Ideology in the BBC and Press TV's Coverage of Syria Unrest: A Schema-Based Approach

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Abstract

The present paper investigates how far ideologies can be teased out in discourse by examining the schemata employed by two ideologically opposed news media, the BBC and Press TV, to cover the Syrian crisis during a period of nine months in 2011. By assuming that news is not a value-free construction of facts and drawing on micro structural approach of schema theory a comparative analysis of twenty six news texts posted by the two news agencies was conducted. Every attempt was made to choose the news posted by the agencies on the same topic on the same date. The analysis showed that the BBC and Press TV employed not only exclusive but also common schemata, which were significantly different in number hammering their contrasting perspectives in the minds of their viewers. The results are discussed from an educational perspective and suggestions are made for future research.

Keywords: schema theory, ideology, discourse, semantic schemata

1. Introduction

Discourse representation in newspaper reporting has attracted the attention of many scholars (e.g., Pietikainen, 2003; Murata, 2007; Cohen, 2010). The reason for this might be the fact that the type of news items involving most cases of discourse representation in media seems to be the most objective type simply because the journalist working for an agency does not need to create the tent, but to transmit the statements of third person (Durant & Lambrou, 2009).

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Media can and do, however, manipulate the truth in order to put across their own or their representative government's political agenda. It follows that the same events can be very differently reported, if the reporting media have different ideologies.

Similarly, Scollon (1998) argued that news stories are not so much about events but about narrations of events. According to Fowler (1987), "there is no neutral representation of reality if indeed there is such a thing as a well-defined reality" (p. 67). It can, therefore, be said that one cannot escape comprehending reality or the world through language, because reality is always structured or restructured through language. Similarly, it is argued that news reports are not a value-free representation of reality but ideological constructs. The reported events reflect a specific ideological perspective on the basis of certain, though not always explicitly stated, values and beliefs. Hence different news media quite often present the same event in different ways or with different focuses.

Since language is influenced by ideology, all texts, whether spoken, written or visual, are inexorably shaped and determined by a web of political beliefs and socio-cultural practices. They are, therefore, as Simpson and Mayr (2010) put it, anything but neutral. Schema-based analyses of texts produced by opposing media can thus help individuals understand how ideology is embedded in language in general and texts in particular. They help critical readers become aware of how the reflexes of dominant or mainstream ideologies are sustained through textual representations. As Ott and Mack (2010) observed "the content of the mass media socializes people to care about some issues and not others, to see those issues from some perspectives and not others, and to adopt particular attitudes toward the perspectives it presents" (p.13).

Ever since critical discourse analysis (CDA) came on the scene, a number of analysts have addressed ideology in news reports through the identification and description of certain linguistic elements (e.g., Cohen, 2010; Harding, 2006; Lazer and Lazer, 2004; Leudar, Marsland & Nekvapil, 2004). Some of these preferred elements have proved to be lexical choices, repetition of some specific lexes, different types of speech acts, the pronouns "us" and "them", active voice vs. passive one, nominalization, thematic patterns, and modality, to name a few.

Relying on the devices adopted by the CDA, however, seems to be questionable because they cover a very small percentage of texts. As Schegloff (1997) convincingly brought up, the CDA does not always provide sufficiently detailed and systematic analyses of the texts it examines, e.g., examining the pronouns used in the news. Similarly, Toolan (1997) criticized the CDA for being more demanding of their tools of analysis. Mckenna (2004) thus proposed expanding CDA studies by drawing on schema theory. Based on this proposal, the present study elaborates up the theory by resorting to its macro structural approach and then applies the approach to the analysis of certain news texts posted by the BBC and Press TV. It aims to find out whether the constituting schemata of the texts produced by two agencies reveal the ideologies underlying the coverage of the Syrian unrest in 2011.

1.2 Schema Theory

Schema theory first emerged in the early 1900s (e.g. Bartlett, 1932; Head, 1920; Piaget 1926) to explain how individuals employ their mental templates of past experiences to produce appropriate behavior. The explanatory nature of schema theory paves the way for its application in discourse analysis via two approaches, i.e., macro and micro structural. The macro structural approach defines schema as scripted or rhetorical knowledge. In this sense, knowing schema means knowing the structural patterns of various texts such as narratives and expository ones (e.g., Mc Neil, 1987; Poplin, 1988). While the macro structural approach to schema theory considers fields, genres and discourse styles as schemata, the microstructural approach views each and all the words and phrases constituting authentic texts as schemata (Khodadady, 1997, 2004, 2013; Khodadady & Herriman, 2000). In recent years a large number of discourse analysts have employed these two approaches to capture the schemata used in different texts.

1.2.1. Macro Structural Approach

There are two methods for text analysis which follow macro structural approach of schema theory, i.e., discourse and meta discourse analyses. The purpose of discourse analysis which is subdivided into register and genre analysis is to capture the communicative purpose of a text. A text analyst who employs meta discourse analysis attempts to single out and elaborate the strategies which are employed by the author of a text to signal his presence.

1.2.1.1. Register Analysis

As a subdivision of macro structural approach of schema theory, register analysis focuses on the identification of lexis and grammar points which are statistically significant in a given text (Hill, 1958; Barber, 1962; Crystal & Davy, 1969). The problem with this approach is its inability to distinguish two texts with different communicative purposes which share the same number of register words as it only takes into account the frequency of occurrence of some intended forms. This shortcoming led researchers to resort to another approach called genre analysis, to yield a better account of the communicative purpose of a text.

1.2.1.2. Genre Analysis

Applying genre analysis to explore the communicative layers of a text provides a deeper view of the functional units of the text than register analysis. In order to extract the communicative units of a text discourse analysts resort to the definition of moves or functional units which act as the basic criteria to determine the boundaries of each communicative unit. 'Move' is defined as a semantic unit relevant to the writer's purpose (McKinlely, 1983, cited in Dudley-Evans, 1986). Nwogu (1997) further specified the definition of ''move'' as ''a text segment made up of a bundle of linguistic features (lexical meaning, propositional meanings, illocutionary forces, etc.) which gives the segment a uniform orientation and signals the content of discourse in it'' (p.114).

Compared to register, move thus has the advantage of capturing the function of a particular part of the text under examination. A crucial starting point for a move analysis is to consider the purposes of the target genre, which regulate its propositional contents, schematic pattern, and choice of register (Swales, 1990).The concept of move also captures the function and purpose of a text.

In his remarkable work on introduction analysis, Swales (1981), for example, identified a four-move structure to describe the schematic pattern of the introduction in research articles, which he later revised to create a widely known model. This model includes three moves of establishing a territory, establishing a niche and occupying the niche. Moves, however, cannot reveal anything about the content of text simply because they deal with its format.

1.2.1.3. Meta Discourse Analysis

Meta discourse is defined by Vande Koppel (1985) as devices by which a writer helps his readers organize, clarify, interpret, evaluate and react to the propositional content provided on the level of discourse. Hyland (1999) classified all these purposes in two general categories of textual meta discourse such as logical connectives and interpersonal meta discourse such as hedges. Similar to genre, the basic unit of analysis for meta discourse is, however, defined as communicative and functional rather than formal, therefore, the analyst has no objective criteria to determine the boundaries of employed schemata within a text (Khodadady & Javadi Mehr, 2012, p. 23). For example, "might", "perhaps" and "it is possible" are all considered as hedges which signal the lack of a given writer's full commitment. Structurally, however, "it is possible" is a sentence with a complete meaning whereas "might" is a model whose meaning depends on the main verb it attaches to. How a hedge can be a model and a sentence at the same time remains an open question.

1.2.2 Micro Structural Approach

Micro structural approach of schema theory takes a more precise initiative for analyzing discourse than macro structural approach. In this approach another definition of schema is proposed which provides a more objective tool for text analysis. Khodadady (1997) defined schemata as the words and phrases constituting authentic texts which are assigned into three main domains of semantic, syntactic and parasyntactic. Each domain is hierarchically formed by its genera, which are in turn composed of species and types. The semantic domain which is open in nature, for example, consists of four genera, i.e., adjectives, adverbs, nouns, and verbs. The genus of adjectives in turn contains species such as agentive, comparative, dative and nominal adjectives. And finally each species expressed in texts such as agentive adjectives consist of types such as *surprising*, *boring* and *engaging*, to name a few.

The syntactic domain which is *closed* in nature includes auxiliaries, conjunctions, determiners, prepositions and pronouns and the last domain which is called Parasyntactic includes schemata such as numerals, abbreviations, names and para adverbs.

Approaching texts from the microstructural perspective of schema theory provides researchers with an objective measure to study and compare them empirically. It is argued that each and every schema used in an authentic and unmodified text expresses whatever concepts the author of the text wishes to convey if it is understood not only by itself but also in relation to other schemata forming the whole text (Khodadady 1997, 1999a; Khodadady & Herriman, 2000). This study employs the micro structural approach to study the BBC and Press TV's ideology behind covering the Syrian crisis which began on March 15, 2011. It started with demonstrations that grew nationwide by April 2011. These demonstrations were part of the wider Middle Eastern protest movement known as the Arab Spring.

The Syrian government deployed armed forces to tackle the demonstrations and the Arab League, United States and European Union condemned the use of violence against the protesters. The Arab League suspended Syria's membership in the league to oppose the government's response to the crisis, but granted the Syrian National Coalition Syria's seat on 6 March 2013. Russia and Iran, however, supported the Syrian government and Syria thus turned into a competitive stage between Russia and Iran on the one side and the Arab League, United States and European Union on the other. In mid-2012 full-scaled urban battle began in Damascus, followed by battle of Aleppo. The war degenerated into a stalemate in early 2013, with both sides making limited advances in different places. According to the UN, the conflict was becoming "overtly sectarian in nature", though both the opposition forces and the Syrian government deny that sectarianism plays any key role in the conflict.

2. Methodology

2.1 Materials

The materials for this study were downloaded from the websites of the BBC and Press TV. The topic "Syria unrest" was adopted as the main theme to access the home pages of these two news channels for about nine months from March to November of 2011.

During this period twenty six news articles dealing with the topic were downloaded from the two websites to form the corpus of the present study as shown in Table 1. The news posted by the BBC and Press TV were selected because they represent the two opposing sides of unrest in Syria.

While the former supports the opposition, the latter backs the Syrian government. The news articles of these two agencies thus represent two distinct ideologies.

Table 1. The Title of the News and their Broadcast Date

Text	Date	The BBC headlines	Date	Text	Press TV headlines
101	3 APR 2011	Syria: Minister to form cabinet as Douma buries dead	3 APR 2011	201	Assad orders ex-minister to form cabinet
102	17 APR 2011	Syria: Protests despite Assad reform promises	14 APR 2011	202	Syrian students march for reforms
103	30 APR 2011	Syria: Obama signs off on sanctions hitting Syria, Iran	30 APR 2011	203	US imposes fresh sanctions on Syria
104	29 SEP 2011	US ambassador Robert Ford pelted with tomatoes in Syria	29 SEP 2011	204	Syrians throw eggs at US ambassador
105	16 OCT 2011	Arab League calls for Syria dialogue within 15 days	16 OCT 2011	205	AL to debate Syria suspension in Cairo
106	30 OCT 2011	Syria's Assad warns of 'earthquake' if West intervenes	30 OCT 2011	206	Assad warns West against intervention
107	2 NOV 2011	Syria accepts Arab League peace plan after Cairo talks	3 NOV 2011	207	Syria accepts Arab League plan
108	13 NOV 2011	Syria accused over attacks on Saudi an Qatari embassy	12 NOV 2011	208	Syrian protesters storm Saudi embassy
109	14 NOV 2011	Jordan's king calls on Syria's Assad to step down	14 NOV 2011	209	Syria suspension vote divides Jordan
110	16 NOV 2011	Syria: Arab League sets deadline to end 'repression'	16 NOV 2011	210	Syria boycotts Arab League meeting
111	19 NOV 2011	Arab League deadline for Syria action passes	20 NOV 2011	211	Arab League anti-Syria deadline expires
112	20 NOV 2011	Assad says Syria will not bow down to 'pressure'	20 NOV 2011	212	Assad: Syria war will destabilize all ME
113	20 NOV 2011	Arab League rejects Syrian demand to change peace plan	17 NOV 2011	213	Arab League gives Syria 3-day deadline

2.2. Procedures

Upon downloading the twenty six articles, codes one and two were assigned to the BBC and Press TV, respectively. Then, the two digits of 01 to 13 were added to the right of the codes to specify their chronological order. For example the first article of the BBC was codified 101 which covers almost the same news posted by the Press TV and coded 201. In other words, articles 101 and 201 deal with almost the same event reported by the two agencies. (The dates on which these articles were broadcasted are given in Table 1 above.) It should be mentioned that a few dates on which these news were broadcast by the BBC and Press TV are not exactly the same. For example texts 101 and 201 are provided on 13 November and 12 November, 2011, by the BBC and Press TV respectively.

Following Khodadady and Lagzian (2013), the news articles were parsed into single and phrasal schemata and then assigned to three main semantic, syntactic and parasyntactic domains. Each domain schema was then assigned to its genera. The genus schemata were in turn subcategorized into their constituting species. Upon specifying the 122 species of the 14 genera, all the schemata constituting the 26 news articles were coded to run statistical analyses. The codes established by Khodadady (2013) were employed in the process. For the eleven agentive, complex agentive, comparative, complex, dative, complex dative, derivational, complex derivational, nominal, simple, and superlative species of adjective genus, the codes 1110, 1111, 1120, 1130, 1140, 1141, 1150, 1151, 1160, 1170, and 1180 were, for example, assigned. (The species, their codes and example types are given in Appendix.)

2.3. Data Analysis

Since Chi-square procedure is used to test the relationship between the frequencies of discrete categorical data (e.g., Hatch & Lazaraton, 1991) it was employed in this study to find out whether the news articles posted by the BBC and Press TV differed from each other in terms of their schema tokens. Crosstabulation statistics was also employed to determine the differences in the number of schema tokens for genera and species because they consisted of more than two categories. The IBM SPSS Statistics 20 was utilized to run the analyses and test the following hypotheses:

H1. There is no significant difference in the number of exclusive and common semantic, syntactic and parasyntactic domain types employed by the BBC and Press TV.
H2. There is no significant difference in the number of exclusive and common semantic, syntactic and parasyntactic genus types employed by the BBC and Press TV.
H3. There is no significant difference in the number of exclusive and common semantic, syntactic and parasyntactic species types employed by the BBC and Press TV.

3. Results

Table 2 presents the domain tokens and types by agency cross tabulation. As can be seen, 7256 semantic, syntactic and parasyntactic schemata comprise the 13 news articles broadcast by the BBC which drops to 3702 for the Press TV (henceforth PTV). As a nominal adjective contributing to the semantic domain of the news, "Syrian" has, for example, been used 64 and 51 times by the agencies, respectively. Similarly, the BBC and PTV have employed the name "Syria" 98 and 71 times, respectively, necessitating focusing on the types of the schemata rather than their tokens to trace the ideology followed by the two. As it can also be seen in Table 1, the semantic schema types employed by the BBC (1251) are almost two times more than those of the PTV (644), showing that the message the former conveys to its audience is semantically heavier than the latter.

Table 2: Domain Tokens and Types by Agency Cross Tabulation

Schema domains	Agency		Total	Agency		Total
	BBC	Press	Tokens	BBC	Press	Types
Semantic	3159	1689	4848	1251	644	1895
Syntactic	2889	1449	4338	188	127	315
Parasyntactic	1208	564	1772	267	156	423
Total	7256	3702	10958	1706	927	2633

In order to account for schema types common to both agencies and explore the significance of their difference, a third category was added to the analysis, i.e., the BBC and PTV as shown in Table 3. As can be seen, most of the distinct schema types employed by the BBC (n=886, 78.30%) and PTV (n=279, 79.30%) are semantic in nature.

Also most of the schemata shared by both agencies are semantic (n=365, 63.50%) highlighting their superiority over their syntactic and parasyntactic counterparts in conveying intended ideologies. The results also show that the BBC has used significantly more semantic, syntactic and parasyntactic schema domain types than the PTV has (X^2=94.334, df=4, p<.0005), rejecting the first hypothesis that *there is no significant difference in the number of exclusive and common semantic, syntactic and parasyntactic domain types employed by the BBC and Press TV*.

Table 3: Domain Types by Agency Cross tabulation

Schema domains	Count and percentage	Agencies			Total
		BBC	PTV	BBC & PTV	
Semantic	Count	886	279	365	1530
	% within Domain Types	57.90%	18.20%	23.90%	100.00%
	% within Agency	78.30%	79.30%	63.50%	74.30%
Syntactic	Count	75	14	113	202
	% within Domain Types	37.10%	6.90%	55.90%	100.00%
	% within Agency	6.60%	4.00%	19.70%	9.80%
Parasyntactic	Count	170	59	97	326
	% within Domain Types	52.10%	18.10%	29.80%	100.00%
	% within Agency	15.00%	16.80%	16.90%	15.80%
Total	Count	1131	352	575	2058
	% within Domain Types	55.00%	17.10%	27.90%	100.00%
	% within Agency	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Table 4 presents the schema genus types by agency crosstabulation. As can be seen, the majority of **exclusive** semantic schema types are verbs in genus for both the BBC (370) and PTV (113). However, most **common** schema types are nouns (186), indicating that nouns play the most important role in conveying the ideology followed by news agencies. The names genus of parasyntactic domain come next in terms of exclusive and common schema types for both the BBC (99) and PTV (35). Similar to its domain types, the BBC has used significantly more genus types than the PTV (X^2=142.961, df=26, p<.0005), rejecting the second hypothesis that *there is no significant difference in the number of exclusive and common semantic, syntactic and parasyntactic genus types employed by the BBC and Press TV*.

Table 4: Genus Types by Agency Cross Tabulation

Genus types	Agency			Total	Genus types	Agency			Total
	BBC	PTV	BBC & PTV			BBC	PTV	BBC & PTV	
Adjectives	135	56	50	241	Syntactic verbs	21	3	19	43
Adverbs	38	12	6	56	Abbreviations	16	5	4	25
Nouns	343	98	186	627	Names	99	35	66	200
Verbs	370	113	123	606	Numerals	25	11	8	44
Conjunctions	5	1	12	18	Para-adverbs	29	8	18	55
Determiners	12	3	30	45	Particles	1	0	1	2
Prepositions	11	7	29	47	Total	1131	352	575	2058
Pronouns	26	0	23	49					

The number of semantic, syntactic and parasyntactic species types used by the BBC and PTV has been given in Appendix (due to its length). As can be seen, out of 122 species, 24 have not been used in the articles showing the superiority of micro structural approach in differentiating these articles from other types of texts. For example, neither possessive pronouns nor exemplifying para-adverbs contribute to their contents making them detached and impersonal. As it can also be seen, the BBC has used significantly more species types than the PTV (X^2=391.741, df=194, p<.0005), rejecting the third hypothesis that *there is no significant difference in the number of exclusive and common semantic, syntactic and parasyntacticspecies types employed by the BBC and Press TV.*

4. Discussion

Van Dijk (1998) argued that ideologies are produced and reproduced in societies through texts. If the argument holds true, then the semantic schemata or vocabularies (Fowler, 1987) of the texts must do so more effectively than syntactic and parasyntactic schemata do. Other scholars, however, believe that some syntactic species such as pronouns and parasyntactic species such as names are ideology-laden too. In their study of using pronouns by politicians, Proctor and I-Wen Su (2011), for example, showed how American politicians attribute themselves to a particular ideology by the employment of pronominal choices.

Similarly, Adetunji (2006) employed deixis to show how politicians such as Nigeria's president Olusegun Obasanjo associate with and dissociate from actions taken by them or their officers at different times.

The present authors, however, believe that discussions of ideology must be based on semantic schemata first and foremost because they form the bulk of articles and thus shape their reader's views as intended. The findings of the present study, for example, show that out of 2058 schema types comprising the 26 news articles 1530 (74.30%) are semantic whereas 326 (15.80%) and 202 (9.80%) are parasyntactic and syntactic in domain, respectively. It is also suggested that both common and distinctive semantic schemata should be taken into account when the ideologies expressed by two or more agencies are discussed. To comply with the suggestions, nine common semantic types will be examined in this paper to find out what ideology the BBC and PTV pursue in their news on Syrian crisis, i.e., "anti-government", "brutal", "international", "notorious", "pro-government" and "uprising".

4.1 Anti-Government

As a complex adjective the schema 'Anti-government' has been used eight and seven times by the BBC and PTV in texts 102, 103 (f=2), 108 (f=2), 112 (f=3), 210, 202, 207, 208 (f=2), 211, and 212, respectively. Except in the context of the text 103 in which 'anti-government' describes the schema 'activists' who reported 'bloodshed' across Syria, the BBC depicts reactions to these 'anti-government' movements in all other contexts via the schemata 'repression', 'bloody' 'crackdown', 'killing', 'reform' 'promises' and 'arrest' to create a picture of violence and atrocity in Syria. Similarly, the PTV composes texts 201, 202, 208 and 212 to bring up the schemata 'cracking down', 'killed' and 'killing' in conjunction with 'anti-government' movements. In 201 and 202, however, it calls the "crackdowns" as accusations made by the 'Syrian' 'opposition' and offers no agents for killings in 208 and 212.

In contrast to the PTV, the BBC in text 103 openly attributes the 'repression' of 'anti-government' movements to 'President Bashar al-Assad'. The PTV, nonetheless, highlights the role of 'foreign countries', 'US State Department', 'Western powers', 'Israel' and 'foreigners' in sponsoring, supporting and funding these movements and thus backgrounds the crackdowns of 'anti-government' protests in Syria. In addition to portraying the 'anti-government' movements as victims, the BBC remains mute as regards these foreign interventions in Syria.

It is, however, worth mentioning here that the BBC brings up the issue of foreign interventions in Syria's affairs in some texts but all of them are expressed as quotations from President Assad accompanied with the verb schema 'accused' as discussed in the section dealing with the common schema 'Western'.

4.2 Brutal

The simple adjective schema 'brutal' has a token of 4 shared equally by the BBC in texts 101 and 108 and PTV in texts 204 and 208. Both news channels have utilized it to describe 'crackdown', although with contrasting orientations. The former identifies the Syrian "security forces" as the main agents of the "brutal crackdowns" against the "Friday prayers" which happen on a "weekly" basis in Syria as a result of which "sanctions" have been imposed on the country. The PTV, however, takes "the brutal crackdown" out of Syria and plants them in "Saudi Arabia", "Bahrain" and "Yemen" where "popular anti-regime rallies" and "peaceful protesters" are crushed by "troops and weapons." The "White House", however, refuses "to take a strong stand on the brutal crackdowns" in Bahrain and Yemen but does the opposite in Syria.

4.3 International

The derivational complex adjective 'international' has been used just once by the PTV in text 210 to bring up the acceptance of one of the Arab League conditions by Syrian government to admit 'international' and 'Arab' media to report freely from inside Syria. The BBC, however, employs it 12 times in texts 101, 103(f=2), 104(f=4), 106, 107(f=2), 111, and 113, to achieve several objectives. First, it utilizes the schema in two subheadings to describe 'pressure' and 'division'. According to Simpson and Mayr (2010) headlines express, in abbreviated form, the essence of the article. In the case of the present study, the BBC thus tries to present the Syrian crisis as an international issue whereas the PTV treats it as an internal affair.

In text 107 the schemata 'international' 'pressure' is, for example, employed to underscore the universality of this 'pressure'. In text 104 under the subheading 'international division' the BBC, however, puts up the names of just two countries, 'Russia' and the 'US', identifying the contradicting viewpoints of these two governments over Syria's issue as division in the international community.

The BBC explicitly maintains the status of these two countries' views as privileged in texts 106 and 113 by bringing up the schemata 'key' and 'players' in conjunction with 'international' to describe the 'US' and 'Russia' who warned of a 'civil war' in Syria.

In texts 104, 107, 107 and 111, the BBC utilizes the adjective schema 'international' to achieve another objective by relating it to 'pressure' laid over Syria to 'stop' and 'end' using 'force' for suppressing and cracking down protests as an international concern. And finally, in the context of text 103 'international' is employed as a descriptor of 'isolation' to emphasize the process of marginalizing Syria by 'international' community. The withdrawal of French and Moroccan ambassadors from Syria is offered by the BBC as a token of 'international' 'isolation' which is further backed up by employing the parasyntactic schemata the 'US', 'Britain', 'France', 'Qatar', 'Saudi Arabia', 'United Arab Emirates', 'Morocco', 'EU' and 18 members of the 'Arab League'.

4.4 Notorious

In contrast to the schema "international', the adjective 'notorious' has been used once in text 103 by the BBC and three times by the PTV in texts 203, 204 and 213. By describing the Syrian 'Air Force Intelligence' as "notorious" the BBC paves the way for the establishment and acceptance of the Free Syrian Army formed by defected soldiers and thus emphasizes the nature of crisis as internal. The PTV, however, utilizes the schema 'notorious' to depict a negative picture of Arab League members. The members are "notorious" because they are have committed "flagrant" and "massive human rights violations against their own people" and are accused of "massive abuses". They also lack national credibility because they "are US-sponsored authoritarian regimes."

4.5 Pro-Government

The complex adjective schema 'pro-government' has been used once by the BBC and PTV to describe different groups of people. While the BBC brings up the storming of 'pro-government' supporters into the Qatari and Saudi Arabian embassies, the PTV reports a clash between 'pro-government' demonstrators and US ambassador to Syria Robert Ford.

In contrast to the BBC, in text101, that juxtaposes schemata 'pro-government' 'supporters' with 'crowds' and 'supporters' of 'Syrian' 'President' 'Bashar al-Assad'; the PTV, in text 207,   brings up the schemata 'pro-government' 'demonstrators' in conjunction with 'Syrians'.The schemata used by the BBC depict 'pro-government' supporters as crowds who support Bashar al-Assad. The PTV, however, equates 'pro-government demonstrators' with Syrians to convey the impression that these 'pro-government' demonstrators represent the Syrian people who oppose foreign interference represented by Robert Ford. The BBC creates a negative attitude towards the demonstrators using it with 'storming', 'stormed', 'attack' and 'condemned' whereas the PTV does the same with "Ford" who 'was reportedly scheduled to hold a secret meeting with Hassan Abdul-Azim, who leads the outlawed Arab Socialist Democratic Union party'. By putting the subject pronoun 'he', which stands for 'Ford', at the sentence initial position, the PTV attributes the responsibility for the 'clash' between 'Ford' and 'pro-government' 'demonstrators' to 'Ford'.

4.6 Uprising

The complex noun 'uprising' has been used six times by the BBC in texts 101, 104, 106, 109(f=2) and 113 and once by the PTV in text 204. The former deals with "uprising" in Syria as a "pro-democracy" movement vitalized by "mass street protests" which are brutally crushed by Syrian "security forces" resulting in the death of "more than 3,500 people" and disappearance and imprisonment of "many others" as reported by "the UN".   It portrays Assad as an ignorant "president" who has 'admitted that "many mistakes" had been made by his security forces'. The BBC emphasizes his ignorance of the pro-democracy uprising as a "struggle between Islamism and pan-Arabism".

The PTV, however, avoids using the schema "uprising" for Syria and opts for the schema "crisis" as in the introductory paragraph of text 201 or "unrest" in text 202. It shifts its readers' attention from Syria to Qatar as "another authoritarian Arab League member that was fearful of a popular uprising during the Arab Spring". Thus similar to all other semantic schemata comprising the 26 news articles analyzed in this study, both the BBC and PTV have employed the schema "uprising" to support their own ideology by connecting it to the schemata which is in line with their line of thought and condemns the opposing views.

5. Conclusion

Drawing on microstructural approach of schema theory and assuming that news is an ideology laden construction of facts presented through language, a comparative analysis of the BBC and Press TV's news on Syrian crisis was conducted. It explored the difference in ideologies of these two news media by resorting to the constituting semantic, syntactic and parasyntactic schemata of their news articles. The statistical tests showed that the two news channels differed significantly from each other in the number of common and exclusive schema domain, genus and species types they had employed in the articles.

The findings of this study show that putting certain schemata together reveal the ideological standpoints of text producers regarding a specific subject or ideology, i.e., **supporting or opposing a given government**, and thus establish their analysis in terms of their species as a comprehensive and objective method in critical discourse analysis. In other words a schema must be considered as a unique concept which contributes to the ideology followed in news articles by having a specific meaning not only by itself but also in combination with other schemata comprising the articles. The BBC, for example, brings up "security forces" in juxtaposition with a number of other schemata which force its viewers discoursely to visualize the "Syrian forces" as "notorious agents" who "arrest", "open fire" as a regular part of their "brutal crackdowns", and "kill innocent civilians" on a daily basis. These schemata thus force the BBC's audience into accepting whatever measures the Western governments deem necessary to destroy these forces supported by Assad. The effect of an ideology like this on Eastern viewers becomes more profound when concerned parties' attention is drawn to the inclusion of media texts in school and university curriculum.

As Khodadady (1999b) put it, media texts dealing with political issues have long become part of educational materials in tertiary education in countries such as Iran. It is a common practice that language teachers advise their students to expose themselves to news texts and in some cases ask them to transcribe the news to improve their proficiency in English. It is, therefore, important that these language teachers take the ideologies followed by agencies into account and inform their students as such. It is also suggested that the schema-based discussion of texts be extended to syntactic and parasyntactic schemata especially pronouns, names and titles of key players in Syrian conflict, to have a more comprehensive view of the relationship between ideology and schemata in texts and talk.

And finally, it is suggested that other international news channels be compared with each other by utilizing the micro structural approach of schema theory.

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Appendix

Schema species types and their codes as used by agencies

No	Species	Code	BBC	PTV	BBC & PTV	Total
1	Agentive Adjective	1110	9	2	2	13
2	Agentive Complex Adjective	1111	0	1	0	1
3	Comparative Adjective	1120	2	1	0	3
4	Complex Adjective	1130	18	9	2	29
5	Dative Adjective	1140	11	4	2	17
6	Complex Dative Adjective	1141	4	7	0	11
7	Derivational Adjective	1150	20	7	4	31
8	Derivational Complex Adjective	1151	3	2	1	6
9	Nominal Adjective	1160	2	4	9	15
10	Simple Adjective	1170	62	18	29	109
11	Superlative Adjective	1180	4	1	1	6
12	Comparative Adverb	1210	4	1	1	6
13	Complex Adverb	1211	-	-	-	-
14	Derivational Adverb	1220	30	8	3	41
15	Simple Adverb	1230	3	2	2	7
16	Superlative Adverb	1240	1	1	0	2
17	Adjectival Noun	1310	2	2	4	8
18	Complex Noun	1320	4	5	7	16
19	Compound Noun	1330	13	1	7	21
20	Compound Complex Noun	1331	-	-	-	-
21	Conversion Noun	1332	-	-	-	-
22	Derivational Noun (Simple)	1340	55	11	32	98
23	Derivational Complex Noun	1341	2	0	0	2
24	Gerund Noun	1350	39	17	7	63
25	Gerund Noun (Complex)	1351	1	0	0	1
26	Nominal Noun	1370	3	0	1	4
27	Simple Noun	1380	224	62	128	414
28	Complex Verb (Base)	1411	3	2	1	6
29	Complex Verb (Third Person)	1412	-	-	-	-
30	Complex Verb (Past participle)	1413	1	0	0	1
31	Complex Verb (Present participle)	1414	1	0	0	1
32	Complex Verb (Simple Past)	1415	-	-	-	-
33	Derivational Verb (Base)	1421	-	-	-	-
34	Derivational Verb (Third Person)	1422	-	-	-	-
35	Derivational Verb (Past Participle)	1423	2	0	0	2
36	Derivational Verb (Present participle)	1424	1	1	0	2
37	Derivational Verb (Simple Past)	1425	-	-	-	-

38	Phrasal Verb (Base)	1431	14	3	3	20
39	Phrasal Verb (Third Person)	1432	2	0	1	3
40	Phrasal Verb (Past Participle)	1433	7	0	2	9
41	Phrasal Verb (Present Participle)	1434	3	0	1	4
42	Phrasal Verb (Simple Past)	1435	6	2	1	9
43	Simple Verb (Base)	1441	92	29	37	158
44	Simple Verb (Third Person)	1442	26	10	13	49
45	Simple Verb (Past Participle)	1443	88	26	29	143
46	Simple Verb (Present participle)	1444	49	17	6	72
47	Simple Verb (Simple Past)	1445	75	22	29	126
48	Verb (Slang)	1446	0	1	0	1
49	Conjunction (Phrasal)	2110	3	1	2	6
50	Conjunction (Simple)	2120	2	0	10	12
51	Demonstrative Determiner	2210	1	0	4	5
52	Interrogative Determiner	2220	-	-	-	-
53	Numeral Determiner	2230	5	2	6	13
54	Possessive Determiner	2240	3	0	4	7
55	Quantifying Determiner	2250	2	0	11	13
56	Ranking Determiner	2260	0	0	2	2
57	Specifying Determiner	2270	1	1	3	5
58	Complex Preposition	2310	4	3	9	16
59	Compound Preposition	2320	2	0	3	5
60	Phrasal Preposition	2330	3	3	2	8
61	Simple Preposition	2340	2	1	15	18
62	Demonstrative Pronoun	2410	4	0	2	6
63	Emphatic Pronoun	2420	2	0	0	2
64	Interrogative Pronoun	2430	-	-	-	-
65	Object Pronoun	2440	3	0	4	7
66	Possessive Pronoun	2441	-	-	-	-
67	Reflexive Pronoun	2450	2	0	0	2
68	Relative Pronoun	2460	0	0	6	6
69	Subject Pronoun	2470	2	0	7	9
70	Unspecified Pronoun	2480	13	0	4	17
71	Specified Pronoun	2481	-	-	-	-
72	Conditional Auxiliary	2510	0	0	1	1
73	Past Auxiliary	2511	1	0	3	4
74	Past Perfect Auxiliary	2512	0	0	1	1
75	Past Continuous Auxiliary	2513	1	0	0	1
76	Present Continuous Auxiliary	2514	1	1	0	2
77	Present Auxiliary	2521	0	1	6	7
78	Present Perfect Auxiliary	2522	2	0	2	4
79	Present Perfect Continuous Auxiliary	2523	-	-	-	-
80	Past Model Auxiliary	2531	3	0	0	3
81	Past Perfect Model Auxiliary	2532	4	0	0	4
82	Present Model Auxiliary	2541	3	0	0	3
83	Present Perfect Model Auxiliary	2542	-	-	-	-

84	Future Perfect Continuous Auxiliary	2543	-	-	-	-
85	Future	2544	0	0	1	1
86	Future Auxiliary	2545	0	0	1	1
87	Future Perfect Auxiliary	2546	-	-	-	-
88	Past Phrasal Auxiliary	2551	1	1	0	2
89	Past Perfect Phrasal Auxiliary	2552	-	-	-	-
90	Past Perfect Continuous Auxiliary	2553	-	-	-	-
91	Present Phrasal Auxiliary	2561	1	0	1	2
92	Model (Present)	2570	3	0	1	4
93	Model (Past)	2580	1	0	2	3
94	Abbreviations	3110	7	3	0	10
95	Acronyms	3120	9	2	4	15
96	Interjection	3210	-	-	-	-
97	Name (Full)	3310	25	14	11	50
98	Name (Labeling)	3320	4	1	2	7
99	Name (Organizational)	3330	22	6	10	38
100	Name (Single)	3340	45	13	40	98
101	Name (Titles)	3350	3	1	3	7
102	Numeral (Alphabetic)	3410	-	-	-	-
103	Numeral (Digital)	3420	23	6	8	37
104	Numeral (Roman)	3430	0	1	0	1
105	Numeral (Year)	3440	2	4	0	6
106	Para-adverbs (Additive)	3511	4	2	1	7
107	Para-adverbs (Contrasting)	3512	6	1	1	8
108	Para-adverbs (Emphatic)	3513	3	0	0	3
109	Para-adverbs (Frequency)	3514	1	0	1	2
110	Para-adverbs (Intensifying)	3515	4	2	3	9
111	Para-adverbs (Interrogative)	3516	-	-	-	-
112	Para-adverbs (Manner)	3517	0	0	1	1
113	Para-adverbs (Negation/Approval)	3518	1	0	1	2
114	Para-adverbs (Prepositional)	3519	0	3	0	3
115	Para-adverbs (Referential)	3520	0	0	2	2
116	Para-adverbs (Time)	3521	7	0	7	14
117	Para-adverbs (Exemplifying)	3522	-	-	-	-
118	Para-adverbs (Location)	3523	3	0	1	4
119	Particle (Complex)	3610	1	0	0	1
120	Particle (Simple)	3611	0	0	1	1
121	Symbol (Conventional)	3710	-	-	-	-
122	Symbol (Scientific)	3720	-	-	-	-
	Total		1131	352	575	2058