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How online news headlines and accompanying images 'translate' a violent event: a cross-cultural case study

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How online news headlines and accompanying images 'translate' a violent event: a cross-cultural case study

Abstract

This article extends the methodology and findings of an earlier project (Riggs, 2020) which conceived of cultural representation as translation and investigated the role of stylistic features of news in (mis)representing the cultural 'Other'. In that study, I analysed news texts about a specific violent event¹ and emphasized the negative consequences of journalists' stylistic choices, namely, how they were likely to exacerbate fear, divisions and prejudices vis-à-vis the 'Other' (in this case, French society, and Muslims). In the present article, I continue to examine online news texts from the UK, Switzerland and Spain but focus on news articles from the first day of the news cycle (15 July), and in particular on the language of the headlines, and accompanying visual material, as this would have been likely to be 'read' with each headline. These textual and visual elements translate the event as newsworthy and as a terrorist act. Differences across the news cultures represented are discussed, and the case is made for extending cross-cultural research on stylistic and visual features of news texts.

Cet article étend la méthodologie et les résultats d'un projet antérieur (Riggs, 2020) qui conçoit la représentation culturelle comme une forme de traduction et étudie l'influence des caractéristiques stylistiques des articles de presse en ligne sur la représentation de l''Autre'. Dans cette précédente étude, j'ai analysé des articles de presse traitant d'un événement violent spécifique et j'ai souligné les conséquences négatives des choix stylistiques des journalistes, à savoir, comment ces éléments étaient susceptibles d'exacerber la peur, les divisions et les préjugés vis-à-vis de l''Autre' (dans ce cas, la société française et les musulmans). Dans le présent article, je continue d'examiner des textes de presse en ligne du Royaume-Uni, de la Suisse et de l'Espagne, mais je me concentre sur les articles du premier jour du cycle d'information (15 juillet) et en particulier sur le langage des titres et les éléments visuels qui les accompagnent, car ceux-ci sont souvent 'lus' avec les titres. Ces éléments textuels et visuels traduisent l'événement comme étant digne d'intérêt (newsworthy) et comme étant clairement un acte terroriste. Les différences entre les presses nationales représentées sont abordées, et j'appelle à étendre la recherche interculturelle sur les caractéristiques stylistiques et visuelles de textes journalistiques.

Keywords: stylistic features; online news; terrorism; headlines; stylistic analysis; multimodal analysis

Introduction

On Bastille Day, 14 July 2016, Mohamed Lahouaiej-Bouhlel drove a large lorry through the thousands-strong crowd of revellers who had gathered on the Promenade des Anglais in Nice, France to watch the annual fireworks display. Eighty-six people were killed and 434 were injured. With such high numbers, the violent attack was reminiscent of two others that had occurred in France the previous year (the Bataclan and Charlie Hebdo attacks) and found to be terrorist in nature. For this reason and also, arguably, because of Bouhlel's background (authorities rapidly determined that he was Tunisian),

within hours of [the] event, terrorism [...] became the focus as François Hollande declared that this was 'an attack whose terrorist quality cannot be denied... it is the whole of France that is under the terrorist threat'. As demonstrated by *Le Monde*, the 'Islamist terrorist' line remained the preferred explanation for French politicians (and much of the media in France and beyond) for days despite conflicting evidence which should have suggested a much more cautious approach. While, as these lines are written [28 July 2016], the links between Lahouaiej Bouhlel and so-called Islamic State remain 'unproven' and in fact increasingly tenuous, the French Minister of the Interior continued to defend on the 18th of July what, at that stage, was mere speculation: the modus operandi was reminiscent of IS and, while the attacker seemed to suffer from various mental health issues, he had been 'quickly radicalised' despite no evidence being presented to the public. Of course, this is not to say that this official explanation is not the correct one, but that in the absence of publicly available evidence, one should expect more caution on the part of public servants, particularly in such a delicate context. (Mondon & Winter, 2016)

Sindoni (2018, p. 271), also citing West and Loyd (2017), observes that a given type of violent act is more likely to be labelled 'terrorist' if it is committed by a Muslim than if it is perpetrated by a White, non-Muslim, in particular in the media. Commenting on the findings of the UK Centre for Media Monitoring's CfMM Special Report: How the British Media Reports Terrorism, the Centre's director, Rizwana Hamid, decries the 'disproportionate focus on Muslims' in the UK press. 'Worst of all' are headlines that 'imply that religion is always the motivator [for violence committed by Muslims], ignoring other factors such as criminal history and mental health issues' (also flagged by Mondon & Winter) 'which may be at play, and which are often mentioned when the perpetrator is not Muslim.'2 This 'well-established news frame that equates Muslims with terrorism' also 'indirectly suggest[s] the "necessity" of fear and suspicion' (Sindoni, 2018, p. 281). This was certainly demonstrated in my previous study, in which the Nice attack was 'seen as a justifiable reason to report frequently and at length on the "significant" Muslim population of France, terrorism, radical Islam, jihadism, and Daesh', 'to link these themes closely together' (Riggs, 2020, p. 147), and to exacerbate fear and a sense of threat. (For a list of studies that document this conflation of Muslims/Islam and terrorism/violence in news and culture, see Riggs 2020 (e.g., p. 21)). That said, the former editor of the Guardian, Rice-Oxley, has claimed that in its initial reporting on the event, his news outlet deliberately avoided applying the 'terror' label:

Throughout that day, we were extremely careful about using the T word (it has become rather meaningless) and deliberately avoided mentioning Isis. Of course, it was clear that a mass killing had taken place. But as to motive, nothing was apparent. One of our earliest decisions was to send a reporter to the Tunisian home of the perpetrator, where an alternative to the Isis footsoldier narrative emerged. (Rice-Oxley, 2016; also cited in Riggs, 2019; 2020)

Given the media's tendency to associate certain violent events with Muslims/Islam, and given the issues raised by Mondon & Winter and Rice-Oxley, I examine whether, and how, news outlets from three different countries construct the Nice event for their readers as an Islamist terrorist attack, and/or as newsworthy (Bednarek & Caple, 2012; 2016) on the first day of reporting, and I investigate similarities and differences across news sources and across the countries in question. The headlines and visual material examined are conceived of as *translating* the event, and the news values of the outlets, for the domestic audiences. (In turn, they both shape and are shaped by the beliefs, expectations and values of their corresponding cultures.) While this conception of translation will be different from others represented in this

special issue, it is licit to talk about translation here in a broader sense, both because of the nature of 'news translation' itself (so much more than transfer from one language to another; comprising, among other aspects, the (de)selection and recontextualization of information for the home audience, which are necessarily tied to values, for instance) and because of the broadening of the definition that the subdiscipline has brought about (see, for example, Davier, 2015). As van Doorslaer (2012, p. 102) observes, 'the act of translation [...] 'involves the transfer of nationally and culturally constructed symbols, norms, *values* and *images*' (my emphasis). Working from the perspective of translation of news texts, Zhang (2013, p. 408) observes that the language of *headlines* 'is heavily mediated and recontextualized'; 'transeditors' conveying them in a new language, but also the original creators of headlines, 'put their own knowledge' and, importantly, 'values', into headlines.

Admittedly, these scholars are not ostensibly suggesting that the concept of news translation need not involve interlinguistic transfer. And of course, in the situation and corpus I am looking at, interlingual transfer did occur as flow of information was happening among countries that speak different languages. But this is simply not the translational aspect of the communication that I am focusing on here. We only need think back to Jakobson to recall that other kinds of transfer have also long been accepted as forms of translation, and descriptions by other scholars from the discipline do point to the 'non-interlinguistic' dimension: For Brownlie (2010, p. 32) in her analysis of English-language newspaper reporting on the 2007 French elections, 'explaining and communicating events from one cultural and political sphere to another' is translation. In his study of Radio-Canada.ca's Derrière le voile series, Conway describes the journalists' stories, which seek to explain to Canadians how Canadian Muslims see the world, as acts of cultural translation' (2012, p. 1001; emphasis in the original). In Maitland's (2017) much broader conception, all of the elements of the world that we encounter and seek to understand are source texts, and anyone who engages with them is a translator. While this may go too far, the journalist who reports on an event abroad and a cultural Other for a given news outlet translates in the broader (and of course often also the narrower) sense.

Scholars in news translation studies and media studies alike agree that 'how a particular event/issue is established as being news' (Caple & Bednarek, 2016, p. 440) 'make[s] an impact upon the perception of the event (and the actors taking part in it) by news consumers' (Valdeón, 2012). Importantly for the present article, reporting on terrorist attacks 'exemplifies this process' (Valdeón, 2012). Indeed, both ideology and proximity may affect the way such events are presented in/as news. 'Depending on the ideological position of the news outlet', for instance, 'a terrorist attack may be given salience or not' (Valdeón, 2012). Taking the US media as an example, Valdeón (2012) observes that 'in the past, Eta bombings in Spain were largely ignored by US media whereas Islamic³ violence was readily reported. Equally, US media emphasized the political attribute ("separatist") of Eta rather than the violent actions ("terrorist") whereas they accentuate violence in the case of Islamic groups' (Valdeón, 2012). In a similar vein, attacks occurring outside the West may not be considered news, which hides from the Western public the fact that Muslims are far more often victims of terrorist violence than 'we' are. As Freedman (2017) and Owunna (2015), whom I also cite elsewhere (Riggs, 2020), point out, 'during the same week as the Charlie Hebdo attacks, the terrorist organization Boko Haram killed more than 2,000 people in Borno State (Nigeria)' (Riggs, 2020, p. 20); but Charlie Hebdo got 50 times the global press coverage (Owunna, 2015). It is violent attacks that take place in the West that get reported upon in the West, and they take on great importance for Western readers, in large part due to news outlets' construction of newsworthiness.

Of course, examining how an event is reported can also provide insights about similarities and differences across news within a region or country, and across countries and cultures. It can demonstrate how newspapers build 'significantly different stories from the same basic "facts" (Bromley and Cushion, 2002, p. 161; qtd. by Caple & Bednarek, 2016, p. 451), *or* 'show how particular events are constructed in similar ways across dissimilar publications (e.g. Bird, 2002)' (Caple & Bednarek, 2016, p. 451).

Why focus on headlines?

This event is first 'made to mean' (Freedman, 2017, p. 211; Riggs, 2018; 2020) through the headlines of the articles appearing on 15 July, just hours after the attack. As various scholars (e.g., Conboy, 2007; Molek-Kozakowska, 2014) have pointed out, headlines serve three main functions: they briefly introduce the topic covered in the article; they spark readers' interest in the topic; and they give readers an idea of the style and values of both the journalist and the news outlet. Thus, despite their relative brevity (length can vary according to news source and country), 'headlines are primary semantic framing devices. This means that their lexical choices and syntactic patterning are instrumental to how [the] subsequent text is to be comprehended and evaluated' (Molek-Kozakowska, 2013, p. 185). In addition, 'the framing applied in the headline is likely to restrict readers' readings and judgments' (p. 185), irrespective of what follows. What is more, 'readers get their first', and often 'only impressions from headlines' (Jovanović, 2018, p. 5). Put otherwise, headlines typically reach a much broader range of readers than the texts they accompany. At the same time, as Jovanović, examining misleading headlines in the Serbian context, observes (2018, p. 5), '[u]nfortunately, there are reasons to believe that headlines may be particularly inaccurate or "hyped" (Caulfield & Bubela, 2004, p. 53)'. This is often the case in news about Muslims (see, for instance, CfMM, 2020).

Corpus and methodology

For this article, I analysed solely the news texts from my original corpus that were published on 15 July. They come from the left-leaning *Guardian* and the right-leaning *Telegraph* (UK) (seven articles each); the left-leaning *El País* (14 articles) and the right-leaning *El Mundo* (12 articles) (Spain); *Le Temps* (three), *La Tribune de Genève* (14) and *Le Courrier*⁴ (seven) (French-speaking Switzerland; political lines are not clear-cut, but the press of this region is often considered centre-left (Riggs, 2020)).

The selection of articles could be criticised as 'cherry-picking' (Jovanović 2018). However, it is licit because these earliest articles are immediate and influential shapers of audiences' impressions of the event, as mentioned above; and this preliminary analysis is a useful starting point or litmus test for determining whether it is worth using this methodology with the full corpus of headlines, and/or other corpora.

A mixed methods approach was used to analyse the corpus. Headlines were extracted from the articles using QDA Miner. There followed an iterative process of close reading and identification of common and/or salient themes and linguistic elements to determine which headline components to analyse more closely. The stylistic features of metaphor, alliteration and modality⁵, occurrences of 'France', 'attack', 'terrorist attack' and equivalents in French and Spanish, and references to Daesh/ISIS/Islamic State and to religion, were thus selected; further justification for these choices is provided in the following three sections. The chosen features

were then colour-coded by category so that they could be quantified, and qualitatively described. Discussion of the stylistic features of the headlines is qualitative, as is that of accompanying visual material (photographs and videos). Visual elements were analysed using Discursive News Values Analysis (DNVA) (Caple and Bednarek, 2016; see section 'On analysing images' below). DNVA can also be used for written text, but I rely more on the stylistic analysis used in my previous study as it allows more fine-grained description of lexical and stylistic choices.

On instances of '(terrorist) attack' in the headlines

The presence or absence of references to a 'terrorist attack' in headlines is obviously one indication of whether the news sources translated this event as terrorist in nature from the first day of reporting. It is important to note that the English term 'attack' covers a wider semantic field than the French *attentat* and the Spanish *atentado*. Put otherwise, in this analysis, 'attack' is not considered to refer to a *terrorist* act unless specifically preceded by the adjective. In contrast, consider the dictionary definitions of *attentat* and *atentado*:

Attentat: 'Entreprise, tentative criminelle contre une personne (spécialt. contre une personne en vue ou dans un contexte politique), contre les droits, les biens de qqn. → Agression, attaque, complot, crime.' (Dictionnaires Le Robert - Le Grand Robert de la langue française, 2017; my emphasis)

[Back translation: Enterprise, criminal attempt against a person (esp. against a prominent person or *in a political context*), against a person's rights, property, or assets. → Assault, attack, conspiracy, crime. My emphasis]

Atentado: 'Agresión o desacato grave a la autoridad u ofensa a un principio u orden que se considera recto'; 'Agresión contra la vida o la integridad física o moral de alguien'; 'Delito que consiste en la violencia o resistencia grave contra la autoridad o sus agentes en el ejercicio de funciones públicas [...]' (Real Academia Española, 2020; my emphasis)

[Back translation: Assault on or serious contempt for *authority* or offence against a principle or order considered to be morally right/legitimate; Assault on a person's life or physical or moral integrity; Crime consisting of *violence or serious resistance against authority or its agents acting in an official capacity* [...]. My emphasis]

While these terms' denotative meanings are not solely linked to the notion of terrorism, references to political context or to authorities certainly tend in that direction. Perhaps more importantly, their connotative meanings in the collective psyche of the cultures in question are undeniably linked to terrorism. Thus one might imagine that a headline that includes 'attentat' or 'atentado' more clearly labels the event as terrorism than a headline that simply uses 'attack'.

On stylistic features

In my previous study, I explored the influence of stylistic features across a lot of textual material from the three different cultures. I continue to identify and analyse stylistic features here because if they are at work in headlines, and in particular in the headlines of 15 July 2016 which are the first to frame the event, their effects may be all the more powerful within this microcosm. Or, one may observe differing effects in the headlines than in the texts as a whole, which would be telling for the same reason: they have a lot of power to shape, early on, readers' impressions

of an event. Moreover, as I found when observing disease-related metaphor in my prior study (Riggs 2020, p. 152), 'even infrequent occurrences of a stylistic feature can be salient and influential.' This is all the more true with headlines as such features are so immediately visible.

It is also important to examine how stylistic features of headlines about this particular event tie in with negativity and with the appeal of the articles (as newsworthy to audiences). Molek-Kozakowska (2013, p. 188) flags 'the media's general embrace of negativity as a top news value', while Bednarek and Caple (2012) list negative vocabulary and references to emotion, references to nations (we will look at 'France'), and metaphor among elements that 'enhance' news values. Metaphor does so because it activates marked imagery to make comparisons, so its presence in headlines may leave an almost visual, and likely strong, impression. In her study of sensationalism in UK tabloid headlines, Molek-Kozakowska (2013, p. 192) identified alliteration as one of the 'contrived textual devices fitted into headlines to increase the attractiveness of the article'. Alliteration makes more salient the content to which it is attached, meaning that in headlines it, too, will place early emphasis on the content readers encounter and make that content stand out.

On analysing images

News texts are a prime example of communication that relies significantly on the visual mode to 'make its content mean'. This is all the more true of the online format, on which more and more readers rely for their news. Online, visual content is omnipresent and multiform, so that its influence on the communicative situation sometimes equals or even rivals that of the previously dominant written content. And yet, the images that accompany news texts have been insufficiently studied thus far. Bednarek and Caple (2014, p. 140) argue that 'an analysis of how news values are discursively constructed in texts should be both 'manual' and "multimodal". This is true of their DNVA methodology, adopted here.

Multimodal analysis originated with the observation that many kinds of texts communicate as much via visual material as via written content. In the 1980s and 1990s, linguistics scholars (see Hodge & Kress, 1988; Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996) felt a 'toolkit' for visual analysis could and should be developed using 'some of the principles of linguistic analysis found in the systemic functional theory of Halliday (1978), also used as the basis of much CDA [Critical Discourse Analysis]' (Machin & Mayr, 2012, p. 7). Kress and van Leeuwen's second edition (2006) of Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design, upon which Bednarek and Caple also draw in their analysis of visual content within DNVA, systematizes the approach but has also received plenty of criticism. For instance, the notion of a 'visual grammar' has been recognized as faulty (e.g., Machin & Mayr, 2012), not least because visual meaning is more readily ambiguous than language, images are to be 'understood on a more holistic, contextual, real-world-knowledge basis' than 'lexico-grammatic structures', and, while 'there are identifiable components in pictures', '[e]ach of these [...] is likely to activate any semiotic rule in the viewer, depending on his or her individual socio-cultural, physico-geographic background' (Ensslin, 2008, p. 397). To combat the subjectivity inherent in visual analysis, ideally, visuals would be examined by multiple researchers and 'intersubjective semantic consensus' (p. 397) sought. This was not possible in the present study but should be envisaged in future research on news visuals.

Caple and Bednarek (2016) 'propose two perspectives from which to analyse how news values are discursively constructed in imagery': 'content and camera technique' (p. 445). Content is 'what is depicted in the image' (p. 445), and generally constructs the news values of Impact, Timelineness, Proximity and Consonance (see Table 1 for definitions). Camera technique relates to how an image has been created, and includes 'composition', 'perspective, including angle [...] and technical considerations' (p. 446; all italics in original). In relation to Aesthetic Appeal, 'Bednarek and Caple (2010) discuss at length the implications of the construction of largely negative happenings [...] as "aesthetically pleasing" or "beautiful" and label this an "evaluative clash" (17)' (Caple & Bednarek, 2016, p. 445). In addition, camera angles can convey a message about the 'unequal power relations between the viewer of the image and the person depicted in the image' (Caple & Bednarek, 2016, p. 450). As I am not an expert on visual techniques, where the 'how' is concerned, I will mainly comment on composition and angle where relevant.

<<< Insert Table 1 about here >>>

Results and discussion

The following sections present and discuss findings related to key content of the headlines analysed: the *themes* of France, (terror/ist) attack, and religion; the *stylistic features* of metaphor and alliteration; and the *visual content* that accompanied the headlines. These elements were chosen because they all contribute to shaping the focus and directing the attention of the reader right from the outset. In doing so, they also contribute to translating the event in question, the culture in which the event took place, and their newsworthiness.

'France'

Bednarek and Caple (2012) highlight reference to nations as one of the ways newsworthiness is enhanced. Logically, France is mentioned in headlines throughout the corpus, but to somewhat different effect depending on outlet and country (see Table 2).

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France is the grammatical subject in the TG and EP headlines (three times and two times, respectively) and is portrayed as a victim more often in the UK headlines (five occurrences; e.g., 'Why does France keep getting attacked?', TG1) and the EP headlines (three occurrences; e.g., 'Francia, bajo la amenaza del terror [France under terrorist threat], EP3), than in the Swiss or EM ones, which also mention the country less often. Almost solely in the UK headlines (and particularly in TG) is this victimhood further enhanced through personification and collectivization of France, however: 'France reels after new deadly attack' (TG9); 'France stunned after truck attacker kills 84' [...]; '[...] attack shows France's acute vulnerability to terrorism' (DT21) (my emphasis). The sole personification of the country occurring elsewhere, in EP10, is dramatically different because it is positive, incorporates direct quotation and conveys Eliteness (see discussion of images below): 'Obama destaca la "resistencia extraordinaria" de Francia' [Obama highlights the 'extraordinary resilience' of France].

'Terror'

In line with Rice-Oxley's (2016) claim that the *Guardian* avoided using the word 'terror' early on (see above), the TG headlines from 15 July 2016 indeed use the more general 'attack' four times (see Table 2), never collocating it with 'terror'. Nevertheless, TG9 establishes continuity between this event and two major attacks in France that *were* qualified as terrorist actions: 'From Charlie Hebdo to Bastille Day: France reels after new deadly attack.' In addition, the *texts* of early TG articles unequivocally evoke terror: the 'video explainer' at the beginning of TG1, for instance, also discussed in the section about images below, is entitled 'Why is France targeted so often by *terrorists*?' (my emphasis).

In contrast to TG, DT headlines *do* explicitly collocate 'attack' with 'terror', three times already on 15 July. Even when the news headlines use 'attack' alone (three times on 15 July), they most often link the term directly with terrorism (e.g., DT5: 'Nice *terror* attack; Europe "faces summer of copycat *attacks*"; DT20: 'The crumb of comfort from the Nice *attack* is that even *terrorists* who plot alone can be stopped'; DT21: 'Analysis: Nice truck *attack* shows France's acute vulnerability to *terrorism'*), while DT19 explicitly refers to 'terror': 'How the *terror* in Nice unfolded [...]' (all emphasis mine).

<<< Insert Table 3 about here >>>

Among the Swiss news sources, only TDG uses *attaque* on a few occasions (three occurrences). It also uses *attentat* four times in 14 articles, and *Daech* is referred to once. LC uses *attentat* three times in seven articles whereas LT uses it three times in just three articles. The proportion of occurrences across the Spanish corpus is higher (see Table 2). The Spanish newspapers also refer to *Estado Islámico* in the 15 July headlines, though not frequently. What stands out most from these results is that the left-leaning TG and EP have a remarkably divergent approach to inclusion of the notion of terror in these headlines, while the left- and right-leaning Spanish sources appear to have a similar policy. The Swiss press also does not shy away from the terrorism label early on.

Religion

DT26 explicitly refers to religion in the headline, making Islam salient and threatening from the outset, especially with the choice of an extremely negatively charged verb: 'How *religion* can drive someone to *slaughter* his fellow citizens – and believe they deserve it' (DT26; my emphasis). The anti-Muslim DT article extrapolates from the Tunisian background of an individual perpetrator to 'collectivise', 'genericize' and 'anonymise' (Sindoni, 2018, p. 276) the categories of 'Muslim' / 'Islam'. That said, insofar as Bouhlel's background (leading to the assumption – also never unequivocally confirmed⁶ – that he was Muslim) in part triggered the early labelling of the event as Islamist terrorism (conflation of Muslims and terrorism; see Introduction), all of the news sources are guilty of this to some degree.

That said, the only other explicit reference to religion in a headline on 15 July, in TDG5, has a completely different message. 'Daech espère des représailles contre les *musulmans*' [Daesh is hoping for retaliation against Muslims] (my emphasis) recognizes that this kind of attack can exacerbate tensions and divisions and thus help Daesh meet what some, including the 'experts' cited in the corresponding article, consider its objective: to destabilise Western

societies. The TDG headline nevertheless takes Daesh's involvement, and therefore the thesis of terrorism, for granted at this early stage.

Metaphor and alliteration

In prior work (Riggs, 2019; 2020) I found that metaphor in my 15–18 July corpus activated mostly negative and mostly violent imagery. In the 15 July headlines, all but two metaphors are closely connected to negative content, and seven out of twelve are linked to violent content. It is noteworthy that only the UK headlines have none of either type. While metaphors across these headlines are too few to draw general conclusions, their nature clearly conveys Negativity and Impact, and they often also evoke terrorist connections. Two metaphors in EM, using tintes ('Un atentado con tintes yihadistas...' [A terrorist attack with jihadist tinges/touches > overtones], EM10) and firma ('Atentado en Niza: un ataque con la firma del Estado Islámico [Terrorist attack in Nice: an attack bearing the signature of Islamic State], EM30, indicate right on the first day of reporting that the attack bears the mark of Daesh/jihadist involvement. One headline each in EP (8) and EM (31) refers to the use of vehicles as a 'weapon of war', thus equating the Nice attack with war-level violence. In EP8, use of vehicles is also attributed to lobos solitarios [lone wolves], and in EM31, it is an 'idea of Al Qaeda'. Both the lobos metaphor, which becomes an extended metaphor in the corresponding article, and the terreau metaphor in TDG7's 'Nice, un terreau de radicalisation islamiste' [Nice, a breeding ground for Islamist radicalization], have an effect of 'animalization' (Molek-Kozakowska 2014, p. 161-2) of (Muslim) perpetrators of violence and also 'collectivise', 'genericize' and 'anonymise' (Sindoni, 2018, p. 276) them. The TDG headline may also give the impression that such 'beasts' are proliferating in the French city.

As noted above, alliteration makes more salient the words into which it is incorporated. Alliterated content in the 15 July headlines was most often negative, so negative content was made to stand out via use of this stylistic feature. Consider the occurrences in DT (UK), LT and TDG (Switzerland) (there were no instances of alliteration in the Spanish headlines):

Driver [...] **d**elivered **m**urder on a **m**assive scale (DT19)

Attentat de Nice: un **m**aximum d'effets avec un **m**inimum de **m**oyens (LT2) [maximum effect with minimum means]

La France à nouveau frappée par un attentat (TDG13) [France once again hit by an attack]

Used in headlines, metaphor and alliteration "increase[] the attractiveness" (Molek-Kozakowska, 2013, p. 192) of the article in the sense that they contribute to fulfilling the second function of headlines, that of piquing readers' interest in the topic and drawing them in, by conveying the Impact, Negativity and Superlativeness of the violent event through marked, noticeable language. They therefore contribute to translating newsworthiness. That said, they are not employed to the same degree across languages. These stylistic features certainly warrant further attention in cross-cultural research on news.

Images

All of the news sources across the three countries convey the news values of Impact, Negativity and Superlativeness in their 15 July reporting on the attack, and this is not surprising given the degree of violence, large number of victims, and place where it occurred (in the West, in a

fellow European country), all of which make the event newsworthy. The British and Spanish sources generally convey these values in similar ways, with some nuances discussed below. The Swiss *Temps* and *Tribune de Genève*, in contrast, are the only ones to avoid the most violent manifestations of the event and its aftermath (video footage of the lorry, for instance); the sole exception is TDG4's photograph showing a section of the Promenade des Anglais where bodies lie covered in blue sheets. In addition, the Swiss articles are the only ones that do not use the segments of Hollande's speech in the early hours of 15 July in which he explicitly labelled the event 'terrorist' – despite the fact that a number of their headlines *do* convey this idea (see Table 2). Otherwise, the images of the Swiss subcorpus, which are particularly varied, do not show clear patterns – which is interesting in itself – and therefore I do not focus on them here.

Four of the seven TG articles from 15 July include an initial video. (Three DT articles of seven also include a video after the headline, but due to a data collection issue, I am unable to comment on them.) Two of the TG videos are more than two minutes long. The longest (at 2:33) accompanies TG1 and contextualizes significantly, for example, by evoking the socioeconomic problems of France's *banlieues* or the fact that Muslims in the country feel 'isolated and excluded'. However, much of the contextualization is directly linked to *the assumption that the attack was terrorist in nature*, reflected, for instance, in discussion of France's interventions abroad to combat Al Qaeda and Isis, or the statement that 'Isis has called on jihadis to attack France'. The second video (2:10) relates directly to the attack itself, and a segment showing Hollande speaking again emphasises the terror link. A third video presents 1 minute 14 of Hollande's speech, communicating once again the notion that this act is terrorist in nature. Thus, the TG videos contradict Rice-Oxley's (2016) above-mentioned claim. Taken together, the TG images communicate mainly Negativity, Impact, Superlativeness and Eliteness – the latter, almost solely by featuring Hollande. We will see that manifestations of Eliteness differ according to country, and sometimes also to the political leanings of the news outlets.

The available DT images communicate Negativity, Impact and Superlativeness in similar ways to TG. What are more interesting are the divergences: two instances of Aesthetic Appeal, and a very different manifestation of Eliteness. Regarding the first news value, in DT7, the opening photograph shows slightly faded flowers in the foreground, more in the background. Onlookers line the street. Due to the camera angle, the viewer's eyes will rise toward them, the palm trees and the blue sky above. A shaft of sunlight cuts across the image from top centre to bottom right, suggesting something almost celestial. Both this and the fact that the photo is taken from a low angle create an 'evaluative clash' (Bednarek & Caple, 2010; Caple & Bednarek, 2016) between, on the one hand, the Negativity and Impact of the event for which the memorial has been laid, and on the other, the aesthetics of the scene, probably making it even more poignant for the viewer. Regarding Eliteness, DT's right-leaning tendency is reflected in the combined messages of the visual and verbal 'texts' of DT27, 'The Nice terror attack is why Donald Trump might win'. The headline is accompanied by an image of Donald Trump before a lectern and microphone (Eliteness), speaking and gesturing in Cincinnati, with two Ohio flags, an American flag and a blue stage curtain behind, while the accompanying article subtly blames Muslims and Islam for the event, and lends credibility to Trump's anti-Muslim stance. Trump is practically the sole conveyor of Eliteness in the right-leaning Telegraph's articles from 15 July.

Turning to the Spanish news outlets: the EP subcorpus includes three videos; the EM subcorpus, six. Hollande's speech and its referencing of terrorism are part of the 1 minute, 23 second video at the beginning of EP3, which also shows the aftermath of both the Bataclan and Nice attacks, and of EM6's 39-second video. EP7's photograph is also of Hollande speaking. As in TG, Eliteness gives credence to Hollande's statement. As is customary across the corpus, through photographs and videos, the Spanish outlets show both the event and its aftermath in ways that convey Negativity, Impact and Superlativeness, but EM emphasizes these more, in particular through a long (1:24) video, used in two different articles, which shows footage of the attack including people screaming and running, a map of the lorry's trajectory, evacuation of the injured, and so on.

What is particularly noteworthy in the Spanish corpus is the use of important *domestic* figures and symbols to represent Eliteness, and also in part to support the terrorism thesis and/or security measures. EP5 and EM7 both feature video footage of then Minister of the *Interior*, Jorge Fernández Díaz. In EP5's video, following a minute of silence (before Madrid's city hall; this domestic symbol itself is pictured in EP9), Fernández Díaz looks upward, again suggesting something celestial. In addition, then president Rajoy is featured in video footage in EP13 (1:47) and EM4 (3:27) in which he links France's and Spain's experience of *terrorism*, promises Spanish cooperation, and evokes domestic policies and measures resulting from the event; and in a photograph at the speaking engagement, taken from a low angle. Another interesting choice is the inclusion in EM2 of a photo of the Spanish king and queen visiting the French ambassador to Spain. Such representations of Eliteness in turn convey not only the Impact and Superlativeness of the event, but also its Proximity for Spain and Spanish readers. Images of important 'home' officials are absent from the UK corpus from 15 July and there is just one among the 17 Swiss images included in the analysis.

In addition, EP is the only source to use an image of Obama, in one of only two positive headline segments in the whole corpus of 15 July articles. This choice certainly contrasts with the use of Trump in DT, reflecting the opposite political tendencies of the respective news outlets.

Finally, EM30 also includes a 'hybrid' visual form which is very telling for this analysis: a series of still shots from a Daesh propaganda video are interspersed throughout the article. The initial still is captioned 'Fotograma de un vídeo en el que el IS anima a atropellar a sus víctimas' [Frame of a video in which IS [Daesh] encourages [its members] to run over their victims]. Six men are pictured: three are in balaclavas, and the faces of two are completely hidden while only the eyes of the third are visible. Two others have scarves wrapped around their heads. One man on the left, whose face we can see, has long hair, a beard and an angry, menacing gaze. He is at the centre of the second photo and at the right of the third, as each hones in on a different part of the group of men. At least three of them are holding rifles, and all wear combat/desert/rugged gear. Readers will assume the one in front is Abu Mohamed al Adnani, discussed in the article, who is speaking and pointing at an audience we cannot see. A caption that is part of the original video, in Arabic and in English, reads 'Kill them and spit in their faces and run over them with your cars'. In line with Sindoni's (2018, p. 281) analysis of an image of 'Jihadi John' in British tabloid *The Sun*, '[t]he visual representation [...] draws on the typical iconography of the scary terrorist (negativity) [...]. [T]his representation is immediately recognizable as it coheres with ideas and understanding of the news frame of terrorism, thus making it consonant [recall the news values] [with] the readers' projected fears'

(emphasis in original). Out of all the images published with the 15 July headlines studied here, this series of images is the one that most forcefully translates the Nice event as Islamist terrorism, in a way that is likely to convince readers and encourage fear and a sense of threat.

Conclusion

In my previous studies, I observed that some sources were more balanced than others in their treatment of the Nice event, for example, by contextualizing, mentioning alternative hypotheses to the 'terrorist' one (that Bouhlel was mentally ill, for instance), or emphasizing evidence that Bouhlel was not religious. However, when we look at *headlines* from 15 July alone, which are influential because they are the first to present and frame the event, it appears that across the three languages and cultures, journalists have most often taken the French president's premature evaluation at face value and brought it 'home', translating the event as terrorist, and as newsworthy in part for this very reason. The news outlets' approaches also coincide in that they all convey the Negativity, Impact and Superlativeness of the event through similar types of images (although those from EM2 and EM30 stand out particularly; see above).

Other aspects of image use as well as certain thematic and stylistic choices that contribute to translating newsworthiness sometimes diverge according to news outlet or culture, in potentially telling ways. For example, representations of Eliteness aligned with political leanings in DT and in the Spanish news sources; they were closely tied to *domestic* figures and symbols, therefore conveying the news value of Proximity, in Spain but not elsewhere. Research on visual material is lacking in the area of news translation, and clearly such elements merit more attention. While due to the small corpus, findings on metaphor and alliteration cannot be considered conclusive, the fact that metaphor was absent from the UK headlines and present in the others, as well as the types of metaphor, and the confirmation that alliteration was associated with negative and violent content in two countries' headlines, suggest further crosscultural research on the use and influence of these features in headlines would be valuable. Finally, headlines, visuals and articles' content should be studied more *in conjunction with each other* than they were here, and in relation to more events and longer news cycles; and audience reception studies should be done to confirm researchers' interpretations of how events are translated in the news.

Media emphasis on Negativity (a 'top news value' (Molek-Kozakowska, 2013, p. 188)), the immediate labelling of the Nice attack as terrorist, and much of the language and visual material explored here are likely to encourage 'fear', 'suspicion' (Sindoni, 2018, p. 281) and a sense of threat and to exacerbate tensions between societal groups, in particular Muslims and non-Muslims. Can such tendencies ever be undone? Identifying alternative ways of reporting this kind of event should be a larger goal of the research avenues outlined above. One way of doing so may in fact be to also analyse the stylistic features and visuals of neutral and positive reporting (rare as it is), including about Muslims, across languages and cultures.

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Notes

¹ I use 'event' in Eyerman's sense. A happening becomes an event '[t]hrough a dialectic of actions and interpretation' (Eyerman, 2008, p. 22) and the attribution of meaning that results.

Table 1: News values, their definitions and 'visual resources for constructing' them.

² For Hamid's remarks and the Report: https://cfmm.org.uk/resources/publication/cfmm-special-report-how-british-media-reports-terrorism/

³ The appropriate term is 'Islamist'.

⁴ In this text, news articles from the corpus are referred to using abbreviations for the online newspaper they came from: TG = *The Guardian*, DT = *The Telegraph*, EP = *El País*, EM = *El Mundo*, LT = *Le Temps*, TDG = *La Tribune de Genève*, LC = *Le Courrier*.

⁵ Findings on modality will not be discussed here due to lack of space. It is certainly an aspect of news headlines that warrants further research.

⁶ For this reason, the DT26 headline is 'inaccurate or "hyped" (Jovanović, 2018; Caulfield & Bubela, 2004), but also *consonant* (recall the news value) with the expectations and prejudices of many readers.

⁷ The Swiss *Courrier* was not taken into account in the analysis of images due to a potential data collection flaw.

⁸ Al Adnani was a senior leader and the chief spokesman for Daesh before he was killed in August 2016.

News value and definition

'Visual resources for constructing news values'

Negativity: 'The negative aspects of an event or issue'

What: 'Showing negative events and their effects [...]; Showing people being arrested; Showing people experiencing negative emotions.'

How: 'High camera angle, putting viewer in dominant position [...]; Camera movement and blurring, combined with [...] running, ducking [...] (suggesting unstable situation, that is, danger).'

Timeliness: 'The relevance of an event or issue in terms of time: recent, ongoing, about to happen or seasonal'

What: 'Showing relevant time in the image [...]; signage.'

Proximity: 'The geographical or cultural nearness of an event or issue'

What: 'Showing well-known or iconic landmarks [...], natural features [...] or cultural symbols'; 'signage'.

Superlativeness: 'The large scope or scale of an event or issue'

What: 'Showing the repetition of key elements in the image frame [...]; Showing extreme emotions in participants; Placement of elements of different sizes next to each other to maximise contrast'.

How: Camera movement, same as with Negativity; 'Use of specific lens and angle to exaggerate or condense differences in size/space'.

Eliteness: 'The high status of individuals, organisations or nations involved'

What: 'Showing known and easily recognisable key figures [...]; Showing people in uniform or with other regalia of officialdom; Showing self-reflexive elements like microphones/cameras, media scrum; Showing people being flanked by military, police or bodyguards; Showing context associated with an elite profession [...]';

How: 'Low camera angle indicating high status of participant in image.'

Impact: 'The high significance of an event or issue in terms of its effects/consequences'

What: 'Showing the after-effects (often negative) of events [...]; Showing emotions caused by an event; Showing sequences of images that convey cause and effect relations.'

Novelty: 'The new issue'

and/or What: 'Showing people being shocked/surprised; unexpected aspects of an event or Showing unusual happenings' that are 'outside' the 'societal norm or expectation'.

> How: 'Juxtaposition of elements in the frame that create a stark contrast.'

Personalisation: 'The personal issue, including reports'

or "human" face of an event or What: 'Showing "ordinary" individuals [...]; Showing an eyewitness emotional response.'

> How: 'singling out one individual through foregrounding or backgrounding; Using a close-up shot'.

Consonance: 'The stereotypical aspects of an event or issue; adherence to expectations'

What: 'Showing happenings that fit with the stereotypical imagery of an event/person/country'.

'The **Aesthetic** Appeal: aesthetically pleasing aspects of an event or issue'

What: 'Showing' elements that are 'culturally recognised for their beauty.'

How: 'Dynamic, asymmetric composition [...]; Lighting, colour contrast and shutter speed used for artistic effect.'

(Source: This table combines content from two tables in Caple & Bednarek (2016), 439; 447-8)

Table 2: Occurrences of the term 'France' in headlines from 15 July.

	News outlet and number of articles from 15 July							
Use of 'France'	TG (7)	DT (7)	LT (3)	TDG (14)	LC (7)	EP (14)	EM (12)	
Total								
occurrences	4	1	0	2	1	4	2	
Grammatical								
subject	3	0	0	1	0	2	0	
Victim;								
target; under								
threat	4	1	0	2	0	3	1	

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Table 3: Occurrences of references to terrorism and attacks in headlines from 15 July.

	News outlet and number of articles from 15 July							
Term	TG (7)	DT (7)	LT (3)	TDG (14)	LC (7)	EP (14)	EM (12)	
Attack	4	4	0	3	0	0	0	
Attacker/ed	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Terror/ist/ ism; terror/ist	0	6	2	4	2	8	0	
attack Islamic	U	6	3	4	3	0	9	
State/Al Oaeda	0	0	0	1	0	1	2	