

## The Translator as Journalist: Getting Across the Ideological Intricacies of Translating News

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### Abstract

*The role of translators in news reporting has recently been gaining increasing attention. The process of translating news seems to be influenced by the ideological and political preferences of the news networks. This paper aims to investigate the influence of news organisations on the practices of news translation; that is, the social practices within an institution promoting a particular discourse, ideology or belief. It underlines the role of news translators/journalists in media discourse. It also looks at whether news translators, or journalists, are influenced by the ideological tendencies or political leanings of news institutions. In addition, the paper situates the topic of news translation within the ideological turn of Translation Studies. For the purpose of this enquiry, news articles were collected from Aljazeera and Al-Arabiya to see how translation is being conducted in news agencies. This study shows that news items can be ideologically altered to conform with the news organisations values by using a number of translation strategies. These alterations occur on the textual and lexical levels of the news items, making them carry a different representation of the news story at hand.*

**Keywords:** News Translation, Ideology, Aljazeera, Al-Arabiya, Textual Alterations

### Introduction

The study of news translation has begun to gain ground since 2003, when the University of Warwick conducted a three-year project of investigating translation in global news (Kyle and

Bassnett 2006). This growing importance of news translation in Translation Studies is also reflected in the prominent work of Christopher (2010), who argues that news translators practise self-censorship in their translation to serve the state and its governmental bodies. Furthermore, Claire (2005) argues that the practices of news translation in local news agencies accentuate the invisibility of the role of the translator, who may often hold a title such as international journalist or news writer despite the fact that translation is an integral part of their work.

Translation in news contexts is present from the first step of the news-gathering process, and it involves a number of alterations. A news text that is transposed from one language into another goes through processes of editing, rewriting, reshaping and repackaging, which result in no clear distinction between the source and target texts (Bielsa and Bassnett 2009). The process of news translation entails a certain transformation of the source text for the purpose of producing news-style content. This means that the concept of faithfulness in journalism is not attributed to the source text, but rather to the sequential narration of events in the target text (*ibid*).

According to Bielsa and Bassnett (*ibid*), events in journalistic texts could be reported in three main generic types. The first one is the informative genre, which involves the factual description of events. In these types of texts, the author's style is minimized and textual alterations on the target text maximally allowed. Most of the news agencies adopt this type of genre, making their news texts informative. The second type is the interpretive genre, which relates to issues such as reportage. In this type, information is selected, interpreted and then narrated by a journalist. The third type is the argumentative genre, penned by authors who are not journalists, but columnists or opinion articles on a certain webpage. This type is somewhat contrary to the informative genre, as the author's style is to a certain degree

maintained. Most of the corpus data used in this study belongs to the informative genre.

The informative texts of news reporting are the ones which incur maximal textual alterations in their lexical and syntactic structures. In other words, the actions of translators in media outlets impinge upon the process of translating and producing news. Such a textual intervention is a key in Tymoczko and Gentzler's controversial definition of translation. They state that

Translation thus is not simply an act of faithful reproduction but, rather, a deliberate and conscious act of selection, assemblage, structuration, and fabrication—and even, in some cases, of falsification, refusal of information, counterfeiting, and the creation of secret codes. In these ways translators, as much as creative writers and politician, participate in the powerful acts that create knowledge and shape culture. (2002, xxi)

Translation, therefore, consists of deliberate selection of certain vocabulary or what a journalist wants to include or exclude in their translation. This results in all kinds of textual interventions and manipulation of the target text. Translation, nonetheless, is an essential activity in the production of news and it is inseparable from other journalistic practices.

The corpus data analysed in this study provides illustrative examples of such changes. Hence, this paper is divided into three main sections. The first section explores concepts such as media ideology, institution and translation for a political point of view. The second section presents the case study and the procedure of data collection and analysis. The third section analyses data under two main categories: ideological alternation of news texts and macro-ideological practices of news reformulation. The argument about the influence of the media is significant to this research, which deals with the impact of the media ideology on the translation process—more specifically the influence of the Arab media in post-revolution Egypt from a translation point of view.

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### Media ideology

Ideology, with its multiple definitions, has been often studied in relation to media and media studies (Nicholas and Price 1998). The media tend to promote the ideological slant of powerful groups or the dominant classes in society. The way a story is presented by news media reflects ideologies buried underneath its stated lines, whether it is discussing political, social or personal issues (ibid). The narrative of a news item by a media institution portrays the attitudes and ideologies of that institution towards its conception of reality.

Media play an influential and prominent role in societies by selecting news stories they wish to communicate to the public. Wall et al. (2007) state that the consumption of media texts is one of the things that allows people to make sense of the world as well as the events happening in it. News organisations have different views of how they represent events. They hold opinions and beliefs which may vary considerably in ideological representations (Bell and Garrett 1998). These ideologies influence news production and the discourse of news agencies. Discourse, according to Fairclough and Wodak (1997), is the study of language use in speech and writing in relation to social contexts that involves the practices of institutions. The ideology of an institution in their translation practices is a subject of interest to Translation Studies. This field encourages research on ideology, and, as stated by Calzada-Pérez (2003), it is designed “to encourage a debate on ideology in translation studies”. Further, Fawcett (1998, 107) argues that “throughout the centuries, individuals and institutions have applied their particular beliefs to the production of certain effects in translation.” This is an indication that institutions such as media organisations, which make huge use of translation, certainly convey their ideological stances through translation, as the corpus under analysis will demonstrate.

According to Thompson (1990), media ideology could be defined as a system of beliefs or practices held by different media organisations in order not only to reflect, but to represent and to shape the world and the events taking place in it as per their fostered beliefs. The media can be used not only for marketing a product, propagandising a belief, taking an idea for granted, or advocating a party, it can also be one of the primary tools in warring countries and conflicts to exterminate political opponents. Castells (2009), for instance, provides evidence that the press in America, the UK, Sweden and Germany, during the War on Iraq tended to marginalize dissenting voices and privilege the political consenting voices that meet their ideology or their set of ideas. Such practices discussed by Castells can also be applied to Arab news channels from a translational perspective.

### **Translation under institutional settings**

The concept of institution in Translation Studies was first introduced to the field by Mossop (1988) in his article *Translating institutions: a missing factor in translation theory*. In a translation context it refers to corporations, governments, organisations and the like which directly or indirectly use the service of translators (ibid). This concept has been receiving greater attention in Translation Studies, especially in connection with ideology and power relations. Translation scholars refer to “institutional translation” when the service of translation is done *in* or *for* specific organisations such as Translation Bureaus and government bodies which provide their services through translation (ibid, and Kang 2011). Loupaki (2010) suggests that news institutions can influence translations by the use of addition and/or deletion strategies, which are carried out for ideological reasons.

In news translating context, translators or news writers whose jobs involve translation are usually monitored by other senior staff (such as the news editors) who most likely intervene in the production of news reports. Hence, Koskinen (2000) argues that

it is necessary to study the institutional constraints affecting a translation task. This idea is of paramount importance when handling news translation, because the process is highly influenced by the system and the overall policy of news agencies. Likewise, Hatim and Mason (1990) explain that the role of social institution is very important in the translation process and not just the speech situation. It is crucial for the translator to consider the beliefs, perceptions and attitudes of the SL and TL members (*ibid*). The power and status of the social institution influence the production of an utterance—or a news item in this case. Studies in this regard have been conducted by Fairclough (1995) and other critical discourse analysts such as van Dijk (1998) and Wodak (1989). Fairclough (1995) indicates that a lexical selection and lexicalisation which emerge from ideological differences have almost always been the result of institutional practices. Hatim and Mason (1990 and 1997) incorporate in their translation model the notions of beliefs and perceptions, the social circumstances, the effects on language users, and the discourse of institutions prevailing in society. The discourse of institutions alongside the social constraints involve discussion on the political powers in translations; for example, the influence of political parties or figures on the outcome of a translated news report.

### **Translation as a political act**

News agencies have been said to serve governmental institutions or political parties—with a variant degree of involvement from one country to another. In Egypt, for example, media institutions have always been under the influence of the successive governments and controlled by the party in power at a time (Mohammed and Gunter 2013). In Translation Studies, the influence of politics was present in the radical changes to the definition of translation and the attitude of how scholars view it as a result of the cultural turn (Bassnett 1996). Regardless of pure linguistic approaches, translation is ultimately political (Álvarez

and Vidal 1996). Scholars argue that the study and practice of translation involve examination of power relations and power structures in a given society. Hermans (1996) states that translating is a matter of manipulating a source text so that target text readers would comprehend it in a way intended by the translator, or in the case of news by the news institution or the commissioner of the translation act. Álvarez and Vidal (1996) prove that the choice of particular vocabularies over other options, or the emphasis on some linguistic elements reflects the political implication intended in the text.

Schäffner (2004, 136) maintains that “Modern Translation Studies is no longer concerned with examining whether a translation has been “faithful” to a source text (the notion of “equivalence” is almost a “dirty” word now).” Instead, she continues, the focus now is on the social, cultural and ideological aspects as well as the external politics surrounding the translation act. It goes without saying that human interaction involves language. However, in linguistic interaction, socio-cultural, historical, ideological and institutional issues may determine discourse organisation as well as the textual structure of that discourse (Schäffner and Bassnett 2010). For example, translators are sometimes instructed to use specific terms or avoid others. Texts may be made inaccessible to the public of a given society if they do not conform to the official ideology of the political party in power. The lexical choices that news translators adopt may reflect the strategic use of political concepts of a particular ruling party, government institution or news organisation (Schäffner 2004; Schäffner and Bassnett 2014).

Machin (2008) indicates that the consensual view towards journalism in general as a truth-seeking activity and journalists as the eyes and ears of the public may no longer have credence. By looking at *Aljazeera Code of Ethics*, for example, one would find terms such as *honesty, courage, fairness, balance, independence, credibility* and *diversity*. They also state that the network is presenting “diverse points of view and opinions without bias and

partiality". The reality, however, could be completely the opposite, as argued by critical discourse analysts such as Fairclough (1995). Schäffner (2004) points out that by tracing the sources of these news reports, especially those resulting from translation, one could obtain surprising findings on the extent news texts might be altered. However, it could be stated here that most of the political studies on translation have taken their data from news articles to exemplify and operationalize their concepts, without looking into the process of translating news.

## **Research Methodology**

### ***Research context***

Allan Bell (1991) states there are three areas that have to be covered in the process of collecting media texts: the *genre*—which is news in the case of this study, the *media outlet*—for instance, the *Aljazeera* and *Al-Arabiya* organisations, and the *media output*—which is the material (news stories) that the outlet produced. The current study investigates the ideological practices of translators when translating the news. The data represents texts written in English and translated into Arabic only. A brief account is given on Aljazeera and Al-Arabiya in the sections to follow as well as why they have been chosen in this study. In addition, a political and social background on Egypt is also provided in order to contextualise the research and give further information to the reader.

### ***Case study***

The country of Egypt witnessed a revolution in 2011 against a long-term regime. Egyptian activists, through social media, called people to protest and invited everyone to take part in a revolt against the government corruption, unemployment, poverty, and more specifically, against Hosni Mubarak who ruled the country for about 30 years (Castells 2012). They coordinated the events of January 25, 2011, the *Day of Rage*, and took to the streets. Protests went nationwide. It was a pivotal moment for

change at the centre of Arab Politics (Lynch 2012). Different forces and contesting parties actively participated in those protests, which ended the rule of former President Hosni Mubarak, who was forced to step down and turn power over to the Egyptian Military Council on 11 February 2011. The Egyptian people began a new process of reconstructing the legislative institutions in the country. Votes were cast for constitutional amendments in March 2011, followed by parliamentary elections in February 2012, through which the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, alongside other Islamist parties, won almost 90% of the seats. The remaining 10% went to liberal, independent and secular politicians (AP 2013). The first democratically elected Islamist, the President of Egypt Mohamed Morsi, began to grant himself more executive powers, for example, he made his decisions immune. The other anti-Islamist forces began to mobilize for more demonstrations, calling for Morsi to leave power on 30 June 2013. The Military initially gave time to both disputing parties to resolve their issues but then acted by imposing its own plans (AP 2013).

The intervention of the Military has been seen by some Egyptian and other regional and international politicians as a military coup, because the Egyptian defence minister Abd al-Fetah al-Sisi justified the actions of the Military, as well as insinuating himself into the presidential race for Egypt. The defence minister Abd al-Fetah al-Sisi also ordered the arrest of active members of the Muslim Brotherhood who held high positions in the government and parliament, including putting the Islamist President Mohamed Morsi in custody (Goldschmidt 2013). The Military intervention included the suspension of the constitution and the imposition of a plan to end the unrest in the country. After one year of applying the plan, al-Sisi was elected to office on 8 June 2014. As seen by pro-Morsi protesters, the election of Sisi to rule Egypt and the arrest of Morsi was a clear indication that it was a military coup d'etat.

Regional media such as Aljazeera and Al-Arabiya appeared to have opposing views and remarkably different accounts in their news stories on Egypt, each according to their ideological and political beliefs. This article examines the ideological role of the news produced by English wires such as Reuters and AFP that were then reproduced in a manipulated Arabic version by Aljazeera and Al-Arabiya.

### ***Why Aljazeera and Al-Arabiya?***

Aljazeera and Al-Arabiya provide typical examples of how translation in news is being conducted in real-life surroundings. They are considered leading news providers in the region (Elmasry et al 2013). Their political leanings and ideological orientations are a perfect example of the impact and influence of an institution in the translation process and product, as Aljazeera is pro-Morsi and anti-Sisi and Al-Arabiya is pro-Sisi and anti-Morsi.

Translation of news in Aljazeera and Al-Arabiya occurs in a number of articles, and is done on a daily basis. Although each organisation has its own vision, mission and goals, they meet in the activity of translation. Their institutional differences, therefore, enrich this study by offering different points of view on one topic. Examining these two cases from a translation perspective helps to develop a wider understanding of the process of news translation. A practical reason for choosing these sites is the ease of gaining access to real-life material in collecting the documentary data (Yin 2011).

### ***Data collection and analysis***

The methodology of this study involved delving into the contents of the Aljazeera and Al-Arabiya websites to come up with the corpus data for the analysis. These procedural steps were carried out as follows:

- Collecting all the news articles on Aljazeera and Al-Arabiya webpages that reported Egypt during the period allocated for this study.
- Filtering all the news texts to choose two main themes/topics involving Morsi and Sisi and protests for or against them.
- Choosing news articles that have been taken from non-Arabic media providers.
- Singling out the translated news articles from those collected in stage three.
- Having followed these steps, the number of news articles collated from Aljazeera webpage is 8 and from Al-Arabiya webpage, 11.

The collated news articles were categorised into two groups: Aljazeera and Al-Arabiya. Each of these groups contains varying number of articles. The Aljazeera articles were codified as *Aljazeera*, and *Al-Arabiya*. After that, each article in these groups was further given a number. For example, the Aljazeera group contains eight articles, so the codes were *Aljazeera-1* to *Aljazeera-8*. This codification was also done to the *Al-Arabiya* group which contains eleven articles—codified as *Al-Arabiya-1* to *Al-Arabiya-11* (see Primary Sources).

The corpus data consists of 19 (shown in Primary Sources—References) articles of varying lengths. Each of these articles has its Arabic counterpart version, also of varying lengths. It is neither possible nor one of the objectives of this study to analyse every single article from start to finish. Therefore, only few segments (examples) of these articles were selected. The selection process was based on a careful examination of some news items and their translated Arabic versions in order to examine the behaviour of translators in rewriting and translating news reports, as well as the strategies they used. In addition, these news articles were also examined to explore how news translators were influenced by the ideologies of the news institution to which they belong. Examples were taken from the

corpus data that can account for discrepancies and inconsistencies in translation. The corpus data was manually collated and was not based or taken from online corpora or concordances.

### *Ideological alterations of news texts – adding ideological stance*

Adding new elements to the translated text of a news story is not necessarily conducted for clarification, explication, or background purposes (Gambier 2006, Bell 1991). It can also be done to gear an event to a particular end, serving the political interests of a news organisation or hammering home the discourse of the news organisation. For instance, in Example (1) below, Aljazeera's translator seems to accentuate the idea that Sisi's government and regime are disliked by even anti-Islamists and anti-Morsi protesters by adding a paragraph, which presents liberal youths and secular figures being driven away by the return of Mubarak officials. The source text, which was an Associated Press news report, does not include this paragraph in Example (1), which was added by Aljazeera. This addition or paraphrasing of ST linguistic elements into a new contextual framework is a manipulative act intended to describe the area of concern to Aljazeera.

#### **Example (1)**

كما أشار التقرير أيضا إلى أن النظام القائم بمصر أغضب غير الإسلاميين من شباب الثورة ودفعهم إلى الابتعاد عن تأييده، الأمر الذي يرجح أن تكون نتائج الاستفتاء مخيبة لآمال السيسي. (Aljazeera-1)

LT (Literal Translation): **The report also pointed out that the existing regime in Egypt has angered the non-Islamists from the youth of the revolution and pushed them away from its support. This may lead to a disappointing outcome of the referendum for Sisi.**

The recurrent insertions are in reality mechanisms assisting in constructing the discourse Aljazeera attempts to disseminate. Aljazeera is a protagonist of the Egyptian revolution and

considers the 30<sup>th</sup> June uprising a military coup. Therefore, in Example (2) below, Aljazeera added an ideological segment to the Arabic version: “ في حين تواصلت المظاهرات أمس ضد الانقلاب ، ، بالعديد من المدن والبلدات المصرية حتى بعد صلاة العشاء [while demonstrations continued against the coup yesterday in many Egyptian cities and towns until after evening [night] prayers]”, which indicates the existence of ongoing anti-coup demonstrations across the country. This was on the 11<sup>th</sup> November 2013, five months after the 30<sup>th</sup> June uprising.

### Example (2)

**Gunmen killed two Egyptian soldiers on Sunday in an attack on a military facility near the Suez Canal city of Ismailia, a security official said.**

**A third soldier was wounded in the attack on the base, located on the road between Ismailia and the city of Zagazig, to the west in the Nile Delta. The gunmen opened fire from a passing vehicle, the official said. (Aljazeera-2)**

قال مصدر أمني مصري إن جنديين من الجيش قتلوا في إطلاق نار على وحدة عسكرية بمدينة الإسماعيلية، كما أصيب جندي ثالث في هجوم وقع على الطريق بين الإسماعيلية والزقازيق، في حين تواصلت المظاهرات أمس ضد الانقلاب بالعديد من المدن والبلدات المصرية حتى بعد صلاة العشاء.

واستهدف مسلحون على متن سيارة موقعا عسكريا بين الإسماعيلية والزقازيق إلى الغرب في الدلتا ثم لأنوا بالفرار.

**LT: An Egyptian security source said two soldiers from the army were killed in a shooting at a military unit in Ismailia, and a third soldier was wounded in an attack on the road between Ismailia and Zagazig, while demonstrations continued against the coup yesterday in many Egyptian cities and towns until after evening [night] prayers.**

**The gunmen in a car targeted a military site between Ismailia and Zagazig to the west in the Nile Delta and then ran away.**

Al-Arabiya, on the other hand, follows similar patterns of inserting ideological stances in its translation of news stories from foreign (written in English) sources. Similarly, its additions are not ideology-free. An important point to be reiterated here is that Al-Arabiya is a Sisi supporter and stands with the 30<sup>th</sup> June uprising, considered to be a “second revolution”. Al-Arabiya adopted an anti-Morsi discourse and this was reflected in the translation of news wires by adding their own viewpoints such as in examples Example (3) and Example (4). The news translators working for Al-Arabiya would find themselves forced to follow Al-Arabiya’s political leanings in their translations or they would be happy to do this because it fits with their own ideology. In Example (3), for instance, Al-Arabiya inserted ideological stances highlighting Morsi’s detrimental policies in running the state.

### Example (3)

ويواجه مرسي، في الذكرى الأولى لتوليته الحكم، تظاهرات تطالب برحيله، وإفساح المجال لإجراء انتخابات رئاسية مبكرة، وعلت المعارضة المصرية ذلك، بأن مرسي فشل في إدارة الدولة، والأمن منهار (Al-Arabiya-1)

LT: Morsi faces, on the first anniversary of his rule, demonstrations demanding his departure, and making way for early presidential elections. The Egyptian opposition, however, explained that this is a result of Morsi’s failure to run the state and the collapse of security.

### Example (4)

يُذكر أن أنصار جماعة الإخوان المسلمين، التي ينتمي إليها مرسي، مستمرين في تنظيم اعتصامات ومسيرات، تخلل بعضها أعمال عنف دامية، لاسيما في محيط جامع رابعة العدوية، حيث وقع أكثر من ٢٠٠ قتيل. وكانوا دعوا اليوم الثلاثاء إلى “مليونية” تظاهرة للمطالبة بعودة مرسي. (Al-Arabiya-2)

LT: The supporters of the Muslim Brotherhood, to which Morsi belongs, are continuing to organise sit-ins and marches, some of which included bloody acts of

**violence, especially in the vicinity of Rabaa al-Adawiya mosque, where more than 200 people have fallen dead. They [supporters] called for, on Tuesday, a “Million-Man” protest to demand Morsi’s return.**

In Example (4) above, Al-Arabiya rhetorically underscores the connection between the Brotherhood and violence such as in “اعتصامات ومسيرات، تخلل بعضها أعمال عنف دامية” (sit-ins and marches, some of which included bloody acts of violence). The source text of Example (4) was produced by AFP, and Al-Arabiya stated that the source of this news article was AFP, but in reality the source article did not include this paragraph, which was added in its entirety by Al-Arabiya. Furthermore, addition of ideological stances can also take the shape of segments added to sentences, such as in Example (5) below, in which two segments were added. The first one was “وفي أوضح تصريح يخرج عن الإدارة الأميركية” (In the clearest statement by the U.S. administration after the dismissal of President Morsi), which paves the way for paying extra attention to the foregrounded part in this clause. The second one, which is “أن الجيش المصري لم يستول” (the Egyptian army did not seize power), is more evaluative and ideological as it portrays the attitude of Al-Arabiya in that the Egyptian army stood with the people of Egypt who took to the street in a second revolution.

### Example (5)

**“The military was asked to intervene by millions and millions of people, all of whom were afraid of a descent into chaos, into violence,” he told Pakistan’s GEO TV”.** (Al-Arabiya-3)

وفي أوضح تصريح يخرج عن الإدارة الأميركية بعد عزل الرئيس مرسي، اعتبر وزير الخارجية الأميركي جون كيري أن الجيش المصري لم يستول على السلطة، بل لبي مطالب الملايين التي خرجت في الميادين، مطالبة المؤسسة العسكرية بالتدخل لتخوفهم من الانزلاق في الفوضى والعنف

**LT: In the clearest statement by the U.S. administration after the dismissal of President Morsi, the U.S. Secretary of State,**

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**John Kerry, said that the Egyptian army did not seize power, but met the demands of the millions who took to the streets and squares, calling for the military to intervene as they were afraid of sliding into chaos and violence.**

According to Baker (2007, 151), translators “accentuate, undermine or modify contested aspects” of the source text. They can strengthen the discourse of the news institution through translation by altering the textual representation, especially when news organisations find ultimate freedom in adding and deleting elements of their choice, but within their institutional framework; that is, in conformity with their news policies and the discourse adopted.

### *Silencing ideological stance*

Translation Studies stresses the importance of context. Kang (2007, 21) states that translators as text producers make “translation-related decisions” based on their training and experience within the context of the institution they work for. In other words, they draw conclusions about what to silence in a particular news story from the discursive practices they have been exposed to, and then interpret events within this realm. Consequently, the selection of items and the representation of events will inevitably be influenced by the news institution. Therefore, translation behaviour shown in the examples below is regulated by discursive practices and the agenda or the ideology of the news institution in question. For instance, Example (6) below was produced by Reuters and was completely silenced by Aljazeera. This news item explicitly indicates that Egypt’s Sisi is unhappy with taking money from Gulf states such as Saudi Arabia and UAE, which dedicatedly supported Sisi’s action against Morsi and the Brotherhood. In fact, Sisi’s reliance on Gulf states’ financial support matches the interest of Aljazeera as it may suggest that there are no future visions and development projects at least in the near future for Egypt’s Sisi.

### Example (6)

**Gulf states poured billions of dollars in aid into Egypt to prop up the economy after Sisi toppled the Brotherhood. Sisi would not predict when Egypt would no longer need that aid but said Egypt needed to stand on its own feet.**

**“We don’t see this as a good thing, frankly, and hope it ends as soon as possible.” [Sisi said] (Aljazeera-3)**

In Example (7), Aljazeera noticeably took out the segment “for aiding a terrorist organisation”, a reference to the banned Muslim Brotherhood, which clearly states that this is a “terrorist organisation” which was banned from conducting any political or other activities in Egypt. Although this was omitted from the translation, Aljazeera has reported the fact that Egypt’s interim government declared the group a “terrorist organisation”.

### Example (7)

**The journalists - an Australian, a Canadian-Egyptian and an Egyptian - were each jailed for seven years on Monday for aiding a “terrorist organisation”, a reference to the banned Muslim Brotherhood.**

The sentences were widely criticised by rights groups and Western governments, with U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry calling them “chilling and draconian” and the U.N. warning of “a risk that miscarriage of justice is becoming the norm in Egypt.” (Aljazeera-4)

وأثار الحكم الصادر أمس بالسجن المشدد ما بين سبع وعشر سنوات على صحفيي الجزيرة الذين ألقى القبض عليهم في ديسمبر/كانون الأول -وبينهم أسترالي - غضب الكثير من الحكومات الأجنبية ومصريان يحمل أحدهما الجنسية الكندية والمنظمات الحقوقية الدولية.

LT: The sentence of rigorous imprisonment between seven and ten years issued yesterday on Aljazeera journalists who were arrested in December—including an Australian, two Egyptians, one of them carrying Canadian citizenship—stirred the anger of many foreign

## **governments and international human rights organisations.**

Al-Arabiya, on the other hand, has also silenced some of the sentences and paragraphs due to ideological interests. For instance, the phrase “government installed by the army”, which took different forms in news such as “army-backed government” or “army-installed government” or “military-installed government”, has not been rendered.<sup>1</sup> The Arabic version by Al-Arabiya renders it as “الحكومة” (the government), but not as a “military-backed or installed” government. In a similar vein, Example (8) shows exclusion of sentences which states that Morsi was the first democratically elected president in Egypt. Of course, this would heighten the perception that the Egyptian army overthrew a legitimate president who came to power in a fair democratic process. Therefore, Al-Arabiya mediated it as “الرئيس السابق” (former president) so that it accords with its rhetoric pertinent to Egypt.

### **Example (8)**

**Egypt’s benchmark rose 2.0 percent to 7,117 points, its highest close since January 2011, when former President Hosni Mubarak was still in power. The index is up 43 percent since the army ousted Egypt’s first democratically elected leader Mohammad Mursi last July. (Al-Arabiya-4)**

وارتفع المؤشر الرئيسي للبورصة المصرية ٢% إلى ٧١١٧ نقطة مسجلا أعلى إغلاق له منذ يناير ٢٠١١ قبل الإطاحة بالرئيس الأسبق حسني مبارك. وارتفع المؤشر ٤٣% منذ أن عزل الجيش الرئيس السابق محمد مرسي في يوليو.

**LT: The main index of the Egyptian Stock Exchange rose 2% to 7117 points, recording its highest close since January 2011 before the overthrow of former President Hosni Mubarak. The index rose 43% since the army isolated former President Mohamed Morsi in July.**

<sup>1</sup> The government here refers to the government installed by Sisi and the military.

Further, Example (9) displays an example from a report issued by Human Rights Watch on August 21, 2013, almost a month and a half since the military's intervention and the instalment of a new military-backed government which was sworn in on July 16, 2013. The report clearly states that the Egyptian authorities "did little or nothing" to protect the "Coptic Christians" and prevent attacks against them. However, Al-Arabiya silenced this ST segment, perhaps to close the door against any possible criticism of the new government, which resigned six months later on February 24, 2014:

### Example (9)

**"For weeks, everyone could see these attacks coming, with Muslim Brotherhood members accusing Coptic Christians of a role in Mohammad Morsy's ouster [sic], but the authorities did little or nothing to prevent them."** said Joe Stork, acting Middle East director at Human Rights Watch. "Now dozens of churches are smoldering ruins, and Christians throughout the country are hiding in their homes, afraid for their very lives". (Al-Arabiya-5)

هيومن رايتس "وشدد جو ستورك، القائم بأعمال المدير بمنطقة الشرق الأوسط في على أن أنصار جماعة الإخوان المسلمين اتهموا المواطنين المسيحيين "ووتش بأنهم سبب الإطاحة بالرئيس السابق محمد مرسي، وقام البعض منهم بمهاجمة الكنائس في محافظات مصر، ما أدى لاختباء عشرات الأسر من المسيحيين خوفاً من البطش بهم.

LT: Joe Stork, acting Middle East director at "Human Rights Watch" stressed that supporters of the Muslim Brotherhood accused the Christian citizens that they were the reason for the overthrow of former President Mohamed Morsi. Some of them [supporters] attacked churches in Governorates of Egypt, which led to tens of Christian families hiding in fear that they may be brutalised.

As outlined in the introduction, the influence of the editorial guidelines of a given news institution has an enormous impact on translation products. The section that follows also looks at

ideological alternation in news texts by exploring the substitution of ideological stances.

### *Substitution of two opposing ideological stances*

News segments may be added to or deleted from the source text, but in some cases news segments in a paragraph may be replaced by another different segment or information within the same unit of a text for ideological motives. Example (10) depicts the complexity of this process and illustrates the multifaceted manipulation techniques that news organisations employ in translating ideological elements. The source text article states that the protest is against the military coup and that this protest was followed by other suppressive actions, but stresses that the fiercest of these actions was the Republican Guard massacre. This is stated in a subordinate clause followed by Brotherhood members calling for more protests. Al-Arabiya shifts the focus of this news segment by substituting it with another one: “وشهد مقر الحرس الجمهوري صباح اليوم محاولة اقتحام من مؤيدي الرئيس السابق” (The Republican Guard headquarters witnessed this morning a break-in attempt by the supporters of the former president) which carries an ideological stance different from the one intended in the ST by Reuters. The source article points out that the Republican Guard massacre was carried out by an entity opposing the protests and Morsi supporters, but Al-Arabiya’s translation decidedly refers to Morsi supporters as the culprits who caused the death of 51 people and injuries of dozens:

#### **Example (10)**

**“In protest against the military coup that was followed by suppressive actions, topped by the Republican Guard massacre that took place at dawn, we call on all citizens and honourable people to protest on Tuesday across Egypt,”**  
**Hatem Azam, a spokesman for a coalition led by the Muslim Brotherhood, told a news conference. (Al-Arabiya-6)**

وقال بيان باسم التحالف الوطني لدعم الشرعية الذي يقوده الإخوان المسلمون ثلّي “الشهيد” ندعو المصريين للاحتشاد غدًا الثلاثاء في مليونية “في مؤتمر صحافي: “ وكذلك في مسيرات جنائزية.

وشهد مقر الحرس الجمهوري صباح اليوم محاولة اقتحام من مؤيدي الرئيس السابق راح ضحيتها ٥١ شخصاً وسقط على إثرها عشرات المصابين.

LT: A statement, by the National Alliance Supporting Legitimacy, led by the Muslim Brotherhood, was read out at a press conference: “We call on Egyptians to rally on Tuesday in a Million-Man March of “Martyrs” as well as in funeral marches.”

The Republican Guard headquarters witnessed this morning a break-in attempt by the supporters of the former president, taking the lives of 51 people and leaving tens of people wounded.

News institutions can manipulatively mediate news by means of substituting ideological preferences. For instance, the *The Guardian* an article about Egypt and then it was translated by both Aljazeera and Al-Arabiya into Arabic. Both news organisations mediated the first paragraph into Arabic in different ways, each stressing and emphasising certain ideological points of view. The source text article is shown in Example (11) by Aljazeera and Example (12) by Al-Arabiya below:

### The Guardian Source Text:

The Egyptian president, Mohamed Morsi, has vowed there will be no second revolution in Egypt, as thousands planned to gather outside his presidential palace calling for his removal after a year in power.

### Example (11)

قال الرئيس المصري محمد مرسي إنه يرفض دعوات المعارضة لإجراء انتخابات رئاسية مبكرة، مؤكداً أنه لن تكون هناك ثورة ثانية، وذلك في حوار نشرته صحيفة غارديان البريطانية اليوم الأحد، في وقت تشهد فيه مصر حالة من الترقب والتوتر (Aljazeera-5) الأمني مع انطلاق مظاهرات معارضة للرئيس وأخرى مؤيدة له.

LT: Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi said he rejected the opposition calls for early presidential elections, stressing that

**there will be no second revolution, in an interview published in the British Newspaper *The Guardian* on Sunday, at a time when Egypt is witnessing a state of anticipation and security tension within demonstrations for and against the president.**

### Example (12)

أعرب الرئيس محمد مرسي في حوار له مع صحيفة الغارديان البريطانية عن ثقته في أنه سيكمل مدته الدستورية في الرئاسة كاملة، وعن رفضه الدعوات المطالبة بإجراء انتخابات رئاسية مبكرة، وتعهد بالآلا يكون هناك ثورة ثانية في مصر في الوقت الذي نزل فيه آلاف إلى الشوارع يطالبون برحيله بعد عام من توليه الحكم، مستبعداً في الوقت ذاته تدخل الجيش المصري في اللعبة السياسية، لكونه لديه شؤونه الداخلية. (Al-Arabiya-7)

LT: President Mohamed Morsi expressed in his interview with the British newspaper *The Guardian* that he is confident that he will complete his constitutional term in the presidency fully, and rejected the calls for early presidential elections, and pledged that there will be no second revolution in Egypt at a time when thousands took to the streets demanding his departure after a year from taking office. At the same time, he ruled out the intervention of the Egyptian army in the political game, as it has its internal affairs.

The source text explicitly exhibits two arguments. First, Morsi says that there will be no second revolution. Second, thousands protest for Morsi's removal. Although Aljazeera and Al-Arabiya both reported that Morsi rejected the opposition calls for early presidential elections and that there will be no second revolution, they diverge in reporting the protests. Whereas Aljazeera claimed there were protests supporting Morsi and others against him, Al-Arabiya reported that the protests were against him. Al-Arabiya also included other elements in this introductory paragraph that Aljazeera ignored. For instance, they point out that Morsi was sure he would complete his constitutional term and, most importantly, that he was confident that the army would not intervene in this political conflict. It is true that some of those elements were reported by *The Guardian* and then foregrounded by both news organisations, but the news segment stating that

there were demonstrations supporting president Morsi, reported by Aljazeera, was absent from the ST.

### ***Paragraph reordering - Sentence repositioning***

This section looks at the strategies of reformulating news texts, which are paragraph reordering (including sentence repositioning) and partitioning of news articles. In some cases, the translated text seems to exhibit an ideological content that overrides the one in the source articles and belies the intended messages.

Paragraph structure in translating news can vastly differ from the original text. The alternation can occur in the linguistic structure of the sentences and/or on the order of the sentences in the same paragraph. Moreover, it is highly likely that the order of paragraphs in the same text will suffer reordering. As a matter of fact, sentences can be reshuffled and repositioned during the translation process in a manner that enables news translators to negotiate their ideological point of view. A number of examples from Aljazeera and Al-Arabiya news articles will be analysed to trace the actions of news translators in real-life texts.

Example (13) below shows different strategies that news translators use to emphasise their ideological point of view. This paragraph in Example (13) is the last in the English source text and in the process of translation it was repositioned to occupy the first paragraph in the Arabic target text. Furthermore, it was divided into three paragraphs to streamline the effect in the Arabic text. The de-passivisation of the sentence “The situation in Egypt must be referred to the ICC by the security council” into Arabic, which reads “دعا اثنان من المحققين الدوليين الأربعاء لمجلس الأمن” (Two international jurists called on Wednesday the UN Security Council to refer the file of Egypt’s situation to the International Criminal Court), runs opposite to nominalization, as the agent in this sentence is ‘international jurists’ and should be voiced out actively. Nominalisation is usually used to conceal facts and hide

the agent, but Aljazeera chose to de-nominalise the sentence to show the identity of the agent.

### Example (13)

**Egypt has for too long been treated as a client state in the cause of geopolitical struggle. Its military has been central to this and has consistently done so with impunity. It is time for the British government to lead the way in bringing this to an end. The situation in Egypt must be referred to the ICC by the security council. Failing that, human rights lawyers will be waiting in courts across the world for Egypt's military, with evidence that they have committed heinous international crimes. (Aljazeera-6)**

دعا اثنان من الحقوقيين الدوليين الأربعاء مجلس الأمن الدولي لإحالة ملف الوضع في مصر والإفان محاميي حقوق الإنسان سيتريصون للجيش المصري "إلى المحكمة الجنائية الدولية"، في قاعات المحاكم حول العالم بالأدلة التي تثبت ارتكابه جرائم دولية شنيعة

البريطانية، كتب محاميا حقوق الإنسان "غارديان" ففي مقال مشترك نشرته لهما صحيفة في خضم الصراع "مايكل مانسفيلد وطيب علي أنه لطالما ظلت مصر تُعامل كدولة "تابعة الجيوسياسي، وأن جيشها ظل يلعب فيه دوراً مركزياً وينعم باستمرار بحصانة لاضطلاحه بهذا الدور

وقال المحاميان إنه قد آن الأوان لكي تقود الحكومة البريطانية الركب من أجل وضع حد لذلك الامتياز.

LT: Two international jurists called on Wednesday the UN Security Council to refer the file of Egypt's situation to the International Criminal Court, "otherwise, human rights lawyers will be waiting in courts across the world for the Egyptian army with evidence to prove it had committed heinous international crimes."

In a joint article the British "*The Guardian*" newspaper published it for them, the lawyers of Human Rights Michael Mansfield and Tayab Ali wrote that Egypt has for too long been treated as a client state in the cause of geopolitical struggle, and its army has been playing a central role in this and enjoying constant impunity for carrying out this role.

The lawyers said that it is time for the British government to lead the way in order to put an end to this privilege.

Aljazeera made some textual alterations, stressing a point not stated in the source article, in the phrase “دعا اثنان من الحقوقيين” (Two international jurists called) as these two in reality are the authors of the news article in *The Guardian* and the article does not state whether they are lawyers or not, unless further research is conducted. This translation could also explain the paragraph writing in Arabic and how it has changed in style. This is because the ST paragraph was written in three paragraphs in the TT, Example (13). This paragraph structure between Arabic and English could be an area of interest for further research in news writing in Arabic.

Example (14) by Aljazeera exhibits a case of one TT paragraph made by fusing elements from another two paragraphs; the news translator took out segments of one paragraph to make them initial sentences (openings) for another paragraph. The transitional adverbial clause is taken from Example (14) below and the underlined quotation was taken from another paragraph in the same text.

#### Example (14)

**In an impromptu speech at a military graduation ceremony, Abdel Fattah al-Sisi said he had refused to sign off on a 2014/15 budget proposal following lengthy discussions this week because it was too dependent on ballooning borrowing.**  
(Aljazeera-7)

وأضاف السيسي في كلمة بمناسبة حفل تخرج دفعة جديدة في الكلية الحربية أمس أنا أحصل على مرتب الحد الأقصى وهو مبلغ ٤٢ ألف جنيه.. لن أخذ نصفه”  
\_\_\_\_\_ “مصر. وسأتنازل عن نصف ممتلكاتي من أجل

LT: Sisi added in a graduation ceremony speech at the Military Academy yesterday, “I get the maximum salary of 42 thousand pounds .. I will not take half of it, and will give up half of my possessions to Egypt.”

Although this could be attributed to stylistic choices, it still indicates the leeway translators of news texts have in exchanging

linguistic elements between paragraphs in order to balance the ideological emphasis of the news institutions they work for.

The process of producing news stories through translation entails bringing to the fore the values that are important to the news institution. The ST organisation of paragraphs is arguably done in accordance with the values of the ST news agency. It can be posited that, in translation, the TT news agency would have different values and ideologies; thus, its news production would be mediated from the ST to make its values shine through its news stories. With regard to Al-Arabiya, the reordering of paragraphs is also used frequently and was present in the study data. In some occasions, an English news story can be completely translated into Arabic, almost literally. However, it happens with a reshuffling of paragraphs, refocusing their importance to conform to the institution's priorities in terms of the satellite paragraphs.

The reordering of paragraphs was also present in Examples (15) and (16), where the paragraph in the Arabic version below (paragraph 6) was taken from the middle of the English version (paragraph 21). This was done to shift the ideological point of view of the ST. In this particular paragraph, Haddad was talking about worries of marginalising Islamist parties in Egypt, but Al-Arabiya shifted this segment to precede a paragraph (Example (16)) discussing the possibility of Morsi supporters turning to more violent methods. The reader will link this worry to violence rather than the marginalisation of Islamists:

#### Example (15)

**“It’s beyond control now. There was always that worry. With every massacre that increases,” Haddad said, describing the anger among opponents of the military.** (Al-Arabiya-8)

أصبح الوضع خارج السيطرة ”وقال الحداد واصفاً الغضب بين المعارضين للجيش: “الآن، كانت تلك المخاوف قائمة دائماً، وتزداد مع كل مذبحه

**LT: And Haddad said, describing the anger among opponents of the army: “The situation became out of control now. Those concerns were always there. They were growing with every massacre.”**

**Example (16)**

وتشير التصريحات إلى مخاطر تحوّل أنصار مرسي المنفصلين عن قيادتهم إلى وسائل أشد عنفاً مع احتدام الغضب واعتقال الزعماء الذين طالما تبوّأوا النشاط (Al-Arabiya-9)السلمي.

**LT: Statements indicate that the danger of Morsi supporters who were separated from their leadership may turn into more violent means with the increasing anger and the arrest of leaders who have long embraced peaceful activities.**

Example (17) below displays another example of reordering of paragraphs in a very selective manner. The translator chose only six paragraphs to translate from a 1639-word-long article written in 33 paragraphs. Segments of the last paragraph were brought forward to the first paragraph of the translated text. These sentences were:

**Example (17)**

**As his opponents bank on this year being his last, Morsi confidently predicted that he would serve a full term. (Paragraph 32) (Al-Arabiya-10)**

أعرب الرئيس محمد مرسي في حوارهِ مع صحيفة الغارديان البريطانية عن ثقته في (Paragraph 1)أنه سيكمل مدته الدستورية في الرئاسة كاملة.

**LT: President Mohamed Morsi expressed in his interview with the British Newspaper *The Guardian* that he is confident that he will complete his constitutional term in the presidency fully.**

In this example, Al-Arabiya did not directly state that the source was *The Guardian*, let alone state that it was a translation. In mentioning the source, Al-Arabiya only stated “العربية نت” (Al-Arabiya.net). A meticulous scrutiny of the ST and TT paragraphs

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shows how the translators reformulated the target text to be shaped and structured into a new version in Arabic.

Changing the order of paragraphs and repositioning the sentences within a paragraph is a strategy news translators resort to in order to refocus a particular ideological point of view. Some examples show extremely radical alterations that result in a travesty of the ST representation, such as Example (15) above. This, in fact, reiterates the view that “all translation implies a degree of manipulation of the source text for a certain purpose” (Hermans 1985, 11). The inversion of sentences and paragraphs in the TT suggests that translation in the news is usually frowned upon by media professionals. Further, not stating that a particular news article is the result of translation would raise doubts regarding the objectivity and transparency of a given news organisation.

### ***Article Partitioning***

In translating news items, a source article may be partitioned into two target articles, each focusing on a particular point or purpose. According to text analysts such as Hatim and Mason (1990), a text can only contain one rhetorical focus or purpose, with some other sub-foci. In news translation or reformulation process, a sub-focus attended in a news text is sometimes developed in to a separate text to become the main focus of a new text in a process known as “transediting”.<sup>1</sup> The data of this research shows that this can be achieved even by simply splitting a source article into two target articles as in the case of *Al-Arabiya-11* and *Aljazeera-8* (see Primary Sources).

Example *Al-Arabiya-11* illustrates the complicated process of rewriting a news article adapted from another language. In this example, *Al-Arabiya* states that the source was AFP, but a search in “Google” for all AFP articles published on July 8, 2013 (the

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<sup>1</sup> Transediting is a term used by Stetting (1989), cited in Bielsa and Bassnett (2009).

date Al-Arabiya's Arabic article was published) that were accessible to other media platforms showed no evidence that the Arabic version was a counterpart of the English. Al-Arabiya's Arabic version of this article was divided into two sections, separated by a subheading. Each section discusses a different item of news: the first part, written in four paragraphs, reports the US statement on the violence in Egypt; the second section, written in four paragraphs, reports a statement by Catherine Ashton, EU Foreign Policy Chief, with the EU's stance on Egypt. This second section was translated from AFP, whereas the first section was translated from both Reuters and AFP. Al-Arabiya's English website also published the same news story in English, but some paragraphs were taken from Reuters. The English headline of Al-Arabiya's English was "U.S. condemns "explicit" calls to violence by Egypt's Brotherhood".<sup>1</sup> This supports the claim that the Arabic version by Al-Arabiya was a mixture from AFP and Reuters, not just AFP. The most important element in this reformulation process is to produce a news story/article that meets the ideological and political tendencies of Al-Arabiya. Bringing in four articles in order to produce one news story by selecting the elements that meets the news organisation's ideology is a strategy that news institutions adopt to influence public opinion. Example (18) is only one instance of authoring a news article concentrating on one rhetorical focus. For instance, the paragraphs focusing on the deaths and the actions of the army in the source articles have not been included. This is only mentioned in one paragraph:

### **Example (18)**

**She [Catherine Ashton] also deplored the deaths of 51 loyalists of ousted Islamist president Mohamed Morsi while pressing the interim authorities to carry out a "thorough" and "impartial"**

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Arabiya's English version can be accessed here: <http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2013/07/08/U-S-condemns-explicit-Muslim-Brotherhood-calls-to-violence.html>

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**judicial investigation, announced earlier by the army-appointed interim president, Adly Mansour.**

It is worth mentioning that most of the articles, whether by Reuters or AFP, included information on the 51 civilians killed by the army, but this was absent from Al-Arabiya's Arabic version on this particular event.

In *Al-Arabiya-11* (see Primary Sources), two source articles were reformulated to produce one article by Al-Arabiya. Occasionally, one article may be partitioned into two, divided by themes usually. In such case, every important point is stressed separately in a single rhetorical focus. *Aljazeera-8* (see Primary Sources) is an example of how Aljazeera fractured Reuters's article into two independent Arabic news articles. The first one focuses on the sensitive issues of US assistance and Egypt's relation with Israel, as Sisi described this as stable. This was in the body (satellite paragraph) of Reuters's article, but Aljazeera made a separate article out of it. In fact, there was only one paragraph where Sisi talked about Egypt's relation with Israel. The second article was allotted to discuss the economic issues in Egypt. However, more background information was added to this article by the news translator.

### **Conclusion**

The aim of this paper was to analyse the ideological representations of translated media texts, and the influence of the institution on translation outcomes. Most importantly, it offered an analysis of how translation in media settings works. The cases studied in this paper, concerning Egypt's 30 June uprising, allowed a comparison between two Arab news media organisations, Aljazeera and Al-Arabiya.

This study, by examining translated news texts, has demonstrated that it is possible for a news translator to carry out minor or major alterations to the news story under translation. This can simply be done by feeding the ideological choices the translator makes into

the target text, such as inserting a new ideological stance or silencing an existing ideological stance. Although these results seem to corroborate with other studies that addition and deletion are carried out for ideological, temporal or spatial reasons, this study has added other factors, which involve the substitution of one ideological stance with another.

By analysing the macro-ideological practices of news texts, this study has also revealed that Aljazeera and Al-Arabiya change the TT sequential paragraph structure in a way that is different from the ST order of paragraphs. According to the analyses, this is most likely to be conducted for ideological purposes. Furthermore, it has been identified that sentences within paragraphs can also be significantly repositioned in translation, foregrounding the most valuable information to the news organisation. Another ideological practice that this research has identified is article partitioning. This happens when one ST article is divided into two TT articles, each stressing a point of view. On the contrary two or more ST articles are brought together to form one TT article. Therefore, this paper argues that the translated target language text based on the foreign original text is influenced at a very basic level by the ideological stance of the media outlet and the news audience for the text will generally be unaware of the process that has created the news item they are reading.

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[%D9%8A%D9%86%D8%AF%D8%AF-  
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[%D8%A9-%D8%AC%D8%AF%D9%8A%D8%AF%D8%A9-%D8%A8%D8%B9%D8%AF-%D8%A3%D8%AD%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%AB-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D8%B1%D8%B3-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D9%85%D9%87%D9%88%D8%B1%D9%8A.html](#)

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