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Publication Details

Thomson, EA, White, PRR and Kitley, P, "Objectivity" and "hard news" reporting across cultures: comparing the news report in English, French, Japanese and Indonesian journalism, Journalism Studies, 9(2), 2008. Original journal available here.

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“Objectivity” and “hard news” reporting across cultures: comparing the news report in English, French, Japanese and Indonesian journalism.

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Abstract

This paper is concerned with comparisons of the language of hard news reporting across languages and cultures. Within English-language journalism, authorial “neutrality” and use of the “inverted pyramid” structure are frequently seen to be distinctive features of the modern hard news report and one of the grounds by which journalists assert the “objectivity” of their writing. This paper proposes a framework for investigating these notions linguistically and cross-linguistically, i.e. by reference to systematically observable features of the language and the text organizational structures used in the hard news reporting of different journalistic traditions. The paper reports that what might be termed authorial “neutrality” can be found operating in the hard news reporting of range of a different languages, but only when “neutrality” is understood to be a strategic constraining of a certain subset of attitudinal language. The paper reports that the “inverted pyramid” structure is also found cross-linguistically but further research is required to determine whether it is as dominant in the hard news reporting of other cultures as it appears to be in English language journalism.

Key words: journalism, news, inverted pyramid, objectivity, subjectivity, appraisal

Introduction

Two key notions recur with considerable regularity in the media studies and journalistic training literature concerned with the modern hard news report – the idea that model examples of such texts are "neutral" in reporting "just the facts" and that, prototypically, they employ what is referred to as the "inverted pyramid" structure, an arrangement by which the "most important information" comes first and progressively "less important information" follows after. It is frequently held that authorial neutrality and the inverted pyramid structure are key factors in the distinctiveness and uniqueness of the modern hard news report as a text type. For example, in his influential study of the history of journalism in the United States, *Just the Facts*, Mindich (1998) argues that the "ethic of objectivity" is the defining feature of modern journalism and that neutrality (covered by Mindich under the headings of "detachment" and "facticity") and the inverted pyramid are key components of this "objectivity".

The understandings and accounts cited above typically focus, of course, only on hard news reporting as it is conducted within English-language journalism. Our overriding purpose in this paper is to suggest ways in which we might cast our gaze more widely to consider the situation in the news reporting discourses of other languages and cultures. We provide some case studies below of analyses of news reports in languages other than English which we hope may act as examples in this regard. In so doing we will be report on preliminary findings which point to both similarities and differences in the way hard news reporting is conducted across different journalistic traditions and in the way the "ethic of objectivity" understood and practiced. However, in order to be able to develop cross-linguistic comparisons of journalistic style and textual organisation, it is firstly necessary to define our terms and to clarify how claims about neutrality and textual organisation might be investigated linguistically – that is to say by reference to systematically observable features of the language and text organizational structures used in hard news reporting. With this objective in mind, we begin below by seeking to clarify how the notion of the "inverted pyramid" and authorial "neutrality" might be dealt with linguistically. While our starting point here is English language journalism, we nevertheless seek to

extend the range of the discussion by making reference wherever possible to discourse practices in the news writing of other languages and cultures.

The inverted pyramid

The descriptions of the inverted pyramid structure provided in the journalism training and media discourse literature typically make two key claims, (1) that such reports begin by providing a summary of the event under consideration and (b) that, rather than providing a chronologically ordered reconstruction of what happened, such reports are arranged so that what is "most important information" comes first and what is less important comes after. Thus Rich, for example, in *Writing and Reporting News*, describes the opening of the inverted pyramid in the following terms.

> The most common type of lead on a hard-news story is called a "summary lead" because it summarizes the main points about what happened. It answers the questions who, what, when, where, why and how. The rest of the story elaborates on what, why, and how. (Rich 2000: 35)

With respect to the proposition that the opening singles out what is "most important", the following quotation from MacDougal in a journalism training text is typical,

> …the climax or end of the story comes first. Given a schedule of facts to arrange in the form of a newspaper article, the writer selects the most important fact or climax of the story and puts it at the beginning. The second most important fact comes second, the third most important fact third and so on. (MacDougall: 1987)

Some reworking of such observations and characterisations is required if we are to make use of them in cross-linguistic comparisons. We need to describe exactly what does happen in the openings of hard news reports and we need an account of what the term "summary" actually references in terms of textual structuring and communicative effects.

The hard news opening

In English language hard news reporting, the opening is most typically constituted by the combination of a headline (sometimes headlines) and an opening sentence (the "lead"). The headline(s) and opening sentence can be seen as representing a single

unit because, in most cases, the headline exactly repeats a sub-set of the informational content of the lead, serving simply to sign-post key meanings which will be presented more fully in the following sentence. This relationship is exemplified below. (Superscripts are used to link information presented in the headline with the same information when it reoccurs in the lead.)

> **Million[1] flee[2] as hurricane[3] pounds[4] Florida[5]**
>
> MIAMI[5], Monday: Hurricane[3] Andrew smashed[4] ashore south of Miami[5] early today with walls of water and the howling terror of 257 km/h winds, forcing a million[1] people to flee[2] and leaving 13 dead in the wake of what could be the biggest storm[3] to hit the United States this century.
>
> [*Sydney Morning Herald* 25/08/92]

This interdependence can be seen as an artefact of the news production process, since headlines are typically written not by the reporter but, at a later stage, by a subeditor who typically seeks a headline which sums up the lead.

Unlike other story telling text types (i.e. the traditional narrative as identified by Labov and others in the narratology tradition – see Labov 1972), the modern English language hard news story does not begin by providing a separate, introductory orientation in the form of background information about the participants and their physical or social setting. Most typically it begins by setting out a sub-set of the incidents which constitute the activity sequence being described. As in the case just cited above, the depiction will be at the same level of abstraction and generalisation as the activity sequence which the opening acts to preview and summarise. Thus the incidents outlined in the headline/lead are represented just as they would be if the activity sequence were being described in full and in chronological sequence. Accordingly, in the opening of the typical hard news report, the original activity sequence can be said to have been reduced to its "key" elements by a process of elimination —the headline/lead opening is a cut-down, possibly re-ordered version of the original activity sequence. Following the work of Rothery and Stenglin (1997), we propose to use the term "synopsis" for openings which function in this manner.

In other cases, the headline/lead opening acts to construe the activity sequence in more general and often more abstract terms. The description of individual, concrete

happenings is replaced with a representation which formulates those happenings according to a more general and larger-scale system of classification. For example,

> **BOMB RAGE**
>
> **Riots sweep Tahiti**
>
> Rioters carved a blazing trail of destruction through the paradise island of Tahiti yesterday in a wave of fury sparked by French nuclear tests.
>
> [*Herald Sun* 08/09/95]

Here a sequence of events — fighting between police and protesters, the fire bombing of Tahiti airport, the stoning of shops in the capital Papeete, for example — has been construed at a more general level as, variously, a “bomb rage”, a “riot” and a “blazing trail of destruction”. Again, following Rothery & Stenglin (1997), we use the term “abstract” as a label for openings which operate in this way

The selection of elements for this headline/lead opening is, of course, a value laden process. It is conditioned by ultimately ideological judgements about which aspects of the event under consideration have the greatest social significance and about which aspects are likely to have the greatest impact for the intended audience. This can be demonstrated easily enough by considering the actual selections made by different reporters in constructing openings for reports of the same event. For example,

> **NO FUTURE**
>
> **How the Big Australian dumped a little Australian**
>
> [*The Daily Telegraph* 30/04/97]
>
> Steelworker Wayne Hunter — the proud "face of the future" on BHP billboards — became the forlorn face of a steel city with no future yesterday. As BHP announced it would shut down steel making in Newcastle and other plants, directly costing 2500 jobs, Mr Hunter represented what Premier Bob Carr called a “boardroom betrayal of working class”.

versus

> **BHP sackings a $1bn bonus**
>
> [*The Australian* 30/04/97]

> Investors applauded the decision by BHP to close its steel mills in Sydney, Geelong and Newcastle, driving up its share price by 48c yesterday to add to almost $1 billion to the market value of the Big Australian.

Similarly,

> **Five Palestinians killed in Israeli raid**
>
> [*Al Jazeera*, 23/02/06]
>
> Israeli troops have killed five Palestinians during the biggest raid against West Bank fighters for months, stoking tension as Hamas leaders hold talks to form a new Palestinian government.

versus

> **Two soldiers wounded in Nablus mission**
>
> [*Jerusalem Post*, 23/02/06]
>
> Five Palestinians were killed on Thursday and two soldiers wounded, one moderately, during fierce gun battles and clashes in Nablus where Operation Northern Lights continued.

Here obviously the Al Jazeera and the *Jerusalem Post* writers have made different assessments as to which aspects of the event constitute its maximally "newsworthy" crisis point – i.e. "Five Palestinians killed" versus "Two soldiers wounded".

And again,

> **Blair unveils damning dossier on Saddam**
>
> [*Jerusalem Post*, 25/09/02]
>
> LONDON - British Prime Minister Tony Blair yesterday warned of the urgent need to act after the publication of a 50-page British intelligence dossier of evidence on Iraq's continuing determination to acquire weapons of mass destruction and delivery systems.

versus

> **BLAIR'S DOSSIER DAMNS HIM**
>
> [*The Mirror*, 25/09/02]

TONY Blair was greeted with near-silence from his own MPs yesterday as he set out his case for a possible war with Iraq - but got a glowing tribute from President Bush.

On the basis of this account, then, it can be seen that the typical English-language headline/lead opening provides, not simply a summary, but a value-laden synopsis of an event which is shaped by a particular set of assumptions about which aspects of events are typically more socially significant and which are less so. News report openings of this type, therefore, do not so much record events as interpret them, presenting a particular way of viewing and responding to those events as "natural" and "commonsensical".

Our own preliminary investigations of news reporting across languages (specifically Japanese, French, Indonesian and Chinese) suggests that the arrangement identified above operates widely cross-linguistically, even while it is not yet clear whether it dominates to the same degree as it appears to do in English-language hard news reporting. The following examples from French and Japanese reporting demonstrate the arrangement by which headlines and opening sentences cover the same material and in so doing provide a synopsis of what have been assessed as the "key" aspects of the event under consideration.

[French, *Le Monde,* 23/08/07]

La Géorgie dit avoir tiré mercredi sur un avion russe
(*Georgia allegedly fired on a Russian aircraft on Wednesday*)

Les forces géorgiennes ont tiré mercredi sur un avion russe qui avait violé l'espace aérien de la République, a déclaré vendredi un haut responsable du ministère de l'Intérieur.
[*On Wednesday Georgian forces fired on a Russian aircraft which had violated the airspace of the Republic, a senior official of Department of the Interior said on Friday*.]

[Japanese: *Yomiuri shinbun,* 16/10/04*]*

Minamata byoo Kuni • Ken ni sekinin
[*The country and the prefecture are responsible for Minamata Disease (mercury poisoning)*]

Saikoosai hanketsu genkoku jisshitsu syooso

[*Supreme Court confirms that the plaintiffs win*]

Kansai shosoo: Haisui hoochi wa ihoo : 7150man baisyoo meirei

[*The Kansai Case: The discharge of mercury-polluted waste is illegal: 71,500,000yen compensation ordered*]

Kumamoto, Kaogoshima ryooken no Shiranui kaigan kara Kansai ni utsuri sunda Minamata byoo mi-nintei kanjya 45nin (shiboo fukumu) to izoku ga, Kuni to Kumamoto ken ni kei yaku 1oku 1800man en no songai baisyoo o motometa "Kansai Minamata byoo sosyoo" no jyookoku shin hanketsu ga 15nichi, Saikoosai dai2 syoo hootei de atta.

[*In the final appeal in Court 2 of the Supreme Court on the 15th, forty five patients (including those who have already died) with Minamata Disease who moved from the Shiranui coastline to the Kansai area along with their families were awarded compensation from both the nation and the prefecture of about 118 million yen*]

One departure from the headline/lead synopsis model which can be observed cross linguistically is an arrangement under which the synopsis and abstracting function is confined to the headline (or headlines), while the opening sentence performs a different role, for instance, setting out background information or providing a setting, and so on.

Here is an example from the French newspaper, *Figaro*,

Une femme de 36 ans avoue un triple infanticide

[*A 36-year-old woman admits a triple infanticide***]**

MEURTRE

[*Murder***]**

Habitant Albertville, Virginie L. aurait congelé et dissimulé les trois nouveau-nés mis au monde en 2001, 2003 et 2006.

[*Inhabitant Albertville, Virginia L. froze and hid the three new-born babies in 2001, 2003 and 2006]*

De notre envoyé spécial à Albertville

[*From our special correspondent***]**

L'HORRIBLE découverte a eu lieu mercredi, en début d'après-midi.
[*The horrible discovery took place Wednesday, early in the afternoon*]
Eraldo Anselmo, un retraité de 87 ans, jardinait rue ÉdouardPiquand, à Albertville, en Savoie, lorsque son voisin est arrivé, affolé. « Venez vite, venez vite » , lui crie Philippe V.
[*Eraldo Anselmo, a 87 year old pensioner, of ÉdouardPiquand Street, in Albertville, in Savoy, when a neighbour arrived, was thrown into a panic. "Come quickly, come quickly", Philippe V calls to him*]

It is clear, then, that hard news openings serve this same interpretative function across languages. The following two headline/lead openings from reports in different newspapers covering the same event demonstrate this interpretative function in operation in French news reporting.

[1. *Libération***,** 28/06/04**]**
La coalition transfère un semblant de pouvoir.
[*The Coalition transfers an appearance of power*]
Irak
Avec deux jours d'avance par crainte d'attentats, l'administrateur américain a cédé la place, mais pas toutes les compétences, au gouvernement irakien.
Two days early, for fear of attack, the American administrator has handed over his position, but not all the powers, to the Iraqi government.
Bagdad envoyé spécial
[*Baghdad special envoy.*]

Le secret avait été très bien gardé. La plupart des ministres n'avaient été prévenus que la veille. Peu de personnalités avaient été invitées hier matin, vers 10 h 30, à la cérémonie de transfert de pouvoir.
[*The secret had been very well kept. Most of the ministers had been informed only the day before. Few dignitaries had been invited to the ceremony of the handover of power held around 10.30 yesterday morning.*]

[2. *Figaro*]

Irak - souveraineté contrôlée: Les Etats Unis ont avancé de deux jours le transfert de pouvoir aux nouvelles autorités
[*Iraq - supervised sovereignty: The United states has put forward by two days the handover of power to the new authorities.*]

Avec deux jours d'avance sur l'échéance initialement fixée au 30 juin, la coalition a remis le pouvoir au gouvernement intérimaire irakien, hier à Bagdad
[*Two days before the initial deadline set at 30 June, the coalition handed power to the interim Iraqi government yesterday in Baghdad.*]

(For the translations of these text upon which we rely and for a full discussion of these texts, see Caffarel & Rechniewski, 2008)

We notice here that the writer of the *Libération* report has included mention of the limited nature of the handover (i.e. "not all the powers") and has characterised it as "an appearance" of power, aspects of the event which the writer of the *Figaro* report has not seen fit to mention in the opening. As a result, obviously rather different interpretations are provided - with the *Figaro* report presenting the handover as "mission accomplished", so to speak, and the *Libération* report implying that questions remain as to its genuineness and legitimacy.

The body of the hard news report

Following previous work by Iedema et al. (1994) and White (1997, 2000a, 2000b), we see the second phase of the typical English-language hard news report - the body which follows the headline/lead - as acting to specify, elaborate and comment on the various strands of information presented in the opening. It is noteworthy that this specification and elaboration is typically presented non-chronologically and discontinuously. That is to say, events are seldom presented in continuous step-by-step sequence in the order in which they occurred, and when dealing with a particular aspect or sub issue, the writer typically attends to this at different points in the body of the report, rather than dealing with it exhaustively in a single section. The work by Iedema et al., and White cited above has demonstrated that the body of this type of report can be broken down into self-contained components which typically perform one or more of the following functions in relation to the headline/lead.

- Elaboration or Reiteration: One sentence or a group of sentences provides more detailed description or exemplification of information presented in the headline/lead, or acts to restate it or describe the material in the headline/lead in different terms.
- Causes: One or more sentences describe the causes or reason for some aspect of the "crisis point" presented in the headline/lead.
- Consequences: One or more sentences describe the consequences flowing from some element of the crisis point of the headline/lead.
- Contextualisation: One or more sentences places some aspect of the crisis point of the headline/lead in a temporal, spatial or social context. For example, the geographical setting will be described in some detail or the "crisis point" will be located in the context of preceding, simultaneous or subsequent events. Prior events of a similar nature may be described for the purpose of comparison.
- Attitudinal assessment: Some form of judgement or evaluation is passed on some element of the headline/lead.

Our preliminary investigations of hard news reporting across languages reveals that, once again, the English-language model can be observed to be in operation across languages. We demonstrate this below by means of an analysis of a short news report translated from the Indonesian newspaper, the *Suara Pembaruan*

[*headline* + *lead*]

Wife of Armed Forces Officer Abducted by GAM (Free Aceh Movement)

[04/07/03]

Lhokseumawe (place name) – the wife of an Armed Forces officer and her younger sister who joined the group of RCTI journalists travelling from Langsa to Lhokseumawe have also been kidnapped by The Free Aceh Movement (GAM).

[*contextualisation*]

Since then, until Friday morning, TNI officials still do not know the exact position of the RCTI journalist and cameraman even though there has been communication that they are in the Peureulak district, East Aceh.

[*elaboration – details of those involved*]

TNI spokesperson in Lhokseumawe, Leiutenant CAJ Ahmad Yani Basuki, at a press conference in the Media Centre, Friday, said the two women who were in Ersa's group were Safrida (35) the wife of Lieutenant Colonel Ashari, and Soraya, Safrida's younger sister, the wife of Lieutentant Agung.

[*elaboration – details of those involved*]

"TNI officials do not know yet the exact position where they are," Yani said who was accompanied by one of the women's, namely Lt Col. Ashari. At present Ashari is assigned to the National Air Force Training Centre in Surabaya. Whereas Lt Agung is currently at school in Bandung.

[*contextualisation – events leading up to the kidnapping*]

According to Ashari, his wife was in Lhokseumawe to visit her sick parent. But her departure with Ersa's group was not reported to her husband. "Last Wednesday I reported this matter to the TNI Military Police Unit in Lhokseumawe."

[*attitudinal – evaluative commentary on the events*]

"I regret my wife joining Ersa"s group", Ashari said.

[*consequences*]

To speed up the search for the missing RCTI journalists, Lt Col. CAJ Ahmad Yani hopes that members of the community and others will give information about the location of the two RCTI journalists so that steps for their safety can be taken.

[*attitudinal - evaluative commentary on the events]*

"Last evening they phoned their homes, and they were fine. I hope people will give us information about where they are so we can take steps for their safety that will not endanger them" Yani said.

This arrangement leads to a conceptualisation of such texts as involving a relationship between a central "nucleus" (the headline/lead) and a set of dependent sub components which can be thought of as "satellites" to that "nucleus". Thus the headline/lead dominates the text, providing its focus or angle with the subsequent

satellites operating only to elaborate on, explain or comment on material presented in that opening. The body of the text does not develop new meanings but, rather, acts to refer back to the headline/lead through a series of specifications.

This "orbital" arrangement is illustrated diagrammatically in the following figure.

Figure 1: Orbital structure illustrated

It is clear that texts organised orbitally in this way occur with great regularity in contemporary English-language hard news reporting and the same arrangement can be observed in operation across languages. Again it remains a question for further research as to whether this model is as dominant in other journalistic cultures as it is in English. (For a discussion of alternative structures which appear to operate in Japanese hard news, see Thomson, Fukui & White, in press and for a discussion of Thai hard news report structure see, Knox & Patpong, 2008)

Journalistic styles and authorial "neutrality"

We turn now to the second feature of hard news reporting which, as mentioned above, is so often associated with notions of media objectivity, namely the view that hard news reports, or at least ideal examples of such, avoid any authorial opinion or point of view and present "just the facts". In our approach to this issue we turn to the work of Iedema at al (1994), White (2000a, 2005, 2006) and Martin & White (2005) and their notion of "journalistic voice". For these authors, journalistic voice refers to a taxonomy for classifying and grouping news media texts according to the use they make of certain key evaluative meanings, and more specifically to the various ways in which positive or negative assessments are conveyed or activated. The journalistic voice taxonomy itself relies on work within what is known as the appraisal framework

(see for example Martin 2000, White 2000a, Martin & White 2005). Appraisal theory has been developed over the last 15 years or so by a group of researchers concerned to develop an analytical model which could better deal with the way language construes attitude and enables writers/speakers to position themselves evaluatively with respect to the viewpoints of potential respondents and other speakers/writers.

In terms of the analysis of journalistic discourse and the associated notion of "objectivity", the following insights of appraisal theory are key.

Types of attitude

Appraisal theory holds that positive and negative assessments (which it groups together under the heading of "attitude") can be divided into those which involve (a) emotional reactions (what the appraisal framework terms "affect"), (b) assessments of human behaviour and character by reference to some system of conventionalised or institutionalised norms (what the appraisal framework terms "judgement") and (c) assessments of artefacts, texts, natural objects, states of affairs and processes in terms of how they are assigned value socially, for example in terms of their aesthetic qualities, their potential for harm or benefit, their social significance, and so on. For example (relevant items are underlined):

> (**affect** – emotional reaction)
> It was, then, with **fury**, that I returned home on Saturday to find my own country rumbling with the mumbles of the peaceniks.
>
> (**judgement** – normative assessment of human behaviour, i.e. by reference to notions of ethical/unethical, honest/dishonest, courageous/cowardly, capable/incapable, normal/abnormal, and so on)
> To see police **brutally** **manhandling** demonstrators was not only shocking but representative of more **repressive** regimes, such as China.
>
> (**appreciation** – assigning a social value to objects, artefacts, texts, states of affairs, i.e. by reference to aesthetics and other systems of social valuation)
> The new president's speech was **elegant** and **well-woven**, sounding a panoply of themes without seeming **scattered**.

Inscribed (explicit) versus invoked (implicit) attitude

Appraisal theory also attends closely to the possibility that attitudinal evaluations may be more or less explicitly articulated. It applies the label "inscribed" attitude to locutions which carry an attitudinal value (positive or negative assessment) which is largely fixed and stable across a wide range of contexts. For example, via lexical items such as *corrupt, virtuously, skilfully, tyrant, coward, beautiful, abused, brutalised*. This "inscription" of attitude is contrasted with formulations where there is no single item which, of itself and independently of its current co-text, carries a specific positive or negative value. Rather, the positive/negative viewpoint is activated via various mechanisms of association and implication. For example,

> He only visits his mother once a year, even though she is more than 90 years old.
>
> George W. Bush delivered his inaugural speech as the United States President who collected 537,000 fewer votes than his opponent.
>
> Telstra has withdrawn sponsorship of a suicide prevention phone service - just days after announcing a $2.34 billion half-yearly profit.

The term attitudinal "invocation" is used of such instances.

It is a feature of attitudinal invocations that they are typically conditioned by the co-text and will often be subject to the beliefs, attitudes and expectations the reader brings to their interpretation of the text (i.e. their reading position.)

The voices of English-language broadsheet news reporting

The work on journalistic voice cited above has found that English-language broadsheet news reporting[1] (as opposed to commentary and opinion) is typically conducted in one or other of two "voices" or "styles" (termed "keys" in Martin & White 2005), where "voice" references a particular pattern in the use and co-occurrence of evaluative meanings. These two evaluative arrangements are termed "reporter voice" and "correspondent voice". Reporter voice is shown to be used most typically in "hard news" coverage of the type we are currently considering – i.e.

[1] Little work has been done on "voice" in the English-language "tabloid" media, though it does appear that different conventions apply here with respect to the use of explicitly evaluative language.

reports of accidents, disasters, protests, crimes, court proceedings, warfare and similar events. This hard news reporter voice involves a substantial curtailment of the author's use of explicitly attitudinal meanings, particularly with respect to inscribed judgement. Correspondent voice most typically occurs in the work of specialist or rounds journalists (i.e. "correspondents") and in the context of news items covering local or international politics. Correspondent voice texts involve some curtailment of inscribed attitude, but the constraints are less extensive than in reporter voice. Thus writers operating in correspondent voice will, on their own behalf, explicitly assess human behaviour by reference to notions of human capacity, tenacity and normality, but will refrain from explicitly making ethical judgements about right and wrong, good and evil. In contrast, journalists operating in reporter voice mode refrain from all such judgements of human behaviour, confining such evaluations to the quoted words of external sources. A third voice, termed "commentator voice", is most typically found in the context of the overtly argumentative and subjective text types (i.e. opinion pieces, commentaries and editorials) and is substantially less common on the news pages. The full array of attitudinal meanings is available to those writing in this commentator style. (For the account of journalistic voice upon which we rely here, see Martin & White 2005: 164-184).

The system of journalistic voice as a set of options with respect to the occurrence and co-occurrence of attitudinal values is presented diagrammatically below in Figure 2.

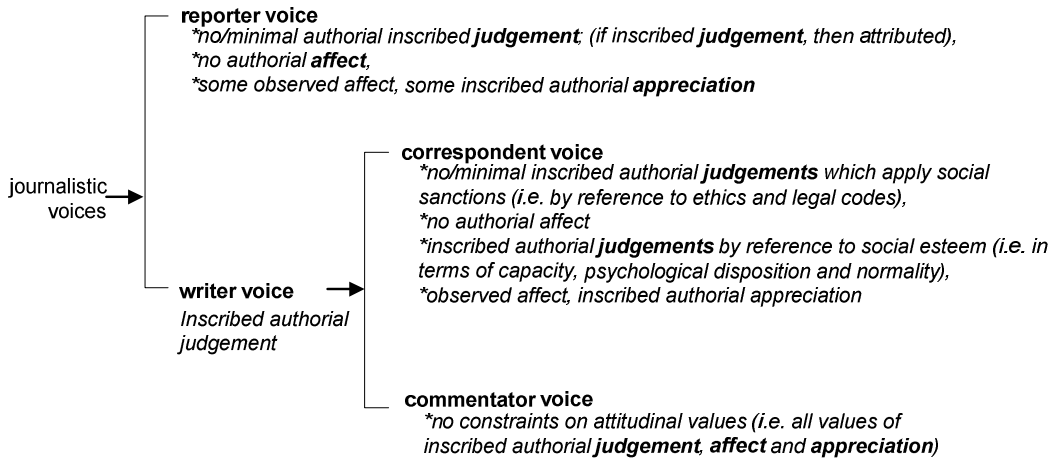

Figure 2: Journalistic Voice

The voice of hard news reporting (reporter voice), is outlined in some more detail below.

Inscribed Judgement

There is a very high probability that any explicit (inscribed) positive or negative judgements (assessments of human behaviour and character by reference to notions of ethics and social acceptability) will be confined to material attributed to outside sources. Thus there will be no or very few instances of the journalistic author explicitly, in his/her own words, passing judgment on human actions and behaviours.

Inscribed Affect

In those texts where there are few or no instances of inscribed authorial judgement, there will also be no instances of the author describing his/her own emotional responses. Thus authorial affect appears incompatible with reporter voice. Against this, it is observed that texts without inscribed authorial judgement do sometimes include instances of the author reporting on the emotional responses of third parties, even if the frequency of such instances within individual texts is not high. Thus the author reporting that others are "pleased", "upset", "troubled" etc is compatible with reporter voice.

Inscribed Appreciation

Instances of inscribed authorial appreciations (assessments by the author of objects, artefacts, happenings and states of affairs by reference to aesthetic and related systems of social valuation) do occur in the texts which, on the other hand, exclude instances of inscribed authorial judgement and affect. However, even while they occur with some regularity across corpora of news reporting texts, they occur at relatively low frequencies. Thus, of the 42 texts in their corpus which Martin & White (2005) classify as reporter voice (on the basis that they contain no values of inscribed authorial judgement and affect), 35 have at least some instances of inscribed authorial appreciation, at a rate of between 0.9 and 6.3 instances per 500 words. Some examples of formulations from reporter voice texts which involve inscribed authorial appreciation are set out below (appreciations underlined and in bold).

> Labour has delivered a **sharp** warning to teachers
>
> In spite of Mr Blunkett's **robust** message, he got a standing ovation from more than half the delegates.

Defense Minister Beniamino Andreatta took a **harsher** line, demanding that the pilot be prosecuted.

"We are fed up," said Mauro Gilmozi, the mayor of this **picturesque** town of 3,600.

All that remains is a **mangled** heap of yellow metal on the bloodstained snow.

Anger continued to build in Italy, an **important** U.S. ally and home to seven **major** U.S. military installations.

A mile up the road, in a depression out of sight of the surrounding countryside, they found the place, a **desolate** old house

As the security situation **deteriorated**, Washington and London appealed for both sides to avoid all-out combat.

In terms of explicit attitude, then, hard news reporter voice is an arrangement under which some types of attitude (i.e. inscribed authorial judgement and affect) are curtailed while others occur occasionally (i.e. inscribed authorial appreciation and observed affect.)

Invoked (tokens of) attitude

The research cited above indicates that invoked attitude (i.e. via implication and association) is a common feature in hard news reporter voice texts in English. The following extract from a reporter voice text demonstrates this functionality in English-language reporting.

(1) The families of British detainees at Guantanamo Bay are to take their fight for the men's release to the US with the help of the foremost American civil liberties group, they announced yesterday.

(2) Politicians, campaigners and lawyers joined relatives of the prisoners to launch the Guantanamo Human Rights Commission at the House of Commons.

(3) Nine Britons and three British residents are among the 660 men who have been held at the American naval base in Cuba for more than two years

without charge or access to lawyers. Another 11 Europeans, several from France, Sweden and Germany, are also detained at Camp Delta.

(4) "We have to speak not only to the courts of law but to the court of public opinion," Nadine Strossen, the president of the ACLU, said. She said there was growing concern over the Bush administration's actions in the "war on terror".

(5) "It is plain and clear that the treatment of these 660 being held without charge, without access to a lawyer, without access to a court, violates the most fundamental of human rights," said Philippe Sands QC, professor of law at University College, London. [*Guardian*, 21/01/04: 4]

We notice that in paragraph 5, a strong explicitly negative judgement of the US administration is conveyed by the text, but as is conventional in reporter voice texts, this is only through the quoted words of an outside source. Thus Philippe Sands QC is cited as saying that the treatment of the prisoners in Guantanamo Bay "violates the most fundamental of human rights". No such explicit value judgements are passed in the words of the journalist author. Nonetheless, there are several authorial formulations which have the clear potential to trigger related attitudinal positions. For example, the families of the detainees are said to have taken their "fight" to the "foremost" American civil liberties group. In some contexts, of course, "fighting" will have negative associations but here it has the potential to trigger a positive sense of vigour or determination on the part of the families. The term "foremost" is of itself an appreciation (since it involves an assessment in terms of social saliency and not a judgement of propriety or social acceptability), but it nevertheless has the potential to cast the "fight" by the family in a positive light. The reader is also told that the prisoners have been held "for more than two years without charge or access to lawyer." The factual content here – i.e. more than two years without charge or access to lawyers – has a clear potential to trigger a negative view of the authorities' behaviour as callous and improper.

In this extract, then, we observe attitude which has been indirectly invoked by the author acting to support and lay the evaluative groundwork for the attitudes which are elsewhere explicitly announced in quoted material.

What does this mean for our efforts to deal with the commonsense notion of "objectivity" and specifically "authorial neutrality" in more theoretically principled ways? Obviously we do not view it as useful to see hard news reports as "objective" in any commonly used sense of the term. Clearly authorial perspective strongly conditions the numerous subjective choices which journalist authors must necessarily make as they construct such reports. Against this, we are now in a position to recognise the typical hard news report (that constructed in reporter voice) as nevertheless involving a strategic avoidance of certain key evaluative meanings and thereby backgrounding and potentially concealing the subjective role of the journalist author. In these terms, then, "objectivity" is relative – a measure of the degree to which the "voice" employed avoids or constrains the use of key attitudinal meanings and modes.

The research cited above, then, has demonstrated that the use of the more evaluatively constrained reporter voice is common in the hard news reporting of English language broadsheets such as *The Guardian*, *The Times*, *The New York Times* and *The Age* (of Melbourne Australia). The question remains as to whether a similar constraining of attitudinal meanings is the dominant option for hard news reporting in the "high brow" print media of other cultures, and whether the same system of journalistic attitudinal styles ("voices") can be observed in other cultural contexts. Our own preliminary investigations are not advanced enough to offer any conclusive answers to such questions. We are, however, in a position to report that we have been able to observe something very similar to English-language reporter voice operating in the hard news reporting of a range of languages, including Japanese, French, Indonesian, Thai and Chinese. To demonstrate this, we offer below an analysis of a Japanese news report which we believe can justifiably be characterised as operating with reporter voice. We have used formatting to indicate the presence of the various different types of attitude. Material which has been attributed to outside sources, and hence for which the journalist author does not take direct responsibility, has been boxed.

Key

bold underlining = inscribed (explicit) attitude

italics = invoked (implied) attitude

boxed = attributed material (i.e. quotes)

The sub-type of the attitude is indicated in square brackets immediately following the relevant span of text.
[j] = judgement (positive/negative assessments of human behaviour in terms of social norms)
[ap] = appreciation (positive/negative assessments of objects, artefacts, happenings and states of affairs in terms of aesthetics and other systems of social valuation)
[af] = affect (positive/negative emotional responses); 1st-af = first-person or authorial affect; 3rd-af = observed affect, i.e. the reporter describing the emotional responses of third parties

For the purpose of this demonstration, only the translation of the original Japanese is provided (though the Japanese for instances of attitudinal language is provided below).

Sovereignty handed over to Iraq
As a precaution against <u>terrorists</u> [j], the handover is brought forward.
The 14mth occupation of Iraq is over.

The CPA handed over sovereignty to the Iraqi provisional government just after 10am on the 28th (Japan time same day 3pm). The occupational rule which continued for 14 months following the collapse of the Hussein Government is over and, *a sovereign nation run by the Iraqi people has been born.* **[**j] Iraq has begun establishing full scale political power **[j]** which will happen (after the election) next year but, the Allied forces mainly composed of the US army will remain in Iraq as a multinational force.[j] The **<u>deterioration</u>** [ap] of public safety such as incidences like the frequent occurrence of **<u>terrorism</u>** [j] by anti American resistance forces has not been stopped and the future of the new nation is **<u>threatened</u>**. [ap]
The handover of sovereignty occurred two days earlier than the 30th, which was originally planned. There is a **<u>fear</u>** [3rd-af] that anti-American forces were planning a large scale **<u>terrorist</u>** [j] attack during the handover ceremony,

therefore it seems that in order to avoid an attack which could prevent the handover, the schedule changed.

At the small scale ceremony which was held in central Baghdad on the 28th, the Iraqi President, Yawar said, "(This) is an **historic** [ap]day" and Bremer, the US Civilian Administrator, announced, "the future is **optimistic**". [ap] At the ceremony, amongst others, Prime Minister Allawi, Deputy Prime Minister Sareha, Chief Justice Al-Mahmodi, and the Special English/Iraqi representative, Richmond attended. President Yawar and others held an official Allegiance Ceremony after the handover of sovereignty.

Based on the resolution of the United Nations Security Council, Iraq is to restore "complete sovereignty". The coalition led by US/UK which had responsibility for public safety in Iraq after the collapse of the Hussein government, changed its name to the multinational forces *and continues to occupy (the country).*[j] The provisional government doesn't have the power to decide long term policy and laws announced by the CPA will also be valid.

After the ceremony, Prime Minister Allawi said to the Press Gallery that the national parliamentary election due on Jan 2nd next year is being planned.

Mr. Bremer hand delivered a personally signed letter by President Bush, which asked for a reopening of diplomatic relations. America cut diplomatic ties with Iraq following the Gulf War of 1990. *Mr. Bremer immediately following the completion of the handover ceremony, together with the spokesperson, Senor and others departed Iraq by air***.** [j] The CPA was dissolved.

Leaving aside the material attributed to outside sources, we notice that, in keeping with our classification of the text as reporter voice, there are only a few instances of inscribed attitude in the author's own words. One of these is the term "terrorist" ("*tero"* in the Japanese) as used to describe those forces fighting against the US and its allies. At first glance this might seem to be inconsistent with our earlier specification that reporter voice texts avoid instances of inscribed authorial judgement (i.e. instances where the author evaluates human behaviour and action by reference to social norms). However, in this case we are dealing with a term that has become so "conventionalised" as a way of designating this grouping that it no longer constitutes

subjectivity or assessment on the writer's part. Otherwise, with respect to explicit evaluation, the writer confines himself to two instances of appreciation and one instance of observed affect.

[appreciation – assessments of objects, artefacts and states of affair]
1. The **deterioration** [ap] of public safety such as incidences like the frequent occurrence of terrorism by anti American resistance forces has not been stopped,
(*[[hambei eikoo seiryoku ni yoro tero mo himpatsu suru]] nado, chian no* ***akka*** [ap] *ni wa hadome ga kakatte orazu,*)

2. and the future of the new nation is **threatened** [ap].
(*shinsei-kokka no zetoo wa* ***tanan*** [ap] *da*)

[observed affect]
3. There is a **fear** [3rd-af] that anti-American forces were planning a large scale **terrorist** [j] attack,
(*[[hambei seiryoku ga shuken ijoo no shikiten o yooteki ni daikiboo na* ***tero*** [j] *o chikakeru]]* ***osore*** [3rd-af] *ga ari,*)

In instance 1, the evaluation is of the condition of public safety – i.e. that it is "deteriorating" - and hence is appreciation rather than judgement. Similarly in instance 2, the evaluation is of a future state of affairs.
In instance 3, it is not the writer himself who is presented as doing any evaluating but rather some unspecified grouping in the community – those who purportedly "fear" (*osore*).

As well there are a couple of instances where attitude is being invoked rather than directly inscribed. Perhaps the most telling is the concluding remark that "Mr. Bremer immediately following the completion of the handover ceremony, together with the spokesperson, Senor and others departed Iraq by air**."** This has the clear potential to activate in the reader a negative view of Mr Bremmer, specifically that he has made an over hasty, perhaps even cowardly, departure from the country.

This then is an instance of reporting where the author avoids any explicit, direct evaluations of human behaviour by reference to social norms (judgements), while at

the same time he offers occasional evaluations of situations and states of affair (appreciations), reports of the negative emotional reactions of others (observed affect), and observations which, via implication, have the clear potential to position the reader attitudinally (attitudinal invocation). In this then, the Japanese author conforms precisely to the attitudinal arrangements which have been shown to operate with considerable regularity in English language hard news reporting.

Conclusion

It is clear that today's media world is in a state of flux as indigenous, local traditions of journalistic practice increasingly come under pressure from a range of globalising forces, including the growth of the internet and the continuing expansion of English as the major world language. It is unfortunate, therefore, that comparative studies of media variation and variability around the world are few and far between. (Hallin and Mancini's 2004 study *Comparing Media Systems – Three Models of Media and Politics* is one outstanding exception to this rule.) Even less work has been done which has as its primary focus the comparison of news reporting discourse across the diversity of the world's journalistic cultures. Thus it remains difficult to determine how similar or different are the genres, styles and rhetorical workings of news reporting language as it operates around the world. This lack of knowledge is of concern in its own right, since it means that we remain unclear as to the degree to which different languages and cultures have developed their own individual journalistic styles and structures. But it is even more troubling given the possibility that the global forces mentioned above may be acting to homogenise journalistic practices internationally. Without this knowledge it will be impossible to determine, for example, whether or not Anglo-American modes of journalistic discourse are coming to dominate internationally and, in the process, supplanting local styles and text types.

The objective of this paper, therefore, has to been to propose various lines of enquiry and various analytical frameworks by which cross-linguistic comparisons of journalistic discourse may be conducted. We have been able only to offer some preliminary insights into similarities and differences in the reporting of hard news

across cultures. We hope that our efforts may inspire others to pursue their own investigations along similar pathways.

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