

Abstract 60

Importance & Significance of Language Used in Newspaper Headlines (An Investigation Based on National Newspapers of Sri Lanka)

N. M. Amila Nuwan Madhusanka

Temporary Lecturer, Department of Mass Communication, University of Kelaniya
nuwanamila7777@gmail.com

Language is the medium which transit knowledge developed by humans from past to present and present to future. Newspapers are different from other literary documents as they contain day to day information. Therefore, it is a document, which contains information related to wars, crimes, floods, robberies, changes of consumer price index, commercial news, ongoing activities of the country etc. Newspaper headlines are significant since every headline denotes the beginning of a news item. Hence, it is easy to investigate newspaper headlines by examining the characteristics and qualities of news items since headlines and news are interrelated. Significant value has been given to headlines than other news items of the newspaper. A complete news item is compressed into a single headline by using a creative language style. The main objective of the investigation based on national newspapers of Sri Lanka, is to identify the significance of the language used in headlines. Content analysis and interviews were used as the research methodology. The contents selected for the analysis are from the newspapers: *Lankadeepa*, *Divaina*, *Dinamina* and *Silumina*. At the end of the research, the study enabled to understand the importance of the language used in headlines. It was found that the language used in headlines is important to compress the story, to express the importance of the story, to attract readers and to add colours to the face of the paper. The main feature of the newspaper headlines is the transformation of “*Vidakdha*” tradition of language to progressive tradition of language. In addition, the usage of classical prose language style for headlines, usage of ordinary structure by going beyond the classical rules, influence made by folklore and other languages and the significance of the sentence structure were also observed regarding the language used in headlines. Newspaper titles are very important for popularity. There was a hidden meaning in headlines especially in the form of puns. A suggestion can be made at the end of the research as follows: Writers should pay their attention to the structure of the language as well as the grammar of the language when they are following the progressive tradition. The headline should look at the hidden meaning of the headlines before the publishing and the support of specialized editors should be sought for the title.

Key words: Headlines, Importance, Language, Newspaper, Significance