



Translating Political Agency: A Hallidayan Analysis of Iranian Official Discourse in *Fox News*

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Abstract

This article examines the recontextualization of Iranian political agency in *Fox News* coverage of the 2025 Iran-Israel-US conflict. Drawing on textual metafunction, it applies theme-rheme and given-new frameworks to Persian source statements, English reference renderings, and their *Fox News* representations. The findings reveal systematic shifts in the representation of Iranian political agency across the three textual layers. Collective and nationally framed agency is frequently recast as leader- or regime-centered, while threat, confrontation, defiance, and military capability gain prominence in the target discourse. Legal, diplomatic, cultural, and sovereignty-based dimensions receive comparatively less prominence in the target discourse. These patterns emerge through thematic, informational, reporting, labeling, and headline shifts, rather than lexical substitution alone. Treating quotation, paraphrase, headline compression, and mediated attribution as translation-mediated recontextualization, the study reveals less visible mechanisms of ideological representation in translated news discourse. The findings contribute to news translation research by showing how textual prominence reshapes political agency and ideological meaning.

Keywords: Ideological recontextualization, news translation, political discourse, systemic functional linguistics, theme, rheme

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Cite this article: Afkhami, M., Razavizadeh, S. N., & Aghamohamadi, M. (2026). Translating political agency: A Hallidayan analysis of Iranian official discourse in *Fox News*. *Translation and Interpreting Research*, 3(9), 33-44.
<https://doi.org/10.22054/tir.2026.93714.1069>



© 2026 – Allameh Tabataba'i University Press

Print ISSN: 3092-6599

Online ISSN: 3060-7019

Publisher: Allameh Tabataba'i University Press

Published: 02.05.2026

Accepted: 29.04.2026

Received: 01.04.2026

1. Introduction

The movement of political discourse across languages is rarely exhausted by the notion of lexical equivalence. In the domain of international news, translation is often inseparable from processes of selection, condensation, attribution, and recontextualization, all of which may alter the way political actors are made visible to a target audience. This is particularly the case in conflict reporting, where translated or translation-mediated statements do not simply transmit what was said elsewhere; rather, they participate in the construction of political intelligibility. The present study examines this problem through the English-language representation of Iranian official discourse in *Fox News* coverage during and after the 2025 Iran–Israel–US conflict. Its concern is not only with whether particular Persian expressions were rendered accurately, but with how political agency, informational salience, and ideological orientation were reorganized as Persian official statements entered an Anglophone news environment.

The point of departure for this inquiry is the recurring contrast between Persian collective political subjects and their English-language recontextualization. In Iranian official discourse, terms such as *mellat-e Iran*, usually translatable as “the Iranian nation” or “the Iranian people,” carry a particular political force: they present agency as collective, national, and historically continuous. In some *Fox News* coverage of the June 2025 conflict, however, such collective agency is displaced by formulations such as “his regime” or “the regime,” a shift that is analytically significant not merely because of its lexical value, but because of its textual function. To render, paraphrase, or reframe a national subject as a regime subject is to alter the point from which the message unfolds. The source discourse’s collective “people/nation” is repositioned as a securitized state apparatus, and the political utterance is thereby made available to the reader through a different interpretive frame. This study treats that shift not as an isolated mistranslation, but as part of a broader pattern of translation-mediated ideological recontextualization.

The immediate intellectual motivation for this article derives from Potter’s (2016) study of ideological representation in English and Arabic news reports. Potter’s study remains highly instructive because it demonstrates, with unusual methodological clarity, that ideological representation in news discourse may be disclosed through the organization of the clause as message. Drawing on Halliday and Matthiessen’s (2004) systemic functional linguistics, Potter analyses the interaction between theme–rheme and given–new structures in English and Arabic reports on the investigation into Rafiq al-Hariri’s assassination. Her central insight is that ideology is not only carried by explicit evaluation or overt political judgement; it may also be embedded in the positioning of clause elements, in the treatment of information as recoverable or new, and in the accumulation of apparently ordinary textual choices. Potter’s work is thus significant for the present article not as a topic to be replicated, but as a methodological provocation: if theme–rheme and information structure can reveal ideological representations in bilingual news reports, they may also illuminate the less visible processes through which political discourse is transformed in news translation and mediated quotation.

The present study acknowledges Potter’s article as its principal methodological inspiration and seeks to extend its implications in two respects. First, while Potter’s corpus concerns English and Arabic news reports and the representation of Syria, the present article turns to Persian–English political news mediation and the representation of Iranian official discourse in a major US media outlet. Second, while Potter’s study is situated primarily within systemic functional linguistics and critical discourse analysis, the present article relocates the Hallidayan apparatus within Translation Studies. This shift is important because the texts examined here are not always direct translations in a narrow sense. They include formal quotations, indirect renderings, journalistic paraphrases, live-blog summaries, and institutionally framed descriptions of Persian-language statements. The appropriate object of analysis is therefore not translation as a bounded textual product alone, but translation-mediated

recontextualization: the set of practices through which source-language political discourse is selected, reformulated, attributed, and made legible in a target-language media setting.

This approach is consistent with a substantial body of work in Translation Studies that has challenged the idea of translation as neutral transfer. Baker's (2006) narrative theory has shown that translation participates in the construction and circulation of public narratives through such mechanisms as selective appropriation, labelling, repositioning of participants, and temporal or spatial framing. Bielsa and Bassnett (2009) similarly argue that news translation is shaped by the institutional routines of journalism, including immediacy, condensation, editorial alignment, and target-audience expectations. Hatim and Mason's account of the translator as a communicative agent is also relevant here, since it directs attention to the social and institutional conditions under which discourse is mediated (Hatim & Mason, 1990). In the context of international news, the mediating agent is not always an individual translator; it may be a news organization, an editorial desk, a wire service, a live-blog format, or a chain of secondary sources. The present article therefore treats Fox News as an institutional mediator whose representations of Iranian official discourse can be examined through the textual traces left by that mediation.

The analytical framework, however, is grounded in systemic functional linguistics, particularly the textual metafunction. Halliday and Matthiessen's (2014) conception of the clause as message provides a precise way of examining how political meaning is organized. *Theme*, as the point of departure of the clause, establishes the element from which the message proceeds; *rheme* develops that point of departure and carries forward the proposition. The information system, organized through Given and New, makes it possible to ask what a text treats as already recoverable and what it presents as informationally salient (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). These categories are especially useful for Translation Studies because ideological shifts in translated or mediated news texts may not appear only in individual lexical substitutions. They may also appear in the redistribution of thematic prominence, in the reallocation of agency, in the foregrounding of threat or defiance, and in the backgrounding of legal, diplomatic, or contextual material.

The importance of such an inquiry is heightened by the relative opacity of Persian official discourse for most Anglophone readers. Statements by Iranian political officials usually enter English-language media through layers of mediation: official English versions, wire-service renderings, regional media reports, editorial summaries, and platform-specific framing. At each stage, choices are made about what to quote, what to omit, what to paraphrase, what to label, and which actor should be placed at the center of the message. When the target audience lacks access to the Persian source, these choices can acquire the status of the statement itself.

Despite extensive scholarship on ideology in political discourse and news translation, Persian–English mediation remains relatively underexplored at the level of clause organization. Existing research has examined Iran's representation in Western media mainly through broader patterns such as threat construction and securitization, while Translation Studies has focused on narrative framing and ideological mediation. Less attention has been paid to how theme–rheme and given–new structures reveal shifts in agency and salience across languages. This article brings these perspectives together.

The study is guided by this research question:

1. How are Iranian official statements recontextualized in Fox News coverage of the 2025 Iran–Israel–US conflict through translation-mediated practices?

2. Literature Review

This understanding of news translation as mediation has been developed most persuasively in studies that examine how translation participates in the construction of political narratives. Baker's (2005, 2006) work on narrative and translation remains important here because it rejects the benign assumption that translation necessarily promotes understanding across conflictual divides. Translation may, instead, contribute to the consolidation of public narratives by selecting some elements of a source discourse, suppressing others, and repositioning participants in ways that accord with the interpretive habits of the target community (Baker, 2005). This perspective is especially relevant to political news, where the authority of translation is often obscured by journalistic genre conventions. The reader encounters the translated or mediated statement as news, not as a visibly interpretive act.

Empirical work on conflict-related news translation has given this theoretical claim a sharper textual basis. Pan and Liao (2021), in their corpus-based analysis of translated reports on the 2008 Tibet riots, show that the translation of reported conflict is deeply implicated in positioning. Their study demonstrates that evaluative choices, shifts in attribution, and patterns of relabelling can subtly guide readers toward particular alignments with or against the actors represented in the news. The significance of this work for the present article lies not only in its concern with conflict, but in its insistence that positioning is linguistically traceable. Political alignment is not imposed solely through overt editorial judgement; it is distributed across naming practices, quotation structures, evaluative lexis, and the management of reported speech.

A comparable concern informs Mo's (2025) analysis of the translation of news about the 2019 Hong Kong protests. By examining how translated protest news was constructed across different institutional settings, Mo shows that translation can intensify, neutralize, or redirect the framing of political events. The translated news item is therefore best understood as a reconstructed text whose relation to the source event is mediated by institutional location and narrative purpose. This point is crucial for the present study, since Fox News coverage of Iranian official statements does not always present itself as direct translation. It often appears as quotation, paraphrase, live-blog summary, headline compression, or mediated attribution. The analytical object is consequently broader than translation in the narrow sense; it is translation-mediated recontextualization.

Studies of Iran-related news translation further suggest that this field of inquiry remains underdeveloped, despite its political importance. Pormouzeh (2014) examines the renarration of Iranian cultural and political news in Western media and argues that thematic selection, reframing, and institutional intervention contribute to the reconstruction of Iran's public image. Although his analysis is not grounded in systemic functional linguistics, it anticipates the central premise of the present article: that Iran, as an object of international news, is often represented through translational and narrative procedures that reshape agency and legitimacy. The present study takes this concern to a more local textual level by asking how such reshaping is realized through clause organization, information status, actor labelling, and reporting verbs.

The narrative approach, however, requires a linguistic apparatus capable of showing precisely how repositioning occurs inside the text. This is where systemic functional linguistics (SFL) becomes methodologically valuable. Within an SFL-informed approach to translation, meaning is not confined to referential content; it is organized through choices that are experiential, interpersonal, and textual. Manfredi's (2004) work on Translation Studies and systemic functional linguistics is useful in this respect because it presents SFL as a framework through which translators and analysts can examine how meaning is reorganized across languages. For the purposes of the present article, the textual metafunction is of particular importance. It makes it possible to analyze how a message is staged, which participant is selected as the point of departure, and how subsequent information develops or evaluates that starting point.

Information structure adds a second layer to this analysis. The distinction between Given and New is not reducible to whether information has literally appeared before. It also concerns what the text treats as recoverable, expected, or already shareable with the reader. Political news may present contested assumptions as if they were background knowledge, while assigning informational prominence to selected evaluative claims. Potter's (2016) study is exemplary in this regard. In her analysis of English and Arabic reports on the Hariri investigation, she shows that the interaction of theme–rheme and given–new structures can disclose ideological representations that remain implicit at the surface of the report. Her contribution is not merely that she applies Hallidayan categories to news discourse, but that she demonstrates their capacity to reveal how news texts manage suspicion, responsibility, cooperation, and blame through the organization of the clause as message.

Recent work on thematic structure in translated news headlines supports this move from broad narrative analysis to clause-level scrutiny. Akhiroh (2024) shows that the translation of headlines may preserve or transform the thematic orientation of the source, thereby affecting the implied intention and interpretive direction of the news item. This is especially pertinent because headlines and leads function as macro-points of departure: they are the first textual positions from which the reader approaches the event. In conflict reporting, where readers may not continue beyond the headline or opening lines, thematic decisions at this level are not merely stylistic. They condition the initial distribution of agency, responsibility, threat, and legitimacy.

The relevance of positioning has also been developed in recent work on diplomatic translation. Liu and Ang (2026), examining China's diplomatic responses, argue that shifts in translation can reposition self and other and thereby affect identity and power relations. Their study is valuable for the present article because it links translation choices to the construction of political subjectivity. Diplomatic and official discourse is often highly sensitive to formulations of agency, address, and legitimacy. A shift in the identity of the speaking subject, or in the evaluative force attached to that subject, may therefore produce effects that exceed ordinary lexical variation.

The literature thus points toward an interdisciplinary design, but also reveals a gap. News translation research has shown that translated political news is shaped by narrative framing, institutional positioning, and ideological mediation. SFL-oriented translation research has shown that textual meanings can shift across languages through changes in thematic and informational organization. Potter (2016) has demonstrated that theme–rheme and given–new analysis can expose ideological representation in bilingual news reports. Yet Persian–English political news mediation, particularly in US coverage of Iranian official discourse, has rarely been examined through this combined lens. Existing work on Iran in Western media has often remained at the level of macro-representation, while studies of translated political news have not sufficiently attended to the specific textual mechanics through which Iranian agency is reorganized in English.

The present article addresses this gap by bringing together news translation studies, narrative approaches to political mediation, and Hallidayan textual analysis. It argues that ideological recontextualization in the selected Fox News corpus is not adequately captured by identifying isolated loaded words. Rather, it must be examined through the patterned interaction of actor labels, thematic position, information status, reporting verbs, and omission.

3. Methodology

This study employs a qualitative, comparative design to examine how Iranian political statements are recontextualized in English-language news discourse. Rather than seeking statistical representativeness, it focuses on five politically salient statement-events that can be traced across the Persian source text, an English reference rendering, and their representation in Fox News. The analysis

therefore centers on close textual comparison, particularly the linguistic processes through which political agency and informational prominence are reorganized.

The study draws on two complementary perspectives. First, Baker's (2005, 2006) narrative approach views translation as a socially situated practice involved in the production and circulation of public narratives. From this perspective, translation and news mediation may select, reorganize, and foreground particular aspects of political discourse, thereby contributing to its public representation. Second, the linguistic analysis is grounded in Halliday and Matthiessen's (2014) systemic functional linguistics, particularly the textual metafunction and the conception of the clause as message. Theme is the element that provides the clause's point of departure, while Rheme contains what is presented about that theme. Given information refers to information presented as recoverable or already known within the discourse, whereas New information refers to information presented as new or noteworthy. theme–rheme and given–new structures are therefore examined to determine how political actors and propositions are positioned and made salient. The analysis also considers actor labeling, or the linguistic choices used to name and characterize political actors, and reporting verbs, which indicate how a source statement is represented (e.g., *said*, *warned*, or *threatened*). Together, these perspectives allow linguistic shifts to be interpreted as potential forms of narrative and ideological recontextualization.

The corpus comprises five statement-events produced during and after the 2025 Iran–Israel–US conflict. For each event, three textual layers were examined where available: (1) Persian source discourse, including official statements, speeches, social media posts, or state-media interviews; (2) English reference renderings from official sources or international news organizations; and (3) Fox News texts, including headlines, leads, article bodies, quotations, paraphrases, and mediated descriptions. Cases were selected purposively when a Persian source was identifiable, Fox News had represented the statement, an English comparator was available, and the representation showed a potentially meaningful shift in actor labeling, theme–rheme organization, information focus, reporting verbs, or omission.

The three layers were compared at the clause level, with particular attention to changes in political agency, theme–rheme and given–new organization, reporting verbs, evaluative labels, and omitted or foregrounded information. These differences were then interpreted through Baker's narrative perspective to examine how linguistic reorganization may contribute to the reframing of political actors and events. The analysis does not assume that every divergence constitutes ideological manipulation; rather, it distinguishes observable textual differences from their broader interpretive implications.

4. Results and Discussion

The analysis identified recurring differences between the Persian source statements, the English reference renderings, and their representations in Fox News. These differences occurred not only at the lexical level but also in the organization of information and the representation of political actors. In particular, the analysis revealed shifts in theme–rheme organization, given–new information, actor labeling, reporting verbs, and headline formulation. Across the cases, these shifts affected which actors were positioned as the primary points of departure, which aspects of the statements received greater informational prominence, and how the reported speech acts were characterized.

The analysis first examines headlines and leads, as these textual components establish the initial framing of the statements before the reader encounters the fuller report. In the selected Fox News texts, headlines and leads frequently placed Iranian actors or institutions in prominent thematic positions and characterized their statements through reporting verbs associated with confrontation,

warning, or rejection. Examples include “Iran’s supreme leader slams Trump”, “Iran warns of ‘real capabilities’”, and “his regime rejects the ‘imposed peace’”. These formulations provide an initial characterization of the reported statements and consequently shape how the subsequent discourse is introduced.

The headline “Iran’s supreme leader slams Trump just days after US strikes on nuclear sites” illustrates this pattern. “Iran’s supreme leader” functions as the topical theme, while the rheme presents the action “slams Trump”. The resulting organization places the Iranian leader at the starting point of the message and presents the statement primarily through an interpersonal act directed toward Trump. The temporal adjunct, “just days after US strikes on nuclear sites”, provides contextual information but does not constitute the clause’s point of departure. Thus, the headline gives initial prominence to the Iranian leader’s response rather than to the preceding military or diplomatic context.

A similar pattern occurs in Fox News’s treatment of Abbas Araghchi’s post-ceasefire statement. The headline “Iran warns of ‘real capabilities’ if Trump doesn’t drop ‘disrespectful’ tone toward supreme leader” places “Iran” in the theme position and develops it through “warns of ‘real capabilities’”. The Rheme consequently foregrounds the statement’s deterrent dimension. The article also reports other elements of Araghchi’s statement, including his discussion of Iranian carpets, independence, and national self-worth. However, these elements receive less prominence in the headline than the warning and the reference to Iran’s capabilities. The headline therefore establishes a particular informational entry point through which the fuller statement is subsequently presented.

A particularly clear case of thematic repositioning occurs in Khamenei’s June 18 statement, in which the Persian source discourse places *mellat-e Iran* (“the Iranian nation”) in a prominent position. The Persian formulation is presented below:

ملت ایران در مقابل تحمیل تسلیم هیچ کس نخواهد شد.

Literal translation: The Iranian nation will not surrender to anyone in the face of coercion.

In the Persian source, «ملت ایران» (the Iranian nation) functions as the topical theme, while the Rheme expresses the nation’s refusal to surrender under coercion. The clause therefore presents political agency as collective and national rather than as the action of an individual leader or government.

The official English rendering preserves this organization: “The Iranian nation will not capitulate to anyone in the face of coercion.” Here, “the Iranian nation” again functions as theme, retaining the source text’s representation of collective agency. Fox News, however, reformulates the statement as: “his regime rejects the ‘imposed peace’”. The thematic shift is immediate. Instead of “the Iranian nation”, the clause begins with “his regime”, making the regime associated with the individual leader the principal actor. The possessive “his” further personalizes this representation, while “rejects” frames the statement as the regime’s response to an offered “imposed peace”. The contrast can therefore be summarized as nation → regime. While the Persian source and official English rendering foreground a collective national actor, Fox’s formulation foregrounds a leader-associated regime. This represents a change not merely in lexical choice but in the organization of political agency: the same statement is presented first as a collective national refusal and then as a regime’s rejection.

A related form of recontextualization appears in Fox News’s representation of Khamenei’s June 17 post invoking Haydar:

به نام نامی حیدر، نبرد آغاز می گردد.

Literal translation: In the noble name of Haydar, the battle begins.

In the Persian clause, «به نام نامی حیدر» (in the noble name of Haydar) functions as a marked theme. It establishes a Shi’i religious-historical frame before the Rheme, “the battle begins”, introduces the

proposition. Although the statement contains an explicit martial reference, its opening foregrounds a culturally specific invocation that situates the subsequent reference to battle within a particular symbolic tradition.

Fox News, by contrast, characterizes the post as “seemingly threatening messaging”. This formulation shifts the focus from the religious-historical referent to Khamenei as the relevant actor and characterizes his communication through the evaluative category of threat. The martial element is therefore not invented by Fox; it is already present in the source. The shift lies in how the utterance is made salient to the target reader: the Persian text begins with a culturally specific invocation, whereas the Fox representation foregrounds the security-related interpretation of the message. The contrast illustrates why the analysis goes beyond lexical equivalence. In the source, the marked theme provides a cultural and intertextual point of departure; in the Fox representation, the statement is introduced through a characterization of its perceived communicative force. The result is a shift from a religiously situated invocation to a threat-oriented framing of political communication.

Reporting verbs provide a further site of recontextualization. In political news, verbs such as *said*, *stated*, *argued*, *warned*, *threatened*, *mocked*, and *slammed* do more than attribute statements; they characterize the nature of the reported speech act. In the selected Fox News corpus, Iranian statements are repeatedly introduced through more confrontational formulations. Khamenei is reported to have “slammed” Trump, while Araghchi is described as “warning” and “mocking” and as delivering a “clear threat”. Such choices can precede the reader’s engagement with the full statement and consequently contribute to its interpretation. They therefore complement theme–rheme organization by providing an additional linguistic resource through which political discourse is framed in the target context.

Araghchi’s June 27 statement provides a further example of how competing elements within a single political statement may be differentially foregrounded. The statement combines a cultural metaphor concerning Iranian carpets with claims about national independence, criticism of Trump’s tone, a taunt directed at Israel’s reliance on the United States, and a conditional warning concerning Iran’s capabilities. One relevant passage reads:

ما داشته‌های خود را می‌شناسیم، برای استقلال خود ارزش قائلیم و هرگز اجازه نمی‌دهیم کسی دیگر سرنوشت ما را تعیین کند.

We know our worth, value our independence, and never allow anyone else to decide our destiny.

The first-person plural «ما» (we) functions as Theme, while the Rheme develops this collective subject through references to worth, independence, and self-determination. The clause consequently constructs agency primarily in terms of collective dignity and sovereignty. Fox’s representation, however, gives greater prominence to the statement’s warning concerning Iran’s “real capabilities”. Although the sovereignty-based argument is retained in the article, it is subordinated to a headline and surrounding commentary that foreground confrontation and deterrence. The difference therefore concerns not simply what information is retained, but which element is given initial and greater discursive prominence.

A similar pattern appears in Fox’s representation of Pezeshkian’s “total war” statement. The Persian source-context includes:

ما در یک جنگ تمام‌عیار با آمریکا و اسرائیل و اروپا هستیم.

We are in a full-scale war with America, Israel, and Europe.

The surrounding discourse further states:

از هر طرف ما را محاصره کرده‌اند.

They have besieged us from every side.

The two clauses are important when considered together. The “total war” formulation occurs within a broader account of multidimensional pressure and siege. Fox’s headline, however, foregrounds “total war” as the principal news value. The phrase is not mistranslated or fabricated; rather, its increased prominence alters the informational hierarchy through which the statement is initially encountered. The broader explanation of siege consequently functions as contextual support for a headline-centered reading of the Iranian president’s statement as a declaration of “total war”.

The nuclear-rights discourse provides another example of thematic reframing. Araghchi states:

ایران به عنوان یکی از امضاکنندگان مؤسس معاهده ان پی تی، کاملاً حق داشتن چرخه کامل سوخت هسته‌ای را دارد.

As a founding signatory to the NPT, Iran has every right to possess the full nuclear fuel cycle.

The initial phrase “As a founding signatory to the NPT” functions as a marked theme, establishing a legal frame before the claim concerning Iran’s nuclear rights is presented. The proposition therefore begins from treaty membership and legal entitlement. By contrast, the broader Fox News discourse frequently situates Iran’s nuclear activities within a security-oriented frame. The difference is consequently one of framing as well as topic: the source foregrounds Iran as a treaty participant making a rights-based claim, whereas the alternative security frame encourages the reader to approach the same activity primarily through the categories of threat and risk.

A related framing operates at the institutional level in Fox News’s recurring descriptions of Iran as a “clerical regime” and in references to state sponsorship of terrorism. Such descriptions can function as a standing interpretive frame across individual reports. Once these characteristics have been established as part of the discourse surrounding Iran, subsequent references to Iranian warnings, responses, or nuclear activities are presented against an already established background of threat and confrontation. In this sense, institutional labeling contributes to the given information surrounding later reports and can influence how the more immediate statements are interpreted.

The analysis undertaken here indicates that the ideological work of translation-mediated news discourse is often performed below the level of explicit commentary. In the selected corpus, Fox News’s representation of Iranian official statements is shaped not simply by isolated lexical choices, but by the textual organization through which agency and salience are distributed. The distinction between Theme and Rheme is useful precisely because it shows where the political subject of a clause is placed and how that subject is subsequently developed.

This finding also clarifies the value of Given–New analysis. The selected texts repeatedly treat regime-centered and threat-oriented readings as recoverable or expected, while elements of the Persian source discourse that invoke national agency, legal entitlement, cultural memory, or diplomatic conditionality are made less structurally prominent. The result is not always omission in a simple sense. More often, it is a redistribution of informational weight. What remains visible in the target text does not necessarily retain the same textual force it had in the source discourse.

The broader implication is that political news translation should not be assessed only through the binary of accuracy and inaccuracy. Such a binary is too narrow for contemporary digital journalism, where translated discourse frequently appears in hybrid forms. The more consequential question is how the receiving text reorganizes the conditions under which a political statement becomes intelligible. In the cases examined here, Iranian official discourse is repeatedly moved away from collective, legal, or diplomatic self-representation and toward securitized regime representation. This movement is achieved through the interaction of actor labelling, thematic placement, information status, and evaluative framing.

5. Conclusion

This study examined how Iranian political statements are recontextualized in Fox News through the interaction of translation, news mediation, and textual organization. By bringing Baker's (2005, 2006) narrative approach into dialogue with Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) systemic functional linguistics, the study moved beyond a comparison of lexical equivalence to examine how translated political discourse is reorganized as a message for target readers. The analysis of five statement-events showed that ideological framing may emerge not only through what is translated or omitted, but also through how actors, information, and speech acts are positioned within the target discourse.

One of the clearest patterns concerns the representation of political agency. In the Persian source discourse, formulations such as *mellat-e Iran* (the Iranian nation) construct agency through a collective national subject. In Fox News representations, this agency is at times recast through expressions such as "his regime" or "the regime", shifting the point of departure from a collective national actor to a leader-associated political entity. This change is significant because theme selection does more than identify an actor: it establishes the perspective from which the subsequent message unfolds. The difference between a national theme and a regime-centered theme consequently contributes to different representations of who is acting and how that action should be understood.

The findings also indicate that recontextualization frequently operates through redistribution of salience rather than straightforward omission. Legal, diplomatic, cultural, and sovereignty-based elements may remain in the target text while receiving less prominence than warnings, military capabilities, confrontation, or defiance. Headlines, reporting verbs, actor labels, and thematic organization play an important role in establishing this hierarchy. A statement containing several rhetorical dimensions may therefore be introduced primarily through one of them, shaping the reader's initial interpretation before the fuller content is encountered.

These findings contribute to Translation Studies by demonstrating the value of combining narrative framing with clause-level analysis. Baker's framework helps explain the broader process through which political discourse is repositioned within a target narrative, while theme–rheme and given–new systems make some of the linguistic mechanisms underlying that repositioning observable. The study thus suggests that ideological analysis of news translation can benefit from attending to the organization of information at the clause level rather than focusing exclusively on lexical choices or explicit evaluative language.

The study is necessarily limited by its small, purposively selected corpus and its focus on a single news organization and a specific period of political conflict. The findings should therefore not be taken as representative of Fox News as a whole or of English-language news discourse more broadly. Future research could examine larger and more diverse corpora across news organizations, political events, and language pairs, while combining SFL-based analysis with other dimensions of narrative framing. Such research could further clarify how recurrent patterns of thematic selection, information distribution, actor labeling, and evaluation contribute to the cross-linguistic construction of political narratives.

Acknowledgements

The author wishes to acknowledge Professor Mohammad Dabirmoghddam, whose insightful lectures on Communication and Linguistics and intellectual guidance have provided an important foundation for the researchers and contributed significantly to the development of this study.

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