

Text types and language varieties in a diachronic perspective

Language varieties -> language used in relation to specific kind of texts. It comprises both macrostructure and microstructure. The examination of macrostructure requires the analysis of the functional/semantic components of a text (how it appears), while the micro one includes the lexical, syntactic and grammatical level.

Diachronic perspective -> how the text change over time. Texts will be analysed in relation to the language of texts in a period of time and how such texts and language have changed. The starting point is the early modern period (1500-1700).

Historical pragmatics -> looking at the changes of languages in relation to the time context.

Other definitions:

- A.H. Jucker: historical pragmatics is a field of study that wants to understand the patterns of intentional human interaction of earlier periods, the historical developments of these patterns, and the general principles underlying such developments.
- I. Taavitsainen and S.M. Fitzmaurice: historical pragmatics focuses on language use in past contexts and examines how meaning is made. It is an empirical brunch of linguistic study.
- A. Jacobs and A.H. Jucker: historical pragmatics deal with the changes in the linguistic structure resulting from altered communicative needs which are due to changes in the social structure or in the situational context.

Section 1 Language of News

A. Importance of news and how to present it in early modern England

Seventeenth-century: market for news. Readers were not prepared to spend money for a weekly news pamphlet unless news was convincing. This troubled news writers then just as much as it does now (21 century). However, in 17th century, the news revolution process began.

B. How was news communicated at the beginning of the 17th century?

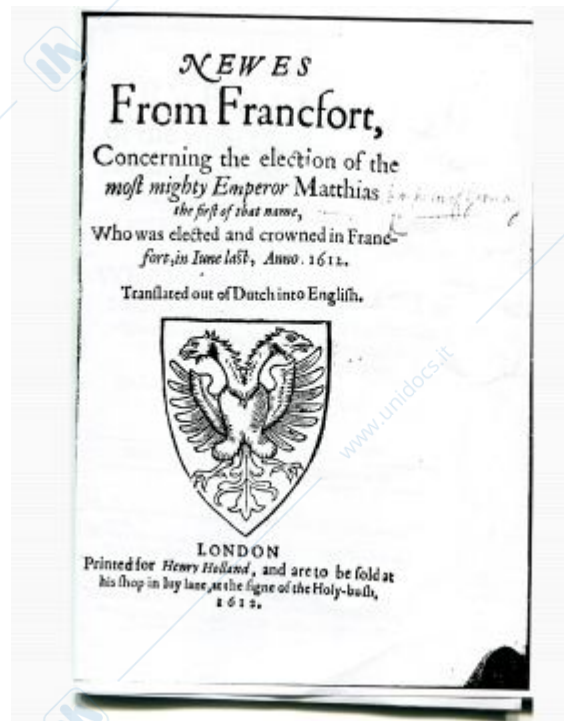
Speech: friends, proclamations and written text read out aloud in public places.
Written: manuscript (letters) or print (proclamations, occasional news pamphlets).

C. Occasional News Pamphlets (1600-1620)

During this period, occasional news pamphlets most commonly carried the word "newes" or "relation" on their title pages, the terms appear together or they are reported singly.

The format was small quarto and woodcuts were often found on the title page. The font was usually gothic, the number of word per page varied between 350 and 400. The pamphlets

reported both foreign and domestic events, none of these considered controversial by the English monarchy of the day. For much of the early modern period, the book trade in London (pamphlets, gazettes,..) centered around St. Pauls; from eighteenth century onwards also Fleet Street became associated with the English press.



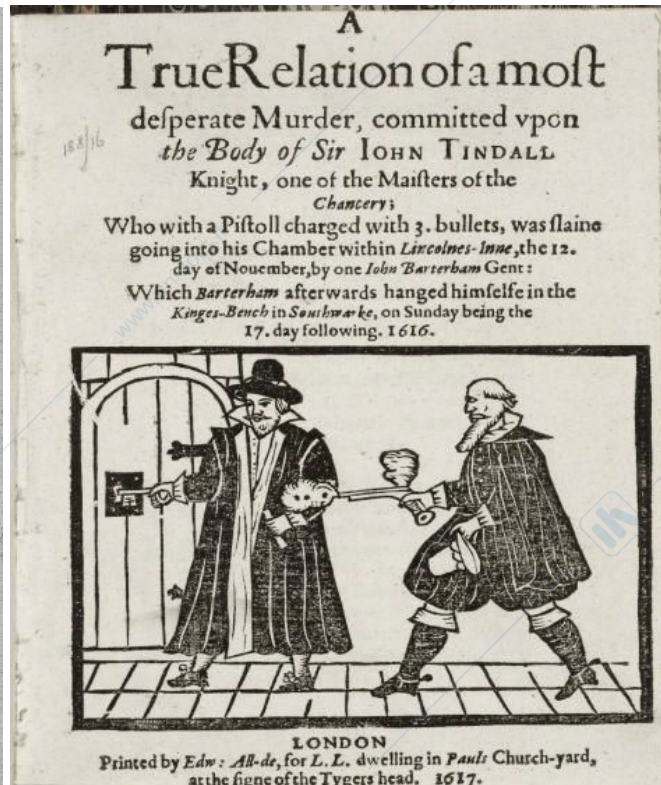
Analysis:

- The title page shows the gothic font and the big black letters (-> default font).
- there are some typographic varieties (-> *italic*, CAPITAL LETTERS, **size of the letters**). These varieties are important for all the kinds of communication.
- The importance of the news translation is given.
- The information about the text are given, for example, it is said where the text has been published (-> imprint).

D. Paratext

- The additional information of a text.
- Genette (1997): paratext indicates those partes of a text that provide a framework for the written text. The elements typically included are: title page, preface, contents pages, illustrations and appendices. Genette said that paratext is a "*privileged place of pragmatics and a strategy, of an influence on the public, an influence that [...] is at the service of a better reception for the text and a more pertinent reading of it*". This definition of Genette's is applicable to paratextual features of many early seventeenth-century news pamphlets: many of them make extensive use of paratext to attract, inform and orient the reader.

What catches readers attention on the title page? Halfpage woodcuts (particularly frequent in crime and natural disaster news, they are often dramatic and sensational, with images). Semantic point of view. Text in contents summary can be divided into different parts: the initial information (relating to the subject of the relation); further background details (concerning the event) and explicit editorial comment (on how the news will affect the reader). The first part is always foundable, whilst the other two elements are only sometimes present.



Picture 1:

- The information is directly given in the first sentences.
- An editorial comment on how readers will react to the text is given by the words: "reade and tremble".
- The word "relation" is usually associated with "true, most true" and with adjectives related to the authenticity of the news.
- Details about the 5W and the 1H (what, where, when, who, why, how) are often found in the title page summaries.

Picture 2:

- The layout and the typographic variations are quite similar to the previous image.
- Foregrounding words (words that foreground a particular message) and conative function of the occasional news pamphlet -> attract the readers' attention. The arresting image is also fundamental.
- "Most" -> superlative (a dramatic tone is added).
- "Desperate" -> hyperbole.
- "True" -> strategy that gives reliability (= affidabilità) to the news.
- Multimodality of the transmission of the message (through different means).

Furthermore, the conative function is still significant in the visual aids we could find nowadays. The visual aid and the images have the same function of the woodcuts in the 17th century. Also the title page and the headline (introduction) are present.

Dating apps fuel rise in sex attacks: Sites linked to reports of rape and grooming

*Crime involving dating apps Tinder and Grindr have risen sevenfold
Includes serious offences like rape, assault, and child exploitation
Figures were revealed through a Freedom of Information Act request
Just 55 cases were recorded in 2013, compared to 412 last year*

By **DAILY MAIL REPORTER**

PUBLISHED: 00:02 GMT, 11 January 2016 | UPDATED: 00:08 GMT, 11 January 2016

The figures have prompted calls for app users to be better educated about the dangers of meeting people online, amid fears they are 'just the tip of the iceberg'. 'If we are going to base the formation of a relationship on a photo and a few lines of text, how do we know that person is who they say they are?' said Andy Phippen, a professor of digital responsibility at Plymouth University.

'It is something we tell children about – don't trust who people say they are online – but adults go merrily about thinking it is a good way of [finding a partner].'

The figures have been revealed through the Freedom of Information Act, which is under threat from the Government. Ministers claim it is 'too costly' to administer and have ordered a review. Some 30 police forces responded to the request, which showed that two years ago there were just 21 crime reports involving the dating app Tinder, compared with 277 in 2015. Meanwhile Grindr saw numbers rise from 34 in 2013 to 135 last year. Tinder is hugely popular among heterosexual daters with around 50million users worldwide.



E. Occasional epistolary news pamphlets and credibility of sources (1600-1620)

News was a commodity of high value, and people who had important news had surely the wish to communicate it to their preferred addressee. In the 17th century, people also used to foreground the social status of the addresser in order to give credibility to the news transmitted, so the people giving the information was socially important. The addressee must check the source and the credibility of the news, otherwise, it will be socially outrageous for the people who is sending the information. By indicating the high status of the addresser and addressee, publishers achieve two important objectives: giving news value and giving news reliability through the correspondents' respectability. In addition, the supplier of the news could gain financial advantages and could increasing his personal status.

Usually, the news transmission was in the form of epistolary news. Sometimes the reader could receive a pamphlet with the copy of the original letter, otherwise the standard

epistolary conventions were available whereas s/he received the original letter instead of a copy. In conclusion, the letters provide paratextual information regarding not just the contents of the letter, but also the background of either the addresser or addressee or both. In modern news, newspapers emphasise where is possible or appropriate, the high status of the news source. Nowadays, letters have less impact compared to other media.

F. First English periodical news pamphlets (1620): The role of translation

2 December 1620 marked an historic break from the way news was packaged and sold in the past. The major change was the more frequent and regular publication of the pamphlet: single numbers started covering news from many different places in the same issues (before, the publication of the news pamphlet was completely irregular). However, up until September 1621, the news sheet itself was printed in the Netherlands and not in England. Amsterdam was considered as “the centre of European journalism” where publishers started to sell new sheets containing various forms of written news from everywhere in Europe (the most important one was the *avvisi*). In the late 1620, the Dutch news began to be translated into French, then on 2 December, the first English *coranto* appeared. The *coranto* was a single-sheet news publication. Consisting of one leaf in small folio, amounting on average to about 2,000 words, with two columns of news on each side of the two pages, these corantos were in format the same as their Dutch counterparts. Their content too very closely reflected the news found in the Dutch versions. Readers’ attention was immediately captured by these publications. Corantos used to provide news about the Thirty Years War or about religion.

F.1. Translation in seventeenth-century: English news

News translation had a fundamental role in the dissemination of foreign news in England. Remember that English print news was itself translated into other languages. However, in order to comprehend the role of the translation, it is vital to examine the strategies adopted in the translation from Dutch to English. Apart from those passages containing news about England, which were eliminated for censorship reasons, translators chose to do a literal translation of the Dutch corantos, as it can be seen from the comparison between the extract taken from Broer Jansz’s Dutch coranto of 3rd July 1621 and the one taken from its English translation published the 9th July 1621.

VVt Praghe den 17.dito **Dese daghen** heestmen wederom ettcijcke Stucken gheschuts uyt het Magasijn aen verscheyden plaetsen op’t Slot alhier brenghen laten / desghelijer sal oock inde Stadt gheschien / soude van wegghen der Erecutie / ende den ooploop / daer vooren mensich bevreest/ aenghesien sijn/ ghelijck dan oock teghenwoordich / hier des Oversten van Saffars Muyterije seven Compaignien / alhier aenghecomen zijn / wel ghearmeert Dolck / alleene dat zy gheen 20orant Boeren ofte Carbiners

From Prage the 17 herof There are againe some more peeces of Ordinance caused to be fetched out of the Magazin / and brought into divers places of the Castle / the same shall also be done in the Cittie / the reason is / because they feare for an 21orant when the execution shall be. In like manner the Generall Saffars Horsemenne are 21oranto 21ora / 21oran 7. Companies strong / well Armed Men / alone they have no long gunnes or Cerbyners / they are inquartered in the old and new cittie / it is said / that the Execution shall be upon Munday or

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| <p>voeren / de selve heestmen inde Oude ende Nieuwe-Stadt gheinquartier / ende segtmen dat die erecutie op toccomende Maendach ofte Dingsdach voltrocken sal worden/ daer na sullen de Keyserlijcke Commissarissen sich van hier nae Brin in Moravien begheven / ende aldaer verghelijcken Proces voornemen / oock handelt dat Spaensclje vole in Moravien teghens die Burgherije ende Inwoonders seer Tyrannisch. Gisteren nacht hebben die alhier legghende Soldaten / de Joden Stadt plunderen willen / dan is veraccordeert worden / ende sullen de Joden den Oversten van Walsteyn een 21oran somme gelts geven morten. Die Overste Frenck gaet daghelijck alhier sonder wacht / wil een Apologia teghens Mansvelt laten uyt gaen.</p> | <p>Tuesday next / which 21oran ended the Emperours Commissioners shall goe from hence into Moravia / and there doe the like Execution. The Spanish Souldiors in Moravia doe Tyrannize very much over the Citizens and Inhabitants. The Souldiors / which lye here / would yester night have savaged the Jewes Cittie (or that part of Prague / wherein the Jewes dwell) but an Agreement is made / and the Jewes must give the Governour of Walsteyn a great som of Money. The Governour Frenk goeth dayly here up and downe / without any watch / he will sett out an Apology against Mansvelt. (<i>Courant newes out of Italy, Germany, Bohemia, Poland &c.</i>, 9 July 1621)</p> |
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Lexical omission and addition of the English translation:

- The Dutch words “Dese daghen” (“These days”) are untranslated.
- The place name “Brin” has no reference in the translation because the translator thought that this information could be irrelevant for the English public. However, a clear reference is indicated by the words “the Jewes Cittie”.
- The parenthesis (*Courant newes out of Italy, Germany, Bohemia, Poland &c.*, 9 July 1621) have no correspondence in the Dutch text, so it is an addition of the translator.
- Apart from these differences, the translation is literal, word for word.

The fact that the translators of corantos followed a literal method of translation can be contrasted with the different translation strategy adopted by the following translator of an occasional pamphlet, as it can be seen in the example taken from the *Gazette of Londres* (*London Gazette*, 1666-1688). This gazette was addressed to the French community in England and more generically to all the people who read and communicate in French. The translator into French generally provided a literal translation, however there are some exceptions as the example below: this translation has a non-literal approach.

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| <p>Paris. The 27th instant Madam was happily brought to bed of a Daughter at the Pallace of St. Clou, and was the same day visited and complimented by their Majesties and several of the Great Ladys and personages of the Court. (<i>London Gazette</i>)</p> | <p>Il 27 de ce mois, Madame fut, heureusement, delivrée d'une belle Princesse, en la délicieuse Maison de Saint Clou: & ce jour-là, recut visite de Leurs Majestez, & de plusieurs des Personnes de la Cour. (<i>Gazette de Londres</i>)</p> |
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- “Paris” or “complimented” are not found in the French version, while “délicieuse” is an addition.

F.2. Modern news: translation role and strategies

Modern-day news agencies can be viewed as vast translation agencies, structurally designed to achieve fast and reliable translations of large amounts of information. Translation is of the utmost importance in news agencies and it is inseparable from other journalistic practices that intervene in the production of news. A more flexible translation could be found in the news texts produced by global agencies in the major European languages. In translating news, the domestication is the dominant strategy adopted by journalists who rewrite texts in order to make them suitable according to the rules of the medium in which they work. The main purpose, however, is to provide information of an event in a precise and clear way. The major changes in the translation process are:

- Change of title and lead;
- Elimination of unnecessary information;
- Addition of important background info;
- Change in the order of paragraphs;
- Summarizing information.
- Change of the terminology used (-> creation of false friends).

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| 1 | <p>Chicago police detained thousands of black Americans at interrogation facility</p> |
| 5 | <p>Special report: Guardian lawsuit reveals overwhelming racial disparity at Homan Square, where detainees are still held for minor crimes with little access to the outside world, despite police denials that site is an anomaly</p> <p>Spencer Ackerman and Zach Stafford in Chicago</p> <p>Wednesday 5 August 2015 17.56 BST</p> |
| 10 | <p>At least 3,500 Americans have been detained inside a <u>Chicago</u> police warehouse described by some of its arrestees as a secretive interrogation facility, newly uncovered records reveal.</p> |
| 15 | <p>Of the thousands held in the facility known as <u>Homan Square</u> over a decade, 82% were black. Only three received documented visits from an attorney, according to a cache of documents obtained when the Guardian sued the police.</p> <p>Despite repeated denials from the Chicago police department that the warehouse is a secretive, off-the-books anomaly, the Homan Square files begin to show how the city's most vulnerable people get lost in its criminal justice system.</p> <p>People held at Homan Square have been subsequently charged with everything from "drinking alcohol on the public way" to murder. But the scale of the detentions – and the racial disparity therein – raises the prospect of major civil-rights violations.</p> |

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| 1 | <p>Internazionale</p> |
| 5 | <p>07 AGO 2015 16.01</p> <p>Dentro la struttura segreta della polizia di Chicago</p> <p>La struttura di Homan square gestita dal dipartimento di polizia di Chicago.</p> <p><i>(The Guardian)</i></p> <p>Spencer Ackerman, <i>giornalista di The Guardian</i>, Zach Stafford, <i>giornalista</i></p> |
| 10 | <p>In base a documenti resi noti solo di recente, almeno 3.500 statunitensi sono stati detenuti in un centro della polizia di Chicago descritto da alcuni degli arrestati come una struttura segreta per interrogatori.</p> |
| 15 | <p>L'82 per cento delle migliaia di persone trattenute nella struttura di Homan square nell'arco di un decennio è nero. Secondo la documentazione segreta ottenuta quando il Guardian ha fatto causa alla polizia, solo tre di loro hanno ricevuto visite documentate da parte di un avvocato.</p> <p>Nonostante il dipartimento di polizia di Chicago continui a negare che il deposito rappresenti un'anomalia segreta e illecita, dai documenti relativi a Homan square comincia a emergere come le persone più vulnerabili della città si perdano nel suo sistema di giustizia penale.</p> <p>Le persone rinchieste a Homan square sono state in seguito accusate di qualsiasi cosa, da "bere alcol per strada" all'omicidio. La portata delle detenzioni – e la disparità sociale che le ha caratterizzate – lascia ipotizzare tuttavia pesanti violazioni dei diritti civili.</p> |

As it can be noticed from the English article taken by *The Guardian*, the Italian version of the journal *Internazionale* is much more different from its original. The difference is in the focus of the information: in the first article, the focus is on “thousand of black Americans”, while on the second one the focus is on “struttura segreta”. The focus depends on the audience and it could change depending on the people who are reading the article. In addition, the translation is not literal.

F.3. More information about the translation

A translation could be direct (ex: the Italian is translated into French and then into English) or intermediary (from classical words). More details about the translation could be found in the imprint. In some cases (-> occasional texts from 1610 to 1625), both the original text and the translated one could appear in the same publication: for example. the Dutch news and its English translation could be found together. This phenomenon add credibility to the text because it shows that the translation is literal and not invented. The things translated are true and the proof is given by the parallel text.

F.4. Types of translation

- **Verbatim:** continuation of the weekly news word by word. There is no mediation and the translation in not changing the content of the original text. However the reading is not easy: the linguistic features are not the same in all the languages.
- **Domestication:** the translator translates a text only for the target audience and the translation is no longer literal as it was in the past. This could also give birth to *fake news* where the emphasis is put on the factuality (-> give lots of facts confirming the story even it is not true). Additional information could be added to help the reader understand the significance of the news (-> “gloss”).
- **Adverbial translation ≠ Adsensory translation.** An example of adverbial translation is the literal translation of God’s message (it could not be changed).
- **Invisible translation:** it implies also the language functions (ex.: informative function) and it has an influence on our lives. The invisible translation is similar to the role of the translator in modern press. In some cases (ex.: the novels), the translation could be quite quick and the question the translator could ask himself is: “How much status (impact) does it has?”.
- **Close translation** (one-to-one translation): very close to the original text.

F.5. Translation strategies on online articles. The source and the target text must be checked to identify some possible problems:

- Problems related to content and text comprehension;
- Problems related to style (ex.: fictional texts);
- Problems related to cultural terms: how do I translate them into the target language? It is difficult finding the perfect equivalent (ex.: “esame di maturità” = “A-levels”).

This paragraph about the translation highlights its complexity.

G. Giving credibility to the news

Intellectual élites manifest the little contempt towards corantos or serialized print news for these reasons:

- News customers are castigated for their unthinking, uncritical appetite for news;
- news publishers and writers are condemned for their overriding interest in financial gain;
- all those involved in the publication of news are scorned (= disprezzati) for lack of education and class;
- the news publications themselves are attacked for their multifarious (= molteplici) inaccuracies;
- publishers were usually interested in making money instead of in providing useful information.

For that reason, news writers tried to persuade readers of the truth of the information. The rhetorical features that van Dijk identified provide a valid starting point for this analysis:

- 1) Emphasis on the **factual nature of events**;
- 2) provide a **strong relation between all the facts of a story** (the recognition of a general story consolidates a better understanding of the story);
- 3) **Emotional and attitudinal dimension**: the language of the news must be really emotional and this could be applied to both modern and 17th century press;
- 4) use of **direct speech** and **report quotes**.

Another important characteristic of the news was the exactness of these numbers that is important but rather the fact that they are given at all. They are signals of truthfulness predicated on the understanding that the reporter capable of providing such exact figures must necessarily have had first-hand knowledge as to what happened.

H. Recounting time and events in news

a) Seventeenth-century

Much news in 17th century consisted of dispatches based around the deadline (place and date of news) followed by the news report itself. Basically, the writer was considered as a simple messenger, s/he does not interpret the news.

From Breslaw in Silesia the 14. of September, 1632. Stilo novo.

There came **tydings** hither on the 4. of this moneth, that the Saxon forces were expelled out of the Citie Steynau by the Imperialists, and likewise that the Sconce was yeilded vp by agreement, which newes was very acceptable to the Spirituall persons, as likewise to the Burgrau of Dona, and caused much joy amongst them. On the fift of this moneth about evening, wee heard great

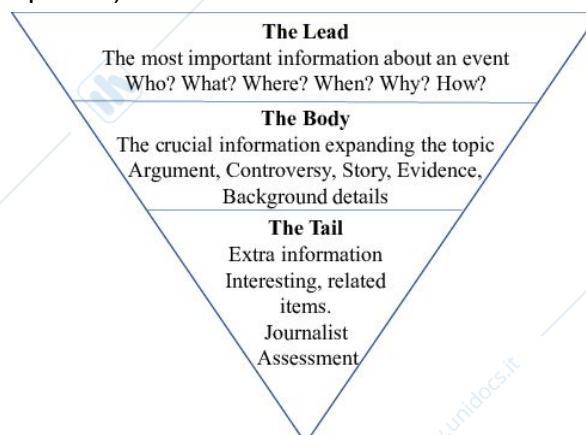
- As it can be seen, there is the date line (where and when the information was sent).
- "Tydings" is a word indicating news (it is frequently used).
- The news is told as chronicles (similar also to the way in which histories were reported). The reader is much more involved.
- History and news genre were mixed together.
- The news was just provided by the writer.

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| <p>shooting here, and from our Steeple we saw great fires which much perplexed and terrified vs all, neither could any man conjecture what might be the matter. Onely all men generally agreed in this, that the Saxons happily and those of Dubalts Armie were come to relieue Steynau, and that both Armies had encountered together. The next morning (which was the 6. ditto) there came before the gates of this Citie many Wagons and Carts, as likewise many Imperiall Troupes (betweene 40. and 60.) most of them horsemen, and the greater part of them Crabats, which were fled from the Imperiall Armie: these related unto vs, that [...] This Afternoone we received more certaine intelligence, the Contents wherof are to this purpose. The Imperialists having heretofore taken and forced the Citie Steynau from the Saxon and Dubalts forces, were resolved with an Armie of 20000. men to march [...]</p> <p><i>(The continuation of our forraine avisoes, 3 October 1632)</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The details informing the reader of when and from where the news was sent, do not say nothing about the contents of the report, are then followed by a chronological recount of the events. - The news writer begins with the date that is furthest back in time and moves forward in chronological order to report what that occurred. The title often informs the reader about the date or place, but not the contents of the report. - No attempt is made to foreground any particular aspect of the story. - Lack of journalistic viewpoint or angle. - The news writer in this particular report is basically restricting himself to the role of purveyor (= fornitore) of news rather than interpreter. |
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b) Modern-day news reports

Van Dijk analyzes printed hard news from a semantic point of view: they are typically organised according the following three main principles:

1. News stories follow a top-to-bottom organisation (the information becomes less general and increasingly more specific. This is linked to an inverted pyramid: the text can be cut at any point without prejudicing the textual coherence of the pieces).



2. News stories do not proceed in temporal succession (they are characterised by flashbacks and flashforwards. Only sporting event reports follow a chronological structure, narrated from the beginning to the end).
3. Contemporary press news is recounted cyclically (each topic of the news story is delivered in instalments=sezioni/rate. This convention is a consequence of the principle of relevance, news writers interpret news according to what is most relevant, in their opinion).

Semantic macrostructure of news discourse is related to news discourse macrosyntax, or schemata, that includes:

1. **Summary:** represented by the headline and lead. Usually, the headline contained in the summary is concise and it provides the first basic information about the story, which becomes increasingly more specific in the body of the text;
2. **main event:** non-chronological, cyclical reporting;
3. **background:** history, context, previous events, non-chronological, cyclical reporting;
4. **consequences:** non-chronological, cyclical reporting;
5. **verbal reactions:** non-chronological, cyclical reporting;
6. **comment:** non-chronological, cyclical reporting;
7. **closure;**
8. **temporal organisation:**
 - 8.1. first three paragraphs = linear chronological structure;
 - 8.2. remaining paragraphs = recount of the story, from past to present to past again.

c) Reasons for differences in recounting of time in the 17th and modern-day news reports

The 17th century and the present-day press are very different. In the first case, the most obvious point concerns the source of the text, that is the result of a translation. It is vital to remember the European context of news production when the narrative structure of English news texts is analysed. As already said, one of the most evident dangers confronting a news writer was the possibility of offending local authorities through both the actual reporting of the news itself or through the interpretation given by the writer to that news.

For that reason, in the 17th century, the writer simply passed the news he had received from "reliable" sources and s/he did not change or interpret it. In addition, the standard temporal structure and the chronological mode of narration employed in most seventeenth-century news texts were a strategy that therefore facilitated news comprehension. Furthermore, this chronological mode of news narration involves the reader interacting more actively with the text than is the case with modern-day news narrative techniques.

I. Headlines, headings and margin captions

News reports in the seventeenth century were not usually introduced by headlines until the pamphlets appeared during the English Civil War (1642-48), where the form of directional summary was experimented for the first time. The aim of these new headlines were to orientate the reader through the contents of the newspaper or report (it was not in the way we understand the term nowadays). In other words, headlines used to indicate roughly what the news is all about. During the English Civil War, a great use of margin captions was made.

I.1. Headlines in modern-day newspapers

In the 18th and 19th centuries, headlines started to become used more and more often in the form of introductory words at the top of a news report and they surely have an informative function:

Ex.: *Teenagers spend more time at home.*

In giving information, the headline usually says something about the what, who, where, how. Why it was not expressed in the past because it could be dangerous tell why something has happened.

I.2. Conative purpose of headlines

The conative function of language is used to write headlines that should catch reader's attention. The use of phonological foregrounding (-> repetition of sounds in the words) or unusual words are the strategies frequently used:

Ex.: *Princess's promise kept.*

I.3. Punning in headlines

When headlines are written to strike the reader's attention the impact is generally expressed in phonological foregrounding or in punning (-> "pun" = gioco di parole).

Ex.: *Raine won't stop.*

Punning is seen through the use of homonyms (different words with different meanings that have the same spelling and pronunciation), homophones (different words with different meanings that have the same spelling but different pronunciation) and homographs (different words with different meanings that have the same pronunciation but different spelling).

I.4. Words omitted in headlines

Headlines usually omit words found in complete clauses. The words omitted are usually grammatical words that indicate grammatical relationships between one word and other (ex.: articles, auxiliary verbs, linking verbs, copular verbs and prepositions). Even if these words are omitted, the meaning of the sentence is still comprehensible.

Ex.: *Tobacconists fuming.*

J. The language of News Reporting

The style of the news in the 17th century was factual and impersonal with a particular focus on the nouns and verbs. A little use of adjectives and other forms of nominal premodification made the style unadorned. The language showed hence no ambition to “delight with poetic license”.

However, from 1622 to 1624 the coranto editor Thomas Gainsford created a new newspaper language in order to make news more understandable. In this case, his role was that of guide and interpreter and it is not surprising if the editor establishes a personal relationship with his readers: for that reason the pronoun “we” is used. The writer then indicates his own continuous editorial presence by frequent references to what s/he has written in previous reports or publications. In this continuous news narrative, writers make a great use of metaphors and figurative language. Additionally, also the concept of “periodicity” has changed: it was understood as “*a temporal framework designed to promote a more insightful narration and understanding of contemporary events*”. Apart from Gainsford’s style, it was only in a few news pamphlets of the Civil War years that other exceptions to the general impersonal factuality of news reporting can be noticed. In conclusion, only in the late 1960s a new kind of news language appeared.

J.1. The language of *The Sun* - *The Sun’s* new journalism

A new kind of newspaper appeared in 1969 with the birth of *The Sun*. Its language was indicative of a greater oral, demotic style than that found in other British popular newspapers. Apart from giving news, *The Sun* wanted also to entertain people. For that reason journalists started to use a register similar to the spoken one in order to make the newspaper more comprehensible and easy to read. The emphasis is on the fun and simplicity. Furthermore, this simple style of *The Sun* has influenced the rest of the British press, both tabloid and broadsheet.

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| <p style="text-align: center;">THE SUN SAYS</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A million women wait</p> <p>ONE MILLION British women take the pill. Regularly. They have to know how SAFE it is – not just how effective.</p> <p>Professor Victor Wynn’s long researches have convinced him that there are real dangers in the pill. Dangers of fatness. Of depression. Of thrombosis.</p> <p>He is sure that within two or three years the pill, in its present form, will be banned. On both sides of the Atlantic.</p> <p>Some of the professor’s findings</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Greater use of bold type, underlining and capital letters in speech they would be emphasised through the intonation). - The sentence structure reflects the spoken language. - Use of adverbial phrases or monosyllabic words (quite rare for written English). - Better illustration of the closeness of the rapport <i>The Sun</i> wanted to create with its readers (even if the pronominal bonding of newspaper and reader was not innovatory). - The Sun wants also to establish in its readers’ minds an implicit recognition that both newspaper and reader shared a similar background |
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| <p>have been published in learned medical journals that most women don't read. And he has an important book coming out next year. Maybe in March. Maybe later.</p> <p>But those million British women are taking the pill NOW. They should be told now what the risks are.</p> <p>The professor is anxious that young women SHOULD be given the facts. This week the <i>Sun</i> invited him to give the facts. In its columns. He said he couldn't do so [...]</p> <p>(29 November 1969)</p> | <p>and world outlook. For that reason, the addressee is frequently involved in the discussion, as the pronouns "you" and "we" attest.</p> <p>- Fowler (1991): "<i>what is happening here is that the Sun is, through a discursive model of popular speech, consolidating a community: those who experience in the paper a kind of 'plain man's language' will buy it and read it because that is what the 'ordinary man' does</i>".</p> |
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J.2. News and social media

News transmitted via social media sites is a typical example of unmediated journalism where every single news update reaches us in the form of an instant message. This 'real-time reaction' allows for instant feedback which turns the once "one-to-one/few" e-mail communication into mass communication. Blogs are hence the personification of unmediated journalism and they can be opened by professional journalists or by ordinary people. As stated by Reese, Rutigliano et al. (2007) "traditional online news sites differ in structure from the weblogs, using the story as the basic unit, updating and changing these stories from one hour to the next. These story units do not accumulate as do posts on weblogs. They do not typically embed links to other stories in the site's own archive".

Twitter, launched in 2006, is the SMS portal of the Internet, offering a social networking and micro-blogging service which enables "its users to send and read messages called tweets. Tweets are text-based posts of up to 140 characters displayed on the user's profile page" in reversed chronological order and posted via a range of technologies such as mobile phone, instant messaging clients and the web.

In contrast, **Facebook** had not been intended for exchanging news, though now it connects millions of people around the world and helps to share information on any topic, yet the specificity of personal profiles set up on Facebook tends to produce opinionated texts, rather than actual breaking news updates.

YouTube is an unmediated web TV, a worldwide video-sharing community where the users can upload any sort of video clips. In addition, *YouTubers* can also post videos to reply to and comment on previously posted videos, in the same way as they can post replies to other posts on a blog. Hence, any sort of material, including news stories, can be constantly updated and integrated with further details, which are first and foremost visual, but which may also include spoken and written language, sounds, and music.

In conclusion, the relationship with the news is much more dynamic rather than in the past.

K. The language of Diplomatic Correspondence

Early modern diplomatic correspondence provides a very good example of how contextual communicative features can influence the structure and contents of a text as demonstrated by the diplomatic correspondence between Sir Lambert Blackwell (England's envoy to the Grand Duchy of Tuscany) and the England's Secretary of State in London, the earl (= conte) of Nottingham.

K.1. Schema of Blackwell's letter

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|---------|--|
| Opening | Salutation + <u>blank space</u> |
| Body | Referencing to when his own letters were sent and/or when he received Nottingham's last letter |
| | Reporting his own diplomatic activity |
| | Reporting other news he has received regarding Italy or affecting Italy and England |
| Closing | Subscription |

K.2. Analysis of Blackwell's correspondence

From the dates of the letters it can be seen that Blackwell used to write at least once a week. The **opening** usually contains the salutation "My Lord" followed by a significant amount of blank space before the first paragraph. In these letters, the blank space has an important role because it signals the deference the addresser felt for the addressee (it was a matter of respect towards the addressee). Furthermore, the blank space shows that the writer of the letter do not care about the cost of the paper (there was hence the willingness to pay for the paper, which was so expensive at the time). After the opening, there is the **body** of the letter with an indented paragraph which usually begins in one or two ways: either Blackwell indicates the date or general contents of his last letter to the Secretary of State, or he acknowledges receipt of the last letter or letters to arrive from Nottingham. In addition, the repetition of contents from one letter to another can be considered characteristic of Blackwell's letters to the Secretary of State and is a direct result of the risk of diplomatic correspondence going astray. A personal evaluation can also be seen for example the use of

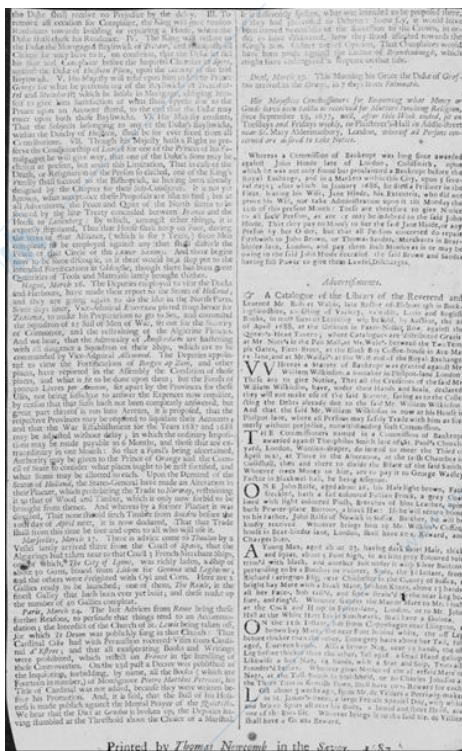
private verbs such as *think*, *believe*, *predictive will*, and evaluative adjectives, but it is clear that Blackwell does not want to modify English policy.

In conclusion, as stated previously, the news writer is simply providing facts and information; he is the purveyor of news, not the news analyst. This model of news presentation was very common at the time, and especially so in the contemporary press.

Section 2 The Language of Advertising

A. Seventeenth-century Advertising

The *London Gazette* was the only periodical news publication from August 1666 to February 1688 (except from 1679 to 1682) and it had a monopolistic position. The news published was factual and impersonal, but it made money also thanks to the *advertisements* section. They had gradually developed in periodical news and they became increasingly common during the 1650s. By the 1680s advertisements became a fundamental part of the *Gazette*. Advertisement texts used to appear at the end of the second column on the second page and the space occupied can take up more or less 1/5 of the entire content. However it is estimated that advertising could amount to 40% of the total income. Here a typical page of the *London Gazette* with the advertisements section in the right column of the second page:



☞ An Impartial Collection of the great Affairs of State, from the beginning of the Scotch Rebellion, in the year 1639 to the Murder of King Charles the First. Wherein the first occasions, and the whole Series of the late Troubles in England, Scotland, and Ireland, are faithfully Represented. Taken from Authentick Records, and Methodically Digested, by John Nalson, LL D. Published by His Majesties special Command. Sold by S.Mearne, T.Dring, B. Tooke, T. Sawbridge, and C. Mearne.

☞ The Second Part of the Works of Mr. Abraham Cowley, being what was Written and Published by himself in his younger years, and now Reprinted together; The Fourth Edition. Sold by Charles Harper at the Flower-de-Ince in Fleetstreet, and J. Tonson at the Judges Head in Chancery Lane, near Fleetstreet.

B. Analysis of 1681 advertisements

These advertisements can be examined in relation to participants, the objects and places advertised, and successively the language used in their promotion. Although, the *Gazette* began life as a publication explicitly addressed to “merchants and gentlemen”, the above advertisements make clear that by 1681 it had extended its range of readership. However, religious publications were the most commonly advertised, followed by historical works and children’s diseases.

Present-day advertisements contains a different promotional language rather than the one found in 17th century advertisements. The characteristics of modern advertisements should be:

- 1) **Attention value:** the advertisement has to draw attention to itself;
- 2) **Readability:** the advertisement must sustain the interest it has aroused;
- 3) **Memorability:** the advertisement must be remembered by the audience;
- 4) **Selling power:** the advertisement must prompt the right kind of action.

In drawing attention to itself, much modern day print advertising relies extensively on both visual and linguistic elements. It is also true that the potential for visual foregrounding in the seventeenth-century publication was much smaller rather than the modern press. However, some visual strategies were adopted to draw the reader’s attention to the advertisements in general and book advertisements in particular: for example the texts were placed at the end of the second and final page and headed by the italicized title “*Advertisements*”. Advertisements promoting the sale of books were further signalled by a pointing hand. Type size, italics and capitalization were also exploited to emphasise key words in the text. In all advertisements italics was frequently used for important details, and capitalization was also sometimes used in book advertisements to draw attention to significant information regarding, for example, the contents of volumes. Additionally, readability is not so significant for the understanding of late seventeenth-century advertisements.

The most obvious difference lies in the absence of a “personal and colloquial style”. Each and every notice in the *Gazette* is product-oriented. The only personal elements that can be found are the names of the author of the advertised book, the bookseller where the work can be purchased or the group of people targeted. There is no allusion of the advertiser attempting to communicate with the reader as an individual. In place of the personal element, highly detailed descriptions of what is being advertised are frequently found. This phenomenon underlies the authority and expertise of the author and the importance of his study. Finally, one last banal but perhaps effective way of fixing the product on the reader’s consciousness was to repeat the same advertisement in successive numbers.

As concern the selling power, in modern advertising we find frequent use of imperatives, while in late seventeenth-century periodical advertising the reader is invited to buy in a very indirectly way. In the vast majority of the cases, the selling power of the advertisement is subsumed in the description of the advertised work and it was no doubt considered redundant since the readers already knew that as the text was in the *Advertisements* section of the publication, and concerned a particular product which could be bought, it was hence necessarily for sale.

C. Humorous contemporary commentary of eighteenth-century typographic features of advertisements

By the beginning of the eighteenth century, advertising strategies had become so recognizable that contemporaries made fun of them. The humour suggestions provided have the role of increasing the visibility of the promotional text. Furthermore, the various eye-catching symbols, fonts and “any other recommendatory Artifice in Printing” commonly employed by typographers to highlight the advertisement.

Appendix

1. Checklist of linguistic and stylistic categories

Lexis:

- A. Semantic category of lexis? (lexical field/content of the text);
- B. Simple or Complex? (number of syllables in the words);
- C. Formal or informal?
- D. Descriptive or evaluative? (evaluative vocabulary contains judgements);
- E. General or specific? (specific English is for special purposes while general lexis is for everyday texts);
- F. Idiomatic phrase? (informal, spoken language);
- G. Nouns concrete or abstract? (concrete nouns are for everyday text abstract lexis for example is for philosophical texts);
- H. Great use of adjectives?
- I. Verbs stative (e.g. refer to mental states, attitudes,..) or dynamic (e.g. go, say, buy,..; often found in narratives texts)?

Syntax:

- A. Clause types:
 - A.1. Declarative: *I am (not) rich.*
 - A.2. Interrogative: *Is she French?*
 - A.3. Imperative: *Drink the water!*
 - A.4. Exclamatory: *What a good dog!*
- B. Clause complexity:
 - B.1. Simple: s + v + direct object + eventual complements: *She lives in Italy.*
 - B.2. Compound: two or more main clauses joined by co-ordination: *He is a small boy but he is very strong.*
 - B.3. Complex: main clause(s) + one or more secondary/dependent clauses: *When it rained, we went inside.*
 - B.4. Minor/non-clausal (no subject or finite verb): *shut on Sunday.*
- C. Number of words in sentence? (the more words the more complex structure)
- D. Noun phrases simple or complex: pre-modification (the modification of the words preceding the noun is more common but less formal) or post-modification (modification of the words after the noun)?
- E. Use of passive? (written form, technical English)
- F. Parenthetical elements? (typical of spoken English)
- G. Ellipsis? (typical of informal English)

Figures of speech:

- A. Repetition of lexis and syntactic structure? (emphasis on the lexical content)

- B. Phonological patterns (rhyme, assonance, consonance, alliteration)? (emphasis on the lexical content)
- C. Metaphor? (figure of speech: comparison between two unlike things that have something important in common)

Cohesion:

The more cohesion the easier it is to understand the text. In written texts cohesion is increased.

- A. Lexical cohesion: repetition, synonyms, semantic field;
- B. Syntactic cohesion: reference, substitution, ellipsis.

Tenor:

It depends on the relationship between addresser and addressee. The closer the relationship the more informal the text.

2. Spoken and written vocabulary

- A. More generalized vocabulary (*a lot of, got, thing, nice, place, things like that,...*);
- B. More phrasal verbs (e.g. *Can you put on the light? Don't worry, I'll put you up; I can't put up with Peter*);
- C. More fillers (riempitivi): (*ah, you know, well, like, I mean,...*);
- D. More repeated words: (*I saw the man, and this man, well, the man was walking towards,...*)
- E. Features of back-channel (words, phrases and non-verbal utterances, like "*I see, oh, uhuh, really, erm*", used by a listener to give feedback to a speaker that the message is being followed and understood).

3. Spoken and written grammar and syntax

- A. Use of active verb forms: *I wrote the letter.*
- B. Use of contracted forms in verbs: *I'm not English; I don't know him.*
- C. Examples of non-standard grammar: *I don't know nothing.*
- D. Infrequent use of more than two pre-modifying adjectives. These are the adjectives that come before a noun: *I saw the tall, young, handsome man.* (3 pre-modifying adjectives: 'tall', 'young', 'handsome');
- E. Use of paratactic structures: *I saw the man. He was at the bus stop.*
- F. Frequent use of coordinating conjunctions like 'and', 'but': *They went to the cinema and after it finished they went to the pub but,...*
- G. Many incomplete sentences and pauses: *I got about £50. Today... A good day's work.*
- H. Repetition of syntactic structures: *We decided to leave since we thought ... we decided ...*
- I. Changes in the sentence structure during the course of the sentence: *I was going ... we were going to the pub ...*
- J. Greater use of interactive language (e.g. questions): *What do you think about this?*

4. Timeline for English print news (1476-1702)

| | |
|------------------|---|
| 1476 | William Caxton sets up first press in London. |
| 1513 | First extant occasional news pamphlet. |
| 1580s | French civil wars and large increase in translated occasional news pamphlets in England. |
| 1603 | Death of Elizabeth I and accession of James I. |
| 1618 | Start of Thirty Years War. |
| 1620 | First extant one-sheet English coranto containing multiple foreign news items. Printed in Amsterdam and shipped to England. |
| 1621 | One-sheet English corantos, that are still translations in Dutch and German publications, printed in London. |
| 1622 | First series of English news pamphlets. They are not published on a fixed day of the week but they are organised in annual series. |
| 1625 | James I died and Charles I became king. |
| 1632 | Corantos are banned by Charles I for six years. |
| 1638 | Corantos published again but contents just based on translations of foreign publication. |
| 1641 | First English newsbook published. Unlike corantos, these contain both foreign and domestic news. Corantos cease publication with arrival of newsbooks. Newsbooks come out on a fixed day of the week. |
| 1642-1649 | Explosion of periodical print news, though much of it based on polemic and propaganda. |
| 1649 | Charles I is executed and England becomes a republic in the form of Commonwealth. |
| 1650s | Although the first advertisements in news pamphlets go back to 1620s, it is in this decade that advertisements become more frequent of the periodical news press. |
| 1653 | Oliver Cromwell is proclaimed Lord Protector. |
| 1658 | Oliver Cromwell dieD. |
| 1660 | Restoration of the monarchy. Charles II becomes king. |
| 1665 | The <i>Oxford Gazette</i> is founded. This becomes the <i>London Gazette</i> in 1666. The <i>Gazette</i> is a monopoly publication coming out initially twice a week, later three times a week. |
| 1667 | First attested use of the word "newspaper" in the <i>Oxford English Dictionary (OED)</i> . |
| 1671 | Advertisements start begin published on a regular basis in the <i>Gazette</i> . |
| 1695 | Lapse ('non rinnovo') of the Licensing Act and other newspaper start begin published. |
| 1702 | Publication of the <i>Daily Courant</i> , the first English daily newspaper. |