ARTICLE TITLE
THE ROLE OF LANGUAGE IN NEWS DISCOURSE

AUTHOR(S)
Mehriban Monsumova

ARTICLE INFO

DOI
https://doi.org/10.31435/rsglobal_ijitss/30062022/7809

RECEIVED
12 March 2022

ACCEPTED
21 April 2022

PUBLISHED
26 April 2022

LICENSE
This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.

© The author(s) 2022. This publication is an open access article.
THE ROLE OF LANGUAGE IN NEWS DISCOURSE

Mehriban Monsumova, Odlar Yurdu University, Baku, Azerbaijan

DOI: https://doi.org/10.31435/rsglobal_ijitss/30062022/7809

ARTICLE INFO
Received 12 March 2022
Accepted 21 April 2022
Published 26 April 2022

KEYWORDS
news discourse, media, fact, word, radio, television, language, speech.

ABSTRACT
In the article, first of all, the concepts of fact and accurate information are disclosed that make up the text of the news. Because an event worthy of news status should be taken as fact. Otherwise, high-quality media will refuse to distribute the material. In addition, it is very important to accurately convey the fact to the public. That is, the maximum proximity of the prepared material to the event accepted as fact increases the accuracy of the information. First of all, a journalist needs to have a perception of the event, to have sufficiently comprehensive information, to correctly understand reality, to have impartiality, objectivity and a sufficient lexical and grammatical base to express his formed opinion. The article also analyzes the important points to pay attention to in the choice of words and sentences in the preparation of news material, depending on the type of media. Thus, different ways of delivering information in different media also have an impact on news materials. For example, the simplicity and clarity of words, the size, and structure of sentences are approached differently, depending on whether the real audience is a reader, listener, or viewer.


Copyright: © 2022 Mehriban Monsumova. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY). The use, distribution or reproduction in other forums is permitted, provided the original author(s) or licensor are credited and that the original publication in this journal is cited, in accordance with accepted academic practice. No use, distribution or reproduction is permitted which does not comply with these terms.

Introduction. The quality of a news discourse is measured by its accuracy. The level of accuracy is determined by the degree of inconsistency between the formation of the idea to be conveyed in the text of the message, its delivery methods, and the interpretation of the message recipient. There are discursive explanations of the causes of all these inconsistencies and discursive methods from a linguistic point of view to minimize these discrepancies. There are differences in the application of these methods depending on the media. Thus, the accuracy factor creates the clarity factor. Because the event must first be clear to the communicator, and then he must, through the material prepared by him, make the event (again) understandable for the reader, listener, and viewer. Each media has its own specifics. News material is also prepared with these features in mind, aiming to make everything clear to its audience. And depending on the correct perception of information, the accuracy coefficient is justified. This is because accuracy is compromised if the information is not perceived or misunderstood by any member of the mass communication process chain. Depending on this approach, the main goal is to investigate the features of the news discourse in various media and to try to follow the balance between accuracy and clarity of the news in the media. As there may be other reasons for inaccurate news. For example, external interference, different contexts, and so on.

Not surprisingly, after realizing the complexity of the media and the discourse approach allowing answers to many questions, most researchers consider the discursive approach to media research to be a promising area. Because discourse has a multifaceted approach that allows the media to be universally discovered, described, solved, and explained by many research issues.

In media discourse, the topic of the text is either known in advance or is determined depending on the interpretation made by the users of the language. The subject of the text is determined primarily by the author of the text (addressee). If we talk about a specific news discourse, the process of reflecting reality in the material begins with its perception by the journalist. To do this, he needs enough facts about the incident.
Although the Latin word for “fact” is described in dictionaries as “a real event,” the media needs impeccable sources to turn any event into a fact. In modern practice, the rule of “at least two sources” is used. This rule goes something like this: for any information to be considered a fact, it must be confirmed by at least two different independent sources. It means that:

1. Source A did not receive information from B.
2. A and B did not receive information from the same source C.

That is, both A and B are considered first-hand sources. (Çaplı, 2017: 14) If the source of the fact is not specified, the trust in the information is reduced, and this may even be perceived as a subjective position or an invention of the journalist.

The abundance and versatility of facts allow the journalist to look at the event from different angles, forming a relatively objective position about the event. Based on his position, a specific idea arises in the direction of creating future material. He expresses this opinion in a certain language. "Expressing an idea through language is called speech." That is, a fact is transformed into a news text through speech.

One of the rules of journalistic ethics, written more than 100 years ago by the famous American journalist Walter Williams, who founded the school of journalism, says: Clear thinking, clear language, accuracy, and honesty are the foundation of good journalism. (Ерофеев, 2018: 63) There are two interrelated subtleties of speech accuracy:

1. An opinion formed on the basis of facts should be as close as possible to the reality (event) spoken/written about.
2. The language used should be as close as possible to the formed opinion.

That is, the accuracy of the fact depends on the accuracy of the speech. On the other hand, speech is the expression of thought through language, so the accuracy of speech depends on the accuracy of thought and language. When a fact is studied and understood correctly, thought becomes accurate, and when language accurately expresses a thought, speech becomes accurate. And as a result, the fact is accurately reflected in the material/text. "He who thinks clearly expresses it clearly." (Ерофеев, 2018: 45)

The problem is that no language can fully express a formed idea. No speech has all the lexical and grammatical bases of the language. That is, even the speech of a speaker with a high level of language proficiency is less than the entire common language. For example, no matter how well a witness describes an event, the listener's perception of the event will always be narrower than that of the witness. Because there will always be details that have not been delivered or cannot be delivered. According to RIA Novosti, German psychologists have concluded that everyone lies an average of 160-200 times a day. (https://echo.msk.ru/news/31563.html) Much of this lies stems from the fact that the idea is not expressed in precise words or the emphasis is incorrectly placed. For example, the color that we call red has different shades, and each shade has its own name. But we usually combine all these tones into one word "red". As a result, the red that the speaker is trying to describe may be different from the red that the listener imagines. In this case, that is, when the speech base lacks the linguistic base, the reality in the mind of the addressee does not coincide with the reality created in the addressee.

Sometimes there are no words to express a specific thought in a specific language. In Yakutia, for example, there are no names for fruits in the local language. This is due to the fact that all year round the climate is too low for fruit ripening. Therefore, the locals call fruits in Russian. That is, there is no word to express the concept (idea), but the words are taken from another language because the reality is not reflected in the local language.

In particular, the difference in the timing of the reception and transmission of information leads to differences in the emotional state of the communicator due to psychological and physical factors, the weakening of the initial memory, which in turn leads to distortion of information.

In addition, the opinion that led to the exact statement may not be in line with the journalist's personal position. Either the journalist must compromise his subjective position in favor of objectivity, or he must sacrifice his objective position to the subjective interests of others.

Thus, the paper aims to explore news discourse from a linguistic perspective focusing on the crucial role of language during news production. In this connection, the method of discourse analysis has been used to study news texts from various media sources such as news agencies, newspapers, news sites, television and radio news, etc.

In the analysis of discourse, there is also the idea that the first intention is conveyed in the text in a distorted form. This happens because language does not fully cover thought, and speech does not fully cover language (internal influence), and as a result of external influences, reality is not fully
covered in the text. The recipient builds his/her reality by adding the missing "elements" at the level of his worldview. That is, all obstacles, from the process of forming an idea to the process of its perception by the addressee, violate ideal accuracy. Therefore, we will refer to the concepts of accuracy, impartiality and relative objectivity. Nothing is 100%.

An opinion based on facts determines the priority hierarchy of those facts according to the position (personal, objective). The macrostructure in the news discourse is clear on the basis of priority facts. For example, both the subject and the form of the news are based on this hierarchy.

Let's clarify. Serious news is usually written in the form of an inverted pyramid. In inverted pyramid order, the most important facts are given in the first sentence or paragraph (lead), while the following sentences and paragraphs give relatively less important points. Determining the degree of importance depends not only on people's needs and perceptions of the general social reality, but also on the "policy" of the media or the reporter's personal approach to the issue (the reality is that nothing is perfect).

Language manifests itself not only as a means of expression of thought, but also as a means of its realization. The idea can be expressed in a painting, sculpture or musical work, formula or any textual discovery. However, no tool can replace language in its scope and depth. This is due to the connection between thought and language. Thus, the breadth of language allows for a wide range of ideas. Just as language finds its expression in speech, so fluent and clear speech is an expression of clear and well-formed thinking. However, let's look at the language differently from the perspective of the media.

All mass media can be divided into 3 directions according to the characteristics of message. Visual, audio and audiovisual media. According to these features, the press is considered as a visual media, radio - audio, television - audiovisual media. Media Internet can be applied to all three. The language of the media is also determined by their technical capabilities:

1. Visual media - written speech, illustrations, tables, graphs, diagrams (ie, non-moving information that can be perceived visually);
2. Audio media - oral speech, all elements of sound intonation, music, various types of noise (for example, sound information);
3. Audiovisual media - Images that move along with those of visual and audio media.

"Speech" in the media can also be viewed broadly as "language" in the media. That is, if we replace “language” with visual media in the formula “speech = thought + language”, the thought can be conveyed in the form of written speech, illustrations, tables, and so on. If we replace "language" with audio media, it is possible to convey the already formed idea by any means that can be received by audio. The language of audiovisual media allows to convey ideas both through video images. That is, the capabilities of media discourse depend on the capabilities of the media. “When you use a certain technology there is always something you can do, there is always something you cannot do, and there is always something you can do better”. (Rantanen, 2005: 142)

The news discourse is also organized according to the media's ability to deliver information. In other words, information about the incident is collected in accordance with the technical capabilities of the media, and is also prepared and delivered in accordance with the technical capabilities of the media. For example, if an informational material prepared for a newspaper is represented by photographs from the scene, visual effects with rererunds and internoises are created on the radio, and the material on television can be enriched with video images.

The first method of reporting the event in the media is the word. Thus, even in the news without comments, or in photo reports, there are notes that will clarify the image through subtitles and captions (for example, about time, place, etc.). The text of the news is read in any case. But depending on the media, it is either read by the audience or read for the audience. If the audience reads the news itself (in the press), they have the opportunity to read and master the news according to their individual abilities. That is, someone reads quickly and easily understands, another reads slowly or reads several times to understand. But if the news is read for an audience (on radio, television), the text should be written in such a way that with a single reading of the reader (presenter, reporter) everything was clear to the target audience. In this case, the news should be easy to read and sound good. The speed of the reader's speech is determined by the rules of the news program, but in any case, the news is not read at a slow pace. In general, the normal (average) pace of reading a news text is 120-140 words per minute. That's about 2 words per second. (Даутова, Анохин, 2018:20) (On average, newscasters read at a speed of about 15-16 standard lines of text per minute (White, Barnas, 2010: 105) One printed A4 page is read in about two minutes (Epofoeen, 2018: 51)
Also, the text of the news should have a logical, consistent structure, and in the process of reading the correct emphasis on words and sentences, a good timbre and not boring tone for news material, as well as speech without foreign and regional language accents helps to understand the text read quickly and not get confused. Research studies show that defective speech by a journalist on the air is unacceptable. (Powers, Haller, 2017: 68) However, “With professional guidance, almost anyone can become a competent broadcaster” (Mills, 2004: 5). That is, “Not everyone is born with ‘great pipes’, and that’s OK….Your goal should be to make the most out of the voice you were born with and to sound natural when you read a story out loud” (Wenger, Potter, 2015: 278).

Of course, if audiovisual news is watched on the Internet, it is possible to watch the same story over and over again, but who can be sure that the user will want to re-read, listen or watch incomprehensible material - be it visual, audio, or audiovisual. Therefore, the news should be understandable from the first reception. In any case, the specifics of television and radio do not allow to return to the material many times. The text sounds and ends at a certain time. The listener should understand what he hears without "intralingual translation". He doesn't even have time for that. It is impossible to go back and once again listen or watch what was not heard and was not understood. Therefore, in this case, the responsibility in the process of presenting the news is doubled. Because the text of the news should be prepared to take into account this specificity of television and radio in such a way that (1) - the presenter or correspondent can read it easily, (2) - the audience and especially listeners can easily understand it.

If there is a space constraint in the press, the time constraint on television and radio requires that news be kept short and compact. Although there are no such restrictions on news sites, brevity is considered the “golden rule” of media on the Internet, because the shorter the news, the more likely it will be read or viewed. It is no coincidence that the news genre is the oldest and smallest genre of journalism. Therefore, sometimes not all the many interesting facts collected by the reporter are covered in the news. In this case, reporters try to convey as much information as possible with few words. However, it is wrong to burden sentences with facts, especially since the principle “One sentence = one idea, one paragraph = sentence” (Çaplı, 2017: 15) is taken as a basis in TV and radio news. As a result, the reporter is forced to choose the most valuable from the valuable facts. “In the American journalistic slang, this is called ‘Killing your babies” (Moharramli, Karimova, 2017: 43). This can be achieved by reducing the number and volume of citations. The main thing is not to distort the author's opinion.

The main purpose of a media text is to convey the essence. This can be done in different forms (genre, structure, etc.). But in any form, viewers will want to grasp the essence in a nutshell. Especially in the genre of news, which is distinguished and loved by its operativeness, verbosity will not be appreciated by anyone. Therefore, the text of the news should not be approached as an element of art. “Research shows that sentences longer than 15 words are difficult to understand. Listeners should not be put in the position of Spartans in ancient Greece. Once, after patiently listening to the long speech of the ambassador from the island of Samos, they said: “We forgot what he said at the beginning, and we did not understand the ending, because we could not remember the beginning” (Moharramli, Karimova, 2017: 40).

Both television and radio have specific features as a means of expressing oral language. News discourse is broadcast on radio, which is an audio media, through the means of sound expression, and on television, which is an audiovisual media, in both audio and visual forms of expression. Forms of sound expression are understood as speech - which is the expression of thought through language and speech auxiliary forms of speech - sound effects (intonation, diction, stress, and so on). Each of them plays a unique role in the transmission, perception, and influence of information and adapts to the specifics of each media. For example, visual forms of television include: "visual intonation" (facial expressions, gestures, general body behavior), which are (visual) auxiliary forms of speech, and individual external data of a person (posture, style), as well as technical means of expression as a frame, foreshortening, plan, such elements of visualization as light, color, movement, etc. have a strong influence on the spoken language, therefore the television speech differs from the speech on the radio.

In electronic media, the language of news is built in accordance with the requirements of audio speech. In particular, radio news is written for the “listener's ear”. “During the “golden age of radio,” 1930-1950, before television sets appeared in every home, the family gathering around the parlor radio console in the evening sat facing it, a natural thing to do because the radio talked to them”. (Fang, 1991: 4) Radio is not so important in any home today; it is often listened to with headphones while driving or running. In any case, currently listening to the radio is carried out in parallel with any other work. Therefore, the radio news text surpasses other media in its simplicity and closeness to a living language. The goal is for information to be
heard, to grab attention, to be easy to understand and think about, or to be etched into memory so that it can be shared with someone. Radio news has a golden rule called KISS (ing. “Keep It Short and Simple” or “Keep it short and sweet”) (Davian VLAD, 2018: 79). This is due to the fact that the radio works on only one sense organ (ear). Therefore, the text of the news is written and delivered to the audience, amplified by sound effects, using the means that will cause the ear to freely perceive, understand and remember.

Unlike other media, live sound is more important in radio news. Thus, while videos on television and photos in the press create a visual image of an event and its participants, live sounds play an important role in creating visibility in radio broadcasts. Live sounds include direct speech of the communicator from the scene (journalist, interviewer), intersounds and reperunds. Starting a radio broadcast with clearly understood live sound helps to feel the immediate atmosphere of the events. Interesting, informative quotes are given first, and if there are repetitions in the interviewer's speech, they are shortened. If the reporter's text alternates with the interlocutor's speech, a few seconds internoise between them prevents the audio speech from mixing. Although ending the story with a quote is not considered a success, refund or intershum + text can be considered a successful ending for a news report. (Moharramli, Karimova, 2017: 43)

By adding liveliness to speech in radio news, a picture of what is happening is created in the brain. Therefore, in spite of the fact that important facts are given in the materials of radio news, the text is not filled with figures and statistics. Thus, in the language of live speech, events are not aggravated by large numbers or long names, events are visualized by stable, simple speech. Instead, the preference is given to the description of the event and the observations of the journalist. However, the news is not the kind of journalistic genre that expresses the personal position and feelings of a journalist. In any case, serious news discourse in high-quality media would ideally be presented in a neutral manner.

In audiovisual media, the main requirement is that the word does not repeat the image. If the video shows children playing football in the dump, what's the point of saying it in one word?! Rather, the video will be more informative if it talks about the causes of this uncleanliness, which causes people's dissatisfaction, and investigates the indifference of the relevant agencies to eliminate this situation, or focuses on their expected measures in this direction. Since visual effects are a priority on television, the principle of "save words if you can show" is adhered to. At the same time, the small number of words and the shortness of the text make it easier to understand the information and reduce the attempts to manipulate the audience with the information. The text should convey what is not in the image or explain the image if necessary. In other words, it should not match the image to the text, but the text to the image. There is only one exception: if someone is mentioned in the text, that person must be shown in the frame immediately (in this case, the image "obeyed" the text).

However, in stand-ups (a journalist transmits information in the frame from the scene), the background, although it should coincide with the event about which the report is being conducted, should not distract from the reporter's speech. In other words, although stand-ups have a well-founded image, the word is a priority over the image. Therefore, stand-up is not a reporter's PR in a news story, but a means of conveying important information and gaining public trust.

It should be noted that what can be said about the visuality-word relationship can also be said about natural sound-words. For example, if it is possible to repeat the slogan of the rally to the audience, it is pointless to repeat the slogan in the text. If natural sounds need to be heard, a behind-the-scenes reporter or stand-up reporter should be able to pause his or her speech when needed.

Thus, in addition to the collected facts, television and radio news are recorded on the basis of video and audio. When a text is written based on successful visual materials, the news material is also successful. When a text is written and sounds and images are added to it, there can be inconsistencies, and objectivity is reduced. Because the second case may direct the audience in the direction of a subjective idea.

In newspaper news, the first word is important, then the image, on the radio natural noise (inner sound) + word, and in television news - the first image, then inter sound + word. In other words, in the visual media (both newspapers and websites), the event is first reported in words and then, if possible, in photographs. In the audio media, with the priority of the collected voices, the event is conveyed in words. And audiovisual media write text based on collected images, and if necessary, non-textual images are preferred over non-visual texts. Because despite the fact that the main information is conveyed through the text, the viewer is more affected by the image and it is more memorable. “...Only through visual media good contact with viewers can be established. …In comparison to other media, visual media can attract more viewers for good visuals” (Mishra, Nanda, 2017: 27).
But there are also montages based on the text. For some data (for example, rising or falling oil prices) it is not possible to shoot on camera a specific event and show. In this case, the selected frames do not have a substantial information load, but they are adapted to the sentences and make it easier to understand the extra-frame text.

News stories shy away from trendy phrases or idioms that become meaningless because everyone uses them too often. And the concepts and meanings that they express are conveyed in non-prominent words, making the text smoother for the reader or the listener's ear. Replacing borrowed words if they can be expressed and understood in our own language also helps to maintain the purity of the language.

The most important thing in a news discourse is that each word in the text has an information load. By removing the words "parasite" from the text, which have no basis in meaning, and going directly to the essence of the message, we also shorten it. Duplicate opinions should also not be included in the news text. Sometimes, to better express an idea, it is again expressed by "changing the places of the main members of the sentences" or using synonyms. Such cases are more common at stand-ups during live broadcasts, and this is understandable because the text is not read, it is said impulsively. However, if we are talking about a successful news speech/text, the idea should be expressed only once in the most ideal form after it has been concretely formed.

The use of words expressing a feature of an object as an indicator of assessment is perceived as manipulation of the audience, therefore their number is minimized or excluded in the news discourse. "Most adjectives can be replaced by more precise, specific words. Adverbs usually indicate that there is a verb that needs strengthening. Adjectives are imprecise" (Acholonu, 2014: ch.7).

Adjectives can only be used when expressing a real opinion. For example, in the phrase “beautiful girl,” the dependent part is considered a personal position of the journalist because it is only natural that some people may not consider her “beautiful”. But in the phrase "blonde girl" the adjective reflects reality, and therefore the adjective expresses objectivity.

In the news media discourse, the expression of an open personal opinion or the opinion of the editorial board, the private approach of the channel to the event is not allowed. That is, the pronoun "I", especially "we", if used to denote a subjective attitude, and not to emphasize the value of intimacy, will not be present in a professionally prepared, unbiased news text. "Whom do you mean by “we” and in this case, who are "you"? When we say “we are confident”, whose confidence are you talking about, and who is insecure in this case? etc.” (Çaplı, 2017: 72)

Conclusions. Thus, simple, common words are used to make the information easier to understand; short sentences for quick understanding; news text for memorization are not aggravated by the abundance of names and numbers. The news discourse tries to answer all possible questions that may arise, but does not require analysis. News discourse does not analyze, it only works with facts, but creates the basis for extensive analysis.

Sentences and paragraphs in the news text have a logical sequence and create the integrity of the text. The integrity of the text is also reflected in the style. Because the stylistic difference between the paragraphs destroys the integrity of the text. Stylistic mistakes are the most common and most difficult to correct. For example, simplifying speech / text by moving from a formal style to a journalistic style or living language while maintaining the formality of news is the most difficult part of the editing process. For a story to be fluent, the transition between sentences and paragraphs in the text must be smooth, coherent, and consistent.

To write or talk about complex things easily, need to have a wide lexical base. This is equally important when creating a flawless style. In addition, a wider vocabulary allows to express thoughts more accurately. And this is the most important feature of the news discourse.

REFERENCES


