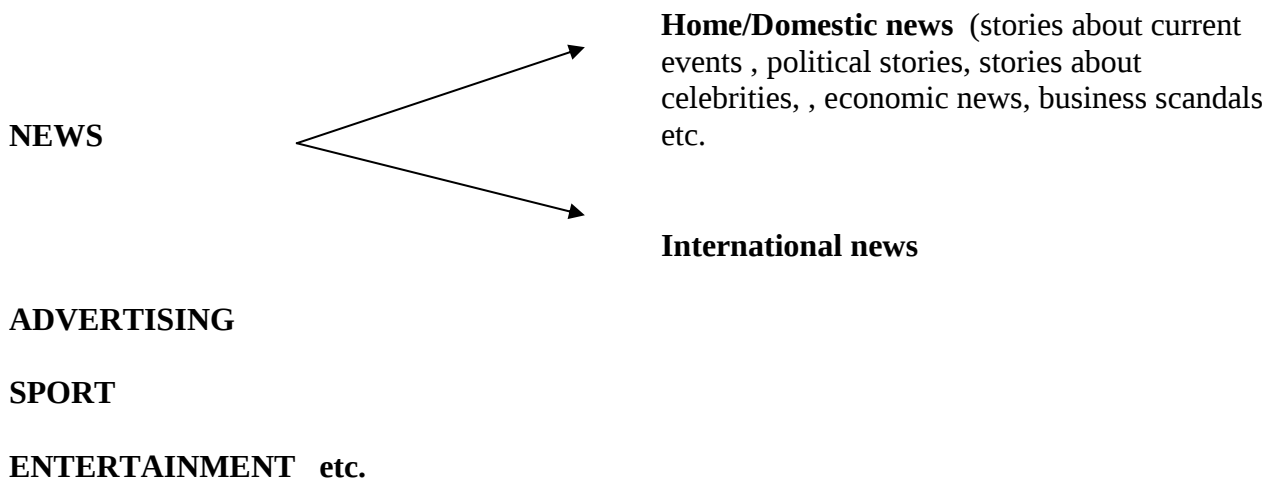


THE LANGUAGE OF NEWSPAPERS

Newspapers contain a range of items:



TYPES OF NEWS

Hard News focuses on:

Politics
Economy
War
Disasters
Accidents
Science
Technology
Law
Crimes
Protests ,etc.

Soft News focuses on:

People,
Places,
Issues that affect the reader's lives,
Communities problems etc.

Hard News refers to stories which combine the concepts of seriousness and timeliness.

A hard news story is usually an account of what happened, why it happened and how the reader will be affected. Hard news has little value after 24-48 hours.

Soft news is usually timeless, that is the story happens over a longer time span. It could appear any day over reasonably long period without affecting its newsworthiness.

Case : Quattrocchi

As an example, we could look at a real story – the death of the Italian, Fabrizio Quattrocchi, who was kidnapped and then killed in Iraq, (April 2004). The facts appeared as **hard news** in stories mentioning the classic components of a news story: *who, where, when, how and why*. During the period of his capture, **soft news** stories appeared focussing on other angles, such as his family, his work, the daily life of Italians working in Iraq etc..

Hard news stories are based on 5 **W's** *who? what? when? where? and why/how?*, which are essential to a news story.

THE STRUCTURE OF NEWS STORIES

The structure of news stories is based on a nucleus and radiating satellites that make up the body:

NUCLEUS includes: Over-line ↓ Headline ↓ Sub-head or summary line/by-line ↓ Lead ↓ Wrap - up	BODY includes: Satellites
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The **headline** and the **lead** are the basis for how the story will develop.

Similar information may be found in the body of the story.

The **lead**, which follows the headline, often in bold font, elaborates the headline but it is not an introduction. It can contain the main idea of the news story, that is the focus of the story or what the story is about. The event can begin at the point which is considered to be of the greatest interest.

The **lead** should also give some or all of the 5 W's(**who?, what?, where?, when?, and why /how?**)

The **headline** may also be followed by a subhead or summary line which qualifies or elaborates the headline before the lead, and by-line, which tells who wrote the story. An over-line can appear above the headline to clarify it.

The **wrap – up** (the optional paragraph) of a story is not a conclusion, but it indicates a resolution .

The **satellites** may :

- Reformulate the information given in the nucleus;
- Add information to it;
- Give causes and conditions

The satellites of hard news stories are based on 5 **W's: who, what, where, when, how / why** which are essential to news stories.

Example: the crocodile story (see the photocopy)

Case : Structure of news story.

Looking at the “crocodile story” we find that the nucleus, which includes the headline and lead, summarises the *who? what? where? and when?* of the story, as well as the angle the story takes (that a tourist was attacked by a crocodile). The body of text which follows takes the form of satellites; each satellite, or group of sentences is independent of the others, and is derived from the nucleus, not another satellite. In this text we find 7 satellites (S=satellite, p=paragraph)

S1: (p2)telling who? and where?;

S2: (p3) what? The cause of the event;

S3: (p4-5) police involvement, and their hypotheses;

S4: (p6) what is happening today;

S5: (p7 -10)the involvement of the company the victim worked for;

S6: (p11) police responsibility, and how they are dealing with the event;

S7 (p12-15) a description of what actually happened.

Paragraph 16 wraps up the story, but is not a conclusion as such. It does not summarise the satellites, but connects back to the nucleus while echoing satellite 2.

Task: Mother kills son (see the photocopy)

CHARACTERISTICS OF NEWSPAPER HEADLINES

Analysis of newspapers involves a consideration not only of reporting styles but also of headline styles since both of them reveal much about ideology and aims of an individual paper.

Headlines will be the focus of our analysis.

To catch the reader's attention, **headlines** need to be simple, easily readable and appropriate to the kind of paper in which they are printed. The choice of words for a headline is affected by the ideas to be expressed and by the kind of reader associated with a paper. The structure is often described as telegraphic. For reasons of space headlines tend not to use finite verbs (i.e. verbs in the past, present or future tenses), auxiliary verbs or adverbs. In these cases there is no time reference. Alternatively, the verb may be incorporated in a noun phrase by class-shifting, or **nominalization**, becoming a dynamic noun.

Sometimes a headline can be ambiguous, it can have two meanings. For example **ambiguity** can occur when a word could be interpreted differently depending on its word class.

e.g. LOCAL MAN FINDS PICASSO DRAWING IN SHED

The **ambiguity** occurs in whether the word DRAWING is a verbal noun premodified by Picasso or whether it is a present participle.

Language Features

The omission of words;

the use of short words;

the use of loaded words (words with strong connotations);

the use of nominalization;

the use of noun phrases;

the use of gimmicks (puns, word play ,metaphor, alliteration, rhyme)

Omission of words

The words omitted are usually *function words*, that is grammatical words that do not carry intrinsic meaning : determiners (some, this, that, the, a, an, etc), pronouns (relative pronouns), auxiliaries (be, have, do).Titles (Mrs, Sir, Lord) and punctuation may be also omitted.

e.g. Bush likely to name 2nd nominee next week (*President, to be, the* omitted)
(President Bush is likely to name the 2nd nominee next week)

Short words

e.g. row = argument

aid = assistance

raid = robbery.

Tabloids make a greater use of shorter words and more sensational words.

e.g. Monster in the classroom

Loaded words

Loaded words are words that carry particular strong connotations that is, carry an emotional loading beyond their literal meaning.

e.g. wealthy : **rich** (negative connotation) **well off/affluent** (positive connotation)

Noun phrases

Noun phrases can be nouns on their own (cars ,people) , but often include other words such as determiners (*these* cars, *the* people, *a* pensioner), numbers (*a thousand* dollars) , adjectives (these *fast* cars ,the *important* people), called **modifiers**. Noun phrases can also be pronouns.

The main noun in a noun phrase is called the **headword**, the last word in the chain of words.

e.g. the three *people* ; the sweet *perfume*

e.g. PM defeats Iraq troops pull out *call*. (the call to pull troops out of Iraq).

e.g. I've got two *boys*, and *they* both enjoy playing tennis

Many headlines are noun phrases.

e.g. Shoplifting *arrests*
(The Independent)

Task

Here is a news story in standard English. Turn it into a single noun phrase that would make an appropriate headline and label the modifiers and the headword:

“A Labrador, Daisy, has had to have emergency veterinary treatment after she ate a daffodil.”

possible headline :

DAFFY	DAISY'S	VET - DASH	PANIC
modifier	modifier	modifier	headword

Nominalization (a noun can be used instead of a verb)

Headlines may not contain a verb. The action is frequently nominalized (turned into a noun) becoming a dynamic noun.

e.g. Jailed Iraqi abuse soldier in tears (the soldier who abused)

Gimmiks

Gimmiks are strategies that can create ambiguity. They include:

Puns, that is plays on words, which include :

homophones : words with the same sound but a different spelling and meaning.

e.g . DR SPUHLER WILL MAINTAIN SWISS ROLE

The phrase SWISS ROLE is a homophone of SWISS ROLL

Homonyms : words with the same sound and spelling but different meaning.

e.g. WOMEN WHO SMOKE HAVE LIGHTER CHILDREN

This headline, which is a story about the risks of smoking in pregnancy, contains an ambiguous use of the word **lighter**. This word lighter is a homonym. It can be an adjective meaning less heavy (the factual meaning required by the story) but it can also be a known meaning a device for lighting a cigarette.

Intertextuality

Intertextuality means reference to familiar phrases, which are already known to the reader, many coming from film and book titles or the words of songs.

e.g. MY FUR LADY, ZARA THE BOHEMIAN (how the Queen's grand-daughter was dressed)

A pun based on Intertextuality : My Fur Lady echoes My Fair Lady, a musical film.

Metaphor

A metaphor describes one thing in terms of another, creating an implicit comparison.

e.g. - Time is running out

e.g.- Political gains must be weighed up against the costs (gains, weighed up, costs. Politics seen in terms of finance)

Alliteration

Alliteration is the repetition of sounds ,usually consonants.

e.g. BUTTER BATTLE SPREADS

Rhyme

Words which rhyme.

e.g. CRIME OF THE TIMES

Verbs

We have seen that headlines tend not to use **finite verbs**, it is the lead which will anchor the story in time with a generic reference, sometimes, however, the verb is present and may appear in one of the following forms : the present simple-the past participle –the infinitive – the future with modal verbs and the conditional. Other tenses may appear but normally in **tabloids**.

The past participle is used to signal the **passive voice**. Some headlines use the **passive voice** to focus the reader's attention on a particular element, particularly on what happened rather than on the people involved. By omitting the *by* + *agent*, readers can be left in suspense.

e.g. World Cup matches "fixed in the Far East"
(The Observer)

The passive voice allows the newspaper to attract attention to the noun phrase "*World Cup matches*" which would be in the object site of an active sentence.

Headlines may have a visual function. The picture can give meaning to the headline or add an extra dimension of meaning.

e.g. AND THEY ALL LIVED

This story carries meaning because it was accompanied by a picture of the crashed plane .

Newspapers in Britain

National Newspapers

There are two types of National newspapers in Britain and most of them express a political opinion, therefore they may be RIGHT WING or LEFT WING.

Broadsheets/Quality newspapers <i>(large size)</i> The Times (the oldest newspaper ,right wing) Sunday Times (right wing) Daily Telegraph (right wing) The Sunday Telegraph (right wing) The Observer (slightly left wing) The Guardian (slightly left wing) The Independent (neutral) Financial Times (neutral)	Tabloids/Popular newspapers <i>(compact-sized format)</i> The Sun (the biggest –selling, right wing) Daily Express (right wing) Daily mail (right wing) Daily Star (right wing) Daily Mirror (left wing) Sunday Mirror (left wing) News of the World (right wing)
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There are other newspapers for example **local** and **regional** newspapers.

Differences between Broadsheets and Tabloids

Broadsheets (serious – minded newspapers) - Headlines are small. They usually extend over to columns . The print tends to be smaller. Front page headlines, however, are sometimes an exception. - Long and detailed articles about national and international events. - The photos are small. - Lexis is more formal and specific. - The angle adopted tends to be more factual .The tone is often controlled . - Punctuation is used traditionally and formally. Dashes are less frequent. - Co-ordinators in the initial position are <i>not common</i>. Cohesion is created through referencing and lexical repetition rather than through conjunctions.	Tabloids (less serious newspapers) - Headlines are big . they are typed in bold print and may extend across the whole page. The front page headlines can occupy more space than the whole article they refer to. - Shorter articles about less important events. - Lots of stories about famous people. - Photos are large often in colour. - Lexis is often emphatic with short and sensational words. - The angle adopted is human. News stories (political, economic, etc.) are directly linked to people. The tone is conversational and the approach sensational and dramatic. - Punctuation is used sparingly. Comas are often omitted after initial adverbials and between strings of adjectives . This avoids complicating the reading process. Dashes make the style quite informal - Co-ordinators in initial position are <i>common</i>: e.g. And Lisa, 23, is hoping for success tomorrow.
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The style of **tabloids** is distinctive with its sensational approach and dominant front page headlines, while the style of **broadsheets** is distinctive with its factual approach.

e.g.: **IT'S PADDY PANTSDOWN**
(The Sun)

Mps rally to Ashdown
(The Independent)

Each of the two headlines reports on the same event: the revelation that the politician **Paddy Ashdown** had had an affair with his secretary. The **Independent** considers the political results of the event. The **Sun** focuses on the more sordid side of the event, punning on Ashdown's name and the collocation "caught with your pants down".

e.g. : **ICE-BLOCK KID**
Karlee,2,survives six hours locked out of home at – 22°C
(The Sun)

Girl frozen alive on her own doorstep
(The Daily Telegraph)

The **Sun** aims to attract attention and uses both a capitalised headline and a sub-headline. It pervades more information than the **Telegraph** aiming to catch the reader's interest. The colloquial noun KID is typical of the paper's chatty style. The headline is a *noun phrase* and the *sub-headline* is a complex sentence. The use of the present tense creates a sense of immediacy, adding to the dramatic impact.

The **Telegraph** uses a straightforward, factual headline which is simple and yet still dramatic. It is a simple sentence in structure. The prepositional phrase functioning as an adverbial highlights the fact that this took place at home, making the story more interesting . It does not use capitalisation.

At present the differences between tabloids and broadsheets are breaking down.

- Many of the broadsheets have stories about famous people.
- Tabloids used to be cheaper than broadsheets, but The Times is now the cheapest national newspaper.
- The Times and the Independent have both switched to a compact – sized format.

Newspapers in the USA

National Newspapers

There are more than 1500 daily newspapers in the USA. Each one is usually sold only in one part of the country, but they cover national and international news. In large cities, there is often more than one newspaper and the different ones express different political opinions.

Newspapers sold in nearly all parts of the USA

USA Today

The Wall Street Journal

The New York Times

Los Angeles Times

Washington Post

International Herald Tribune: it is an international newspaper and it is part of the New York Times Company . It is based in Paris, printed at 33 sites throughout the world, for sale in more than 180 countries.