, but there is a technical feature that appears only for news reports about Saudi Arabia; purple is partly replaced by green around those reports. The symbolism of the green colour is obvious; it is the colour of the Saudi flag and is associated throughout Saudi society as representative of the country's identity. This feature is not part of the English version of *Al Arabiya*.

6.4 Conclusion

This chapter has explored and analysed a range of lexical choices and their grammatical and textual significance in terms of ideological influences. The investigation of the terms used shows the different tendencies present in each category. While Al Arabiya generally uses negative or at least neutral labels to vilify the activists in its Arabic coverage, it employs subtler language that neither condemns nor glorifies the three activists in its English reporting. English *Al Arabiya* avoids as much as possible the use of human rights-related labels like "activist". On the other hand, Al-Alam's Arabic coverage extensively employs a large number of human rights-related labels, along with other glorifying terms like "Shaheed", "Laureate of the Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought", and "peaceful dissident". The English version of Al-Alam, however, does not use as many human rights-related labels as the Arabic version, but its coverage is generally supportive of the activists through the use of positive labels and the avoidance of negative ones.

The wording of the accusations is the other lexical feature analysed in this chapter. The results reveal how each category has its unique way of reporting, justifying, or denouncing the prosecution of the activists. In the first category, *Al Arabiya* uses accusations that may suggest criminality or even evil in Saudi public opinion, especially with the first two activists. As to Al-Nimr, it uses the discourse of terrorism extensively in addition to other immensely serious accusations. The English *Al Arabiya* coverage uses a wider range of accusations that may seem to oppose the official Saudi narrative. This may show how the English coverage is influenced and affected by the expectations

of its readers; in addition, the fact that other international English-language news agencies provide similar news reports could have forced *Al Arabiya* to keep up and not risk losing its credibility among Western audiences. *Al-Alam* Arabic, on the other hand, relies extensively on the most trivial “crimes” as the main reason for prosecution. For instance, the most common accusation against Badawi is “criticising scholars and religious police”; for Al-Hathloul it is “trying to drive from a neighbouring country”; and for Al-Nimr it is “disobeying the Guardian and insulting the government”. Other accusations are mentioned here and there but usually with a dismissive tone. *Al-Alam*’s English coverage also highlighted the trivial accusations rather than the more serious ones, with a similar tone.

The analysis of visual choices shows how each news agency tried to use visuals to enhance its own point of view. In the first category, *Al Arabiya* often uses neutral or authoritative images to highlight a certain authoritative and legalised discourse. Both the Arabic and English versions of *Al Arabiya* highlight other aspects of the discourse that demand attention, such as the on the Saudi embassy, when reporting on Al-Nimr’s case. *Al-Alam*’s Arabic coverage tends to use provocative images in all three cases. For instance, it uses Badawi’s photo in Mecca to evoke parental and religious emotions among its readers and Al-Hathloul’s photo holding the driving licence to highlight a legal issue. The English version of *Al-Alam* uses photos that could speak to an international audience, especially those of the families, including children, protesting Al-Nimr’s execution.

In general, there is a distinctly noticeable pattern in the ideological attitudes taken by the news agencies, and the difference across the linguistic dimension is especially interesting. This uncovers in a very stark way the manipulation or promotion of human rights discourse in the news.

Chapter 7: Interpretation (Discourse Level)

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the discursive elements in the news reports are investigated and analysed through their intertextuality. The concept of intertextuality, as discussed in section 3.3.4 above, is one of the most important interdiscursive tools in many CDA approaches. There are three main intertextual elements, news sourcing, quoting verbs, and hypertextual elements. All are important to the expression of ideologies in media discourse and often serve to indicate the discursive context that the news agencies adopt and promote. Analysing news sources is an essential tool for understanding how the news that is reported is linked to other texts. This tool can highlight the dynamics of the discourse that function through multiple texts. Quoting verbs are a tool that can also be used to understand how parallel texts are being used within different texts. The quotes from the selected corpus are classified according to the taxonomy of quoting verbs' meaning potentials proposed by Caldas-Coulthard (1994; see section 7.3). As for the third aspect, hypertextual elements are mainly tags and hyperlinks and are explored as another instrument that digitally links online news reports with other electronic material.

The focus of the analysis is on the intertextuality of the media discourse and how it can be interpreted. Fairclough (1989, p. 162) explains that this interpretation stage at the discourse level "corrects delusions of autonomy on the part of subjects in discourse. It makes explicit what for participants is generally implicit". Each section of the analysis in this chapter discusses one of the cases, starting with Badawi, then Al-Hathloul, and ending with Al-Nimr.

7.2 Reporting Sources

This section focuses on the journalistic sources used in the news reports. Gans defines news sources as "the actors whom journalists observe or interview, including interviewees who appear on the air or who are quoted in magazine articles and those who only supply background information or story suggestions" (2004, p. 80). These source are classified by Shoemaker and

Reese (1996) into two types of sources, direct and indirect. Some news sources are definite in the sense that the reader is expected to know that the mentioned news source is a well-defined body, news agency, person, or other source. On the other hand, there are indefinite sources that are anonymous or only vaguely defined.

The use of sources in the reporting of news signifies an intertextual element that could have an ideological or journalistic motivation. Referring to a news agency that is known for its credibility and impartiality among the target audience adds to the credibility and impartiality of the news report itself. Moreover, the use of a news source that is known for its support for human rights (as highlighted in the tables 12, 13, and 15) could also signify the adoption or the promotion of an activist viewpoint of the reported news. There is another dimension to news sources, which is the ideology or ideological classification of a given source. For instance, some news sources are clearly pro-Iranian, while others are pro-Saudi, and many others do not fit into either group.

7.2.1 The Case of Badawi

The news sources referred to in the selected news reports can be divided into two main types: definite sources, where the source is explicitly named, and indefinite sources, where the source is not explicitly named or otherwise recognisable. The 46 reports about Badawi's case contain 41 sources, 31 definite and 10 indefinite, as presented in Table 12.

Table 12: Number of references to news sources in the Badawi case

		Al Arabiya		Al-Alam	
		Arabic	English	Arabic	English
Definite	AFP		4	4	
	BBC		4	2	
	Reuters		1	1	
	CNN		1	3	
	The Independent			17	
	AP		1		
	The Guardian			6	
	The Daily Mail			2	
	Deutsche Presse-Agentur			1	
	Der Spiegel			5	
	Deutsche Welle			1	
	Russia Today			1	
	Al-Quds Al-Arabi Newspaper			2	
	Rassd News Network			1	

	Al-Ahed News			1	
	Alealamy.net			1	
	Watanserb.com			1	
	SPA		2	1	
	Al Arabiya News	2	4		
	Sabq News		3	1	3
	Saudi Gazette		2		
	Al-Madinah newspaper		1		
	Okaz newspaper			3	
	Press TV				1
	Al-Alam News			2	
	Amnesty International		3	17	
	Reporters Without Borders		1	3	
	Human Rights Watch			6	1
	Arabic Network for Human Rights Information			6	
	The Saudi human rights activist Waleed Abu Al-Khair			3	
	The Director of the Center for Democracy and Human Rights in Saudi Arabia Ali Al-Yami			1	
Indefinite	Sources	1	4	3	
	Witnesses/Observers		2	2	
	Defence lawyer(s)		2		1
	Bandar, a blogger		1		
	Western media			3	
	Saudi media		1		1
	Human rights groups		2	2	2
	Activists			1	
	Total	3	39	103	9

The first category, *Al Arabiya* Arabic, contains only two news reports that refer to two sources. The only definite source is *Al Arabiya* itself, and the indefinite source is simply “an official source”. The mode of reporting in this category is very authoritative; the writing style of one report sounds similar to a legal statement issued from a Saudi court. For example, the report starts with the common legal formulation حكمت المحكمة, which can be translated as “The Court ruled”. Using this style mimics the tone of an official legal statement issued by a court. The second news report is basically a collection of three substantial quotations from the official source noted above. The report starts with the expression أكدت وزارة الخارجية السعودية (The Saudi Foreign Ministry confirmed/assured). This shows that the only Arabic news report about this case is written in a style and mode that does not oppose or sound critical of the official narrative.

The second category, *Al Arabiya* English, published six news reports about Badawi's case. The mode of reporting is different from the Arabic coverage — for instance, the reports refer to 39 news sources, 27 definite and 12 indefinite. A few features can be distinguished from the Arabic coverage, such as the wide variety of international sources quoted or referred to on many occasions: AFP, BBC, CNN, Reuters, and so on. This reporting style is beneficial and effective when there is language that is critical of the Saudi government's attitude or the Kingdom's legal system. For example, the references to the accusations against Badawi as "undermining security" and "promoting freedom of speech" are taken from BBC and AFP, respectively. This technique gives Al Arabiya room to distance itself from being critical of the Saudi government and at the same time use language that is suitable for addressing its international readership.

Moreover, *Al Arabiya*'s English discourse concerning human rights differs from its Arabic counterpart. It tends to discuss Saudi internal issues more openly but with a cautious tone. It relies heavily on photos and interviews from widely known international (mainly Western) news agencies. Another important distinction is the heavy use of indefinite sources, as 30.77% of the sources in English-language reporting are indefinite. This could be an indicator of the fact that *Al Arabiya* attributes many of the details it reports to unnamed individuals (like witnesses) or those with vague names (like a blogger named Bandar). For instance, the source "witnesses" is used to report the story of Badawi's flogging after Friday prayer. This could be because no media coverage was allowed at the flogging, so any source might prefer to remain unnamed. Another reason could be the nature of news transediting, by which a news report could be assembled from news reports from other news agencies; in this example, the fact "the flogging of Badawi" was reported by various news agencies based on the same type of news source. BBC uses "witnesses"[1], The *Guardian* uses "the witness"[2], The *Telegraph* uses "a

[1] https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-30744693
[2] https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jan/09/saudi-blogger-first-lashes-raif-badawi

person close to his case"[3], and so forth. These sources, if they are different people, could have been influenced by one another.

Another noteworthy fact is that English *Al Arabiya* refers to four Saudi news agencies, one of which is the official government news agency, The Saudi Press Agency (SPA). The SPA, cited four times, is the most frequently chosen source, after AFP and BBC. The last significant distinction is the difference between sources related to human rights or activism and others. This distinction is made to classify the sources that are known mainly for their activism or the focus of their work on human rights issues. *Al Arabiya*'s Arabic reports do not use any human rights sources; its English coverage uses them in only 10% of the total number of references. They refer to Amnesty International three times, to Reporters Without Borders once, and to unidentified human rights groups twice. The concept of human rights is seldom present in the English coverage, but it does exist at the margins, as when human rights groups are used as a reference in the last sentence of two reports. Amnesty International is used a significant source only once, in a three-line quote. However, this appears in a 2013 news report while the issue was under appeal. This kind of discourse shows the Al Arabiya agency's dual role on such issues. It usually represents the liberal trend in the Saudi community by supporting social and individual rights like freedom of expression and women's rights (Zayani, 2012). However, it has not called for political rights. Moreover, when there is a contradiction between an activist case and the official governmental narrative, *Al Arabiya*, especially in Arabic, tends to tone down its liberal attitude. This can be seen from the fact that very few activist sources or references are used in news sources after Badawi's sentence began to be carried out.

In the third category, *Al-Alam*'s Arabic coverage mentions Badawi's name in 65 news reports and reports substantive news about him in 35. In those reports, there are 103 news source instances, 92 definite and 11 indefinite sources. This relatively large number of reports is an indicator of *Al-Alam*'s high interest in the story. In addition, almost 90% of these news

[3] https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/saudiarabia/11335093/Saudi-blogger-to-be-publicly-flogged-for-insulting-Islam.html

sources are definite, which lends greater authenticity and a tendency to relate this story to the various international media outlets. Using such intertextual elements could also support the anti-Saudi narrative in this case. There are references to a wide range of international and local news sources, some Western (AFP, BBC, CNN, Der Spiegel), some Arab (Al-Quds Alarabi Newspaper, Rassd News Network, SPA), and some from other areas, including Russia Today.

In addition to the 56 definite news sources, *Al-Alam* Arabic uses definite activist sources for almost 35% of its references. The most common is Amnesty International, with 17 references. Other human rights groups like Human Rights Watch and the Arabic Network for Human Rights Information are referred to six times each. This high percentage of references to human rights entities, in addition to two indefinite activist news sources, reflects the fact that *Al-Alam* consistently presents Badawi's story as a human rights case.

In the last category, the English coverage from Al-Alam shows a very different attitude towards the story. The number of news reports is nothing short of trivial when compared to the Arabic coverage. There are only three news reports about Badawi among seven reports that use his name. Within these three reports, nine news sources are used. Three are references to a Saudi local online newspaper. The percentage of definite and indefinite sources is very similar. What is most noticeable in this category is the several unsourced statements and facts that appear in the reports.

In general, the use of definite sources is comparatively higher than the use of indefinite sources in all four categories. The third category shows a significantly higher definite tendency, with 90% meeting that criterion.

7.2.2 The Case of Al-Hathloul

As for Loujain Al-Hathloul, her name appears in 14 news reports. However, only eight report on her story as the main focus; they have 13 different news sources, nine definite and four indefinite (Table 13).

Table 13: Number of references to news sources in the Al-Hathloul case

		Al Arabiya		Al-Alam	
		Arabic	English	Arabic	English
Definite	Al Arabiya News	2	1		

	AFP		6	1	1
	Russia Today			1	
	The New York-based watchdog is the Middle East and North Africa director Sarah Leah Whitson				1
	The Saudi interior ministry		1	2	1
	Rai al-Youm newspaper			1	
	Human Rights Watch				3
	Reporters Without Borders			1	
	Loujain Hathloul		7	3	2
Indefinite	Activists		13	7	3
	Official source	2			
	Social media	1			
	YouTube		1		
	Total	5	29	16	11

The first category, *Al Arabiya* Arabic, has only one news report about Al-Hathloul's case. It discusses her first driving incident in 2013, not the more critical 2014 episode, when she was arrested. This report refers to three sources, and the only definite source is *Al Arabiya* itself. *Al Arabiya*'s mode of reporting in this report focuses on denying that Al-Hathloul was jailed or arrested, in order to correct false news or rumours that were spreading about her situation after she posted the video of her driving. This approach is clear from the very title of the report الأمن السعودي لم يعتقل "لجين".. واستدعى والدها للتحقيق (Saudi security did not arrest "Loujain"... and called her father in for questioning). The first sentence also starts with the expression نفى مصدر مسؤول ("an official source has denied"). This appears to be a response to other news reports claiming that she *had* been arrested. This category has more indefinite references and no human rights-related reference at all.

The second category, *Al Arabiya* English, uses six different news sources, four definite and two indefinite. The most common source is Al-Hathloul herself; the reports quote and refer to her tweets seven times. AFP is the second most frequently used reference; it is used six times. Notably, the two news reports appear to be taken entirely from AFP, since the first reports started with "(AFP, Riyadh)" as the primary source. In the second report, the title includes "AFP" in the title: "Saudi women drivers Hathloul and Alamoudi released: AFP". This shows that *Al Arabiya* tried to rely on an international news agency as the source for reporting on this controversial case, which could give it some distance from sounding directly critical of Al-Hathloul's

arrest. This could be seen as a way of using intertextuality as a distancing tool. On the other hand, *Al Arabiya* refers to the Saudi Ministry of Interior as a source for the justification of any such arrest: “the interior ministry would strictly implement measures against anyone undermining the social cohesion” (see Appendix A, news report number 88). As for the indefinite news sources, they make up approximately half of all sources in this case. The most commonly used source is “activists”, which appears 13 times. Using this term gives this story the sense of a human rights issue rather than a legal case, which does not appear to favour *Al Arabiya*'s presumed goal of justifying the Saudi government's action. Although many of the quotes from the activists are followed by the Saudi Ministry of Interior response and justification, the last word is given to the activists: “they say women's driving is not actually illegal, and the ban is linked to tradition and custom in the Islamic nation” (see Appendix A, news report number 88).

The third category, *Al-Alam* Arabic, contains four reports, the most among the four categories to cover this case. It refers to more sources but uses fewer references. For example, *Al-Alam* English refers to Al-Hathloul's tweets only three times, compared to seven times in the previous category. It also refers to a wide range of news agencies such as AFP, Russia Today and the independent newspaper *Rai al-Youm*. Moreover, this category has references to more humanitarian news sources like Reporters Without Borders. As for indefinite news sources, there are seven references to unnamed activists. Therefore, there is a majority (69%) of human rights-related sources in this category. This shows the tendency to link the reports of these news agencies with the human rights discourse expressed by other agents in the field. Using these intertextual elements is an essential indicator for understanding the discursive techniques used in reporting on cases like this.

The fourth category, *Al-Alam* English, refers to six news sources in a single report. One of the most striking features of this category is that it uses almost the same sources as *Al Arabiya* English. This could mean that the two agencies have copied and edited a report from the same source. However, there are two additional human rights-related news sources that are mentioned in the report; Sarah Leah Whitson and Human Rights Watch. The

only indefinite source used is “activists”, which is used three times. More than 70% of the sources of this category are definite.

7.2.3 The Case of Al-Nimr

As for the third case, Nimr Al-Nimr’s name is mentioned in 179 news reports, but only 113 reports focus on his case. These news reports can be roughly divided into two groups; Al-Nimr's execution and the execution's backlash, including the attacks on the Saudi embassies (Table 14).

Table 14: The two topics regarding Al-Nimr’s case

	Al Arabiya		Al-Alam		
	Arabic	English	Arabic	English	
Al-Nimr’s execution	15	3	21	26	65
The execution’s backlash	12	26	4	6	48
Total	27	29	25	32	113

The 113 reports refer to 59 different news sources, 48 definite and 11 indefinite. There are nine sources that could be considered related to human rights.

Table 15: Number of references to news sources in the Al-Nimr case

		Al Arabiya		Al-Alam	
		Arabic	English	Arabic	English
Definite	AFP		14		1
	AP		15		2
	Reuters	1	30		2
	Radio France Internationale	4			
	International Business Times				1
	Center for Global Security and Geopolitical Studies				1
	Huffington Post				1
	The Independent				3
	TASS news agency		1		
	WikiLeaks				1
	Jordan News Agency (Petra)		1		
	Emirates News Agency		2		
	Oman News Agency		1		
	Qatar News Agency		1		
	Manama Post			2	
	Middle East Online				1
	Rai al-Youm newspaper			1	
	Alwaienews.net			1	
	SPA		16		3
	Al Arabiya News	18	27		
	Al-Hadath news	1			
	Arab News		1		
	Al Riyadh Newspaper			2	

	Al-Alam News			13	2
	Press TV				12
	Iranian TV	1			
	Islamic Republic News Agency	3	9		2
	AhluBayt News Agency (abna24)				1
	The Iranian Students News Agency	6			
	Mizan Online News Agency	1			
	Al-Hashd al-Shaabi website	1			
	Fars News Agency	1			
	Tasnim News Agency	1			
	Digarban	1			
	Saham News	2			
	Alahednews			1	
	Annabaa.org			2	
	Alsumaria News			2	
	Amad News		1		
	Mehr News Agency				2
	Shafaqna.com			1	
	Human Rights Watch	1			2
	Amnesty International	4			2
	Reprieve, an advocacy group				3
	Iranian Human Rights Activists News Agency	1			
	Arabic Network for Human Rights Information			1	
	The European-Saudi Organisation for Human Rights			1	
	OHCHR			1	
Indefinite	Sources	3	1	3	1
	Observers	3		1	
	Iranian media	5	3		
	Defence lawyer(s)	1			1
	Russian foreign ministry source		2		
	Western media			1	
	Iranian media	1	1	1	
	Saudi media			1	
	Saudi social media sources				3
	Human rights groups	3			6
	Activists			12	2
	Total	63	126	47	55

In the first category, *Al Arabiya* Arabic coverage contains 27 news reports, 15 of which announce Al-Nimr's execution, cover other elements of the charges against him, or address related topics. The other 12 reports cover the backlash after his execution, especially the attacks on the Saudi consulate and embassy in Iran, in addition to the international response to those attacks. This category gives relatively a balanced coverage to the two topics. The news of the execution could be important in Arabic and Saudi discourse for the purpose of deterrence. At the same time, the news about the attacks also shows the role of Iran in influencing dissidents. In addition, Iran is portrayed

as a guilty party by many countries around the world, especially with regard to this incident.

The sources chosen by *Al Arabiya* in this category show a fascinating pattern. There are 43 references to definite sources, which account for 77% of the total, but only two are related to human rights activism: Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International. The Saudi government, or the legal system of Saudi Arabia, prosecuted Al-Nimr not as a human rights activist but as a terrorist. Therefore, the discourse of Al-Nimr's prosecution is not linked by *Al Arabiya* to human rights at all. The only news report in which they use these two references is a news report titled الحشد يقصف الفلوجة بصاروخ عليه صورة الإرهابي النمر (The Popular Mobilization Forces [PMF] bombards Falluja with a missile bearing the image of the Terrorist Al-Nimr). This report covers the actions of the RMF, an Iraqi state-sponsored organisation that includes roughly 40 largely Shia militias. This organisation has been criticised as being motivated by sectarian vengeance, as is noted in this news report, which uses Al-Nimr's image as a Shia symbol or icon; he is shown as a hero for defying the Saudi regime. Using the image of Al-Nimr in this context can be understood as a sectarian action since the RMF's enemy in the battle in Falluja were Sunni militias. References to Amnesty International in this news report occur twice; once at the beginning of the report, which states that Amnesty International has accused the RMF of abducting, torturing, and killing dozens of Sunni civilians. The second time Amnesty International appears is its accusation that the RMF engaged in arbitrary executions during this battle. Human Rights Watch is also used as a reference in this report; it is cited as claiming that some of the RMF's violations could reach the status of "war crimes". So, *Al Arabiya* uses human rights organisations as sources only in this context, which has no connection whatsoever to Al-Nimr's execution.

The most frequently used source in this category is *Al Arabiya* itself, with 18 references; there is also a reference to Al Arabiya's sister channel Al-Hadath News. There are some references to two international news agencies; Reuters (once) and Radio France Internationale (four times). It is also notable that *Al Arabiya* uses a range of definite Iranian sources: nine news agencies. For instance, The Iranian Students News Agency (ISNA) is used as the primary source, along with Mizan Online News Agency, Al-Hashd al-Shaabi

website, Fars News Agency, Tasnim News Agency, Digarban, and Saham News, all to report on internal news from Iran. The main focus of these reports is the prosecution of the “outlaws” who attacked the Saudi embassy. These prosecutions were reported with an air of suspicion by *Al Arabiya* as merely a political manoeuvre to get out of the diplomatic crisis caused by the burning of the Saudi embassy. There were 13 indefinite news sources used in this category. Some are completely vague, like “sources” and “observers”. Others are partially identified with terms such as “Iranian media” and “Western media”.

The second category shows that English *Al Arabiya*'s coverage uses the greatest number of news sources (126). In these references, there is not even a single reference to any definite or indefinite source that is related to activism or human rights. There are only three news reports that focus on Al-Nimr’s execution in this category, while 26 report on the backlash caused by the execution.

In this category, *Al Arabiya* relies heavily on SPA, which is referred to 16 times. However, the most frequently used sources are international news agencies. AFP appear 14 times and the AP 15. The most used of all is Reuters, with 30 references. The Islamic Republic News Agency and Amad News are the only Iranian news agencies referred to as definite sources in this category. As for the indefinite news sources, there are only seven references to four unidentified sources.

The third category, *Al-Alam* Arabic, has a different attitude towards Al-Nimr’s in terms of the type of news reported. For instance, it contains 25 relevant news reports, but only 4 report on the issue of the embassy attacks or other backlash-related news. The other 21 focus on Al-Nimr’s execution or his “heroic” activities, influences, sermons, speeches, and so forth.

This category contains the fewest number of references to news sources (47). The most frequently used source is *Al-Alam* itself, but several other definite sources are used in this category. These references include mainly Iranian and pro-Iranian news agencies such as Alahednews, Annabaa, Alsumaria News, and Shafaqna. In addition to these sources, other news agencies from the Arab world are cited, including Manama Post, Alwaienews,

and the *Rai al-Youm* newspaper. Moreover, *Al Riyadh*, a local Saudi newspaper is used as a definite news source in only one news report with the title الادعاء السعودي يطلب الاعدام للشيخ النمر (The Saudi prosecution demands the execution of Sheikh Al-Nimr). This report appeared more than two years before the execution, soon after the Saudi prosecutor had presented the case against Al-Nimr. The report's focus is on criticising the prosecutor's accusations and demands; it follows the prosecutor's statement with several critical responses from Saudi opposition sources. Another response used to invalidate the accusations is from the Arabic Network for Human Rights Information. There are two more indefinite news sources with a human rights focus used in this category; The European-Saudi Organisation for Human Rights and the UN OHCHR.

Al-Alam's Arabic coverage uses many human rights-related sources, both definite and indefinite. The word ناشطون (activists) is used as an indefinite news source 12 times in the different reports. So, this discursive tool offers an indication of the way *Al-Alam* presents Al-Nimr's story within a human rights discourse through several references to human rights groups and activists in its Arabic coverage.

The last category, *Al-Alam* English, contains the largest number of relevant news reports with 32 news reports about Al-Nimr's case; only 6 focus on the attacks on the embassy or the backlash to the execution. The other 26 deal with Al-Nimr's execution or other news about his "heroic" activities, influences, sermons, speeches, and so forth. There are many definite and indefinite news sources in these reports, with definite sources used 76% of the time. One of the big differences between *Al-Alam*'s Arabic and English coverage is that the English category uses a variety of international news agencies as sources, including AFP, AP, Reuters, International Business Times, the Center for Global Security and Geopolitical Studies, the Huffington Post, The *Independent* newspaper, and WikiLeaks. These international sources are used to report reactions from around the world towards Al-Nimr's plight, in addition to relaying some interviews and statements about the topic. For instance, AFP is the source for a statement by a German foreign ministry spokesman concerned about the growing tension in the region due to Al-Nimr's execution. *Al-Alam* uses only one Saudi news agency, SPA, to report

the announcement of the execution sentence by the Saudi Ministry of Interior. The most frequently used definite news source is the Iranian English-language news agency, Press TV, which appears 12 times. Press TV and other pro-Iranian news agencies such as IRNA, AhluBayt News Agency, and Mehr News Agency are also used to report various takes on the story of Al-Nimr's execution, including statements, interviews, and reports from Saudi, Iranian, and other officials and citizens. For example, Press TV is used as the source for statements by Ayatollah Khamenei, the Saudi Ministry of Interior, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, and Nimr Al-Nimr's brother Mohamed.

There are also some references to human rights organisations as definite news sources in this category. These sources are Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, and Reprieve, and they are for reports that criticise the "troubling" human rights record of Saudi Arabia. For instance, one statement was issued jointly by Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International to criticise the "alarming" increase of death sentences against Saudi Shiites, which they believe that the authorities are using to crush opposition under the pretext of fighting "terrorism."

As for the indefinite sources, there were some references to "sources", "defence lawyers", and "Saudi social media". There were more references to indefinite sources linked to human rights such as "human rights groups" and "activists". The indirect "activists" source is used to report their calling for protests to condemn the execution in Saudi Arabia.

7.3 Quoting Verbs

In this section, the focus of the analysis is on another intertextual element: the way the news reports refer to other texts by quoting. The reporting verbs used are listed and analysed with a few detailed examples in order to understand the discursive effect entailed by this level.

The analysis starts by exploring all the quoting verbs used in the corpus. A description of the findings and their relevance to the study follows. The tables in this section divide the quoting verbs according to the classification of quoting verbs meaning potentials proposed by Caldas-Coulthard (1994; see Table 16).

Table 16: The meaning potentials of quoting verbs (from Caldas-Coulthard, 1994)

Speech-reporting verbs	Meaning	Examples
Neutral structuring verbs		say, tell, ask, enquire, reply, answer
Metapropositional verbs	Assertives	remark, explain, agree, assent, accept, correct, counter, announce
	Directives	urge, instruct, order
	Expressives	accuse, grumble, lament, confess, complain, swear, claim
Metalinguistic verbs		narrate, quote, recount
Descriptive verbs		
Prosodic (loudness, pitch emotion)		cry, intone, shout, yell, scream
	Voice qualifier (manner)	whisper, murmur, mutter
Paralinguistic	Voice qualification (attitude)	laugh, giggle, sigh, gasp, groan
Transcript verbs	Relation to other parts of discourse	repeat, echo, add, amend
Discourse signalling	Discourse progress	pause, go on, hesitate, continue

7.3.1 The Case of Badawi

The number of reporting verbs, including quoting verbs, differs from one category to another due to many factors, such as the different number of reports, variations in reporting style, the ideological tendencies of the news agencies, and the language itself.

For Badawi, there were 17 verbs used for quoting (Table 17). Most of these verbs are used in the third category, which also has the largest number of reports. The fourth category uses only one quoting verb.

Table 17: Quoting verbs used in Badawi's case

			Al Arabiya		Al-Alam	
			Arabic	English	Arabic	English
Speech-reporting verbs						
Neutral structuring verbs		Said		4	37	2
		Mentioned	1		1	
		Replied			1	
		Wrote			1	
		Tweeted			1	
		Told		1		
Metapropositional verbs	Assertives	Stressed	1		2	
		Clarified	1		2	
		Described			5	
	Directives	Called for		1	1	
	Expressives	Condemned			3	

Metalinguistic verbs		Reported		2	2	
		Quoted		2		
		Concluded			1	
Descriptive verbs						
Prosodic (loudness, pitch emotion)		Chanted			1	
Paralinguistic	Voice qualifier (manner)					
	Voice qualification (attitude)					
Transcript verbs						
Discourse signalling	Relation to other parts of discourse	Added	1		12	
		Interrupted			1	
	Discourse progress					

As for the first category, *Al Arabiya* Arabic, four quoting verbs are used: أشار (mentioned), أكّد (stressed), أوضح (clarified), and أضاف (added). Two are assertives used to quote authoritative Saudi figures. “Stressed” is used with the subject “the Saudi Foreign Ministry”, whole “clarified” is used with the subject “an official source”. Only one neutral verb and one discourse-signalling verb are used. The latter is “added”, which follows the same quote by the official source.

The second category, *Al Arabiya* English, uses five verbs. Two are neutral, “said” and “told”. Another two verbs are metalinguistic, “reported” and “quoted”, and each is used twice. The verb “reported” appears twice, both times in quoting Saudi newspapers (*Al-Madinah* and *Sabq*). There are other uses “reported” that are not quoting verbs; they appear with news sources like AFP and BBC. There is one directive verb, “called for”, which *Al Arabiya* uses with the subject “Amnesty International” and the object “unconditional release of Badawi”. This quote sounds very critical of the imprisonment of Badawi. However, this report is dated 1 August 2013, while the appeal of the first sentence was still in progress. Moreover, Badawi’s case was also seen by more liberal Saudi writers as a mistake attributable to the influence of the extremist and traditionalist religious elite that dominates the Saudi legal system. This criticism is found in many soft news articles in Saudi Arabic newspapers. This perspective suggests that *Al Arabiya* uses these reporting expressions in order to show this critical outlook. Moreover, being critical of the Saudi legal system in the English coverage could be perceived by international viewers as a positive sign of both transparency and

independence in the media. Nevertheless, these quotes and references to human rights organisations disappeared in the later reports by *Al Arabiya*, after the appeal was rejected, the case gained more and more international attention, and there was more criticism from many quarters of the Saudi legal system.

The third category, *Al-Alam* Arabic, has the highest number of quoting verbs 15. Five are neutral, which are قال (said), أشار (mentioned), رد (replied), كتب (wrote), and غرد (tweeted). These verbs are used neutrally to report different kinds of quotations from a number of speakers. They are not discussed in detail here, as they do not have significant discursive value. The second group of verbs are metaproposotional. There are also five of this sort: أكد (stressed), أوضح (clarified), وصف (described), طالب ب (called for), and ندد (condemned). These verbs do need to be discussed in detail. There are three assertive verbs; “stressed” is used two times. One is with the subject “the European Union” in a passage stressing that Badawi's physical punishment is unacceptable and inhumane. The second instance is with the subject “Chris Doyle”, the director of the London-based Council for Arab-British Understanding. The context here is Doyle’s stressed that Saudi Arabia is an important partner for Britain. The second assertive verb is “clarified”, which is also used twice. Once it appears with “Ben Emmerson,” the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Counter-Terrorism and Human Rights, in a report about abuses in the way Saudi Arabia conducts its trials. The other instance is with Human Rights Watch; it clarifies that Badawi was arrested in June 2012. The third assertive verb is “described”, which appears five times. The first is with the subject “Amnesty International” in a description of Badawi’s second sentence as deeply objectionable. It is used again with Amnesty International when the report quotes its description of the sentence as shocking. The third instance appears when the UN described the sentence as “cruel and inhumane”. The fourth was when the Arabic Network for Human Rights Information described the charges against Badawi and other activists as “humorous”. The last instance of the verb “described” is in quoting a Saudi newspaper that had reported the prosecutor as describing Badawi’s website as “opposing the moderate approach”. The directive verb “called for” is used only once, to refer to The European Parliament’s call for “releasing Badawi”

and comparing Saudi Arabia's legal system to the one used by ISIS. The expressive verb "condemned" is used three times; the first two involve quoting Reporters Without Borders in its condemnation of what it considered "inhuman punishment and contrary to international law". The same quotation is used in two different news reports, once in each case. The third instance involves quoting the condemnation of Badawi's sentence by certain European parliamentarians, who describe it is "a very harsh and outrageous act by the Saudi authorities".

As for the metalinguistic verbs, there are two verbs: نقل (reported) and استخلص (concluded). The former is used twice, once when quoting SPA's report on a statement by the Saudi ambassador in London, Mohammad bin Nawaf bin Abdul-Aziz, which contained assurances about the importance of the mutual relationship between Saudi Arabia and the UK. The second occurrence quotes *Okaz*, the Saudi newspaper, and its report that "The Supreme Court issued its decision after five judges of high level reviewed the verdict issued by the Criminal Court in Jeddah for three months". The verb "concluded" is only used once, in a quote of the *Guardian*, a British daily newspaper; that paper drew the lesson from Badawi's trial that "Saudi Arabia is an enemy of freedom of opinion, freedom of thought, honesty and courage".

One of the most striking uses of quoting verbs is the use of the prosodic verb هتف (chanted). It is used when reporting what happened when Badawi was flogged on 9 January 2015, with the crowd that was watching chanting 'الله أكبر' (*Allahu Akbar)* or "God is great", according to *Der Spiegel*, the German weekly news magazine.

As for the last type of quoting verbs, transcript verbs, two discourse signalling verbs are used. The first is أضاف (added), which appears 12 times, and the second is قاطع (interrupted), which is used only once in the reporting of a debate between Tim Sebastian of *Deutsche Welle* and Prince Turki Al-Faisal, the president of Saudi Arabia's General Intelligence Agency; Al-Faisal had interrupted the journalist when he was discussing Badawi's case.

The fourth category, *Al-Alam*'s English, uses only one neutral quoting verb, "said", and it only appears twice.

7.3.2 The Case of Al-Hathloul

In Al-Hathloul's case, five quoting verbs are used (Table 18). The reason for the relatively small number of quoting verbs is the much smaller number of news reports in this case than in Badawi's.

Table 18: Quoting verbs used in Al-Hathloul's case

			Al Arabiya		Al-Alam	
	Meaning		Arabic	English	Arabic	English
Speech-reporting verbs						
Neutral structuring verbs		Said		7	2	4
		Wrote		1		
		Tweeted		3		
Metapropositional verbs	Assertives					
	Directives					
	Expressives					
Metalinguistic verbs		Reported			1	
Descriptive verbs						
Prosodic (loudness, pitch emotion)						
Paralinguistic	Voice qualifier (manner)					
	Voice qualification (attitude)					
Transcript verbs						
Discourse signalling	Relation to other parts of discourse	Added			1	
	Discourse progress					

The first category, *Al Arabiya* Arabic, does not have any quotations; there is only one brief news report about the case, containing only four short paragraphs. In the second category, however, *Al Arabiya* uses three quoting verbs in its English coverage. The three verbs are neutral: "said", "wrote", and "tweeted". The latter two verbs are used interchangeably to quote or paraphrase what Al-Hathloul wrote in her Twitter account on the day she was arrested at the border. The news report referred to many of her Arabic tweets, but the quotations were translations of those tweets.

The third category, *Al-Alam* Arabic, also uses three quoting verbs, قال (said), نقل (reported), and أضاف (added). The neutral verb "said" appears twice, and the discourse-signalling verb "added" is used once. The metalinguistic

verb نقل (reported) is also used once, when *Al-Alam* reports that *Rai al-Youm*, the independent Arabic newspaper, had used a quotation from an unnamed Saudi activist regarding the fact that Al-Hathloul and her friend, Maysaa Al-Amoudi, could be arrested for driving because they were driving in another country. The last category, *Al-Alam* in English, uses only the neutral quoting verb "said", which appears four times.

7.3.3 The Case of Al-Nimr

In the third case, Al-Nimr's, there are 27 verbs used for quoting (Table 19). Since this case has a fairly similar number of news reports in each category, it is worth examining the quantitative differences in quoting verbs across the four categories. One of the most noticeable differences is that the English *Al Arabiya* and *Al-Alam* contain nearly twice the number of quoting verbs as their Arabic counterparts. Both *Al Arabiya* Arabic and *Al-Alam* Arabic contain 34 verbs each. *Al Arabiya* English uses 54 verbs, while *Al-Alam*'s English uses 59.

Table 19: Quoting verbs used in Al-Nimr's case

			Al Arabiya		Al-Alam	
	Meaning		Arabic	English	Arabic	English
Speech-reporting verbs						
Neutral structuring verbs		Said	18	32	9	26
		Told	1	3	2	2
		Expressed		2	1	1
		Mentioned	2			
		Replied	1			1
		Stated that				1
		Noted that				1
		Concluded			1	
		Tweeted	1			
Metapropositional verbs	Assertives	Stressed	2	2	5	1
		Emphasised				2
		Clarified			2	
		Announced	1	1		
		Described	1	4		
	Directives	Called for	1	1	1	4
		Urged		2	1	1
		Warned				3
	Expressives	Condemned			2	1
		Wondered	1			
		Denounced		1	1	
		Appealed			1	
		Claimed				1
Metalinguistic verbs		Reported	1			4

		Quoted		2		
Descriptive verbs						
Prosodic (loudness, pitch emotion)		Chanted				1
		Shouted				1
Paralinguistic	Voice qualifier (manner)					
	Voice qualification (attitude)					
Transcript verbs						
Discourse signalling	Relation to other parts of discourse	Added	4	4	6	8
	Discourse progress					

As for the first category, *Al Arabiya* Arabic, five neutral quoting verbs are used: قال (said), أخبر (told), أشار (mentioned), رد (replied), and غرد (tweeted). These verbs may not offer a very significant indication of the discourse. The other type of quoting verbs is metapropositional verbs, and there are three assertives, one directive, and one expressive. The three assertive verbs are أكد (stressed), صرح (announced), and وصف (described). “Stressed” appears twice. The first occurrence is to report that Al-Nimr, who is labelled زعيم الفتنة “the leader of the sedition”, is stressing the fact that he was given a pen and paper to write his defence statement so he could discuss it with his lawyer before submitting it to the court. The second use regards the fact that the Saudi Ambassador to Iraq, Thamer Al-Sabhan, had stressed that the permanent position of Saudi Arabia is against terrorism and terrorist groups who wage internal and external war against Saudi Arabia. The one appearance of “announced” occurs in quoting what Thamer Al-Sabhan wrote on his Twitter account, which included the fact that he had “discussed the Saudi-Iraqi relations with the Iraqi Defense Minister, and stressed that the liberation of Falluja is being carried out by the Iraqi army and the International Alliance”. “Described” is also used only once, to describe the quoting technique that *Al Arabiya* followed when reporting what Nabil Elaraby, the Secretary-General of The Arab League, had said when condemning the attacks on the Saudi embassy and consulate in Iran. The one directive verb, طالب (called for), is used when quoting a letter by Hossein Mirdamadi, the uncle of Ayatollah Khamenei and an Iranian dissident critical of the regime, to his

nephew criticising human rights violations in Iran and calling on the Supreme Leader to end these “irreparable destructive abuses”. The only expressive verb in this category is تساءل (wondered), which is also used in the same news report regarding Hossein Mirdamadi, who had referred to the arrests imposed on Iran's opposition leaders, Mirhassein Mousavi and Mehdi Karroubi, and wondered whether they had taken up arms against the regime. The metalinguistic verb نقل (reported) also appears once to quote the Prosecutor General of Tehran, Abbas Jafari Dolatabadi, who had said that the investigation of those accused of attacking the Saudi embassy was continuing. As for the last type of quoting verb, transcript verbs, there is only one discourse-signalling verb, أضاف (added), which was four times.

In the second category, *Al Arabiya* English, three neutral quoting verbs appear: “said” (32 times), “told” (3 times), and “expressed” (twice). These verbs may not have a very significant indication of the discourse. The other type of quoting verbs is metapropositional verbs; here, there are three assertives, two directives, and one expressive. The three assertive verbs – “stressed”, “announced”, and “described” – are precisely the same as those used in the Arabic version. The verb “stressed” makes two appearances. The first is when the Jordanian government is reported to be stressing its condemnation “of the Iranian interference in the internal affairs of Arab states” in the context of the demonstrations in Iran and attacks on the Saudi embassy and consulate following Al-Nimr’s execution. The second involves a quote from an Omani government statement stressing the “need to find new rules that prohibit any form of interference in the internal affairs of other countries”. The verb “announced” is used once, when quoting Ali Shamkhani, the secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, and his announcement that “those who stormed the Saudi Embassy have been brought to justice and are awaiting trial”.

The verb “described” appears four times. The first is in a quote of Oman’s description of the embassy and consulate attacks as “unacceptable” in a statement published by the sultanate’s official news agency. The second instance is in a quote of what SPA had published when reporting the Saudi government statement regarding what it described as Iran’s “hostile” reaction to Al-Nimr’s execution. Another instance appears in quoting the condemnation

by Bahrain's Foreign Ministry of the attacks; the ministry had described them as a “flagrant violation of international law.” The final instance is in a quote from the Saudi Ministry of Interior that had described Al-Nimr as an “instigator of sedition” after his arrest.

The two directive verbs are “called for” and “urged”. The verb “called for” is used once to quoting the Al-Nimr family statement complaining about the death sentence issued by the court. In their statement, they called for a dialogue with Saudi officials to discuss what is best for “our dear country”.

The verb “urged” appears twice. The first is when quoting UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and his concern about the diplomatic dispute following Al-Nimr’s execution; he spoke with the Saudi and Iranian foreign ministers and urged them to avoid anything that could further aggravate the situation in the region. The other instance is in a quote of UN Security Council members regarding the attacks against the Saudi embassy and consulate. In this report, those members had urged both the Saudis and the Iranians to attempt to reduce tensions in the region by maintaining a dialogue.

The only expressive verb in this category is “denounced”, which appears with a quote from the Egyptian foreign minister that denounces the attacks as “unacceptable acts”. The metalinguistic verb “quoted” is used twice, once in reporting a statement by the secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, Ali Shamkhani, as quoted by the Islamic Republic News Agency. His statement included his confirmation that the Iranian “government is following the issue of the attack on the Saudi embassy”. The second instance is when quoting the director of the Asian Affairs Department, Khalid Ibrahim Abdulrahman Al-Hamar, who had commented on the fact that Qatar's ambassador to Iran was recalled in protest over the attacks on the Saudi embassy and consulate. The last type of quoting verbs is transcript verbs. There is only one discourse-signalling verb in this category – “added” – which is used four times.

As for the third category, *Al-Alam* Arabic uses four neutral quoting verbs are: قال (said), أخبر (told), عبر (expressed), and ختم (concluded). The second type of quoting verbs is metapropositional verbs, and there are two assertives, one directive, and three expressives. The two assertive verbs are

أكد (stressed) and أوضح (clarified). “Stressed” is used five times. The first appearance is in quoting what Haider al-Abadi, Iraq’s former prime minister, regarding his shock when he received the news of Al-Nimr’s execution. He stressed that silencing and executing dissidents is a policy that would backfire and bring destruction to governments and their peoples. The second use is in a reporting of what Sayyid Ahmad Khatami, a senior Iranian cleric, said regarding the attacks on the embassy and consulate. He stressed that he did not approve of attacks on embassies since their staff are guests of the country they are in and the attacks would not benefit Iran; he added the attacks might also taint the reputation of those committed to the holy movement. However, he also supported the protests and marches and condemned “the crimes of the Al Saud regime”. The third use is connected to reporting a statement by an Iraqi Shia paramilitary group named عصائب أهل الحق (*Asayib Ahl al-Haq*) or “the League of the Righteous”. This group urged the Iraqi government to reconsider its relationship with Saudi Arabia, especially after Al-Nimr’s execution. In the report, the group stressed that the Iraqi government should have executed convicted terrorists in Iraq and that any delay or procrastination in such executions would be considered as a disregard of Iraqi people. The fourth involves reporting the concerns of the European Organisation for Human Rights regarding the treatment Al-Nimr faced during his years of imprisonment. This organisation had stressed that Al-Nimr was a prisoner of conscience, a human rights defender who had demanded political reforms. The fifth instance involves reporting a harsh statement issued by Hezbollah following Al-Nimr’s execution. That statement had described the execution as a crime and stressed that this “crime” would be a disgrace that tainted the Saudi regime.

There are two directive verbs: طالب (called for) and دعا (urged), each used once. Both appear in the same report, noted above, on the statement issued by Asayib Ahl al-Haq. In this report, the group’s statement called for the execution of all of those convicted of terrorist operations against Iraqis, especially those who were Saudi.

As for the expressive verbs, there are three in this category: أدان (condemned), استنكر (denounced), and ناشد (appealed). “Condemned” is also used in the same report on the Asayib Ahl al-Haq statement that condemned

the execution of Al-Nimr as a “barbaric act” stemming from the “Saudi Wahhabi-Takfiri terrorist ideology”. The second verb “denounced”, is used in quoting what the scholars of Jabal 'Amil said in a statement issued to denounce the “crime” of executing Al-Nimr and stating that Saudi Arabia is continuing its series of Wahhabi-Takfiri criminal actions in order to cover up their shattering defeats in Yemen. The third verb, “appealed”, is used when reporting a statement by منظمة بدر (the Badr Organisation), an Iraqi Shia political party, that not only criticised Al-Nimr’s execution but also appealed to the entire free world to condemn this heinous crime committed by Saudi killers and to stand with the heroic people of the Arabian Peninsula. The last type of quoting verbs is transcript verbs, and there is only one discourse-signalling verb used in this category: أضاف “added”, which appears six times.

As for the fourth category, *Al-Alam* English, it contains the largest number of quoting verbs (16) and the greatest number of their uses (59). There are six neutral quoting verbs: “said” (36 times), “told” (twice), “expressed” (once), “replied” (once), “stated” (once), and “noted” (once). These verbs may not offer very significant indications of the discourse.

The other type of quoting verbs is metapropositional verbs: there are two assertive, three directive, and two expressive verbs. The two assertives are “stressed” and “emphasised”, and “stressed” is used only once. It appears in a report on Germany’s intention to reconsider military sales to Saudi Arabia after Al-Nimr’s execution. In this report, *Al-Alam* quotes Steffen Seibert, a German government spokesperson, who stressed that dialogue with Saudi Arabia was in Germany’s interest as he was commenting on the planned sanctions.

The verb “emphasised” is used twice. The first is in a report about Ayatollah Khamenei’s reaction to Al-Nimr’s execution. In his comments, Khamenei emphasised that “the Almighty God will not remain indifferent to innocent blood and [this] unrightfully shed blood will rapidly afflict the politicians and executives of his [Saudi] regime”. The second time is in the same report, when Khamenei emphasised that “those who are honestly interested in the fate of humanity, [and] the fate of human rights and justice,

must follow up on such issues and should not remain indifferent to this situation".

The three directive verbs are "called for", "urged", and "warned". "Called for" appears four times. The first is when reporting a statement by Federica Mogherini, the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, in reaction to Al-Nimr's execution; she called on the Saudi government "to promote reconciliation between the different communities". The second instance is in a report describing France's and Germany's condemnation of the mass execution in which Al-Nimr was among those who died. This condemnation appeared in a statement that was quoted as calling on the governments of the Middle East to try to avoid aggravating sectarian and religious conflicts. The third instance is in reporting a statement by Laurent Fabius, a former French foreign minister, commenting on the same incident. He was quoted as calling for de-escalating the tensions between Saudi Arabia and Iran. The fourth instance is from a report that covers a similar response from Switzerland; a statement by the Swiss Foreign Ministry is quoted as calling for the authorities in the region to try to lower tensions in order to avoid conflicts and provocations.

The verb "urged" is used only once in a report similar to those mentioned in reference to "called for"; the UN Security Council issued a statement condemning Al-Nimr's execution and the other mass executions. The report quotes the statement as urging the Saudi and Iranian sides to maintain a dialogue and lower tensions in the region.

The verb "warned" appears three times. The first is in reporting a statement by Federica Mogherini issued in reaction to Al-Nimr's execution; she warned that such a case could spark worse sectarian tensions and conflicts, which would harm the whole region. The second and third cases quote the same line in two different reports that include a warning from Iran to Saudi Arabia that Al-Nimr's execution would cost it dearly.

The two expressive verbs in this category are "condemned" and "claimed". The first verb is used once, in a message from Hassan Rouhani, the President of Iran, who condemned the "non-Islamic and inhuman" acts of Saudi Arabia and described them as "blatant violation of human rights and

Islamic values". The second verb "claimed" is used once, in a report containing what Saudi Arabia had said in a UN session to defend its position on Al-Nimr's execution and the other executions; the Saudis claimed that all those convicted had been given "fair and just trials without any consideration to their intellectual, racial, or sectarian affiliation".

The metalinguistic verb "reported" is used four times, all with the same source, Press TV. The first is in a quote from David Cameron, the former British prime minister, condemning Saudi Arabia's actions. The second quote is a statement by Hassan Nasrallah of Hezbollah, warning that the end of the Saudi regime was near. The third quote is from Ayatollah Khamenei, who stressed that Al-Nimr's execution was a vital issue of justice and human rights. The last is a quote from UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, who expressed concerns regarding the increase in tensions that developed after the executions.

The only descriptive verbs used in this category are the two prosodic verbs "chanted" and "shouted". Both are used to describe how protestors were voicing their condemnation of Al-Nimr's execution. The verb "chanted" refers to what Iraqi demonstrators were chanting, which was "Damned, damned be Al Saud!", while "shouted" is used in another report to quote what Iraqi demonstrators were shouting, which in this case was "Killing Sheikh Nimr is the beginning of your downfall". The last type of quoting verbs is transcript verbs. There is only one discourse-signalling verb used in this category, "added", which is used eight times.

7.4 Hypertextual Elements

As online news reports are part of digital discourse, intertextuality is an inherent feature in such material, due to its hyperlinked nature. Some features analysed in this research are hypertextual elements that are present in most of the news reports. For example, the central hypertextual element in this section is the tag, which has been defined as "an element of code in a computer document used especially to control format and layout or to establish a hyperlink" (Merriam-Webster, 2019). The tags found in the selected corpus are present under each news report as a hypertextual tool

that can, when clicked, open a new page with a list of all the news reports that contain that same tag. Other intertextual elements are discussed to investigate the discursive features surrounding the selected corpus. The analysis follows the same structure as followed above by analysing the three cases one by one; in each category of each case, the analysis also deals with the relevant news reports. The main factor that serves as a measure to separate the four categories is the large gap in the number of news reports. Despite this, the technical and journalistic style of each category can be readily observed. For instance, some technical features in the first category alone (*Al Arabiya* Arabic) appear in the comments section that follows the news report and offers readers the opportunity to write remarks, supporting or opposing comments, opinions, clarifications, and so forth.

7.4.1 The Case of Badawi

While there are only two news reports in the first category, there are thirty-five in the third category.

Of the two reports in the first category, one contains six tags and the other none. The first is رائف بدوي (Raif Badawi), and it is supposed to transfer the user to another page with a list of other news reports with the same tag. However, clicking actually sends the user to a page with the message “No result found”. In theory, this could mean that no other news reports have the same tag. However, it should show at least the news report that includes the Raif Badawi tag. Therefore, it seems that the tag feature was not active at the time this thesis was written. This is likely the case, as the other tags all lead to an empty results page. The other tags are قيم الإسلام (Islamic values), السجن (prison), الشبكة الليبرالية (Liberal Network), الجلد (flogging), and حكم بالإعدام (death sentence). These tags could have been used to link the news report announcing the sentence of Badawi with broader contexts and discourses. For instance, the tag about Islamic values highlights the central attitude of this news report, which reads as very protective of Islamic values and critical of Badawi's crime.

In the second category, there are 14 different tags in 11 news reports. The most frequently used tags refer to Saudi Arabia and its legal system. For example, “Saudi Arabia” is used five times, and “Saudi Court”, “jail” and

“Vision 2030” are used once each. The name “Raif Badawi” is used as a tag in only three news reports, although six reports deal with his story. Other tags are linked in one way or another as major keywords of these news reports. “Islam” is used twice, and “Arab Spring”, “Social Media”, and “Saudi liberal” are each used once. The issue of the ban on women driving, which is the focus of the second case study of this thesis, is also linked in one report that includes the story of Al-Hathloul and used the tag “Saudi women driving” once. Other less relevant tags like “Syria”, “Nobel”, and “White Helmets” are present in the reports that do not include Badawi's case as their main focus. In this category, the reporting did not include a comments section. The technical structure of *Al Arabiya*'s Arabic website is vastly different from the English version. Not only are there visual differences, but the Arabic version also offers more options, features, and sections in the Arabic header. The social media sharing buttons are similar, to some extent, between the two versions.

As for the third category, *Al-Alam*'s 65 news reports contain more than 220 tags. The use of tags in this category is strikingly more intensive than in the other categories. For instance, although there are only 65 news reports and Badawi is the main focus of only 35 of them, there are 81 tags that include the name رائف بدوي (Raif Badawi). Part of the explanation lies in the several variations of Badawi's name that are used as different tags. Nine variations of the name appear in the Arabic *Al-Alam* reports:

1. رائف بدوي (Raif Badawi)
2. بدوي (Badawi)
3. رائف (Raif)
4. المدوّن السعودي رائف بدوي (the Saudi blogger Raif Badawi)
5. المدوّن رائف بدوي (the blogger Raif Badawi)
6. المدوّن السعودي (the Saudi blogger)
7. مدوّن سعودي (a Saudi blogger)
8. المدوّن (the blogger)
9. مدوّن (a blogger)

In addition to these tags, others that refer to Badawi appear. For example, the tags ليبرالي (a liberal) and ناشط (an activist0 are also mentioned in a report about Badawi. Clicking on the first tag leads to a list of three news reports, one of

which is about Badawi, while clicking on “an activist” leads to a long list of reports about different activists, including those in other countries like the UAE, Bahrain, and Egypt. The latter tag is not the only one that has a human rights relevance or significance. There are more than three dozen different human rights-related tags. For instance, there are 11 different tags for human rights organisations, such as منظمة العفو الدولية (Amnesty International), الشبكة العربية لمعلومات حقوق الإنسان (Arabic Network for Human Rights Information), and جمعية حسم الحقوقية (Saudi Civil and Political Rights Association). There are also tags that include the names of five Saudi Arabian activists: Waleed Abu Al-Khair (a jailed Saudi lawyer and human rights activist), Suliman al-Reshoudi (a judge and prominent pro-democracy activist), Zuhair Kutubi (a columnist), Suad Al-Shammari (a women's rights activist), and Nimr Al-Nimr. There are also more generic tags. For example, there are tags with general topics like “civil society”, “human rights activists”, “human rights violations”, “human rights”, “freedom of expression”, “prisoners of conscience”, “Saudi activist” and “political activists”. Other tags have some specific interest or focus like “human rights in Saudi Arabia”, ”human rights in Bahrain”, and “Women's Rights in Saudi Arabia”. Finally, there are a large number of tags that are relevant to human rights violations by Saudi Arabia, including “arrests of human rights activists”, “flogging a liberal blogger”, “Saudi violations”, “the flogging penalty”, “prison sentence”, “apostasy”, “executions in Saudi Arabia”, “The execution of Sheikh Al-Nimr”, “medieval ruling system”, “beheadings in Saudi Arabia”, and “beheading a woman”.

Another group of tags focused on Saudi Arabia and its government. Some of these tags are neutral, like الحكومة السعودية (the Saudi government), السعودية السلطات (Saudi authorities), الملك السعودي (the Saudi King), and other tags that referred to a few Saudi cities and regions. The tag السعودية (Saudi Arabia) was used 35 times and was the most frequently used tag. Other tags are used to refer to Saudi Arabia with either explicit or implied negative connotations, such as النظام السعودي (The Saudi regime), النظام الوهابي (The Wahhabi regime), and النظام الملكي السعودي (the Saudi monarchical regime). Other negative references appear in tags referring to the Saudi legal system, religious entities, and Saudi foreign policies. For instance, tags like الوهابية (Wahhabism), الشرطة الدينية (the religious police), and الوسطى حكم من القرون (medieval decree] are

terms that *Al-Alam* often uses to refer to what it views as Saudi Arabia's backward, religiously extremist, and barbaric interpretation of Islam. Other tags refer to problematic Saudi political issues, such as عاصفة الحزم (Operation Decisive Storm) and العدوان السعودي على اليمن (Saudi aggression against Yemen), although they are connected to different viewpoints on the war. The latter tag is used more frequently, while the first appears only once. The crucial topic of terrorism is connected to many tags. Some are directly or indirectly linked to the story of Badawi, like the tag داعش (The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS)), which appears in eight news reports. In many of those, the story links what was done to Badawi and other activists in the Saudi legal system to what was being done to the victims of ISIS, making the discursive point that ISIS and the Kingdom share the same fundamentalist and terrorist ideology. Other terrorism-related tags include تنظيم القاعدة (Al-Qaeda), بوكو حرام (Boko Haram), محاربة الإرهاب (fighting terrorism), مكافحة الإرهاب (counter-terrorism], هجمات 11 سبتمبر (September 11 attacks), and هجمات باريس (Paris attacks).

There are various other tags covering a wide range of topics or people mentioned in the news reports. These include the names of international politicians, names of countries and cities, and somewhat arbitrary or irrelevant terms like "Facebook" and "a tweet".

In the fourth category, *Al-Alam* in English, there are 24 different tags in 7 news reports. The most frequently used tags are "Saudi Arabia" and the name "Raif Badawi", both of which appear four times. There is a group of five tags that refer to human rights and activism-related terms: "human rights", "Human Rights Prize", "Human Rights Watch", "Saudi political activist" and "Sakharov Prize". Another group of tags includes issues related to Saudi law and the country's legal system, such as "beheading", "publicly beheading", and "jailed". Some tags, like "ISIS flag" and "Wahhabism", have what appears to be an intentionally negative connotation. One of the most interesting tags is "*Charlie Hebdo* attacks", which appears in a report referring to the solidarity march in Paris after the killing of journalists at that satirical publication. The report mentions that, ironically, ministers from Bahrain and Saudi Arabia participated in the march in support of freedom of speech, even as they suppressed activists and journalists in their own countries. This kind of

association between news stories internal to Saudi Arabia with international narratives is used extensively by *Al-Alam*, usually with a negative attitude.

7.4.2 The Case of Al-Hathloul

As the number of news reports in this case is lower than in the other two, there are also fewer tags. In the first category, *Al Arabiya* includes the name or story of Al-Hathloul in two reports with three tags. The first is قيادة السيارة (car driving). This tag was a very active topic because it was used in many news reports during the movement to allow women to drive and the various attempts to move that issue along. However, it has recently been deactivated, and clicking the tag leads to a page with the message “No result found”. This could be due to a technical problem or an editorial decision. The tag الهذلول (Al-Hathloul) has also been deactivated. The last tag is السعودية (Saudi Arabia) which by contrast is still active; when clicked, it leads to a list of news reports about Saudi Arabia that contain the same tag. Given that the previous two tags are deactivated but other tags like “Saudi Arabia” are not, a technical explanation is unlikely.

Other important intertextual elements in this category are video links and the comments section. The news report includes a video link from Al-Hathloul's Keek account featuring footage of Al-Hathloul driving her father's car as he filmed her and commenting on the ban on women driving. As for the comments section, it has 382 comments that range from very supportive of her actions to expressing extreme disapproval. Some comments received a large number of likes and/or dislikes, and some led to threads of supporting and opposing replies. For example, comment 339 (Figure 19) is titled أين المساواة (where is the equality?) and wonders اين المشكلة في قيادة السيارة من قبل المرأة في السعودية؟, which can be translated as “What is wrong with a woman driving a car in Saudi Arabia?” This comment received 49 likes and 16 dislikes.

Figure 19: Comment 339

On the other hand, a disapproving user (comment 378; Figure 20) commented on the news report with ياالله يا لها من كارثه... تقود السياره ويلنا وسواد ليلنا, which can be translated as “Oh God! What a disaster! She drives! Woe upon us!” This comment received many replies supporting its message, 66 likes, and 29 dislikes.

Figure 20: Comment 378

The above two comments are an indicator of the activity of the sides supporting each viewpoint. Some comments may seem extreme, as they cite religious rhetoric which prohibits the women driving. Others warn that tribal and traditional values would be destroyed. On the other hand, some comments show an extreme attitude to their opponents, describing their opinions as “backwards”. The comments section in general reveals how controversial this issue is in the Saudi community. It is worth noting that the comments section has been deactivated recently and cannot be viewed anymore.

The second category, *Al Arabiya* English, contains two news reports with five different tags. Three focus on the issue of women driving: “Saudi women driving”, “Saudi women”, and “driving ban”. Another tag, “Ahthloul”, obviously focuses on Al-Hathloul herself, although the spelling is incorrect. The other two tags were “Saudi Arabia” and “police”.

As for the third category, *Al-Alam* Arabic, there were 33 tags in 8 news reports. Some focus on the issue of women driving, such as قيادة السيارات (driving cars), قيادة السيارة (car driving), and قيادة المرأة (woman driving). Al-Hathloul herself has a tag including her name that is used in two news reports. Some tags deal with the more general topic of Saudi women’s issues and rights, like the tag المرأة السعودية (Saudi woman) in two reports, حقوق المرأة في السعودية (women’s rights in Saudi), and ناشطتان (two female activists). Some tags like ولاية الرجل (male guardianship) refer to another issue that Saudi women have protested: the government-enforced guardianship of males over females, who need their

guardian's approval for many governmental, commercial, and other facets of daily life. Another group of tags focuses on human rights-related issues: examples include الانتخابات elections), حقوق الانسان في السعودية (human rights in Saudi), الجزيرة العربية لجنة الدفاع عن حقوق الإنسان في شبة (Committee for the Defense of Human Rights in the Arabian Peninsula), منظمة العفو الدولية (Amnesty International], جمعية حسم الحقوقية (Saudi Civil and Political Rights Association], and نشطاء الانترنت (Internet activist). The other cases studied in this thesis are also mentioned: المدوّن رائف بدوي (the blogger Raif Badawi) and اعدام الشيخ النمر (the execution of Sheikh Al-Nimr). Other tags appear in a way that is suggestive of associative journalistic techniques. For example, *Al-Alam* uses the tag داعش (ISIS) in a report about human rights in Saudi Arabia.

In the fourth category, *Al-Alam* English, the two reports include nine tags. The only tag that refers to a human rights-related topic is “Human Rights Watch”. The tag closest to Al-Hathloul’s the case of was “driving ban”. Some tags are difficult to understand in this context, such as “video”, “photos” and “horror”. These seem to have been added arbitrarily or, perhaps, for a specific technical but unclear purpose. Finally, it is worth noting that Al-Nimr is mentioned in two tags in this case: “Sheikh Nimr” and “Nimr”.

7.4.3 The Case of Al-Nimr

Nimr Al-Nimr’s case has the largest number of news reports and thus the most tags in each category. Due to the vast number of tags, the discussion of these elements does not analyse each tag in detail; instead, the focus is on the most valuable and relevant to the present study, although a brief overview of each category is provided.

In the first category, Arabic *Al Arabiya* published 46 news reports with 143 tags. The first group of tags refer to Al-Nimr; 16 reports contain the tag نمر النمر (Nimr Al-Nimr). The second group includes tags that refer to the attack on the Saudi embassy and consulate: 27 news reports contained one or more of the following tags: اقتحام السفارة السعودية (storming the Saudi embassy), الاعتداء على السفارة السعودية (attack on the Saudi Embassy), السفارة السعودية (Saudi embassy), القنصلية السعودية (Saudi consulate), سفارات (embassies), مدينة مشهد (Mashhad City), هجمات (attacks), اتفاقيات (conventions), and اتفاقية فيينا (Vienna Convention). This reveals how much more attention *Al Arabiya* pays to the aftermath of the

execution, as opposed to the execution itself. As for that event, this category uses five different tags to refer to it: إعدام (execution) used seven times, القصاص (Qiṣāṣ) an Islamic legal term that refers to “retaliation in kind” or more specifically “execution” in this context, اعدام 47 ارهابياً (executing 47 terrorists), إعدامات (executions), and حكم بالإعدام (death sentence).

Another group of tags focuses on terrorism-related topics. These tags appear 19 times in the news reports. Linking the case of Al-Nimr to terrorism is made clear by the official Saudi statement presenting Al-Nimr as one of 47 “terrorists” executed on the same day. These tags are as follows: إرهاب (terrorism) used eight times, الإرهاب (the terrorism) used twice, إرهابيون (terrorists), القاعدة (Al-Qaeda) used twice, خلايا (cells) used twice to refer to terrorist cells, داعش (ISIS), and مسيرات آل شويل (the marches of Al-Shuwail) which refers to the Iranian protest, where one marcher was holding a sign with Al-Shuwail’s name and photo; Al-Shuwail has been linked to Al-Qaeda as a supporter and theoretical defender.

Two important groups of tags used by *Al Arabiya* in this category are those related to pro-Iranian names and those related to Saudi–Iranian relations. The tags that contain pro-Iranian names include حزب الله (Hezbollah), حسن نصرالله (Hassan Nasrallah), نصرالله (Nasrallah), الخميني (Khomeini) and خامنئي (Khamenei). The tags that are related to Iran and the Saudi–Iranian conflict include إيران السعودية (Iran and Saudi Arabia), قطع العلاقات (cutting ties) used three times, السعودية تقطع العلاقة مع إيران (Saudi Arabia cuts ties with Iran) used twice, الصراع الإيراني السعودي (the Iranian-Saudi conflict), الدبلوماسية الإيرانية (Iranian diplomacy), الولي الفقيه (the Guardian Jurist), referring to Iran’s system of governance, where the Guardian Jurist is the Supreme Leader who has control of governmental organisations, الحرس الثوري (Revolutionary Guards), الثورة الإيرانية (the Iranian revolution), سليماني (Sulaimani), and الملالي (the mullahs), a term used to describe the ruling system in Iran, although the literal meaning refers to Shia scholars.

As for the second category, there are 95 different tags used in the 47 news reports that mention Al-Nimr’s name. Two main groups of tags can be highlighted as an initial exploration of the way they are used in this category. The first group of four tags focuses on Al-Nimr and his execution: “Nimr Al-

Nimr", which is used 12 times, and "Nimr", "executions", and "execution", each of which is used once. The second group of 7 tags appear in 22 reports that focus on the aftermath of the execution, including the attacks on the Saudi diplomatic facilities: "embassy", which is used six times, "Saudi embassy attack", used three times, "Saudi embassy", used twice, "consulate", used three times, and "protest", "Mashhad", and "Tehran", each used once. English *Al Arabiya* also uses many terrorism-related tags. There are six such tags: "terrorism", "Al-Qaeda", "Al-Nusra Front", "Islamists", "ISIS", and "Fares Al-Shuwail".

The most frequently used tags are "Saudi Arabia", "Iran" and other names related to one country or the other, or both, or to their governments. Some tags refer to "Hezbollah", "Saudi–Iranian crisis", "Saudi Interior Ministry", "Saudi Council of Senior Scholars", and so forth.

The rest of the tags range from the names of international, Saudi, and Iranian officials to names of cities, countries, and organisations. It is notable that no tags focus on anything related to human rights or activism, as in the previous two categories.

As for the third category, *Al-Alam* in Arabic mentions Al-Nimr's case in 52 news reports that include 278 different tags, the highest number in any category reported in this thesis. The tags in this category cover a wide variety of topics. As to the two main issues of the case focused, Al-Nimr's execution receives a significant amount reporting and attention, while the attacks on the embassies are not mentioned in any tag. The tags that mentioned Al-Nimr and his execution are as follows:

1. الشهيد الشيخ نمر باقر النمر (the Martyr Sheikh Nimr Baqir Al-Nimr)
2. آية الله الشيخ نمر باقر النمر (Ayatollah Sheikh Nimr Baqir Al-Nimr), used three times
3. الشيخ نمر باقر النمر (Sheikh Nimr Baqir Al-Nimr), used twice
4. الشيخ نمر النمر (Sheikh Nimr Al-Nimr), used three times
5. الشيخ النمر (Sheikh Al-Nimr), used seven times
6. النمر (Al-Nimr), used seven times
7. الشهيد النمر (the Martyr Al-Nimr),
8. نمر النمر (Nimr Al-Nimr), used seven times

9. نمر باقر النمر (Nimr Baqir Al-Nimr), used four times
10. إعدام الشيخ نمر النمر (execution of Sheikh Nimr Al-Nimr)
11. إعدام الشيخ النمر (execution of Sheikh Al-Nimr)
12. إعدام الشيخ نمر (execution of Sheikh Nimr)
13. إعدام النمر (execution of Al-Nimr)
14. إعدام (execution)
15. جريمة الإعدام (The crime of execution)
16. جريمة إعدام الشيخ النمر (The crime of execution of Sheikh Al-Nimr), used twice

The sheer number of tags shows the degree to which *Al-Alam* was interested in Al-Nimr's case and how his execution was a significant story that was linked to other texts using 16 tags. The execution is treated by *Al-Alam* as part of a pattern of human rights violations and political corruption in Saudi Arabia, as is clear from the discourse it adopts, both textually and intertextually. Another large group of tags includes terms related to human rights, activism, and corruption in the Saudi legal system:

1. حقوق الإنسان (human rights), used four times
2. حقوق الإنسان في السعودية (human rights in Saudi Arabia), used three times
3. لجنة حقوق الانسان في السعودية (Commission on Human Rights in Saudi Arabia)
4. انتهاكات حقوق الانسان (human rights violations)
5. ناشطون سعوديون (Saudi activists)
6. سجناء الرأي (prisoners of conscience)
7. اعتقالات في السعودية (arrests in Saudi Arabia)
8. الاحتجاجات في السعودية (protests in Saudi Arabia)
9. الحراك الشعبي السعودي (popular Saudi mobility)
10. المعارضة السعودية (Saudi opposition)
11. تظاهرات السعودية (Saudi demonstrations), used twice
12. الحريات (freedoms)
13. السجون السعودية (Saudi prisons)
14. المعتقلين (detainees)

The number of human rights-related tags shows that *Al-Alam*'s adopted narrative is influenced by and promotes a human rights discourse, or at least

its view of such a discourse. One tag that links this case with Badawi's is رائف بدوي (Raif Badawi), which is used twice.

The story of Al-Nimr is also linked with other narratives like the Saudi–Iranian conflict. As *Al-Alam* adopts a critical stance on Saudi policies, many tags refer to the many facets of this issue. For example, the tag الاحتلال السعودي (the Saudi occupation) refers to the Saudi-led intervention in Bahrain on 14 March 2011, which was aimed at helping the Bahraini government to stop the anti-government uprising underway in that country. The use of the disapproving term "occupation" reveals the anti-Saudi position in the narrative of the issue. Other crucial tags focused on the Saudi regime itself condemn it as autocratic, extremist, and backward. They include نظام الخلافة الملكي (Royal Caliphate Regime), الملكية العمودية (vertical monarchy), العرش السعودي (the Saudi throne), and الوهابية (Wahhabism), which is used three times, along with many tags that include or implies the controversial concept of التكفير (Takfir) in the Islamic tradition; *Takfir* means the act of accusing a Muslim of being an infidel. This accusation can have dire consequences, as it could lead to a person so accused being charged as an apostate. The Iranian narrative usually refers to the Saudi interpretation of Islam as extreme and based on *Takfir* of another Muslim. Iran also accuses Saudi Arabia of influencing extremist Jihadi groups theoretically, politically, and financially. Therefore, Al-Nimr's execution is, for *Al-Alam*, another extreme act of a regime that practised *Takfir* against Al-Nimr. There are thus tags like دعاة التكفير (Takfir advocates), الإرهاب التكفيري (Takfiry terrorism), الجماعات التكفيرية (Takfiry organisations), and so forth. In the same vein, *Al-Alam* also uses many tags referring to terrorism, sectarianism, and political violations, which generally attribute such negative stances to the Saudi government.

As for the fourth category, *Al-Alam*'s English coverage uses 135 different tags in 34 news reports. The focus of coverage in this category is similar to its Arabic counterpart in the inclusion of a considerable number of tags mentioning Al-Nimr's name. There were 13 such tags, including "Al-Nimr", "Martyr Sheikh Al-Nimr", "Sheikh Al Nimr" and "Shia cleric Sheikh Nimr al-Nimr". The tag "Nimr al-Nimr" is used in 19 news reports, and another, "Sheikh Nimr al-Nimr", appears 30 times .

There are two significant differences between the two versions of *Al-Alam* as to Al-Nimr. The first is the lack of human rights-related discourse in the English version, as only two tags refer directly to human rights or activism “UN Human Rights Council” and ”human rights”. The other is that the English version focuses on the discourse of the Shia minority in Saudi Arabia. English *Al-Alam* uses 10 different tags that mention the Shia issue, with used in several reports. For example, the tag “Shia cleric” appears 11 times, “Shia” 6, and “Shiite” twice, with the other tags – “prominent Shiite cleric”, “Shiite minority”, “Shia leader”, “Shia Sheikh”, and “top Shia cleric” – used once each.

There is also a significant focus and link in this category between Al-Nimr’s execution and extremist Saudi ideology. Many tags highlight this issue, such as “Sunni brutal monarchy”, “Wahhabi”, and “executioner's sword”. Other tags emphasise the issue of Al-Nimr’s execution, such as “Saudi execution”, which was used twice, “execution”, used 11 times, and “execution of Sheikh Nimr”. Another tag reveals more bias where it is used: “Sheikh Nimr's martyrdom”. In addition, there are some tags that link to two news reports with “ISIS” and “Daesh”. Other tags cover a wide range of topics related to issues or people mentioned in the news reports. These include names of international politicians and names of countries and cities, along with apparently arbitrary or irrelevant tags like “video”.

7.5 Conclusion

This chapter has detailed a wide range of intertextual elements to help understand the interdiscursive level of discourse in the three cases. The first analytical tool, news sourcing, shows that the four categories utilise sources differently, sometimes to a significant extent. Across the four categories, there are more definite than indefinite news sources, with the exception of *Al Arabiya*’s Arabic coverage of Al-Hathloul’s case. It is notable that the linguistic dimension plays a vital role in the approach to reporting. For instance, *Al Arabiya*’s Arabic coverage relies heavily on official Saudi sources, in some cases indefinite official sources. The exception is the coverage of Al-Nimr’s case, where it uses a variety of Iranian news sources in addition to the official Saudi sources. *Al Arabiya*’s English coverage, on the other hand, uses a wide

range of definite and indefinite sources, especially several international news agencies. The main pattern to be noticed in this analytical tool is the usage of human rights-related sources. Across all three cases, *Al Arabiya*'s English and *Al-Alam*'s Arabic versions use a higher percentage of these sources than is found in the other two categories. This information fits with the presumed ideological tendencies discussed above: that *Al Arabiya*'s Arabic version is targeted towards Arabs, especially Saudis, while its English text is directed towards an international audience, particularly Westerners. This suggests that human rights discourse is less desirable in the Arabic version, since it might provoke more unrest in Saudi society, while the English coverage does not entail the same risk. Furthermore, *Al Arabiya* likely feels it necessary to keep up with the parallel coverage by international news agencies so as to maintain credibility. To achieve that aim without conflicting with the official Saudi narrative, *Al Arabiya* has to do extra work, using various journalistic techniques to minimise its adoption of human rights discourse. *Al-Alam*, on the other hand, has the opposite approach to reporting; its Arabic coverage is dense with human rights sources, unlike its English counterpart. This could be due to the same reason that *Al Arabiya* tries to avoid using such discourse. *Al-Alam*'s Arabic coverage uses a large number of human rights-related sources, both definite and indefinite, in all three cases. *Al-Alam*'s English coverage does not use them as much, which could be due to the fact that it does not wish to foreground the very human rights discourse that has been used extensively to target Iran, Al-Aram's home country.

The second analytical tool also provides a detailed account of how the news reports use different reporting verbs to serve different purposes. Besides the use of many neutral quoting verbs, many categories utilise assertive, directive, expressive, prosodic, paralinguistic, metalinguistic, and discourse-signalling verbs to formulate the intended discourse. The linguistic significance of some of these instances has been discussed, with examples highlighting the way discourse is being structured.

The last analytical tool used in this chapter deals with hypertextual elements like tags. The analysis has shown how different news agencies utilise such technical features to enhance certain aspects of the discourse. One of the most notable issues was how *Al-Alam* extensively uses tags that

refer to activists' names and human rights issues and organisations, even if the core subject of a news report is largely irrelevant to those topics. This kind of technique is a clear sign of how certain news reports are being contextualised using intertextual references.

Chapter 8: Discussion and Conclusion

8.1 Introduction

The main aim of the present research was to compare and understand the representation of selected events, concepts, and ideas related to human rights discourse in the news produced by two conflicting news agencies, Al Arabiya and Al-Alam, which adopt different ideologies in order to examine the role of language, ideology, and power relations on the product of news translation, formulation, and process. This research sought to provide a wider perspective when dealing with multilingual news stories that involve more than simply linguistic and cultural factors. It also aimed to utilise an interdisciplinary approach to tackle this phenomenon. The research relied mainly on theoretical and methodological frameworks that are increasingly being used in the field of translation studies to widen the understanding of the nature of the field.

This chapter summarises the main discursive patterns found in the analysis of the selected corpus. These will be provided in the form of answers to the research questions posed at the beginning of the thesis (see section 1.1 above). Chapters 5 (explanation [socio-cultural level]), 6 (description [text level]), and 7 (interpretation [discourse level]) analyse three discursive levels, highlighting ideological traces and differences in using linguistic, translational, and journalistic techniques across the four categories of news reports: *Al Arabiya* in Arabic, *Al Arabiya* in English, *Al-Alam* in Arabic, and *Al-Alam* in English. Although the model of analysis starts with the socio-cultural level, the discussion in this chapter will answer the question that deals with it in section 8.1.3. The reason for using it at the beginning of the model is to provide a suitable contextualisation for the analysis. Presenting the answer to this question at the end of the questions aims to sandwich the analysis and discussion in order to provide a better understanding of the findings.

To answer the overarching research question (How does ideology influence the cross-linguistic representations of human rights discourse in the news about Saudi activists?), the three sub-questions need to be answered are as follows.

8.1.1 What are the Lexical and Semiotic Variations between the Four Categories?

The lexical and visual semiotic variations of the selected news reports are analysed and discussed in detail above in Chapter 6. A few patterns emerge from this analysis with regard to the choices made in reporting the three stories in each category. There are both differences and similarities across the linguistic and the ideological dimensions of these categories.

In the first category, *Al Arabiya*'s Arabic coverage totally avoids the use of any human rights-related label for any of the activists. It also avoids as much as possible using any mild labels that could show any solidarity or even neutrality towards the activists. Moreover, the lexical choices made regarding the accusations against the activists are not especially different. A similar attitude is adopted in this category, as *Al Arabiya* avoids any reference to activism as a key reason for prosecution, not even mentioning the mild accusations that are noted in the other categories. For instance, Al-Hathloul's case is presented as a response to her driving her car despite the ban on women driving. However, *Al Arabiya* in this category chooses the more vilifying accusation (disobeying the law) instead of simply stating that she was driving her car. A similarly pro-authority attitude is found in the visual choices in this category. For example, many images chosen to accompany the stories of Al-Nimr are photos of Saudi officials, official Saudi buildings, and a few mugshots of Al-Nimr himself, all of which depict him only as a criminal. In general, the lexical choices made in this category show a pro-authority tone that completely disregards any human rights discourse. Given its target audience, the human rights discourse assumed by Al Arabiya accords with conservative – sometimes ultraconservative – trends in Saudi society, which hold that human rights as a concept is a Western ideological tool that contradicts Islam in one way or another. The reliance on this narrative is evinced by the overall semiotic choices in this study.

In the second category, *Al Arabiya* directs its English coverage towards a wider international audience. Therefore, the authoritarian tone found in the first category is now absent. The lexical choices, however, are mainly neutral, conveying the sense of an objective journalistic attitude. This is shown in the

way certain labels and terms are chosen and written. For instance, many labels that sound judgemental or supportive of the narrative of either officialdom or human rights activists are put placed in quotation marks. More often, human rights related-labels are mentioned only with reference to another source. The lexical choices made to describe the accusations are also in line with the overall attitude displayed in this category. Very few accusations refer to activism, but the textual context distances the news agency from adopting or approving such a narrative. Generally, this category is highly similar to other international news agencies in terms of both lexical choices and visual elements. This could indicate that Al Arabiya's coverage in English is closer to Reuters, BBC, AFP, and similar organisations than it is to what Al Arabiya publishes in Arabic. This could also be due to the nature of the target audience and the influence of its expectations.

In the third category, *Al-Alam*'s Arabic coverage focuses primarily on human rights and activism when reporting the three stories. The lexical choices for labelling the activists make heavy use of human rights-related terms. Especially in the first two cases, the label "activist" was nearly the most commonly used term. In the third case, honorific terms were added to the human rights terms. It is clear that the reporting in this category is highly supportive of the three cases and adopts a provocative attitude to the Saudi power structure. As for the accusations, this category contains several references to activism as the reason for prosecuting the activists. For instance, Badawi's "promotion of free speech", Al-Hathloul's "activism", and Al-Nimr's "political activity" are some of the accusations mentioned in this category. The other accusations are dominated by mild, neutral, or even non-criminal language like "criticising scholars and religious police", "establishing a website", "disobeying one's father", "trying to drive", and so forth. The visual choices in this category also contribute to Al-Alam's provocative attitude, with many images showing emotional aspects of the activists or supporting their cases with powerful images like the photo of Al-Hathloul's driving licence.

In the fourth category, *Al-Alam's* English coverage displays a supportive attitude to the activists, similar to what is found the Arabic coverage. However, the agency uses a different technique to frame the three stories. There are far fewer references to human rights in the lexical choices,

though several uses of the “activist” label do appear. The overall focus in the headlines and the structure of the reports highlights other neutral labels that subtly refer to the cases as examples of the unjust rule of the Saudi authorities, instead of focusing on them as human rights abuses. This shows how a single news agency can frame human rights stories differently, according to the languages being used and the audiences being addressed. This is also noticeable in the lexicalisation of the accusations; this category lists several minor, mild, and neutral “offences” as the cause of the harsh sentences. This kind of discourse supports the position that Al-Alam – deliberately if subtly – frames these stories in a deeply negative way. The visual choices, as discussed in section 6.3, are largely supportive of this attitude; the photos chosen may relate better to an international audience. It is also worth noting that the second (*Al Arabiya* English) and the fourth (*Al-Alam* English) categories share some similarities in their lexical choices. This could provide a deeper understanding of how English-language coverage may be affected by other international news agencies in terms of wording, structure, and content.

To some up the answer to this question, the lexical and visual choices have been influenced to a high degree by the ideological attitudes of the news agencies in both Arabic and English, as is shown by what appears relevant and affecting to the targeted audience.

8.1.2 What are the Differences between the Discursive Strategies Applied to Reporting the Same Story in the Four Categories?

This question focuses on the discursive aspect of the news reporting, which is analysed in detail in Chapter 7 through the investigation of three intertextual elements. From this analysis, a few patterns have been identified with regard to the structure of the discourse in the news of the three stories in each category. There are both differences and similarities across the linguistic and ideological dimensions.

In the first category, *Al Arabiya*’s Arabic coverage focuses mainly on reporting news as briefly and concisely as possible, especially with regard to the first two cases; in the third case, the story of Al-Nimr and his execution is

simply deluged by stories about the attacks on the embassy and consulate. The news sourcing in this category is characterised by using very few sources, with those that do appear largely pro-Saudi in outlook. In some cases, these sources are official Saudi entities like the Foreign Ministry. *Al Arabiya* uses both definite and indefinite sources. The third case contains a noticeably broader range of sources that include some pro-Iranian sources, in addition to presumably neutral international news agencies. There is almost no reference to human rights-related sources, with the exception of a very few instances where they are used in reports about “Iranian human rights violations”. *Al Arabiya* in this category is characterised by using certain types of reporting verbs. Many assertive verbs are used to quote authoritative Saudi officials. Other metapropositional verbs are used so as to highlight a certain kind of attitude towards the news. The overall pattern of quoting is that *Al Arabiya* uses mainly neutral verbs with several assertive, directive, and expressive examples that primarily support the official Saudi narrative about the three cases. As for the hypertextual aspects and interactive comments section, they are the most discursive indicator; the use of tags clearly highlights the desired narrative since they work both as keywords and as hyperlinks to other relevant texts on the same news website. What is revealed by these intertextual choices is that *Al Arabiya* avoids using tags that refer to human rights. On the contrary, there are a number of tags that highlight a stance opposing the activists, such as the use of a tag referring to “Islamic values” in Badawi’s case, and more powerfully with the use of several tags referring to “terrorism” in the case of Al-Nimr. There are other tags that can be described as neutral at best, such as those referring to legal terms (“prison”, “death sentence”, “car driving”, etc.). Additionally, the entries in the comments sections show part of the audience response and reception of these stories and give a reasonable indication of the expectations of the *Al Arabiya* target audience (in Arabic). These intertextual choices show to a certain extent the choice to use discursive strategies that link the three selected stories with other issues to construct an overall journalistic narrative that is similar to the Saudi official narrative.

In the second category, Al Arabiya’s English coverage differs from its Arabic reports in terms of the use of intertextual elements. For instance, the

English reports refer to many national and international news sources and quote a number of international officials and entities. This technique is useful for those occasions when *Al Arabiya* is forced to acknowledge certain problematic parts of the news reports or even human rights-related labels. This approach reveals the journalistic technique that *Al Arabiya* uses to distance itself from adopting the counter-narrative and appear objective and transparent at the same time. *Al Arabiya* uses both definite and indefinite sources, but there are many indefinite sources, especially in the first two cases. This could be explained as another distancing technique. It is also worth noting that there is very limited use of human rights-related sources, with the exception of the indefinite news sources mentioned in connection to Al-Hathloul, where “activists” appears as a source 13 times. The case for women driving is generally an issue that has been supported by *Al Arabiya* and was introduced prior to Al-Hathloul’s efforts evolved into a human rights case. Therefore, the reporting of this case has the apparent shape of a human rights narrative that echoes Al Arabiya's stance, but, due to sensitivity, the quotes from the activists are followed by responses and justifications from the Saudi Ministry of Interior. The reference to definite human rights-related news sources cannot be considered as a promotion of human rights discourse in these controversial stories. Rather, they are marginal references, since Amnesty International and Reporters Without Borders are used in Badawi’s case in the last sentence of the 2013 reports that appeared during his trial. This means that the story of Badawi had yet not gained international momentum. Since then, the number of news reports has increased, but references to human rights organisations have disappeared from the reports.

The analysis of quoting verbs reveals another intertextual feature of *Al Arabiya*’s coverage. Most of the quoting verbs are neutral across all four categories. However, other quoting verbs do give some indication of the discursive strategies implemented in this category. For instance, some metalinguistic verbs are used to show the importance of certain aspects, as when the verb “quoted” is used to report a statement by the secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, Ali Shamkhani, which confirmed that the Iranian “government is following the issue of the attack on the Saudi embassy”. Several metapropositional verbs are used for similar purposes. For

instance, many assertive verbs appear when quoting statements by several politicians in support of the Saudi government or condemning the attacks on the embassies in Iran.

As for hypertextual elements, the use of tags in this category is clearly similar to the *Al Arabiya* Arabic coverage, which highlights topics that do not imply a human rights discourse or other uncomfortable topics. Beyond the activists' names, the most frequently used tags are those that refer to Saudi Arabia and its official entities, such as "Saudi Court", "police", "jail", and "Vision 2030". The tag feature is used effectively to intertextually link the reports of these three cases to other vilified issues. For instance, there are numerous tags referring to terrorism and terrorist organisations in the reporting on the Al-Nimr case. Moreover, there are many tags that refer to well-known enemies like Hezbollah and ISIS. In general, the intertextual links show an overarching viewpoint of the way the Al Arabiya agency seeks to construct its narrative.

In the third category, Al-Alam's Arabic coverage is the most focused on human rights-related sources and promoting an activist approach in reporting the three cases. In this category, the largest number of news sources referring to human rights appear, both definite and indefinite. The high number of quotes and information taken from these sources is a major indicator of the way Al-Alam chooses to construct its news discourse. In addition to these sources, a wide range of definite and indefinite news sources are used in this category, showing a high level of intertextuality. This could be a way of supporting the anti-Saudi narrative by filling the news reports with international sources, which also gives the reporting an additional element of authenticity.

As for the quoting verbs, this category contains the widest range of verbs. In addition to many neutral verbs, there are a variety of metaproposotional verbs that are used to quote statements and utterances from other textual elements. What is clear in this category is the focus on quoting activists and human rights organisations. For example, there are quotes from Amnesty International, the Arabic Network for Human Rights Information, and Al-Hathloul herself. This is not different from the way metalinguistic verbs are used in this category. Moreover, the prosodic quoting "chanted" is used to report what happened when Badawi began to be flogged;

people chanted “God is great”. This is another aspect of the reporting that highlights the reaction of much of Saudi society to this incident.

As to hypertextual elements, tags are used vastly more in this category than in the other categories, due to the fact that it contains the largest number of news reports and because the editorial and technical characteristics of *Al-Alam’s* Arabic website chooses to make heavy use of tags in each news report. The use of tags in this category supports the anti-Saudi attitude that Al-Alam adopts with regards to all three cases. In addition to the many tags that include the names of one of the three activists, there were a wide range of tags. This category contains a large number of tags referring to activism and human rights, some of which focus specifically on Saudi human rights. Examples include المرأة السعودية (Saudi woman), used in two reports, حقوق المرأة في السعودية (women’s rights in Saudi), ولاية الرجل (male guardianship), جمعية حسم الحقوقية (Saudi Civil and Political Rights Association), الاحتجاجات في السعودية (protests in Saudi Arabia), الحراك الشعبي السعودي (popular Saudi mobility), المعارضة السعودية (Saudi opposition), and تظاهرات السعودية (Saudi demonstrations). This shows a particular focus on the kind of news reports that require specific tags to connect them, indicating the reporting attitude and the discursive strategy employed by Al-Alam to deal with such reports.

In the fourth category, Al-Alam’s English coverage adopts a similar attitude as found in its Arabic coverage. However, the technical, journalistic, and editorial choices are not very similar. First, the difference between the number of news reports published for these events is notable. As for news sources, there was a very small number of sources, whether definite or indefinite, when compared to the Arabic coverage from Al-Alam. The use of human rights-related news sources is notable, especially in the last two cases (there is only one source in the first case). The range of quoting verbs was very limited in the first two cases; they were used to quote several statements from different sources. Some were international officials like Federica Mogherini and Ban Ki-moon, which is an indicator of the way Al-Alam supports its narrative by citing notable figures from outside the region. It also uses prosodic quoting verbs, namely “chanted” and “shouted”, to refer to angry Iraqi demonstrators who were marching and protesting against the Saudi authorities who executed Al-Nimr. As for the tags, like Al-Alam’s coverage in

Arabic, this category uses many human rights-related tags. Moreover, there are several tags that are very critical of the Saudi government and its legal system, such as “beheading”, “publicly beheading”, and “jailed”. In general, this category resembles the Arabic version with regard to its intertextual choices, although they are non-trivial differences in the details. This indicates that both versions stem from the same ideological stance on the three stories and on the Saudi regime.

8.1.3 How do the Historical, Social, and Political Contexts Influence Human Rights Discourse in the News?

This question focuses on the way discourse is shaped within its wider socio-cultural context. To answer this question, the analysis of the previous two questions needs to be contextualised within the socio-cultural frames discussed in Chapter 5, which provides a useful historical background to the socio-cultural nature of Saudi society, along with the context of the Saudi–Iranian conflict which is represented by the media war on the two linguistic fronts, Arabic and English. Moreover, a detailed explanation of the background and trial of each activist is also provided, along with the human rights context within which each case became controversial.

To understand the Al Arabiya agency’s stance on reporting these stories, it is important to investigate the gatekeeping role played by the governmental and semi-governmental news agencies. The Saudi historical narrative is replete with a deep religious ideology that has been used to unite the peoples of what is now Saudi Arabia under the rule of House of Saud. The Wahhabi interpretation of Islam has been adopted by all Saudi governmental institutions. This situation has contributed to shaping the ultraconservative society found in the Kingdom today. However, the Saudi government has established relations with international powers and signed several international treaties and documents. For instance, Saudi Arabia began an alliance with the UK shortly after the foundation of the third Saudi Kingdom and with the US after the discovery of oil in Saudi Arabia and the end of World War II. These connections opened the Saudi government to the international arena and its influence, a development that led to a violent internal backlash from ultraconservatives. The Saudi government, as detailed in section 5.2.1,

tried to contain the unrest and protests. At the same time, the Saudi government has tried to modernise Saudi Arabia and avoid clashes with international powers. For instance, issues of human rights and global economics caused some problematic and controversial debates related to the religious narrative of the government and its behaviour in the international arena. One of the most divisive issues was the hosting of American and other international forces during the 1990–1991 Gulf War. Another important issue was 9/11 and its aftermath, the so-called War on Terror. The Saudi situation regarding these issues was problematic, as the country was caught between its internal ideology and its official political narrative on the world stage. There were accusations of a double standard in which the Saudi monarchy justified its existence on a religious narrative that largely contradicts its current foreign policy. The Saudi government presents itself to the Saudi community (and many Muslims beyond its borders) as a protector of Islamic values and custodian of the two holy mosques, on the one hand, and to the international community as a liberal government that is trying to modernise the backward elements in its society, on the other.

In the semi-official media, *Al Arabiya* follows a similar attitude when covering problematic issues. It adopts a strict authoritarian stance in its Arabic coverage, while the English coverage is very mild and even objective, at least to some extent. The human rights discourse is not adopted by the agency when a violation by the Saudi authorities has been alleged. However, it is often used in internal ideological debates, because Al Arabiya is perceived by Saudis to be a comparatively liberal media outlet. Thus, when covering issues that contradict conservative ideologies, human rights discourse is often used, even in Arabic coverage.

Another contextual element is the temporal aspect of the news. While a news story is unfolding, its details, connections, and consequences are constantly rewritten. For instance, Al-Hathloul's case was presented in 2013 by *Al Arabiya* within a human rights narrative. At that time, *Al Arabiya* cast the issue as another "liberal" woman trying to exercise her right to drive, which was allegedly restricted by an ultraconservative society. However, when the story unfolded and Al-Hathloul was jailed by the authorities, this narrative disappeared. A similar trajectory occurred with Al-Nimr's story; there was very

little mention of Al-Nimr by *Al Arabiya*, either in English and Arabic, until the attacks on the embassy and consulate. At that point, there was an enormous increase in the number of reports containing his name. Thus, the temporal context of the unfolding of events is an important factor on the production and publication of news reports.

Al-Alam's stance, on the other hand, can be analysed by understanding the history of the political conflict between Iran and Saudi Arabia. It is essential to acknowledge that the current Iranian regime, which controls Al-Alam, has long adhered to a revolutionary religious ideology that was a justification for the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran after the 1979 revolution. Once consolidated, the new revolutionary regime adopted anti-imperialist policies when dealing with the West, especially the US. This promoted a series of conflicts between Iran and American allies in the region, including Saudi Arabia. The Iranian government, as explained in section 5.4, tried to influence neighbouring societies by adopting an anti-monarchy, anti-Western, democratic, and Islamic narrative that claims to stand with Muslim people instead of Muslim governments. Al-Alam's coverage of the Arab world largely echoes this ideology. The reporting of the three cases selected here shows how human rights discourse is extensively highlighted in the Arabic coverage. Human rights discourse thus appears to work as a powerful political tool to put pressure on the Saudi government. In the English coverage, however, there is an important distinction with regard to the use of human rights discourse. Overall, the English coverage by the Al-Alam agency of the three stories does not focus on human rights to the same extent as its Arabic coverage does. This could be due to differences in the intended readership. The Iranian attitude towards other countries, especially in the English-speaking West, is far from friendly, as Iran has frequently been criticised for human rights violations against its own people. Therefore, the Iranian media covered the stories of the three activists in line with the bulk of news reports in English. Al-Alam focused mainly on the cases as issues of injustice as much as human rights violations.

8.2 Concluding remarks

This research has explored the question of ideology and its influence on news making. The main contribution of this research is that it has compared and analysed human rights news reports between and English and Arabic in the context of Saudi Arabia and concluded that the news reporting differs based on the two main factors, ideological and linguistic dimensions. More specifically, it has introduced new data to the analysis of human rights discourse, where the three cases represented a very important aspect of the way ideology manipulates news discourse across languages. It was also noticeable that each of the four categories (*Al Arabiya* in Arabic, *Al Arabiya* in English, *Al-Alam* in Arabic, and *Al-Alam* in English) is influenced by socio-cultural and political elements that shape the way it constructs its media discourse.

Another important contribution is the modified model of Fairclough's three-dimensional approach to CDA, which proves very useful in analysing the linguistic and discursive features of these reports. The selected analytical tools were very valuable in providing a detailed understanding of the differences between the categories. This model would be helpful for further research focusing on ideological influences on media discourse. It is important to highlight the role of translation in the studied cases. Although translation in the traditional "source-text-target-text way" is not explicitly present in the reporting of these stories, traces of various aspects of translations are implicit all the time. For instance, reference to Arabic, English and other news sources in addition to quoting them clearly shows that translation is present even when the information is not presented as translations. Such cross-linguistic phenomena fall squarely within the interest of translation studies research and practice.

8.3 Limitations

One of the limitations of this research is due to the nature of the selected data. First, the topic of the research seemed too sensitive for the news agencies, so they did not cooperate with the researcher in providing internal information on the editorial and journalistic processes of news translation and production.

Second, the fragility of online news reports caused some difficulties in the collection of the corpus. Many technical problems needed to be considered during the data collection process. The technical variations between the four categories caused a problem when trying to generalise or finding patterns in the discourse, which was a technical limitation that was considered during the answering of the questions. It is also important to mention that the corpus would have benefited from including a third language, namely Farsi. Adding the Farsi versions of such news reports both from Al Arabiya and Al-Alam would have provided another perspective on the way these news agencies formulate the discourse around these activists. This choice was not selected for a few reasons in addition to the fact that the researcher does not speak Farsi. First, the inclusion of Farsi would be more suitable for another type of comparison, which would compare the way Saudi and Iranian activists have been reported. Second, when focusing on Saudi activists, it was almost impossible to find any news report in Al Arabiya Farsi about the Saudi activists, unlike the English version. Another significant limitation was noticed in the number of news reports. The three cases do not contain a similar number of news reports, which may seem like a weakness to the research, especially given that the number of reports in the second is very small when compared to the third. This issue cannot be considered a weakness since it is impossible to balance the number of news reports unless another selection factor is ignored. For instance, the second case about Al-Hathloul was selected from a vast activist movement concerned with women rights. Many activists as explained above challenged the driving ban and were subject to prosecution from the Saudi authorities. This movement was covered extensively by the media, and the number of news reports about all of the women activists would have been more than this research could study, and would not have been consistent with the other two cases with regards to the analytical tools and focus of news reports. Therefore, I had to choose one of the most controversial cases of women activists with the risk of having a limited number of news reports. However, the selected data helped to answer the research questions effectively.

8.4 Recommendations

Further research could build on the current thesis and investigate new trends in the issue of human rights news and the way ideology influences the construction of such narratives. First, further research could investigate the news in other modern social media such as Twitter, Facebook, and so forth. This would enrich the data in terms of adding other interactive features to the analysis. Second, further research could also be applied to another human rights context. For instance, similar research on Iranian cases of human rights violations would show another aspect of the equation and could test the validity of the findings of the current research. The study could also use Al Arabiya and Al-Alam with a focus on the Farsi versions of the coverage. Another research work could also use an ethnographic study with such news agencies in order to investigate the internal process of news reporting, translation and editing in more than one language.

This research, with the help of further studies, aims to contribute to the knowledge of the dynamics of social and political change. It also aspires to make a contribution to emancipating human rights discourse from being merely a political tool.

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Appendix A

	Date	Headline	Hyperlink
Raif Badawi			
Al Arabiya Arabic			
1	9/5/2014	السعودية.. 1000 جلدة و10 سنوات حبس لمؤسس الليبرالية	https://goo.gl/zqQqwK
2	7/3/2015	السعودية ترفض التدخل في سيادتها باسم حقوق الإنسان	https://goo.gl/WqP6qD
Al Arabiya English			
3	1/8/2013	Saudi online activist gets 7 years in jail, 600 lashes	https://goo.gl/hR2vZn
4	8/5/2014	Saudi liberal gets 10 years in jail, 1,000 lashes - Al Arabiya News	https://goo.gl/1JMBfp
5	3/9/2014	Saudi court upholds 10-year term for blogger who insulted Islam	https://goo.gl/T4MgCq
6	9/1/2015	Saudi activist flogged outside mosque in Jeddah	https://goo.gl/G2J3cE
7	22/1/2015	Tweet nothings: Arabs quieter on politics amid fear, fatigue	https://goo.gl/KiaFpx
8	2/2/2015	Saudi frees women's rights activist Suad al-Shammary	https://goo.gl/Vsm8nY
9	13/2/2015	Saudi women drivers Hathloul and Alamoudi released: AFP	https://goo.gl/24wbt4
10	11/6/2015	Saudi Arabia condemns foreign criticism of blogger case	https://goo.gl/fnd774
11	12/6/2015	Statement from the Saudi Arabian Embassy in London	https://goo.gl/NjLbf1
12	8/6/2016	Saudi to showcase arts in reform drive	https://goo.gl/2CsDfa
13	3/3/2017	Syria's White Helmets, Trump, Pope Francis in running for 2017 Nobel Peace Prize	https://goo.gl/TTfaYa
Al-Alam Arabic			
14	30/11/2011	محكمة سعودية تحضر مدونا بالقوة بتهمة التهجم على مشايخ	https://goo.gl/GwQEcN
15	27/6/2012	الشبكة العربية تستنكر انتهاك السلطات السعودية لحقوق الانسان	https://goo.gl/C83JY8
16	23/12/2012	محرر موقع الكتروني سعودي يواجه عقوبة الاعدام	https://goo.gl/qMRXBy
17	18/2/2013	إدانة مماطلة السلطات السعودية في قضية بدوي	https://goo.gl/EG36FU
18	22/7/2013	منع ناشطة سعودية من السفر بسبب تغريدات	https://goo.gl/DpNr5u
19	28/12/2013	قاض سعودي يوصي بحكم الردة على الناشط رائف بدوي	https://goo.gl/Mr2c8f
20	8/5/2014	سنوات سجن وألف جلدة لسعودي انتقد الشرطة الدينية 10	https://goo.gl/1ZpBgK
21	10/5/2014	إدانة ناشط سعودي دليل على تزايد قمع الحريات في المملكة	https://goo.gl/nNnRjB
22	2/9/2014	محكمة سعودية تؤيد حكماً بسجن ناشط حقوقي 10 سنوات	https://goo.gl/eo7xyT
23	2/11/2014	اعتقال ناشطة سعودية حقوقية معارضة في جدة	https://goo.gl/T8me9y
24	8/1/2015	العفو الدولية تعتبر حكم جلد الناشط رائف بدوي وحشيا	https://goo.gl/S9Q8RT
25	9/1/2015	السعودية تجلد المدون رائف بدوي في الملأ العام	https://goo.gl/jg9ivo
26	16/1/2015	لماذا ارجئت السعودية جلسة الجلد بحق رائف بدوي ؟	https://goo.gl/CLiCV2
27	17/1/2015	من هو رائف بدوي؟ ولماذا تقوم السعودية بجلده علنا؟	https://goo.gl/enUMUA
28	17/1/2015	الإندبندنت: تاريخ النفاق السعودي الذي اخترنا تجاهله	https://goo.gl/7YNPfC

29	17/1/2015	الغارديان: بجلدها المدون بدوي؛ السعودية عدو حرية الرأي	https://goo.gl/LRem21
30	18/1/2015	هل استسلمت السعودية للضغوط بشان قضية رائف بدوي؟	https://goo.gl/wNi7bp
31	18/1/2015	مواطن سعودي يتحدى السلطة ويصور جلد رائف بدوي	https://goo.gl/sGdpJ9
32	21/1/2015	لماذا تسعى النمسا لإغلاق مركز أديان سعودي؟	https://goo.gl/CQxwqn
33	24/1/2015	للمرة الثانية.. تأجيل جلد رائف بدوي لأسباب صحية	https://goo.gl/dMjgNJ
34	24/1/2015	غضب شعبي بريطاني بعد تحية الملكة للملك السعودي الراحل	https://goo.gl/ewFV9w
35	1/2/2015	قطع الرؤوس في السعوديّة يتعارض مع محاربة داعش	https://goo.gl/tsn9ix
36	1/2/2015	ما حقيقة العفو الملكي في السعودية؟	https://goo.gl/mrFsPn
37	2/2/2015	ناشطة سعودية بعد اطلاق سراحها.. بلادي وان هانت ..علي	https://goo.gl/9BiqHV
38	8/2/2015	الحرب ضد الفكر المتطرف.... مهداة إلى رائف بدوي	https://goo.gl/LEFbr7
39	12/2/2015	برلمان اوروبا يطالب السعودية بالافراج عن بدوي ويشبهها بداعش	https://goo.gl/f2U8Zz
40	25/2/2015	بن نايف يبحث في بريطانيا الوضع باليمن ولندن تثير قضية رائف بدوي	https://goo.gl/w5YpCw
41	25/2/2015	دويتشه فيله تمنح جائزة حرية التعبير لرائف بدوي	https://goo.gl/jw2DFY
42	3/3/2015	النروج تثير قضية المدافعين الحقوقيين في البحرين	https://goo.gl/27sjMq
43	9/3/2015	لماذا منعت السعودية وزيرة سويدية من إلقاء كلمة بالجامعة العربية؟	https://goo.gl/ETRjTH
44	26/3/2015	سياسة السويد المؤيدة لحقوق الانسان تسببت بتوتير علاقتها مع السعودية	https://goo.gl/extzxA
45	29/3/2015	رائف بدوي يسرد تجربته "ألف جلدة: لماذا أقول ما اعتقد"	https://goo.gl/1z3SUu
46	2/4/2015	السعودية ترفض انتقاد كندا لجلد الناشط رائف البدوي	https://goo.gl/wdSEPs
47	5/5/2015	العفو الدولية: سجل مخيف للسعودية بمجال حقوق الانسان	https://goo.gl/mmqK9u
48	7/5/2015	الاندبندنت: أفرجوا عن السعودي رائف بدوي	https://goo.gl/sDwMzi
49	20/5/2015	حز الرقاب... ثقافة سعودية ام بدعة داعشية؟	https://goo.gl/dcTS2Q
50	7/6/2015	تأييد الأحكام الصادرة بحق مؤسس الشبكة الليبرالية السعودية	https://goo.gl/z5GyyN
51	9/6/2015	دعوات الى السعودية لوقف جلد المدون رائف بدوي	https://goo.gl/o6ZLR8
52	10/6/2015	الرياض تستخدم أساليب حكم من القرون الوسطى	https://goo.gl/CxoDCZ
53	18/6/2015	الاندبندنت: مهما فعلت السعودية، تجبن بريطانيا على مواجهتها	https://goo.gl/f8px4F
54	19/9/2015	زوجة رائف بدوي: يتلقى طعاما سيئا وصحته متردية	https://goo.gl/QMizqs
55	24/9/2015	انتقادات لاختيار السعودية رئيسة لجنة حقوقية بالأمم المتحدة	https://goo.gl/P9nDFw
56	7/10/2015	منح المدون السعودي المعتقل رائف بدوي جائزة حرية التعبير	https://goo.gl/NofQ1c
57	8/10/2015	الرياض توظف شركات علاقات عامة اميركية لتحسين صورتها	https://goo.gl/5tGAE2
58	29/10/2015	فوز المدون السعودي رائف بدوي بجائزة ساخاروف الاوروبية لحرية التفكير	https://goo.gl/Ruh3cz
59	29/10/2015	قضية الشيخ النمر تفتح ملف حقوق الانسان في السعودية	https://goo.gl/A18yMN
60	13/11/2015	زوجة المدون السعودي بدوي قلقة على صحته	https://goo.gl/RZLfBH
61	20/11/2015	محكمة سعودية تحكم بإعدام شاعر فلسطيني	https://goo.gl/1sQvde
62	29/11/2015	المحامي السعودي وليد أبو الخير ينال جائزة دولية لحقوق الإنسان	https://goo.gl/c7nfj3
63	30/11/2015	تصدّع جدار الصمت الأوروبي: حملة لإغلاق معاقل !الوهابية	https://goo.gl/FHWMqd

64	23/12/2015	ان كانت هذه صواريخ المرحلة الاولى للتحالف اليمني فما تخبئه للمستقبل؟	https://goo.gl/af7w8B
65	6/1/2016	هل هناك سجناء راي في السعودية؟	https://goo.gl/bePyrg
66	9/1/2016	كيف وصفت العفو الدولية أوضاع حقوق الإنسان بالسعودية؟	https://goo.gl/YibXe5
67	13/1/2016	العفو الدولية تندد باعتقال السعودية لشقيقة رائف بدوي	https://goo.gl/X85qhf
68	28/1/2016	السعودية في تقرير سنوي بعام 2015، ماذا فعلت؟	https://goo.gl/V1koEy
69	2/2/2016	تقرير منظمة العفو الدولية عن حقوق الانسان في السعودية	https://goo.gl/HW93tu
70	8/2/2016	برلمانيون اوروبيون يثيرون قضية المدون رائف بدوي في الرياض	https://goo.gl/U6KCSf
71	20/9/2016	شاهد.. كشف اللثام عن مملكة اللئام: فيلم مرعب عن السعودية يجتاح منازل الاميركيين!	https://goo.gl/w5MLKN
72	13/11/2016	جلوبال ريسيرش: متى تتدخل الأمم المتحدة لتغيير النظام السعودي ؟!	https://goo.gl/Uvttw5
73	18/11/2016	الأمم المتحدة تدعو السعودية لإطلاق سراح نشطاء حقوق الإنسان	https://goo.gl/aQC46Z
74	25/2/2017	محاور الماني يحرج تركي الفيصل بسؤاله عن جلد رائف بدوي!	https://goo.gl/XK9Y3j
75	4/5/2017	لهذا السبب.. دان مقرر الامم المتحدة السعودية بشدة على اراضيها	https://goo.gl/zK4bhf
76	5/5/2017	إدانة أممية من قلب الرياض لسجلها في حقوق الأنسان	https://goo.gl/UG7kog
77	7/8/2017	واشنطن بوست: السعودية غارقة في العصور المظلمة وتمارس "البربرية"	https://goo.gl/MWnfwZ
78	1/9/2017	بالفيديو: جَلْد المدوّن السعودي بدوي.. وزوجته: كانوا يهتفون كما لو أنهم في حفلة	https://goo.gl/8fBhxS
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80	26/7/2014	NSA's new partner in spying: Saudi Arabia's brutal state police	http://en.alalam.ir/news/1616286
81	17/1/2015	Saudi, Bahrain & UK Displays Hypocrisy over Arms and Rights	http://en.alalam.ir/news/1667114
82	18/1/2015	Woman Publicly Beheaded in Mecca + Video	http://en.alalam.ir/news/1667336
83	29/10/2015	Jailed Saudi Activist Wins Prestigious EU Human Rights Prize	http://en.alalam.ir/news/1754191
84	16/5/2016	PHOTOS: ISIS Flag Projected on Saudi Arabia's Embassy in Germany	http://en.alalam.ir/news/1818800
85	26/10/2016	Saudi Female Dissident Tortured to Death	http://en.alalam.ir/news/1877670
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86	2/2/2013	قرصنة ربع مليون حساب على "تويتر" بينها العديد لعرب	https://goo.gl/M42gkP
87	25/10/2013	الأمن السعودي لم يعتقل "لجين".. واستدعى والدها للتحقيق	https://goo.gl/AbVG8K
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88	2/14/2014	Saudi woman 'arrested' at border for defying drive ban - Al Arabiya News	https://goo.gl/PcKuGq
89	13/2/2015	Saudi women drivers Hathloul and Alamoudi released: AFP	https://goo.gl/C97QTR
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90	21/9/2013	مبتعثة سعودية تقود حملة لقيادة المرأة بالمملكة	https://goo.gl/7X5dmr

91	25/10/2013	سعودية تقود سيارة ومرافقها يامل بالضحك على الامر بعد 10 سنوات+فيديو	https://goo.gl/E1aCRs
92	25/12/2014	محاكمة ناشطتين سعوديتين بسبب قيادة سيارة	https://goo.gl/U3cxwj
93	13/2/2015	الافراج عن ناشطتين سعوديتين بعد شهرين من الاعتقال	https://goo.gl/N52mSD
94	1/11/2015	فورين بوليسي: الملك عبدالله لم يكن إصلاحيًا	https://goo.gl/X6D8Ae
95	30/11/2015	انطلاق الحملات الانتخابية بمشاركة النساء في السعودية	https://goo.gl/psS9iM
96	2/2/2016	تقرير منظمة العفو الدولية عن حقوق الانسان في السعودية	https://goo.gl/aPjxCz
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101	22/4/2014	استئناف محاكمة زعيم فتنة العوامية	https://goo.gl/hFJif3
102	9/6/2014	;الحكم على مؤسس خلية إرهابية في العوامية بـالقتل	https://goo.gl/nULKR1
103	18/11/2015	خلايا العوامية... تاريخ من التطرف واستهداف السعوديين	https://goo.gl/8xrCRT
104	2/12/2015	مرايا.. جنود الخميني في السعودية#	https://goo.gl/tQEpAu
105	8/12/2015	مرايا.. مشاهد حصرية من الداخلية لحركة العوامية#	https://goo.gl/SHiWq5
106	2/1/2016	نمر_النمر..سيرة راسخة في الارهاب والتحريض # الفتن على	https://goo.gl/c3ZZsQ
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108	2/1/2016	إرهاب بالعوامية.. قتل رجال أمن ومواطنين وإثارة الشغب	https://goo.gl/zJUfXs
109	2/1/2016	السعودية تستدعي سفير إيران حول تصريح بشأن أحكام القصاص	https://goo.gl/ih21m1
110	2/1/2016	اقتحام السفارة السعودية في #طهران وإشعال النيران فيها	https://goo.gl/PJPKcS
111	2/1/2016	اقتحام قنصلية السعودية أضر باقتصاد مدينة مشهد الإيرانية	https://goo.gl/7LUV3q
112	3/1/2016	الجامعة العربية تدين الاعتداء على سفارة السعودية بإيران	https://goo.gl/NauxfH
113	3/1/2016	السعودية.. التحريض ونشر الفتن سمة خطابات #نمر_النمر	http://ara.tv/vtk4k
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115	4/1/2016	إيران والقاعدة.. صوتان يرفضان تنفيذ القصاص بالإرهابيين	http://ara.tv/8jtjc
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117	4/1/2016	تعرف إلى مادة باتفاقية دولية عمرها 55 سنة وتدين إيران	http://ara.tv/28ctt
118	4/1/2016	سوابق لـ #إيران بانتهاك اتفاقيات حول حماية السفارات	http://ara.tv/b7q45
119	4/1/2016	خطاب نصرالله وإعدام النمر ..DNA شاهد	http://ara.tv/4tcsn
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121	4/1/2016	الاعتداء_على_السفارة_السعودية خرق لـمعاهدة # ;فيينا	http://ara.tv/b2sfj
122	5/1/2016	دور يلعبه نصرالله بدفاعه عن نمر ..محامي الشيطان النمر	http://ara.tv/jgry9

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124	5/1/2016	لماذا تتجنب الجماعات الإرهابية شن هجمات ضد مصالح إيران؟	http://ara.tv/wt4dx
125	5/1/2016	مجلس_الأمن يدين الاعتداء على السفارة السعودية # في إيران	http://ara.tv/mknpc
126	6/1/2016	أردوغان: أحكام الإعدام في #السعودية شأن داخلي	http://ara.tv/jxbwu
127	6/1/2016	بعثة #إيران الدبلوماسية تغادر السعودية عقب قطع العلاقات	http://ara.tv/6d2bx
128	6/1/2016	كاتب بريطاني: #السعودية تستحق الثناء لا العقاب	http://ara.tv/ph8qf
129	6/1/2016	ما لم ينشر عن #نمر_النمر	http://ara.tv/979fz
130	6/1/2016	آل متظاهرون إيرانيون يرفعون صور الإرهابي شويل	http://ara.tv/ge8uk
131	11/1/2016	وتتراجع عن تسمية شارع لعبة النمر إيران تنهي باسمه	http://ara.tv/8d93x
132	14/1/2016	خال خامنئي يخاطبه: تدينون إعدام النمر ولا تتحملون النقد	http://ara.tv/c2q3f
133	14/1/2016	وزير الخارجية الإماراتي لظريف: لا تحرقوا السفارات	http://ara.tv/z6ztt
134	14/1/2016	علاقتنا بإيران منفصلة عن أطراف التعاون الجبير: حول سوريا	http://ara.tv/yrq9y
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136	19/1/2016	الخارجية السعودية: هذه أدلة دعم إيران للإرهاب في العالم	http://ara.tv/ymymv
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138	26/2/2016	معارضون: فوز الإصلاحيين لن يغير سياسة إيران العدائية	http://ara.tv/wm53q
139	4/3/2016	زعيم "أنصار الأمة": 600 شيعي باكستاني قاتلوا مع الأسد	http://ara.tv/bwdyk
140	23/5/2016	الحشد يقصف الفلوجة بصاروخ عليه صورة الإرهابي النمر	http://ara.tv/byxbh
141	25/5/2016	محاولة لتحويل معركة الفلوجة لحرب طائفية ضد السعودية	http://ara.tv/5c7n2
142	27/5/2016	إيران: سليماني في العراق بناء على طلب بغداد	http://ara.tv/ntzpz
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147	16/1/2014	U.S. embassy urges citizens to avoid Saudi Arabia Shiite town	https://goo.gl/fSNTwC
148	23/3/2014	Saudi arrests two over German envoy attack	https://goo.gl/4Cdtx8
149	16/10/2014	Saudi court sentences Shiite cleric, Qaeda militant to death	https://goo.gl/DkP7WQ
150	2/1/2016	Saudi summons Iran envoy over execution remarks	https://goo.gl/nJG8R4
151	2/1/2016	Saudi Arabia executes 47 terrorism convicts	https://goo.gl/G3J5jE
152	3/1/2016	Gulf states back Saudi in its fight against ‘terrorism’	https://goo.gl/i4ao9L
153	3/1/2016	Saudi Council of Senior Scholars condemns Iranian remarks	https://goo.gl/hsdCW5

154	3/1/2016	Saudi embassy in Tehran attacked by protesters	https://goo.gl/SFpFFG
155	3/1/2016	Saudi: 'Iran is last country to talk about terrorism'	https://goo.gl/uFe4Aq
156	3/1/2016	UAE summons Iranian ambassador after Saudi embassy attack	https://goo.gl/LVqSG1
157	4/1/2016	U.N. Syria envoy heads to Saudi Arabia, Iran	https://goo.gl/VHAjNi
158	4/1/2016	U.S. urges Middle East leaders to 'calm tensions'	https://goo.gl/xEyH18
159	4/1/2016	UAE downgrades diplomatic status of Iranian diplomats	https://goo.gl/ZbtNVh
160	4/1/2016	At least two Sunni mosques attacked in Iraq	https://goo.gl/foKSE7
161	4/1/2016	Oil prices rise after Saudi Arabia cuts ties with Iran	https://goo.gl/EmDbGa
162	4/1/2016	Russia says embassy attacks illegal, calls for in Saudi-Iran restraint	https://goo.gl/gdA49k
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164	5/1/2016	Turkey calls for return to diplomatic language in Saudi-Iran row	https://goo.gl/444z4C
165	5/1/2016	Saudi to restore ties when 'Iran stops meddling'	https://goo.gl/Q8BPMa
166	5/1/2016	UNSC condemns attack on Saudi embassy in Iran	https://goo.gl/Rh952U
167	5/1/2016	Egypt backs Saudi Arabia in spat with Iran	https://goo.gl/iumsuW
168	6/1/2016	Bahrain detains 'terrorist cell' linked to Iran	https://goo.gl/YaUEi3
169	6/1/2016	Erdogan: Saudi executions internal matter	https://goo.gl/t65XxW
170	6/1/2016	Jordan summons Iranian ambassador over Saudi tensions	https://goo.gl/xhgaRv
171	6/1/2016	Oman regrets 'unacceptable' anti-Saudi attacks in Iran	https://goo.gl/NYtyb5
172	6/1/2016	Qatari envoy to Iran recalled over attacks	https://goo.gl/ttDHqo
173	7/1/2016	Iraq offers to mediate between Saudi and Iran, fearing for ISIS campaign	https://goo.gl/x9ZEKo
174	9/1/2016	Damascus backs Syria talks, wants attendees' list	https://goo.gl/iff21Y
175	10/1/2016	Air strike kills dozens in Syria rebel-held town	https://goo.gl/VYfJ2U
176	10/1/2016	Threat to Saudi Arabia to evoke Pakistan response	https://goo.gl/ufvjuF
177	10/1/2016	Arab League condemns Saudi embassy attack	https://goo.gl/qGrbyC
178	11/1/2016	China envoy calls for restraint between Saudi and Iran	https://goo.gl/uNS8Dm
179	14/1/2016	Iraq gets Saudi envoy credentials despite anti-Riyadh anger	https://goo.gl/RCizXE
180	15/1/2016	China's Xi to visit Saudi, Iran in new diplomacy push	https://goo.gl/Cf7xcG
181	19/1/2016	Saudi accuses Iran of sowing 'sedition, unrest, chaos'	https://goo.gl/ZGDR7D

182	20/1/2016	Khamenei condemns Saudi embassy attack	https://goo.gl/1TTyod
183	21/1/2016	World Muslim body condemns attacks on Saudi missions in Iran	https://goo.gl/k1Ks3X
184	25/1/2016	Iranian preacher arrested over Saudi embassy attack	https://goo.gl/8knnH7
185	16/2/2016	Iran claims Saudi embassy attackers 'on trial'	https://goo.gl/YJF8FR
186	23/3/2016	Iranian President to visit Pakistan this week	https://goo.gl/RLG5j3
187	15/9/2016	Saudi prince responds to Iran's Hajj criticisms	https://goo.gl/KwBCsL
188	2/10/2016	Erdogan slams US Congress over JASTA law	https://goo.gl/nu26cw
189	1/11/2016	Iran: 20 'undeclared' sentences on Saudi embassy attackers	https://goo.gl/LnHpr2
190	18/12/2016	Iran nod for Saudi embassy attack, mastermind claims in leaked audio	https://goo.gl/hKppH2
191	23/6/2017	What is behind the links between Al Jazeera and Islamist unions backed by Qatar	https://goo.gl/QbgLW9
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195	22/6/2013	مجموعة التضامن تدين استشهاد شاب سعودي بيد الامن	http://www.alalam.ir/news/1486978
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198	1/2/2015	ما حقيقة العفو الملكي في السعودية؟	**http://www.alalam.ir/news/1672371**
199	19/5/2015	الى أين سيفضي صراع "المحمدين"؟!	http://www.alalam.ir/news/1704383
200	27/10/2015	برلمانيون ومراجع إيرانيون ينددون بحكم إعدام الشيخ النمر	http://www.alalam.ir/news/1753647
201	29/10/2015	قضية الشيخ النمر تفتح ملف حقوق الانسان في السعودية	**http://www.alalam.ir/news/1754364**
202	2/1/2016	ماذا قال الشيخ النمر لوالدته بعد سماع تصديق حكم اعدامه؟	http://www.alalam.ir/news/1775019
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204	2/1/2016	هل أخطأت السعودية في حساباتها هذه المرة أيضا؟	http://www.alalam.ir/news/1775360
205	2/1/2016	السعودية تنفذ جريمة الاعدام بحق الشيخ النمر	http://www.alalam.ir/news/1774995
206	2/1/2016	إعدام النمر بعد فشل السعودية في تنفيذ مخططاتها الطائفية بالمنطقة	http://www.alalam.ir/news/1775249
207	3/1/2016	بالفيديو.. القطيف تنتفض تنديدا بجريمة إعدام الشيخ النمر	http://www.alalam.ir/news/1775671
208	3/1/2016	شخصيات علمائية لبنانية: السعودية تمعن بإرهابها بالداخل والخارج	http://www.alalam.ir/news/1775573

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210	4/1/2016	البحرين تهدد بحبس من يستنكر إعدام النمر ولو بالتصريح	http://www.alalam.ir/news/1775922
211	4/1/2016	السعودية منشأ الإرهاب ومغامرة قطع العلاقات مع إيران	http://www.alalam.ir/news/1776257
212	4/1/2016	تظاهرات غاضبة بالسعودية والبحرين على اعدام الشيخ النمر	http://www.alalam.ir/news/1776254
213	4/1/2016	شقيق الشيخ النمر: هناك مساع لاسترداد جثمان أخي الشهيد	http://www.alalam.ir/news/1775997
214	4/1/2016	علماء جبل عامل: قرار إعدام الشيخ النمر أميركي بامتياز	http://www.alalam.ir/news/1775914
215	4/1/2016	إعدام الشيخ النمر مؤشر على غياب حقوق الإنسان في السعودية	http://www.alalam.ir/news/1775949
216	5/1/2016	انطلاق التحالف الشيطاني المثلث	http://www.alalam.ir/news/1776352
217	6/1/2016	في توقيت مشبوه، البحرين تعلن عن ضبط "خلية ارهابية"	http://www.alalam.ir/news/1776622
218	6/1/2016	إيران لن تُستدرج الى حرب طائفية	http://www.alalam.ir/news/1776528
219	6/1/2016	هل هناك سجناء راي في السعودية؟	**http://www.alalam.ir/news/1776542**
220	9/1/2016	كيف وصفت العفو الدولية أوضاع حقوق الإنسان بالسعودية؟	**http://www.alalam.ir/news/1777509**
221	11/1/2016	الادعاء على اعضاء قروب البسطة البحرين: !بالتخابر مع إيران وحزب الله؟	http://www.alalam.ir/news/1778145
222	15/1/2016	باكستان والسعودية: علاقة "الوعود الفارغة"	http://www.alalam.ir/news/1779435
223	16/1/2016	بالفيديو؛ محافظ حلب يكشف المخطط التدميري لسوريا وداعميه	http://www.alalam.ir/news/1776525
224	17/1/2016	الصومال تلقى 50 مليون دولار من السعودية لقاء قطع علاقته بايران	http://www.alalam.ir/news/1780161
225	28/1/2016	السعودية في تقرير سنوي بعام 2015، ماذا فعلت؟	http://www.alalam.ir/news/1783769
226	8/2/2016	نتمنى أن تُسعِف الذاكرة الملك سلمان	http://www.alalam.ir/news/1787314
227	28/2/2016	استهداف الحشد الشعبي انتصار لـ	http://www.alalam.ir/news/1793862
228	4/3/2016	فيلم وثائقي جديد يتضمن صورا غير منشورة عن الشيخ النمر	http://www.alalam.ir/news/1795403
229	24/3/2016	لماذا فشلت السعودية في اليمن؟	http://www.alalam.ir/news/1801746
230	2/4/2016	الشهداء الأسرى في سجون آل سعود	http://www.alalam.ir/news/1804423
231	28/6/2016	بالفيديو/ خطير.. ملك البحرين يريد التخلص من !الشيعة نهائيا	http://www.alalam.ir/news/1833135
232	7/9/2016	هل اقتربت نهاية آل سعود؟	http://www.alalam.ir/news/1859084
233	26/11/2016	بالصور: وقفة أحتجاجية بالمنطقة الشرقية رفضا لزيارة الملك سلمان	http://www.alalam.ir/news/1889845
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235	30/3/2017	قمة عربية متعثرة على بحر ميت	http://www.alalam.ir/news/1945234
236	27/5/2017	الامة العربية تفتقد قائدا يوحدها ولا يفرقها	http://www.alalam.ir/news/1974275

237	3/6/2017	اختراق حساب وزير الخارجية البحريني على	http://www.alalam.ir/news/1977534
238	6/7/2017	حكومة البحرين: المعارضة والإخوان وعوائل سنية عملاء لقطر	http://www.alalam.ir/news/1993096
239	31/7/2017	مقتدى الصدر في السعودية ودعوات مماثلة للحكيم وحمودي والخالصي	http://www.alalam.ir/news/2001681
240	10/8/2017	العوامية: «كُثبان الوهابية» تجتاح السور	http://www.alalam.ir/news/2004569
241	13/8/2017	كيف سعت المملكة السعودية إلى محو تاريخ العوامية؟	http://www.alalam.ir/news/2005447
242	23/8/2017	ناشطون سعوديون يطلقون هاشتاغ لن يمحو ذكر النمر +صورة	http://www.alalam.ir/news/2008503
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247	2/1/2016	Execution of Sheikh Nimr Surely Spark Unrest in Saudi Shiite Dominant Regions	http://en.alalam.ir/news/1775037
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253	3/1/2016	EU Chief Mogherini Condemns Sheikh Nimr Execution by Saudi Regime	http://en.alalam.ir/news/1775623
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255	3/1/2016	Nasrallah: Saudi Arabia Execution of Sheikh Nimr al-Nimr Won't Be Taken Lightly	http://en.alalam.ir/news/1775734
256	3/1/2016	Saudi Executes 47 in 1 Day, Sits on UN Human Rights Council: Huffington Post	http://en.alalam.ir/news/1775729
257	3/1/2016	Saudi Execution of Sheikh Nimr Similar to ISIS Propaganda Videos: Independent	http://en.alalam.ir/news/1775576
258	3/1/2016	Saudi Sectarianism behind Sheikh Nimr Execution: Iran President Rouhani	http://en.alalam.ir/news/1775666
259	3/1/2016	Supreme Leader Tweet on Sheikh Nimr Execution: 'Awakening Not Suppressible'	http://en.alalam.ir/news/1775533

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261	3/1/2016	VIDEO: Iranian Protesters Rally for Sheikh Nimr Execution by Saudi Regime	http://en.alalam.ir/news/1775564
262	3/1/2016	VIDEO: Leader Strongly Condemns Execution of Sheikh Nimr by Saudi Arabia	http://en.alalam.ir/news/1775588
263	3/1/2016	VIDEO: Protesters in London Demonstrate against Saudi Execution of Sheikh Nimr	http://en.alalam.ir/news/1775693
264	3/1/2016	VIDEO: Rallies in Qatif, Bahrain in Condemnation of Sheikh Nimr Execution	http://en.alalam.ir/news/1775582
265	4/1/2016	VIDEO: Iraqis Protest Saudi Execution of Sheikh Nimr in Baghdad, Basra, Karbala	http://en.alalam.ir/news/1776061
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267	4/1/2016	Iranian Judiciary Chief: Saudi Footprint in All Mideast Crises	http://en.alalam.ir/news/1775979
268	5/1/2016	Saudi Police Open Indiscriminate Fire at Cars, Buildings in Shia City	http://en.alalam.ir/news/1776344
269	5/1/2016	Germany: EU Will Reconsider Military Sales to Saudi Arabia	http://en.alalam.ir/news/1776163
270	5/1/2016	Politics behind Saudi Arabia Execution of Sheikh Nimr: Turkey	http://en.alalam.ir/news/1776368
271	5/1/2016	VIDEO: Iranian President Says Cutting Ties Can't Hide Saudi Arabia Crime	http://en.alalam.ir/news/1776362
272	5/1/2016	VIDEO: Iranian Protesters Condemn Saudi Execution of Sheikh Nimr in Tehran	http://en.alalam.ir/news/1776208
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275	8/1/2016	PICS: Saudi, Bahrain, Yemen, Pakistan and …; Scene of protest against Al Saud	http://en.alalam.ir/news/1777242
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277	29/7/2016	Execution Waits For Young Saudi Protester, When World Forgets Him	http://en.alalam.ir/news/1844555
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