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Introduction

On the night of July 14, 2016,¹ just after thousands of residents and tourists had finished watching a fireworks display in celebration of Bastille Day, a violent attack took place in Nice, France. The perpetrator, Mohamed Lahouaiej-Bouhlel, drove a truck through the crowds, killing eighty-six people and injuring 434 others. This attack came relatively soon after two other very serious attacks in France in January and November 2015, similar for their high number of fatalities—the so-called Charlie Hebdo and Bataclan attacks—which were still etched in people’s minds and which had also determined security policies, such as a state of emergency, that were still in place in France but did not prevent this violent act.

I chose to study the way the attack was portrayed in the news of three European countries, the UK, Switzerland, and Spain, and to focus on stylistic features of the news texts, for three reasons. First, I had the same impression I had had when reading or watching news about the tragically momentous attacks of 2015: that from the earliest moment of the news cycle, there was an immediate and pervasive focus on Muslims and radical Islam, despite the fact that again there was very little information about the event. Second, the specific language choices, but in particular stylistic choices, on the part of journalists seemed to me to be playing a significant role in shaping the media’s messages. Third, a number of factors had coalesced after the 2015 attacks, factors which continue to play a significant role in national and international public opinion, politics, and policy: the immigration “crisis” persists, with the accompanying debate on open borders, security, and jobs. Ethno-nationalist populism is on the rise across Europe. The referendum in favor of Brexit, which took place just a few weeks before the attack, was followed by an increase in hate crime in the UK, in particular against Muslims; at the time of writing, neither such acts nor the debate and controversy around Brexit itself have abated. The combination of separatist and divisionism movements appearing in Europe is reflected in

both Brexit and the battle for sovereignty between Spain and Catalonia. Donald Trump, who is known for extreme positions on Muslims and immigrants, and who would soon fuel an international focus on “fake news,” has done serious and potentially lasting damage to democratic processes as well as to international alliances in his three and a half years as president of the United States. Terrorist attacks in “the West” seem to be growing more frequent and anti-Muslim sentiment and violence more pronounced. At the same time, as the media landscape continues to evolve rapidly, there are many questions about the future of news, with journalism (appropriately or not) described as “in crisis.” In many Western countries, ownership of the media seems to be falling into fewer and fewer hands, and they are powerful ones; this in turn raises questions about both the diversity of news content and the independence of journalists.

That said, while a wealth of research exists on the power of the media, the intersections between media and politics, or the role of the media in shaping public opinion, very, very few studies examine the influence of stylistic features of news in a comprehensive manner. While I cannot claim to be utterly comprehensive, the fact that in this book I examine the use of a number of different stylistic devices in the news of three different countries will provide a new and illuminating angle from which to view the “crisis” and to think about improving certain media practices.

Why did I not choose to analyze the stylistic features of news articles about the Charlie Hebdo or Bataclan attacks here? Not only did the events receive wide international media attention, but also, no fewer than eighty-three books were written about them between 2015 and 2016 (Amiriaux and Fetiu 2017). The Nice attack is another event in the chain of which those prior attacks form a part; looking at the continuing trajectory of representation of violence as another piece of the puzzle, another link in the “event chain,” shows how certain reporting choices have coalesced, but also, from an ethical perspective, that some choices, despite being common, are highly questionable.

Let me give one example of what might be called a questionable choice: as I watched the news about the Parsons Green “incident” unfold in London on September 15, 2017,² I was particularly struck by one tendency of the morning television shows. Multiple broadcasters, along with the experts or officials they consulted, used the following phrase or a very similar version thereof: “We are still in the early stages and we have to be careful not to jump to conclusions, but ... ” before going on to formulate hypotheses or draw on prior events to construct possible scenarios—that is, to draw some kind of preliminary conclusion. As is often the case in such situations, the news

continued to focus entirely on this event for hours, even though, as is also often the case in the period immediately following such acts, there were few to no facts to report because the investigation was just getting underway. Also as usual, unsubstantiated rumors circulated, on Twitter in particular. The events and the reporting once again brought to the fore, for me, the question that was part of the impetus for this study, and that journalists, I know, grapple with: to report, or not to report, as such events unfold? I agree that this is “the way it’s done”; but does it have to be? What argument should prevail: that the public has a right to be informed, an argument actually underpinned by the pressure on media organizations to “sell,” to get the first scoop? Or that reporting should be factual, and therefore may well require a waiting period to get facts in place? Not to mention the importance of preserving the integrity of an ongoing investigation.

For reporting too soon can have costs. Canel (2012: 214) examined editorials published in the Spanish newspapers *El Mundo*, *Abc*, and *El País*³ after the bombings that took place in Madrid in March 2004 and were wrongly attributed to ETA (Euskadi Ta Askatasuna, or “Basque Homeland and Liberty,” an armed separatist organization in the Basque country) in the very early stages of investigation and reporting, in particular by media that supported the conservative government in power. Some maintain that this error lost the conservative government the election that took place immediately after the event. Interestingly, “[t]he *problem* definition in the editorials of March 11 was the ‘treatment of terrorism’ by different political parties” rather than the perpetrators (identified, at that stage, as ETA [Basque nationalists]) (Canel 2012: 218; emphasis in the original), and the newspapers made their judgments about actors’ capabilities “with an eye on the election” (218). “The three newspapers” she examined “reacted to the evolution of the frame by going to battle for a specific political option” and against others. Importantly, they “went even further than the political parties they supported: *Abc* and *El Mundo* (right-leaning) were much more critical of the nationalist parties and of the Opposition than the government was, and *El País* was much more critical of the government than the Socialist Party was” (221).

For the author, this demonstrates that “partisanship is a feature of the Spanish press” (Canel 2012: 221), but it is first and foremost a feature of editorials, the text type she examines. For Piquer Martí (2015), in contrast, the media in general are supposed to be the guarantors of “the right to true, just and contextualized information.” This right “also extends to citizens who belong to minority cultures such as, in this case, Muslims”⁴ (138). The press is, according

to Piquer Martí, the most trustworthy media, and “encourages reflection more than others; moreover, it is better able to foster, in citizens, certain values and frames of reference,” although she warns that it is also “able to reproduce imperialist ideologies and conceptions of society” (Crespo Fernández 2008: 46; qtd. in Piquer Martí). Canel (2012: 221) makes the important observation that “unbalanced news comes not only or necessarily from individual journalists but also from the interaction of different factors, which include real world developments, cultural norms,” the rules governing journalists’ decisions, the government-media-public(s) triangle, and “each side’s skills at frame promotion” (221). Unbalanced news happens, including when terrorism is the topic. As with violent and terrorist acts themselves, partisan news about terrorism has costs, and in both cases it is often Muslims or those believed to be Muslim who pay dearly, as I will demonstrate with the findings presented in this book. As we will see in much more detail in the chapters that follow, this minority group is often discriminated against both by the societies in question in this book and in their media, especially when terrorist acts or events believed to be terrorist in nature occur.

Such discrimination is widely qualified as Islamophobia. Runnymede Trust (2017) has provided both a short and a more developed definition of Islamophobia; the latter draws on the United Nations definition of racism. The first states that “Islamophobia is anti-Muslim racism”; the second, that

Islamophobia is any distinction, exclusion or restriction towards, or preference against, Muslims (or those perceived to be Muslims) that has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life. (1; 7)

In the UK, social acceptance of Islamophobia, as indicated from poll results, is worryingly widespread:

37% admitted they would be more likely to support ... policies to reduce the number of Muslims in Britain (note this is worse than stopping Muslims from entering the country)

On average, people think that Muslims make up 17% of the population, compared to the reality of less than 5%

62% agreed that Britain would lose its identity if more Muslims came to live here

More than half of Britons regard Muslims as a threat to the UK. (Muslim Council of Britain 2016: 2)

These attitudes are showing up in schools as well:

35% of 10–14 year olds agree that “Muslims are taking over our country”.

Islamophobia is a particular issue in schools, ... with young Muslims reporting that they are being called “terrorists” and “bombers” by classmates. (Muslim Council of Britain 2016: 2)

The Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) paper also provides examples and statistics of anti-Muslim hate crime and notes that “[t]he attacks seem to spike after major events linked to Muslims,” including “terror atrocities abroad, and Brexit” (3).

As we will see, the media in all three countries in question here, the UK, Switzerland, and Spain, are sometimes blamed for their negative and disparaging portrayals of Muslims and Islam, which are particularly prevalent when terror events are the topic of news. In its 2016 report on country monitoring of the UK, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) exhorted the UK media to “avoid perpetuating prejudice, in particular against Muslims,” qualified the tendency as “reckless,” and lamented the fact that press regulation measures were insufficient:

ECRI regrets that a way has not been found to establish an independent press regulator and that, as a result, certain tabloids continue to publish offensive material ... ECRI urges the media to take stock of the importance of responsible reporting, not only to avoid perpetuating prejudice and biased information, but also to avoid harm to targeted persons or vulnerable groups. (ECRI 2016: 23)

Regarding Muslims specifically and the way they are often linked to terrorism in the media,

ECRI considers that, in light of the fact that Muslims are increasingly under the spotlight as a result of recent ISIS-related terrorist acts around the world, fuelling prejudice against Muslims shows a reckless disregard, not only for the dignity of the great majority of Muslims in the United Kingdom, but also for their safety. (23)

Particularly important for my research, with regard to media reporting on terrorism, ECRI

draws attention to a recent study by Teeside University suggesting that where the media stress the Muslim background of perpetrators of terrorist acts, and devote significant coverage to it, the violent backlash against Muslims is likely to be greater than in cases where the perpetrators’ motivation is downplayed or rejected in favour of alternative explanations. (23)

The year before, then High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein exhorted the UK to “tackle tabloid hate speech,” even making a comparison with Nazi media strategies after the *Sun* labeled migrants “cockroaches.”⁵

So far, it is clear that among the major preoccupations of this book are UK, Swiss, and Spanish news about terrorism, the stylistic features of such news, and the anti-Muslim prejudice often present in such news, and in the societies in question. Translation, however, is also a key issue. How is it connected to the other themes in this book?

Notes on “Translation” and Terminology

I come from a Translation Studies background, and this has naturally shaped not only my vision of languages, cultures, and intercultural communication generally, but also my understanding of what translation means, and my method of analyzing stylistic features of texts. It is important to emphasize that in this book, I conceive of translation in a broader sense than some may be used to. This is not to minimize the importance of translation in its narrower sense—of source text to target text, of one language to another—nor in its more complex dimension where, for instance, news translation is concerned, in which case it may involve one or any combination of the activities of source-target translation, editing, adding, omitting, rewriting, and so on. News translation is a fast-growing area of Translation Studies and these issues are currently receiving a lot of attention. While the present study is also about news, translation is conceived of here as the process of re-presenting societies and groups for foreign readers, in this case, news readers from a different country than that of the societies or groups reported upon. Or, to turn it around, cultural re-presentation is translation.

That said, translation in the narrower sense does also feature in this book; for example, I have translated into English both segments of the French- and Spanish-language news articles examined, and excerpts cited from French- and Spanish-language academic sources. I want to make it clear that while I sought to make translations of academic references as fluid and idiomatic as possible, my strategy was not the same when I translated news segments. In many cases, I left them more literal or at least less smooth because remaining closer to the structure of the original excerpt would give readers a better idea of the content of the original segment and how it was presented.

Regarding terminology, I would like to point out that throughout this book, I have used the term “Daesh” to refer to the extremist organization that is often

labeled “Islamic State” or “ISIS.” “Daesh” is the equivalent of the Arabic acronym for the organization and is used less frequently in English than other acronyms or terms. I chose it for two reasons. First, I did not want to confer the legitimacy that a name that includes “State” confers. Second, the term allows me to avoid another, “Islamic,” which encourages in people’s minds an insidious blurring of boundaries between Muslims, Arabs, and Islamists (who are, despite the way the term gets thrown around, simply Muslims with political goals).

Remarks on Style

In this book, I examine stylistic features of news. What is meant by style, and why investigate it? It can be defined as “a choice of form (‘manner’) to express content (‘matter’)” (Wales 2001: 158). In *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, Vološinov summarizes the work of Vossler and Croce, who represent one major trend in the philosophy of language and who essentially assert that linguistics is “the study of expression par excellence,” and that “[a]ny sort of expression is, at the root, artistic” (52). While one can query the all-encompassing nature of this affirmation, stylistic features, which are the result of personal choice and reflect the original, idiosyncratic features of an individual’s way of expressing herself, are arguably artistic and therefore creative (this is most evident in the case of metaphor). Moreover, in Matejka’s ([1929] 1986) Appendix to Vološinov’s work, which he co-translated, he points out that for Vološinov, “the primary target of linguistic investigation should be exactly that which reveals the creative aspect of human language” (168).

The role journalistic style plays in conveying information and portraying events and cultures has been much overlooked and, I claim, its impact underestimated—especially where common yet influential rhetorical devices such as alliteration and assonance (which make particularly salient for the reader the content they accompany) and modality (which shapes reader belief and confidence in the information received) are concerned. Nevertheless, framing studies (see, for example, Baker 2006, 2007) and discourse analysis, both commonly applied in news translation research, indirectly justify this kind of focus. Reese (2001: 11) defines frames as “*organizing principles* that are socially *shared* and *persistent* over time, that work *symbolically* to meaningfully *structure* the social world” (emphasis in the original). Baresch, Hsu, and Reese (2012 [2010]: 641) cite the “War on Terror” as an example. In addition, “Reese’s definition suggests that framing research not only examine the manifest or most salient content but also strive to catch the structure and pattern hidden in the

media texts, and search for *what makes people take this latent structure and way of thinking for granted*" (Baresch et al. 2012 [2010]: 641; my emphasis). Discourse analysis draws upon stylistics (Schäffner 2013: 48) but has yet to take sufficient account of combinations of stylistic elements in media texts. I maintain that they play a role in encouraging people to subscribe to the "structure and way of thinking" that they encounter in news texts.

Indeed, while we may not pay particular attention to stylistic elements when we read news texts, they nevertheless wield a lot of power. Baresch et al. evoke, for example, the potential role of "allusion" or "situational irony" in constructing underlying, organizing principles (2012 [2010]: 644–5), observing that while "[t]hese devices will be difficult to spot," "the researcher must account for them" (645). Put otherwise, such devices are not obvious, they are under-researched, but they are nevertheless a vital force in the way in which we interpret information. Therefore, "[a]t this early stage in new media scholarship," researchers "must innovate methods for identifying, sampling, and analyzing data sets that will yield meaningful results" (645). Coming from a translation perspective, Boase-Beier, too, emphasizes the importance of "stylistically-aware analysis" (2006: 111). Not only does it help "the translator to describe and justify ... stylistic decisions," but "we can go further, and argue that knowledge of stylistics will allow the translator to consider how such aspects of meaning as attitude, implication, or cognitive state can be recreated in the target text" (Boase-Beier [2011] 2012). Even when the aim is not translation in its narrower sense, that is, from source text to target text, but rather news analysis and the way its discourse translates events, cultures or groups for an-other audience, looking at style "will allow more detailed consideration of the interplay of universal stylistic features such as conceptual metaphor, culturally embedded imagery, and specific linguistic connotation" (Boase-Beier [2011] 2012). Working from a translation criticism perspective, Hewson (2011: 74–83) identifies alliteration and modality as two further key foci for analyses seeking to describe stylistic effects.

The stylistic features I chose to focus on in my analysis are alliteration and assonance, metaphor, and modality. Alliteration and assonance do not necessarily carry the same weight across languages. Nevertheless, as Van Hoof (2008), discussing both French and English, observes,

rhyme, assonance and alliteration fulfill multiple functions: they work together to form rhythm, contribute to harmony, help to solidify ideas and help readers remember the content of verses. This is just as valid for other domains as it is for poetry. (899)⁶

Moreover, his examples demonstrate that alliteration is frequently accompanied by a marked rhythm.

Metaphor, omnipresent in the literary text, plays an important role in shaping impressions and interpretations and is often a challenge to translate. Metaphor is by no means unique to the literary text, however. Does it carry the same weight in other kinds of texts? How does it contribute to shaping their content and messages? This study is in part an opportunity to reflect on the discursive power of metaphor in a very different text type, the news article, and on how it may contribute to “translating” not only events, but also the people and places involved. I have nevertheless avoided including “dead metaphors,” those that have become so ubiquitous that they are no longer recognized as being metaphors and, for the same reason, do not have the influence upon readers that other metaphors do.

In identifying and discussing modality, I will include instances of epistemic modality, deontic modality, and what Bednarek (2010) calls “mental process,” with most emphasis on the first and last type, as there are more instances of these in the kinds of (ostensibly) informational news texts I examine. Drawing upon definitions from linguistics, Bednarek and Caple (2012) define epistemic modality as “the speaker’s degree of confidence in the truth of the proposition” (158–9, note 3). For Halliday (1976), this type of modality covers possibility, probability, and degrees of certainty. Deontic modality, which Halliday terms modulation, covers inclination, permission, necessity, and obligation. Bednarek’s (2010) “mental process” category incorporates

expressions such as decide, imagine and speculate, which can be used to attribute statements to sources (e.g. Somebody working in the post room was injured in the hands and face as another parcel exploded. Some **speculated** it was linked to recent bomb scares. (ABC News Radio, 24 December 2010)). (Bednarek and Caple 2012: 159, note 4; emphasis in the original)

In this section, I have laid out justifications for investigating the stylistic features of news and described the specific features that are the focus of this study. In the following section, I present the corpus of news articles that I analyzed.

Corpus

The corpus of online news articles from the UK, French-speaking Switzerland and Spain contains just under 114,000 words (see Table 1): 27,850 from the *Guardian*

and the *Telegraph* (thirteen and fourteen articles, respectively); 32,100 from *Le Temps* (twelve), *La Tribune de Genève* (twenty-six), and *Le Courrier* (ten); and 53,700 from *El País* and *El Mundo* (thirty-six and thirty-one, respectively). Articles were included in the corpus if they addressed the Nice attack, were published during the defined time frame, and appeared in the “News” section of the sources’ websites. As is evident from the content, however, they do not qualify solely as “hard news,” but rather as a combination of news- and news analysis-type articles. White (1997: 107) claims that “hard news” texts aim “to represent themselves as neutral and impersonal” and therefore avoid “explicit value judgments ... about the morality, competence, normality, etc. of participants, explicit evaluations of events and entities in terms of their aesthetics or emotional impact, inferences about the motivations and intentions of participants,” and “contentious claims about causes and effects.” Almost none of the news articles I analyzed fit all of these criteria, which demonstrates that appearing under the “News” section clearly does not equate with providing totally objective information.

These particular online newspapers were chosen because they represent contrasting parts of the political spectrum, had roughly comparable readership statistics from 2013 to 2016⁷ (Ofcom 2017: 28–30), and are not tabloids. The situation in French-speaking Switzerland is slightly different, as its media tends to be center or center-left on the political spectrum. I added *Le Courrier* to the *Suisse-romande* subcorpus to ensure some variety, as it is widely seen to be more independent and non-partisan. That said, it has recently described itself as left-wing,⁸ while *Le Temps* was recently described to me as neo-liberal. These discrepancies indicate that it is often difficult to ascribe a hard and fast political affiliation to a newspaper, and political leanings can also change over time. Moreover, the Swiss still favor print over digital news. *Le Temps* and *La Tribune de Genève* print versions have a comparable number of readers, whereas *La Tribune* has twice the number of online readers as *Le Temps*. I was unable to obtain data for *Le Courrier*.

Table 1 Statistics for the Full Corpus

Country/region	Number of words	Percentage of corpus
<i>UK</i>	27,852	24.5%
<i>Suisse romande</i>	32,064	28.2%
<i>Spain</i>	53,685	47.3%
Total	113,601	

Table 2 Corpus of Online Newspapers by Country and Political Affiliation

Country	Online newspaper	Probable affiliation
UK	The <i>Guardian</i> (TG)	left-leaning
	The <i>Telegraph</i> (DT)	right-leaning
Switzerland	<i>Le Temps</i> (LT)	mixed ⁹
	<i>La Tribune de Genève</i> (TDG)	unclear
	<i>Le Courrier</i> (LC)	left-leaning
Spain	<i>El País</i> (EP)	left-leaning
	<i>El Mundo</i> (EM)	right-leaning

The time frame for the articles is July 15 to 18, 2016: the day after the terrorist attack in Nice took place and the following few days. I did this

1. to limit the corpus to a manageable size,
2. because a first dip in the number of news items occurred after July 18, and
3. to avoid a distinct news cycle about a later attack on July 26, 2016.

Because the corpus has been constructed according to these thematic and temporal criteria, it qualifies as “comparable” (Kenny 2001; Olohan 2004).

Table 2 presents the corpus by probable political affiliation, where this could be reasonably determined. I chose the *Guardian* and *El País* because they are known to be left-leaning; the *Telegraph* and *El Mundo*, because they are widely considered to be right-leaning. As indicated above, the political characteristics of the *Suisse romande* press are less clear-cut.

Finally, it should be noted that the *Telegraph*’s content, unlike the *Guardian*’s, is behind a paywall, and that this could affect both reader characteristics and journalistic content to some degree. The potential influence of the paywall could be tested with further research.

Methodology

Federici has called specifically for the kind of news study I propose, highlighting “the lack of a breadth of studies focusing on key stylistic features of online news.” The present study and the larger project will contribute to closing this gap while

also building bridges between literary and non-literary analysis. My approach is inspired in part by the close analysis of style that is characteristic of translation criticism (Boase-Beier 2006; Hewson 2011). Scholars including Brownlie (2010), Munday (2007), O'Halloran (2010), and Simpson (1993) have demonstrated the validity of studying monolingual corpora in part through stylistic analysis, even with non-literary texts, while Boase-Beier (2006) has shown how close consideration of style can aid in the actual translation of both literary and non-literary texts. Brownlie (2010: 53) identifies the "use and explanation of French phrases" by journalists as "a stylistic characteristic." According to O'Halloran (2010: 100), even in "hard news," the stylistic element of "metaphors can be ideologically significant" and "influence how people think about" events.

Some might ask why I describe my approach as "stylistic analysis" rather than "discourse analysis." In fact, "discourse analysis" itself means different things to different scholars and, according to some definitions, stylistic analysis is a subset of it: "Discourse analysts also use concepts (e.g. cohesion, coherence, speech act, genre, style, rhetorical purpose, transitivity) that have their origin in other sub-disciplines of Applied Linguistics, such as text linguistics, pragmatics, stylistics, rhetorics [*sic*]" (Schäffner 2013: 48). Specifically stylistic features of news and particularly combinations of these features have been under-researched up to now. I focus on them and do not claim to examine all of the other elements that Schäffner lists.

I chose to work on online news articles from three different countries and, in the case of Switzerland, only from the French-speaking region, and really from Geneva (although at least *Le Temps* is read more widely). There are various reasons for this. The most obvious is that my three working languages as a translator and Translation Studies scholar are English, French, and Spanish; therefore I can aptly analyze news in those languages. In addition, I have lived in Geneva for more than twenty years. But there are other reasons. The three countries are (geographically or politically) part of Europe. Spain and Switzerland are neighbors of France; the UK has many ties with France, not least historical ones. Thus the three countries are connected enough to France to be interested in what happens there, and at the same time sufficiently different themselves to make comparisons of their news reporting interesting, especially if one wants to question the concept of "European" or "transnational" news. In addition, the *Suisse romande* speaks the same language as France and Geneva, in particular, has certain cultural characteristics in common with France and various extremely close ties (not least of which are economic) while also sharing a kind of love-hate

relationship with the country, common when close borders paradoxically mean that people of different nations want to distinguish themselves from each other.

In their study of online news from the *Guardian* and a Swedish newspaper, Karlsson and Strömbäck (2009: 8) provide a strong argument for analyzing British news: “The rationale for including Britain is that news sites from the United Kingdom are widely used not only by domestic audiences, but also by international readers, particularly when international news events such as wars and crises are happening.” Esser (2012) instead argues that media research should not focus on national contexts and indicates that over the past few years prior to her study, the situation had improved as scholars took into account the transnational nature of the media in Europe. Nevertheless, my research suggests that the differing historical, political, economic, and social characteristics of the *Suisse romande*, the UK, and Spain may translate into differing treatment of both terrorist events and Muslims in their respective online news. I think it is precisely the comparative analyses I conduct, on national contexts, which can contribute to affirming or refuting the “transnational hypothesis” I alluded to above. In addition, after conducting their meta-study of English-language research examining the treatment of Muslims in the media, Ahmed and Matthes (2017) concluded that

1. as most studies involve English-language sources,¹⁰ new research should branch out to include other languages, which my study does; and that
2. “cross-national comparative work” and cross-disciplinary research (237–8) are now essential. My study also meets these requirements.

I have emphasized the fact that stylistic features of news have rarely been studied. According to Zhang et al. (2015: 228), “[s]tudies on media translation [tend to] pay more attention to extralinguistic factors, in particular the issue[s] of power, ideology, and [the context of] translation in news media” than to discursive strategies. Studies that constitute exceptions to the prevailing focus on extralinguistic factors often concentrate on one specific aspect of language, for instance, metaphor (for example, Bazzi 2014; Schäffner 2014), neologism (Gallardo San Salvador 2012), or lexical borrowing (Le Poder 2012), or examine discourse types or positions of authority through analyses of reported speech in the news (see, for example, Baumgarten and Gagnon 2008; Davier 2013, 2017; Muñoz-Calvo and Buesa-Gómez 2010; Schäffner and Bassnett 2010). My focus on other aspects of journalists’ language contributes to filling a gap in current research.

Before conducting my analysis, I formulated the following hypotheses. In terms of general themes,

1. references to the home country and/or its citizens, which journalists sometimes use to make an article relevant for the domestic audience (Freedman 2017: 215), would occur across the corpus, but right-leaning newspapers would center more on the home country and also portray it as superior (Brownlie 2010; Kelly 1997, 1998);
2. representations of French society and of Muslims and/or Islam would be more negative in right-leaning sources, given their alignment with conservative positions and policies, which are often anti-Muslim and also likely to find fault with the socialist government in place in 2016 in France. The conflation of Muslims with terrorism would be more pronounced in right-leaning news sources but nevertheless also visible in left-leaning ones.

The first hypothesis aligns with Cottle's assertion that "[w]hen reporting on distant disasters and humanitarian emergencies, ... national news media often seek out stories populated by their own" citizens. "This stock news cast of *dramatis personae* serves to 'nationalize,' personalize and 'bring back home' the meanings of distant events and tragedies" ([2011] 2012: 482). It is also based on Valdeón's (2009: 149) observation that news reporting is "heavily influenced ... by the national narratives of the writers, which permeate the events themselves and offer domestic perspectives of European and world issues." In relation to the second hypothesis, "the global war on terror, inevitably, becomes reported through blood-flecked glasses tinted by national" and, I would add, political "interests" (Cottle, [2011] 2012: 483) and prejudices.

In terms of style specifically, my hypotheses were that

3. across the corpus, modal use would sometimes give suppositions a patina of factuality, and in ways that would be likely to heighten the sense of threat. In right-leaning sources, this phenomenon would also encourage distrust of Muslims;
4. alliteration and assonance would predominantly accompany negative content and serve to emphasize and reinforce it, thereby giving it more weight, in all news sources. This in turn would be likely to fuel readers' sense of threat and "*of a state of emergency*" (Federici 2016: 1; emphasis in the original);
5. metaphors would most often be negative, and a significant number would evoke war and violence specifically.

I chose to leave reported speech out of my analysis and concentrate on the journalists' own discourse. This affected corpus selection: texts about the attack were omitted if they contained too many quotes or were under 300 words. A final remark on the corpus concerns the dates of publication. While there are few *Guardian* articles from July 17 to 18, 2016, this is partly due to what appeared in the relevant search, and partly to a discrepancy in date indications between the search results and the date indicated online, rather than from any deliberate pre-selection.

I used the qualitative data analysis software QDA Miner for this study. This meant coding textual elements in an iterative process of category definition and attribution within the broader categories of lexis, grammar, syntax, and rhetorical devices, and under themes such as "French society" or "attitudes of/ to Muslims." In other words, I established categories under which to classify textual segments according to what I found in the texts themselves (albeit with an interest, from the beginning, in segments containing references to Muslims, Islam, and French society).

I tallied instances of alliteration and assonance across the corpus and classified them as negative, positive, or neutral, depending upon the connotations of the content they accompanied. How is connotation understood here? It is true that various definitions of the term exist and take into account broader or narrower parameters. For instance, according to Osgood, Succi, and Tannenbaum (1957), interlocutors react to words in terms of how positive or negative, strong or weak, active or passive the words are. Twenty years later, Chuquet and Paillard (1987), working from the perspective of a translator aiming to render a target text and the pitfalls she might encounter when dealing with connotation, restricted their concern to the positive *versus* negative dimension. Don Bialostosky (2017) echoes common criticisms of such linguistic conceptions of connotation, which treat it as objectively classifiable and fail to take into account key factors in how words are interpreted, that is

the kinds of situations and the kinds of utterances in which they are typically used, the kinds of speakers who use them, the kinds of hearers who hear them, and the kinds of emotional-evaluational tones with which they are used in those situations. We need to locate our individual associations in shared or at least shareable situations. (Bialostosky 2017)

Nevertheless, I chose to use a narrow conception of connotation in this study based on the positive and negative dichotomy. It is relevant to the topics being addressed and makes it possible to parse textual elements meaningfully, without

being unwieldy. Moreover, I believe that the majority of readers of these news articles would make the same positive and negative associations. They share awareness of these news topics; knowledge of the news sources in question, their language, conventions, and political leanings; and have chosen to read them. The assumption of shared associations could nevertheless be tested with further research.

Vološinov (1986 [1929]) not only emphasizes the socially constructed nature of meaning and connotation, but insists that all words carry connotation or, as he labels it, “evaluative accent”: “Any word used in actual speech” carries not only referential meaning, “but also value judgment: i.e., all referential contents produced in living speech are said or written in conjunction with a specific *evaluative accent*. There is no such thing as [a] word without [an] evaluative accent” (103; emphasis in the original). Moreover, he goes so far as to argue that the distinction commonly made by linguists between referential meaning and evaluation or connotation “is totally inadmissible,” as

[r]eferential meaning is molded by evaluation; it is evaluation, after all, which determines that a particular referential meaning may enter the purview of speakers—both the immediate purview and the broader social purview of the particular social group ... The separation of word meaning from evaluation inevitably deprives meaning of its place in the living social process (where meaning is always permeated with value judgment). (105)

Metaphors were coded as

1. positive (e.g., “none can rival Nice when it comes to conjuring up images of the sun-kissed good life” (TGObs17)),
2. negative (e.g., “a cancerous obstacle” (DT26)), or
3. neutral (e.g., to be “in the spotlight” (TG1)).
4. relating to terrorist violence specifically;
5. not relating to terrorist violence specifically.

Where applicable, metaphors in the fifth category were also coded as

6. violent nonetheless.

Shortcomings

To be sure, my methodology glosses over the characteristics of online news which distinguish it from traditional print news: the convergent nature (Davier

and Conway 2019), interactivity, and immediacy of online news which in turn make it “liquid” (Karlsson and Strömbäck 2009). “Online, the order in which news stories are presented can be constantly rearranged,” while “in the offline environment, news is presented in a linear sequence making it clear where one news story ends and another starts.” In addition, “on the news site-level of analysis, modifications in news content or context are not necessarily highlighted” (Karlsson and Strömbäck 2009: 15). Nevertheless, these observations apply mainly to the extralinguistic level of news content; the constellation of micro-level textual characteristics being analyzed here is more likely to correspond in significant measure to what a reader would have seen around the time of the event.

On the linguistic level, I had to make a selection of stylistic features; I could not cover all possibilities. It nevertheless became clear to me in the course of the study that a feature like prosody is also a key aspect of news style, and that it might be even more relevant in the French and Spanish texts than in the English ones. In any case, further research on stylistic features is sorely needed and would do well to include analysis of prosody.

Finally, visual content is an intrinsic part of “making” online news texts “mean.” Given the scope of this study, I could not analyze it in this book, but I look forward to developing an article on this aspect of my current corpus.

The Chapters

I close this chapter by briefly explaining the content of those that follow. Chapter 2 explores how concepts and approaches from Translation Studies can be brought to bear in the analysis of “European” news about terrorism, discussing in particular the usefulness of the notions of cultural translation and cosmopolitanism for defining the role of the journalist. She is conceived of as an intercultural mediator and, indeed, a translator; news about terrorism, as a narrative of “crisis.” The chapter goes on to present some of the key journalistic principles and guidelines of the online newspapers examined, as well as some examples of how they sometimes fall short of these principles and guidelines; and common forms of media regulation in the three countries in question. Chapter 3 contextualizes the three societies and in particular their attitudes to Muslims through an overview of their linguistic, legal, political, and social characteristics, their experiences with and responses to terrorism, and some features of their respective news landscapes. Chapter 4 presents the

stylistic analysis proper, and Chapter 5 draws comparative conclusions about the findings. Chapter 6 includes reflections on the usefulness of this kind of study for Translation Studies and for journalism; changes that journalists and media systems could implement, and ideas for best practice; and closing remarks.