

## HOW DO EGYPTIAN NEWSPAPERS TELL US ABOUT THE CURRENT IDEOLOGICAL TRENDS?

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**ABSTRACT:** *The present paper attempts to analyse the main front-page headlines of eight Egyptian newspapers, with different mainstream readerships, reporting a single political news issue. On the 13<sup>th</sup> of April 2013, the retrial of former Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak was postponed when the judge withdrew from the case and referred it to another court. The next day, all Egyptian newspapers tackled the event. A critical discourse analysis is carried out to investigate the way language is used to shape certain political ideologies in the newspapers' headlines. The study concludes that despite their claim of being objective, newspapers represent news in a way that propagates their preferred ideologies. Hence, other than being a means of communication, newspapers seem to be an instrument of power, control and manipulation.*

**KEYWORDS:** Egyptian Newspapers, Critical Discourse Analysis, Headlines, Ideology, Power

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## INTRODUCTION

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) studies discourse in its social context. It not only describes a language, but aims at explaining the relationships between language, society, and ideology. Such relationships were described by Simpson (1993) as "language use cannot be regarded as neutral, value-free or exempt from at least some 'angle of telling'. Rather, it is shaped by a mosaic of cultural assumptions, political beliefs and institutional practices – in other words, ideologies" (pp.176-177). Hence, CDA attempts to "investigate critically social inequality as it is expressed, signaled, constituted, legitimized and so on by language" (Wodak, 2001, p.2).

CDA has been applied to various domains of discourse, one of which is news discourse, the focus of the present study. Ideally, newspapers are expected to present any piece of news in a truthful, accurate and comprehensive way, enabling readers to make their own judgments about such news. However, in reality, news articles in newspapers "can be summed up, simplified, polarized, intensified and personified. A transformation of the original account of event in question is presented to the reader in such a way that it may affect his/her view of the world" (Nordlund, 2003, p.8). Thus, any piece of news is written and articulated from a particular ideological position as it is shaped by political, economic, and cultural forces.

Being an indispensable component in any article, headlines are no exception. They are a unique type of text largely geared to saving space and presenting information in a concise way as they compress the event in a minimum number of words to attract the readers' attention, which according to Ifantidou (2009), is their only function. They can also be considered as an "emotion-inducing strategy in the hands of the editor used to initiate, sustain discourse and shape the views of the readers on national issues" (Taiwo, 2007, p. 218). Doing so, they portray and convey a specific ideological content. Thus, the notion of ideology and its relation to power are clarified below.

## Ideology

Ideology is a complex notion. One definition is the one that focuses on the term ideology from a social dimension. To van Dijk (1998), it is a representation of the social beliefs, ideas and attitudes shared by members of a society. Moreover, Oktar (2001) defined ideology as "*presentations of who we are, what we stand for, what our values are and what our relationships with others are*" [original emphasis] (p.314). Another definition of ideology, which is relevant to this study, is quite different from the former one, having a negative evaluation of ideology, claiming that it is "essentially linked to the process of sustaining asymmetrical relations of power – to maintaining domination...by disguising, legitimating, or distorting those relations" (Thompson, 1984, p.4). The same view has been further asserted by others, one of whom is van Dijk who explained that ideologies play an important role "*in the formation and change of public opinion, in setting the political agenda, and influencing social debate, decision making and other forms of social and political action*" [original emphasis] (Finally, on the social side, 1996). According to Pasha (2011), "it is this type of ideology that generates polarization of people into *us* and *them*, and the audience begins to produce and consume discourse in terms of the *we* and *they* dichotomy" (p.50). Finally, to Zaidi (2012), ideology has also been viewed as a "legitimated, normative, and systematic exercise of power by a group in order to achieve specified collective objectives embedded in an impersonal entity or system" (pp.73-4).

## Ideology and Power

In the Egyptian society, like in many others, the state and the dominant institutions try to maintain their dominance over the public in two ways: coercion or consent. The former entails force and resistance, while the latter is much smoother. According to Gramsci's theory (1971), ruling classes do not impose their ideologies on the masses through coercion. They subtly exercise their power through winning people's consent by using strategies like persuasion that influence their minds and might in-turn control their actions (as cited in van Dijk, 1998). Al-Jayrudy (2011) claims that "persuaders seem to engage their persuadees in a conversational discourse which draws upon their powers of reason. As a result, the persuadees rationalize, legitimate and justify the facts and statements presented in the persuasive discourse" (p.42). For instance, when a political party issues a newspaper, it is capable of controlling the content and the way it is expressed, thus shaping the readers' opinion. By doing so, the elites practice their social domination and "impose a policy of exclusion on minorities or any social group that does not belong to *us*" (Pasha, 2011, p.108). Such a relationship is reciprocal.

In view of the above discussions, the present study attempts to answer the following:

- 1) How do eight different Egyptian newspapers report a single event?
- 2) How does the reporting of the same event reveal the different ideologies of the eight Egyptian newspapers?
- 3) What are the linguistic/ non-linguistic devices used to express those ideologies?

Through answering the three questions above, the study tries to identify how the examined newspapers differ in their representation of the event, and how this reflects their different ideological background and political stances.

## METHODOLOGY

This work is a comparative, descriptive analysis of one event as covered by eight different Egyptian newspapers. To analyse the selected data, Fairclough's (1992) model, van Dijk's (1997) cognitive work, and Richardson's (2007) concern about news media are applied, as they complement one another. In Fairclough's model, any CDA can be divided into three stages: description, interpretation and explanation. Consequently, when examining a text, the first step would be describing and analysing the structure of the text and the linguistic choices made by the writer. The second step would be focusing on the interaction between the text and the reader, which includes examining the process of the production of the text by the writer and the process of interpretation by the reader who receives it. The final stage is concerned with explaining the social context of the text. Yet, such levels of analysis sometimes overlap and interrelate, and at the same time, are mutually explanatory. These different types of analyses work simultaneously rather than sequentially.

Due to the restricted nature of headlines, while focusing on discourse-as-text, the researcher analyses both lexical and syntactic levels. While lexical analysis mainly includes lexicalization (the choice of words, naming and reference), the syntactic one covers sentence structure, transitivity, tenses, pre-/post-modifiers, and passive/active voice. Some of these linguistic items are explained here:-

- Lexicalisation: It means studying individual lexical items, their connotations and denotations. Much can be inferred from the lexical choices made by the editor, as these linguistic choices are not ideologically random, and have intentionally been used to perpetuate hidden ideologies and guide the readers' ideological stance (van Dijk, n.d.).
- Naming: Studying naming or labeling shows how certain people or objects are given names to identify them. Such a process is done on ideological basis as explained by Fowler et al., "[T]he different possibilities [of naming] signify different assessments by the speaker/writer of his or her relationship with the person referred to or spoken to, and of the formality or intimacy of the situation" (1979, p.200).
- Sentence structure: In Arabic, while nominal sentences present a proposition and describe people and objects, verbal ones relate events. Consequently, a characteristic feature of Arabic news headlines is the use of noun-initial sentences, as doing so helps in placing emphasis on the subject by making it more noticeable than other elements in the headlines (Al-Jayrudy, 2011).
- Active/passive voice: The voice chosen determines the role of the participant in an action. In newspapers, the actor may be deleted because "the paper is able to imply illegal conduct without actually making an accusation that could leave them vulnerable to legal action" (Reah, 1988, p.88) or the actor is unknown. For Fowler (1991), "passive is a common structure in headlines, it saves space, it is chosen not only for brevity but also because of the official or bureaucratic nature of the events referred to" (p.79). By using that voice, the agent becomes less prominent and the person or thing affected by the action is the focus, unlike the active voice which is used when the writer wishes to focus on the agent
- Transitivity: Transitivity analysis includes identifying who is set as *agent* (doer or sayer, etc.), as *goal* (who is acted upon), and the processes (doing or saying). In other words, as Pasha (2011) puts it "*who is doing what to whom?*" (p.118). That type of

analysis would reveal much about the complex system of hegemony and domination in the society as expressed in media headlines. To do a transitivity analysis, it is necessary to identify every verb and its associated process, and then examine patterns in the use of these processes. There are six processes, namely material, relational, mental, behavioural, verbal, and existential. First, mental ones are processes of “doing”. They express the notion that someone/thing “does” something. Second, relational ones are processes of “being”, as a relation is set up between two separate entities (Halliday, 1994, p.119). Thus, they are used to describe things in terms of their qualities, attributes or identities. While mental processes are those of “sensing”, verbal ones are of “saying”, where there is a “sayer” that is not necessarily a human being. Behavioural processes are related to physiological and psychological behaviour, like breathing and smiling. Finally, existential processes represent something that exists or happens. It may be an event, an object or a human being (Halliday, 1994). By applying transitivity analysis to the selected headlines, the researcher tries to examine how Mubarak is presented, the process types associated with him and their significance.

- Metaphors: It is a way of “representing one aspect of experience in terms of another, and is by no means restricted to the sort of discourse it tends to be stereotypically associated with... it is the relations between alternative metaphors which have different ideological attachments” (Fairclough, 1989, p. 119).

In addition to the abovementioned lexical and syntactic items, van Dijk's (1997) "surface structures" are examined in that dimension (discourse-as-text) to complete the whole picture. This term refers to the embodiment of various abstract discourse structures (i.e., semantic, syntactic and pragmatic) in different forms of expression at the level of phonology and graphics. In general, they may express and convey a hidden meaning, thus influencing the way the event is interpreted by the readers. Placing certain graphical emphasis on a specific piece of information entails its positioning at the top of the hierarchical organisation of mental models. Finally, Richardson's rhetorical tropes are also analysed, namely metaphor, and puns. A "trope will take words and use them to denote-connote something apart from their ordinary meaning" (2007, p. 65).

The second dimension of text analysis is discourse-as-discursive-practice. It is concerned with how people interpret and reproduce a text. According to Jorgensen and Phillips (2002, p. 69), such an analysis "focuses on how authors of texts draw on already existing discourses and genres to create texts, and on how receivers of texts also apply discourses and genres in the consumption and interpretation of the texts". Doing so entails answering questions concerning the reasons for choosing a certain event, the way it is reported and the factors that influence journalists in their reporting.

As for the social dimension, it is related to issues of power, "the social, ideological and hegemonic practices prevailing in the society and how these practices shape (and are shaped by) discursive practices" (Pasha, 2011, p. 40). In other words, one tries to answer questions like, what does a text say about the society it was produced in and the society it was produced for? Does it have an impact on social relations?

At this point of the research, it is vital to focus on both discursive and social practices in order to provide the relevant background information before analysing the selected data.

## Discursive Practices in Egyptian Newspapers

In Egypt, state-owned and government-funded newspapers (*Al-Ahram*, *Al-Akhbar*, *Al-Gomhuriya*) are run by boards that are appointed by the editors-in-chief, who are directly appointed by the president, with the help of the National security bureau. Thus, any anti-government news is filtered. Moreover, private newspapers are published after the approval of the Supreme Council of Journalism, which has the right to confiscate and discontinue any newspaper at any time (Rubin, 2015). The latter happened to the Islamist-oriented newspaper *Al-Horeyya Wal Adala*. Ghoraba (2012) has claimed that many Egyptian journalists themselves serve as insiders to the national security bureau; even some private newspapers are given a license to work for that bureau by sending regular insider reports in return for rewards and possible promotions.

The Egyptian journalists hardly ever feel complete freedom to express themselves. They are always torn between the government with its upper hand, and the reader who often looks at matters from an emotional perspective, sometimes resists shocking facts and resorts to a comfort zone (Ghoraba, 2012). If a journalist or writer expresses different views from the widely accepted standard version in the society, some Egyptian readers initiate a fierce attack against that writer, usually regarding him/her as an outcast. Consequently, such knowledge had to be considered when covering any events during that two-year period of turmoil after the 25 January Revolution, 2011. The core revolutionary demands – for bread, freedom, social justice and human dignity – have not been realised since the fall of Mubarak's regime. Nobody knew whether the Revolution was going to succeed or not; thus most journalists tried to play it safe and not clash with both the opponents and proponents of that regime, in fear of losing their jobs.

On Saturday the 13 April 2013, during the reign of the Muslim Brotherhood (MB), the former Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak appeared in court to face his retrial over the killing of hundreds of protesters in 2011, before he was eventually cleared of all charges on 29 November 2014. However, the judge withdrew from the trial almost immediately, signalling an indefinite adjournment of the trial, saying that he felt "unease" in reviewing the case and referred it to the Cairo appeals court. It's worthy to mention that "the presiding judge was appointed under Mubarak and so were most of the current judiciary, a factor that has complicated transitional justice in Egypt" (Saleh & Fick, 2013). On that day, Mubarak appeared in a totally different image of what was expected. For months, many official accounts were announced describing Mubarak's health condition, as he was held at the military hospital in Maadi, instead of the one in prison, to be treated from heart problems, fractured ribs, depression and high blood pressure. Stunning many Egyptians, the former president looked strong and defiant in court, sitting upright on a hospital trolley, wearing designer sunglasses, waving and smiling at his supporters from the defendants' cage in the courtroom, and also chatting casually with his two sons. The next day, that dramatic appearance was covered by almost all Egyptian newspapers.

This chosen event is highly worthy of focusing on. It incorporates many of the news values suggested by Harcup and O'Neill (2001), such as reference to power elite and to celebrity (the former president himself); entertainment (Mubarak showing up in the cage wearing sunglasses, smiling and waving to his supporters); surprise (unexpected twist of events as most Egyptians were waiting for the verdict); bad news (not knowing what will happen to Mubarak because of the withdrawal of the court); magnitude (first time in Egyptian history to have a president stand a trial); relevance (political importance as prosecuting Mubarak meant the success of the 25



January Revolution). Consequently, covering such an event was expected by all Egyptian newspapers.

Because of the gravity of the event, journalists obtained their information mostly from official sources, which might have geared their reporting in a way that matched the message required to be conveyed to the public at the time. In addition, the political views of the common people pressurised the journalists. Egyptians were unequally divided between supporters and opponents of the ousted president. Thus, it was necessary to address the readers in the expected way or else face the possibility of financial loss. As Richardson states (2007), these characteristics "conspire to reduce...journalism to being a conduit for the views of the powerful" (p. 186).

### **Social Practices**

The predominant social, ideological and hegemonic practices in the society, not only influence, but are influenced by the discursive practices as well. Since both state-owned and independent newspapers were tackled earlier, the most important element to be focused on here is the relationship between the Muslim Brotherhood (often referred to as Ikhwan) and the Egyptian presidents. In general, this relationship can be described as a rollercoaster ride full of ups and downs, mostly the latter. Due to the complexity and the continuity of this conflict, this section will provide a very brief summary of that relationship.

As a start, introducing the MB is vital. It is Egypt's oldest and largest Islamist organisation, founded by Hassan Al-Banna in 1928. Initially, it aimed at spreading Islamic morals and charity works, but soon became involved in politics, fighting against the British colonial control of Egypt.

In the 1950s, during Nasser's reign, and after his failed assassination attempt, the MB society was dissolved, being accused of that attempt; thousands were imprisoned and tortured; and the group was labeled 'an extremist organization'. According to the BBC report (2013), "this clash with the authorities prompted an important shift in the ideology of the Ikhwan, evident in the writing of one prominent member, Sayyid Qutb. Qutb's work advocated the use of jihad (struggle) against jahili (ignorant) societies, both Western and so-called Islamic ones, which he argued were in need of radical transformation".

Tension partially eased during the reign of Sadat (1971-1981) who allowed the MB to work publicly in order to counterbalance the growing leftist trend, yet without being recognised as a political party or as an official religious organisation. During Mubarak's early reign, the MB started winning seats in the parliament until 1989 when the Interior Minister accused the MB of being a façade for the militant Islamists. Unfortunately, the 1990s were the bloodiest in Egypt's internal history, where clashes between militant Islamists and the state forces increased, leading to many terrorist attacks and many deaths. By time, the MB succeeded in having control over civil and professional organisations, to the extent that the 2005 elections resulted in 88 seats, reserved for the MB in the parliament, as they wanted to stop the inheritance project (having Gamal, Mubarak's younger son, the next president). In 2008, "the government launched a crackdown on the Ikhwan, detaining hundreds of members, and instituted a number of legal 'reforms' to counter their resurgence" (BBC, 2013). Military courts also sentenced many of its leaders to jail and arrested hundreds, targeting the organisation's funding.

After the 25 January Revolution 2011, and a period of rule by the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF), the MB took power in Egypt through a series of elections. Mohamed Morsi became the president, being the first MB member to reach such a position. During his rule, "the Islamic movement and its opponents were sharply polarized around the issues of freedoms and democracy. Tensions also rose between the Brotherhood and Egyptian state institutions, particularly the judiciary and security agencies, over which the group attempted to tighten its control" (Fahmi, 2015). Such a determination to tighten their grip on the various institutions included the media as well. Moreover, during his reign, Egypt saw killing of protesters, attacks on several churches, a Brotherhood-dominated parliament, a poor economic status and a number of violations of the constitution. Thus, mass protests broke out against him in June 2013 demanding his resignation. On 30 June 2013, Morsi was deposed by the Egyptian Army.

### **The Eight Egyptian Newspapers**

The newspapers used in this study are classified into three groups, namely *state-owned* ones (Al-Ahram, Al-Akhbar and Al-Gomhuriya), *independent* ones (Al-Masry Al-Youm, Al-Shorouk, Al-Watan and Al-Tahrir), and a Muslim Brotherhood owned newspaper (Al-Horeyya Wal Adala). A brief description of each is given as follows:

#### 1. Al-Ahram (The Pyramids):

Founded in 1875, Al-Ahram has been, for decades, the most widely circulating Egyptian daily newspaper. Egyptian state press has always been accused of being the voice of the President or the ruling party, supporting all the president's decisions, while filtering any anti-government news. The same accusation was said about the next newspaper.

#### 2. Al-Akhbar (The News):

It is a daily newspaper, founded in 1952, achieving one of the highest circulation figures. Being a state-owned semi-official newspaper, it is also Pro-government. Unlike Al-Ahram which is conservative, often read by "state officials, academics, and business people", it has a "livelier and more sensationalist style...read by students, bureaucrats, and more of a mass audience" (Rubin, 2015, p. 243).

#### 3. Al-Gomhuriya (The Republic):

It is another state-owned Egyptian daily newspaper, which was established in 1954 after the first Egyptian revolution and became the new regime's mouthpiece, echoing its viewpoints. It was issued the year Nasser got rid of the first Egyptian President, after the monarchy, Mohamed Naguib. He took over the reign and appointed, his friend, Sadat, as the chief editor of Al-Gomhuriya. This newspaper "tends to focus on Arab socialist issues and leftist causes, and therefore has a following among leftist intellectuals and workers (Rubin, 2015, p. 243).

#### 4. Al-Masry Al-Youm (The Egyptian Today):

It is a privately owned daily newspaper, first published in 2004. Because of not belonging to a single political party, Al-Masry Al-Youm has tackled various controversial topics objectively. After a few years, it started challenging *Al-Ahram* for the status of being the national paper of record, and since then, is regarded as one of the most influential newspapers in Egypt.

**5. Al-Shorouk (The Sunrise):**

It is a daily "private" newspaper, portraying the independent voice of many prominent writers and journalists. It is relatively a recent paper, established in 2009, shedding light on hot issues whether political, economic, or local.

**6. Al-Watan (The Homeland):**

This independent newspaper was launched after the 25 January Revolution, in April 2012. Many prominent figures, mostly known for their opposition to the Mulsim Brotherhood, have been writing in this paper, frequently criticising the government's performance as well.

**7. Al-Tahrir (Liberation):**

It was a privately owned independent newspaper, named after Tahrir Square (the birthplace of the 25 January Revolution), and launched in 2011 during the revolutionary process in Egypt. It was established by the prominent journalist Ibrahim Essa who had ten of his previous publications shut down by order of Mubarak's regime. Its main audience is the young youth, as it is the voice of the 25 January Revolution, trying to expose corruption and build a free society. Both Al-Tahrir and Al-Watan newspapers advocate liberal and/or leftists points of view, often attacking the government. Unfortunately, Al-Tahrir (printed version) was closed in September 2015 due to claims of facing a financial crisis.

**8. Al Horreya Wal Adala (Freedom and Justice):**

Post the revolution, in 2011, Freedom and Justice Party launched this Islamic-oriented newspaper "Al Horreya Wal Adala". It mainly addresses the MB supporters who might be the only clients for that publication, as it contains simply a pro-Islamist rhetoric that is synonymous with the party affiliation. However, after 30 July 2013 and the imprisonment of Morsi (the first MB president), it was discontinued for political reasons, and the party was announced a terrorist organisation.

**DATA**

The following table includes the eight headlines and sub-headlines that were written on 14 April 2013, together with their reference and the researcher's translation.

Number of headline	Name of newspaper	Headline	Sub-headlines
H1	الاهرام	محاكمه القرن فى انتظار دائره جديده "Trial of the century" awaits resumption	مبارك يلوح لمؤيديه .. و النيابة تبحث اعادته لسجن طره Mubarak waves to his proponents and prosecution considers moving him back to Tora prison
H2	الاخبار	صحه مبارك "بمب" .. و النيابة تبحث اعادته الى السجن	المحكمة تتنحى.. و تحديد دائره أخرى خلال ساعات Court withdraws, and trial to be rescheduled shortly



		Mubarak in perfect health, and prosecution considers sending him back to prison.	المخلوع يحيى أنصاره من داخل القفص و أهالي الشهداء يتوعدون Ousted President greets his supporters from cage and martyrs' families swear vengeance
H3	الجمهورية	ظهر في صحة جيدة و معنويات مرتفعة Appeared in good health and high spirits	
H4	المصرى اليوم	مبارك يسترد "هيئته" في "قفص الاخوان" Mubarak regains "prestige" in "the Brothers' jail".	
H5	الشروق	تعثرت الثورة فضحك مبارك Revolution stumbles; Mubarak laughs	محاكمه القرن تنتظر قاضيا جديدا Trial of the century awaits a new judge
H6	الوطن	الفرعون يعود ضاحكا: مبارك عليكم مرسى Pharaoh is back tongue-in-cheek: "Congratulations" on Morsi	
H7	التحرير	شكرا جماعة Thanks guys	
H8	الحريه و العدالة	تنحى محكمه المتحدى و طره تنتظر المخلوع Court of the stepped down president withdraws ; Tora awaits ousted president	

Unfortunately, it was not possible to get hold of the pdf forms (or word documents) of four of these newspapers, and thus their surface structures were not analysed later. The required articles were not found in any of the archives on the net. One can come across other articles written on the same day, yet there is no presence of any of the main articles on the front pages, and then here is what was discovered. There seems to be a deliberate attempt to erase or hide as much information as possible about the 25 January Revolution, the protests at the time, the rule of the SCAF and Mubarak's trial. Such a hypothesis is further emphasised by Magdy (2015), who reached a similar outcome.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

According to Al-Jayrudy (2011), "linguistic variations implicate ideologies.... [The] lexical and syntactic options, in a given discourse contribute to understanding, exploring and interpreting the meanings and ideologies of that discourse" (p. 35). The following is an analysis of the headlines on different levels to see how they reflect the ideologies of the newspapers:-

## A- Surface Structure

Generally, the story appeared in the most prominent location in the newspapers which is the front page, thus reflecting the valuation these newspapers made of that specific covered event. Furthermore, the headlines occupied more space than the articles themselves because of the large and bold printing.

In *Al-Ahram*, being a 'conservative' newspaper, the event was covered in a small panel placed to the left of the front page. Both the headline and the sub-headline were written in black, yet in different sizes, preceded by Mubarak's photo in the cage. The letters were smaller and the typeface was not as bold as the headline, which indicates a lower degree of significance of the whole event.

In *Al-Akhbar*, the headline and the sub-headline covered quarter of the front page accompanied by a photo of Mubarak waving to his supporters from behind the cage. The screaming large red headline, focusing on his good health, was preceded with a smaller sub-headline and followed by another larger one highlighting Mubarak's action and his opponents' reaction. This headline can be part of an indirect media campaign that has worked to subvert Morsi's rule, which was elected by the people. It attempts to underline people's confidence in the ruling regime, by giving the impression that the whole trial is a charade.

In *Al-Gomhuriya*, a bigger space was allotted to the event because of placing a big photo of Mubarak lying on his back in the cell. The main headline was written in black, followed by a large red typeface 'screaming' sub-headline, and then a second sub-headline with a larger typeface size than the headline. Thus the newspaper is arousing anger and hatred by comparing the reaction of his supporters, who raised statues of him, to his opponents' who demanded his execution. This matches its partly leftist stance.

In *Al-Shorouk*, a screaming red headline was placed at the very top of the front page, even before the name of the newspaper, covering the whole area. The sub-headline was written after the newspaper's name, using the same typeface size, but in black. Mubarak's photo showing him behind the bars, waving to his supporters is placed after the headline and the sub-headline. Here, the newspaper, reflecting social interests, is playing on people's emotion by comparing both the revolution and Mubarak. While the former is struggling, he is laughing.

Using special graphical emphasis by the independent newspaper has placed the given message at the top of the hierarchical organisation of the mental models, thus presenting it as an unquestionable reality. Surprisingly, two state-owned newspapers (*Al-Akhbar* and *Al-Gomhuriya*) have done the same. They tend to stay in the grey zone and avoid confronting some of their readers who oppose Mubarak. Conversely, not using prominent graphical structures, as done by the top governmental newspaper *Al-Ahram*, has resulted in de-emphasising the message. In other words, it presents the event as something that does not deserve full attention. This is in line with the uncertainty of that period, as there was no indication whether Morsi's rule would continue, or whether Mubarak's men would regain control over the country.

Together with relying on the position and size of the headlines and sub-headline, two newspapers also used inverted commas in their headlines. In **H2**, a colloquial expression (bumb – بمب) that is very common among readers is used. It is put between inverted commas to draw their attention, as it means 'perfect health', which shows the falsity of the spreading rumours at

the time that Mubarak was on his deathbed. Meanwhile, it arouses the anger of the opponents, and drives them to question the credibility of the whole procedure of Mubarak's trial.

In **H4**, the word "*prestige*" is in inverted commas, highlighting the possibility of Mubarak regaining his prestige and power as a president as the court withdrew from his trial. By also placing "*the Brothers' jail*" in inverted commas, the journalist is emphasizing the fact that that happened during their rule, thus stressing the contradiction between both facts. In other words, he was condemned and humiliated during the rule of the SCAF who were part of his regime, yet regained his prestige and nearly obtained his freedom during his enemies' rule.

## B- Lexicalisation

In this section, the researcher carries out a lexical analysis by explaining the choice of certain words, the connotations behind others and the labeling of persons and objects.

**Emotive words:** Al- Jayrudy (2011) claims that "discourse which appeals to the listeners' emotions has been recognized to trigger action more quickly than a rational discourse" (p. 42). Indeed, politicians use emotional appeal with most people, but reserve reason and logic for the few. The tone of some of the headlines above is provocative. The choice of words such as '*waving*' **H1**, '*greets*' **H2**, '*high spirit*' **H3**, '*laughs*' **H5**, '*laughing*' **H6** clearly paint the picture of Mubarak being insensitive to the people. While they are grieving and suffering from the loss of their beloved ones, he is in high spirits and seems to have been receiving a good treatment at prison. Surprisingly, the ideological postures in these headlines (excluding the MB newspaper and *Al-Tahrir*) condemn the former president. They portray Mubarak as inconsiderate of the people's agony as he smiles and greets his supporters and seems not to be affected by his imprisonment neither physically nor psychologically. Doing so accentuates the probability that this trial might be just a show.

In **H2**, the phrase "*martyrs' families*" appeals to the Egyptians' feelings, eliciting memories of the hundreds of people brutally killed during the first eleven days of the Revolution. "*Swear vengeance*" also reflects the amount of hatred that these families hold for Mubarak because of their belief that he was responsible for the death of their children. Here *Al-Akhbar*, though a government-owned newspaper, uses language that voices social interests.

In **H5**, there is a negative-other presentation of Mubarak since he is depicted as a villain laughing, while the Revolution has stumbled. The headline also has a negative impact on the readers as it reminds them that the Revolution has not fulfilled any of its demands and that Egypt today is not the one they were dreaming of back then. Doing so mirrors the opposing ideology of this independent newspaper.

**Naming:** In the data, Mubarak is labelled as (The Pharaoh), (The one who stepped down), and (The Ousted), yet in the remaining headlines, he is referred to by his common name, which happens to be his family one "Mubarak". These newspapers use a neutral name to be on the safe side, trying not to impose a certain perspective on the people.

The word "*Pharaoh*" in **H6** could be interpreted in two opposing ways. It connotes either dictatorship and oppression, or supremacy and power. This suits the ideology of *Al-Watan* newspaper, which wants to stay in the grey zone. It does not want to denounce the former regime and at the same time, show its alliance to it. Meanwhile, the word "*Ousted*" in **H4** and **H8** connotes force, humiliation and disgrace, thus satisfying the sense of victory of those against the previous regime. Note that the way he is named in these independent newspapers

aim at assigning a low-value social role to Mubarak, thus turning the people against him. In addition, the word "*stepped down*" in **H8** refers to Mubarak's act of relinquishing his power on 11 February, 2011. This label implies full willingness, dignity and no pressure, which juxtaposes with the naming in the second clause "*Ousted*". Here the journalist is being satirical in using '*stepped down*' as both the judge and the president did the same action. Language here is used to shape the reader's opinion.

To describe those who were for Mubarak, two different words were used "*proponents*" **H1** and "*supporters*" **H2**. While the proponent is a person who supports an idea/person and tries to persuade others that it/he is good, the supporter just supports the idea/person, without trying to influence others or taking any action. The former is a much stronger word and it connotes a higher degree of loyalty and devotion (Cambridge Dictionaries Online). Unsurprisingly, *Al-Ahram*, the conservative state-owned newspaper, is the one who used such a word.

When referring to the prison where Mubarak will be sent to, the headlines either referred to it as "*Tora prison*" **H1**, or "*the prison*" **H2**, or mentioned only its name "*Tora*" **H8**. However, in **H4** the expression "*the Brothers' jail*" is used. Here the journalist is indirectly accusing the MB of helping Mubarak, by declaring that he regained his "prestige" in their custody, something which he was denied before. *Al-Masry Al Youm*, like the other independent newspapers, clearly expresses its antipathy to Islamists, blaming them for everything that goes wrong.

### C- Syntactic Features

**Pre-/post-modifiers:** Pre-modified nouns can present varying views of a topic. For example, in **H4**, by describing the jail as that of the "the Brothers' ", emphasis is placed on that fact that it was during their rule that Mubarak was about to gain his freedom.

In other cases, post-modifiers are used more. **H1** '*Trial of the century*' describes the trial as such to highlight the gravity of that event as it was the first time ever, in the Middle East, to imprison a president and condemn him. In addition, in **H3**, Mubarak is said to be in "*good health*", to show the deceptiveness of the spreading rumours then that he was extremely sick, and at the same time, arouse the anger of the opponents. Using the word "*high*" to describe Mubarak's "spirit" re-emphasises the previous picture of a healthy confident person who is enjoying his life, in spite of being imprisoned. Since its readers are usually leftists and workers, *Al-Gomhuriya* is subtly calling for an action from them, by pushing them to question the credibility of the trial, thus in-turn Morsi's regime.

**Sentence Structure:** Like most Arabic news headlines, six of these selected headlines are nominal, placing emphasis mainly on the subject and making it more noticeable; in this case, the subject is mostly Mubarak. The remaining two sentences are verbal. In addition, the present tense has been used in all headlines, adding a sense of immediacy to the event and reflecting its truth.

**Active / passive Voice:** When applied to the data, all the headlines were written in the active voice, contrary to the claim that the passive is usually the voice used in headlines (Fowler et al., 1979). The agent was different in most cases, except for Mubarak who was the focus in a number of ones. In **H3**, the agent is suppressed because the circumstantial element is the intended message. The reader is being exasperated by Mubarak's good health.

**Transitivity:** Choosing one process type instead of another, or giving participants specific positions, reflects the journalists' opinion towards an event. The choice of verb has an inevitable

effect on the way a proposition is portrayed, and does have significant ideological implications. The choice of process might help to shape the readers' reaction. By analyzing the headlines in terms of transitivity, Mubarak was found to be the main participant in seven cases. Unexpectedly, no pattern was detected in the processes of the sample. The behavioural processes pertaining to Mubarak belong to the semantic field of happiness and joy, as he waves to his proponents and laughs at the revolution. This renders the same conclusion as that obtained through lexical analysis; i.e., that this whole trial might be a farce. In "Mubarak regains 'prestige' ", material action intention process is used to place clear responsibility on him for recapturing his prestige. Moreover, another material process is seen in "Mubarak greets his supporters". Here the former president is acting normally as if nothing is wrong in the whole situation. Relational processes are used twice, where Mubarak is the carrier and his health is the attribute, as seen in: "Appeared in good health, and Mubarak is in perfect health." By transforming an action process into a relation or 'state of art', the headlines attempt to accentuate this politically uncomfortable fact, which suits the newspapers stances. Finally, in the headline "Pharaoh is back tongue-in-cheek: Congratulations Morsi", a verbal process is attributed to Mubarak who is teasing his opponents and the revolutionists by congratulating them on having Morsi, the MB figure, as a president, which is a worse scenario than his rule.

#### D- Rhetorical Tropes

**Metaphors:** Newspapers use figurative language to make their texts more interesting and rich, and to inspire certain feelings in readers, thus conveying certain ideologies. This is evident in the following examples: **H5** has a personification. The revolution is portrayed as a person struggling and stumbling, while Mubarak is laughing, yet capable of rising up again. The obstacles that the Revolution faced did not lead to its down fall, but to knocking it down for a short period of time. Here, the journalist's technique sways the readers towards his/her way of looking at the events, and thus share his/her ideology. **H8** personifies the famous prison Tora as a person who is waiting for Mubarak. This is a sarcastic sentence as the writer aims at gloating on Mubarak's imprisonment. This voices the MB's negative attitude towards the former president.

**Puns:** In **H6**, there is a pun in the word "Mubarak". It is not a simple "congratulations", it is also the name of the ex-president Mubarak that is related, in most of the rebels' minds, to thirty years of injustice and tyranny. The newspaper is voicing its in-between ideology, neither totally condemns Mubarak, nor supports the MB. "Thanks, Guys", reads the headline **H7** in the independent pro-revolution daily *Al-Tahrir* which also translates as "Thanks Brotherhood", a reference to Morsi's Muslim Brotherhood which has dominated politics since the Revolution. The word "Thanks" has a sarcastic tone as the journalist thanks the MB for oppressing the Egyptians' freedom and not being able to achieve justice and restore the rights of the martyrs, as if Egypt is 'back to square one'. *Al-Tahrir* Newspaper, like most of the other independent ones at the time, had been focusing on unmasking the MB intentions to take control over Egypt and blaming them for everything, instead of attacking the former regime figures. Thus it was thanking the MB for allowing Mubarak to get away with his deeds, without any condemnation. Such a result is in line with the findings of El Masry, et al. (2014) who have claimed that in 2013 and as a result of disappointment with the policies of Morsi, which sometimes included unnecessary restrictions against journalists...the press frequently attacked Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood.... Another journalist at the independent *Al-Tahrir* newspaper said that the paper sought explicitly to publish stories that would make the Muslim Brotherhood look



bad" (p.1628). This resonates with what have been mentioned earlier of the possibility that the government might be carrying a hidden media campaign, aiming at destabilising Morsi's rule.

## CONCLUSION

The present paper has studied how one event is represented in eight different Egyptian newspapers by using the framework of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Examining both the linguistic and non-linguistic features in the headlines has revealed the success of these newspapers in conveying some underlying tendencies. By analysing specific surface structures, lexicalization, syntactic techniques, and rhetorical tropes, it is evident that Egyptian headlines tend to be politicized.

In general, whatever is promoted through the three state-owned newspapers is in line with the government policy, i.e., reflecting an institutional interest. These institutions maintain their dominance through the use of language. In addition, being always under the scourge from both the government and the reader, they avoid presenting shocking facts and resort to remain within their comfort zone. Consequently, they were the least biased against Mubarak. As for the independent papers (*excluding Freedom and Justice*, which openly shows its detest for the former regime), they seem to put most of their blame on the MB president Morsi and his rule.

However, regardless of their political perspectives, the majority of these newspapers share one encoded ideology, that this trial is nothing but a charade. Mubark is getting a special treatment in prison, enjoying perfect health, and acting as if still in power. Though there are some ideological stances propagated, one fails to find clear cut distinctions amongst all the various headlines, except for the MB's *Freedom and Justice* one. This reflects the uncertainty of that period, as there was no indication whether Morsi's rule would continue, or whether Mubarak's men would regain control over the country, which forced the newspapers to stick mostly to the comfort zone.

To conclude, Egyptian newspapers seem to be instruments of control and manipulation in the hands of the powerful, and the reader is the victim.

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