

**A Relevance-Theoretic Account of the Translation of Ideological Assumptions in
the Language of the News with Specific Reference to Translation from English
into Arabic**

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إِلَهِي قَدْ بَسَّيْتُكَ الْحُلُوَّةَ
To My Lovely Saint

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To all of you I dedicate this work.

System of Transcription

ء	َ	ر	r	ف	f
ا	a	ز	z	ق	q
ب	b	س	s	ك	k
ت	t	ش	sh	ل	l
ث	th	ص	S	م	m
ج	j	ض	D	ن	n
ح	H	ط	T	ه	h
خ	kh	ظ	DH	و	w
د	d	ع	َ	ي	y
ذ	dh	غ	gh		

Short Vowels		Long Vowels	
َ	a	آ	aa
ِ	i	وُ	uu
ُ	u	ي	ii

Abstract

Today`s world is characterised by increasingly rapid mass communication, and political issues are playing a more central role in global communication due to the dramatic influence which such factors as terrorism and economic development exert in bringing great changes to the world as a whole.

The aim of this research is to shed light on the application of Relevance theory to the translation of modality between Arabic and English with special reference to the language used in newspaper reports. A certain group of English modal auxiliaries and their Arabic counterparts are the main focus. The research corpus consists of examples of authentic reports published in English and Arabic leading newspapers, which contain the use of modality. The main hypothesis is that each one of the modal verbs, and in the case of Arabic modal particles, conveys a certain degree of relevance to the readers, this fact contributes to the readers` perception of a certain piece of news in a given way that would presumably be different if another modal were to be used to report that particular piece of news. In order to demonstrate this, two types of examples are used in the corpus. The first type consists of examples of reports published in parallel in different newspapers in the same language reporting the same piece of news but using different modals. This category of examples will help compare modals in English and in Arabic independently of each other. The second type of examples consists of reports published in newspapers in English and their translations into Arabic. The basis of comparison and contrast in analysing both types of examples is the application of Relevance theory to the study of modals and how the relevance of a given piece of news is affected by the use of a certain modal rather than another.

Chapter One: Introduction

“Different languages”, Fowler says, “not only possess different vocabularies (and other aspects of structure), but also, by means of these linguistic differences, they map the world of experience in different ways” (1991: 29). This statement highlights two kinds of differences: linguistic differences and communicative differences. It is a well-established fact that different languages have different formal characteristics which enable them to be distinguished from one another, as each language is identified by its own distinctive styles of expression, grammatical structures, and lexical and phonetic features. The second kind of differences between languages, however, is less clearly identified and remains to be subject to theoretical debate as to the communicative nature of each language and the ways in which a language maps the world of experience for its speakers. Nevertheless, all languages are not “neutral” media; far from being merely made of strings of words and ruled by certain grammatical structures, expressing ideas and relating events carries with it a communicative dimension which conveys a certain perspective or vantage point from which those events and ideas are reported. “Events and ideas are not communicated neutrally, in their natural structure, as it were. They could not be, because they have to be transmitted through some medium with its own structural features, and these structural features are already impregnated with social values which make up a potential perspective on events” (ibid., p. 25). Thus, it is important to take into consideration not only what is communicated in a certain message but also how it is communicated as the linguistic forms of expressing the message will have a bearing on the way that message is received and processed by the addressees.

The relationship between discourses and the contexts in which they are used is characterised by mutual influence. According to van Dijk, the nature of this relationship is highlighted by the fact that “contexts, just like discourse, are not objective in the sense that they consist of social facts that are understood and considered relevant in the same way by all participants. They are interpreted or constructed, and strategically and continually *made* relevant by and for participants” (1997b: 16, original emphasis). In terms of the line of argument developed in the present research, “made relevant” is a key expression in the above quotation from both technical and ideological perspectives. From a technical point of view, the term “relevance” refers to the construction of a suitable communicative context within which the message can deliver the desired effect on the receptors. This construction of a suitable communicative context is performed by the communicator of the message in order to achieve certain communicative objectives in the communicative environment of the receptors. Such communicative objectives might be in the form of shaping the receptors’ response to the conveyed message in terms of creating certain emotional effects or even initiating certain courses of action. Since discourses are essentially constituted in language, the communicator of the message seeks to structure his/her message in linguistic features that are most likely to convey the message in such a way as to create the desired communicative effect. The context within which receptors of the message interpret that message is then “made relevant” through language. Ideology, in the wide sense of the term, enters into the picture because of the social dimension which characterises both discourses and the ideologies for which they stand. Ideologies are closely related to questions of

domination and power monopoly; the dominant group in a social system develops its own ideology so as to “reproduce and legitimate [its] domination” (ibid., p. 26). In order to be able to perpetuate their dominant position in that social system, members of the dominant group will develop their ideology in such a way as to ensure that other members in that system act in a unified manner which contributes to the creation of cohesion and solidarity within the group against potential external threats. Van Dijk compares ideologies in their social role to natural languages which have a similar social role of “coordination” to achieve successful communicative interaction among the social members of a group (ibid.). However, van Dijk points out the difference between ideologies and natural languages as follows:

One fundamental difference between language and ideology, however, is that groups develop and use languages only for internal purposes, that is for communication among their own members, whereas ideologies serve not only to coordinate social practices within the group, but also (if not primarily) to coordinate social interaction with members of other groups. That is, ideologies serve to ‘define’ groups and their position within complex societal structures and in relation to other groups. It is this prevalent overall *self-definition* or social *identity* that is acquired and shared by group members in order to protect the interests of the group as a whole (ibid., original emphasis).

If the above argument stands with regards to the internal cohesive function of language within a group as opposed to the interactive function of ideology, then translation can be viewed as a cross between language and ideology. This is

because translation has the internal communicative purposes of language and it is also assigned the interactive role of ideology as it contributes to “defining” the ideology of the target-language social group as opposed to the ideology of the source-language social group. Transmitting ideologies across social groups and languages is a formidable task and it proves to be increasingly challenging in a world where ideological tensions are not often amenable to easy solutions.

Ideologies, as van Dijk says, also have a cognitive dimension: “ideologies are the mental representations that form the basis of social cognition that is of the shared knowledge and attitudes of a group. That is, besides a social function of coordination, they also have *cognitive functions* of belief organization: at a very general level of thought, they tell people what their ‘position’ is, and what to think about social issues” (ibid., p. 29, original emphasis). This cognitive dimension which characterises ideology is crucial for the understanding of the mechanisms that are put into action when the communicator of the message attempts to “make” the message relevant to his/her audience’s set of beliefs and perceptions with regards to the context in which they interpret that message. Relevance is used in this research in its technical sense and thus it refers to ideology as a set of assumptions held by the audience and to which the communicator of the message refers when conveying his/her message to that audience within a specific context.

The main hypothesis of the present research is that the interaction between language, ideology and relevance is cyclical: ideological assumptions are part of the overall set of cognitive assumptions which the readers hold in their cognitive environment, those assumptions form part of the wider ideological context within which the communicator conveys his/her message, the communicator constructs

the message by choosing certain linguistic features that are most functional in rendering the message relevant to the intended readers. i.e. linguistic features which prompt the readers to recall the ideological assumptions that make interpreting the communicated message produce the desired effect. When translation is involved in order to communicate the message to an audience speaking a different language this cycle is repeated with regards to the target audience.

When the above cycle is thus repeated in translation, the translator becomes the communicator of the original message to the target audience through the translated text. It is argued that the target audience hold in their minds a set of ideological assumptions that are distinct from the ideological assumptions which form a part of the mindset of the original audience to whom the original message is communicated. Thus, the translated message will be relevant to the target audience with regards to their own ideological assumptions which may vary from those of the original audience. Consequently, the translator will take into consideration this difference in the communicative environment of the target audience when rendering the original message in the target language. However, it is important to note that this process is not always as straightforward. In other words, there are cases when the translator's linguistic choices when rendering the original message in the target language are constrained by a number of factors.

The present research aims to provide insight into some of the factors that affect the translator's linguistic choices in translating news from English into Arabic with special reference to some of the English modal auxiliaries and their corresponding modal particles and verbs in Arabic. Among these factors are the

shifts in the use of Arabic modal particles from their original uses in classical texts to their modern uses in newspaper styles in particular. In several cases, translation of news from English into Arabic reveals lack of consistency in usage of the Arabic modal particles and thus the translation of the English modals into their correspondent Arabic modals is not always consistent or systematic.

This research sheds light on the communicative effects which such inconsistency in the use of Arabic modal particles can produce on the readers of the Arabic version of the news. Such communicative effects are understood here in terms of the amount of evidence which each Arabic modal is presumed to convey and the subsequent relevance of the information communicated to the readers through the use of that modal in transmitting a certain political or ideological message.

With this hypothesis in mind, and within the wider theoretical context of Relevance theory, the investigation builds on the relevance-theoretic model for five English modal auxiliaries as developed by Groefsema (1995). The relevance-theoretic account of the English modals as developed here is based on Groefsema's notion of "evidence". Groefsema's model of the English modals focuses on the four modals *can*, *may*, *must*, and *should*. She distinguishes between the meanings of each of these modals on the basis of the relationship which holds between the evidence which a modal indicates and the number of propositions with a bearing on a proposition *p* which contains the modal. For example, in the case of the modals *can* and *may*, the relationship between the evidence which these modals indicate and the propositions with a bearing on *p* is that of "compatibility", whereas the relationship between the evidence indicated by the

modals *must* and *should* and the propositions with a bearing on p is that of “entailment”. Furthermore, the modals are distinguished from each other on the basis of the number of propositions which have a bearing on a proposition p containing the modals. Thus, where the modals *can* and *must* indicate that the evidence is compatible or entailed respectively by the set of all the propositions having a bearing on p , the modals *may* and *should* indicate that the evidence is compatible or entailed respectively by at least some of the propositions having a bearing on p .

The difference between Groefsema’s model and the present argument is that in this research the framework for discussion of the English modals is expanded to include the past forms *could* and *might*. This is achieved by modifying the original notion of “evidence” and arguing that each of the English modals not only denotes that evidence is either compatible or entailed by some or all of the propositions having a bearing on a proposition p which contains the modal, but also each modal denotes a **degree** of that evidence. When applied to the present and past forms of the English modals, this argument has sought to prove that the modals *can* and *may* indicate a **maximum** degree of evidence while the past forms *could* and *might* indicate a **minimum** degree of evidence. The notions of compatibility and entailment are employed in the present discussion because they contribute to a fuller understanding of the interpretation process which takes place regarding the use of a modal auxiliary in a given utterance. Moreover, Groefsema’s discussion of the way that each modal differs from the other modals according to the number of propositions which have a bearing on a proposition p is also preserved in the present chapter because the number of

propositions play a significant role in the distinction between the modals according to the strong or weak margin of possibility or necessity they denote in an utterance. In other words, the modal *can*, for instance, denotes a greater possibility than the modal *may* because in the case of *can* the evidence indicated is compatible with the set of all the propositions having a bearing on a proposition *p* where *can* is used; in the case of *may* the evidence indicated by this modal is compatible with some of the propositions having a bearing on *p*. The same description applies to the uses of the other modals.

The hypothesis that different modals indicate different degrees of evidence not only proves to hold a key position in extending the relevance-theoretic analysis to accommodate the present as well as the past forms of the English modal auxiliaries, but is equally significant in establishing a framework for comparison of the English modal system with modal systems in other languages. Such comparative framework is crucial to any endeavour concerning the study of translation processes taking place between modal systems across languages.

The relevance-theoretic model of the English modal auxiliaries as developed in this research is then extended to include the Arabic modal particles and verbs. The hypothesis argued for in this research is that Arabic modal particles and verbs share the quality which Groefsema calls “evidence”. The reason behind approaching Arabic modal particles and verbs from the viewpoint of a shared quality of “evidence” is that this quality can account for the difference in interpretation between particles indicating very close functions in Arabic utterances such as the particles denoting possibility: *qad* قد and *rubbama* ربما. Furthermore, this account based on the notion of “evidence” also makes it

possible to compare and contrast the interpretations of the Arabic modals with those of the English modals on the basis of relevance-theoretic consideration.

The relevance-theoretic account developed for the English and the Arabic modals is then applied to the translation of modality between those two languages drawing on authentic examples of translated news reports and commentaries from English into Arabic. The main argument is that different modals convey different degrees of evidence for the proposition which contains them. Consequently, translating an English modal into an Arabic modal that does not convey a corresponding degree of evidence to the reader of the translation to that conveyed to the original reader by the source text results in discrepancy between the relevance being conveyed by the proposition of the original, and that conveyed by the proposition in the translation.

Such an account of the English and Arabic modals is aimed to show that using modality in the language of the news conveys the ideological aspect of modality as a linguistic feature as well as the mechanism through which this ideological aspect is communicated to the readership. Unlike Gutt's (1991/2000) analysis which accounts for translation in terms of interpretive resemblance and draws on the notion of translation as an instance of the interpretive use of language, the account developed in the present research provides a technical basis for comparing and contrasting the different modals in English and Arabic and relates that technical aspect of the use of modals as a specific linguistic feature in the language of the news to the ideological dimension of language which is communicated to the readers. It is an attempt to identify the processes that are at work during the act of translation and account for the resulting translated version.

The target audience perceive the translated version according to their already existing ideological assumptions and to how these assumptions are being recalled by the translator through the use of a certain modal in order to evoke certain ideological assumptions. Depending on how closely the modal in the translation corresponds to the modal used in the original, these assumptions are either similar to the ideological assumptions evoked in the original text or at odds with them.

The thesis is structured in the following way: chapter two lays out the methodological framework of the research. The research investigates the use of modal verbs and particles in the language of international news as reported in newspapers. First the use of a designated group of English modal auxiliaries in British and American newspapers is studied, then the use of modal particles in Arabic newspapers is analysed. Lastly, the research investigates the translation of modals from English into Arabic in news reports. For the aims of this research, a corpus of investigation is compiled which consists of two categories of examples. The first category is compiled from parallel data and comprises examples of authentic news reports published by a given number of English-speaking newspapers in Britain and the USA on the one hand, and examples of authentic news reports published by Arabic-speaking newspapers on the other. The choice of the newspapers under investigation which are included in the research corpus is based on the representation of the diverse spectrum of political vantage points and ideologies upheld in Britain and the USA and in the different Arab countries across the Arab World. All extracts in the corpus include the use of modal verbs and particles in the language of the news and this use is analysed with regards to the respective ideologies which the newspapers in question stand for.

The second category of examples consists of authentic extracts of translated news reports from English into Arabic. The study of authentic examples of translated news focuses on the translation of English modal auxiliaries into their corresponding Arabic modal particles and verbs. The main objective of such study is to highlight the ideological dimension of using modality in reporting news in English and the extent to which the ideologies promoted in the Arab countries affect the way the news is translated in Arabic newspapers.

Chapter three studies the role of language in conveying ideology through discourse in social interaction. The chapter sets out to show that “language is not neutral, but a highly constructive mediator” (Fowler, 1991: 1). In other words, language, far from being an objective vehicle used to transmit a certain message, contributes to the construction of the communicative scene of the communicated message so that the readers interpret that message within the contextual framework conveyed by the linguistic choices of the communicator. Such construction of contextual framework for the communication of messages is conducted from a particular angle or viewpoint, namely, an ideological perspective. The communicator of the message seeks to strengthen and promote his/her ideological standpoint through his/her linguistic choices in transmitting the message to the audience. Discourses illustrate the social dimension of language use, they contribute to the elaboration of ideological cohesion among members of a particular group of readers in a particular context as opposed to other groups. Thus, discourses are “systematically-organized sets of statements which give expression to the meanings and values of an institution [...] A discourse provides a set of possible statements about a given area, and organizes and gives structure

to the manner in which a particular topic, object, process is to be talked about. In that it provides descriptions, rules, permissions and prohibitions of social and individual actions" (ibid., p. 42). Discourses are social events which means that they cannot be produced and analysed as isolated textual monoliths. discourse, according to van Dijk, "is a complex communicative event that also embodies a social context, featuring participants (and their properties) as well as production and reception processes" (1988: 2). This means that discourse has a cognitive dimension which addresses the audience's reception of the communicated message according to certain cognitive mechanisms concerning previously held assumptions and the relevance which the new communicated message holds with regards to those assumptions forming part of the mindset of the receiving audience.

Chapters four and five study the cognitive dimension of language and discourse by studying the mechanisms of language reception in terms of the potential relevance which the new communicated message holds to the receiving audience with regards to their previously held assumptions which constitute the contextual communicative environment within which they receive and interpret the message. In Chapter four, previous analyses of English modality are investigated, then analyses which approach the study of modality from a relevance-theoretic perspective are explained. The key term associated with the relevance of modal verbs is that of the extent of evidence which each of the modal verbs conveys to the audience at the time of communication. This analysis is then extended to include the Arabic modal particles and verbs to establish a theoretical framework of discussion for both English and Arabic modal systems.

In parallel to the study of English modals, the study of Arabic modals in Chapter five takes into consideration the analyses developed in classical times by the classical Arabic grammarians between the 6th and the 14th centuries, together with modern studies of the Arabic modals. From those previous analyses conclusions are drawn for establishing a theoretical platform as to the degree of relevance which each of the Arabic modals conveys in a certain context. Such detailed discussion provides suitable grounds for comparing and contrasting the English and Arabic modal systems in order to highlight the ways in which translating modals from English into Arabic is to be analysed. The fact that previous studies of the Arabic modals have been largely subsumed under wider linguistic discussions of particles and verbs in Arabic which do not share any of the modal characteristics of the modals in question, makes the establishment of an exclusive framework for those modals a demanding task, particularly when taking into consideration that the Arabic modals have undergone great semantic change from their original meanings at the time of the classical Arabic grammarians to the modern times and especially in journalistic styles without extensive modern research to underline and accompany this change.

Chapter six discusses the act of translation and sheds light on the translation of modality from English into Arabic as used in the language of news reports. The main hypothesis is that different modals convey different degrees of evidence to the receivers of the message including the use of modality. As a result, the translation of an English modal into an Arabic modal which does not correspond to the English modal in terms of the degree of evidence conveyed to the audience affects the ways the message is received by the audience. This

assumption takes into consideration the communicative environment of the respective readers which involves the already held ideological assumptions which are part of the contextual background of the piece of news which is originally communicated to the source audience in English and subsequently translated to the target audience in Arabic.

Although fields such as the relationship between language and ideology, language and relevance, translation and relevance have already been widely researched; the present research highlights interrelationships that have been so far subsumed under wider disciplines. The aims of the present research is to emphasise the relationship between ideology and relevance on the grounds that ideological assumptions are part of the overall set of cognitive assumptions according to which the relevance of an utterance is determined.

The concluding chapter lays out the findings of the thesis and relates those findings to possible future areas of research where these findings can be extended and applied. The present research is by no means an exhaustive account of all the existing modal expressions in Arabic and English, it can however represent a starting point for further investigation into the applicability of Relevance theory to the analysis of the modal systems in Arabic and English and also the possibility of extending this analysis to other pairs of languages and in other kinds of contexts.

Chapter Two: Methodology

2.1 Introduction

The application of a corpus-based methodology to the study of translation has been a subject of central interest for many scholars in the field. It is now a widely acknowledged fact that, for the investigation of the process of translating and of translation as the final product to be effective and theoretically sound, it should be carried out empirically, i.e. by examining actual translations rather than by formulating prescriptive approaches and guidelines. This chapter begins with defining corpus as a general term, and presenting scholars' views regarding its application to descriptive translation studies. The chapter shall then proceed to introduce the methodology followed in the present research including the type of data used and the specific criteria for presenting and analysing it.

2.2 Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS)

Baker pioneered the argument that the use of corpora in translation studies would be essential in advancing towards a descriptive view of translation. Access to corpora compiled from a large scale of translated texts as well as developing appropriate methods to investigate them “will provide theorists of translation with a unique opportunity to observe the object of their study and to explore what it is that makes it different from other objects of study [...] It will also allow us to explore [...] the principles that govern translational behaviour and the constraints under which it operates” (1993: 235). Baker sees that the necessary move towards

descriptive studies in general and corpus-based studies in particular has been supported by the shift of emphasis of Translation Studies from the primary focus on the static notion of “equivalence” in its many forms to the dynamic application of usage.

In Baker’s view, the approaches which stress the importance of the target text vis-a-vis the source text do at the same time facilitate the way towards placing greater emphasis on the significance of corpus research in translation studies. An example of such approaches is the polysystem theory as expounded by Baker. She cites this theory for two reasons:

First, the [polysystem] theory assumes a high level of interdependence among the various systems and sub-systems which underlie a given polysystem, as well as among the polysystems of literature in various cultures [...] As a consequence, the status of translated literature is elevated to the point where it becomes worthy of investigation as a system in its own right [...] Second, one of the main properties of the polysystem is that there is constant struggle among its various strata [...] This constant state of flux suggests that no literary system or sub-system is restricted to the periphery by virtue of any inherent limitations on its value (1993: 237-8).

Baker also sees in Gideon Toury’s “norms” an important step towards corpus-based translation research. Toury’s norms are “options which are regularly taken up by translators at a given time and in a given socio-cultural situation. In this sense, the notion of norms is very similar to that of typicality, a notion which has emerged from recent work on corpus-based lexicography” (ibid., p. 239). From

this perception of norms, Baker concludes that norms are tools of descriptive analysis because they refer to patterns of translator's behaviour and such patterns "can be identified only by reference to a corpus of source and target texts, the scrutiny of which would allow us to record strategies of translation which are repeatedly opted for, in preference to other available strategies, in a given culture or textual system" (ibid., p. 140).

Toury (1995: 1) advocates the need for Translation Studies scholars to steer away from prescription and pay due attention to describing true-life occurrences in the field. In his opinion

What constitutes the subject matter of a proper discipline of Translation Studies is (observable or reconstructable) facts of real life rather than merely speculative entities resulting from the preconceived hypotheses and theoretical models. It is therefore empirical by its very nature and should be worked out accordingly.

It is this empirical dimension of translation studies which steers the discipline away from purely theoretical hypotheses and prescriptive guidelines and theories about what translators should or should not do regarding either the translation process or the translation product or both and what are the kinds of functions translation should serve or preserve to actual translation phenomena taking place in real life. In order for translation hypotheses to be applicable and verifiable, and to be able to find solutions and answers for the wide variety of problems that translators encounter during the translation process, these actual phenomena should be the subject of exploration and analyses in order to describe the translation act as a whole and its components according to the practical realities of

the discipline and its agents. Thus, DTS “represents the branch that concerns itself with the systematic description of three distinct empirical phenomena seen as constituting the object of the discipline as a whole: the product, the process, and the function of translation” (Laviosa, 2002: 10). Laviosa echoes Toury’s approach concerning DTS which revolves around the conception that translations as entities and translating as activity as well as translation form, which is defined as the relationships holding the original text together as well as strategies during the generation of translation, are all interconnected facts which result in “interdependencies” leading to the intention to uncover “regularities of behaviour” that mark the relationships between function, product and process. Empirical evidence collected from research into a corpus of translation phenomena helps identify what Toury calls interdependencies. This in turn leads to establishing models of translators’ regularities of behaviour in producing the final translation product as it stands for investigation.

There is a consensus among translation scholars that in order for translation theories to be more comprehensive and robust they have to rely on a corpus that is scientifically compiled and analysed. Holmes (1988: 101) points out that

Many of the weaknesses and naivetés of contemporary translation theories are a result of the fact that the theories were, by and large, developed deductively, without recourse to actual translated texts-in-function, or at best to a very restricted corpus introduced for illustration rather than for verification or falsification.

Translation Studies is thus to be considered “an empirical discipline” (ibid., p. 71) but also, as Toury reminds, “a remarkably heterogeneous series of loosely connected paradigms” (1995: 23) which makes the task of defining the proper object of study a challenging one. Toury’s concern is due to the fact that there remains a strong tendency within the discipline “to regard different paradigms as mere alternative ways of dealing with ‘the same thing’. Which they are not, nor can we expect them to be” (ibid.). In this context arises the importance of applying the descriptive approach to Translation Studies because “the cumulative findings of descriptive studies should make it possible to formulate a series of coherent *laws* which would state the inherent relations between all the variables found to be relevant to translation [...] the formulation of laws of this type requires the establishment of *regularities of behaviour*, along with a maximal control of the parameters of function, process and product” (ibid., p. 16, original emphasis).

In its use of methodological analysis to describe translational phenomena, DTS draws on the use of methodology in corpus linguistics, but whereas methodology in corpus linguistics occupies a central position within the discipline, it is “considered just another dimension of DTS, not an integral part of its definition as is the case for corpus linguistics, whose object of study is created by the methodology itself” (Laviosa, 2002: 16-17). The other difference between the application of methodology to translation and its application to corpus linguistics is that, unlike corpus linguistics, it is possible for methodology in translation to encompass analysis of data outside the scope of the linguistic domain of the text to cover other aspects of text production that exert an influence on shaping translational behaviour. DTS can benefit from the ways of methodology

application in corpus linguistics but this application should be subject to elaboration and adjustment according to the specific requirements of the field of translation studies in analysing its product and translation phenomena.

2.3 A corpus-based investigation of translation

According to Baker (2000: 243) translation studies “has specifically inherited from literary studies its preoccupation with the style of individual creative writers, but only insofar as describing the style of a writer can inform the process of translating his or her work [...] From linguistics, on the other hand, translation studies inherited the interest in studying the style of social groups of language users [...] for similar reasons”. Baker’s use of the term “inherited” implies that translation studies is a younger discipline than literary studies and linguistics, but also a discipline with its own theoretical framework and practical mechanisms which set this young discipline apart from the other older ones. Baker is interested in identifying shared aspects of language use among members of social groups through the study of style. With translation in mind, Baker aims at “studying the language shared by a group adhering to a certain poetics [...] in which case the possibility attributable to socially shared preferences for certain uses of language must be worth examining” (ibid., p. 243). Baker’s aim parallels Toury’s objective to investigate translators’ “regularities of behaviour”. The application of corpus research to the study of translation product and process can give insight into the possibility that there exist certain linguistic habits among translators of source texts that belong either to a certain genre or discourse or to a certain language or period of time.

Baker is among the first scholars who advocated the importance of applying methodological analyses to the study of translation. Baker has questioned the lack of scholarly interest in studying the “style” of the translator independently from that of the original author, and also the failure to study a corpus which is compiled exclusively of translated material. This is because “translation has traditionally been viewed as a derivative rather than creative activity. The implication is that a translator cannot have, indeed *should not* have, a style of his or her own, the translator’s task being simply to reproduce as closely as possible the style of the original” (ibid., p. 244, original emphasis). Baker challenges this traditional view and argues that every translator has his/her own individual style which is as distinct as “a thumb-print”, therefore, any study of translation should always be accompanied by an attempt to demonstrate that “a translator does indeed leave his or her individual imprint on every text they produce” (ibid.). Baker defines her notion of the style of the translator as follows

the notion of style might include the (literary) translator’s choice of the type of material to translate, where applicable, and his or her consistent use of specific strategies, including the use of prefaces or afterwords, footnotes, glossing in the body of the text, etc. More crucially, a study of a translator’s style must focus on the manner of expression that is typical of a translator, rather than simply instances of open intervention. It must attempt to capture the translator’s characteristic use of language, his or her individual profile of linguistic habits, compared to other translators. Which means that style [...] is a matter of patterning: it involves describing

preferred or recurring patterns of linguistic behaviour, rather than individual or one-off instances of intervention (ibid., p. 145).

In her definition of a translator's style, Baker echoes Hermans' (1996) notion of a translator's "voice". Hermans believes that the translator's voice can be traced throughout the translated text. Hermans emphasises that there are instances in the translated text where the translator's voice "breaks through the surface of the text speaking for itself, in its own name" (1996: 27). However, Baker questions Herman's conclusion that the translator's voice may well be "impossible to detect in the translated text" (ibid.). In her argument for the necessity to recognise a translator's style as distinguished from the style of the author of the original text, Baker is interested in shifting the focus of the study of translation from "literary stylistics" to "forensic stylistics". Whereas literary stylistics highlights the translator's conscious choices of linguistic features in order to enhance the artistic aspect of the text, forensic stylistics, in contrast, "tends to focus on quite subtle, unobtrusive linguistic habits which are largely beyond the conscious control of the writer and which we, as receivers, register mostly subliminally" (2000: 246). In identifying the translator's linguistic habits and stylistic patterns, the analyst should be able to gain more access to "the cultural and ideological positioning of the translator, or of translators in general, or about the cognitive processes and mechanisms that contribute to shaping our translational behaviour" (ibid., p. 258). Baker states that those translational stylistic patterns stem from "potential motivation" which the analyst needs to concentrate on in order to be able to reach conclusions about the translator's translational behaviour particularly when identifying general patterns of translational behaviour rather than isolated cases of

linguistic choices which may be attributed to factors which are related to the original text and not to the wider context of the translator's ideological and cognitive motivations.

According to Baker, developing corpus-based strategies “goes some way towards fulfilling the growing need for a rigorous descriptive methodology in an attempt to increase the inter-subjectivity of the applied areas of translation studies, such as translator training and translation criticism, and of course in the pursuit of a more satisfying theoretical account of the phenomenon of translation itself” (1995: 224). Earlier in her research, Baker (1993: 236) outlines the developments which have occurred in Translation Studies which demonstrate the need for investigating authentic instances of translational behaviour and analysis of large quantities of translated texts more clearly and renders research of translation corpus more imperative. These developments involve the shift of focus from formal correspondence between the source and target texts in terms of grammar and meaning to functional correspondence of the texts as a whole. This shift in focus from formal linguistic structures to extra-linguistic usage and function of the text as a whole is the starting point for corpus-based research into a large quantity of translated texts and their originals in order to arrive at well-founded conclusions regarding the study of translation in authentic situations.

2.3.1 The representativeness of corpus

Corpus in general is defined as “a large collection of authentic texts that have been gathered in electronic form according to a specific set of criteria” (Bowker, 2002: 1). Originally, the word “corpus” referred to “any collection of

writings, in a processed or unprocessed form, usually by a specific author” (Baker, 1995: 225). But more recently, as corpus linguistics expanded in both size and application, the original meaning of the word has transformed to accommodate three new qualities: these are “(i) *corpus* now means primarily a collection of texts held in machine-readable form and capable of being analysed automatically or semi-automatically in a variety of ways; (ii) a corpus is no longer restricted to ‘writings’ but includes spoken as well as written text, and (iii) a corpus may include a large number of texts from a variety of sources, by many writers and speakers and on a multitude of topics” (ibid.). The applications of corpus are varied, it is normally used to “validate, exemplify or build up a language theory” (Tognini-Bonelli, 2001: 65). In linguistic studies, the EAGLES initiative described a corpus in 1996 as “a collection of pieces of language that are selected and ordered according to explicit linguistic criteria in order to be used as a sample of the language” (quoted in Laviosa, 2002: 6).

A prominent consideration in compiling any corpus is the degree of its representativeness with regard to the linguistic phenomenon or phenomena it is designed to describe. In compiling a corpus, the key consideration is that “it is put together for a particular purpose and according to explicit design criteria in order to ensure that it is representative of the given area or sample of language it aims to account for” (Baker, 1995: 225). The term “representativeness” is a recurrent theme in the study of corpus design and application and scholars argue that the validity of any corpus is indeed gauged by the extent of representativeness it achieves for the data it is aimed to investigate or illustrate. As Biber et al. (1998: 246) state

A corpus is not simply a collection of texts. Rather, a corpus seeks to represent a language or some part of a language. The appropriate design for a corpus therefore depends upon what it is meant to represent. The representativeness of the corpus, in turn, determines the kinds of research questions that can be addressed and the generalizability of the results of the research.

What validates a research corpus then is the way in which the corpus adequately and appropriately represents the linguistic phenomena it is designed to describe. It seems, however, to be a daunting task to achieve complete representativeness in compiling a research corpus due to the great variation of linguistic phenomena in any given language. Biber et al. recognise that “representing a language -or even part of a language- is a problematic task. We do not know the full extent of variation in languages or all the contextual variables that need to be covered in order to capture all variation in texts” (1998: 246). Alternatively, therefore, the aim is to build up “a sample which is maximally representative of the variety under examination, that is, which provides us with as accurate a picture as possible of the tendencies of that variety, including their properties” (McEnery, 2001: 30). It is evident, on the other hand, that the nature and size of corpus samples do vary according to the discipline within which the corpus is compiled and from which samples are taken. In linguistics, for example, corpora generally comprise samples of text fragments of specific length, such as the Brown and LOB Corpora, rather than whole running texts. Other corpora, such as the Cobuild/Bank of England corpus, are made of whole texts regardless of the size of the individual texts in the corpus. In other disciplines, such as machine translation,

corpora do not consist of texts but a number of examples. Newton (1992: 223) therefore defines the term “corpus” in machine translation as “the definite collection of grammatical sentences that is used as a basis for the descriptive analysis of a language” (quoted in Baker, 1995: 225). The size of any corpus sample is not, however, a primary concern because the efficiency of a given sample is measured by its degree of representativeness “which refers to the extent to which a sample includes the full range of variability in a population” (Biber, 1993: 243). Thus, the notion of representativeness of any given corpus is very much relative and depends to a great extent on the specific nature of research for which the corpus is compiled and the objectives it is required to fulfill. That means that “the representativeness of a corpus is never absolute and complete but is perpetually sought and negotiated by identifying and making explicit both the design criteria which underlie the choice of texts that make up a corpus and the proportions of different text categories in it” (Laviosa, 2002: 6). At any rate, the answer to the question of whether a certain corpus is adequately representative depends on the nature and purpose of the specific research for which that corpus has been compiled. Kennedy (1998: 68) confirms that “in the final analysis, of course, a corpus is more or less adequate according to the extent to which the corpus matches the purposes to which it is put”.

According to Biber (1993: 243), researchers typically consider the issue of sample size as a major factor in achieving the required representativeness of a certain corpus, but what researchers need to focus on instead is “a thorough definition of the target population and decisions concerning the method of sampling”. The representativeness of a sample is determined, Biber says, by “a

prior full definition of the ‘population’ that the sample is intended to represent, and the techniques used to select the sample from that population” (ibid.). A prior and well-defined knowledge of what the sample is intended to represent is a prerequisite for assessing corpus representativeness. Definition of the target population consists of two aspects: “(1) the boundaries of the population - what texts are included and excluded from the population; (2) hierarchical organization within the population - what text categories are included in the population, and what are their definitions” (ibid.).

In addition to a proper definition of the target population of the corpus, the adequacy of corpus representativeness depends on “the extent to which it includes the range of linguistic distributions in the population; i.e. different linguistic features are differently distributed (within texts, across texts, across text types), and a representative corpus must enable analysis of these various distributions” (ibid.).

Alongside the issue of corpus degree of representativeness of the phenomena under investigation, there is also the issue of subjectivity of decision regarding the compilation of corpus particularly in the study of translations and the translators’ behaviour. Olohan regards the individual decisions as to which material should be included or excluded from a translation corpus to be “problematic” in corpus-based study of translation. Crisafulli (2002: 32-3) justifies this problematic nature of translation corpus by the fact that “the very design of corpora arises out of an act of interpretation [...] empirical facts do not exist independently of the scholar’s viewpoint; indeed it is the scholar who creates the empirical facts of the analysis by making observable (raw) data relevant to

his/her perspective” (quoted in Olohan, 2004: 47). This subjective nature of corpus compilation drives a number of scholars in Translation Studies to reject the possibility that corpus-based Translation Studies can be used to establish objective and universal laws of translation “partly on the grounds that the subjective judgements and intuitions of the researcher are involved in all stages of corpus analysis, from the very decision to carry out this type of research to the choice of research questions, from decisions on corpus design to the interpretation of results” (ibid.).

2.3.2 Parallel and comparable corpora in translation

A parallel corpus is to be understood as “a corpus consisting of a set of texts in one language and their translations in another language” (Olohan, 2004: 24). There has been a number of inconsistencies about the definition of parallel corpus in the literature; some scholars use the term to refer to bilingual texts that can be compared according to their content but are not necessarily translations of each other (cf. Laviosa, 1997). Baker (1995: 230) defines a parallel corpus as one which “consists of original, source language-texts in language A and their translated versions in language B. This is the type of corpus that one immediately thinks of in the context of translation studies”. Baker sees this kind of corpus as the necessary tool for future advance in computer-assisted training of translators and in developing the performance of machine translation systems. In Baker’s words

Their [parallel corpora] most important contribution to the discipline in general is that they support a shift of emphasis, from *prescription* to

description. They allow us to establish, objectively, how translators overcome difficulties of translation in practice, and to use this evidence to provide realistic models for trainee translators. They also have an important role to play in exploring norms of translating in specific socio-cultural and historical contexts (ibid., p. 231, original emphasis).

The use of parallel corpora is believed to have several benefits for research. The investigation of source texts and their translations allows the researcher to detect translational behaviour especially through the assessment of several translation versions of the same source text.

Another type of corpora is “multilingual corpora” which Baker (ibid., p. 232) defines as “sets of two or more monolingual corpora in different languages, built up either in the same or different institutions on the basis of similar design criteria”. In this context, multilingual corpora are similar to parallel corpora in being particularly useful in translator training and improving the performance of machine translation software. The importance of multilingual corpora arises from the fact that they “enable us to study items and linguistic features in their home environment, rather than as they are used in translated text. They are useful inasmuch as they can provide access to the natural patterns of the target language in particular” (ibid.). However, Baker is skeptical about the usefulness of multilingual corpora because they rely on the assumption that all languages are identical in the ability of expressing things in a “natural” way, an assumption which is obviously widely discredited. This will result in “a serious distortion of our view of the very phenomenon we should be trying to explicate” (ibid., p. 233).. Baker suggests that it is necessary to shift the focus from comparing

languages as such to comparing text production in general. i.e. text produced independently from the existence of another text produced in another language, with translation which involves text produced as a result of the existence of another text produced in a different language. Baker argues that this shift of focus can be effected by access to comparable corpora.

A comparable corpus, on the other hand, is defined as “a bi/multilingual corpus made up of two or more sets of texts from the same subject domain(s)” (Laviosa, 1997: 36). Baker identifies comparable corpora as those which “consist of two separate collections of texts in the same language: one corpus consists of original texts in the language in question and the other consists of translations in that language from a given source language or languages” (1995: 234). According to her, “both corpora should cover a similar domain, variety of language and time span, and be of comparable length. The translation corpus should be representative in terms of the range of original authors and of translators” (ibid.). The ways in which researchers might benefit from comparable corpora involve the identification of translation-specific patterns of language use, i.e. patterns of linguistic features and behaviour which seem to be a distinctive characteristic of translated texts setting them apart from other text categories. A comparable corpus is designed to underline frequencies of linguistic patterns which are pertinent to translated texts. Unlike the case with parallel corpora, Baker does not think that comparable corpora are of great practical value because they do not have any clear applications in translator training projects or obvious contribution to improving the performance of machine translation systems.

The overarching aim of this type of corpus research is to study the underlying motivations which distinguish the language of translation from other types of language. It is therefore essential to ensure that texts in a comparable corpus are “similar in as many respects as possible in an attempt to ensure that their linguistic differences can be reliably attributed to their status as translation versus non-translation [...] rather than to confounding variables” (Laviosa, 1997: 39). However, Laviosa is aware of the limitations that may hinder research into comparable corpora, as “the imbalance inherent in the translation market of the two language communities affects the level of comparability that can be achieved in a corpus of this kind for both the translational variety and the original component of each of the two languages. This, in turn, restricts the comparative analyses one can perform” (ibid., p. 42).

Laviosa also distinguishes between comparable corpora designed to study different genres. Literary comparable corpora, for example, differ in nature and function from that designed to investigate language used in the newspapers. Drawing on her own experience in researching data about narrative works selected from the British National Corpus (BNC), she found that there are a number of constraints regarding narrative works which involve varying levels of comparability and subjective evaluation. In contrast, she points out, “the dimensions of comparability put forward for newspapers are [...] greater in number and relatively less problematic given the greater availability of translational and non-translational texts and the possibility of identifying the topic of each article from the titles and subtitles with a reasonable degree of accuracy.

The level of comparability pursued with this text genre can therefore be considered reasonably adequate” (ibid., p. 40).

Following the typology put forward by Laviosa (ibid., pp. 34-8), the corpus design in the present research consists of samples of, rather than full, texts. The language of those portions of texts is general, i.e. assumed to represent non-specialised language. Texts constituting the research corpus are bilingual and the languages involved are Arabic and English. The corpus under investigation comprises parallel and comparable data, mainly translational and mono-directional, i.e. from English into Arabic. The examples included in the discussion are taken from a wider pool of examples. Unless otherwise indicated, back translations of Arabic examples are my own, as well as back translations of explanations and descriptions of the Arabic modals quoted from different references.

2.4 Description and aims of the translation corpus

2.4.1 Corpus selection criteria

Examples from reports published in different newspapers are synchronic when they constitute comparable texts written in the same language reporting the same piece of news or a translation text and a source text reporting one piece of news. However, the parallel and comparable corpus as a whole is diachronic and it runs over a three-year period of time, it thus includes reports covering a variety of events. The directionality of the translations is from English into Arabic. The type of the medium used in reporting is written to be read and there is no participation on the part of the readers, so the discourse is a non-interactive monologue.

The data compiled for the aims of the present research are extracted from reports published in newspapers in both Arabic and English. The selected Arabic newspapers which constitute the corpus are daily newspapers published in the Arabic language in different parts of the Arab world. These are: *Al-Hayat*, a London-based pan-Arab newspaper which addresses Arab readers across the Arab World. It publishes reports translated from English into Arabic and due to its geographical location in the UK, it contains commentaries originally written in English and subsequently translated into Arabic. The electronic version of this newspaper includes both versions of the leader or commentary in the two languages which allows the investigator to look at the two versions and compare the translation and the original first hand. Extracts from the commentaries and leaders published in this newspaper will be part of the parallel and comparable data.

Some examples in the corpus are drawn from two Syrian government newspapers, *Al-Thawra* and *Teshreen*, these are published in Syria and read mainly by Syrians at a local level. Extracts from these newspapers contain commentaries in the Arabic language exposing the specific ideological stance of Syria and articles are also composed so as to reflect the Syrian position towards world events on the political and diplomatic side. These newspapers are state-run; therefore, they voice the official ideological position in Syria. Examples extracted from articles published in this newspaper will be part of the parallel data.

The third source from which data about Arabic modality is extracted is *Al-Jazeera* news agency. *Al-Jazeera* is a pan Arab agency which broadcasts news on

television and the Internet. Examples from *Al-Jazeera*'s reports will be used in the parallel data.

Other sources of Arabic examples are *Syria News* (Syria), *Al-Akhbar* (Egypt), *Al-Khaleej* (United Arab Emirates), *Akhbar Tunis* (Tunisia). These newspapers are chosen because they are consumed at a local level in their respective countries. When a piece of news concerning a general Arab issue is published, it is interesting to investigate the ways in which this piece of news features in the local newspapers in each of these countries. The other reason for choosing these newspapers is that they represent Arab countries from various parts of the Arab World, Tunisia, for example, represents North Africa while the United Arab Emirates represents the Gulf region. Egypt is undoubtedly a key Arab country due to several reasons related to political and economic issues not least because of its position as one of the very few Arab countries which signed a peace treaty with Israel. The ideological positions of these countries are far from similar in many respects and, therefore, comparing examples of news published in newspapers from each of these countries would reflect differences in their political and ideological identities. Examples from *Syria News* will be part of the comparable data, whereas examples from *Al-Akhbar*, *Al-Khaleej*, and *Akhbar Tunis* will be part of the parallel data.

The English newspapers from which data published in English are drawn are *The Guardian*, a daily British broadsheet newspaper widely read by the British people and publishes reports and commentaries about the situation in the Middle East. Its position is known to be centre-to-left position in British politics. Examples from *The Guardian* will be part of the parallel data. Another British

newspaper is *The Independent*. Extracts from articles published in this newspaper address issues on a more local level within a British context rather than international news, they will feature in the parallel corpus of the present research.

The Telegraph is another widely read British newspaper which is considered to be conservative in tone as opposed to that of *The Guardian* and *The Independent*. It is therefore of interest to compare how the same piece of news is reported in *The Telegraph* with the other two, as that would highlight issues of political orientations. Examples from *The Telegraph* will feature in the parallel data.

The Washington Post is a right-wing American newspaper which includes reports about international news especially when the Middle East is involved. This newspaper is closely related to the US administration and it voices the ideological stances of US officials towards international politics including positions towards the Middle East. Examples from this newspaper will be part of the parallel and comparable data.

Another source of texts published originally in the English language are texts appearing on the *Al-Hayat* electronic version published in English and written by native English speakers then translated into Arabic. These texts will constitute a substantial part of the comparable corpus in this research.

2.4.2 Qualitative selection criteria

The present research focuses on investigating the ways in which modality is used in the language of the news in order to reflect the ideological and political stance of the newspapers reporting news to their readerships. English modal verbs

and Arabic modal particles are therefore the main subject of investigation. The research corpus comprises Arabic newspapers published in different parts of the Arab World and English newspapers published mainly in Britain and the USA. All of these newspapers have been accessed in their electronic format on the Internet. The Arabic newspapers which are included in the research corpus stand for different ideologies according to the particular Arab country in which a particular newspaper is published. This is a way of studying how use of modality in each of these newspapers when reporting political news can reflect different ideologies.

The examples under investigation are chosen on the basis that their subject is political news which are sufficiently of general interest in order to appear in various newspapers simultaneously either in one language or in both Arabic and English. It is understood that there are certain conditions which affect the final form in which news reports are published such as questions of space and editing which can impinge on the way certain grammatical and stylistic features of a given language are used and the frequency of that use. This will be taken into consideration when the research investigates the presence or absence of modal verbs and particles in news reports in the corpus. Moreover, as Toury (1995: 183) points out, an important issue that arises during the comparison of pairs of source and translation texts is the question of how many people have in effect been involved in the act of translation and the number and kinds of parts they played in order to produce a translation final product as such. This issue is usually dealt with in the following manner

Whatever the number, the common practice has been to collapse all of them into one persona and have that conjoined entity regarded as 'the

translator`: this would appear to be the only feasible approach, if research applied to pairs of texts is to transcend superficial description. Among other things, this practice enhances the comparability of findings, which is a *sine qua non* for making any kind of justifiable generalization (ibid.).

The question of the number of agents involved in the act of translating and the ways in which they participate in order to produce the final target text as is presented to the target readership is closely related to the type of mechanism with which newspapers are produced and also connects with issues of space and editing mentioned earlier. Toury's concern is central to the present investigation because it deals specifically with news articles and their translations which are in most cases subject to a whole range of activities such as revising, editing and proofreading. It is, therefore, essential for the specific purposes of the present discussion that these matters are taken into consideration when discussing translations, i.e. focusing on the translator's decisions during the translation process. The present corpus study, on the other hand, has no access to information concerning editorial interventions which the reports subject to investigation might have undergone during the process of either publishing them in the original language or producing a translated version of a given article. Consequently, in view of Toury's statement above, the study has the only option of considering the translations as if the translators were responsible for all the decisions that have resulted in the emergence of the final translation product which appears in the newspapers and is received by the intended readership.

2.4.3 Quantitative selection criteria

For the specific aims of the present research, examples extracted from newspaper reports are partial rather than full texts. These texts will represent examples of authentic language. The language in these examples is not high register and is aimed for a readership of various educational backgrounds.

The English modal verbs studied in this research are the modal verbs which correspond in terms of modal meaning and function to the Arabic modal particles presented in this research. In an attempt to narrow down the scope of analysis of modal auxiliary verbs in English, Arabic modal particles will be considered the basis for specifying the particular English modal verbs that are to be analysed within the scope of the present research. The main modal areas of research are emphasis, possibility, and obligation. The English semi-modal auxiliaries fall outside the scope of the present investigation, but modals indicating various degrees of possibility and obligation in the English language are studied with reference to the corresponding modal particles in the Arabic language.

Examples drawn from the sources mentioned above are portions of text which fall under either of three categories which reflect the types of modality uses. The first category constitutes portions of text which are cited as individual examples of the use of a particular modal. They represent articles published in one language, either Arabic or English, and are produced by a native speaker of that language for the consumption of readers who are also native speakers of the same language. These examples contain the use of modal auxiliaries or modal particles typical to the language in question, and they are consequently used to illustrate the

ways in which the modal system is employed by speakers of the given language in journalistic discourse. The allocation of this category of examples serves the purposes of the present research in the following manner: examples drawn from articles published in Arabic newspapers, produced by native speakers of Arabic and aimed at readership consisting primarily of native speakers of Arabic are employed to exemplify the use of Arabic modal particles in the language of the news. Further, these examples are aimed to underline the line of argument pursued in the present research that modal verbs and particles reflect the particular ideological and discoursal strategy of the institution which communicates the news to its readership. The use of those modals will also be analysed along the lines of Relevance theory to establish a framework for comparing and contrasting the modal systems of Arabic and English along these lines.

The second category of examples in the corpus consists of a number of texts taken from articles reporting the same piece of news in several newspapers in the same language and are considered to be original texts not translations, written by native speakers of that language and aimed at readers who are also native speakers of that same language. These examples will form a part of the parallel data in the corpus and the aim of investigating these texts is to look at similarities and/or differences in the use of modality among native speakers when they are reporting the same news. Identifying these points of similarity and difference in the use of modal particles or auxiliaries in the language of the news as users of the language employ them in reporting news will reflect the similarity and/or difference between the communicative effects conveyed by the use or omission of a certain modal particle or auxiliary and will set the scene for establishing the way

in which the degree of relevance of a certain message becomes affected through that use or omission. The conclusion of such investigation will be to discover if the use or omission of certain modal particles or auxiliaries by native speakers of a certain language influences the way in which receivers of the information who are native speakers of that same language find the information conveyed, through the use or omission of those modals, to be either more or less relevant to them following that particular way of conveying the information to them through using the modal.

The third category of the corpus examples are texts taken from articles published in newspapers in the source language and their translated versions published in the target language. The original and translated texts are about the same piece of news and are similar in length and content. In the case of long chunks of text, only the portions which consist of the use of modality will be considered. The original text is written by a native speaker of the source language and the translated version is produced by a native speaker of the target language. The aim here is to compare and contrast the use of modality between Arabic and English and to outline the correspondence achieved through translation between the relevance of information conveyed to readers of the original text and that of information conveyed to readers of the target text. Ideological considerations will be brought to bear on the choice of particular modal structures in both the source and the target texts as well as relevance-theoretic analysis of the similarity or difference in the communicative situations created by the source and target texts with regard to the specific use of modal structures in the language of the news by Arabic and English newspapers.

Chapter Three: Language and Ideology: The Case of the Use of Modality in the Language of the News

3.1 Introduction

Today's world is characterised by increasingly rapid mass communication, and political issues are playing a more central role in global communication than any other type of issues due to the dramatic influence which such factors as terrorism and economic development exert in bringing great changes to the world as a whole. In this context, the ways in which political issues are communicated bear special significance not only because news is widely circulated around the globe at an astonishing speed but also because the various types of relations among the different nations are shaped, among other things, by the forms of expression which each nation uses with reference to its own political framework and the ideological vision behind it, and with reference to other nations' political and ideological orientations. What makes examining the language of the news more interesting is the fact that, despite being in a state of close and immediate contact with one another thanks to the formidable advance in modern technology, the different nations around the world still hold ideological beliefs and standpoints as numerous as perhaps the nations holding them. These ideological doctrines are in many ways very different from, if not contradictory with, each other.

It is this notion of diversity and contradiction that gives the language related to political issues a unique dimension which renders the task of investigating its ways of expression more complex and challenging. The present chapter attempts at constructing a detailed view of the nature and types of

language used in news reports with special reference to modality as a grammatical structure that plays a communicative role in the process of maintaining and promoting a certain ideological discourse in the minds of the readership of a given newspaper. This issue becomes of central importance when translation between two languages, in this case Arabic and English, is studied. This is due to the fact that the significance of modality as a type of linguistic expression used in news reporting derives from the notion that, in any one language, different modals express different degrees of commitment by the user of those modals. This point becomes crucial when, as shall be illustrated in this and the following chapters, there are cases when different modals are used by different newspapers to report the same piece of news. In such cases, each of the modals used contributes to the formulation of a certain communicative context within which the readers of the news report process that particular piece of news. The communicative context then prepares the readers to perceive the news within a particular ideological framework which is in line with that of the given newspaper reporting the news.

In translated news, the use of modality assumes further significance due to two main reasons. To start with, the act of translating a piece of news involves two languages, more specifically, two linguistic systems which include two different modal systems. These modal systems do not always correspond fully in terms of expressing the various degrees of commitment of the speaker. Secondly, the ideological frameworks within which different linguistic systems operate very often construct different perspectives according to which a political situation is perceived.

The present chapter puts forward the argument that the type of linguistic expression used in news reporting plays an important part in setting the ideological scene for the readers of a particular news report or commentary. The relationship between language and discourse and language and ideology is also studied. The argument presented here leads to suggesting that modality as a type of linguistic expression is not a neutral medium of communicating news. Modality in many cases reflects the ideological perspective from which news is to be perceived by the readers. The act of processing modality used in the news to arrive at ideological conclusions is conducted by the readers through the relevance mechanism of relevance which will be the subject of investigation in the following chapters.

3.2 The nature of language in the news

It should be made clear from the outset that the aim of this chapter is not to advance the notion of the role of the Press in the manipulation of events reported and the attempt to misrepresent facts in order to promote the views and objectives of a few individuals or authorities in the collective mind of the masses in a one-way process of communication. Rather, the present discussion is an attempt to study the relationship between the use of language and the division of power between the newspaper as an institution and the readers in what forms the political discourse of the journalistic language, in order to set the scene for the discussion in the following chapters which places special emphasis on the use of modality in Arabic and English newspapers and the process of translating modal structures between these two languages. First, general views about the relationship between

language and power will be discussed and, where appropriate, examples from different newspapers will be provided to support the argument about the applicability of those views to the role of modality in maintaining or otherwise a particular political discourse in Arabic and English journalistic styles.

News is first and foremost embedded in language. This notion appears to be self-evident to many but the extent to which language can be vital to the modes of expression of news is not perhaps so readily realised simply because receivers of news have become so accustomed to the styles of newspapers that they are frequently led towards accepting certain conclusions and points of view. This acceptance is based on the fact that each newspaper constructs the world of its news in a certain way which is consistent with a certain ideological viewpoint and which the readers of a newspaper become accustomed to and which, crucially, becomes part of the mindset of those readers, so that every time they read that newspaper the readers are in a way prepared to receive the news from a certain angle of perception which has already been constructed in their mindset from previous reading experiences involving that newspaper. This argument will be the focus of the next chapter which studies the role of relevance in processing information (cf. Chapter Four, Section 4.3). Without the receivers always realising it, their reception of the news is channeled by the newspaper's particular choice of language, i.e. the choice of grammatical structures and vocabulary that would best suit the expression of a specific political situation or ideological standpoint. In this sense, language is not a passive reflection of reality but an active force which constructs reality in many different shapes and sizes. Fowler (1991: 1) states that "language is not neutral, but a highly constructive mediator." This position leads

Fowler to conclude that since language is not neutral in reflecting reality, and since news employ language in their ways of expression then the world of the Press “is not the real world, but a world skewed and judged” (1991: 11). Fowler’s conclusion leads to the notion that events taking place in reality must go through the prism of language and then they assume a different colouring before they are reported or announced. The close link between language use and politics results from the fact that both of them are “both cooperative and uncooperative. Moreover, one might argue that the structure of human linguistic communication is related to precisely these functions: it makes what we recognize as ‘political’ interactions possible. One should in this sort of perspective expect some of the structural components of language to have a functional role” (Chilton, 2004: 21). Even though it is not a practical supposition to suggest that all language is originally of a political nature, linguistic structures, nevertheless, “first evolve[d] from socio-political needs –for instance, deictic systems that signal self or self’s group as distinct from non-group member” (ibid.). Fowler refers to a similar notion of group identity which he calls “an ideology of ethnocentrism, or, [...] more inclusively, homocentrism: a preoccupation with countries, societies and individuals perceived to be like oneself; with boundaries; with defining ‘groups’ felt to be unlike oneself, alien, threatening” (1991: 16). This ideology, Fowler says, is formulated in the Press by the use of the pronoun “we”: “How ‘we’ are supposed to behave is exemplified by the regular news reports of stories which illustrate such qualities as fortitude, patriotism, sentiment, industry [...] it breeds divisive and alienating attitudes, a dichotomous vision of ‘us’ and ‘them’” (ibid.). Fowler limits this ideology to the use of pronouns but this kind of ideology can be

manifested in several grammatical categories besides pronouns. In the following chapters the argument shall discuss the ways in which ideological group identities can be formulated through the use of modal verbs in newspaper articles.

Hodge and Kress view language as a tool that controls and distorts: “All the major ideological struggles will necessarily be waged in words [...] in forms of language that bear the traces of these struggles in innumerable ways” (1993: 161). And because different groups of people using the same language employ it differently then the same event will vary accordingly. By the same token, because different languages have different modes of expression that means that different linguistic communities perceive of the same event in different ways according to their respective languages.

The study of language in the news brings about two primary notions which have dominion over what is reported and how. These two notions are discourse and ideology. Discourse and ideology are general notions covering all aspects of human communicative activities, but in the scope of this chapter these two notions will be studied from the journalistic perspective, with special reference to the use of modality and its part in advancing certain points of view to the readers of the news.

3.3 News and the journalistic discourse

Fairclough (1989/2001: 18) defines discourse as “language as a form of social practice”, this means that linguistic structures are not merely for expressing practice which exists outside its realm, but rather it participates in giving that practice its shape and by doing that imparts the values and beliefs of its users on

those with whom those users wish to communicate. In the world of newspapers this thought is well illustrated in editorials which convey the stance of the newspaper about a particular occurrence and the ways the writer uses certain linguistic forms to make the readership aware of that standpoint. In the words of Fairclough (1989/2001: 30-1):

As well as being determined by social structures, discourse has effects upon social structures and contributes to the achievement of social continuity or social change. It is because the relationship between discourse and social structures is dialectical in this way that discourse assumes such importance in terms of power relationships and power struggle: control over orders of discourse by institutional and societal power-holders is one factor in the maintenance of their power.

It can be argued that a newspaper is an institutional power-holder who is part of a larger societal structure trying to put forward an argument that they want the reader to accept with the indirect objective of maintaining the established system of ideas which the newspaper and its supporters uphold, so that their social power would be further enhanced in the minds of the readership. In this sense the journalistic text is transformed from a detached impersonal voice into a lively subjective interaction in which the reader is encouraged to actively participate and even consider taking sides. This conversational technique adopted in the journalistic style has a significant undercurrent regarding the message a newspaper, or rather the voice behind it, wants to communicate to the readers. According to Fowler (1991: 47): “Newspapers have to be lively, because they offer themselves as a brand of entertainment, and because they must disguise the

fact that they are actually a form of institutional discourse. The personal voice is a necessary, but accepted, illusion.” In other words, the discourse of a newspaper is represented by a form of communication that involves the reader so that s/he becomes engaged in the process of deriving the thoughts and conclusions that the communicator aims at reaching in the first place. More importantly, this process of deriving thoughts and conclusions becomes part of the reader’s cognitive mindset or collection of assumptions about the newspaper which are obtained from previous reading experiences involving the same newspaper. Thus, the newspaper establishes a cognitive platform, so to speak, in the minds of its readers. Such cognitive platform prepares the readers to perceive the newspaper’s linguistic choices, in our case the choice of modal verbs, from an angle which enhances the reader’s cooperation and acceptance of the paper’s ideological context.

Fowler (1991: 57) believes that adopting such a conversational style in newspapers is precisely devised for “the construction of an illusion of informality, familiarity, friendliness [...] Conversation implies co-operation, agreement, symmetry of power and knowledge between participants.” What this idea suggests is that the readers are already considered to be active agents in establishing and maintaining a particular line of thought held by the writer since they are part of the communication process which takes that line of thought as its focal point.

In doing so, the newspaper is having what Fairclough calls a “hidden agenda” in mind. By thus involving the readers in the process of communicating what it wishes to promote in their minds, the newspaper is consolidating its grip on the discourse type and hence maintaining a powerful position because it can

direct the readers' perception of what they are reading. This phenomenon is what Fairclough calls the "*opacity* of discourse" (1989/2001: 33, original emphasis), which he believes has a very important role regarding power positions and relations in the act of communication "because in discourse people can be legitimizing (or delegitimizing) particular power relations without being conscious of doing so" (ibid.). Thus, discourse has a key role to play in reproducing ideology in the minds of the audience. Van Dijk believes that "various properties of text and talk allow social members to actually *express* or *formulate* abstract ideological beliefs, or any other opinion related to such ideologies" (1998: 92, original emphasis).

According to Hatim and Mason (1990: 71), discourses are modes of talking and thinking which provide the concrete linguistic medium for the expression of abstract ideological beliefs. In other words, it is through discourse that certain linguistic structures and expressions acquire communicative and connotative dimensions that are key for expressing the ideological message. Thus, an ideology "expresses itself through a variety of key terms which take us beyond the text to an established set of precepts" (ibid.). Hatim and Mason also believe that because discourses are diffuse the only way that makes their analysis possible is by "relating actual expressions to the belief systems, power structures, etc., which underlie [them]" (ibid., p. 186). With the translator in mind, Hatim and Mason view those belief systems and power structures as key indicators of what is to be translated into the target language. Hence, arises Hatim and Mason's notion of the translator's "mediation" in the translating act between the original text and the translated version which is the final product offered to the readers of the target

text. The translator's mediation results from the need to resolve discrepancies between source and target: "Most obviously, the translator has not only a bilingual ability but also a bi-cultural vision. Translators mediate between cultures (including ideologies, moral systems and socio-political structures), seeking to overcome [...] incompatibilities which stand in the way of transfer of meaning" (ibid., p. 223). Another aspect of the translator's mediation is his/her involvement in a deliberate reading act when they translate because they read a text with the intention to produce another text based on the original. Since translators are involved in a deliberate reading act of the source text, Hatim and Mason describe them as "privilege [sic] readers" (ibid., p. 224) as opposed to "ordinary readers", firstly because the source text to ordinary readers represents the ultimate product or the output and, hence, the end of the reading process; whereas for translators the source text is the beginning of the translation process which takes information from the source text as input for the translation product or output. Another difference between translators and ordinary readers, according to Hatim and Mason, is that "Inevitably, a translated text reflects the translator's reading [...]" whereas the ordinary reader can involve his or her own beliefs and values in the creative reading process, the translator has to be more guarded" (ibid.). That means that the translator's perceptions are not supposed to affect the way in which s/he reads the source and eventually translate it. The ideological context of the source should remain intact in the translation. However, according to Hatim and Mason, there are occasions when the purpose which the translation is intended to fulfill justifies the translator's intervention in the message of the source text. In culture-specific texts, in particular, the needs of the consumers of the translation

“may in certain cases even override ST [source text] communicative intentions” (ibid., p. 190). Even when translation is not involved in transmitting the discourse context, contextual considerations are crucial in that “text producers make their choices in such a way as best to serve their own communicative ends and within an institutional setting which exerts its own influence on linguistic expression” (ibid., p. 193).

Following Hatim and Mason’s view of culture as a system which includes ideological considerations as well as socio-political structures, it seems that news is to be considered as “culture-bound texts” (1990: 190); since news reflects the ideological nuances of the different institutions which communicate it to the readers. Thus, news undergoes the type of mediation which other culture-bound texts undergo, whether by the monolingual communicator or the translator producing a translated version of news originally communicated in another language and aimed at a different group of readership from that of the translated version. In other terms, the monolingual communicator of the news is the text producer who makes his/her choice of linguistic expression, for example, which modal verb to use to report a certain piece of news, in such a way that will most effectively achieve his/her communicative end in getting the ideological message across to the readers. Similarly, the translator of a certain news report or commentary will have his/her target readers in mind and is conscious of any ideological incompatibilities that might be present between the original news text and the prospective translated version. Ideologies promoted in countries like those in the Middle East, for example, can be viewed as usually incompatible with those promoted in the West and especially in the US. The translator’s linguistic choice

of a modal verb to replace that used in the original can be affected by the translator's awareness of those ideological incompatibilities and eventually, in the words of Hatim and Mason, the translated product of a news text in such cases may "override ST [source text] communicative intentions" (op. cit).

3.4 The relationship between ideology and language

As has already been discussed in the previous section, ideology operates through language, writers and readers are both involved in the process of producing and reproducing ideological predispositions by linguistic structures demonstrated in texts. Carter and Nash (1990: 21) state that "style is political; questions of language and style are ideological questions". One sense of ideology according to them is ideology as a socially and politically dominant set of values and beliefs which are not 'out there' but are constructed in all texts especially in and through language" (ibid.). Carter and Nash place their emphasis on the study of language and style and the ways in which they represent ideology but only within the context of social formations. Linguistic analysis is insufficient as a sole practice to identify ideology within language, hence the focus must fall on whole texts and on the context of communication between writers and readers "to reveal the ways in which writers exploit linguistic structures in order to address the reader/subject of the discourse and 'subject' him/her to a particular way of seeing (and believing)" (ibid.). Carter and Nash argue that in order for writers to be able to induce their readers to interpret a text from a certain cognitive vantage point, writers tend to build on the readers' already existing "routinized commonsense view of the world" (ibid., p. 51). This commonsensical view of ideology is

derived from the notion that readers are usually reluctant to be displaced from the normality of their surroundings:

For ideology operates, not so much as a coherent system of statements imposed on a population from above, but rather through a complex series of mechanisms whereby meaning is mobilised in the discursive practices of everyday life for the maintenance of relations of domination. It is of the utmost importance, therefore, to search for ways in which the theory of ideology can be linked with methods for the analysis of the discursive forms in which ideology is expressed (Thompson, 1984: 64; quoted in Carter and Nash, 1990: 21).

The “discursive forms” are manifested in the linguistic choices of writers which enable them to construct certain reading contexts for their readers while excluding other contexts which do not serve the communicative ends of the writers. Carter and Nash believe that this strategy of accentuating a certain reading context while suppressing others renders writers in a more powerful position as producers of the message than the readers who will be inclined to cooperate with the writer and arrive at the required reading results rather than consciously resist them, thus avoiding ideological contradictions.

3.4.1 The social dimension of ideology

According to Hodge and Kress (1993: 6), ideology is to be understood as a reflection of social consciousness which is embedded in language:

Language, typically, is immersed in the ongoing life of a society, as the practical consciousness of that society [...] We can call it ideology.

defining ‘ideology’ as a systematic body of ideas, organized from a particular point of view. Ideology is thus a subsuming category which includes sciences and metaphysics, as well as political ideologies of various kinds, without implying anything about their status and reliability as guides to reality.

The salient feature which characterises the nature of ideology seems therefore to be its social dimension and its reliance on the collective belief-sets shared by a number of individuals in an organised group or institution. Simpson explains how certain ideologies rise to become more powerful than others as a result of the social interaction between different organisations or institutions:

An ideology therefore derives from the taken-for-granted assumptions, beliefs and value-systems which are shared collectively by social groups. And when an ideology is the ideology of a particularly powerful social group, it is said to be *dominant*. Thus, dominant ideologies are mediated through powerful political and social institutions like the government, the law and the medical profession. Our perception of these institutions, moreover, will be shaped in part by the specific linguistic practices of the social groups who comprise them (1993: 5, original emphasis).

As well as the organic relation between ideology and social interaction between different organised groups of people, there is an affinity between general perception of a certain ideology and the linguistic behaviour of the social group which upholds that ideology. Simpson echoes similar statements made by other scholars about the subject (e.g. Hatim, 1999) when he explains how language should be perceived as an integral part of social interaction and therefore it has an

important role to play in expressing the collective assumptions of social groups which further yield their distinctive ideologies:

As an integrated form of social behaviour, language will be inevitably and inextricably tied up with the socio-political context in which it functions. Language is not used in a contextless vacuum; rather it is used in a host of discourse contexts, contexts which are impregnated with the ideology of social systems and institutions. Because language operates within this social dimension it must, of necessity *reflect*, and some would argue, *construct* ideology (1993: 6, original emphasis).

3.4.2 Ideological assumptions

Hodge and Kress say “The world is grasped through language. But in its use by a speaker language is more than that. It is a version of the world, offered to, imposed on, exacted by, someone else” (1993: 9). This notion of subjectivity reflects language as a tool of control: “Language is an instrument of control as well as of communication. Linguistic forms allow significance to be conveyed and to be distorted. In this way, hearers can be both manipulated and informed, preferably manipulated while they suppose they are being informed” (ibid., p. 6). The assumption that ideology has this dimension of “manipulation” supports Fairclough’s (1989/2001: 71) speaking of its “invisibility”. He argues that ideology exerts its influence most powerfully when it is least explicit so that it maintains the aspect of being perceived as “common sense”. If ideology becomes visible then its commonsensical quality would be lost and hence cease to be able to sustain its ideological influence. In fact, because ideological beliefs become

common sense they become a substantial constituent of the readers' assumptions about the world and in this way maintaining and promoting them is part and parcel of turning those ideological assumptions into substantial parts of the cognitive environment of the readership and in this way the ideological standpoints of the newspaper addressing that readership becomes the most relevant among other ideological standpoints expressed by other newspapers or any other social institution communicating ideological views and assumptions. It is in this way that newspapers maintain a consistent line of ideological assumptions in the minds of their readerships because the readers in most cases buy "the paper that challenges [their] assumptions least of all" (Hodge and Kress, 1993: 15). So ideology is not part of the surface structure of the text but very much part of the underlying ideas behind the form of the language. Moreover, language plays a pivotal role in enabling the reader to reproduce what the writer has in mind. Fairclough says: "Texts do not typically spout ideology. They so position the interpreter through their cues that she brings ideologies to the interpretation of texts - and reproduces them in the process!" (op. cit). Rather than understanding the position of linguistic expressions as sources of ideology, it is "background assumptions which on the one hand lead the text producer to 'textualize' the world in a particular way, and on the other hand lead the interpreter to interpret the text in a particular way" (ibid.).

Fairclough also discusses the location of ideology in language and argues that ideology is a property of both linguistic structures and linguistic events because "ideology invests language in various ways at various levels" (1995: 71). Linguistic structures as used by Fairclough are a form of system of potential

underlying language practice, while linguistic events are actual discursive practice. When ideology is viewed as located in the linguistic structure, this has the advantage of highlighting the various constraints which linguistic events undergo, such as social conventions, norms and histories. The structure option, however, “has the disadvantage of tending to defocus the event of the assumption that events are mere instantiations of structures, whereas the relationship of events to structures would appear to be less neat and less compliant. This privileges the perspective of reproduction rather than that of transformation, and the ideological conventionality and repetitiveness of events” (ibid.). Alternatively, Fairclough suggests that the location of ideology is the “discursive event” itself. The benefit of locating ideology in the discursive event is that ideology is represented as a process taking place in events, thus emphasising transformation and fluidity instead of defocusing them as in the structure option discussed above. In the event option, structures still need to be in focus in order to eliminate the illusion that discourse is a free process of formation within language.

Moreover, Fairclough suggests that the fact that ideologies are located in texts makes this textual location a variant of locating ideology in events themselves. In this case, it is important to take into consideration the proper extent to which texts are claimed to reveal their ideological features independently of other extralinguistic factors. Ideological processes residing in textual structures can be discovered alongside interpretative and communicative aspects of the linguistic practice rather than pure textual analysis. This underlines the fact that “ideological processes appertain to discourses as whole social events -they are processes between people- not to the texts which are produced, distributed and

interpreted as moments of such events" (ibid.). In Fairclough's terms, discourse means that

Language use [is] imbricated in social relations and processes which systematically determine variations in its properties, including the linguistic forms which appear in texts. One aspect of this imbrication in the social which is inherent to the notion of discourse is that language is a material form of ideology, and language is invested by ideology (ibid., p. 73).

It is the combination of three main aspects which constitutes the complex called "discourse": these aspects, Fairclough states, are social practice; discoursal practice which includes text production, distribution and consumption; and the text itself. These three aspects interact among one another so that the nature of social practice influences the ways in which texts are interpreted by the readers which in turn is closely connected to the way the text features are produced and distributed. Ideology is incorporated with discourse at two levels: "first in the ideological investment of elements which are drawn upon in producing or interpreting a text, and the ways they are articulated together in orders of discourse: and second in the ways in which these elements are articulated together and orders of discourse rearticulated in discoursal events" (ibid., p. 74). As to the question of which linguistic and discoursal features bear ideological significance, Fairclough suggests that the answer is not only lexical meaning but all aspects of meaning and these include presuppositions, implicatures which are manifested in the text through several textual cues and internalised ideological and discoursal structures (ibid.). Fairclough sees the futility of the traditional dichotomy of

“form” versus “content” because formal linguistic features can be ideologically invested in themselves as well as in the meanings they convey to the text consumers. Thus, linguistic features such as modal verbs are ideologically invested when they are used as part of a context of internalised ideological structures and presuppositions which make the meanings they convey to text consumers ideologically significant. Modals denoting obligation, for example, carry ideological interpretations within a specific context which are different from modals denoting possibility. In the language of the news, therefore, using such linguistic features as modal verbs in a news text constructs an ideological framework within which the readers process the news they read that goes beyond the mere aim of providing “information” for the readers.

3.4.3 Ideology and the notion of “otherness”

In his analysis of the use of language in news reports published in the American press during the first Gulf War, Esra Sandikcioglu highlights the role of language as a tool for enhancing and promoting the political ideological agenda of the American military action against Iraq and at the same time “accounting for the Orient’s (or the Islamic world’s) specific Otherness and thereby justifying the West’s neo-colonial approach to the Gulf crisis” (2001: 162). In building up the ideological scene for the readership the communicator of the ideological message needs to address the cognitive perceptions that are particular to that group of readership addressed by the ideological message. The language used in communicating the ideological message is instrumental in shaping the suitable cognitive framework in the readers’ cognitive environment that will facilitate the

desired reception of the ideological message and in delivering the specific communicative ideological goals of that message.

Another relevant concept is Fillmore's (1985: 232) "interpretive frames" which are a combination between the cognitive aspect of the message on the one hand and the linguistic expression of that message on the other. According to Fillmore, a frame helps the receiver of the message to understand it either by being invoked from the outside context of that message or from the particular linguistic features used to express the message:

[a] frame is invoked when the interpreter, in trying to make sense of a text segment, is able to assign it an interpretation by situating its content in a pattern that is known independently of the text. A frame is evoked by the text if some linguistic form or pattern is conventionally associated with the frame in question (quoted in Sandikcioglu, 2001: 174).

Such description of how and when a "frame" is invoked or evoked echoes the premises set out by the theory of Relevance about the construction of a communicative context and the build up of addressees' assumptions through the use of language (cf. Chapter Four, Section 4.3). Fillmore seems to place the focus on the ways in which linguistic features are crucial to communicating a certain message and also how the context surrounding the communication of that message is instrumental in the way the addressees are set to perceive it. He also states that frames lead the process of inference making as they represent "specific unified frameworks of knowledge, or coherent schematizations of experience" (ibid.). Equally interesting is Fillmore's view that linguistic expressions are subjective by nature and so they inevitably reflect the specific viewpoint of the

speaker. which makes the frames they express reflect certain points of view or perspectives by implication (ibid.). modal verbs fall under this category of linguistic forms which are identified by their subjective aspect in communication. Hence, the present argument shall be about the communicative role which the use of modal verbs bears on the ideological message of a news article.

3.5 Ideology, politics and “the modal axis”

When Hodge and Kress (1993: 15) stated that people buy the newspaper that challenges their assumptions the least, they did not identify the kind of assumptions they were referring to in any specific terms. They seem to view newspapers as a type of what Chilton calls “public discourse”. The role of public discourse, according to Chilton, is to generate meaning, forming in the process “*tacit assumptions about the way the world is and what values obtain in it*. In this sense, public discourse assumes, or generates, through the cognitive interaction among speakers and audiences, a *political ontology*. This is the ‘reality’ which interpreters may construct upon the linguistic and pragmatic cues constructed by the utterer, and it maybe assumed, more or less deliberately so constructed by the utterer” (2000: 249, original emphasis). Interpreters are prompted to construct cognitive structures made of assumptions about the “reality” which the text constructs for them. Chilton’s modal axis of reality and morality is based on the fact that “people’s representations have entities that *may exist, might have existed, repeatedly exist, definitely don’t exist*, and so on. Entities and the relations among them may be represented as physically necessary, socially imposed or as morally imperative” (2004: 57, original emphasis). People’s representation of any situation

is the result of processing a certain discourse about that situation with relation to their “world”. Thus, the situation is interpreted with relation to axes of space, time and modality. Spacial and temporal axes are social and are processed in terms of being close or distant from Self (ibid., p. 58). The modal axis draws on the idea that “Self is not only *here* and *now*, but also the origin of the epistemic *true* and the deontic *right*” (ibid., p. 59, original emphasis). Chilton argues that modality also draws on the fact of being close or distant from Self. The epistemic scale ranges from “confident prediction to near impossibility”, while one of the ways in which the deontic scale can be perceived is related to concepts of “insiders” and “outsiders”: “insiders are those that ‘stay close to’, or ‘stand by our standards’; outsiders are expected, or suspected, to do the opposite. That which is morally or legally ‘wrong’ is distanced from Self. The scale is directional, oriented toward the Self’s authoritative ‘position’ with respect to Other” (ibid., p. 60). This notion of proximity versus remoteness from Self seems to be connected with Chilton’s earlier discussion about signalling “group identities” through language (ibid., p. 18), and Fowler’s view of “cultural proximity” and “relevance” as the basis for the construction of ideological beliefs about “us” and “them” (1991: 16).

The position where Self is situated, Chilton says, becomes vital for the interpretation process of political discourse in general and foreign policy discourse in particular. This is due to the fact that “the reality or realities referred to cannot possibly be actually present for speaker and hearer. The speaker thus has to do a lot of discursive work to enable, or induce the hearer to mentally establish a representation” (2004: 61). The subsequent discussion in the following chapters shall be about the use of modality in political discourse, especially when

translation is involved, and the ways in which readers of the news are induced to construct a cognitive representation of the context they are prompted to process when interpreting the message communicated in the news article.

3.6 Ideology and the use of modality in political discourse

The principal function of modality is to express the subjective side of the argument, i.e. the writer's individual position or attitude regarding what s/he is exposing in his/her text. Ideology too has a similar aspect of subjectivity attached to it. As van Dijk puts it: "ideologies do not merely control knowledge but also opinions about events, and such opinions do not represent event structures" (1998: 65). The writer's ability to construct the reader's opinion stems from the writer's potential ability to formulate a communicative background, through language, against which the reader "is reinforced in the security of a designated social, cultural and ideological role" (Carter and Nash, 1990: 53). Thus, for example, by using modality in a news report or commentary, the writer chooses a modal that best serves the construction of an ideological scene that enhances the readers' "security" with respect to the news they are consuming.

The media, in the words of Tuchman, are an integral part of the "drama of structuring and releasing information that would become the basis for the shaping of knowledge. News stories not only lend occurrences their existence as public events, but also impart character to them, for news reports help to shape the public definition of happenings by selectively attributing to them specific details or 'particulars'" (1978: 190).

In that sense, news writers and/or reporters are in the position of imparting their articles and news reports with communicative tasks besides the practice of informing their audience of domestic and global events. They are, so to speak, constructing the scene within which the audience is expected to view the news they are reading. Tuchman states that “some social actors [...] have a greater ability to create, impose, and reproduce social meanings - to construct social reality. News workers are one group with more power than most to construct social reality” (1978: 208).

Newspapers communicate news through a linguistic form that can reflect the angle from which the reported events to be viewed. This is again what Fairclough calls the “opacity” of ideology. Fairclough (1995: 44) believes that the representation of outside reality takes place “from the perspective of a particular interest, so that the relationship between proposition and fact is not transparent, but mediated by representational activity. So ideology cannot be reduced to ‘knowledge’ without distortion”.

Van Dijk (1998: 205) says that “discourse meanings are the result of selecting relevant portions of mental models about events [...] Since models embody opinions, which may in turn have an ideological basis, also the meanings that derive from such ‘ideological’ models may embody ideological aspects”. Mental models are the audience’s assumptions within a particular context and the cognitive framework constructed in the minds of the audience regarding a certain subject.

According to Van Dijk, “models are relevant only *for* language users, and hence only may influence discourse through the ways they are being subjectively

constructed by language users” (1998: 212, original emphasis). The subjective construction is in line with the previous notion that models embody cognitive assumptions of which ideological considerations are a part. The meanings carried in the grammatical structures of the sentences convey these ideological dimensions in the language of the news and the use of modality is one important feature of such subjective reflection of the ideologies of the actors in the process of communicating a piece of news to a certain audience. The argument developed here is based on the notion that, in a news report or commentary, the use of a certain modal contributes to the evocation of a number of ideological assumptions which are part of the cognitive environment in the minds of the readers. Evoking such ideological assumptions prompts the readers to interpret the piece of news they are reading in a certain ideological way which reinforces specific ideological attitudes while weakening others.

Each piece of news reported in newspapers has its particular communicative context according to which the particular audience for whom the report is aimed is expected to react in response to that report. Van Dijk defines the context as “*the structured set of all properties of a social situation that are possibly relevant for the production, structures, interpretation and functions of text and talk*” (1998: 211, original emphasis). So the grammatical structures used by a newspaper reporting a given piece of news mirrors that newspaper’s position towards the event being reported. It seems to be a two-way road; specifying the context helps to locate the reasons of choosing one modal rather than another, and specifying a particular modal used in reporting a certain piece of news leads to

identifying the communicative context and the ideological orientations underlining that context.

The following examples are extracts from news articles which are published by English and Arabic newspapers, and which show that modality participates in promoting certain discursive and ideological positions held by the respective newspapers as media institutions reporting to distinctive groups of readers.

The first example is taken from a news report about the visit which the US president, George W. Bush made to the NATO Headquarters in Brussels in February 2005. The visit took place shortly after the assassination in Beirut of the former Lebanese premier, Rafik Hariri, which sparked powerful reactions both in Lebanon and across the world, particularly in the US and France who voiced accusations of Syrian involvement. The accusation was based on the fact that Syrian military and intelligence forces had had a strong presence in neighbouring Lebanon for over three decades, and Mr. Hariri was said to have become an opponent of that presence despite the fact that he had been one of Syria's staunchest supporters for nearly as long. *The Guardian* reports on Mr. Bush's visit to Brussels as follows:

"Mr. Bush may cause discomfort by demanding that his European hosts support putting pressure on Syria following the assassination last week of the former Lebanese prime minister, Rafik Hariri, which Lebanese opposition figures have blamed on Damascus [...] some of the gestures and announcements preceding Mr. Bush's arrival last night indicated that any rapprochement may lack substance" (*The Guardian*, 21/02/05).

This example highlights several points. First, this particular piece of news appeared in several British and American newspapers on the same day. Second, all the articles reporting this piece of news contained modal verbs which were, interestingly, different from one article to another. This proposition about the potential discomfort which President George Bush is likely to cause to his European counterparts does not appear in the reports published by newspapers other than *The Guardian*. In other words, *The Guardian* aimed at directing its readers' attention to a proposition giving it salience over others.

According to *The Guardian*, on the eve of President Bush's visit to Europe and to the NATO Headquarters, the Russian president Vladimir Putin announced increased nuclear cooperation with Iran and said that he intended to visit Tehran soon. This move, the report explains, challenged one of the most important issues on the US agenda, namely, how to deal with Iran's suspected nuclear ambitions. Meanwhile, the then German Chancellor, Mr. Gerhard Schröder was addressing an international security conference in Munich the previous week when he questioned NATO's usefulness and its appropriateness as a forum for joint US-European policy making.

The readers are directed to consider these propositions to interpret the proposition "any rapprochement lacks substance". By using the modal *may*, the interpretation is based on reinforcing those propositions in the minds of the readers and making them stand out from other ideological assumptions which they may hold regarding the US and its political stance towards issues in the Middle East. In order to achieve that communicative target, *The Guardian* constructs the context within which the readers are to interpret the US political position. By

presenting the Russian and German direct or indirect responses to President Bush's visit, *The Guardian* is implicitly questioning the US position and directs the readers' response towards that conclusion.

The same piece of news was reported by *The Washington Post* against a different contextual background:

"Bush called on Syria to withdraw its forces from Lebanon [...] Syria must end its occupation of Lebanon, Bush said to applause" (*The Washington Post*, 21/02/05).

The report relates circumstances which make it easier for the readership to interpret the piece of information where the modal *must* occurs. The article mentions that among the audience addressed by the president in Brussels when he made that statement were supporters of the Lebanese opposition who vehemently attack Syrian military presence in Lebanon. The article reports that the opposition listening to the American president on that particular occasion hurled insults at Syria and demanded its immediate withdrawal from Lebanon.

It is also of interest to the present argument to compare this use of the modal *must* with the use of the modal *may* in the article published by the British newspaper, *The Guardian*, mentioned earlier. *The Guardian's* position towards Bush's stance against the developments in the Middle East seems to be at odds with that of *The Washington Post*. To start with, *The Guardian* reflects on the possible discomfort with which the European hosts will meet the US president's position. To strengthen this claim further, the article reports that hundreds of demonstrators staged the first of several planned protests in Brussels where Mr. Bush was making his statements about those political developments in the Middle East. It is evident, therefore, that the readers of *The Guardian* are encouraged to

process that piece of information about the US president stance towards a particular political issue from an angle that is very different from the angle from which the readers of *The Washington Post* are prompted to process that same piece of information. The direct quotation of the president's words as published by the US newspaper makes the relevance of a certain proposition, "Syria ends its occupation of Lebanon", possible to the readers by making available a whole set of other propositions for them at that particular point of communication. Not least of these propositions are those closely linked to concepts of "freedom" and "liberty" put forward by Mr. Bush earlier in the year in his Inaugural Address to the American nation as ideals that must be defended and established wherever the White House as well as the rest of the US administration think appropriate in any spot in the world.

The relevance of the proposition "Mr. Bush causes discomfort by demanding that his European hosts support putting pressure on Syria" is cognitively achieved by the readers of *The Guardian* article when they consider a set of propositions that are completely different from those evoked in *The Washington Post* article such as those related to protesters opposing Bush's rhetoric and staging demonstrations to declare their anger at the US policies.

The following example is an extract from a long interview given by the Syrian president, Bashar Al- Assad to two *Al Hayat* journalists. The president tackles a wide variety of issues in the interview, ranging from domestic political and economic reform to the invasion of Iraq and the deteriorating diplomatic relations with the US and its allies. This particular extract is chosen because it also features in an article published by *The Guardian*. The use of different modals in

the two reports is, I shall argue, of ideological relevance to the readers of the English text as opposed to the readers of the original published in Arabic.

نحن سنظل نتحاور لأنه لا شك بأنه بعد 13 عاماً من بدء عملية السلام لا بد من أن يكون هناك الكثير من الدروس التي يجب أن نتعلمها لأن العملية فشلت، فهذه الدروس هي التي يجب أن نناقشها. (الحياة، 03/10/07، حوار وعقليتان، جورج سمعان وغسان شربل في حوار مع الرئيس الأسد "اسرائيل تحاول جر سورية والمنطقة إلى حروب أخرى".

“We will maintain dialogue because after 13 years since the peace process started there can be no doubt that there are many lessons which we must learn because the process failed, these are the lessons which we must discuss” (*Al Hayat*, 07/10/03).

- Syrian president accuses Israel of warmongering: He said he believed Syria’s dialogue with Washington should continue, but he also accused the US of using Syria as a scapegoat. (*The Guardian*, 07/10/03)

Here, the difference between the Arabic and the English versions is that the Arabic includes a modal denoting willingness when the President referred to dialogue with Washington but the English includes the modal *should*. However, the Arabic includes the use of the Arabic modal *yajibu* twice, where the report in *The Guardian* omits that passage. The speaker in the Arabic text expresses willingness to maintain dialogue with Washington whereas the speaker in the English text is quoted to be expressing his point in obligatory terms.

Readers of the *Guardian* report process the point made about maintaining dialogue as an obligatory action rather than in terms of a decision being taken according to the will of the parties concerned. A closer inspection of the wider

context will highlight some ideological facts. The original speaker is the Syrian president speaking about relations with the United States which were at that moment at one of their lowest points. The President is well aware that he is speaking about maintaining dialogue with a superpower but still believes, as he has repeatedly maintained on many other occasions, that Syria is still a key state in the region and holds many crucial cards for peace negotiations. This is the reason which makes him speak of dialogue out of the Syrians' willingness and not because they are forced by any external circumstances or powers.

The Guardian, on the other hand, reports within the communicative context of a Western great power, the United Kingdom, and an ally to the US. According to the English report, Syria has no other option but to try to maintain dialogue with the US administration because the situation will not be in its favour otherwise. Hence, it is easier for the target audience who are part of the same communicative context as that of the newspaper to process the text in terms of two unequal parties maintaining dialogue. Thus, the modal *should* highlights this aspect and reinforces the ideological assumptions which are part of the target readers' already existing assumptions according to which they interpret the article and arrive at a conclusion which is in line with those existing assumptions about power relations and the political advantages of some states as opposed to others.

The following example is about the Arab summit which was originally scheduled to be held in Tunisia in March 2004 but was postponed until late May that year. As would be expected, almost all leading Arab newspapers reported the news about the postponement and the speculations relating to the alternative date and venue. Four reports are cited below taken from four newspapers; two reports

include uses of modality and the other two mark the absence of such uses. For the sake of convenience, all four reports will be cited first with corresponding enumeration and then discussion of each of the reports will follow.

1- أفاد وزير الشؤون الخارجية أن "الرئيس زين العابدين بن علي جدد تأكيد تونس وحرصها الشديد على مواصلة التشاور والتنسيق حتى يتحقق التوافق حول المسائل المصيرية المطروحة على القمة والتي كانت موضع تباين في مواقف تونس وعدد من الدول من جهة ودول أخرى من جهة ثانية". وفي هذا الشأن فإن تونس تؤكد ضرورة انعقاد مجلس الجامعة العربية بمفردها بالقاهرة لأحكام تحضير ملفات القمة ومضامين وثائقها قصد التوصل إلى موقف موحد بالنظر إلى دقة الموقف. (أخبار تونس، 04/03/30).

"The [Tunisian] Minister of Foreign Affairs stated that 'President Zein el-Abideen Ben Ali reiterated that Tunisia is taking utmost care to continue consultation and coordination until reaching an agreement about the decisive issues presented before the summit which have been a matter of discrepancy between the stances of Tunisia and a number of [Arab] states on one hand and other states on the other'. In this context, Tunisia stresses the need for the Arab League Council to hold a separate meeting in Cairo in order to prepare the summit's files and documents to achieve a unified stance regarding the critical situation" (*Akhbar Tunis*, 30/03/04).

2- في إطار الجهود التي تبذلها سورية لتوحيد الموقف العربي تجاه الأوضاع الراهنة وصل السيد الرئيس بشار الأسد إلى القاهرة قبل ظهر أمس في زيارة إلى جمهورية مصر العربية [...] وتناولت المحادثات الاتصالات والمشاورات الجارية بشأن عقد القمة العربية وضرورة الإعداد والتحضير الجيدين لها من خلال تهيئة الأجواء المناسبة للخروج بقرارات تخدم المصالح العليا للأمم العربية وتمكنها من مواجهة التحديات الماثلة أمامها وخاصة في ظل الظروف الدقيقة التي تمر بها المنطقة العربية [...] وأوضح

الرئيس مبارك أن المهم هو أن تنعقد القمة وتخرج بقرارات تخدم القضايا العربية، مرجحاً أن يكون موعد انعقادها خلال شهر أيار القادم. (تشرين، 04/04/05).

“As part of the efforts which Syria undertakes to unify the Arab position towards the current events, President Bashar Al-Assad arrived at Cairo yesterday morning in a visit to the Arab Republic of Egypt [...] the discussion focused on the ongoing communications and consultations about holding the Arab summit and the need to prepare well for it through providing the right atmosphere to be able to make decisions that serve the high interests of the Arab Nation and enable it to face the present challenges especially the critical circumstances which the Arab region is going through [...] President Mubarak stated that the most important issue is for the summit to be held and for decisions to be made that serve the Arab causes. According to him, the summit is likely to be held during the approaching month of May” (*Teshreen*, 05/04/04).

3- وأوضح موسى أنه "حين نطالب بعقد القمة في أسرع وقت ممكن، ليس معنى ذلك أنها ستعقد خلال أيام، ولكنها ستعقد خلال أسابيع تراوح بين ثلاثة وسبعة". (الحياة، 04/03/30).

“[The Arab League Secretary General] Moussa explained that ‘when we demand that the summit be held as soon as possible, it does not mean that it is going to be held in a matter of days, but it will be held within weeks between three and seven” (*Al-Hayat*, 30/03/04).

4- وسعى الزعماء العرب أمس للاتفاق على موعد جديد للقمة وأعلن المغرب أن وزراء الخارجية العرب يعتزمون الاجتماع في القاهرة "خلال الأسابيع القليلة المقبلة" لبحث إمكان عقد القمة. وقال الرئيس

المصري حسني مبارك أن الزعماء العرب قد يجتمعون خلال ثلاثة أسابيع. وذكر الأمين العام للجامعة أنهم قد يجتمعون خلال فترة تراوح بين 3 و 7 أسابيع. (الخليج، 04/03/30).

“Yesterday, the Arab leaders sought an agreement on a new date for the summit and Morocco declared that the Arab foreign ministers are going to meet in Cairo ‘in the coming few weeks’ to discuss the possibility of holding the summit. The Egyptian president, Hosni Mubarak, said that the Arab leaders qad meet within three weeks. The Arab League Secretary said that they qad meet in a period between 3 and 7 weeks.” (*Al-Khaleej*, 30/03/04).

The first two examples mark an absence of modals whereas examples 3 and 4 contain the use of two different modals. It is also to be noticed that when the modals are used they are used to mark a very specific point, namely, the expected alternative date for holding the summit. This piece of news is absent in example 1 and only casually mentioned in example 2, but given central position in examples 3 and 4. The absence of modals highlights the ideological stance of the respective newspapers. In example 1, the report appears in a Tunisian state-run newspaper reporting to the Tunisian people. The main issue at hand is to clarify the Tunisian position with regards to the Arab summit and what the Tunisians see as necessary steps to be taken to overcome the disagreement which marred the original proceedings. The report in question also refers in vague terms to “the critical situation”; this might mean either the complications which ensued from the disagreement among the Arab officials prior to the summit, or to the more general circumstances that concern the deteriorating situation in both Palestine and Iraq. The underlying statement here is that, from the Tunisian officials’ point of view, Tunisia is not to blame for failing to host the Arab summit on the originally

scheduled date; the blame is equally shared with those “other states” who were opposed to the initiatives introduced by Tunisia and other Arab states. In this context, the prospective date for holding the summit in the near or far future is not a primary concern for the Tunisians who seem to be more interested in identifying and addressing the problems which prevented the summit from being held on the original date. In this way, the emphasis falls on what the Tunisian officials consider to be of urgency rather than the alternative date and venue for the postponed summit. Overlooking this information contributes to relegating the issue of the Tunisian failure to host the summit on the original date to a secondary position, while giving more saliency to the Tunisian official position towards the broader issues which are relevant to the summit in general. In particular, two issues are emphasized in the extract above: the first issue is the allusion to points of difference between Tunisia and other Arab states, the second one is what is described as “the critical situation”. The article aims at drawing the attention of the Tunisian audience to focus on the positive attitude of the Tunisian government regarding the Arab summit despite the failure to host it as scheduled.

In example 1 it is clear that the emphasis falls on the Tunisian position regarding the summit, implicitly defending that position. Example 2 is published by a Syrian newspaper addressing the Syrian audience. Throughout the report the main emphasis falls on the importance of making decisions that “serve the high interests of the Arab Nation”. The high interests of the Arab Nation, preparing the right atmosphere, the present challenges and the critical circumstances are aimed at evoking certain ideological assumptions in the minds of the Syrian readers. This article is a typical example of the kind of ideological discourse promoted by

Syrian state-run newspapers for local consumption. The first sentence starts with expressing the Syrian “efforts to unify” the Arabs. Unifying the Arabs has always been a central issue for the ruling Baath Party in Syria because it is one of the three highest principles constituting the Party’s motto (Unity, Freedom, Socialism). The belief in Arab unity features in referring to the Arab countries as the “Arab Nation”, a term less extensively used in many other Arab states; the Tunisian report above, for instance, refers to them as “other states”. Then there is a reference to “challenges” which implies the Syrian position as a country which considers itself to be still at war with Israel as opposed to other states in the region, namely Egypt and Jordan, which signed peace treaties with the Israelis, and, to a lesser degree, states such as Tunisia which has informal relations with Israel. The Syrian readers are in this way led to recall all these assumptions from the context and perceive the summit as a symbol of Arab unity in issuing declarations which represent a unified front in supporting the Syrian position against the hostile outside powers, mainly the US and Israel. The article implies that it is the duty of all the Arab states to hold the summit successfully. This is why the Egyptian president’s speculation about its future date is of very secondary importance to the Syrians and comes at the end of the report while the question of how the summit can serve the Arab causes is stressed repeatedly.

Thus, the absence of modality has been a direct result from the kind of ideological scene the Tunisian and the Syrian newspapers aimed at setting for their respective audiences. In examples 3 and 4, however, the scene is rather different and the use of modality in those two reports reflects the kind of speculation the newspapers involved wanted to highlight for their respective

readerships. Two points are to be noted here: first, the apparent concern with the prospective alternative date for holding the summit. The second point is the different modals used for expressing the same information within the same context of when the Arab summit is going to be held after it has been postponed. The report in the UAE newspaper, *Al-Khaleej*, contains the use of *qad* while that in the Lebanese daily, *Al-Hayat*, uses the Arabic particle denoting near future which is the equivalent of the English modal *will*.

Example 4 shows a greater degree of detachment with regards to the reported piece of news through the use of reported speech and the third person rather than direct quotation of the official's words. In this context, *qad* denotes a higher degree of uncertainty and consequently the action seems to be less likely to happen. In this way, the report reflects the general atmosphere of confusion and lack of consensus among the Arab officials regarding the summit and all the circumstances that surround it starting with its time and venue and ending with the resolutions and declarations which would constitute its outcome. In a sense, *qad* underlines not only the hazy speculation about the number of weeks that would pass before the Arab leaders can hold their summit, but also the general climate of uncertainty characterising the Arab summit with all the issues related to it either directly or indirectly. *Al-Khaleej* is reporting to its readers in the UAE (United Arab Emirates). The detached tone of the report is linked to the seemingly neutral position of the UAE, a Gulf country, with regard to the issue of the Arab summit as a whole. The assertive tone of the Tunisian news report is absent here because the UAE is not directly involved with the issue of hosting the summit, nor is it, as in the case of the Syrians, directly involved in the several volatile issues in Iraq

and Palestine and the conflict with Israel. Although such key ideological points are part of the communicative background of the Gulf readers, the official position normally tends to address those issues in rather moderate terms due to strategic and economic ties with the US. In this way, UAE readers are encouraged to interpret the news about the summit in terms of the prospective time for it to be held rather than from the perspective of any other political aspects.

This sense of uncertainty is unmarked in example 3 where the future particle is used instead of *qad*. First, the main feature in the report is the direct quotation of what the Secretary General of the Arab League actually said. So the official sounded fairly confident about the exact timing of the summit. The future particle here conveys the sense of reassurance and gives the readers a concrete platform on which to build their own conclusions. It is thus no longer a speculation for a hazy and distant event due to take place sometime or other in the future, but a definite time limit and a calculated plan for an important event. This is due to the fact that *Al-Hayat* does not stand for any particular point of view regarding the summit, this is reflected in the matter-of-fact style in relating the proposed alternative date of holding it.

3.7 Concluding remarks

This chapter has established a platform for discussing the use of linguistic features in general and modality in particular on the grounds of the goal of enhancing and promoting certain ideologies in the minds of the readers by the communicator of the ideological message in the language of news reports. In the following chapters the discussion shall proceed from the grounds established in

this chapter to analyse in more detail the use of modal verbs and auxiliaries in the Arabic and English newspapers to construct the ideological context from which receptors of the ideological message draw their assumptions about the news they are receiving. It will be argued that the use of modality is instrumental in constructing the context for the ideological message in order to promote certain ideological assumptions in the minds of the readers of that message and, by doing so, to produce certain response to that message which will strengthen certain political points of view and undermine others according to the specific ideological interests of one political power against another.

Relevance is a key term in establishing a connection between the use of modality in the language of the news and the ideological assumptions held by the readers of the news. Newspaper readers interpret the news within a certain cognitive environment. Ideological cognitive assumptions are part of the overall cognitive environment of the readers. In a news report or commentary, as illustrated by the examples above, the use of a certain modal directs the readers' attention towards a set of propositions which evoke certain ideological assumptions. This evocation of ideological assumptions leads the readers to arrive at conclusions that will reinforce certain ideological positions in their minds whilst relegating others to a secondary place. The mechanism according to which the evocation of ideological assumptions takes place in the minds of the readers in order for them to be able to reach certain ideological conclusions is the mechanism of relevance which will be the focus of the next chapter.

Chapter Four: A Relevance-Theoretic Account of the English Modals

4.1 Introduction

English modal auxiliaries have received a remarkably extensive investigation during a prolonged period of time. The study of modality and the modals in English has indeed been the focus of many linguists and philosophers and the attempts to capture the different meanings of the English modals have led to categorising them as epistemic, deontic, root, and dynamic, according to both semantic (word-meaning) and to pragmatic (context-dependent) considerations. Modal verbs are designed to underline concepts such as “necessity”, “possibility”, “probability” and “obligation” in human communication. Perkins (1983: 6) understands the reason behind the communicative need to express such concepts as being “that such notions are conceptually grounded in the fact that human beings often think and behave as though things might be, or might have been, other than they actually are, or were”.

Yet, the use of the English modals in the language of the media in general and international news in particular has not received a fair share of that extensive body of research into the use of modals in other contexts of linguistic communication whether it be spoken or written such as conversational communication and literary language. In this chapter, I shall seek to set a framework of analysis for the English modal verbs as they are used in newspaper reports and commentaries, drawing on the premises of Relevance theory as developed by Sperber and Wilson (1986/1995). Although this chapter is by no means aimed at presenting a detailed critical account of the whole body of

literature concerning modality to date, the discussion can nevertheless benefit from existing approaches, particularly those analysing modality along relevance-theoretic lines; as they are vital for providing a number of key descriptions and terminology for what is presented here.

The account sought in this chapter is to be established in a relevance-theoretic framework because it is essential to define the English modals following the ways in which they are used by speakers in actual communication by taking into consideration the actual contextual effects that exert their influence on the meanings of the modals as they are used in the language of international news which makes up the research corpus under investigation and from which examples shall be drawn.

As a starting point, a brief overview of the analyses conducted on English modality shall be provided. These analyses draw on the descriptive literature of the English modals within semantic and linguistic frameworks, as well as relevance-theoretic accounts of the English modals. By providing relevance-theoretic accounts of the English modals, the present discussion will draw on some of the former arguments, thus benefiting from both the terminology used by those preceding analyses and the approaches put forward for the study of modality that can be applied to the investigation of modals in the present chapter¹.

¹ It is to be pointed out that the terminology used in describing the English modals on semantic and linguistic grounds has been adopted by relevance-theoretic accounts. The same terminology is, therefore, used in the present account as it represents a descriptive frame for the basic meanings of the modals examined.

4.2 Previous analyses of the English modals

The field of modality as an area for research is one of the most long-standing research fields conducted both by linguists and logicians “since at least the time of Aristotle” (Perkins, 1983: 1). It is hardly surprising then that there has been extensive research on the English modal system resulting in a substantial body of literature being developed about the subject up to this day.

In broad terms, the concept of modality refers to the speaker’s attitude towards the truth of a proposition expressed by a linguistic structure, and towards the situation or event described by that proposition. The majority of linguistic approaches to modality focus on two main modal categories: “epistemic” modality and “deontic” modality¹. Epistemic modality is concerned with the degree of the speaker’s commitment to the truth of the proposition expressed by the sentence containing the modal, e.g.

1- *This may be true.*

2- *This can be true.*

Deontic modality deals with the concepts of “obligation” and “permission” since deontic modals express the speaker’s attitude towards the necessity or desirability of a certain action or event, e.g.

3- *I should go.*

4- *You must leave.*

¹ There are two subtypes of the modal system, these are “dynamic” modality and “root” modality. Dynamic modality concerns the concept of “ability”, while root modality combines the two modal concepts of “dynamic” and “deontic”, e.g.

-*Adam can speak four languages.* (dynamic modality: Adam is able to speak four languages).

-*Jane can come to my birthday.* (root modality: a- Jane is able to come to my birthday, b- Jane is permitted to come to my birthday).

In the literature on modal meanings in English, three main views of modality can be distinguished, these are: the ambiguity view, the polysemy view and the monosemy view.

4.2.1 The ambiguity view

Approaches to English modality based on the notion that the English modals are ambiguous argue that each modal verb encodes a cluster of different modal meanings (Palmer, 1990). Thus, in the case of the modal *may*, for example, the following modal meanings are encoded:

- 1- *My supervisor may be late.* (epistemic)
- 2- *May I enter?* (deontic/ permission)
- 3- *This PC suite may be accessed by all students.* (dynamic)

In the case of the modal *can*, on the other hand, the modal meanings encoded are as follows:

- 1- *I can speak English.* (ability)
- 2- *He can participate in the conference.* (deontic/ permission)
- 3- *You can be reasonable once in your life.* (deontic/ command)

The modal meanings encoded by the modal *must* are:

- 1- *She must be out of her mind.* (epistemic)
- 2- *You must listen to me.* (deontic)

The modal *should* denotes epistemic as well as deontic meanings, Palmer points out that *should* signifies a “highly deontic” sense in some cases:

- 1- *We should be comfortable in this hotel.* (epistemic)
- 2- *You should really watch your weight.* (deontic)

The main difficulty which the ambiguity view faces is the fact that it is not always feasible to distinguish between the dynamic and deontic senses of the modals. For example, in the sentence: “This PC suite may be accessed by all students” there is no categorical difference between the dynamic and the deontic aspects of the modal, even when sufficient contextual information is provided. The same problem applies to the modals *can* and *must* in the examples:

a- *He can participate in the conference.* (deontic/ permission)

b- *You must listen to me.* (deontic)

Such problems in determining the intended meaning signified by the modal prompted Coates (1983) to suggest that the modals are primarily indeterminate and to propose a model of a continuum of modal meaning for each of the modal verbs which extends from a “core” meaning to a “periphery” meaning of the modal. Thus, in the case of *can*, the continuum of meaning extends from the core meaning of “ability” to the periphery meaning of “possibility”. Coates (1983: 92) cites the following example to demonstrate the gradience of modal meanings where it is difficult to determine which meaning is intended by the use of the modal: “All we can do is rake up somebody like Piers Plowman who was a literary oddity”.

Coates’ account of the English modals runs into the difficulty of providing a thorough semantic account which is capable of encompassing the whole array of modal meanings encoded by the modals in all kinds of communicative situations. This difficulty stems from Coates’ attempt to rely exclusively on the semantic aspect of the modal verbs without stressing the importance of pragmatic interpretation. Positing that pragmatic interpretation can determine the particular

meaning intended by the use of the modal in a certain communicative situation makes the notion of gradience unnecessary because it accounts for the modal meaning in less “fuzzy” categorisation within a unitary framework.

4.2.2 The polysemy view

One of the main contributions to the polysemy view of the English modals can be found in the proposals of Sweetser (1990). Central to her argument is the notion that language in general is polysemous because the mechanism of using natural language is that of a metaphorical mapping from the concrete external world of physical experience to the abstract internal world of reasoning. It follows, Sweetser argues, that as part of language in general modal verbs are used as a form of metaphorical mapping from the physical world to the mental world. In other words, modals signify aspects that exist in the physical world which are then extended to the abstract world of mental processes by the speakers. For example, the modal *may* in its deontic sense encodes a potential barrier, whereas *must* encodes an existing barrier, those barriers operate in the mental experience of reasoning:

- 1- *You may go now.* (i.e. You are not barred by any authority from going now).
- 2- *You must be back before dark.* (i.e. You are barred by my direct authority from staying till after dark).

The distinction between the modals *may* and *must* according to their epistemic senses is explained through examples as follows:

- 3- *Sarah may have had a good time.* (i.e. I am not barred by my premises from the conclusion that Sarah has a good time).

4- *I must have missed the best part of the show.* (i.e. The available evidence compels me to reach the conclusion that I missed the best part of the show).

Sweetser's way of distinguishing between the root and epistemic senses of the English modals has the credit of placing more emphasis on the interpretation process in the mind of the speaker at the time of uttering the modal. However, in cases where root and epistemic meanings merge as in Coates' examples, Sweetser's proposal implies that examples of such cases cannot be mentally accessed. This implication does not hold because people do not usually face difficulty in understanding modal meanings in merger cases.

4.2.3 The monosemy view

Perkins (1983: 26) argues that each of the modal verbs has "a single core meaning [...] which is independent of its context". This statement has the obvious shortcoming of excluding the pragmatic aspect from the interpretation of the modal meaning. Perkins himself acknowledges that his account does not "tell the whole story" about the modal meanings but it contributes towards giving a detailed account of the English modals according to a unitary framework which avoids the complexities of the ever-expanding semantic categorisation of the modals advocated by the proponents of the polysemy view.

Perkins also includes the notion of "possible worlds" in his account for the English modals as a useful tool for distinguishing the different modal meanings. The notion of possible worlds is also advocated by Kratzer (1981). Within a possible-worlds framework, Kratzer introduces three factors which underlie the way modals operate, these are: "the modal relation", "the modal base", and "the

ordering source". The modal relation includes the notions of possibility and necessity. The modal base includes a set of assumptions according to which the modal relation is understood. Modal bases can be epistemic or deontic, as in the following examples:

1- *She must be his girlfriend, they are holding hands.* (in view of the available evidence, she is necessarily his girlfriend).

2- *I must pay my debts.* (in view of what is required, it is necessary for me to pay my debts).

Modal bases, according to Kratzer, differ according to the particular possible world within which they occur. She points out that modal meanings are context-dependent because the modal base which is selected for their interpretation is determined by pragmatic factors specific to the time of their utterance.

The ordering source is the factor according to which a particular possible world is selected from a group of other possible worlds which are contained in a modal base. This selection of the appropriate possible world is necessary for the interpretation of the modal meaning. For example, in the sentence "She must be his girlfriend, they are holding hands", the speaker excludes any other possibility except the one that she is his girlfriend because this is the only possibility that is in line with what is assumed to be the normal state of affairs. Kratzer suggests that the ordering source is the factor which determines whether or not a certain world is satisfactorily close to what is perceived as the normal state of affairs and therefore whether or not it should be considered in the interpretation process. That is, the closer the world to what holds true in the actual world, the higher the possibility that a modal relation will be interpreted within that world.

Kratzer's proposal is credited for its focus on contextual considerations and assigning cognition a greater importance in the process of interpreting modal meanings. On the other hand, her proposal is subject to a number of reservations (Papafragou, 1998). According to Papafragou, the idea of a fixed inventory of modal bases conveys the sense that the role of the context in the interpretation process is rigid and inflexible. This contradicts what has been established by Sperber and Wilson (1986/1995) that the context is not a predetermined rigid chunk of information existing outside the realm of the utterance, rather, the context is constructed as part of the interpretation process of the utterance communicated. In addition, Papafragou argues that the concept of ordering source is alien to human cognitive capacities and undertaking such ordering exercise would incur extra unnecessary effort without a corresponding amount of cognitive gain, since "the notion of similarity is too vague to be used on its own. So even if we knew how to give a psychologically tractable picture of possible worlds, the similarity metric would still remain a mystery" (1998: 10).

Before moving on to the relevance-theoretic accounts of the English modals, a brief account of the theory of Relevance as developed by Sperber and Wilson (1986/1995) is provided below.

4.3 Relevance Theory – an outline

The main objective of Relevance theory is to establish a highly constrained descriptive framework to explain a complex set of communication and interpretation situations and phenomena. Central to this theory is the basic notion of cost and benefit, in other words, Relevance theory argues that by cognitively

processing information human beings seek primarily to make the smallest possible processing effort while at the same time achieving the greatest possible cognitive benefit, i.e. a communicative effect. This principle is what Sperber and Wilson call “the principle of relevance”.

The principle of relevance is applied to what every individual holds in his/her mind: assumptions. Assumptions constitute what a human being is basically able to believe to be true. In fact, assumptions are made of everything that a person experiences in the world, ranging from physical phenomena through scientific hypotheses to religious beliefs, cultural orientations and personal experiences and expectations. Clearly, not all assumptions which a person might hold in his/her mind are identical in their truth value or their strength. The strength of assumptions varies according to the nature of each and every assumption: assumptions based on physical perception, for instance, are likely to be stronger than others. Thus, an individual holds in his/her mind different sets of assumptions that claim different degrees of strength according to the environment they are derived from. Moreover, assumptions are relative in their degree of strength from one individual to another and one group of people to another. This explains why a group of people would hold a certain set of assumptions with a great degree of strength while at the same time another group of individuals would consider that set of assumptions to be totally false.

Another key concept in Relevance theory is that of “context”. A context is to be understood as a subset of the hearer’s assumptions about the world. Every new assumption is processed by the addressee in a context. What a person aims to achieve from processing any new assumption s/he encounters is to try to

assimilate that new assumption with those which that person already holds in his/her cognitive context. This assimilation comes as a result of comparing the new assumption with old ones. The comparison of the novel assumption with already existing assumptions can lead to a number of possible outcomes; one likely outcome is for the new assumption to be in line with the existing assumptions in the context in which it is being processed and this results in strengthening those existing assumptions in the mind of the addressee and the new assumption is assimilated by being added to the context. A second outcome may be that the new assumption contradicts the existing assumptions in the context in which it is processed. Depending on the degree of strength of that new assumption, the result can be either the weakening of the existing assumptions or complete eradication of them. If the new assumption is weaker than the existing assumptions in that particular context the result would be that the new assumption is not assimilated into that cognitive context and may be altogether eradicated. What any of these outcomes produce is a change to the cognitive set of assumptions which the addressee holds in his/her mind and what Sperber and Wilson call “cognitive environment”. When the new assumption effects this change to the addressee’s cognitive environment then it is said to have a “contextual effect” for the addressee.

As mentioned above, the context in which the new assumption is processed is only a subset of the addressee’s assumptions about the world. This means that the process of comparison between new and old assumptions does not involve the whole set of the existing assumptions in the mind of the addressee at the time of communicating the new assumption, but only a subset of those existing

assumptions. The question is, therefore, how to identify the suitable subset of assumptions for processing the novel assumption. Sperber and Wilson's answer is that the subset of assumptions, or context, is not given at any point of communication but determined in part by the new assumption itself. That means that it is the content of the new assumption which participates in choosing the context in which it is to be appropriately processed. According to Sperber and Wilson, for a new assumption to be relevant it has to bear a sufficient amount of contextual effects for the addressee in the specific context in which it is processed at a particular point in time.

Furthermore, for the new assumption to be "optimally relevant" it should produce a maximum number of contextual effects while at the same time demanding the least possible processing effort on the part of the addressee. This binary notion is what constitutes Sperber and Wilson's definition of the principle of relevance. It is important to note, however, that the relevance of a given new assumption is relative and varies according to the type of context and the group of addressees to whom it is communicated in the first place. Thus, a piece of local news may prove to be more relevant to a certain group of newspaper readers than a piece of international news. If we apply the principle of relevance as outlined above we can discover why this is the case. The piece of local news is more likely to hold a large number of contextual effects for most newspaper readers at a relatively small degree of processing effort as the context in which the news is to be processed is more readily available in the minds of the readers than that of the foreign news where the retrieval of the appropriate context for processing a piece of international news would cost the readers greater effort in order to achieve

sufficient contextual effects for that news to be adequately relevant in their cognitive environment.

Relevance theory explains the significant role played by the addresser in making a novel assumption sufficiently relevant for his/her audience. By using specific linguistic expressions, the speaker or writer attempts to bring a new assumption to the context of his/her hearers or readers as an optimally relevant one by maximising the number of contextual effects that new assumption can hold for the audience in the particular context in which it is processed while at the same time not putting that audience to unnecessarily great processing effort.

The next section outlines approaches involving the application of Relevance theory to the use of English modality in linguistic communication. The basic argument in these approaches is that different modal verbs are processed in different contexts and therefore they hold different contextual effects according to those contexts in which they are processed by the addressees.

4.4 Relevance-theoretic accounts of English modality

4.4.1 Modals and potentiality

Klinge (1993: 315) develops a framework for what he calls the five central modal auxiliaries, *can*, *may*, *must*, *will* and *shall* in order to “shed light on some central aspects of the immense cotext and context sensitivity involved in the meaning of utterances of sentences containing a modal auxiliary”.

Central to Klinge’s argument is that “potentiality [...] stand[s] for the semantic field shared by the five modals” (ibid., p. 323) he includes in his analysis. This notion of potentiality derives from the fact that, according to Klinge,

the propositional form arrived at through the linguistic semantics of the propositional content of a sentence is to be distinguished from the set of assumptions about the referential situation which that sentence is understood to describe. Klinge calls the propositional form which a sentence gives rise to “situation representation” and the referential content “world situation”. According to Relevance theory the linguistic form of a sentence represents a stimulus which activates a set of concepts. These concepts are then accessed by the addressee in the form of cognitive assumptions in order to arrive at a mental representation which undergoes further processing until the addressee is capable of reaching a satisfactory conclusion as to the meaning of the sentence or the communicative aim of the speaker. The conclusion which the addressee eventually arrives at is controlled by the principle of relevance as formulated by Sperber and Wilson (1986/1995). In Klinge’s terms, the principle of relevance functions to guarantee that the addressee makes the appropriate decision regarding the interpretation of a sentence in a given context “because the addressee seeks to derive the optimal improvement in her representation of the world by combining the conceptual information of the ‘propositional content’ and assumptions about the ‘world situation’ most immediately accessible to her in the context of utterance to arrive at a ‘situation representation’” (ibid., p. 322).

Klinge then moves to account for the individual modals on the basis of the notion of potentiality. In this framework, the modal *can* joins the two outcomes of correspondence and non-correspondence of potentiality, thus stating that both correspondence and non-correspondence are valid outcomes, so that “the linguistic semantics of a sentence containing *can* does not signal whether we ever find out

whether the situation representation we arrive at turns out to be a true description of a world situation” (ibid., p. 341). Klinge’s example is the following sentence:

1- *John can speak English.*

The utterance of the above sentence, according to Klinge, does not signal whether the situation representation [John speak English] turns out to be a true description of a world situation. In other words, the utterance [John speak English] will be compatible with what the speaker signalled by uttering the sentence “John can speak English” this compatibility is achieved regardless of the fact whether the utterance [John speak English] turns out to be a true description of a world situation or not.

Thus, the function of *can* is that it joins the two outcomes of correspondence and non-correspondence of potentiality. In contrast, the modal *may* disjoins the two outcomes of potentiality. Due to its ‘either-or’ nature, the use of *may* in a sentence makes the semantics of that sentence signal that the situation representation turns out to be a true description of a world situation or the situation representation turns out not to be a true description of a world situation. Klinge cites the following examples to illustrate the point:

2- *It can be very cold in Stockholm.*

3- *It may be very cold in Stockholm.*

The utterance of sentence 2 above, Klinge says, signifies that the speaker does not wish to convey a situation representation of low temperatures as an actually obtaining world situation now or in the future in Stockholm. Conversely, the utterance of sentence 3 signifies that the speaker wishes to convey a situation

representation of low temperatures as an actually obtaining or not obtaining world situation now or in the future in Stockholm (ibid.).

In terms of giving permission as denoted by *can* and *may*, Klinge argues that an utterance of a sentence containing *can* does not commit the speaker or addressee to anything happening at all, whereas a sentence containing *may* is committed to the agent either bringing about the world situation or not bringing about the world situation, e.g.

4- *You can smoke here.*

5- *You may smoke here.*

The sentence containing *may* imposes a choice on the addressee, which accounts for the greater formality often involved in the use of *may* for granting permission than in the use of *can*.

As for the semantics of the modal *will*, Klinge provides the following paraphrase: “the situation representation turns out to be a true description of a world situation” (ibid., p. 345). The world situation in the case of *will* is either a future time world situation or a previous world situation, e.g.

6- *They will arrive next week.* (a future time world situation)

7- *They will have arrived two hours ago.* (a previous world situation)

The semantic difference between *will* and *shall* is illustrated by Klinge’s following examples:

8- *Will Gwen do your shopping for you?*

9- *Shall Gwen do your shopping for you?*

Example 8 can be paraphrased in the following way: Does [Gwen do your shopping for you] turn out to be a true description of a world situation? This

means that example 8 may be used as an utterance to request information about a world-event. Example 9, on the other hand, is paraphrased as follows: Does [Gwen do your shopping for you] turn out to be a true description of a world situation which is the result of an agent-event?

In this way, Example 9 may be used as an utterance to request information about an agent-event.

The difference between *shall* and *must*, on the other hand, is again explained by Klinge in terms of potentiality. *Must* is paraphrased as: the situation representation does not turn out not to be a true description of a world situation, e.g.

10- *You must be very careless.*

In terms of the lexical semantics of *must*, it indicates ruling out that the situation representation turns out not to be a true description of a world situation. This process of ruling out that the situation representation turns out not to be a true description of a world situation “amounts to leaving it to a process of inference to work out that the only outcome that is allowed for is that the situation representation turns out to be a true description of a world situation” (ibid., p. 351). Thus, in its epistemic sense, *must* indirectly indicates what *will* and *shall* indicate in a more direct way.

Klinge accounts for modals as “lexemes unmarked for tense” (ibid., p. 348). He acknowledges that failure to combine the modals with the past tense “constitutes a serious descriptive inadequacy” (ibid.). To start with, this descriptive inadequacy casts serious doubts regarding the applicability of Klinge’s account to the rest of the modal auxiliaries and their past forms. Secondly, the

notions of situation representation and world situation are not fully developed and there is no clear link between these notions and enhancing the relevance of the utterance during the interpretation process. Moreover, Klinge's account of the modal auxiliaries in terms of potentiality and its connection with the notions of situation representation and world situation seems to be at odds with the basic criterion of the principle of relevance, particularly with regards to the interpretation of the modal *must* which Klinge describes as "the roundabout way" (ibid., p. 351) of what *will* and *shall* directly signify¹.

4.4.2 Modals and evidence

Another relevance-theoretic account of modality is that proposed by Groefsema (1995). Her model focuses on the idea that the central property shared by all modals in English is that of "evidence". According to this model, the modals *can* and *must* focus the addressee's attention "on all the *evidence* (of whatever nature, epistemic or otherwise) for the proposition expressed by the rest of the utterance" (1995: 62-3, original emphasis). Whereas the modals *may* and *should* "do not cause us to focus on all the "evidence" for the proposition expressed, but rather communicate that there is at least some evidence which supports the proposition expressed" (ibid., p. 63). The difference between *can* and *must* lies in what Groefsema calls "the relation between this "evidence" and the proposition expressed: *must* expresses that the proposition is entailed by the

¹ However, Klinge's account is particularly illuminating when he distinguishes between modals expressing "world-events" that is, "world situations that merely happen" (1993: 326) and modals expressing "agent-events" or "world situations that only happen if an agent chooses intentionally to bring them about" (ibid., p. 326).

“evidence”, while *can* expresses the weaker relation of compatibility, i.e. the “evidence” does not entail the negation of the proposition expressed” (ibid.). Likewise, the relation between the “evidence” and the proposition expressed by *should* is that of entailment, while the relation between the “evidence” and the proposition expressed by *may* is that of compatibility.

Groefsema illustrates her notion of evidence in the interpretation of the modals as follows:

1- *The painters can paint the doors.*

The logical form [*p* the painters paint the doors] is compatible with the set of all propositions which have a bearing on *p*. The logical form focuses the attention of the addressee on all the propositions which have a bearing on *p*, such as that the painters have the ability to paint, that the doors are ready for painting, that painting the doors will not interfere with the other jobs that have to be done, that paint and brushes are available, etc. The difference between the interpretation of *can* as denoting ability and *can* as denoting possibility is illustrated as follows:

2- *She can speak fourteen languages.*

3- *The painters can paint the doors tomorrow.*

According to Groefsema, the logical form of the utterance in sentence 2 [*p* Ann speak fourteen languages] is compatible with the set of all propositions which have a bearing on *p*. In other terms, someone performing an action entails that that person has the ability to perform that action. When the above logical form is processed, therefore, the only proposition which has a bearing on the proposition expressed is the proposition that Ann has the ability to speak fourteen languages. This yields an ability interpretation of the modal *can*. When the utterance in

sentence 3 is processed, on the other hand, the word “tomorrow” indicates that what is at stake is not only that the painters are able to paint, but also being able to paint at a particular point in time involving a particular object. Thus the logical form [p the painters paint the doors tomorrow] is compatible with the set of all propositions which have a bearing on p , and yields a possibility interpretation.

The distinction between the interpretation of *can* and the interpretation of *may* is illustrated by Groefsema by the following example:

4- *You may go home tomorrow* (ibid., p. 67).

The utterance in the above sentence yields the logical form: There is at least one set of propositions such that [p I (patient) go home day] is compatible with it. This logical form will be integrated into the logical form: Doctor says that (there is at least one set of propositions such that [p I (patient) go home day] is compatible with it).

This logical form guides the addressee to supply a piece of evidence for the proposition p . Since the only thing that is stopping the patient from going home is that s/he has not been given permission, which is the permission given by his/her doctor, then the only evidence for the proposition p which the doctor can supply is permission. Consequently, the only relevant interpretation of the utterance above is that the doctor gives permission to the patient to go home. If a different context is provided for the utterance a different interpretation of *may* will ensue. For example, if the context provided for the above utterance suggests that the only thing that prevented the patient from going home is that the ambulance people required for the journey have been on strike, and the doctor is believed to be aware of this fact. In this context, the interpretation process will conclude that there is a

chance that the ambulance service is going to be available the next day. The weak possibility interpretation of *may* results from the proposition being compatible with, not entailed by, some evidence.

Whereas the proposition containing *can* or *may* is compatible with evidence, the proposition containing *must* or *should* is entailed by evidence. Groefsema cites the following examples:

5- *You must be home by eleven.*

6- *You should go and see your grandmother.*

The utterance in sentence 5 yields the logical form: [p Bill be home by eleven o'clock on day] is entailed by the set of all propositions which have a bearing on p , which gives rise to the logical form: Mother says that ([p Bill be home by eleven o'clock on day] is entailed by the set of all propositions which have a bearing on p (ibid., p. 70).

Assumptions about the authority of Bill's mother over him will be easily accessible. Because his mother says that all the evidence entails that he be home by eleven, Bill can conclude that the only evidence that plays a role is derived from his mother's authority, so that what he happens to want is taken as not having a bearing on the proposition expressed. Hence, the interpretation process of *must* concludes that it denotes obligation.

As for the utterance in sentence 6, it yields the logical form: There is at least some set of propositions which entails [p Bill go and see grandmother at time]. Similar assumptions about the authority of Bill's mother become easily accessible in this context. However, the difference in interpretation is due to there being some evidence which entails the proposition p not all the evidence indicated by the use

of *must*. Hence, the interpretation of *should* is taken to be less imperative than that of *must*.

The notion of “evidence” is a useful way of approaching the analysis of modal auxiliaries not only in English but in other languages as well. This notion seems to provide suitable tools for establishing a theoretical basis to account for the meanings of modal verbs. However, Groefsema’s model appears to have more potential than what she argues for. As a term, “evidence” seems to be vague and undefined. Consequently, Groefsema is able to provide only one explanation for the difference between *may* and *can* and between *must* and *should*, i.e. according to the number of propositions involved in the interpretation process. This way of explaining differences in use between the modals works to a certain extent for Groefsema’s present account which includes the present tenses of the modals, but when the past tenses are considered, there will clearly be a theoretical gap in Groefsema’s model. However, accounting for the different relationships between evidence and the set of propositions involved in the interpretation process in terms of “compatibility” and “entailment” is an insightful approach to illustrate differences between seemingly similar modals of the same category such as *must* and *should*.

4.4.3 The metarepresentation hypothesis

The third account of the English modals along relevance-theoretic lines is Papafragou’s “metarepresentation hypothesis” (1997, 2000). In applying her hypothesis to the English modals, Papafragou concentrates on the epistemic functions of the four modals *can*, *may*, *must*, and *should*. She argues that “The

employment of epistemic modality rests crucially on the ability to reflect on the content of one's own beliefs, to take into account the reliability of those beliefs (i.e. the relative strength with which they are entertained), and to perform deductive operations on them" (1997: 32). She proposes the argument that the use of modals is an instance of the interpretive use of language as opposed to the descriptive use of language as explained by Sperber and Wilson (1986/1995). What the above processes lead to, according to Papafragou, is that they "presuppose the ability to conceive of one's mental contents as representations distinct from reality which may bear a variable degree of correspondence to the actual world" (ibid., p. 32). In other terms, Papafragou argues that the epistemic uses of the English modal verbs reflect the individual's ability to assess his/her thoughts and beliefs as opposed to the outside facts of the real world. As a result of such assessment those thoughts and beliefs are expressed as propositional representations used interpretively by the individual holding them, as opposed to the truth-conditional representation of a state of affairs in the external actual world of reality which the individual uses descriptively, i.e. in objective terms without making personal judgments about their truth or falsity.

Papafragou's account provides an insightful approach to the study of epistemic and root modality. However, Papafragou relies heavily on logical relations. For example, she assumes that "the semantic content of modals consists of two components: a logical relation R (basically: entailment or compatibility), and a domain D of propositions. Roughly, then, what the modals are used to convey is that a certain proposition p bears a certain logical relation R to the set of propositions in a propositional domain D " (1998: 11). According to this account, a

domain D can be unspecified, factual or normative depending on the modal used. This relational structure is an instance of another structure, Papafragou argues, which holds between an “operator”, “restrictor” and “matrix”: “The operator takes scope over the proposition in the matrix and relates it to another proposition (the restrictor). In the case of modals, the operator is the logical relation (entailment or compatibility), the matrix is the embedded proposition p and the restrictor is the domain of propositions which the matrix is being placed in relation to” (ibid.). Such an account seems to be appropriate for studies of modal logic rather than studies about the pragmatic relevance of utterances containing modals. Hence, Papafragou’s account is brilliantly detailed but offers limited advance from what has been already introduced by Groefsema; for example, Papafragou uses Groefsema’s terminology and applies it to the same group of modals without really suggesting the possibility of extending such an approach to other modals or modal expressions.

In the present chapter, the discussion will draw on Groefsema’s notion of “evidence” for the English modals. The reason for this is that evidence as conveyed by all the modals but in different degrees and different types of relationships with the propositions expressed by the different modals seems to be applicable for a wider range of modals. This model can account for epistemic as well as deontic functions of the modals. Moreover, it can be applied to modal systems other than that in English, which can lead to establishing a principled framework of accounting for modal uses in different languages, thus facilitating the comparison and contrast of the different modal systems across languages.

Establishing such a comparative framework for analysis of modality across languages will be the basis on which the present research will undertake the study of translating modality between Arabic and English. An independent relevance-theoretic account for each of the modal systems in Arabic and in English will be followed by an investigation of the possible correspondences between English modals and their Arabic counterparts based on correspondences in their modal interpretation in their respective languages. The discussion shall highlight instances of lack of correspondence in modal interpretations when translating modality from English into Arabic and show that such lack substantially affects the interpretation of the communicated news on the part of the target audience as opposed to the source audience.

4.5 Modality in the language of the news and the notion of “evidence” – a proposal

In this section, I shall discuss the use of the English modal auxiliary verbs in the language of news reports and commentaries drawing on the tenets of Relevance theory. The main objective is to analyse the interpretation process of the modals in terms of the degree of evidence which each modal conveys in the context of news reports. The modals discussed below include *may*, *might*, *can*, *could*, *must*, and *should*.

I propose to extend Groefsema’s discussion of evidence to include the modals *might* and *could* and analyse their use in news reports, when this use is not primarily imposed by the linguistic context, i.e. use of past tenses. In doing so, the degree of evidence yielded by the proposition where a modal is used will hold a

key position in assessing the relevance which that proposition holds to the readers in a given context. Thus, according to our model, the modal *can* denotes **maximum** evidence **compatible** with **all** the propositions available from the context. The modal *may* denotes **maximum** evidence **compatible** with at least **some** propositions available from the context. *Could* denotes **minimum** evidence **compatible** with **all** the propositions available from the context. *Might* denotes **minimum** evidence **compatible** with at least **some** propositions available from the context. *Must* denotes **maximum** evidence **entailed** by **all** propositions available from the context. *Should* denotes **maximum** evidence **entailed** by at least **some** propositions available from the context.

As well as facilitating the theoretical distinction between the present and the past forms of the modal auxiliaries, the notion of the degree of evidence indicated by each of the modals will also shed light on the practice of using different modal auxiliaries by different newspapers when reporting the same piece of news. Undertaking such comparison will highlight the idea that when a number of different newspapers report the same piece of news, it is sometimes the case that one newspaper makes one aspect of that news more salient than other aspects by using a modal which indicates maximum evidence, while another newspaper reporting the same piece of news will place that particular aspect in the background by using a modal indicating minimum evidence and so on. The task of giving a certain aspect of news more salience than others is part of what the newspaper leads its readership to focus on when reading a given news report.

The term “evidence” in our model shall be understood as the internal representation which the readers construct according to their cognitive

environment which constitutes background information available to them at the time of communicating the message, as well as information introduced to them from the context of that message itself. Hence the degree of evidence, maximum or minimum, is determined by the specific modal used in communicating a given proposition according to the mechanism of relevance which prompts the readers to base their internal representation of the ideological situation in question on either a maximum or minimum amount of supporting background information to back that proposition depending on the modal used to communicate that proposition, thus producing contextual effects which will lead them to certain conclusions.

4.5.1 Epistemic modals and maximum compatible evidence

4.5.1.1 *May*

According to Groefsema's account, the use of the modal *may* in an utterance denotes that "there is at least some set of propositions such that p is compatible with it" (1995: 62), where p is the proposition introduced by the modal auxiliary. My argument is that the modal *may* is used in an utterance to denote that maximum evidence is compatible with at least some set of propositions for a proposition p . The notion of maximum evidence in analysing the interpretation process of the modal *may* has theoretical potential for two main reasons. The first reason is that the notion of maximum evidence yielded by a certain number of propositions can accommodate the possibility to analyse the interpretation process of not only the present tense of the modal as Groefsema and others in the field have done, but also to be theoretically better equipped to analyse the past tense in the form of the modal *might*. By achieving this theoretical objective the relevance-

theoretic framework for analysing the communicative behaviour of modal verbs will be adequately expanded to include the past tenses of the modals as well as the present tenses, providing better tools for analysing fully all the modals instead of being exclusively interested in the modals in the present tenses. The second reason is that such a theoretical framework will allow research into the behaviour of the modals to be expanded to accommodate modals in other languages, thus setting a comparative and contrastive framework for the study of translation of modality across languages.

Below are some examples about the use of *may* in news reports that show how the above analysis can be applied to the interpretation process of this modal. The first example is a news report published by *The Guardian* about the photos which appeared in *The Daily Mirror* concerning allegations that British troops in Iraq were involved in incidents of indecent behaviour and torture against Iraqi prisoners.

“The Armed Forces minister, Adam Ingram, is today expected to declare that *The Daily Mirror*’s ‘world exclusive’ pictures of British soldiers abusing and urinating on Iraqis were faked [...] Mr. Ingram may offer an apology for ‘inadvertently’ misleading the House, while allowing the announcement on *The Daily Mirror* photos to dominate proceedings” (*The Guardian*, 13/05/04).

The use of the modal *may* denotes that maximum evidence is compatible with at least some set of propositions for the proposition [*p* Mr. Ingram offers an apology]. The notion of “compatibility” is to be understood as in Groefsema’s terms “the evidence does not entail the negation of the proposition expressed” (1995: 63).

The interpretation process of the proposition in question draws on the degree of evidence introduced by the modal as well as the number of possible propositions to be considered by the audience. According to the present analysis, the modal *may* introduces maximum degree of evidence yielded by only some set of possible propositions. This means that the news report does not leave the audience with a strong possibility for the fulfillment of the propositions because they are not required to cognitively consider a large number of possible propositions which are likely to have a bearing on the context of the particular piece of news reported in this instance. Therefore, their interpretation of the proposition where the modal *may* is used leaves the audience with a limited number of possibilities to draw on when processing the text.

By interpreting the proposition on the Minister's apology by the modal *may*, the report leads the readers to form an internal representation about the possibility of the action of actually offering an apology within the context of the general atmosphere concerning the war on Iraq and the position of each of the three main British parties towards that war. The issue of the publishing of the photos showing British soldiers abusing Iraqis is only part of that general political context; therefore, Mr. Ingram's response will also be part of his party's position and will have to face the rising opposition against the war issue and any further deployment of British troops in Iraq. Thus, the degree of possibility with which the proposition about offering an apology is introduced to the readers accentuates the wider political context and leads the readers to construct a mental representation about that context when processing that proposition. In fact, the rest of the article contains several instances of uses of modal verbs conveying different

degrees of possibility and necessity, e.g. *could* and *should*. which illustrates the aspect of expectancy as well as the aspect of commitment to the necessity of a certain proposition by the speaker. This will be the subject of discussion when this article is discussed later as part of studying *could* and *should* in the subsequent sections.

The relevance of a certain proposition introduced by a modal is part and parcel of the relevance of the wider context within which the news report is communicated. The relevance of the modal *may* in the next example is achieved when the report includes additional information which sets the wider scene for the readers to process the proposition introduced by that modal. The example is taken from a news report about the US president, George W. Bush's visit to Europe. This example was discussed in the previous chapter for the ideological aspect it displays, it is repeated here for the purpose of analysing the use of the modal involved in terms of Relevance.

“Mr. Bush may cause discomfort by demanding that his European hosts support putting pressure on Syria following the assassination last week of the former Lebanese prime minister, Rafik Hariri, which Lebanese opposition figures have blamed on Damascus [...] some of the gestures and announcements preceding Mr. Bush's arrival last night indicated that any rapprochement may lack substance” (*The Guardian*, 21/02/05).

As has been indicated in the previous chapter, this piece of news appeared in several British and US newspapers on the same day. Second, all the articles reporting this piece of news contained modal verbs which were, interestingly, different from one article to another. This point will be further elaborated at a

later stage in the discussion when the other modal verbs are analysed. Here, only the interpretation of *may* will be dealt with.

The use of the modal *may* in uttering the proposition [*p* Mr. Bush cause discomfort] draws the attention of the readers to the maximum evidence yielded by at least some set of propositions that have a bearing on the above proposition. When this piece of news about the US president's visit to Europe was reported by other newspapers, both British and American, the proposition about the potential discomfort which President George Bush is likely to cause in European quarters does not appear in the reports published in newspapers other than *The Guardian*.

According to the relevance-theoretic proposal set above, the use of the modal *may* in the second sentence is interpreted in the following way: maximum evidence is compatible with at least some set of propositions for the proposition [*p* Any rapprochement lack substance]. That set of some propositions yielding maximum evidence for the interpretation of the proposition *p* is actually articulated later on in the same news report. According to *The Guardian*, on the eve of President Bush's visit to Europe and to the NATO Headquarters, the Russian president Vladimir Putin announced increased nuclear cooperation with Iran and said that he intended to visit Tehran soon. This move, the report explains, challenged one of the most important issues on the US agenda, namely, how to deal with Iran's suspected nuclear ambitions. Meanwhile, the then German Chancellor, Mr. Gerhard Schröder was addressing an international security conference in Munich the previous week when he questioned NATO's usefulness and its appropriateness as a forum for joint US-European policy making.

The readers are directed to consider these propositions to interpret the proposition [*p* Any rapprochement lack substance]. By using the modal *may*, the interpretation is based on the maximum evidence which is yielded by the set of some propositions as indicated above. It is an interesting fact that the newspaper makes this cluster of propositions stand out in its report which adds to the salience already given to the proposition in which the modal has been used. The attention of the readers of *The Guardian* is drawn to a number of propositions which have not been reported by the other newspapers relating the same piece of news. In this way, the relevance of *The Guardian*'s report to its readers is different from the relevance of another newspaper's report about that piece of news. This will be further discussed below when related reports published by other newspapers about the same news are studied.

The following example is a commentary about the Syrian president's visit to Tehran to meet with Iran's newly elected president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, and with Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. The writer argues that this visit represents a repeat of history because it echoes similar moves made in the 1980s by the then President Hafiz Assad of Syria to build up close ties with the Iranian leaders in order to alienate Iraq and protect Syria from the United States and Israel. The writer wonders if President Bashar Assad is having similar plans in mind and if such plans are going to be effective after the US invasion of Iraq and the prospect of establishing an Iraqi government with a Shiite majority which is very likely to be welcomed by Shiite Iran.

"Assad's maneuvers, however, raise a more fundamental question, one heightened by rising American frustration in Iraq: Is a clash between Syria and the United

States becoming increasingly inevitable. so that the Iraqi conflict may spread to Syria - more specifically to the Syrian side of the border area with Iraq?" (Reason.com, 10/08/05, Michael Young, *Syria: The New Cambodia*).

In order for the proposition [p The Iraqi conflict spread to Syria] to be relevant to the readers, the use of the modal *may* suggests that there is at least some propositions which yield maximum evidence making the proposition p compatible with them. The writer introduces this set of propositions to the readers in order to direct their interpretation of the new proposition towards the conclusion that there is a certain extent of possibility that the military action which took place in Iraq is going to spread to neighbouring Syria. Among these propositions are the Syrian failure to win the support of the Iraqi government and the fact that Syria is vulnerable in the face of the US military might compared to Iran. The use of *may* in this context makes those propositions available as part of the readers' assumptions so that they can process the new proposition introduced by the use of the modal to arrive at the conclusion which the writer is arguing for.

4.5.1.2 Can

In Groefsema's account, the proposition which contains the modal *can* "is compatible with the set of all propositions which have a bearing on p " (1995: 62). According to the present proposal, *can* indicates that maximum evidence is compatible with the set of all propositions with a bearing on a proposition p . The following examples are aimed at illustrating how the notion of a maximum degree of evidence leads the interpretation process of the modal *can* in newspaper reports.

The first example is a commentary published by *The Guardian*. the article is written by Crispin Black, a government intelligence analyst until 2002. and the subject is about the news concerning the success achieved by the British security services in thwarting an alleged chemical attack on the country and the ways the British authorities are required to consider in their fight against terrorism at the national level.

“The raids in the home counties on March 30, and the rumours of the thwarting of a chemical attack that emerged yesterday, suggest that our security services are able to acquire actionable intelligence on which to act [...] We can also take some reassurance from a good general counter-terrorism record stretching back nearly 60 years [...] IRA teams never knew when their operations had been compromised. This kind of life is wearing and diverts the energies of terrorists away from attacks and towards their own security. To some extent this kind of atmosphere can deter even suicide terrorists - the last thing they want is Parkhurst rather than Paradise” (*The Guardian*, 07/04/04).

The writer in this article gives salience to two propositions by his use of the modal *can*. This salience is achieved by directing the audience’s attention towards the propositions in question and prompting them to consider the maximum evidence which is compatible with the set of all the possible propositions which have a bearing on those two propositions. The context in the article suggests that the writer aims at bringing the case of combating the terrorism of the IRA to the forefront of the audience’s attention. The proposition of having a good record in curbing terrorist activities on the part of the British authorities is made stronger by the suggestion that all the evidence yielded by all the

propositions having a bearing in that particular context on the new proposition backs the argument that the British authorities are able to counter terrorist activities plotted by other terrorist groups. It is directed at the British people who still have vivid memories of the terrorist acts perpetrated by the IRA, bringing the IRA into the context highlights the effectiveness of the proposition and strengthens assumptions about its high possibility.

The next example is taken from the American newspaper, *The Washington Post*, reporting on the same European visit by Mr. Bush. The main feature of most of the reports published in this newspaper is that they heavily quote the US president's exact words rather than reporting them in the third person. From the theoretical perspective of the present argument, this feature proves to be of considerable significance because the modals used by Mr. Bush draw the audience's attention to certain aspects in his speech whereas reports published in newspapers which relate the President's words in the third person use different modals and thus focus the audience's attention on other aspects of the event and the corresponding position of Mr. Bush.

"Bush called on Syria to withdraw its forces from Lebanon [...] adding that if Syrians stay out of Lebanon's parliamentary elections in the spring, the vote 'can be another milestone of liberty'" (*The Washington Post*, 21/02/05).

Addressing the American audience, the newspaper builds on the picture which George W. Bush has constructed in his Inaugural Address, where the words "freedom" and "liberty" were used frequently. Here again Mr. Bush uses the word "liberty" when he talks about the parliamentary elections in Lebanon. The Lebanese case is used by Mr. Bush to prove his rhetoric to be right and applicable

to the rest of the world. The modal *can* prompts the audience to consider the maximum degree of evidence which is compatible with the set of all the propositions that have a bearing on that particular context. The word “liberty” is obviously key here because it recalls to the audience’s attention the rhetoric used by the President in his Address earlier that year and at the same time applies that rhetoric to a specific situation in faraway Lebanon; that it is “occupied” by the Syrian forces and that this occupation inhibits the democratic process of parliamentary elections in that country. In this way, the US audience are prompted to form ideological conclusions which are in line with what the US administration has in mind.

In the next example both *can* and *may* are used in the article to report on one piece of news about the Iraqi government elections and the insurgents’ threat to disrupt the process by wreaking mayhem in Baghdad.

“Democracy can bring peace to the Middle East: Terrorists have vowed ‘to wash the streets of Baghdad with the voters’ blood’ and have described polling stations as ‘centres of atheism and vice’. Against this must be set the eagerness of the Shia [...] This, then, is a highly unusual election. But it offers the chance of self-representation to a people subjected for decades to totalitarian rule. Therein may lie the key to peace” (*The Telegraph*, 29/01/05).

The caption is introduced by the use of *can*. The proposition [*p* Democracy bring peace to the Middle East] indicates that there is maximum evidence produced by the set of all propositions existing in the context that make the new proposition compatible with it. This means that the readers are prompted to consider the new proposition in terms of a strong possibility for its realisation based on the fact that

they can recover from the context of the report all the relevant propositions which yield a maximum degree of evidence making the new proposition compatible with those propositions and so arrive at the conclusion that peace in the Middle East is going to be achieved through the democratic process of elections taking place in Iraq. However, the proposition of achieving peace in the Middle East is toned down in the last sentence with the use of the modal *may*. There is only some set of propositions in the context which yield maximum evidence for the new proposition to be compatible with. Among the available propositions is the fact that the Iraqis are actually going to the polls to elect their leaders for the first time in three decades. But the suggestion that the bloodshed between Sunnis and Shias is going to intensify during the elections prompts the readers to arrive at the conclusion that the proposition about bringing peace to this troubled region bears limited possibility. The use of the modal *may* communicates this limited possibility and makes the propositions which make this limited possibility relevant to the readers readily accessible within the context in which they are processing the article.

4.5.2 Epistemic modals and minimum compatible evidence

4.5.2.1 *Might*

The modal *might* in the present relevance-theoretic model indicates minimum evidence which is compatible with at least some set of the propositions available to the readers to interpret a proposition *p*. The following examples are set to illustrate that it is this difference in the degree of evidence that distinguishes *may* from *might*. *Might* denotes a smaller margin of possibility than that denoted

by *may* because, in the case of *might*, only minimum evidence is compatible with some set of the propositions which are retrieved by the audience when a proposition p which contains the modal is communicated to them. In the case of *may*, on the other hand, the modal indicates maximum evidence as illustrated above, which means that *may* denotes a greater margin of possibility for the proposition p in which it occurs.

The following example is an extract from the commentary discussed in an earlier discussion of the modal *may*, relating to the possibility that the conflict in Iraq is going to spread westwards to the Syrian side of the border.

“The Syrians are adding to the carnage, but are otherwise incapable of creating a durable Iraqi system that they can manipulate. And because the U.S. hasn’t the means, or the wherewithal, to engage Iran today militarily, whether in the border area or elsewhere, it might prefer, paradoxically, to strike against Syria [...] In order to regain a hold over Iraq, and in the process break the increasingly powerful Iranian hand there, the Bush administration might seek first to settle its accounts with Syria on the Western border” (Reason.com, 10/08/05, Michael Young, *Syria: The New Cambodia*).

Here the writer used the modal *might* to introduce his propositions to the readers. The readers are prompted to consider minimum evidence yielded by the set of some propositions which make the new proposition as introduced by the modal compatible with that set of propositions. The new propositions [p The US prefer to strike against Syria] and [p The Bush administration seek first to settle its accounts with Syria on the Western border] are made relevant to the readers after they consider the evidence introduced to them by the propositions available from

the context and with which the new propositions are rendered compatible with that evidence. Some of the propositions are made accessible from the article itself; these include the US inability to face Iran militarily as well as the desire to regain control of the situation in Iraq by relocating the conflict to Syria. However, these propositions only yield minimum evidence so that the readers are led to arrive at the conclusion that the realisation of the new proposition has a limited degree of possibility within the context in which it is communicated.

4.5.2.2 *Could*

The difference between *can* and *could* from the point of view of the interpretation process as proposed by the present argument is that *can* indicates maximum evidence compatible with the set of all the propositions which have a bearing on the context in which *can* is used. *Could*, on the other hand, denotes minimum evidence compatible with the set of all propositions having a bearing on the context in which it is used. The idea is that *could* focuses the attention of the audience on only the least available evidence which the set of all the propositions that can be considered in the context where *could* is used can yield in that particular context. The following examples can further illustrate this point.

“The fate of Mr. Ingram and the *Mirror*’s editor, Piers Morgan, could hang on the statement, expected this afternoon during a debate on the armed forces [...] Labour rebels could choose to register their unease over Iraq by supporting the Lib Dems in any vote” (*The Guardian*, 13/05/04).

The two instances of using the modal *could* in this report indicate that there is weak possibility for the said actions to take place in actual terms. In

relevance-theoretic terms as proposed in the present chapter. what the modal *could* indicates is that the attention of the readers is called to focus on the least degree of evidence which is compatible with the set of all the propositions which the audience recall in that particular context in order to interpret the proposition where the modal occurs. In other words, by interpreting *could* the readers mentally construct an internal representation of the situation. This means that they recall available background information from the context when they process that background information as well as information communicated in the article, the readers derive a low degree of possibility for the action introduced by the modal *could* to take place. Examples of the background information available to the readers from the context are to do with the general unrest among British MPs regarding the Iraq issue, especially after violence broke out there after the invasion and the subsequent arrests of Iraqis, followed by the scandals involving British troops abusing Iraqi detainees. The Liberal Democrats voiced rejection of proposals of the deployment of additional British soldiers to fight alongside the Americans in Najaf. The Liberal Democrats described the American forces actions in Iraq as a “failing strategy” especially after they were involved in operations in Falluja which resulted in the killing of hundreds of civilians. Against this background, rebel Labour MPs, in the event of any vote introduced on the issue, were likely to support the Liberal Democrats’ opposition to sending more British soldiers to Iraq.

Despite the fact that the modal *could* denotes a minimum amount of evidence from the context available, the fact that this evidence is compatible with the set of all the propositions prompts the readers to process as many propositions

as possible from the context. In the next example, this point can be further illustrated:

“It is not the absence of anybody’s involvement that’s keeping the Iranians from knowing what they need to do,” Rice told reporters. “They need to live up to their obligations. They need to agree to verification and to stop trying to hide activities under cover of civilian nuclear power.” Iran could emerge as one of the most contentious issues during Rice’s debut as the top U.S. diplomat” (*The Washington Post*, 04/02/05).

This report relates one of the first press conferences held by Condoleezza Rice as a US Secretary of State. Rice refers to the issue of Iran’s development of nuclear weapons, accusing the Iranians of misleading the international community about their nuclear activities. The likelihood of the proposition that Iran emerges as one of the most contentious issues during Rice’s debut as the top US diplomat is based on assumptions related to Rice’s long-standing position with regards to the Iranian issue and the fact that Iran’s activities have become high on the US agenda after the war on Iraq. The readers’ internal representation of the situation will be based on such information producing some degree of evidence that the Iran issue is going to prove contentious as Rice assumes her new diplomatic post.

4.5.3 Deontic modals and entailed evidence

4.5.3.1 *Must*

According to the present relevance-theoretic account of the modals, the modal *must* indicates maximum evidence entailed by the set of all the propositions having a bearing on a certain proposition in a given context. The difference

between maximum evidence indicated by *can* and maximum evidence indicated by *must* is that *can* indicates that maximum evidence is compatible with the set of all the propositions having a bearing on a certain proposition in a given context, while *must* indicates that maximum evidence is entailed by the set of all the propositions having a bearing on a certain proposition in a given context. The following examples will illustrate the interpretation process of *must* in certain contexts.

The first example is reported by *The Guardian* in an article about the aftermath of the death of Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, and the arrangements taken by the PLO prior to presidential elections of the Palestinian authority.

“The Palestinian leadership acted quickly to fill the power vacuum, electing the former Palestinian prime minister, Mahmoud Abbas, unanimously as the new head of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). Cabinet minister Ibrahim Abu Najah confirmed that he is unlikely to face a challenger in the Palestinian authority’s presidential elections, which must be held within the next 60 days. In the meantime, the speaker of the Palestinian parliament, Rauhi Fattouh, will be sworn in later today as caretaker president” (*The Guardian*, 11/11/04).

The proposition [*p* Presidential elections be held within the next 60 days] is produced by a maximum degree of evidence entailed by the set of all the propositions which have a bearing on the context of the Palestinian arrangements prior to holding those elections after the death of the Palestinian leader, Yasser Arafat. The readers of *The Guardian* are prompted to focus their attention on all the propositions which yield maximum degree of evidence that those presidential

elections are held within a period of no more than 60 days from the time of the report. The outcome of this interpretation process is that this piece of information proves to be relevant when it results in a strong necessity for the action to take place in the particular context within which it is being processed by the audience. One interesting aspect of this fact is that the same piece of news was reported by another newspaper, *The Independent*, using another modal to communicate that piece of information to its audience. The modal used in *The Independent*'s report was the auxiliary *can*:

“In a hurried effort to project continuity, the PLO elected former Palestinian Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas as its new chief, virtually ensuring that he will succeed Arafat as leader of the Palestinians. The Palestinian legislature also was to swear in Parliament Speaker Rauhi Fattouh as caretaker president of the Palestinian Authority until elections can be held in 60 days, according to Palestinian law” (*The Independent*, 11/11/04).

The same piece of news was reported by *The Washington Post* and *The Telegraph* without using any modals:

“Arafat's duties heading the Palestinian Authority will be assumed by Prime Minister Ahmed Qureia. The Palestine Liberation Organization will be run by its deputy, former prime minister Mahmoud Abbas. The speaker of the Palestinian legislature, Rawhi Fattouh, will take over the ceremonial role of president until elections within the next 60 days” (*The Washington Post*, 11/11/04).

“Mahmoud Abbas, also known as Abu Mazen, the former Palestinian prime minister has been elected head of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), one of the many roles Mr. Arafat held during his 40 years in charge of the

Palestinian movement. An election to discover his successor at the head of the PA is to follow” (*The Telegraph*, 11/11/04).

If the relevance-theoretic account argued for in the present discussion is sound then the relevance of the same piece of information is different from one news report to another. In the *Guardian* report the audience are given clues through the use of the modal *must* to concentrate on the maximum degree of evidence, which is entailed by the set of all the propositions which have a bearing on the particular context within which that piece of information, or proposition, is communicated. In the *Independent* report, on the other hand, the use of the modal *can* leads the readers to process the information on the basis of considering the maximum degree of evidence which is only compatible with the set of all the propositions having a bearing on the particular context where that proposition is being subject to the readers’ interpretation. The cognitive outcome of such discrepancy in the use of the modals is to endow a certain proposition more prominence in one report than the other, and the readers of the *Guardian* report consider a type of evidence expressed by the modal *must* which is different from the type of evidence expressed by the modal *can* in the report which the readers of *The Independent* receive for their interpretation of that particular proposition.

Readers of the respective newspapers will construct distinctive internal representations. Readers of the *Guardian* report will process the set of all propositions available from the context which produce evidence that entails the new proposition taking place. The entailment of the evidence produces deontic interpretation of the action; that means that the readers are led to recall background information which communicates the necessity of the elections to be

held within the stated period of time. The relevance of this proposition to the readers will result in highlighting the issue of the Palestinian elections and giving it prominence within the context.

This kind of relevance in the *Guardian* report is different from the relevance which the *Independent* report holds for its readers. Readers of the *Independent* report will process the new proposition about the Palestinian presidential elections not in terms of necessity (entailed evidence) but rather in terms of ability (compatible evidence). The result being that the readers will process the information as less urgent and less obligatory.

In the *Washington Post* and the *Telegraph* reports, on the other hand, there is no use of modals to introduce the new proposition about the elections. *The Telegraph* does not mention the 60 days part of the news. This results in the relevance of the proposition of the Palestinian elections being different from that communicated by the *Guardian* and the *Independent* reports above. The proposition here is not highlighted and does not communicate a sense of urgency, necessity or possibility. Readers of these two later reports are not prompted to process the new proposition in terms of importance and the issue of the elections is consequently relegated to a secondary position.

The second example is taken from the report about George W. Bush's visit to Europe and his statements on the situation in the Middle East. As mentioned earlier, modality features heavily in the US president's statements, which are quoted verbatim by *The Washington Post*, unlike other newspaper reports which relate his statements in the third person.

“Bush called on Syria to withdraw its forces from Lebanon [...] Syria must end its occupation of Lebanon. Bush said to applause” (*The Washington Post*, 21/02/05).

The American readership are encouraged to consider maximum degree of evidence which is entailed by the set of all the propositions having a bearing on the particular context within which the proposition [*p* Syria end its occupation of Lebanon] is being processed. In fact, the report includes a number of possible propositions in order to make it easier for the readership to interpret the piece of information where the modal *must* occurs. The article mentions that among the audience addressed by the US president in Brussels when he made that statement were individuals from the Lebanese opposition who vehemently oppose Syrian military presence in Lebanon. The article reports that the opposition listening to the American president on that particular occasion hurled insults at Syria and demanded its immediate withdrawal from Lebanon. They applauded Bush’s strong words regarding the issue.

It is equally relevant to compare this use of the modal *must* with the use of the modal *may* in an article about the same piece of news published by the British newspaper, *The Guardian*, mentioned earlier and repeated here for convenience:

“Mr. Bush may cause discomfort by demanding that his European hosts support putting pressure on Syria following the assassination last week of the former Lebanese prime minister, Rafik Hariri, which Lebanese opposition figures have blamed on Damascus” (*The Guardian*, 21/02/05).

Readers of *The Guardian* are encouraged to process that piece of information about the US president stance towards a particular political issue from an angle that is very different from the angle from which the readers of *The*

Washington Post are prompted to process that same piece of information. The direct quotation of Mr. Bush's words as published by the US newspaper makes the relevance of the proposition [*p* Syria end its occupation of Lebanon] possible to the readers by making available a whole set of other propositions for the readers at that particular point of communication. Not least of these propositions are those related to concepts of "freedom" and "liberty" put forward by Mr. Bush earlier in the year in his Inaugural Address to the American nation as ideals that must be defended and established around the world.

Following from the previous two examples, the next extract is taken from *The Telegraph* newspaper about the same European visit discussed above. Although it reports the same piece of news, the article adds extra dimension to the present discussion by the use of the modal *must* but in a different setting from the previous two instances.

"George W. Bush, US president, has called on Syria to end its 'occupation of Lebanon' [...] He also used strong words against Iran. 'For the sake of peace, the Iran regime must end support of terrorism and must not develop nuclear weapons', he said" (*The Telegraph*, 21/02/05).

The modal *must* is used in the proposition [*p* The Iran regime end support to terrorism and not develop nuclear weapons]. Interestingly, the president's words were again quoted verbatim here but not on the issue concerning the withdrawal of Syrian forces from neighbouring Lebanon, rather the modal *must* here concerns the issue of the Iranian nuclear programme. Consequently, the proposition associated with the Iran issue where the modal *must* appears is given more prominence over the other propositions which also feature in the article. This

means that, according to the relevance-theoretic framework argued for in the present discussion, the readers of the *Telegraph* article are directed to focus their attention on the set of all the propositions having a bearing on the context within which that particular piece of news is being processed, namely the question of the Iranian regime being affiliated with issues such as sponsoring terrorism and illegally developing an arsenal of nuclear weapons; issues which pose great concern to the Western world on both sides of the Atlantic. To the *Telegraph* readers, the Iranian issue is more accessible because they are more familiar with the long standing question of developing nuclear weapons than the much more recent developments in Syria and Lebanon. Therefore, it is the news about Iran which stands out in *The Telegraph* report not that about Syria.

4.5.3.2 *Should*

Similar to the case with *must*, the relationship between the evidence indicated by the modal *should* and the set of the propositions having a bearing on the context within which a proposition *p* is being processed is that of entailment not of compatibility. The difference between *must* and *should* being one which has to do with the number of the propositions with a bearing on the context. As elaborated previously, *must* evokes maximum evidence entailed by the set of all the propositions having a bearing on the context at hand. *Should* evokes maximum evidence entailed by at least some of the propositions involved in the interpretation process.

The first example about the use of *should* in news articles is taken from the commentary published in *The Guardian* about the issue of British national

security and thwarting possible terrorist attacks on the country by chemical or biological weapons.

“We should remember that the majority of the UK’s Islamic community is just like everyone else - they condemn terrorism and would alert the authorities to suspicious groups or individuals [...] We should widen the recruiting base of our intelligence services” (*The Guardian*, 07/04/04).

The proposition [p We remember that the majority of the UK’s Islamic community is just like everyone else] is produced by maximum evidence entailed by at least some of the propositions which make interpreting that proposition in its context cognitively possible for the readers. Instances of such propositions are made clear in the same article when the writer suggests that British Muslims would alert the authorities to suspicious groups or individuals. He also suggests that there will always be people prepared to keep their eyes and ears open in return for financial rewards or the promise of a helping hand with immigration or welfare. Those propositions yield maximum degree of evidence for the readers to process the proposition p in order to achieve maximal evidence from that piece of information. The second use of *should* in this example further illustrates that the writer, Crispin Black, wants to evoke a number of propositions in the minds of his readership in order to make possible the interpretation of his novel proposition in a way that would render it maximally relevant to his readers. In his discussion throughout the article the writer attempted to make readily available in his readers’ minds the propositions which have a bearing on the context of why it is vital for the British authorities to widen their recruitment base, i.e. recruit people from across the social, racial and religious spectrum in the UK. In doing so, the writer

aims at leading his readers to make sense of the proposition [*p* We widen the recruiting base of our intelligence services] by making readily available any proposition that would help the readers to retrieve maximum evidence that can make the proposition *p* relevant in the particular context within which it is being processed.

The next example is taken from the article concerning the issue of the alleged “torture” photos appearing in *The Daily Mirror* and the political debate regarding that issue.

“However, the Lib Dems did not rule out sending further UK troops to help in Basra or southern Iraq. But urged that they should not be used to ‘work alongside the Americans in Najaf’ [...] any extension of the UK’s military role should only take place by agreement with the new government and the full backing of the UN” (*The Guardian*, 13/05/04).

Both propositions in this example where the modal *should* is used are produced by maximum evidence entailed by the at least some of the propositions which are cognitively available to the readers in order to interpret them in the context at hand. The relevance of those two propositions is rendered possible when the readers are able to consider the evidence entailed by the set of propositions available to them in the particular context of communicating that piece of news. Among such propositions available to the readers are those related to the stance which the party of the Liberal Democrats in Britain took towards the British government’s decision to go to war in Iraq as part of the US-led coalition forces and the debate which ensued about the involvement of British troops in guarding security in Iraq and the issue of whether it is acceptable or not for those

troops, generally located in southern Iraq, to move to other areas which are under the US troops control to help those troops in their tasks too.

4.6 Concluding remarks

There is a large body of literature on the subject of English modals and a wide variety of approaches towards categorising the meanings of the English modals. Traditional analyses of the modals included the study of the modals on mainly semantic grounds. Among those approaches are those established on the basis that each of the English modals indicates several different meanings which can be identified according to the context in which it occurs. A second approach accounts for the English modal system as one that is based on a unified meaning approach and that each modal auxiliary has a basic core meaning which is recognised independently of the context in which it occurs. A third approach accounts for the modals in terms of ambiguity which means that each modal is potentially ambiguous and this ambiguity can only be resolved according to the context in which the modal is used.

A number of recent analyses of the English modal auxiliaries have been based on Relevance theory in an attempt to provide a principled cognitive and pragmatic framework to distinguish the different uses of modals in communication. The central hypothesis which is common to relevance-theoretic accounts of modality is the unitary meaning approach to the modals and that they can only be distinguished according to a common characteristic which Klinge (1993) calls “potentiality” and Groefsema (1995) calls “evidence”.

The present chapter is a relevance-theoretic account of the English modals based on Groefsema's notion of "evidence". Groefsema's model of the English modals focuses on the four modals *can*, *may*, *must*, and *should*. She distinguishes between the meanings of each of these modals on the basis of the relationship which holds between the evidence which a modal indicates and the number of propositions with a bearing on a proposition *p* which contains the modal. For example, in the case of the modals *can* and *may*, the relationship between the evidence which these modals indicate and the propositions with a bearing on *p* is that of compatibility, whereas the relationship between the evidence indicated by the modals *must* and *should* and the propositions with a bearing on *p* is that of entailment. Furthermore, the modals are distinguished from each other on the basis of the number of propositions which have a bearing on a proposition *p* containing a modal. Thus, where the modals *can* and *must* indicate that the evidence is compatible with or entailed by the set of all the propositions having a bearing on *p*, the modals *may* and *should* indicate that the evidence is compatible with or entailed by at least some of the propositions having a bearing on *p*.

The difference between Groefsema's model and the present argument is that in this chapter the framework of discussing the English modals is expanded to include the past forms *could* and *might*. This is achieved by modifying the original notion of "evidence" and arguing that each of the English modals not only denotes that evidence is either compatible with or entailed by some or all of the propositions having a bearing on a proposition *p* which contains the modal, but also each modal denotes a degree of that evidence. When applied to the present and past forms of the English modals, this argument has sought to prove that the

modals *can* and *may* indicate a maximum degree of evidence while the past forms *could* and *might* indicate a minimum degree of evidence. Regarding the relationship between the evidence and the propositions which have a bearing on the proposition *p* where the modal occurs in terms of compatibility or entailment, those notions are employed in the present discussion because they contribute to a fuller understanding of the interpretation process which takes place regarding the use of a modal auxiliary in a given utterance. Moreover, Groefsema's discussion regarding the idea that each modal differs from the other modals according to the number of propositions which have a bearing on a proposition *p* is also upheld in the present chapter because the number of propositions play a significant role in the distinction between the modals according to the strong or weak margin of possibility they denote in an utterance. In other words, the modal *can*, for instance, denotes a greater possibility than the modal *may* because in the case of *can* the evidence indicated is compatible with the set of all propositions having a bearing on a proposition *p* where *can* is used; in the case of *may* the evidence indicated by this modal is compatible with some of the propositions having a bearing on *p*. The same description applies to the uses of the other modals.

The hypothesis that different modals indicate different degrees of evidence not only proves to be useful for extending the relevance-theoretic analysis to accommodate the present as well as the past forms of the English modal auxiliaries, but is equally significant in establishing a framework for comparison of the English modal system with modal systems in other languages. Such comparative framework is crucial to any endeavour concerning the study of translation processes which involve modal systems across languages.

In the following chapter, the relevance-theoretic model will be extended to the study of the uses of Arabic modals in newspaper articles. Applying the model of evidence to Arabic modality will introduce a new way of approaching the study of that linguistic feature in order to set specific theoretical criteria for comparing and contrasting the English and Arabic modal systems.

Chapter Five: A Relevance-Theoretic Approach to the Study of Arabic Modality

5.1 Introduction

One of the challenging features of Arabic modality is the fact that, unlike other main grammatical categories such as verbs and nouns, the Arabic modal system is not grammatical, rather it is mostly lexical. Therefore, any lexical unit which expresses a modal meaning can be part of the system regardless of its grammatical category. Furthermore, modal particles in Arabic have undergone a significant semantic change from their old uses in Classical Arabic (CA) to their modern uses in Modern Standard Arabic (MSA). CA dates back to the period between the 6th and the 14th centuries and it is the language in which the Quranic verses were revealed. MSA is the modern form of written Arabic. Whereas CA was the language of highly distinguished forms of literature and sacred revelations, MSA reflects the more streamlined styles of modern expression. CA and MSA represent very different historical and cultural periods, which explains why they have different stylistic and lexical features. However, both CA and MSA share the syntactic and grammatical structures of written Arabic. McLoughlin (1972: 58) defines MSA as “that variety of Arabic that is found in contemporary books, newspapers, and magazines, and that is used orally in formal speeches, public lectures, learned debates, religious ceremonies and in news broadcasts over radio and television”. Ryding (2005: 8) quotes Vincent Monteil’s description of MSA as “*lughat al-jara'id*” [the language of newspapers]. She states that “Defining MSA through its function as the language of the Arabic news media is a useful way to delimit it since it is not officially codified as a

phenomenon separate from Classical Arabic and because Arabic speakers and Arabic linguists have differing opinions on what constitutes what is referred to as *al-lugha al-fuSHa* [the most eloquent language]” (ibid.). Modality is an illustrating example of the difference between the written tradition of CA on the one hand and the modern MSA styles on the other. Modal particles feature extensively both in the CA literature and the MSA styles.

As a starting point for the present chapter the classical meanings of the Arabic modal verbs and particles will be traced as they are explained in the literature of the classical Arabic grammarians, then we shall compare those early analyses with modern uses of those modals in Modern Standard Arabic.

The following step is to establish a relevance-theoretic framework to define uses of the Arabic modals as they are used in actual communication. It shall be argued that Relevance theory can be a useful tool in the analysis of the different interpretations of the Arabic modals and the contexts in which they occur, with special reference to the language of news reports and commentaries which comprise the corpus of the present research and from which examples shall be drawn.

5.2 Arabic Modality

Modals in Arabic differ from their English counterparts in one major grammatical aspect: that of categorisation. Arabic categorises some modals as particles and others as main verbs whereas English modals are established grammatically as auxiliary verbs. According to the leading classical Arabic grammarian of the 14th century, Sibawayhi, quoted below in Ibn Faris (1328/1963:

95), a particle is a part of speech that is neither a noun nor a verb but is nevertheless meaningful.

"ما جاء لمعنى وليس باسم ولا فعل" (ابن فارس، 1328/1963 :95).

“What comes for a meaning but is neither a noun nor a verb”.

Ibn Faris also quotes Al-Akhfash who defines a particle as a part of speech that cannot be conjugated, qualified, or put in the binary or plural form.

"ما لم يحسن له الفعل ولا الصفة ولا التثنية ولا الجمع ولم يجر أن يتصرف فهو حرف" (ibid.).

“What is not a subject to a verb nor an adjective, and neither can it be dualised nor pluralised, nor can it be conjugated-then it is a particle”.

So a particle in Arabic is presented as a grammatical entity that has a meaning in the sentence within which it occurs but is neither a verb since it has no time reference nor a noun because it does not refer to any concrete or abstract object.

Another difference between Arabic and English modals is that the Arabic particles which have similar modal functions in the sentence to those of their English counterparts are not formally classified as such, i.e. as modals. In other words, they are not allocated a separate grammatical category based on their modal meaning. In classical Arabic grammatical literature they are explained alongside other particles which do not convey modal meanings but which the classical grammarians used to cluster together as part of the linguistic tradition of the language. In this chapter, these modal particles will be separated from the traditional clusters of other particles and set in categories borrowed from the English grammatical classification of modals. Thus, the terms “emphasis”, “possibility” and “obligation” as used for the English modals will be used to describe the functions of the Arabic modals which correspond to those modal

meanings. A similar kind of grammatical classification of the Arabic modals does not exist in the Arabic linguistic tradition. For the purposes of this research, it can be presumed to be of theoretical interest to establish a grammatical categorisation for the Arabic modals in order to be able to compare and contrast their modal functions in the Arabic sentence with those which the English modals perform in the English sentence. The terminology adopted in explaining these categories is drawn from the classical descriptions of the meanings of these particles as well as the terminology employed in categorising English modals so that the comparison and contrast of modals in the two languages can be brought a step closer to realisation. The following sections are a description of the different categories of Arabic modals.

5.2.1 Emphatic Modals

There are two particles in Arabic which are assigned the emphatic function in a sentence. These are the particles *'inna* and *qad* with the perfective verb.

5.2.1.1 The particle *'Inna* إن

According to some classical grammarians this particle is inserted in the nominal sentence in order to give a sense of “confirmation” to what has been stated (Ibn Faris 1328/1963: 175).

المعنى في "إن زيدا قائم" ثبت عندي هذا الحديث.

Ibn Faris equals *'inna* to the verb “to confirm”, so if someone says: “*'inna* Zaydan dhahibun” (*'inna* Zayd is going) this means, according to Ibn Faris, that:

“It is confirmed to me that Zayd is going”. Emphasis in Arabic is defined as follows:

التوكيد: تثبيت الشيء في النفس، وتقوية أمره. والغرض منه: إزالة ما علق في نفس المخاطب من شكوك، وإمالة ما خالجه من شبهات (محمد الأنطاكي، 1969: 264).

“Emphasis: confirming something in the mind, and supporting its case. The purpose of its use: to eliminate doubts in the mind of the addressee, and clear confusion in his thoughts” (Al-Antaaki, 1969: 264).

In contemporary studies of Arabic, Cantarino defines *'inna* as a demonstrative with “an emphatic interjectional character”, together with *'anna* it is used “in order to direct the mind of the listener toward a specific noun in the accusative case on which they exert their governing emphatic influence” (1975a: 227). However, Cantarino supports the belief that the noun in the accusative is not structurally part of the following sentence and consequently it does not need to be the grammatical subject of that sentence. So, according to this belief, the emphasis in Cantarino’s example:

الرجل *'inna* the man he [is] in the house” focuses on the noun “the man” rather than on the whole of the sentence. But Cantarino acknowledges two cases in which the noun in the accusative after *'inna* is made part of the rest of the sentence: the first case is “when the emphatic accusative is simultaneously the logical and grammatical subject”, e.g. *'inna* the man [is] in the house” and the second “when the accusative is the grammatical subject of a nominal sentence with inverted word order”, e.g. *'inna* the man killed” (ibid.) Other accounts of *'inna* maintain the same description that *'inna* “emphasizes the speaker’s certainty [...] that what is said in a sentence is a fact, is

true, will indeed take place, etc.” (Bloch. 1986: 102). In contrast to Cantarino’s view, Bloch quotes the medieval Arab grammarians as stressing that the emphasising function of *’inna* “pertains to the sentence *as a whole*”, and that inserting *’inna* into a statement will stand for repeating the statement to be emphasised. (ibid., original emphasis). Although there is a consensus among grammarians of Arabic about the emphatic sense of *’inna*, there seems to be some degree of disagreement as on which part of the sentence this emphasis should fall. Hasan (1971: 631) describes the emphatic meaning of this particle as “the emphasis of relation”. He explains this emphasis as that of the relation which the second component holds to the first in the nominal sentence preceded by *’inna*. Hasan argues that this particle is inserted in order to remove any possible doubt or denial of that relation, he also believes that this particle emphasises what otherwise would be emphasised through repeating the same sentence. He concludes by saying:

ومن الخطأ البلاغي استخدامهما [إن و أن] إلا حيث يكون الخبر موضع الشك أو الإنكار. والتأكيد بهما يدل على أن خبرهما محقق عند المتكلم، وليس موضع شك. ولا يستعملان إلا في تأكيدات الإثبات.

“It is a stylistic error to use them [*’inna* and *’anna*] in contexts other than the ones which denote that the predicate is open to doubt or denial. Using either of them for emphatic purposes conveys the sense that their predicates are confirmed to the speaker and that there is no place for doubt. These two particles are used only to emphasise affirmative statements.” (ibid.)

Ryding (2005: 425) translates *’inna* into “indeed, truly, verily”, this particle “has a truth-intensifying function when used at the beginning of a statement. It emphasizes that what follows is true”. It is beyond the scope of this

research to discuss those modalised expressions in detail. It is, therefore, sufficient in the context of discussing Arabic modality to refer to this particle under the category of emphatic modality and cite examples of its uses in news articles.

The emphatic overtones of *`inna* are rendered more salient when stylistic considerations other than emphasis, such as starting a new sentence or connecting a sentence to previous ones in the text, do not seem to be a primary issue. In an article published by the Syrian newspaper *Al-Thawra* the following sentence appears:

ولهذا فإن سورية ستؤكد لزائرها الذي يعرف أكثر من غيره أن خيارات واشنطن تجاه العرب ظالمة، ومنحازة للعدو الصهيوني [...] أن الأمن والسلام اللذين يتحدث عنهما أصحاب الرؤوس الحامية في الإدارة الأمريكية لن يتحقق بالصواريخ والطائرات [...] بل الأمن والسلام يتحقق بالاحتكام إلى القوانين والقرارات والشرائع الدولية ومعالجة كل الأسباب التي أدت للواقع الجديد. (الثورة- افتتاحية الثورة- "تستطيع أمريكا إن أرادت"- 03/05/03).

“Therefore, *`inna* Syria will stress to its visitor [US Secretary of State at the time, Colin Powell] who knows more than anyone else that Washington’s choices are against the Arab issues and biased in favour of the Zionist enemy [...] that the security and peace the hot-headed in the US administration talk about will not be achieved by missiles and planes [...] Rather, security and peace are achieved through respecting international laws and resolutions; and tackling all the causes that led to the new reality” (*Al-Thawra*, 03/05/03).

By emphasising the proposition “Syria will stress to its visitor” the readers are led to consider such propositions as the American prejudice against Arabs in favour of the Israelis; peace and security are key issues for Syria and that the Syrians are very concerned about the American military aggression as a substitute

to diplomatic channels to reach political solutions. The use of the emphatic particle *'inna* in this context is also in line with strong wording of the rest of the article and sets the scene for the readers to process the message in terms of the specific Syrian official ideological standpoint.

Another example about the use of *'inna* in this sense is the following report by *Al-Jazeera*:

ويبقى من الصعب الجزم بأن هذه الزيارة قد تجسر الهوة بين الطرفين أمام تباين المقاربات [...] ومهما كان التقارب الدبلوماسي بين الجانبين فإن رؤية الأميركيين للوضع الدولي تبقى بعيدة عن رؤية الأوروبيين (الجزيرة، 05/02/21، جولة بوش الأوروبية على محك الخلافات بين ضفتي الأطلسي).

“It remains difficult to conclude that this visit [Bush’s visit to Europe] had bridge the gap between the two sides with regards to the difference in viewpoints [...] However close the two sides are diplomatically, *'inna* the Americans’ perspective about the international situation remains far apart from that of the Europeans” (*Al-Jazeera*, 21/02/05).

The proposition introduced by *'inna* gives rise to a number of assumptions such as the Americans went to war against Iraq while the Europeans were firm in refusing to participate in that war; in the case of Iran for example, the Europeans chose to engage in negotiations about Iran’s nuclear arsenal and refer to UN resolutions while the Americans developed an aggressive rhetoric and talked about possible regime change in that country. This background information is underlined by the conclusion emphasised by *'inna* that the Americans’ perspective regarding global issues remains very different from that of the Europeans.

5.2.1.2 The particle *Qad* قد + perfective verb

When it precedes the verb in the perfective, this particle has an emphasising effect on the utterance. Ibn Faris mentions one meaning for *qad* which is “a predictable answer” and this is the only reason why this particle can occur at the beginning of the sentence¹.

Ibn Hisham (674/1999: 271) says that one of the functions of *qad* is to confirm the realisation of an event that has been expected for some time, his example is the common call to prayer: “qad the prayer commenced” قد قامت الصلاة because people will be expecting that prayer will be due soon². The second meaning of *qad*, according to Ibn Hisham, is denoting the immediacy of the accomplishment of the action in question as opposed to the declarative statement without *qad*. Cantarino (1974: 68) also describes the temporal and emphatic functions of *qad*. First, it “emphasizes the verbal action in its past value, as having been completed at the moment of speaking or just prior to the introduction of a new situation; it is the equivalent to a pluperfect: “سأله هل قد رأى أحداً؟” “He asked him if qad he saw someone?” Second, this particle can also be used to emphasise the action in the certainty of its having taken place: “قد سمعت صوتاً” “qad I heard a sound/voice”.

¹ وليس من الوجه الابتداء بها إلا أن تكون جواباً لمتوقع، وقوله جل وعز: [قد أفلح المؤمنون]، لأن القوم توقعوا علم حالهم عند الله تبارك اسمه، فقليل لهم: “قد أفلح المؤمنون” والحقيقة ما ذكرناه (ابن فارس 1328/1963: 240).

“It is not appropriate to start with [*qad*] unless it is used as an answer for something already anticipated. The Almighty said: “qad the believers prevailed” because those concerned anticipated to be informed about their situation in the eyes of God, so they were told: “qad the believers prevailed” and the truth is what we have mentioned” (Ibn Faris, 1328/1963: 240).

² معاني قد: 1- أحدها التوقع، قال الخليل: يقال “قد فعل” لقوم ينتظرون الخبر، ومنه قول المؤذن: قد قامت الصلاة، لأن الجماعة ينتظرون لذلك، وقال بعضهم: تقول “قد ركب الأمير” لمن ينتظر ركوبه (ابن هشام، 674/1999: 271). “The meanings of *qad*: 1- One is expectation, Al-Khalil [another classical grammarian] said: it is said “qad he did” to people who are waiting for such news, likewise, the muezzin’s phrase: qad the prayer commenced, because the group concerned are waiting for that, some say: you say “qad the prince mounted” to those who are waiting for his mounting” (Ibn Hisham, 674/1999: 271).

Ryding (2005: 450) states that the use of *qad* “serves to confirm the meaning of the past tense by emphasizing that the action did indeed happen. Sometimes the insertion of the word “indeed” in English is appropriate”. An earlier account of *qad* by Dahl and Talmoudi (1979: 55) gives an insightful view about the connotations of *qad*:

In making a statement, I am trying to make my hearer believe that the proposition expressed by the statement is true. But in order to do so I must make sure that the hearer believes that I am trustworthy. If I am speaking about something that it is not obvious that I know, I must be able to present what kind of evidence I have, and the hearer may demand this evidence from me.

This aspect of the speaker’s position and the degree of commitment towards the statement containing *qad* underlines the modal feature of this particle rather than the mere function of indicating the accomplishment of past actions. The only communicative difference between *’inna* and *qad* according to the above views is that *’inna* can either strengthen already held assumptions or modify them if there is a place for doubt or denial on the part of the addressees. In the case of *qad*, on the other hand, its emphatic function falls only on what the grammarians call “an answer to what is anticipated”. That means that the communicative function of emphatic *qad* concentrates on strengthening the assumptions already held in the minds of the readers, because it emphasises what the readers already expect and not what they might doubt or deny where the writer will need to modify their assumptions. Furthermore, there is a stylistic difference between the two emphatic particles; where *’inna* is used with nominal sentences *qad* is used in verbal

sentences. This imposes a syntactic restriction on the communicative function of emphasis between the two particles.

Consequently, the use of *qad* in an utterance changes the communicative function of that utterance from that when *qad* is not used. The following article is a case in point:

يتجه الرئيس المصري حسني مبارك للفوز بولاية جديدة في أول انتخابات تعددية أكدت السلطات أنها غير مسبوقة، وقالت المعارضة ومنظمات غير حكومية إنها شهدت تزويراً واسعاً. وتوقع النجل الأصغر للرئيس المصري وقائد حملته الانتخابية فوزاً كاسحاً لوالده، في حين أشارت أرقام أولية أفاد بها مراسل الجزيرة إلى أن مبارك فاز بنحو 75% بعد فرز 60% من الأصوات، لكن اللجنة الانتخابية لن تنشر النتائج قبل غد السبت. أما أقرب منافسي مبارك رئيس حزب الغد أيمن نور فحل ثانياً بنحو 10%، ولم يعرف بعد حجم المشاركة في الاقتراع [...] وقد طعن نور في حديث للجزيرة في صحة الانتخابات ودعا إلى إعادتها، متحدثاً عن انتهاكات واسعة، قائلاً إنه يستطيع كشفها، ومتهما اللجنة الانتخابية بأنها "طبقت في الصباح قواعد غير التي سمحت بها في المساء". غير أن المتحدث باسم الانتخابات المصرية أسامة عطاوية قال إنه تبين أن كل الوقائع التي ذكرها نور غير صحيحة، رافضاً إعادة الاقتراع [...] وقد وصفت واشنطن من جهتها الاقتراع بأنه "خطوة أولى إيجابية"، رغم معلومات عن عمليات تزوير في بعض مراكز الاقتراع. (الجزيرة، 05/09/09، مبارك نحو ولاية جديدة والمعارضة تؤكد تزوير الانتخابات).

"The Egyptian president, Hosni Mubarak, is set to win a new term in office after the first multi-party elections described by the authorities as unprecedented and of which the opposition and non-governmental organisations said were rigged on a large scale. The president's younger son who led his father's election campaign was reported as saying that he expected a landslide victory for his father. Meanwhile, *Al-Jazeera's* correspondent reported that the initial figures put Mubarak in the lead with 70% after counting 60% of the votes, but the election committee will not declare the results until tomorrow Saturday. As for Mubarak's

closest rival. the leader of Al Ghad party, Ayman Nour. he came second with 10%, but the total number of voters is not yet known [...] and qad Nour rejected the validity of the process and called for the elections to be restarted, talking about large-scale rigging, claiming that he is able to uncover it and accusing the election committee that “it implemented in the morning rules that were different from those it permitted in the evening”. But the Egyptian elections spokesperson, Osama Atawya said that all the incidents mentioned by Nour appeared to be untrue, refusing to conduct a recount [...] and qad Washington described the elections as “a first positive step”, in spite of information about incidents of fraud in some ballot centres” (*Al Jazeera*, 09/09/05).

The propositions “Nour rejected the validity of the process” and “Washington described the elections as “a first positive step” are communicated to the readers by the evidence that strengthens their already held assumptions about the process of the Egyptian elections. Already existing propositions that are available in the context include previous information about the opposition leader, Mr. Ayman Nour and the fact that he was imprisoned by the Egyptian authorities for a long time before Washington exerted pressure on Cairo to release him shortly before the elections. Other propositions which the readers can recall from the context is the fact that the Egyptian elections were the result of US pressure on Cairo. Such information which the readers can recall from the context strengthen their assumptions that the opposition leader is going to voice strong rejection of incidents of fraud in vote counting in a system not renowned for its transparency or democratic record as well as assumptions about the readiness of the US officials to praise these elections as a step forward towards democracy in Egypt.

By the use of *qad* to communicate these propositions the report is underlining the readers' ideological assumptions in order to reinforce them and render them more salient in their minds.

The emphatic overtones denoted by the use of *qad* with the verb in the perfective become clearer when the same statement is introduced with *qad* in one article and without it in another addressing the same news, as in the following two reports.

عرفات يعتبر خارطة الطريق في حكم المنتهية وأبو ردينة يؤكد الالتزام بها:
اعتبر الرئيس الفلسطيني ياسر عرفات، في تصريح لمحطة "سي.إن.إن" التلفزيونية الأميركية، إن "خريطة الطريق" الدولية للسلام في الشرق الأوسط، في حكم المنتهية. وقال عرفات في المقابلة التي أجرتها معه محطة "سي.إن.إن" في رام الله (الضفة الغربية) ونشر نصها على موقع المحطة في شبكة انترنت إن "خريطة الطريق قد ماتت لكن فقط بسبب العدوان العسكري الاسرائيلي في الأسابيع الأخيرة". (الحياة، 03/09/03).

Arafat considers the Road Map over and Abu-Rdeina pledges to continue abiding by it:

The Palestinian President, Yasser Arafat, considered in a statement to CNN that the international Road Map to Peace in the Middle East is no longer applicable. Arafat said in the interview with CNN in Ramallah (West Bank) which was published on the Internet that "The Road Map qad died but only because of the Israeli military aggression in recent weeks" (*Al-Hayat*, 03/09/03).

فشل جهود تسوية الخلافات داخل السلطة الفلسطينية، عباس يهدد بالاستقالة وعرفات ينعي خارطة الطريق:
قال وزير الإعلام الفلسطيني نبيل عمرو إن رئيس الوزراء محمود عباس سيبلغ المجلس التشريعي أنه سيستقيل إذا لم يمنح سلطات لأخذ خطوات هامة على طريق السلام [...] يأتي ذلك في الوقت الذي قال فيه

الرئيس الفلسطيني ياسر عرفات إن خطة خارطة الطريق للسلام "Ø ماتت بسبب العدوان العسكري الاسرائيلي في الأسابيع الأخيرة". (الجزيرة، 03/09/03).

“Efforts to ease friction inside the PA fail, Abbas threatens to resign and Arafat announces the death of the Road Map: •

The Palestinian Information minister, Nabil Amr, said that the Palestinian Prime Minister, Mahmoud Abbas, will inform the Parliament of his intention to resign if he is not given additional powers to take major steps towards peace [...] Meanwhile, the Palestinian President, Yasser Arafat, said that the Road Map to Peace “Ø died because of the Israeli military aggression in recent weeks” (*Al-Jazeera*, 03/09/03).

There is a clear discrepancy between the two reports with regards to the quotation; in the first article *qad* is inserted before the main verb while in the second the report *qad* is omitted, even though both articles report the same piece of news and quote the same words in the same context. Obviously, one of these two articles is less accurate than the other since the difference occurs within what is supposed to be a quotation of Arafat’s exact words. There is no direct access available for the present research to resources that would reveal what the late Palestinian leader actually said on that particular occasion; whether he uttered *qad* or not. Nevertheless, the question is why the first quotation involves the use of *qad*? The context gives an explanation for the use of *qad* in this quotation. There is a widespread sense among Arab readers that the “Road Map to Peace” is not going to survive the tumultuous relations between Israel and the Palestinians, and so in a way the “death” to which Arafat was referring has been highly expected among the various strata of Arabic audience. The use of *qad* in this context adds

extra emphasis to an already strong statement in order to appeal to the readers in opposite ways at one and the same time. For those who hoped that the “Road Map” would survive against all the odds and achieve a peaceful solution for the bloody conflict in the Occupied Territories, the use of *qad* will convey the meaning that it is only because of the recent Israeli violence that the “Road Map” is now of no use whatsoever. For those, on the other hand, who long expected such an outcome and somehow wished that this “Road Map” should never see the light because it clashes with their own ideological and political agendas, *qad* is the way of declaring that their very wish has come true and the “Road Map” is now declared “dead”.

In any case, the interpretation of *qad* remains that the proposition has been expected by the audience. The writer’s proposition “The Road Map died” makes the audience recall their assumptions about the Road Map and the faint hope that this agreement would be able to survive the long-standing conflict between the Palestinians and the Israelis, and the absence of trust between the two sides. This proposition is consequently relevant in strengthening those assumptions of expectation for the audience. The absence of *qad* in the second article marks an absence of emphasis and therefore reduces the tone of the statement to a factual and detached statement.

5.2.2 Modals denoting possibility

These include *qad* when attached to the main verb in the imperfective form, as well as the particles *rubbama* and *la ‘alla*.

5.2.2.1 The particle *Qad* قد + imperfective verb

According to Ibn Hisham (674/1999: 274) *qad* has three meanings when preceding the main verb in the imperfective. The first meaning is “reduction” which can be either of two types: the reduction of the frequency that the action is likely to take place and his example is: قد يصدق الكذوب، قد يجود البخيل “The liar *qad* tells the truth”, “the miserly *qad* gives generously”. The second type is reducing the possibility of the predicate. In the first type it is clear from the two examples, “The liar tells the truth” - “The miserly gives generously”, that the frequency of the actions of telling the truth and giving generously is notably low. In the second type the meaning of the verse, cited by Ibn Hisham, is that the people’s situation is the least of what the Almighty knows; this means that *qad* here does not denote the limitation of God’s knowledge but only the knowledge of the people’s situation¹.

The particle *qad* shifts its meaning from emphasising the statement, when used with the perfective, to transforming a declarative statement into one that denotes possibility or uncertainty when it precedes the verb in the imperfective. *Qad* is used in this sense in order to “emphasize the verbal action as being incomplete and consequently, uncertain. This, in turn, leads to its use as a definite expression of uncertainty” (Cantarino 1974: 70).

However, Ryding (2005: 451) states that *qad* “implies possibility” when used with the indicative present tense, and translates it into either *may* or *might*: e.g.

¹ [قد يعلم ما أنتم عليه] أي: ما هم عليه، هو أقل معلوماته سبحانه (ابن هشام، 674 1999: 274).
“[*qad* He knows what is your situation] i.e. their situation is what the most High knows the least” (Ibn Hisham, 674 1999: 274).

قد تكون أكثر أهمية (It might be of greater importance)

قد تتخذ أشكالاً مختلفة (They may adopt different shapes)

Ryding's translation of *qad* as either *may* or *might* is a good example of the inconsistency of the use of *qad* in MSA. There is no specific criterion on which Ryding bases her argument that *qad* can stand for both *may* and *might*, nor does it seem to be a reliable assumption since *may* and *might* denote different modal meanings especially when tense considerations are not an issue, i.e. when *might* is used in a sentence marked with the present tense not the past.

Drawing on the accounts of classical grammarians cited above about the meanings of *qad* with the imperfective, it can be concluded that *qad* denotes a lesser degree of possibility than the English *may* and, thus, it is closer to *might* in that sense. However, examples from newspaper articles show that in modern uses *qad* is closer to *may* because it is usually used in contexts where a considerable degree of possibility is conveyed.

In the following article, published by *Al-Khaleej* newspaper, *qad* denotes a high degree of possibility of the action which becomes clearer when the article is compared with another published by *Al-Hayat* about the same piece of news. The news is about the Arab summit which was originally due to be held in March 2004 in Tunisia. However, Tunisia later was not ready to host the summit and the Tunisian officials suggested that the summit be postponed to a later date that year. The other Arab officials did not welcome that suggestion and insisted on holding the summit as soon as possible in any other Arab country willing to host it. The *Al-Hayat* article quotes the Secretary General of the Arab League, Mr. Amr

Moussa, saying that the summit “will” be held within weeks. The *Al-Khaleej* article, on the other hand, refers to Mr. Moussa’s proposal using the particle *qad*.

وسعى الزعماء العرب أمس للاتفاق على موعد جديد للقمة وأعلن المغرب أن وزراء الخارجية العرب يعتزمون الاجتماع في القاهرة "خلال الأسابيع القليلة المقبلة" لبحث إمكان عقد القمة. وقال الرئيس المصري حسني مبارك أن الزعماء العرب قد يجتمعون خلال ثلاثة أسابيع. وذكر الأمين العام للجامعة أنهم قد يجتمعون خلال فترة تراوح بين 3 و 7 أسابيع (الخليج، 04/03/30، ترحيب عربي ب"المبادرة المصرية" واتصالات لتسريع القمة).

“Yesterday, Arab leaders sought to reach an agreement about a new date for holding the [Arab] summit. Morocco announced that the Arab foreign ministers plan to hold their meeting in Cairo “during the next few weeks” to discuss the possibility of holding the summit. The Egyptian president, Hosni Mubarak, said the Arab leaders qad meet in three weeks’ time. The Secretary General of the [Arab] League suggested that they qad meet during a period between 3 and 7 weeks” (*Al-Khaleej*, 30/03/04).

وأوضح موسى أنه "حين نطالب بعقد القمة في أسرع وقت ممكن، ليس معنى ذلك أنها ستعقد خلال أيام، ولكنها ستعقد خلال أسابيع تراوح بين ثلاثة وسبعة" (الحياة، 04/03/30).

“Moussa explained that ‘when we demand that the summit be held as soon as possible, that does not mean that it is going to be held in a matter of days, but it will be held within a number of weeks between three and seven” (*Al-Hayat*, 30/03/04).

The factual aspect about the number of weeks conveys a sense of high degree of possibility on the part of the speaker. The quotation in *Al-Hayat* involves the Arabic particle *sa-* which denotes the near future, communicating that the action is going to take place in the near future. The use of *qad* in *Al-*

Khaleej sounds less certain but nevertheless repeats the same factual information and thus echoes the overtones of high possibility that the action is going to take place. This sense of high possibility is communicated in the following example which is taken from an article published by *Al-Hayat* about related news of the Arab summit discussed above. The extract below reports the issue of choosing Morocco as a possible alternative host for the summit instead of Tunisia:

ونسبت "فرانس برس" إلى دبلوماسي عربي في القاهرة قوله إن القمة التي أرجأتها تونس واقتрحت مصر استضافتها قد تنعقد في المغرب كحل وسط. وأوضح أن "هناك مشاورات جارية مع المغرب وقد يحتضن هذا البلد القمة في آخر المطاف". وأكد أن هناك مبررين يدفعان إلى عقدها هناك أولهما أن المغرب يرأس حالياً المجلس الوزاري للجامعة العربية، والثاني أنه أحد بلدان المغرب العربي التي دعمت حق تونس في استضافة القمة (الحياة، 04/04/05، مبارك يلتقي الأسد والبشير ويتعهد حضور القمة "حتى لو في القمر").

"France Press Agency quoted an Arab diplomat based in Cairo saying that the [Arab] summit which has been postponed by Tunisia [the original host] and which Egypt offered to host, qad be held in Morocco as a compromise; adding that "there are ongoing consultations with Morocco and that country qad welcome the summit eventually". The diplomat further stressed that there are two reasons for holding it there: first, because Morocco is the current president of the Ministerial Council of the Arab League; secondly, because Morocco is one of the Maghreb countries which supported Tunisia's right to host the summit" (*Al-Hayat*, 05/04/04).

The justifications for choosing Morocco as a potential venue are cited, thus giving a sense of certainty about the likely outcome of consultations with the Moroccan officials. From the above examples about the use of *qad* with the imperfective the propositions introduced both before and after *qad* are used to set

the scene for a considerable degree of possibility for the proposition introduced by *qad* to take place. This leads the readers to process the information by forming an internal representation which involves background information and also information given in the report. This internal representation is based on the assumptions which exist in the background which are reinforced by the information in the article as evidence which heightens the possibility of the action introduced by the proposition containing *qad*. In this sense, *qad* is close to the English *may* because the evidence which the readers process is compatible with the propositions introduced.

5.2.2.2 *Rubbama* ربما

Ibn Hisham (674/1999: 444) quotes Al- Rummani's explanation of the reason behind using *rubbama* with a verb in the imperfective. However, according to grammatical accounts of *rubbama* it occurs only before the verb in the perfective because it denotes reduction and one can only know the degree to which something is reduced when s/he is familiar with it and that is only possible for something that is past and not for something in the future as nobody is capable of telling the future¹.

Hasan (1973: 526) rejects any possibility for *rubbama* to precede the main verb in the imperfective, unless it conveyed the meaning of the action being most

¹ رب، وأكثر ما تدخل على الماضي [...] لأن التكثر والتقليل إنما يكونان فيما عرف حده، والمستقبل مجهول، ومن ثم قال الرماني في (ربما يود الذين كفروا): إنما جاز، لأن المستقبل معلوم عند الله تعالى كالماضي (ابن هشام، 674/1999: 444).
 “*Rubba*, is mostly inserted before the past tense [...] because increase or reduction of the action are only possible for something which is known, and the future is unknown. therefore, Rummani [another classical grammarian] explained the [Quranic verse] “*Rubbama* the infidels want” as appropriate because the future is known to the most High like the past” (Ibn Hisham, 674/1999: 444).

certainly accomplished as if it were in the perfective form¹. This means that this particle is exclusively used to express that the action in question has certainly taken place at some point in the past, or, in the case of the main verb occurring in the imperfective, is as certain to take place as an action which has already happened. So there is no possibility for *rubbama* to convey any sense of uncertainty or possibility of a future action or event even when it precedes a main verb in the imperfective.

According to Cantarino (1975b: 225) *rubbama* "expresses an [...] idea about an action which has taken place in the past, thus, could happen again. Hence, the perfect tense is used in the clause, usually with a non-preterital meaning". Its equivalent in English would be, Cantarino believes, the adverb "perhaps" and that will not involve the implication of past experience. In this case the main verb is still in the perfect while referring to the future.

However, *qad* often co-occurs in modern Arabic writing with *rubbama*, as two synonymous particles denoting uncertainty or possibility of the action at hand. Most present-day Arabic writers seem to overlook the original semantic difference between the two particles and confuse one with another by using them interchangeably. The following extract shows a clear example of such confusion:

مأزق دستوري قد يتسبب بحل البرلمان المصري: يواجه مجلس الشعب المصري (البرلمان) مأزقاً دستورياً ربما يؤدي في حال تعقد الموقف إلى حله و إجراء انتخابات مبكرة بعدما أصدرت المحكمة الدستورية العليا

¹ أما دخولها على المضارع الصريح وعلى الجملة الاسمية فنادر لا يقاس عليه، إلا إن كان معنى المضارع محقق الوقوع قطعاً [...] لا شك في حصوله، فكأنه من حيث التحقق بمنزلة الماضي الذي وقع معناه، وصار أمراً مقطوعاً به [...] أما في غير ذلك فشاذاً لا يقاس عليه. وإنما كان الأكثر دخولها على الزمن الماضي لأن معناها التأكيد والتقليل، ولا يمكن الحكم بأحدهما إلا على شيء قد عرف (حسن، 1973: 526).
 "As for its [*rubbama*] insertion before the present tense and the nominal sentence, this case is rare and not to be considered as a general rule to be followed, unless the meaning of the present tense is definitely accomplished [...] without any doubt about it, as if it is a past tense which did actually take place and has become a fact [...] other than that shall be regarded as exception and should not be followed. It is more common that it is inserted before the past tense because it denotes increase and reduction, and deciding either of these is possible only for what is known" (Hassan, 1973: 526).

في مصر أمر قراراً يلزم أعضاء مجلس الشعب المتخلفين عن الخدمة العسكرية أداءها أو الإعفاء منها وفقاً لنص القانون كشرط للترشيح لعضوية المجلس، وتوقعت مصادر برلمانية ألا يقل عدد الأعضاء عن عشرين نائباً. (الخليج، 03/08/18).

“Constitutional crisis qad leads to dissolving Egyptian parliament: The Egyptian parliament is facing a constitutional crisis which rubbama leads, should the situation become more serious, to dissolving it and introducing early elections after the supreme constitutional court in Egypt decreed yesterday that members of the Parliament who did not serve the compulsory military service are obliged to either do their military service or obtain an exemption according to the law as a condition for candidature to Parliament membership. Parliamentary sources expected that the number of members would not be fewer than twenty members” (Al-Khaleej, 18/08/03).

No indications can be found here as to the reasons behind the use of both particles in two consecutive sentences in the above example. The degree of uncertainty of the verbal action as expressed in the above article seems to be identical in the two sentences so the most likely explanation would be that the two particles were used interchangeably on the basis that both of them denote the same degree of uncertainty. Yet other uses differentiate between *qad* and *rubbama* so as the former occurs before the main verb in the present tense while the latter occurs before nominal sentences, as in the following extract:

أيًا تكن الجهة التي دبّرت هذا التفجير - وقد يشار إلى جهات أصولية، وربما إلى تنظيم "القاعدة" - فإن البنية الأساسية للهجمات المسلحة حالياً في العراق لا تزال تلك التي استطاع صدام حسين أن يحافظ عليها من بقايا نظامه. وعلى رغم الفلتان الأمني، كانت بعثة الأمم المتحدة تشعر في بغداد بأنها ليست أقل أو أكثر تعرضاً للخطر، بل بأنها ربما محمية بمجرد حاجة الجميع إليها، [...] لكن خصوم الاحتلال الأميركي في العراق،

الخصوم الفاعلين الآن، والذين قد يصبحون فاعلين لاحقاً لأسباب كثيرة، يتعاملون مع الأمم المتحدة على أنها جزء من "الحالة". (الحياة، 03/08/21، "الانتقام" من الأمم المتحدة، عبد الوهاب بدرخان).

“Whatever the organisation responsible for this explosion- the finger of accusation qad points at fundamentalists, rubbama “Al-Qaeda”- the basic structure of the recent armed attacks in Iraq remains the same as that which Saddam Hussein managed to maintain from the remnants of his regime. Although security is fast diminishing in the country, the UN mission in Baghdad has had the feeling that it is neither less nor more at risk, rubbama even protected simply because everyone needs its presence [...] but those who vehemently oppose the American occupation of Iraq, and these are the people who are active at the moment and who qad be active later for many reasons, regard the UN as being part of the “situation” (*Al-Hayat*, 21/08/03).

My argument is that this confusion is not characteristic to original Arabic writing conventions because *rubbama* clearly signifies distinct interpretations from those signified by the use of *qad*. What the classical accounts of *rubbama* seem to suggest is that this particle was originally intended to denote past events that happened in actual terms and about which there can be no doubt. That is the reason why *rubbama* in the Arabic grammatical tradition seems to occur exclusively with verbs in the past tense and never in the present tense.

I shall draw on the above accounts of *rubbama* to show that, in relevance-theoretic terms, this particle gives rise to different interpretations of utterances from interpretations which the use of *qad* gives rise to. Before proceeding, however, it should be noted that the meaning of *rubbama* in MSA styles has

undergone a noticeable change. This particle no longer signifies past events but events that are likely to happen in the future. In this sense, *rubbama* has become closer to share the “reductive” function of *qad* when used with the imperfective. Moreover, it has become common practice in modern Arabic writing to use *rubbama* with verbs in the present tense rather than verbs in the past tense, and with nominal phrases as the example above shows. This is a clear diversion from the classical uses of this particle.

Rubbama is used in MSA styles with verbs in the present tense to denote speculation about future events and the contexts in which this particle appears convey a sense of low possibility for accomplishment of the action introduced by it. In other words, where *qad* with the imperfective seems to be used in contexts where factual background information can be retrieved, thus implying that the action introduced by *qad* is more likely to take place, *rubbama* seems to be used in contexts where there is less factual basis for rendering the action possible, so that the readers’ internal representation of the situation does not lead them to inferring a substantial degree of evidence for a high possibility. In that sense, it can be argued that modern uses of *rubbama* in MSA styles resembles the English *might* in that the least amount of evidence is deduced from the context available to the readers. This evidence is compatible with the propositions communicated and with background information constituting the readers’ held assumptions about the situation. In the following two examples, speculation of the event is accompanied by a sense of low possibility for that action to take place. This sense of low possibility is communicated through lack of reliable background information and therefore lack of sufficient evidence that the action is going to take place.

وربما تحسم جولة موسى الذي وصل إلى المغرب أمس مسألة المكان خصوصاً أن جهود مبارك في الأيام المقبلة ستتركز على تهيئة الأجواء لرحلته إلى الولايات المتحدة التي سيصلها يوم السبت المقبل (الحياة، 04/04/05، مبارك يلتقي الأسد والبشير ويتعهد حضور القمة "حتى لو في القمر").

“Rubbama Moussa’s [the Secretary General of the Arab League] tour, after arriving at Morocco yesterday, reaches a final decision about the issue of the summit venue, especially that Mubarak’s efforts in the coming days are going to focus on preparing the atmosphere for his visit to the United States where he is due to arrive next Saturday” (*Al-Hayat*, 05/04/04).

Another report about the same news was published by the Egyptian newspaper, *Al-Akhbar*. It quotes President Mubarak saying:

[الرئيس مبارك]: ربما تنعقد القمة في مايو، لكن لا بد أن تنعقد ولا بد أن تتفق الدول العربية أولاً على الموعد والمكان، وهذا يرجع إلى تونس. فلا بد أن تجري تونس اتصالات مع باقي الدول العربية لكي تتفق معها على القمة في تونس أو حسبما ترى الأغلبية (جريدة الأخبار المصرية، 04/04/05، توحيد الموقف العربي في مباحثات القمة بين مبارك وبشار والبشير).

“[President Mubarak]: Rubbama the summit is held in May, but it has to be held and the Arab countries have to first agree on the date and venue. This is for Tunisia to do; Tunisia has to contact the rest of the Arab countries to agree with them that the summit be held either there or according to what the majority decide” (*Al-Akhbar*, 05/04/04).

Before moving on, a possible objection needs to be addressed regarding the above relevance-theoretic account of both *qad* and *rubbama* and the difference in the interpretations which these two particles give rise to in utterances. Could it not be the case, one might argue, that writers of MSA are not aware of the

difference in the meanings of the two particles and thus will confuse one with another which will result in using them alternatively in the same text as if they were synonymous, possibly to avoid repetition of one particular particle? After all, that is what one example cited above (the report about the Egyptian parliament) seems to illustrate.

This objection seems to be valid especially when one is aware that the use of the particle *rubbama* in particular no longer abides by the classical syntactic rule which restricts the occurrence of this particle to sentences with verbs in the past tense. But even if that was the case, it cannot be assumed that two particles indicate identical meanings and can replace each other in any context. Such an assumption is too simplistic and ignores the fact that there are nuances of meaning between synonymous lexical units in any language. The inaccurate practices of regarding *qad* and *rubbama* as identical in meaning stress the need for raising the awareness of Arabic speakers to a more systematic way of using these two particles.

5.2.2.3 *La'alla* لعل

According to Ibn Hisham (674/1999: 416) *la'alla* is used to express either hope for something positive or waiting for something that one is afraid of. In the context of defining the meanings of *la'alla*, Arabic grammarians underline the importance of distinguishing between hoping for something and wishing it to happen; as this particle is used only to express the first but not the second. Hoping for something to take place goes only with things that can actually happen in reality as it were, whereas wishing can be used for both what can and cannot

happen in reality¹. According to Ryding (2005: 428), this particle is similar in meaning to the particle *rubbama*, and it is to be translated into the English “perhaps”.

Cantarino describes it as “a particle of emphatic uncertainty” (1975a: 238).

This particle has undergone considerable semantic change in MSA styles and certainly in journalistic style as the following examples will show:

أميركا في ديارنا. حدث مثل هذا لن يكون عابراً . لن يكون عابراً في هذا الجانب من الخريطة. ولن يكون عابراً في الجانب الآخر. الحشود التي نزلت إلى شوارع نيويورك قبل شهور كانت تقول شيئاً. لعل صوته لم يسمع إلى هنا، رغم الشاشات الصغيرة، ورغم العناوين العريضة في الصحف. (الحياة، 03/07/23، "تاريخ عاطفي"، ربيع الجابر) .

“America is on our doorstep. An event like this is not going to be insignificant on this side of the world map, and it will not be insignificant on the other side either. The crowds which took to the streets in New York a few months ago were saying something. la‘alla their voices did not reach here despite appearing on TV screens and despite grabbing the headlines of newspapers” (*Al-Hayat*, 23/07/03).

This example illustrates the semantic transformation of *la‘alla* in modern written Arabic. The writer is definitely not in the position to hope that the crowds’ voices will not be heard in his part of the world nor is he expecting anything to take place in the future since he is clearly talking about a past event. The closest explanation is the one put forward by Cantarino to explain the meaning of this particle, namely, its use to express “emphatic uncertainty”. In this sense, it indicates a kind of logical inference from preceding utterances as to what is due to

¹ و "لعل" للترجي والإشفاق، والفرق بين الترجي والتمني أن التمني يكون في الممكن، نحو: "ليت زيدا قائم" وفي غير الممكن، نحو: "ليت الشباب يعود يوماً"، وأن الترجي لا يكون إلا في الممكن؛ فلا تقول: "لعل الشباب يعود" والفرق بين الترجي والإشفاق أن الترجي يكون في المحبوب، نحو: "لعل الله يرحمنا" والإشفاق في المكروه نحو: "لعل العدو يقدم" (شرح ابن عقيل، الجزء الأول، 2000: 318).

come next. On the other hand, there is pragmatically more to *la'alla* than to merely convey the logic of what is to be expected. In this example, the writer is not directly inferring what will happen from what has been previously mentioned, rather, he is expressing his certainty with a particle that is supposed to be used to express uncertainty. Thus, he is stressing an ironic point he wishes to make in his article.

Other writers use this particle as a means of introducing their own personal views on the argument at hand, as in the following extract:

للحديث عن الذاكرة عند العرب دلالات عديدة منها البكاء على الأطلال والأمجاد الغابرة التي عرفت فترات مجد وعز، ومنها الرد على البعض من الغرب الذين يتهموننا بالتخلف وضعف المعرفة والإنتاج العلمي. ومنها التنفيس اللحظي لمظاهر القمع من خلال إسقاط الذاكرة الحاضرة على الماضي لعل ذلك يوفر الهرب من المباشرة باستخدام كل أنواع الترميز والتلميح والتأشير. (الثورة، 03/09/25، "لا تصدقوهم إنهم يتنفسون كذباً.. ولكن"، د. أحمد بلال).

“There are several indications which refer to Arabs’ relationship with memory, such as expressing nostalgia towards ancient glories and prosperous times, and responding to some in the West who accuse us of backwardness and the poor quality of our knowledge and scientific research. Other indications include momentous release of oppression manifestations through applying present memory to the past, *la'alla* this would facilitate escape from straightforwardness by using all forms of symbolism, delusion and reference” (*Al-Thawra*, 25/09/03).

The use of *la'alla* here comes closest to its classical meanings of expressing hope. It is in this sense that the modal meaning of *la'alla* becomes most obvious. Instead of using an ordinary connective with the connotation of cause and result, the use of *la'alla* underlines the writer’s position as that of

“emphatic uncertainty” towards the statement he is making. Despite the fact that the relationship between the different parts of the sentence is still that of cause and result as another connective with similar connotations would convey, this particle is less factual and more subject to the writer’s individual attitude towards his discussion. Hence, the consequence put forward by the writer is not factually proven but it is still considered to be sufficiently reasonable for the writer to take it into consideration. So, the writer is on the one hand “uncertain” about the consequence he is introducing to his readers since that consequence is not proven; and on the other hand he is putting that consequence in an “emphatic” style because he has sufficient reasons to introduce this consequence to his statement.

It is worth noting that some writers use this particle very frequently as in the next example:

ولعله من المنطقي القول إن كل حركة فرضت على الشعوب معاناة حقيقية في حياتها المادية والمعنوية منذ عصر العبودية وحتى يومنا هذا مروراً بالاستعمار والاستغلال والنازية والفاشية والعنصرية بجميع ممارساتها تشكل نوعاً من الإرهاب الذي لم ينقطع عبر عصور التاريخ المختلفة. ولعل في إشارة قداسة البابا /يوحنا/ وسواه من أولي الألباب والضمان إلى التقصير الأمريكي في التعاطي مع موضوع التفجيرات الإرهابية في الحادي عشر من أيلول ما يلقي بعض ظلال الشك حول هذه القضية من جهة، ويضيء جوانب يجري التعتيم عليها في هذه القضية من جهة أخرى. ولعله من المفيد أيضاً أن نستذكر أن الإرهاب الدولي لم يغب يوماً وأن قوى تدعى الديمقراطية تسهم مادياً ومعنوياً في تدريب الإرهاب وتمويله ، ولا يقتصر هذا الإرهاب على التفجير فقط بل يتعداه إلى الجوانب السياسية والاقتصادية والثقافية وسواها . (الثورة، 03/08/27، دراسات، "أزمة الإرهاب.. وإرهاب الأزمات"، محمد ابراهيم حمدان).

“And la`alla it is logical to say that every movement that imposed on nations real suffering in their physical and spiritual living since the age of slavery up till our day, including colonisation, exploitation, Nazism, Fascism and racism with all its

practices, represents a form of terrorism which has always been present throughout history.

And la'alla in the reference which Pope John Paul and other honest people made regarding the American failure to deal with the issue of the terrorist explosions of September 11, there are hints that cast some shadows of doubt around this issue on the one hand and shed light on aspects that are being glossed over in this case on the other.

And la'alla it is also useful for us to recall that international terrorism has always been present and that powers called democracies are contributing both financially and psychologically to training and financing terrorism. This terrorism is not limited to carrying out explosions but also extends to political, economic, cultural as well as other aspects" (*Al-Thawra*, 27/08/03).

The use of *la'alla* in this example is different from the other two mentioned above. *La'alla* in this extract does not denote any sense of irony on the part of the writer. Nor does it suggest an introduction of a supposition. What can be noted in this example is that the writer is discussing factual events which have occurred in the past whether this past was near or distant. This feature contrasts with the original meanings of *la'alla* as a particle to express hope for the future or waiting for something to happen in times to come. It also contradicts Cantarino's notion of "emphatic uncertainty" as all ideas discussed are closely related to historical facts that are not open to controversy. The first use of *la'alla* is used as a personal way of stating a fact, the writer wants to comment on a historical phenomenon and *la'alla* is used to introduce the sentence following it. Here again the modal meaning of this particle seems to be problematic but closer inspection

will show that the writer is discussing a certain historical phenomenon; he is concentrating on one aspect of this phenomenon and this aspect is the one that particularly supports his ensuing argument and serves the ultimate aim of the whole passage. This aspect is highlighted by the use of *la'alla* which underlines the writer's argument.

The second use of *la'alla* in this example is used in a similar way to that of the first one. The writer is providing insight into the comments of the pontiff and introducing his own understanding of them in association with the subject of the discussion. The writer is explaining how he has interpreted the remarks of late Pope John Paul II and others in a way that does not put the argument in a factual or objective framework but in a framework that introduces the writer's personal point of view.

The third use of *la'alla* in the extract also stands for the writer's individual position regarding the historical phenomena he is discussing. Furthermore, in this third usage the writer is offering advice to the readership and he is even using the first person in the plural form to address that readership directly. In this way the writer has involved the readers with his argument and assumes that they are going to agree with him. However, he has not put his advice in a declarative or imperative statement. In this sense, the use of *la'alla* is a mild way of asserting the writer's views on the subject and involving the readers' active participation in interpreting the text in a similar way to that of the writer.

5.2.3 Modals denoting obligation

In Arabic, obligation is expressed by a group of lexical units which do not belong to the same grammatical category. Furthermore, the classical grammarians

had no specific category to set them apart from other grammatical categories according to their meanings. The main lexical units that fall under this category in written Arabic are the verb *yajibu* as well as the preposition '*ala*'.

5.2.3.1 The verb *yajibu* يجب

There are no classical accounts which explain the meaning and uses of the verb *yajibu* due to the fact that this verb is categorised as a main verb regardless of its modal meaning. This is a similar case to the categorisation of modal particles alongside other non-modal particles in classical Arabic grammar. These long-standing grammatical categories still hold in present-day studies of Arabic grammar (Al-Antaaki, 1969; Al-Nou'aimi, 1977; Al-Sayed, 1967; Hasan, 1968-1969-1971-1973; Wright, 1967; Smart, 1986; Ryding, 2005). However, there is a very recent account of Arabic deontic modality which sheds light on the uses of Arabic verbs, prepositions and other modalised expressions with comparison to the English corresponding modal auxiliaries. This account is put forward by Abdel-Fattah (2005) and is an important step forward towards a better understanding of the Arabic deontic modal verbs and expressions.

Abdel-Fattah describes the English *must* as a verb which expresses “subjective deontic necessity (obligation)”, and says that the Arabic *yajibu* expresses that type of obligation, e.g.

You must leave now.

يجب أن تغادر الآن

[must + subjunctive part. = that (hereinafter) + come now] (2005: 33).

¹ Cf. Abdel-Fattah (2005: 33) for a detailed list of Arabic deontic modal expressions.

However, Abdel-Fattah argues that “of all the Arabic modals وجب [*wajaba*-infinitive form of *yajibu*] (and its constructions) is the most ambiguous; it accounts for all shades of necessity with an amazing flexibility of usage” (ibid., p. 38)¹. The reason being, Abdel-Fattah argues, that *yajibu* resembles the English *have to* in that the deontic meaning expressed is “external; the speaker’s involvement in the speech act is indirect in the sense that he/she is not the one laying the obligation. Therefore, a subject-oriented interpretation (dynamic) is more plausible” (ibid., p. 38). His example is:

All I have to do is to drive my car in the area.

بينما لا يتوجب علي إلا أن أتجول بسيارتي في المنطقة

[whereas no must on me but that wander about in my car in the area].

Then Abdel-Fattah claims that *yajibu* “can fit as an equivalent for all English modal verbs and expressions accounted for by necessity” (ibid.). Abdel-Fattah does not give examples as to how he conceives this to be the case with *yajibu*. The view that one modal verb in one language can replace “all” modal verbs in another language sounds both over simplistic and counter-intuitive. Abdel-Fattah describes the modal *yajibu* as being “neutral” and “ambiguous” (ibid.) which begs the question as to how a modal verb can be considered “neutral”, since the main feature of modality is the subjective overtones of the speaker’s degree of commitment towards a statement.

To develop a relevance-theoretic interpretation of this verb, the model which Groefsema (1995) formulates for the English modal verbs *must* and *should* will be adopted here, including her terminology which will be explained below.

¹ Abdel-Fattah believes that *yajibu* “can express epistemic, deontic, and dynamic meanings; thus, it is inherently ambiguous, which allows a wide range of usage flexibility” (2005: 46).

Groefsema proposes that in the case of *must* being used in an utterance, a proposition *p* “is entailed by the set of all propositions which have a bearing on *p*” (1995: 62). The notion of “bearing” is used in a technical sense in order to “focus the addressee’s attention on all the *evidence* (of whatever nature, epistemic or otherwise) for the proposition expressed by the rest of the utterance” (1995: 62-3, original emphasis). According to her proposal, what differentiates *must* from *can* is the difference in the relation that holds between the “evidence” and the expressed proposition. When *must* is used, this indicates that the proposition is “entailed” by the evidence; when *can* is used, the proposition is “compatible” with the evidence, which means that “the ‘evidence’ does not entail the negation of the proposition expressed” (ibid.).

This can be illustrated by the following example:

كما إن أسلحة الدمار الشامل التي تشكل خطراً عالمياً شاملاً يجب التخلص منها وإزالتها من جميع مواقع تواجدتها بدون استثناء. (الثورة، 03/08/27، دراسات، "أزمة الإرهاب.. وإرهاب الأزمات"، محمد ابراهيم حمدان).

“Furthermore, Weapons of Mass Destruction which represent a global danger yajibu be eliminated everywhere they are found without exception” (*Al-Thawra*, 27/08/03).

The writer’s choice of *yajibu* is not an arbitrary one, but the reader will need the wider context of the article to locate this choice within its proper context. The writer of this article is Syrian and he wrote it at the time when the US was demanding that Syria abandon alleged programmes of developing WMD. The Syrian government responded that these weapons existed in other countries in the region namely in Israel. If the US administration was genuinely worried about the

security of the whole of the Middle East then the wisest option would be to work on eliminating all WMD wherever they are and especially in Israel where an arsenal of highly technological weaponry is being continuously advanced and developed. The writer is well aware that this option will not be part of the American strategy.

Another example is an article reporting the views of the Maronite bishop in Lebanon, Boutrous Sfeir, on the latest situation in Lebanon after the assassination of former premier, Rafik Hariri, on 14 February 2005:

ودعا صفير في عظة الأحد في بركي إلى تغليب العقل على النزق والانفعال وإلى أن يترك للشعب اللبناني مجال اختيار المسؤولين عن مصيره، عن بصيرة واعية، وحرية تامة، فهو الذي يجب أن تكون له الكلمة الأخيرة، في اختيار من يتولون تدبير شؤونه، وتقرير مصيره، وأما ما عداه من أفراد وجماعات وأحزاب فيجب أن يذعنوا لما يقرر. أفليست هذه الديمقراطية الصحيحة؟ (الحياة، 05/02/21).

“In Sunday’s homily at Bkerky [Cathedral], Sfeir called for making reason prevail over destructive emotions and to make it possible for the Lebanese people to choose those responsible for their future, according to mature vision and total freedom. It is the Lebanese people who yajibu have the last word regarding the choice of their leaders. All others including certain individuals, groups or parties yajibu concede to what the people of Lebanon decide. Is this not the correct democracy?” (*Al-Hayat*, 21/02/05).

The speaker wishes that [p The Lebanese people have the last word] is entailed by the set of all propositions which have a bearing on p . In other words, the utterance is not a description of an actual state of affairs but rather a description of what the communicator wishes to be an actual state of affairs, i.e. a desirable state of affairs.

Another example is an extract from a commentary in the Syrian newspaper *Al-Thawra* about the Iraqi elections. The writer is drawing parallels between the deadline for holding the Iraqi elections and a possible deadline for ending the presence of US troops in Iraq.

من هذا الفهم يجب قراءة اللحظة التاريخية للانتخابات العراقية المقبلة وليس من منظور الإدارة الأميركية التي تحدثت عن هذه اللحظة من دون أن تذكر لحظة انتهاء الاحتلال التي ينتظرها الشعب العراقي بفارغ الصبر [...] إن احترام الحكومة العراقية لموعد الانتخابات وإصرارها عليه رغم كل الاعتراضات والمطالبات بتأجيله من جانب بعض الأحزاب المشاركة فيها يجب أن ينسحب على المواعيد والوعود التي أطلقتها الإدارة الأميركية قبل الحرب وعلى رأسها موضوع إنهاء الاحتلال والانسحاب من العراق بعد هذه الانتخابات. (الثورة، 05/01/28، الانتخابات العراقية .. واحترام المواعيد الأخرى).

“It is from this understanding that the historic moment of the Iraqi elections yajibu be perceived, not from the perspective of the US administration which talked about this moment but failed to mention the moment of ending the occupation for which the Iraqi people are waiting with patience running out [...] the Iraqi government’s respect for the elections date and its staunch support of it despite all the objections and demands of postponement on the part of some participating parties yajibu be extended to the dates and promises made by the US administration before the war particularly the issue of ending the occupation and withdrawing from Iraq after these elections” (*Al-Thawra*, 28/01/05).

This commentary is aimed at the Syrian readers who hold ideological assumptions about the US policies in the Middle East with regard to two main points. The first point is the US interests in the region and the second point is the US aggressive rhetoric against Syria especially following the invasion of Iraq. The writer aims to capitalise on those ideological assumptions and reinforce them

within the context of the Iraqi elections by drawing a parallel between respecting the deadline for holding those elections and respecting “other” dates, i.e. the date of withdrawing US troops from Iraq. The writer uses the Arabic verb *yajibu* denoting a strong sense of obligation, thus reinforcing his readers’ assumptions about the dubious nature of the US approach towards issues in the region especially its military presence in Iraq and also indirectly reminding the Syrian readers of the US officials’ strong language when calling on Syria to pursue certain courses of action relating to the security in Iraq and other political issues. By using a modal that communicates maximum evidence which makes the new proposition entailed by the set of all propositions available in the context, the writer is focusing the readers’ attention on their already held assumptions regarding the issue in question and reinforcing these assumptions to highlight the Syrian point of view regarding the US policies in the region rather than focusing their attention on the Iraqi elections themselves despite the fact that the Iraqi elections are the main subject of the commentary. The writer used the subject of the Iraqi elections to conjure up in the minds of the readers ideological assumptions about the US “double standards” policy and even express skepticism about those elections as they are the result of the US presence in Iraq. The writer aimed at making the subject of the Iraqi elections relevant to the Syrian readers only in terms of strengthening their assumptions about the US and its failures in the Middle East, not in terms of being a step forward towards achieving a democratic process in Iraq.

5.2.3.2 The preposition 'ala على

This preposition is not accounted for as an independent modal particle in the classical tradition of Arabic grammar. One of the differences between CA and MSA styles is that in CA this preposition used to co-occur with *yajibu* forming a phrasal verb denoting obligation. In MSA, however, this preposition occurs independently of the verb *yajibu* to denote obligation in the sentence. In Abdel-Fattah's account of deontic modality in Arabic, the preposition 'ala can stand for both *must* and *should*, although 'ala lacks "a sense of warning" that can be denoted by *must* in the English sentence (2005: 41).

The degree of obligation which 'ala seems to convey in MSA styles resembles that conveyed in English by the verb *should*. According to Groefsema's model, what the verb *should* means is that "there is at least some set of propositions such that *p* is entailed by it" (1995: 62). Since, the present argument argues that the Arabic 'ala conveys a degree of obligation which resembles that conveyed by *should*, then Groefsema's model can be extended to explain interpretations of that structure when used in Arabic utterances. The following are examples of how this can be the case:

فلماذا الهجوم الشامل في اتجاه واحد؟! والمعارضة الشاملة في الاتجاه الآخر تحت نفس الشعار ونفس القضية؟! أليس في هذا من الدلائل ما يكفي على أن المؤامرة أكبر من شعاراتها؟! وأنها تستهدف الجميع وأنه على السياسة الدولية أن تتحرر من قيود السيطرة الفئوية المرتبطة بمركزية رأس المال الصهيوني الذي يغامر ويقامر بالمصلحة الإنسانية لحساباته الاستغلالية المريضة. (الثورة، 03/08/27، دراسات، "أزمة الإرهاب.. وإرهاب الأزمات"، محمد ابراهيم حمدان).

"So why is the mass attack heading in one direction and the mass opposition in another under the same motto and the same issue? Is not that ample evidence that

the conspiracy is larger than its mottoes? and that it targets everyone and that ‘ala international politics break free from the chains of domination of one group linked to the Zionist capital which gambles with human welfare for the benefit of its sick exploitative calculations” (*Al-Thawra*, 27/08/03).

This example is part of the article mentioned earlier about eliminating WMD from the world. The position discussed here is that world powers must be aware of the Israeli dangerous influence on the Middle East. Such evidence can be that it is not normal for international politics to be controlled by one small group as opposed to the rest of the world, that certain capitalist circles operating in the US are contriving policies according to the interests of certain countries at the expense of others, etc. When the Syrian readers consider this background information then the above statement becomes relevant to them by way of highlighting their assumptions about certain states of affairs concerning international politics and contrasting those assumptions with those put forward by the writer as desired states of affairs.

The following example is an instance of reporting the same piece of news using two different modals. The article is a report on the EU tour made by Mr. Walid Jumblatt, one of the heads of Lebanese opposition against the Syrian military and intelligence presence in Lebanon. The EU tour came in the wake of the assassination of former Lebanese premier, Rafik Hariri, which brought significant changes to the political balance of the Lebanese powers and resulted in the sudden withdrawal of Syrian troops from their locations in Lebanon under intense international pressure. In addition to demanding the immediate withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon because the Syrian military intelligence was

accused of carrying out Hariri's assassination. the Lebanese opposition also demanded the resignation of chiefs of Lebanese security forces who were viewed as supporters of the Syrian presence in Lebanon, as well as the immediate admission of international investigators into the assassination. The interesting point in this example is that the two reports were published by the same newspaper on the same day; the first extract quotes Jumblatt's words while the second extract reports them without quotation marks and in both reports different modal verbs are used.

الاستشارات النيابية تعيد [رئيس الحكومة عمر] كرامي والمعارضة تشترط إقالة قادة الأجهزة:
قال [جنبلاط] في بروكسيل بحسب مصادره إنه "إذا كان كرامي مستعداً للعمل مع المعارضة فيجب أن يوافق على مطالبها وهي التحقيق الدولي باغتيال الحريري واستقالة قادة الأجهزة الأمنية". (الحياة، 05/03/10).

"Parliamentary consultations result in [PM, Omar] Karami staying in office, and opposition demands resignation of heads of security apparatuses:

In Brussels, Jumblatt said according to his sources that "If Karami is willing to work with the opposition he yajibu concedes to its demands which are the international investigation of Hariri's assassination and the resignation of the heads of security apparatuses" (*Al-Hayat*, 10/03/05).

- أجاب جنبلاط أن "الانتخابات ستجري في أيار وينبغي الانتباه إلى أن المطلوب جدول انسحاب محدد قبل الانتخابات اللبنانية" [...] إذا كان كرامي مستعداً للعمل مع المعارضة فعليه أن يوافق على شروطها وفي طليعتها التحقيق الدولي في اغتيال الحريري واستقالة المسؤولين عن الأجهزة الأمنية. (الحياة، 05/03/10).

"Jumblatt replied that "The elections are going to be held in May and what is to be noted is that a specific timetable for withdrawal is required before the Lebanese

elections” [...] If Karami is willing to work with the opposition *‘ala* he concedes to its conditions which include first and foremost the international investigation of Hariri’s assassination and the resignation of the chiefs of the security apparatuses” (*Al-Hayat*, 10/03/05).

The strong sense of obligation communicated in the first report prompts the readers to process the information in terms of the urgency of the required action and also in terms of the speaker’s considerable authority regarding the issue he is addressing. In other words, the first report reflects the position of the speaker, Mr. Jumblatt, as someone who has authority over senior officials like the Lebanese Prime Minister. By citing the words of Mr. Jumblatt and his use of the verb *yajibu* which expresses a strong sense of obligation, the first report underlines Jumblatt’s authority and represents him as a key player in Lebanese politics. Readers of the first report are directed to consider all the propositions in the context that reinforce their assumptions about the authority of Jumblatt as an important figure in the opposition who is capable of influencing the political scene in Lebanon.

By contrast, the second report cites Jumblatt’s words using the obligation particle *‘ala* not *yajibu*. As a result, the readers’ assumptions about the speaker’s authority are to a certain extent weakened because the proposition is not given the same degree of salience as that in the first report. The new proposition in the second report is made relevant to the readers when they process the information communicated to them in terms of less urgency of the required action and to a certain extent less authority of the speaker over the other key players in Lebanese politics such as the Prime Minister. By using *‘ala*, the report represents the

speaker as suggesting what is to be done about the resignation of the Lebanese premier and the chiefs of the security apparatuses but the authority of the speaker is not emphasised or underlined.

5.3 Concluding remarks

The Arabic modal particles and verbs, in contrast to the English modal auxiliaries, have received much less systematic investigation into their meanings and interpretations both in classical grammarians' literature and modern time research. It is also a well known fact that Arabic modals are not classified as such in the grammatical tradition of Arabic and are not given independent grammatical status according to their modal functions in Arabic.

The aim of this chapter has been to explain the modal particles and verbs in Arabic. First, classical accounts as put forward by Arabic grammarians are introduced, then modern uses of the modals in the MSA styles are analysed. A relevance-theoretic account is provided for each of these modal particles and verbs as a way to underline the different interpretations each of these modals gives rise to when used in specific utterances with specific reference to the language of the news as reported in the Arabic Press.

The following chapter shall draw on the findings of this chapter and the previous one which accounted for the English modals. The discussion shall proceed to apply those findings to the translation of modality from English into Arabic within the relevance-theoretic framework developed in this research.

Chapter Six: A Relevance-Theoretic Account of the Translation of Modality from English into Arabic in the Language of the News

6.1 Introduction

There is a great variety of studies which approach the study of translation from an ideological perspective. Translation, be it process or product or both, is related to instances of texts indicating gender manipulations, national identity demonstration, social class divisions and other types of ideological issues. Translation of political discourse (Hatim and Mason, 1990, 1997; Hatim, 1999; Lane-Mercier, 1997) is also a common practice, with studies including empirical research of linguistic uses in two or more different languages (Sidiropoulou, 1998; Suleiman, 2003), or applying a specific translation theory to the study of newspaper headlines or other journalistic features (Fawcett, 1995, 2000). The translation of modality has also received a number of varied and detailed accounts based on linguistic, semantic and pragmatic approaches (Mitchell and Hassan, 1994; Farghal and Shunnaq, 1998; Badran, 2001). But studies which link the translation of modality on the one hand and the relationship between modality and the ideological aspect of language on the other have been largely subsumed under wider frameworks of discussion.

It is the aim of the present research to shed light on the relationship between modal auxiliaries as linguistic features and the expression of ideological viewpoints in the language of the news. The hypothesis put forward is that modal verbs and particles which are used in news reports and commentaries contribute to the understanding of a certain ideological standing point communicated to the

readers of a certain news report at a certain point in time. This relationship is also reflected in the translation of modal aspects between two languages. In order to support this hypothesis, the present research applies Relevance theory to the understanding of modality in the language of the news. In the previous two chapters modality in English and Arabic has been analysed along the lines of Relevance theory and a relevance-theoretic account has been established for each one of the two modal systems. This chapter draws on the conclusions of the previous chapters and establishes a similar relevance-theoretic account of the translation of modal verbs and particles from English into Arabic. Such an account for the two modal systems underlines the ways in which ideological points of view are both communicated and understood by newspaper readers.

6.2 Translation: the relationship between the translator and the reader

Translation has been approached from a variety of different angles. The underlying notion that unites those approaches to the study of translational phenomena is the dynamic relationship between the translator and the reader of the translation.

The dynamic relationship between the translator and the reader is manifested through the dynamic nature of language itself. Kashkin expresses this point most adequately when he says that

a [grammatical] form never appears as an existing *thing*, or as a point in time, but rather as an event of choosing. This event is not governed by a rule or set of rules with a definite ‘output’, but rather by various factors of a different nature, having different degrees of influence and priority. Thus,

the grammatical forms. from the point of view of the language user or of the translator, do not ‘exist’, they ‘happen’: they develop in time as a *process* of making a choice (1998: 96, original emphasis).

To put this point differently, the translator’s choice of lexical and grammatical items when translating is not to be understood as a mechanical process or “as a deterministic response to source language stimuli with target language means” (ibid., p. 97) but rather as an integral part of the communication act taking place interlingually between the translator and the reader. That is why Kashkin describes the translator as “an acting linguistic subject” (ibid., p. 98) whose primary aim is to strike a balance between what s/he is about to communicate through translation and how the addressee is going to perceive that message. Therefore, the translator is faced with the task of choosing from the linguistic repertoire of the target language the linguistic features and expressions which can best render that communicative balance between the translator’s aim and the target reader’s reception of the translated message both possible and effective. Kashkin calls the set of possible linguistic choices which are available to the translator/communicator “functional field”; grammatical, lexical, and contextual means of conveying a certain grammatical idea or covering a certain ‘domain of meaning’ (ibid.).

The notion of the interactive nature of the relation between linguistic expressions and the wider communicative context is acknowledged by many scholars in the field and it underlines the nature of translation as process and/or product as a communicative relationship between the translator as communicator of the original message and the addressee as receiver of the translated text.

Vermeer's skopos theory in translation also stresses the fact that it is not possible to fully appreciate a given text on the sole basis of its linguistic texture and away from the communicative circumstances within which it has been produced. This shift of focus from the actual text in its linguistic or formal reality to the communicative world in which the text has been molded leads skopos theory, according to Vermeer, to concentrate on both the translator as communicator of the original message in translation and the addressee as receiver of the translation in the target language. In fact, Vermeer believes that there is no such thing called an "objective" understanding of a text because "a translator is first of all a recipient of a source texteme to be translated, and text reception is a form of text production [...] A translation therefore starts from the translator's understanding of the source texteme. Target recipients understand the understanding of a translated texteme (in their own way)" (1998: 43). According to the above quotation, the recipients of a translated message are not exposed to the original message in any definite terms. Rather, the recipients of the translation have a text that is analysed and processed by the translator. It is the result of the translator's analysis and processing of the original message which constitutes the translation as a product which is eventually introduced to the target addressee in the form of a translated text conveying a certain message. Vermeer says that the governing rule for the analysis and processing of the original text as conducted by the translator is that of a "skopos" or ultimate goal of the translation. Translation according to skopos theory is, therefore, not a question of rendering the textual "surface structure" or linguistic features from one language into another; it is "a skopos-oriented cultural process, one element of which if any is a verbalized part. And it

is not above all a question of translating a source text, but of a holistic ‘acting’ in a target culture for a given purpose and its intended recipients [...] The purpose (“skopos”) determines the strategy of translating and provides the freedom and responsibility for its execution” (1998: 56). The translation, with the intended skopos, is then delivered to the target addressee who also participates in the process of understanding the translated message according to his/her particular communicative expectations, for “no translation can ‘give’ a recipient ‘the’ author and ‘her/his’ text, but only part(s) of the author and her/his text plus the recipient’s interpretation, associations, etc.” (op. cit).

The reader’s involvement in the translation act is also discussed by Fawcett (1995). Fawcett argues for Pym’s (1992) distinction of three types of reader involvement: excluded, observational and participative. The reader of a translation is excluded when the translation as a whole or parts of it are closer to “transcription” of the original than to translation, so that the reader “therefore has no way of recovering, or rather participating in constructing, the original meaning” (1995: 178). A fully participative reader is the one who is able to have sufficient access into the intricacies of the original mainly because of similarities between the source and target cultures and linguistic habits. Fawcett’s example of such readers’ participation is modern English prose translated into European languages. He believes that the vast majority of readers of translations belong to the category of observational readers, who only have access to the original text through the translator’s interference either by adding explanatory annotations and footnotes or by rewriting the original or by omitting some aspects of it, which again hinges on making the reader excluded rather than assuming a participating

role in the translation. This exclusion, however, is very often inevitable because of the fact that the target reader is different from the source reader in many ways including differences in linguistic and communicative norms and expectations. Consequently, the translator has to make “recourse to forms of paratext and compromise, because the target reader is in very many ways unlike the source reader. The inclusion of such material does of course affect the degree to which the target reader can participate directly in the text” (ibid., p. 180).

Fawcett then proceeds with his argument to state that Pym’s categorisation of the reader is a step forward in the right direction of bringing the intended readers “into the equation” of studying translated works. Although the term of the intended reader “has so far remained notoriously vague” as it does not seem to be able to address the difficulty of defining a typical reader and, as Fawcett acknowledges, “leaves totally unexamined the concept of ‘similarity of readership’ and whether such an entity can even be said to exist” (ibid., p. 179). Nevertheless, classifying the reader as in Pym’s model highlights the degree of involvement in the translation. Fawcett wants to shift the focus from House’s (1981) notion of text function as a ruling factor which ultimately dictates the translation strategy to the reader’s involvement in the translated text as a way of bringing to the fore the notion that “translation in all its forms is frequently the site of a variety of power plays between the actors involved. Some of these are quite deliberate manipulations of the original for a wide variety of reasons, ranging from the desire to save money to the desire to control behaviour, from the desire to follow perceived norms (and keep the translator out of prison or worse) to the desire for cultural hegemony” (Fawcett, 1995: 177).

Fawcett is not alone in claiming that translation should be viewed from the perspective of power play and ideology. In her analytical study of the translation of literary sociolects, Lane-Mercier (1997) arrives at the same conclusion. Lane-Mercier argues that even before the act of translation starts, and at the level of the source text itself, literary sociolects are “saturated with authorial presence and contain extremely powerful reading positions; as such, they are a product [...] of a rhetorical practice of mimesis that aims to orient (or disorient) the reader by generating aesthetic, ideological and political meaning” (1997: 48). This manipulation is considered by Lane-Mercier to be an act of “violence” in the Venutian sense. Further, on the level of the target text, the “violence” of the translating subject replaces that of the original author. The result being

on the one hand, the creation of aesthetic, ideological and political meaning that inevitably encodes target-language images and beliefs with respect to the cultural Other, thus reflecting the translator’s position within the socio-ideological and sociolinguistic divisions of his or her context, his or her attitude in relation to the “foreignness” connoted by sociolects and their speakers, as well as the ethical stance implied by his or her translation strategies, and, on the other hand, the creation of reader positions which coincide only partially, if at all, with those of the source text (ibid.).

Lane-Mercier concludes that violence is a quality that is inherent in the translation process and in the target text. On one hand, the translation process in and by itself represents a violence on the original as it is “always already a ‘forcible’ transformation of the source text” (ibid.). On the other hand, it is a clear

manifestation of the translator's presence in the target text through the various translation strategies adopted by the translator to produce the target text which is another "violence" exercised on the original in terms of supplements, deletion of some aspects of the original, parody and other sorts of strategies which the translator is likely to resort to during the translation process.

Lane-Mercier concludes, followed by Halverson (1999), by stating that the current conventional concepts of translation, such as equivalence and the various dichotomies of formal translation versus dynamic translation, overt as opposed to covert translation, domestication and foreignization, are unable to account satisfactorily for the translation process and product. The alternative suggested by Halverson is prototype concepts while Lane-Mercier believes that what needs to be done is the "relativization" of those various traditional dichotomies. What is really at stake in the translation process, according to Lane-Mercier, is "the translator's own ethical code, his or her responsibility and engagement with respect to the choices for which he or she opts and the aesthetic, ideological and political meanings these choices generate" (1997: 63). What in fact lies at the heart of Lane-Mercier's argument about the ideology of translation is the introduction of a new dichotomy of "concealment and acknowledgement". This dichotomy links the translator's responsibility towards the source author and the source text together with the translator's "agency" in producing the meaning.

Other attempts to move translation away from the traditional concepts and dichotomies have sought to account for the cognitive aspect of translation, thus combining the textual features of the text with the contextual dimensions. Terms like cognitive linguistics and cognitive semantics are discussed by a number of

scholars. Another key contribution is that of Gutt (1991/2000). In his application of Relevance theory to the act of translation, Gutt introduced new theoretical grounds for approaching translation from a new perspective that has a great potential for yielding a number of interesting results. In the subsequent sections, analyses linking translation to cognition are investigated in order to shed light on the potential which such a link can yield in the field of studying translational phenomena.

6.3 Translation and the cognitive aspect of language

6.3.1 Cognitive semantics and the notion of directionality in translation

Marmaridou (1996: 49) bases her notion of directionality of translation processes and practices on the theoretical framework of cognitive semantics. Within that framework, Marmaridou reverses the original view that translation should be regarded as a directional process from the source language to the target language and argues that, on cognitive grounds, “translation is an instance of conceptual metaphor, whereby conceptual structures of the target language are mapped onto the source text in order to make it understood by the TL [target language] reader”. In this model, translation processes and practices are defined as “strategy-implementing operations that are involved in the performance of translation tasks, whereas translation practices make reference to the ways in which translations of texts come about in particular sociocultural settings and characterize the work of student and professional translators” (1996: 50).

What is interesting about the theory of cognitive semantics is that it abandons the long established perception of linguistic meaning as a reflection of

objective reality in favour of a Lakoffian sense of language as expression of experienced reality. This approach to language is pursued not only in response to the necessity of addressing the basic philosophical problem about the nature of linguistic meaning, but also bases itself on a growing body of empirical research in the field of cognitive science. A key emphasis has been placed on the role of experienced and perceived reality in structuring human cognition. The conclusion being that, among other things, linguistic meaning “is not based on objective qualities inherent in real-world objects but is dependent on and determined by properties of the human cognizer” (Halverson, 1999: 6). Accounts of translation based on the cognitive aspect of language shift the focus from the objectively structured world to the world as structured and experienced by the human subject. In other words, language is not an objective system or structure as part of an outside concrete reality it is rather part of the human cognitive system and it therefore represents the general cognitive structures of humans in the form of lexical and syntactic features of grammar. According to cognitive semantics theory it is the close relationship between linguistic vocabulary and structures and cognition which is able to account for the reason that human experience is expressed in different ways in different languages. According to that theory, human experience varies across speakers of different languages and that is why a particular language accounts for the specific experiences and perceptions of its own speakers which may differ to a great extent from the perceptions and experiences of another group of humans speaking a different language.

In addition, Marmaridou elaborates in her model on Toury’s view (1980: 17) that translation functions by “map[ping] target messages, along with their

position in the target's relevant primary and secondary modelling systems [...] on source messages, along with their likewise position". The notion of translation as "an instance of conceptual metaphor" is realised as follows: metaphor in principle works by transforming abstract ideas into concrete perceptions. Marmaridou extends this principle to translation where the use of target linguistic features and expressions are to be understood as a type of "textual metaphor" which transforms the abstract experience of the source text into the concrete linguistic realisation of the target, thus making the target reader perceive the substance of the source text as experienced by the original reader. What this model implies is that the original view of translation as a linear process starting at the source text and moving towards the target text is necessarily reversed on cognitive grounds because the translator considers the means which make the source meaningful to the target reader before they embark on the actual act of translating.

6.3.2 Translation as a "prototype concept"

Building on the research of other scholars in the field, Halverson (1999) argues that current accounts of what a translation "concept" constitutes are not satisfactory and contain several deficiencies in drawing the required line between what is "translation" what is "non-translation". For example, the approaches based on the notion of equivalence in translation "do not account for much of translational 'reality' and are based on a philosophy which has been in its death throes ever since being dealt a mortal blow by Charles Darwin [...] relative approaches, on the other hand, while more successful at drawing a boundary [...] are not successful in accounting for empirical evidence of membership gradience"

(ibid., pp. 7-8), where “membership of gradience” refers to the inequality of members of a certain category in terms of their “goodness of example” ratings. Halverson believes that a step forward towards accounting satisfactorily for the “translation” concept is to construct a cognitive model for this concept through the elaboration of the metaphorical mapping as proposed by Sweetser (1990: 18); that language represents “a deep cognitive predisposition to draw from certain particular concrete domains in deriving vocabulary for a given abstract domain”.

The main benefit from adopting a prototype concept will be, according to Halverson, to “relieve our discipline of a great deal of unnecessary discourse and dissension on issues that can never be resolved” (1999: 20), mainly those theoretical frameworks debating the notion of equivalence. Then Halverson goes on to argue that the norm-based theses of each of Chesterman, Hermans and Toury all constitute a “concept” of translation. Chesterman’s view of professional translators is that they are the ones who best preserve the translational norms, in other words, they produce a target text “in such a way that it will meet the expectancy norms pertaining to it” (1993: 10). Hermans also uses the same term of what is “expected” of a translator: “when translators do what is expected of them, they will be seen to have done well” (1991: 166). According to Halverson, these expectancy norms are basically internalised and provide ample evidence that “professionals acquire their status by virtue of their ability to produce texts which fit the concept of translation which is current in their time and place, at least” (1999: 22). Toury’s norm-based theory consists of the “initial superordinate norm” which is “logical” as opposed to “chronological”, this norm corresponds, so Halverson believes, to both Chesterman’s and Hermans’ “expectancy” and

“correctness” norms respectively, which means that “it, in fact, is the same thing as an underlying concept of ‘translation’ adopted by the translator” (ibid.). At this point, Halverson stresses the need to elaborate on the distinctions at the cognitive level in the translation process in order to account for the underlying processes of the translation ultimate outcome which is the norm-based behaviour of the translator. Halverson thinks that those underlying processes at the cognitive level constitute essentially the concept of translation which refers to the “level of assumptions (internalized norms of various types)” (ibid., p. 23).

However, the “internalised norms” are not a clear description of what constitutes translational processes at the cognitive level. Halverson does not establish a proper theoretical platform for analysing such processes as she herself admits that her argument in that regard is mere speculation. Furthermore, what she calls a “concept” of translation remains largely vague and very general. Therefore, a theory with clear tenets is an effective way that can account for the cognitive processes which are at work during the act of translation.

This research draws on the tenets of Relevance theory to explain translational phenomena from English into Arabic in newspaper reports and commentaries. Many accounts of translation were based on the arguments developed by Relevance theory to explain translation on cognitive grounds. The pioneering work in that field is the work of Gutt discussed below.

6.4 Relevance theory and translation: the work of Gutt

Sperber and Wilson’s (1986/1995) Relevance theory establishes that relevance has a central role to play in human cognition and communication.

According to this theory, language is used by humans in either of two ways: descriptively or interpretively. The descriptive use of language means that one utterance resembles another in both form and meaning which means that both utterances necessarily share the linguistic as well as the communicative properties. In other words, both utterances are identical and bear the same truth conditions in a given possible world, a good example of the descriptive use of language is direct quotations. The interpretive use of language, on the other hand, indicates that one utterance holds an “interpretive resemblance” to another. The two utterances do not share formal qualities, so they are not identical and only resemble each other in the communicative result, indirect quotations are one example of this type of language use. In Relevance theory, the meaning intended by the communicator is called “informative intention”, this meaning or informative intention is conveyed in the form of verbal or linguistic expressions which contain “semantic representations” which are in their initial form a type of “assumption schemas” which require further enrichment so as to become truth conditional utterances achieving a “propositional form”. Semantic representations receive their appropriate enrichment from the “context” defined as “a psychological construct, a subset of the hearer’s assumptions about the world” (Sperber and Wilson, 1995: 15). The addressee uses this context to interpret the utterance communicated to them. The context is selected according to two criteria: 1- ease of accessibility, which means the amount of “processing effort” incurred, and 2- the amount of “contextual effects” resulting from the interpretation of the utterance in the selected context. The amount of processing effort relative to the amount of contextual effects defines the “relevance” of a given assumption communicated in

a selected context. Sperber and Wilson call the relationship between these two criteria “the principle of relevance” which necessitates that, in interpreting the utterance, an adequate amount of contextual effects is produced for the minimum processing effort required to complete the process. It is, therefore, the speaker’s responsibility to communicate his/her message in a way which ensures that the hearer is able to arrive at the interpretation which the speaker originally intended. The speaker can lead the hearer to the intended interpretation if s/he makes correct assumptions about the assumptions which are available to the hearer at a particular point in time, in other words, identifying the possible contexts that the hearer is likely to call to mind at the time of communicating the utterance. The most likely outcome of this process is that the hearer will arrive at an understanding which “interpretively resembles” that which the speaker originally intended. According to Wilson and Sperber “two propositional forms P and Q [...] *interpretively resemble* one another in a context C to the extent that they share their analytic and contextual implications in the context C” (1988a: 138, original emphasis).

Gutt (1991/2000) builds on this notion of the interpretive use of language in his application of Relevance theory to translation. The key to Gutt’s approach is that “the relationship between what we say and the thoughts we intend to communicate is one of interpretive resemblance - in other words, we do not necessarily say what we think, but more often than not what we say *interpretively resembles* what we intend to communicate” (2000: 36, original emphasis). In this context, translation is to be regarded as an instance of the interpretive use of language because “the translator produces a receptor language text, the

translation, with the intention of communicating to the receptors the same assumptions that the original communicator intended to convey to the original audience” (ibid., p. 99). In other words, translation is a kind of indirect quotation which takes place interlingually. But interlinguality is not the ultimate factor which labels a certain text as a translation. Gutt distinguishes between translation and non-translation by using the distinction of descriptive versus interpretive use of language. Texts which exist wholly because of the prior existence of another text in another language are translations and are instances of the interpretive use of language in translation because they achieve relevance through interpretive resemblance to the original text. On the other hand, texts which exist in their own right and achieve relevance independently of any other texts which may precede them in another language are instances of descriptive use of language and are not considered to be translations even if another text is produced in another language to the same effect. Gutt’s example for such category of texts is manuals which are produced in different languages but achieve relevance to their respective audiences because they fulfill the communicative needs of the audience rather than their resemblance to other already existing texts.

In order for any act of communication to be successfully fulfilled, the ultimate aim should be “to have the communicator’s informative intention recognised by the audience” (Sperber and Wilson, 1995: 161). While Sperber and Wilson discuss the necessity of recognising the communicator’s informative intention by the audience at an intralingual level, Gutt applies this requirement to the act of translation. In order to show how the relevance-theoretic view of translation as interlingual interpretive use can serve as a framework for an

alternative theory of translation, Gutt starts by explaining what is meant by the claim that “an utterance interpretively resembles an original”:

In interpretive use the principle of relevance comes across as a presumption of optimal relevance: what the receptor intended to convey is (a) presumed to interpretively resemble the original [...] and (b) the resemblance it shows is to be consistent with the presumption of optimal relevance, that is, is presumed to have adequate contextual effects without gratuitous processing effort. This notion of optimal resemblance seems to capture well the idea of faithfulness, and Sperber and Wilson have, in fact, stated that in interpretive use ‘[...] the speaker guarantees that her utterance is a faithful enough representation of the original: that is, it resembles it closely enough in relevant respects’ (2000: 100-101).

The principle of relevance thus constrains a translation both in terms of what it should convey and in terms of how this should be expressed:

If we ask in what respects the intended interpretation of the translation should resemble the original, the answer is: in respects that make it adequately relevant to the audience - that is, that offer adequate contextual effects; if we ask how the translation should be expressed, the answer is: it should be expressed in such a manner that it yields the intended interpretation without putting the audience to unnecessary processing effort (ibid., pp. 101-102).

Both constraints are contextually determined, since the principle of relevance is dependent on the context. Gutt envisages that those terms contain within

themselves the answer to the problems which translators face in establishing translation theory:

These conditions seem to provide exactly the guidance which translators and translation theorists have been looking for: they determine in what respects the translation should resemble the original - only in those respects that can be expected to make it adequately relevant to the receptor language audience. They determine also that the translation should be clear and natural in expression in the sense that it should not be unnecessarily difficult to understand (ibid.).

The translator, according to Gutt, is supposed to have sufficient knowledge about the cognitive assumptions which make up the cognitive environment of his/her target audience in order to be able to convey the original message via his/her translation: "Using his knowledge of the audience, the translator has to make assumptions about its cognitive environment and about the potential relevance that any aspects of the interpretation would have in that cognitive environment" (2000: 116). Gutt's focus on the "potential" relevance which the original message might hold for the target audience stems from his research in the field of literary translation and translating the Bible. In those areas of translation activity, the potential target audience at whom the translation of the original message is aimed share very little, if any, of the assumptions held by the original audience. This is due to temporal and spatial considerations and also to the fact that the Bible falls under the category of sensitive text, that is, the religious nature of translating this type of text adds a new dimension to the communicative aspect. The original biblical message is not inherently relevant to the target audience at any given time

or place, so the translator has to search for the assumptions present in the cognitive environment of the target audience that will make the relevance of the original message potentially achievable in producing the translated version. However, this idea of potential relevance leads only part of the way. In the modern world of mass communication through the media, and if the translator is about to translate a piece of international news for example, the original message is not totally alien to the intended target audience as they are presumed to be familiar with global issues and secondly because the translated message is of temporal proximity to the cognitive environment of the target audience as it is for the original audience, which makes it more communicatively accessible in the first place. Gutt does not account for this type of relevance which differs significantly from that which he exposes in his examples of translation activity.

Gutt defines his account as explanatory in the sense that “it explains why translation occurs at all; it occurs where consistency with the principle of relevance requires that the utterance representing another utterance be expressed in a language different from that of the original” (2000: 201). Tirkkonen-Condit responds to this point by stating that Gutt’s account within this framework is not unique to translation and can also be applied to other intertextual activities such as summarising, reviewing and paraphrasing. She says that Gutt “takes it for granted that translation in interlingual [...] as if the switch from one language system to another would not bring any unique cognitive elements to the communication event that call for explanation [...] Some differences in translated language can be explained by relevance, but not all. Why does translated language tend to behave

differently from originally produced language also in contexts in which relevance would call for similarity?” (2002: 195).

This last point corresponds very closely to the case about the example of translating international news mentioned above. The central hypothesis in this research corresponds to the question of what affects translation from English into Arabic regarding news and commentaries. The argument is that news communicated in one language is, in some cases, relevant to the original receptors in ways different from that communicated by the translated version of that news to the target receptors. Ideological considerations play a part in setting the scene for conveying a certain message through a news article or commentary which leads the audience towards particular ideological conclusions. Translations of articles sometimes set a different ideological scene for the target readers, thus leading them towards certain conclusions which may be different from those reached by the readers of the original message.

Gutt believes that constructing a translation theory on the basis of Relevance theory constitutes a step in the right direction and enables translation studies to move away from the exclusive interest in the translator’s behaviour during the translation process. However, Gutt has been widely criticised for upholding the claim that all other translation theories are redundant and “unnecessary” and that only Relevance theory is capable of explaining translational phenomena in all its variety. Malmkjaer (1992), for example, contends that Gutt does not offer practising translators any concrete help with their translation tasks.

The following sections will discuss the translation of modality from English into Arabic in the language of news reports and commentaries drawing on the premises of Relevance theory. This account will be based on the earlier analysis of the Arabic and English modals as developed in the previous two chapters. This chapter is therefore a case study about the application of the previous analysis to the translation of modality from English into Arabic as it appears in the language of the news.

6.5 A relevance-theoretic account of translating modality from English into Arabic in the language of newspaper articles

The account discussed below is based on the notion of the degree of evidence which the different modals convey in the two languages as developed in the analysis of the Arabic and English modals in the previous chapters. The first section will be devoted to the translation of modals denoting possibility between Arabic and English and the second section will be assigned to the translation of modality denoting obligation drawing on examples of authentic translations of news reports and commentaries from English into Arabic.

6.5.1 Translating modality denoting possibility

As was pointed out earlier in the discussion of Arabic modality, the meaning of the Arabic particles which denote possibility *qad* قد and *rubbama* ربما have changed from the times of ancient Classical Arabic to MSA styles especially in news reports. The relevance-theoretic analysis developed in the discussion mentioned above has sought to capture the relevance which *qad* قد and *rubbama*

ربما hold in terms of the degree of evidence they convey in the contexts in which they are used. In the present section, those degrees of evidence conveyed by *qad* قد and *rubbama* ربما are studied in terms of their uses as translations of English modals. The main problem in accounting for the translation of English modals into *qad* قد and *rubbama* ربما is that those two Arabic particles have no past forms as their English counterparts, *can* and *may*, and so translating the English modals in their past forms constitutes a communicative problem with regard to the target reader as the following examples will show.

The first example is a commentary about the Syrian president's visit to Tehran to meet with Iran's newly elected president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, and with Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. The writer argues that this visit represents a repeat of history because it echoes similar moves made in the 1980s by the then President Hafiz Assad to build up close ties with the Iranian leaders in order to alienate Iraq and protect Syria from the United States and Israel. The writer wonders whether President Bashar Assad of Syria is having similar plans in mind and whether such plans are going to be effective after the US invasion of Iraq and the prospect of establishing an Iraqi government with a Shiite majority which is very likely to be welcomed by Shiite Iran.

"Assad's manoeuvres, however, raise a more fundamental question, one heightened by rising American frustration in Iraq: Is a clash between Syria and the United States becoming increasingly inevitable, so that the Iraqi conflict may spread to Syria - more specifically to the Syrian side of the border area with Iraq?" (Reason.com, 10/08/05, Michael Young, *Syria: The New Cambodia*).

تحركات الأسد تثير سؤالاً أساسياً، وهذا السؤال يزداد بروزاً إثر الإحباط المتصاعد لدى الأميركيين في العراق: هل أصبح الصدام بين سورية والولايات المتحدة حتمياً بشكل متزايد، وبالتالي سيمتد الصراع العراقي إلى سورية خاصة على الجهة السورية المحايدة للعراق؟ (أخبار سورية، 05/08/10).

“Assad’s manoeuvres raise a fundamental question, this question is made more salient by rising American frustration in Iraq: Is a clash between Syria and the United States becoming increasingly inevitable, so that the Iraqi conflict will spread to Syria - more specifically to the Syrian side of the border area with Iraq?”

The proposition in the original text is introduced by the use of the modal *may* whereas the proposition in the translation is introduced by the use of a particle which corresponds in meaning to the modal *will*. Readers of the original text are directed to interpret in terms of possibility the proposition which communicates the spread of the Iraqi conflict to the Syrian side of the border. In contrast, readers of the translation are directed to interpret the proposition in terms of future realisation in the sense that the new proposition is going to be the direct result of the propositions made available in the context within which that new proposition is communicated to the readers. The proposition in the original text, that the Iraqi conflict spreads to Syria, communicates that the action is possible to a limited extent while in the translation the proposition is communicated in terms of its increasing “inevitability”, thus making this inevitability stand out in the minds of the target readers to a greater extent than it stands out in the minds of the original readers. As a result, the relevance of the proposition in the original to its readers is achieved in terms of its possibility of realisation whereas the relevance of the proposition in the translation to its readers is achieved in terms of its future realisation as a direct result of the available propositions in the context, rendering

it more salient in the minds of the target readers by highlighting its inevitable aspect.

This discrepancy in the use of modality between Arabic and English is further illustrated when two different English modals like *can* and *might* are translated into Arabic using the same particle *qad* قد. The following extract is a case in point.

“The Syrians are adding to the carnage, but are otherwise incapable of creating a durable Iraqi system that they can manipulate. And because the U.S. hasn’t the means, or the wherewithal, to engage Iran today militarily, whether in the border area or elsewhere, it might prefer, paradoxically, to strike against Syria [...] relocating a conflict to a more convenient venue can be tempting when a country is eager for military success; particularly, too, when it is contemplating some sort of drawdown of forces” (Reason.com, 10/08/05, Michael Young, *Syria: The New Cambodia*).

يأتي السوريون ليزيدوا الوضع اشتعالاً، لكنهم في الوقت نفسه غير قادرين على إقامة نظام عراقي قابل للاستمرار بحيث يستطيعون السيطرة عليه. وباعتبار أن الولايات المتحدة لا تملك الوسائل ولا السلاح الكافي لكي تجابه إيران عسكرياً، لا في منطقة الحدود ولا غيرها، لذلك فإنها قد تفضل أن تقوم بضرب سورية بدلاً من ذلك [...] نقل الصراع إلى مسرح أكثر ملاءمة قد يكون أمراً مغرياً بالنسبة لدولة بحاجة لنجاح عسكري، خاصة إذا كانت تفكر بسحب جزء من قواتها. (أخبار سورية، 05/08/10).

“The Syrians are making the already explosive situation worse, but are at the same time incapable of creating a durable Iraqi system that they can manipulate. And because the U.S. does not have the means neither sufficient weaponry to engage Iran militarily, whether in the border area or elsewhere, it qad prefers to strike against Syria instead [...] relocating the conflict to a more convenient venue qad

be tempting for a country which is in need for military success: particularly when it is contemplating to withdraw part of its forces”.

The proposition in the original [*p* It prefer to strike against Syria] is relevant to the readers when they consider minimum evidence yielded by some set of propositions with which the new proposition is compatible. The proposition in the translation [*p* It prefer to strike against Syria] is relevant to the readers when they consider maximum evidence yielded by some set of propositions. Since there is another Arabic modal that closely corresponds to the modal *might* in English, namely *rubbama*, the particle *qad* seems to be a less accurate option for translating *might*, the result is the difference in the amount of evidence expressed between the two modals. In this case, the original proposition communicates a very limited degree of possibility for the action to take place while the proposition in the translation prompts its readers to process the information in terms of a higher degree of possibility for the action to take place. Thus, the proposition in the translation is rendered more salient in the cognitive environment of the target readers than the original proposition in the cognitive environment of the source readers.

The second proposition in the original, on the other hand, is [*p* Relocating a conflict to a more convenient venue be tempting] is relevant to the readers when they consider the maximum evidence communicated by the set of all the propositions available in the context with which the new proposition is compatible. In the translation, the proposition [*p* Relocating a conflict to a more convenient venue be tempting] is relevant when the readers process maximum evidence yielded by only some set of propositions with which the new proposition

is compatible. In this way, the readers of the original text are directed to consider the proposition in terms of high possibility and to perceive the available propositions which are available in the context as producing a high degree of evidence, making the proposition salient in the minds of the readers. In the original, the writer makes a number of propositions highly accessible to the readers so that they process the new proposition in terms of all the evidence that those propositions yield in the context. Among these propositions are those with relation to the US eagerness to achieve military success outside Iraq, its desire to reduce the number of US troops serving in Iraq as well as the desire to eliminate the growing Iranian influence in both Iraq and Syria. In the translation, by contrast, the same propositions are recalled by the target readers through the use of *qad* on the basis of the assumption that they form only part of the overall number of propositions yielding all the evidence which makes the new proposition compatible with those propositions. Whereas the source readers access those propositions on the basis of the assumption that they form the complete set of propositions which yield a maximum degree of evidence making the new proposition compatible with them, readers of the translation recall the same propositions as part of the overall set of available assumptions. The result being that readers of the source are prompted to interpret the new proposition in terms of high possibility while readers of the translation interpret the new proposition in terms of less possibility of being realised.

In the following extract, there are two cases of translation of modality between Arabic and English. The first case is related to translating the English modal *might* which denotes minimum evidence into the corresponding Arabic

particle *rubbama*. The second case reflects discrepancy represented in the addition of a modal in the Arabic translation of the original declarative statement.

“In order to regain a hold over Iraq, and in the process break the increasingly powerful Iranian hand there, the Bush administration might seek first to settle its accounts with Syria on the Western border. Syria is feeble: Iran is not” (Reason.com, 10/08/05, Michael Young, *Syria: The New Cambodia*).

ربما تفكر إدارة بوش أن تقوم أولاً بتصفية حسابها مع سورية، من أجل استعادة سيطرتها على العراق، وللقضاء على السيطرة الإيرانية المتزايدة هناك. يجب أن نأخذ بالاعتبار أن سورية ضعيفة بينما إيران ليست كذلك. (أخبار سورية، 05/08/10).

“The Bush administration rubbama seeks first to settle its accounts with Syria on the Western border, in order to regain its hold over Iraq, and eliminate the increasingly powerful Iranian control there. We must take into consideration that Syria is feeble while Iran is not”.

The second proposition shows a clear example of discrepancy between the original text and the translation. In the original, the proposition [*p* Syria be feeble, Iran be not] is introduced to the readers in the form of a declarative statement without the use of any modal auxiliary. In the translation, the same proposition is introduced by the use of the Arabic verb *yajibu* يجب. By introducing the proposition by a modal denoting obligation, the translator has added extra emphasis to the proposition and made it more salient in the minds of the target readers. The target readers are led to consider all the propositions in the context which yield maximum degree of evidence making the new proposition entailed by them. In other words, the translator is directing the target readers to access all the assumptions they hold within the context in order to interpret the new proposition

in terms of high necessity. In doing so, the translator is adding more communicative features to the declarative statement of the original. Through the use of a modal denoting obligation, the translator is reminding the readers of the ideological assumptions already available in their cognitive environment concerning the US policies in the Middle East and focusing on the idea that the US is interested in holding its grip on the rest of the region, starting with weaker countries such as Syria. Such ideological assumptions are made more accessible to the readers by highlighting the new proposition in terms of the obligation of considering them within the context.

The next example is written by Henry Siegman and discusses the former Israeli PM, Ariel Sharon's refusal to return to the pre-1967 border and his dismissal of the Palestinian refugees' right of return. In the meantime, Sharon had declared his "disengagement" plan which involved the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and the dismantling of the illegal Jewish settlements there. The writer looks further into the situation in Gaza:

"One does not have to be paranoid to see the intensification by Sharon of targeted assassinations in Gaza as an effort to destroy initiatives currently underway to establish a front of national unity between the Palestinian Authority and Islamic extremist groups that may hold the promise of avoiding political and economic chaos in Gaza, thus precluding Sharon's expectation that such a collapse might serve as an excuse for cancellation of the promised withdrawal" (*Al-Hayat*, 24/04/04).

فلا يحتاج أن يكون المرء مصاباً بعقدة ارتياب كي يرى في تصعيد شارون لعمليات الاغتيال في غزة مسعى لتدمير مبادرات أولية تجري حالياً لإقامة جبهة وطنية بين السلطة الفلسطينية وجماعات إسلامية متطرفة

يمكن أن تفلح في تجنب فوضى سياسية واقتصادية في غزة، وتحول بالتالي دون حدوث ما يتوقعه شارون بأن يوفر مثل هذا الانهيار المحتمل ذريعة لإلغاء الانسحاب الموعود (الحياة، 04/04/24).

“One does not need to be paranoid to see in Sharon’s intensification of assassinations in Gaza an effort to destroy initiatives currently underway to establish a national front between the Palestinian Authority and Islamic extremist groups that yumkinu [in the ability to] manage to avoid political and economic chaos in Gaza, thus precluding Sharon’s expectation that such possible collapse provides an excuse for cancellation of the promised withdrawal”.

The modal *may* in the original is translated into the Arabic main verb *yumkinu* which literally means “to be in the ability to”. Hence, this verb is closest to the English *can* not *may*. What this entails in terms of evidence is that the proposition in the original [*p* A front of national unity that holds the promise of avoiding political and economic chaos in Gaza] is produced by maximum evidence compatible with only some of the propositions available in the original context. The Arabic verb in the translation, however, indicates that the proposition communicated to the audience leads them to process a maximum degree of evidence compatible with the set of all the propositions that the target readers can recall in that particular context. In other terms, the proposition in the original text entails that it is not absolutely clear whether the formation of a front of national unity between the Palestinian Authority on one hand and the Islamic groups on the other will be the required key to political and economic stability for reasons of well known frictions between the two concerned parties in terms of their ideological as well as popular agendas and backgrounds. The modal *may* is consequently used in this context in order to convey that only some of the

propositions available in the particular context of the message produce the possibility for the new propositions, which contains the modal, to take place in actual terms. In the translation, this possibility is increased notably so that the readers are prompted to process the information against the background of assumptions related to the strong possibility that such national unity is the answer to political and economic stability in the disputed Gaza, so the use of a verb that indicates ability gives a strong sense of evidence which is compatible with all the propositions that are available to the audience for processing in the given context.

The translation of the modal *might* above reveals further implications. It actually is a poor translation of the original. The English modal of the original is not translated in the Arabic version, so the original proposition takes the shape of a different proposition in the translation. The original proposition is [*p* Such a collapse serve as an excuse for cancellation of the promised withdrawal]. This proposition is transformed in the translated version into [*p* Such a possible collapse serve as an excuse for cancellation of the promised withdrawal], with the obvious absence of modality in the translation. The original proposition indicates that the audience will process a minimum degree of evidence compatible with some of the propositions available for processing in the given text. Conversely, the translated proposition is a declarative statement which bears a truth-conditional status in the context provided. The discrepancy results in making the relevance which the original proposition holds to the original readers different from the relevance which the translation holds for the target readers.

6.5.2 Translating modality denoting obligation

Although the translation of modals denoting obligation is in theory more straightforward than the translation of modals denoting possibility between Arabic and English, the following examples illustrate that in practice it is not always the case. The presumption that translating English modals of obligation into Arabic is straightforward stems from the fact that the Arabic modals of obligation correspond closely to those in English in terms of the degree of evidence they convey in similar contexts and consequently the relevance they indicate to the reader. As the following examples will illustrate, however, English modals of obligation are not consistently translated into their Arabic closest correspondents. The result being that the degree of evidence conveyed by the proposition communicated in the original differs from that which is rendered in the translation, which means that the relevance which the original proposition holds to the original audience and the relevance which the target audience will receive from the translated version in Arabic will not correspond fully.

The first example is a commentary written by Patrick Seale entitled *Exit Strategy for the United States*.

“In an ideal world, the U.S. would recognize its mistakes; fire those who made them; adopt radical new policies; and thereby attempt to recover some, at least, of its squandered authority. This is not going to happen. President George W. Bush and his team are not about to commit hara-kiri. They will, almost certainly, try to save themselves by muddling through. (The fact that they have chosen this moment of grave crisis to impose sanctions on Syria, instead of seeking its help in

stabilizing Iraq, points to a profound incomprehension of the Middle East scene)“
(*Al-Hayat*, 14/05/04).

لو كنا في عالم مثالي لقلنا أن على أميركا أن تعترف بأخطائها وتطرد أولئك الذين ارتكبوها وتنتهج سياسة جديدة من أساسها، وتحاول أن تسترد على الأقل بعض سلطتها الضائعة. ولكن ذلك كله لن يحدث، فالرئيس بوش وفريقه غير مستعدين للانتحار بل سيحاولون على الأرجح إنقاذ أنفسهم عن طريق التهرب والتخبط (ولعل اختيارهم في هذا الوقت الحافل بالأزمات الحادة لفرض عقوبات على سورية بدل السعي إلى الحصول على مساعدتها في إعادة الاستقرار في العراق، يدل على جهل عميق للمسرح الشرق أوسطي).

“If we had been in an ideal world, we would have said that ‘ala the U.S. recognize its mistakes; fire those who made them; adopt radically new policies; and attempt to recover at least some of its squandered authority. This is not going to happen, however; as President Bush and his team are not prepared to commit suicide. Instead they are likely going to try to save themselves by muddling through. (and la‘alla their choice of this time of grave crisis to impose sanctions on Syria, instead of seeking its help in stabilizing Iraq, points to a profound incomprehension of the Middle East scene)”.

The proposition in the original [*p* The US recognize its mistakes] is introduced to the readers by the use of the modal *would*, whereas the proposition in the translation is introduced to the target readers through the use of the modal *‘ala*. To readers of the translation, processing the proposition in terms of obligation is more in line with what they already hold in their environment of assumptions within the context of the article. To Arabic readers the US “is supposed to” understand certain issues, pursue certain policies and review its attitude towards certain matters concerning Arabs in general and the Middle East in particular. To English readers this is simply not the case, moreover, the

proposition in the original is cited in hypothetical terms with the construction of a hypothetically ideal world in mind, which makes the proposition less imposing and as such detached from the actual course of events. By introducing the modal 'ala in the translation, the hypothetical and the actual worlds are juxtaposed and the target readers are directed to interpret the proposition which contains the modal in terms of the urgency of the actual world more than in terms of the detachment of the hypothetical world of the original text. This sense of urgency in the interpretation of the new proposition corresponds to the emotional attitude of the Arabic audience towards issues relating to the US policies in the Middle East and its immediate effects on them as they are directly affected by those policies and the outcomes associated with them in the region.

The next example is an extract from a commentary written by Helena Cobban, a writer and owner of a news website. She comments on the aftermath of the US led coalition's invasion of Iraq in March 2003. She opposes the invasion and argues that the war was fought for the wrong reasons and that it resulted in bringing chaos to Iraq and the Iraqi people.

“Meanwhile we have also seen numerous instances of access to jobs or other opportunities that should belong to Iraqis as of right being used by the U.S. commanders to try to mold or even coerce the political beliefs of Iraqis” (*Al-Hayat*, 08/09/03).

خلال ذلك نرى أن الكثير من الوظائف والفرص التي يجب أن تكون أصلاً من حق العراقيين وهي تستعمل من قبل القادة الأميركيين لاستمالة العراقيين أو حتى قسرهم على تغيير مواقفهم السياسية (الحياة، 03/09/08).

“Meanwhile we see that many jobs and opportunities which must belong to Iraqis as of right being used by the U.S. commanders to try to mold Iraqis or even coerce them to change their political beliefs”.

The modal *should* in the original is translated into the Arabic verb *yajibu*. Therefore, the proposition [*p* Jobs or other opportunities that belong to Iraqis] in the original is produced by a minimum degree of evidence which is entailed by some propositions available to the audience in the given context. This minimum evidence indicates that the statement, or proposition containing the modal, is made on the basis of the more neutral position of the writer towards the idea that those jobs are the right of Iraqis more than the US commanders. The writer does not capitalise on the idea and this is evident from the use of a weaker form of obligation in English. In the translated version, by contrast, the verb used to convey the same proposition indicates a strong sense of obligation. Thus, the translated version of the proposition leads the target reader to consider the maximum evidence which is entailed by the set of all the propositions available in the given context.

The next example consists of the words of Chris Patten, Commissioner of External Relations for the European Union at the time. Patten discusses the issue of reconstructing Iraq after the Anglo-American invasion, and whether the countries which were not part of the military conflict are to be involved in the reconstruction of post-war Iraq.

“Must We Help Reconstruct Iraq? Should we help to reconstruct Iraq? Divisions before, during and after the conflict inevitably mean that each step the

international community takes has to be weighed carefully. each decision scrutinized minutely” (*Al-Hayat*, 24/10/03).

هل نمد يد المساعدة لإعادة إعمار العراق؟ هل نمد يد المساعدة لإعادة إعمار العراق؟ إن الانقسامات التي نشأت داخل المجتمع الدولي قبل النزاع وخلالها وبعده تعني بالضرورة أن عليه أن يفكر ملياً في كل خطوة قبل الإقدام عليها وأن يمعن النظر في كل قرار قبل اتخاذه (الحياة، 03/10/24).

“Shall we extend a helping hand to reconstruct Iraq? Shall we extend a helping hand to reconstruct Iraq? Divisions in the international community before, during and after the conflict necessarily mean that ‘ala the international community carefully weigh each step before taking it and minutely scrutinise each decision before reaching it”.

The modals *must* and *should* are not translated in the Arabic version. It is obvious that readers of the original are guided by the writer to consider assumptions where a sense of obligation is strongly represented in the propositions of the context. There is no sense of obligation conveyed in the translation and thus readers of the translation are not guided to select within their assumptions those propositions which convey obligation in the given context. In relevance-theoretic terms, the evidence conveyed to the original audience by the proposition containing the modals in the English text is not conveyed to the target readers of the Arabic version, and this leads to a notable discrepancy of relevance between the source and the target text in the given context.

The following example is a report about the period following the withdrawal of Syrian troops from neighbouring Lebanon in the wake of intense international diplomatic pressure on the Syrians demanding that Syria stop exerting its influence on Lebanese affairs.

“ ‘What we’re trying to do is put as much pressure on Damascus to make clear that any use of the assets it has in Lebanon, residually or otherwise, will not be tolerated - and to the degree anything bad happens, Syria will be held responsible,’ said a senior U.S. official involved in Lebanon policy. A senior State Department official added: ‘The message we’re sending is: The people who should be running Lebanon are not Syrian or agents of Syria, but the Lebanese [...] The only presence Syria should have in Lebanon is an embassy, like every other foreign country’” (*Washington Post*, 01/03/05).

"واشنطن بوست": سورية تؤسس لوجود خفي

وقال مسؤول أميركي رفيع على علاقة بالسياسة اللبنانية للصحيفة: "ما نحاول القيام به هو ممارسة الضغط على دمشق من أجل إيضاح أن أي استخدام لمصادر قواتها في لبنان في شكل استباقي أو بطريقة أخرى لن يتم التسامح معه وفي حال حصل شيء سيء فإن سورية ستتحمّل المسؤولية". وأضاف المسؤول في الخارجية الأميركية: "إن الرسالة التي نوصلها هي أن الأشخاص الذين يجب أن يديروا الشؤون اللبنانية ليسوا السوريين ولا عملاءهم وإنما اللبنانيون، وأن الوجود السوري الوحيد الذي يجب أن يكون لسورية في هذا البلد هو السفارة مثل كل الدول الأجنبية الأخرى" (الحياة، 05/03/01).

“*Washington Post*: Syria tries to establish an undercover presence

A senior US official involved in Lebanese policy told the newspaper: ‘What we are trying to do is put pressure on Damascus to make clear that any use of the assets it has in Lebanon, residually or otherwise, will not be tolerated and in case anything bad happens, Syria will be held responsible,’ ‘The message we’re sending is: The people who must be running Lebanon are not the Syrians or their agents, but the Lebanese [...] The only presence Syria must have in this country is an embassy, like every other foreign country’, a senior State Department official added”.

The modal *should* in the original is translated into the Arabic for *must*. Therefore, the proposition [*p* The people who are running Lebanon are not Syrians or agents of Syria] in the original is produced by a minimum degree of evidence which is entailed by some propositions available to the audience in the given context. From the use of a weaker form of obligation in English, readers of the original are prompted to consider some of the propositions available in the given context. In the translated version, by contrast, the verb used to convey the same proposition indicates a strong sense of obligation. Thus, the translated version of the proposition leads the target reader to consider the maximum evidence which is entailed by the set of all the propositions available in the given context. As a result, the relevance which the original proposition holds for its readers is different from the relevance achieved by the target readers when processing the evidence available to them with the given context.

6.6 Concluding remarks

Translation studies represents an extensive body of research and a great number of theories, accounts and approaches which all attempt to account for translational phenomena and reach theoretical and practical conclusions to explain translational behaviour and translation as a process and/or a product. Some theories approached translation from a linguistic perspective, that is, from the perspective of the language used in the translation as lexical and grammatical structures, others from a pragmatic or contextual viewpoint, studying the response which a given translation produces on the receivers at a given point in time. The ideological aspect is also investigated by some scholars who established a link

connecting translation to the ideological background within which it is produced and introduced to readers.

Other theories and accounts sought to establish a link between translation and cognition on the basis that language is first and foremost embedded in human cognition. Marmaridou (1996) and Halverson (1999) view translation in terms of metaphorical mapping of one language on another. Gutt (1991/2000) applies Relevance theory to the act of translation and argues that Relevance theory is able to account for all translational phenomena and address all problems that practising translators are likely to encounter.

The aim of this chapter has been to establish a relevance-theoretic model of translating modality from English into Arabic in the language of news reports and commentaries. The relevance-theoretic account developed in the previous chapters for the English and the Arabic modals was applied in this chapter to the translation of modality between those two languages drawing on authentic examples of translated news reports and commentaries from English into Arabic. The central argument in the relevance-theoretic account developed in the previous chapters is that different modals convey different degrees of evidence for the proposition which contains them. Consequently, translating an English modal into an Arabic modal that does not convey a corresponding degree of evidence to the reader of the translation as that conveyed to the original reader by the source text results in discrepancy between the relevance being conveyed by the proposition in the original and that conveyed by the proposition in the translated version.

This relevance-theoretic account of the English and Arabic modals is aimed to show that using modality in the language of the news conveys the

ideological aspect of modality as a linguistic feature as well as the mechanism through which this ideological aspect is communicated to the readership. Unlike Gutt's analysis which accounts for translation in terms of interpretive resemblance and draws on the notion of translation as an instance of the interpretive use of language, the relevance-theoretic account developed in the present research can provide a technical basis for comparing and contrasting the different modals in English and Arabic and relates that technical aspect of the use of modals as a specific linguistic feature in the language of the news to the ideological dimension of language which is communicated to the readers at the same time. It is an attempt to identify the processes at work during the act of translation and to account for the resulting translated version together with the ways in which it is perceived by the audience in terms of their already existing ideological assumptions and how these assumptions are being recalled by the translator through the use of a certain modal in order to evoke a certain ideological assumption which, depending on how closely the modal in the translation corresponds to the modal used in the original, is either similar to the ideological assumption evoked in the original text or at odds with it.

Chapter Seven: Conclusion

The objective of this research has been to investigate a specific linguistic phenomenon which is the use of modality in the language of news articles as reported in different newspapers in Arabic and English and to study examples of translating modality from English into Arabic. In order to achieve that objective, the present thesis first shed light on the relationship between ideology and language in general to facilitate the discussion about the relationship between ideology and modality as a specific linguistic feature which contributes to the establishment of a given ideological scene at the time of communicating the ideological message. As a further step, it studied the relationship between ideology and relevance in the sense that ideological assumptions form part of the overall cognitive assumptions of the readers about a particular ideological message and that, consequently, the message holds a certain degree of relevance for the readers according to their already held ideological assumptions. Thirdly, this research studied examples of the translation of modality from English into Arabic in news reports and commentaries applying the findings developed on the degree of relevance which each modal conveys to the readers at the time of communicating a message.

With reference to a particular message, the diversity and sometimes conflict of the ideologies held and promoted by different constituencies gives the different choices of linguistic expressions and structures used in expressing those ideologies and related political issues an important dimension which has been widely researched and analysed. However, the present research approached the question of the relationship between language and ideology on the grounds that

modals contribute to constructing the ideological context of news reports and commentaries in which they occur, and thus to promoting certain ideological assumptions in the minds of the readers so as to shape or reshape the readers' perception of the ideological message communicated and subsequently of the wider context of the issue addressed. Producing the required perception highlights some political points of view and undermines others depending on the specific ideological interests of the institution which communicates that ideological message.

Relevance is a key term in establishing a connection between the use of modality in the language of news reports and commentaries and the ideological assumptions held by the readers of the news. Newspaper readers interpret the news within a certain cognitive environment which encompasses ideological assumptions about the specific ideological context within which a given piece of news is communicated and processed at a certain point in time. The use of a certain modal in a news article or commentary directs the readers' attention to a set of propositions which evoke related ideological assumptions. When the readers are thus prompted to process certain ideological assumptions rather than others, their conclusions can reinforce certain ideological positions and attitudes with regards to the ideological message while weakening other positions.

We have argued that the mechanism according to which news reports and commentaries are processed by the readers is that of relevance. Drawing on relevance as developed by Relevance theory, this research has established a relevance-theoretic model of a number of the English modal auxiliaries and then extended this model to include the Arabic modal particles which correspond in

their meanings to those of the English modals in the language of the news under investigation. Using authentic examples of news reports and commentaries from different Arabic and English newspapers, the relevance-theoretic model developed for the Arabic and English modals has shown that different modals convey different degrees of relevance to readers of the news. This relevance-theoretic model has then been extended to study instances of translating modality from English into Arabic. By drawing on the findings of our relevance-theoretic model, examples of translation of modality in news articles illustrate that translating an English modal into an Arabic modal that does not convey a corresponding degree of relevance to the reader of the translation as that conveyed to the original reader by the source text results in discrepancy between the relevance of the original message and the relevance of the translated message, which can lead to differences in the ideological attitudes being promoted by the original as opposed to those promoted by the translation.

There are numerous important analyses which have brought into focus the link between ideology in the political sense and linguistic choices. There are also many insightful studies of the connection between ideology and social cognition on the one hand and cognitive models expressed through metaphor and other linguistic structures on the other. The present investigation has been an attempt to shed light on the possibility of extending those studies to include the applicability of Relevance theory to a specific grammatical form, the use of modality in a given ideological context, and the ideological dimension which bears on both the use of modality in a certain language and the translation of modality from one language into another.

Translating modality between Arabic and English has so far received limited consideration in the field of translation studies. Accounts of the Arabic modals consist of discussion of individual sentences where modals are likely to be used. There is a noticeable deficiency of a clear and systematic categorisation of the Arabic modals compared to the well established grammatical categories of the English modals. Analysing the Arabic modals is moreover rendered more complex by the semantic shifts of those modals from their classical uses to MSA styles. The present account of the Arabic modals is by no means an exhaustive one since it covers only a small group of the Arabic modals with reference to their English counterparts. Nevertheless, it represents a stepping stone towards establishing a theoretical framework for analysing the Arabic modals in a systematic way, taking into account the modern uses of those modals and drawing examples from texts rather than decontextualised individual sentences. The present body of research into the different meanings and uses of the Arabic modal particles and verbs is either limited by the existing accounts of classical explanations in the case of written styles of Arabic, or form descriptive accounts of the uses of modals in spoken forms of Arabic which display a very wide variety of modes of expression not only among the different parts of the Arab World, for example the difference between spoken Arabic in Egypt as opposed to that spoken in Syria or Tunisia, but also among different regions within the same Arab country and even within the same city due to several social and educational factors. Although both kinds of research are valuable and necessary for a better understanding of the mechanisms and functions of written and spoken styles of Arabic, they are not sufficient to provide the required theoretical basis of research.

In the case of accounts based on classical explanations of Arabic categories, there is a clear temporal, linguistic and contextual gap between classical uses of modals and present-day ones which render those classical accounts at best dated and at worst totally awkward and inapplicable. In the case of the descriptive accounts of spoken Arabic, such accounts are useful in specific practical contexts, such as the translation of spoken dialects or raising awareness of the difference of dialects of Arabic as spoken in different Arabic regions. However, research on spoken Arabic cannot be applied to the written styles which are the ones considered to represent the standard form of Arabic. Research into the possibility of applying Relevance theory to the study of Arabic modality or other grammatical forms and structures can be a useful tool in understanding the functions of those forms in certain contexts and the mechanisms which are employed in order for these forms to produce relevance to the receptors.

As well as investigating the applicability of Relevance theory to the study of a wider range of the Arabic modals, further research can also investigate uses of modality in contexts and genres other than that of language used in newspapers. It can, for example, compile a research corpus of authentic examples about the use of modality in medical language, legal contracts, advertising and other possible areas of research. Furthermore, establishing a theoretical framework for categorising Arabic modality in a systematic way also contributes to raising translators' awareness of the issue of semantic shifts of the Arabic modals and that uses of modality in classical contexts differ significantly from modern uses of those modals. This realisation will enable the translators to make informed

choices about the appropriate use of a particular modal for a particular context whether in Classical Arabic or Modern Standard Arabic.

The following procedures can be instrumental in establishing a framework of understanding the communicative environment within which Arabic modality functions and the ways in which Arabic modals can be studied more systematically and effectively.

- Developing a corpus of authentic examples containing uses of Arabic modality in different contexts and genres. Such corpus can include a number of sub-categories, such as uses of Arabic modals in medical language, legal language, literature, and public speeches.
- Compiling a detailed corpus will provide a very useful tool for research into patterns of linguistic behaviour regarding choices of modals in a certain genre of written Arabic. These patterns of linguistic choices can be compared across the Arab World to identify similarities and differences of linguistic behaviour according to the specific country or region, as part of the general linguistic preferences of that country or region (some Arab countries are more influenced by European languages in terms of linguistic choices than others).
- Identifying patterns of linguistic behaviour regarding uses of Arabic modals will help set a framework for standardised uses of modality in written Arabic. Standardisation will be particularly important in two regards:

1- It will provide clear strategies for translators to guide them in translating modality from and into Arabic.

2- It will help reassess the viability of classical accounts of Arabic modals in order to establish a more appropriate grammatical study of modality in the context of MSA styles.

This thesis has introduced one possible way of approaching the study of Arabic modals in MSA. The aim has been to show that classical uses of modality in Arabic do not stand in modern uses of Arabic and that there is thus an increasing need to address the issues of linguistic choices by writers and translators of Arabic modality in modern contexts. The extensive use of Arabic modality in written styles and the importance of this grammatical category in Arabic as in any other language require that modern studies of this category be conducted on a systematic basis and be given the importance it deserves alongside other modern lexical studies in Arabic which have so far been given prominence over grammatical studies across the Arab World.

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