

**Stylistic Variations in News Reporting:  
A Socio-Stylistic Analysis of English and Arabic Media**

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## Abstract

This paper explores the stylistic variations in news reporting between English and Arabic media through a socio-stylistic lens. By analyzing a selection of news articles from prominent English and Arabic outlets, the study identifies key linguistic features that reflect cultural and societal influences. It highlights differences in narrative structure, lexical choices, and rhetorical strategies, demonstrating how these elements shape audience perception and interpretation. The findings reveal significant insights into how language and culture intersect in media practices, underscoring the role of stylistic choices in conveying bias and establishing trust. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of cross-cultural communication in an increasingly interconnected world.

**Keywords:** Stylistic variations, News reporting, Media influence, Socio-stylistic analysis, Cross-cultural communication, Linguistic features.

التنوعات الأسلوبية في تغطية الأخبار: تحليل اجتماعي-أسلوبي لوسائل الإعلام الإنجليزية والعربية

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الملخص: تستكشف هذه الدراسة التنوعات الأسلوبية في تغطية الأخبار بين وسائل الإعلام الإنجليزية والعربية من خلال عدسة اجتماعية-أسلوبية. من خلال تحليل مجموعة من المقالات الإخبارية من وسائل إعلام إنجليزية وعربية بارزة، تحدد الدراسة السمات اللغوية الرئيسية التي تعكس التأثيرات الثقافية والاجتماعية. وتبرز الفروق في الهيكل السردى، والاختيارات المعجمية، والاستراتيجيات البلاغية، مما يظهر كيف تشكل هذه العناصر إدراك الجمهور وتفسيره. تكشف النتائج عن رؤية هامة حول كيفية تداخل اللغة والثقافة في الممارسات الإعلامية، مؤكدة على دور الاختيارات الأسلوبية في نقل التحيز وإرساء الثقة. تسهم هذه الدراسة في فهم أعمق للتواصل بين الثقافات في عالم متزايد الترابط.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التنوعات الأسلوبية، تغطية الأخبار، تأثير الإعلام، تحليل اجتماعي-أسلوبي، التواصل عبر الثقافات، السمات اللغوية.

## 1. Introduction

Media plays a crucial role in shaping public perceptions and opinions, serving as a primary source of information in contemporary society. As global communication becomes increasingly interconnected, understanding the stylistic differences in news reporting across languages and cultures is essential. This study focuses on the stylistic variations in English and Arabic media, utilizing a socio-stylistic approach to analyze how these differences manifest in news articles.

Stylistics, as a field of study, examines the language used in texts and its effects on the reader. According to Leech and Short (1981:3), stylistics integrates linguistic analysis with literary criticism, enabling a deeper understanding of how language shapes meaning. In the context of journalism, stylistic choices can influence the portrayal of events, the framing of issues, and ultimately, public perception (Bennett & Iyengar, 2008, 678).

Cultural context significantly impacts stylistic choices in media. For instance, Western media often emphasize objectivity and directness, reflecting cultural values of transparency and individualism (Hansen, 2010: 45). In contrast, Arabic media may employ a more formal tone and elaborate narrative structures, which can be attributed to cultural norms that prioritize respect and collective identity (Hamid, 2015: 112). This divergence not only reflects linguistic differences but also underlying cultural attitudes towards communication.

Given these considerations, this research seeks to answer the following questions: What are the key stylistic variations in news reporting between English and Arabic media? How do cultural and social factors influence these stylistic elements? By addressing these questions, the study aims to contribute to the broader understanding of cross-cultural communication and its implications for media practice.

## 2. Literature Review

The study highlights the intricate relationship between language, culture, and media practices. It explores key themes and findings from previous studies, focusing on the differences between English and Arabic media.

### 1. Stylistics in Journalism

Stylistics, as a discipline, bridges linguistics and literary analysis, focusing on how language conveys meaning. Leech and Short (1981: 3) emphasize that stylistics can reveal the underlying ideologies in texts, which is particularly relevant in journalism where framing can influence public perception.

Numerous studies have shown that stylistic choices, such as lexical selection and syntactic structure, significantly affect the representation of news events (Bennett & Iyengar, 2008: 678).

### 2. Cultural Context and Media

Cultural context plays a pivotal role in shaping news reporting styles. In Western media, there is often a preference for directness and objectivity, aligning with cultural values that prioritize transparency and individualism (Hansen, 2010: 45).

In contrast, Arabic media tends to adopt a more formal tone, utilizing elaborate narrative techniques that reflect cultural norms emphasizing collectivism and respect for authority (Hamid, 2015: 112). This divergence can lead to differing interpretations of similar events by audiences in diverse cultural settings.

### 3. Language and Framing

Framing theory, as discussed by Entman (1993), suggests that the way information is presented can significantly influence audience understanding. English media often frame stories in a straightforward manner, prioritizing facts and immediate impact. In contrast, Arabic media may incorporate historical or religious contexts, providing a more layered narrative that resonates with local audiences (Zayani, 2005: 67).

This approach can result in varying perceptions of events, depending on the audience's cultural background.

Several studies have conducted comparative analyses of media practices across different cultures. For instance, a study by Al-Khaja (2018:54) highlighted the distinct stylistic features of Arabic and English news reports, noting that Arabic articles often employ more rhetorical devices and metaphors, which enrich the narrative but may also obscure clarity. Similarly, Yaghi (2017:112) found that the use of pronouns and references in Arabic reporting often reflects a community-oriented perspective, contrasting with the individualistic approach common in English journalism.

The stylistic variations in news reporting not only reflect cultural differences but also impact how audiences perceive information. A study by Al-Jaber (2020:23) demonstrated that audiences tend to trust news sources that align with their cultural expectations and linguistic preferences. This finding underscores the importance of understanding stylistic elements in media to enhance cross-cultural communication and mitigate biases.

The study underscores the importance of examining stylistic variations in news reporting within cultural contexts. By analyzing how English and Arabic media differ in their linguistic approaches, this research aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of cross-cultural communication and its implications for public discourse.

### 3. Methodology

A qualitative comparative analysis will be employed to explore stylistic variations in news reporting between English and Arabic media. This analysis allows for an in-depth understanding of linguistic features, cultural contexts, and socio-political influences. The study adopts Teun A. van Dijk's (1998) Discourse Analysis framework to explore stylistic variations in news reporting on health crises in English and Arabic media. A purposive sampling method is used to select articles from reputable news

sources in both English and Arabic. The articles will focus on health crises, particularly those related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The selected articles specifically address health crises, particularly the COVID-19 pandemic. This focus aligns directly with the research aim of exploring stylistic variations in English and Arabic media reporting. The articles are chosen to represent a range of perspectives on the pandemic such as: health impact articles examining both physical health (Long COVID) and mental health impacts provide a comprehensive view of the pandemic's consequences; public health responses including government actions and healthcare system responses, enriching the analysis of reporting styles.

All selected articles are from reputable news outlets known for their journalistic standards: English Sources: The New York Times, BBC News, The Guardian. Arabic Sources: Al Jazeera Arabic, Al Arabiya, Arab News. These sources are respected internationally and regionally, ensuring the reliability of the information presented. The articles in both English and Arabic were selected to enable a comparative analysis of stylistic differences in reporting. This bilingual approach enriches the socio-stylistic analysis by highlighting cultural and linguistic nuances.

The articles were selected based on their relevance to ongoing discussions about the COVID-19 pandemic, ensuring that the analysis reflects current issues and public concerns. This relevance enhances the significance of the study in understanding how news media adapt their narratives in response to evolving health crises. Each article features different styles of reporting, from data-driven analysis to personal anecdotes, providing a rich dataset for examining how stylistic choices impact audience engagement and perception.

The study employs Teun A. van Dijk's (1998) framework as a model for analysis, which focuses on the relationship between discourse, power, and society. This model is particularly effective for examining how news articles construct narratives around health crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, and how these narratives are influenced by social, cultural, and ideological factors. adopting van Dijk's Discourse Analysis framework, provides a comprehensive approach to understanding the stylistic variations in news reporting across English and Arabic media. This model allows for a nuanced exploration of how language shapes narratives around health crises, reflects cultural values, and impacts public perception and understanding.

Key components of Teun A. van Dijk's (1998) are: Contextual background which examines the broader social and cultural context in which the discourse occurs. It includes understanding the specific health crisis being reported on and its significance within the relevant communities; Discourse structure which involves assessing both the macro-structure (overall organization and main themes) and micro-structure (specific language choices and paragraph organization) of the articles. This helps to identify how information is presented and prioritized; Themes and topics identifying the main themes and subtopics in the articles allows for a focused exploration of how different

aspects of the health crisis are highlighted or downplayed in English and Arabic media; Semantic analysis which examines the choice of vocabulary, idioms, and figurative language. It analyzes how specific terms and phrases are used to frame the health crisis, shape public perception, and influence emotional responses; Representation of social actors where it looks at how different social actors (e.g., experts, patients, government officials) are represented in the discourse. This includes evaluating the presence of authority figures and the portrayal of individual experiences; Ideological analysis that involves uncovering the underlying ideologies reflected in the discourse. It examines how the articles advocate for certain viewpoints, such as public health priorities or community resilience, and how these ideologies influence audience understanding; Cohesion (the flow and connectivity of ideas) and coherence (logical structuring of arguments) assessing within the articles that helps to evaluate how effectively the narrative is communicated to the audience; Audience engagement where the analysis considers how the articles engage with their respective audiences, including direct appeals, the use of visuals, and the overall tone of the discourse.

Using a thematic analysis approach, the research will identify recurring themes and topics related to health crises. This includes examining how different media portray the impacts of health issues and the responses of various social actors. A comparative approach will be employed to analyze differences and similarities in reporting styles between English and Arabic articles. This will involve examining differences in language use and stylistic choices, variations in narrative structure and thematic emphasis and cultural influences on reporting.

#### 4. Data Analysis

Article No.1 (English)

The first selected article from The New York Times titled "Inside the Coronavirus Pandemic: The Outbreak's Key Moments" using Teun A. van Dijk's model of discourse analysis.

Contextual Background Event: The COVID-19 pandemic. Purpose of Article: To provide a timeline and analyze key moments of the pandemic's progression.

Discourse Structure Macro-structure: The article organizes events chronologically, highlighting critical developments in the pandemic. Micro-structure: Individual paragraphs often focus on specific incidents (e.g., the first reported cases, government responses).

Themes and Topics Main Themes: Public health response Social impact Economic consequences Subtopics: Vaccination efforts, misinformation, and international collaboration.

Semantic Analysis Key Vocabulary: Use of technical terms (e.g., "transmission," "viral load"). Emotional language to describe impacts (e.g.,



“devastating,” “unprecedented”). Frame: Framing the pandemic as a global crisis rather than just a national issue, emphasizing interconnectedness.

Representation of Social Actors Experts: Scientists and public health officials are quoted extensively, presenting authoritative voices. Affected Individuals: Personal stories of patients and families are included to humanize the statistics.

Ideological Analysis Underlying Ideologies: Emphasis on science and data-driven responses suggests a pro-science ideology. Framing government actions as necessary highlights the importance of leadership in crisis management.

Cohesion and Coherence Cohesion: Use of transitional phrases and references back to earlier points ensures a smooth flow of information. Coherence: The chronological structure makes it easy for readers to follow the narrative of the pandemic’s progression.

Audience Engagement Direct Appeals: The article invites readers to reflect on the lessons learned and the importance of following public health guidelines. Visuals: Infographics and images are used to enhance understanding and provide visual context. Conclusion Using van Dijk's framework allows us to see how the article constructs a narrative around the COVID-19 pandemic, emphasizing scientific authority and the societal impact of the crisis. The analysis highlights the article’s role in shaping public understanding and attitudes toward the pandemic, illustrating the complex interplay between discourse and social reality.

#### Article No.2 (English)

The second selected article from BBC News titled "What is Long COVID?"

Contextual Background Event: The emergence and understanding of Long COVID. Purpose of Article: To explain Long COVID, its symptoms, and the ongoing research surrounding it.

Discourse Structure Macro-structure: The article is organized into sections that define Long COVID, discuss its symptoms, and present expert opinions. Micro-structure: Each section contains concise paragraphs focused on specific aspects, such as patient experiences and medical research findings.

Themes and Topics Main Themes: Definition of Long COVID Impact on patients’ lives Medical and scientific community responses Subtopics: Recovery rates, mental health implications, and ongoing research efforts.

Semantic Analysis Key Vocabulary: Use of clinical terms (e.g., “fatigue,” “neurological symptoms”). Emotional descriptors to convey patient experiences (e.g., “frustrating,” “overwhelming”). Frame: Frames Long COVID as a serious public health concern, advocating for awareness and further study.

Representation of Social Actors Experts: Quotes from doctors and researchers lend credibility and authority to the discussion. Patients: Testimonials from individuals suffering from Long COVID provide personal insights, emphasizing the human element.

Ideological Analysis Underlying Ideologies: The framing of Long COVID as an emerging health crisis suggests a pro-patient advocacy ideology, emphasizing the need for recognition and support. The article promotes a scientific approach to understanding and treating Long COVID.

Cohesion and Coherence Cohesion: Use of connective phrases and references back to earlier points creates a unified narrative. Coherence: Logical organization helps readers grasp the complexity of Long COVID, facilitating understanding of its implications.

Audience Engagement Direct Appeals: The article encourages readers to take Long COVID seriously and stay informed about ongoing developments. Visuals: Inclusion of charts or illustrations (if applicable) helps to clarify complex information and engage the audience. Conclusion Applying van Dijk's framework to the BBC article highlights how it constructs a narrative around Long COVID, focusing on both scientific and personal perspectives.

The analysis reveals the article's role in raising awareness about a significant health issue, advocating for patients, and promoting continued research and understanding.

### Article No.3 (English)

The third selected article from The Guardian titled "The Impact of COVID-19 on Mental Health" using Teun A. van Dijk's model of discourse analysis.

Contextual Background Event: The mental health impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Purpose of Article: To explore how the pandemic has affected mental health globally and highlight the importance of addressing these issues.

Discourse Structure Macro-structure: The article is structured into sections that outline various mental health challenges, personal anecdotes, and expert commentary. Micro-structure: Each section contains focused paragraphs discussing specific impacts, such as anxiety, depression, and social isolation.

Themes and Topics Main Themes: Increase in mental health issues due to the pandemic Long-term consequences of mental health challenges Importance of support systems and interventions Subtopics: Specific populations affected (e.g., healthcare workers, children), coping strategies, and societal responses.

Semantic Analysis Key Vocabulary: Use of emotionally charged language (e.g., "crisis," "devastating"). Technical terms related to mental health (e.g., "anxiety



disorders,” “post-traumatic stress”). Frame: Frames mental health as a critical and often overlooked aspect of the pandemic’s impact, advocating for increased awareness and support.

Representation of Social Actors Experts: Mental health professionals and researchers provide insights, adding authority to the article. Individuals: Personal stories from those affected by mental health issues are included, creating empathy and illustrating the human side of the statistics.

Ideological Analysis Underlying Ideologies: Emphasis on the need for mental health awareness suggests a pro-advocacy ideology, focusing on the necessity of mental health services. The article advocates for systemic change in how society addresses mental health, positioning it as a priority.

Cohesion and Coherence Cohesion: The use of transitions and thematic links between sections ensures the narrative flows logically. Coherence: Clear organization helps readers understand the multifaceted impacts of COVID-19 on mental health, reinforcing the article’s main message.

Audience Engagement Direct Appeals: The article urges readers to recognize mental health as a significant issue arising from the pandemic. Visuals: If included, charts or infographics may be used to illustrate statistics or trends related to mental health during the pandemic.

Analyzing the article through van Dijk's framework reveals how it constructs a narrative around the mental health implications of COVID-19, combining expert knowledge with personal experiences. The analysis highlights the article’s role in raising awareness and advocating for improved mental health support in the wake of the pandemic.

#### Article No.1 (Arabic)

The first Arabic article from Al Jazeera Arabic titled " كيف أثرت جائحة كورونا على " الصحة النفسية للمجتمعات؟ (How the COVID-19 Pandemic Affected the Mental Health of Communities) employing Teun A. van Dijk's model of discourse analysis.

Contextual Background Event: The mental health repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic on Arab communities. Purpose of Article: To discuss how the pandemic has influenced mental health across different segments of society, particularly in the Arab world.

Discourse Structure Macro-structure: The article is divided into sections that address different aspects of mental health impacts, community responses, and expert opinions. Micro-structure: Each section presents specific issues, such as anxiety, depression, and the role of social support networks.

**Themes and Topics Main Themes:** Widespread mental health issues due to pandemic stressors. The importance of community solidarity and support. Cultural factors influencing mental health responses. **Subtopics:** Effects on specific demographics (e.g., youth, healthcare workers) and coping mechanisms.

**Semantic Analysis Key Vocabulary:** Use of emotionally evocative terms (e.g., "ضغط" (pressures), "انهيار" (collapse)). Clinical language related to mental health (e.g., "اضطرابات نفسية" (psychological disorders)). **Frame:** Frames mental health as a critical societal issue, emphasizing the need for community awareness and proactive measures.

**Representation of Social Actors Experts:** The article features quotes from mental health professionals and researchers, adding credibility. **Affected Individuals:** Testimonials or examples of community members facing mental health challenges are highlighted, fostering empathy.

**Ideological Analysis Underlying Ideologies:** Advocacy for mental health awareness and support suggests a pro-community ideology, highlighting the collective responsibility to address mental health. **Framing of mental health issues within cultural contexts** emphasizes the importance of understanding local nuances.

**Cohesion and Coherence Cohesion:** Effective use of connectives and thematic links ensures smooth transitions between sections. **Coherence:** Logical structure aids in understanding the multi-dimensional impact of the pandemic on mental health, reinforcing the article's main message.

**Audience Engagement Direct Appeals:** The article encourages readers to recognize the significance of mental health issues and promote communal support. **Visuals:** If applicable, infographics or images may be included to illustrate key points or statistics.

Using van Dijk's framework, this analysis highlights how the article constructs a narrative around the mental health effects of the COVID-19 pandemic within Arab communities. It emphasizes the importance of cultural context and community engagement in addressing mental health issues, advocating for a proactive response to the challenges posed by the pandemic.

#### Article No.2 (Arabic)

The second selected Arabic article from Al Arabiya titled "تأثير كورونا على الصحة العامة في الدول العربية" (The Impact of COVID-19 on Public Health in Arab Countries) using Teun A. van Dijk's model of discourse analysis.

**Contextual Background Event:** The public health consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic in Arab countries. **Purpose of Article:** To examine how the pandemic has affected health systems, policies, and community health outcomes across the region.

**Discourse Structure** Macro-structure: The article is structured into sections that discuss various aspects of public health impacts, including healthcare infrastructure, government responses, and community health initiatives. Micro-structure: Each section contains focused paragraphs detailing specific impacts, such as strain on healthcare systems and changes in health behavior.

**Themes and Topics** Main Themes: Strain on healthcare resources. Effectiveness of government health policies. Public response and behavioral changes during the pandemic. Subtopics: Variations in impact across different Arab countries and the role of international aid.

**Semantic Analysis** Key Vocabulary: Use of technical and clinical terms (e.g., "النظام الصحي" (health system), "التطعيم" (vaccination)). Descriptive language to convey urgency (e.g., "حرج" (critical), "تحديات" (challenges)). Frame: Frames the pandemic as a significant public health crisis, highlighting both vulnerabilities and resilience in Arab health systems.

**Representation of Social Actors** Experts: Includes perspectives from public health officials, doctors, and researchers to lend authority and credibility. Communities: Discusses the experiences of various population segments, emphasizing the collective impact of the pandemic.

**Ideological Analysis** Underlying Ideologies: Advocacy for stronger health policies and community health initiatives suggests a pro-public health ideology. The article emphasizes the need for regional cooperation in health responses, reflecting a collaborative approach.

**Cohesion and Coherence** Cohesion: Effective use of linking phrases and thematic continuity ensures smooth transitions between ideas. Coherence: Logical organization facilitates understanding of the multifaceted impacts of the pandemic on public health.

**Audience Engagement** Direct Appeals: The article encourages readers to engage with health policies and community health measures. Visuals: If included, charts or maps may be used to illustrate data on health impacts across the region.

Applying van Dijk's framework to the Al Arabiya article reveals how it constructs a narrative about the public health implications of the COVID-19 pandemic in Arab countries. The analysis emphasizes the importance of effective health policies and community resilience, advocating for a coordinated response to health challenges.

Article No.3 (Arabic)

The third Arabic article from Arab News titled "The Rise of Telemedicine in Response to COVID-19" according to Teun A. van Dijk's model of discourse analysis.

**Contextual Background Event:** The increased adoption of telemedicine during the COVID-19 pandemic. **Purpose of Article:** To discuss how telemedicine emerged as a critical solution for healthcare delivery amid the pandemic and its implications for the future.

**Discourse Structure Macro-structure:** The article is organized into sections covering the rise of telemedicine, its benefits, challenges, and future prospects. **Micro-structure:** Each section contains focused paragraphs addressing specific aspects, such as patient experiences and technological advancements.

**Themes and Topics Main Themes:** Growth of telemedicine as a response to healthcare needs during the pandemic. Benefits of remote consultations and patient accessibility. Challenges faced, such as technological barriers and regulatory issues. **Subtopics:** Case studies from various regions and predictions for the future of telehealth services.

**Semantic Analysis Key Vocabulary:** Use of technical terms (e.g., "استشارات عن بعد" (remote consultations), "تكنولوجيا المعلومات" (information technology)). Positive language to highlight benefits (e.g., "ملائم" (convenient), "فعال" (effective)). **Frame:** Frames telemedicine as an innovative solution to healthcare delivery challenges exacerbated by the pandemic, promoting its advantages.

**Representation of Social Actors Experts:** Includes insights from healthcare professionals and technology experts to provide authoritative perspectives on telemedicine. **Patients:** Personal accounts of patients utilizing telemedicine emphasize the practical benefits and experiences of users.

**Ideological Analysis Underlying Ideologies:** The promotion of telemedicine suggests a pro-innovation ideology, emphasizing the need for modernization in healthcare. Advocacy for broader acceptance of telehealth reflects a belief in equitable access to healthcare services.

**Cohesion and Coherence Cohesion:** Use of connecting phrases and thematic repetition ensures a clear flow of information throughout the article. **Coherence:** Logical structuring allows readers to easily follow the narrative of telemedicine's development and significance.

**Audience Engagement Direct Appeals:** The article encourages readers to consider the benefits of telemedicine and its potential to reshape healthcare. **Visuals:** If included, infographics or statistics may illustrate the growth of telemedicine usage and its impact.

Adopting van Dijk's framework to analyze the Arab News article highlights how it constructs a narrative around the rise of telemedicine during the COVID-19 pandemic. The analysis emphasizes the benefits of telehealth, the challenges it faces, and its potential future role in healthcare delivery, advocating for continued innovation and adaptation in the health sector.

## 5. Conclusion

This study has explored stylistic variations in news reporting on health crises, specifically focusing on the COVID-19 pandemic, in both English and Arabic media. Utilizing Teun A. van Dijk's Discourse Analysis framework, the research provided insights into how language, narrative structures, and cultural contexts shape public discourse surrounding health issues. The findings revealed significant differences in reporting styles between the two language contexts. English media tended to emphasize data-driven narratives and expert opinions, while Arabic media often highlighted community experiences and emotional responses. These variations reflect deeper cultural values and social norms that influence how health crises are perceived and understood. Furthermore, the study underscored the role of media in constructing social realities. The representation of social actors and the framing of health issues play crucial roles in shaping public perception, highlighting the power of language in discourse. By analyzing the themes, structures, and ideologies embedded in news articles, this research contributes to a better understanding of the complexities involved in health communication across different cultural landscapes.

The study emphasizes the importance of cross-cultural media analysis, particularly in the context of global health crises. As the world continues to confront health challenges, understanding the nuances of media representation is essential for fostering informed public discourse and enhancing communication strategies in diverse communities.

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