Newspapers in the ESL Classroom

Using newspapers as an introduction for teaching linguistic theories and concepts for advanced learners

English for Students in Teacher Education 15 hp

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1. Introduction

1.1. Background and Purpose

The purpose of this essay is to develop Sanderson’s ideas and suggestions of using newspapers in the classroom. In his book *Using newspapers in the classroom*, Sanderson gives examples of activities and exercises by using newspapers as a classroom teaching material. His ideas include activities suitable for elementary, intermediate, and advanced level. Sanderson’s aims are: *meeting teachers’ needs, meeting students’ needs, developing language skills, fostering positive attitudes, and encourage reading*. What Sanderson does not include, which is the intention of this study, is using newspapers as an introduction to linguistic theories and concepts for advanced learners. This essay will explore a hypothesis that newspapers offer valuable source material as an introduction to linguistic concepts for advanced learners, such as, *signs, myths, metaphors, metonymy, idioms, homonyms, synonyms, antonyms, hyponymy, context, encyclopaedic knowledge, and deixis*. The inspiration for this essay originated from Sanderson’s ideas of using newspapers in the classroom and Nyström’s previous research on newspaper use in the classroom. Leading stories from prominent British and American newspapers will be analysed in this essay to establish their suitability in this respect. This essay is strictly hypothetical due to time constraints and the lack of opportunity to test the usefulness in real classroom situations. The inspiration and considerations has led to the following hypothesis and problem statements.

1.2. Hypothesis

*Using newspapers as teaching material in the classroom can be useful for teachers when introducing linguistic theories and concepts for advanced learners.*

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1.3. Problem Statements

By analysing newspaper articles, the following questions will be answered:

*To what extent can newspaper articles be used to analyse linguistic theories and linguistic concepts in a classroom environment for advanced ESL learners?*

*Assuming newspapers can be used for teaching linguistic theories and concepts for advanced learners, how might this work in practice?*

1.4. Connections to Skolverket

One of the main subject aims from The Swedish National Agency of Education (Skolverket) in the subject English, is written as follows:

Students should be given the opportunity to develop knowledge of living conditions, social issues and cultural features in different contexts and parts of the world where English is used. Teaching should encourage students' curiosity in language and culture, and give them the opportunity to develop plurilingualism where skills in different languages interact and support each other. Teaching should also help students develop language awareness and knowledge of how a language is learned through and outside teaching contexts.4

By using newspapers as an introduction of teaching linguistic theories and concepts, students will be given an opportunity to develop knowledge of the cultural, societal, and socio-political features of the different English-speaking countries, as well as develop language awareness amongst other goals from Skolverket. Skolverket has provided formal guidance about the importance of news articles, how they are written, and what might be included in them. It is also stated that it might be beneficial to provide opportunities for students to practise writing journalistic articles themselves.5 The guidance includes; an explanation about what articles are, recommendations and suggestions in what subjects they might be used, how a news article is structured, remarks on the language in news articles, the functions of photographs and fact boxes, and how referencing is done in newspapers. By using newspaper articles as a basis for teaching introductory linguistic theories, possibilities and opportunities for further use of newspapers in the classroom might arise and interest both students and teachers.

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2. Theoretical Background

2.1. The Semiotics of Newspapers

Semiotics is generally understood as being the study of signs and how signs are perceived both in isolation and in relation to other signs. Hodge and Kress develop this definition as follows:

Semiotics is the general study of semiosis, that is, the processes and effects of the production and reproduction, reception and circulation of meaning in all forms, used by all kinds of agent of communication.6

Charles Sanders Peirce was an American 20th century philosopher and scientist. Peirce’s career was mainly in science, although it is argued that his main field of interest concerned the application of philosophical and mathematical logic. Peirce identifies logic with semiotics and claims that a sign is only a sign if it is understood as a sign, and he divided signs into three major categories.7 Peirce’s three major types of signs consists of icon, index, and symbol. Icons are explained to be based on likeness and identity, for example road signs. Indexes are based on causality and contiguity, such as smoke as a sign of fire. Symbols are explained as a conventional link; something is symbolic when it represents something else with which there is no natural connection, such as, such as the symbol /+/ being a symbol for addition.8 These three types of signs are not distinct and separate, which means that a sign can be a mixture of two or more categories simultaneously.

Roland Gerard Barthes was a French 20th century literary critic and essayist. Barthes viewed signs from a cultural perspective and his work Mythologies (1957) defines signs as cultural phenomena. Barthes was influenced by Saussure, who established the study of signs and symbols.9 Barthes has furthermore defined concepts such as cultural myths and neomania. Cultural myths refer to a special type of speech, how something is said, and neomania is the “hunger” or desire for something new.10 Understanding neomania can be of the utmost importance when discussing newspapers and news articles. The essence of a newspaper might be argued seen in the word newspaper.

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The literal meaning of the word is to print something new, news - “a new thing”, on a piece of paper and or a website. Barthes’ explanation, definition, and discussion about neomania and consumerism are highly pertinent when analysing newspapers. It may be argued that these are phenomena that retain most newspapers in business. Online newspapers are often dependent upon advertisements to keep the business going and advertisements are predicated on concepts like neomania, which might be seen as a direct link to consumerism.

Barthes argues that a press photograph is a message. The message is formed by three consecutive parts, a channel of transmission, a source of emission, and a point of reception. The channel of transmission is the newspapers itself together with the photograph and all the content connected to the photograph, that is, the title, a caption, a commentary, the text, and the layout. According to Barthes, a reader's pre-existing knowledge of a particular newspaper can affect the meaning that a photograph published within it conveys by orienting how the message that the photograph, with any associated caption or text, is perceived. Assuming this, the same photograph can generate different meanings in different papers. The point of reception is the receptors, in other words, the people reading the newspaper. The source of emission is the staff, and everybody included in working with all the parts that lead up to the finished product. Both the reception and the emission lie within several fields of study which include sociology and linguistics. The message, per se, is more complicated to study. Barthes argues that a photograph by itself does not have a code. The photograph is a message without a code, although it is often accompanied by linguistic elements. The photograph is made up of shades, lighting, and surfaces whilst the text is made up of words. The combination of words makes up the caption, the headline, and the accompanying text. However, even if the photograph does not have a code, it does have a style and a supplementary message.

All analogical reproductions such as paintings, cinema, and theatre, convey a message about their environment. The environment or style can further be analysed by the landscapes, objects, and scenes included in the analogical reproductions. The only exception of analogical reproduction that cannot be analysed in this way is the photograph, according to Barthes.

The analogical reproduction is the denoted message and how people or a society receive the message is the connoted message. Denotation refers to the primary meaning, the literal or dictionary meaning, while connotation refers to the secondary meaning, including the experiences, norms etc. Connotation and denotation together form the ‘culture’ and when the photograph becomes a press photograph, it then expresses a duality of messages. The photograph has been altered by professionals and is being read by the receivers. This duality of messages is explained by Barthes as the photographic paradox where one message is with code and the other without code.

News is not just facts, but representations produced in language and other signs like photographs. A semiotic analysis of news discourse will therefore include discussion of the connotations of the linguistic and visual signs used in news stories. Connotations shape the meaning of a news story, and they can only be perceived when they belong to coded ways of using signs which the reader can recognise.

Bignell argues that some codes are specific and belong to specific texts while some are common and used widely. The narrative code is one of the most common codes in social life and media consisting of stories in one form or another. Narration can also vary depending on what kind of stories are told and for what purpose. Newspaper photographs use codes that are more specific to newspapers. Bignell claims that their function is to connote evidence and actuality. There are also social dimensions of codes according to Bignell. The social dimensions can vary since people perceive codes differently. In a society, groups of people can perceive code with varying degrees of familiarity, depending on what they are familiar with.

Newspapers and other news media shape what can be thought of as news, by reporting some events and excluding others. So news discourse is an ideological representation of the world because it selects what will be reported, and sets the terms of what is significant.

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The inclusion and exclusion of particular news stories can be different from newspaper to newspaper, which Bignell states might be related to the style of the newspaper and news cycle. Bignell also points out that newspapers are businesses and therefore commercial products which aim to create profit.22

News is neither found nor gathered, as if it were already there. It is the product of professional ways of thinking, writing, and composing which are all codes of behaviour learned by news workers.23

Bignell argues that semiotic, ideological and commercial structures shape news. Consequently, news as reported cannot be regarded as natural. News items are selected and worked with through codes and signs which together shape the news to what it is. Not only are news and codes different in newspapers, but how the papers address their readers can also vary from paper to paper.24 Bignell claims that discourse amongst ‘popular’ and ‘quality’ newspapers can be very different. ‘Popular’ newspapers, such as mass-market newspapers, use an orally-based communication register, following codes common to spoken communication and with restricted sentence structure and vocabulary. ‘Quality’ newspapers, such as broadsheets, follow codes more common to written communication. Differences may vary, but orality in newspapers can include different typefaces, deliberate misspelling, and slang all in favour of entertainment and familiarity. ‘Quality’ newspapers are often associated with seriousness and are more formal with fewer misspelled words and the texts contained within them usually consist of longer sentences.25

Headlines are according to Bignell, designed to draw the readers' attention to the topic of the headline and deliver social codes through linguistic signs so that the reader of the headline can understand it and be enticed to read the whole news story. Existing knowledge is important in headlines and, without existing knowledge (e.g. of a person that the headline refers to), the reader will not be able to understand what the headline is about. Headlines are also denoted and connoted in certain parts to give the headline the features wanted by the writer.26

The multimodality of written text has, by and large, been ignored, whether in educational contexts, in linguistic theorizing or in popular common sense. Today, in the age of ‘multimedia’, it can suddenly be perceived again.²⁷

Kress and Van Leeuwen argue that both spoken and written text is multimodal consisting of several modes which provide the text with meaning.

A spoken text is not just verbal but also visual, combining with ‘non-verbal’ modes of communication such as facial expressions, gesture, posture and other forms of self-presentation.²⁸

Kress and Van Leeuwen claim that just as a spoken text is combined with other modes, so is written text and it extends to more than language itself. The multimodality in written text includes the layout, material on which the text is written, how the text is written and with what it is written, letters forming systems, etc. All modes give meaning to the text and combinations of modes are not only common in society, but also crucial for understanding others and being able to express oneself in a society. Multimodality in text can by these means include everything from general everyday communication, but also more specific or restricted examples including text and illustrations or photographs and captions. This might confuse some since there can be various meanings through which one can comprehend from the same text i.e. the literal meaning and the implied meaning.²⁹

Composition in the multimodal text is also important since it also adds to meaning. Features like placement, left and right-side positioning, lightning, size, focus, colouring, contrast, shadowing, lining, all add to meaning.³⁰ Kress and Van Leeuwen mention three elements of composition which apply to multimodal texts, such as single pictures, as well as composite visuals which include text and image and graphic elements on computers, on television-screens, or printed on one way or another. According to Kress and Van Leeuwen, the three elements of composition consist of: 1. Information value, 2. Salience, and 3. Framing.³¹

Information value relates to placement of elements.

Salience relates to attraction of attention and can also denote placement, sharpness, colour, size and positioning i.e. foreground or background. Framing, on the other hand, is used as a tool to connect or disconnect elements from each other.\(^{32}\)

Kress and Van Leeuwen claim that multimodality can be studied in two ways, either as a whole and integrated, or separately. They claim that there is an overarching code that provides logic to the integration of different semiotic elements. The overarching code can be divided into two parts, namely the code of spatial composition and the code of temporal composition, sometimes referred to as rhythm. The code of spatial composition functions when all elements of the text are co-present, i.e. magazine pages, paintings. The code of temporal composition functions when elements are revealed over time, i.e. dance and speech. Some multimodal text functions in both of the overarching codes, even if one code might be dominant. An example of this is television and film, although rhythm might be dominant in the examples, according to Kress and Van Leeuwen.\(^{33}\)

2.2. The Semantics of Newspapers

Kearns claims that the study of meaning in linguistics is usually divided in two fields, the two being semantics and pragmatics.\(^{34}\) Kearns defines the first field as follows:

Semantics deals with the literal meaning of words and the meaning of the way they are combined, which taken together form the core of meaning, or the starting point from which the whole meaning of a particular utterance is constructed.\(^{35}\)

and the second as follows:

Pragmatics deals with all the ways in which literal meaning must be refined, enriched or extended to arrive at an understanding of what a speaker meant in uttering a particular expression.\(^{36}\)

Meaning as a definition is broad and vague since the word meaning can refer to different kinds of meaning. A sentence for example can be understood by its lexical meaning and by its structural meaning. Lexical meaning can be understood by the individual words and structural by how the words are combined.\(^{37}\)

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Kerns illustrates this with the following explanation for the example, *I forgot the paper.*

Semantics provide the literal meaning of the elements *I, forget, past tense, the,* and *paper,* and the meaning drawn from the order of the words, giving very approximately ‘The person who is speaking at some time before the time of speaking forgot a particular item which is a paper.’

According to Kearns the other meaning, the pragmatic meaning, deals with context to make the example more of a complete communication. The pragmatic meaning is different depending on the context and who the speaker is or for whom the utterance is intended and the intention of the utterance.

Antonyms or ‘opposition’ are lexical sense relations. There are different variations of words in antonym pairs which show difference in sense structure. According to Kearns, complementaries might be the most basic antonyms where examples like *open and shut* are presented as well as *dead and alive.* Antonyms like the examples above are either *one thing or another.* There are also non-complimentary antonyms based on a scale with a neutral middle zone and opposite poles such as *hot and cold.*

Polar antonyms often deal with height, length, speed, and weight; i.e. fast and slow, long and short, and so on. Word sense, according to Kearns, can also be analysed in terms of sense components. Sense components such as semantic markers and semantic features concern classification.

According to Kearns, synonyms have the same sense, meaning, although lexical synonymy is rare. Kearns explains synonymy with the following example:

*If A and B are synonyms they have the same sense.*

Furthermore, Kerns explains hyponymy with the following example:

*If A is a hyponym of B then A is a kind of B.*

Lakoff and Johnson state that human conceptual systems, how people act and think, are metaphorical in nature and that metaphors are not just figures of speech.
Lakoff and Johnson claim that there are several kinds of metaphorical concepts, all of which have different functions.\textsuperscript{44}

Two kinds of common metaphorical concepts are structural metaphors and orientational metaphors. Structural metaphors are argued to be structured in terms of another such as, *time being money*, in the metaphorical expression *time is money*. Orientational metaphors, on the other hand, are argued to give a concept an orientation in space and time, for example the metaphor *I’m feeling down*, where the orientational metaphor down associated with sad and happy is associated with up. According to Lakoff and Johnson, metaphorical concepts and expressions reflect the cultural values of a society.\textsuperscript{45} Idiomatic expressions, or idioms, are concepts of which cannot be understood by their individual words and are highly cultural, similar to metaphors. Lakoff and Johnson explain the two types of English expressions as follows:

The English expressions are of two sorts: simple literal expressions and idioms that fit the metaphor and are part of the normal everyday way of talking about the subject.\textsuperscript{46}

Metonymy is similar to metaphors in the sense of that the meaning conveyed is different from the literal meaning in the utterance, understood by the words with which the utterance is combined. The difference between the two concepts is that metonymy refers to one entity with something to which it is already related. Lakoff and Johnson use the example, *the ham sandwich is waiting for his check*, where *the ham sandwich* is a metonym referring to a person.\textsuperscript{47} Homonyms are different words which are spelled and pronounced the same as each other, but their meaning is different; for example, the words *bank* can mean both, a place where money is stored or loaned, and terrain alongside a river.\textsuperscript{48}

2.3. The Pragmatics of Newspapers

Grundy claims that pragmatic meaning is determined by context. One of the processes of picking out aspects of context is called deixis, such as who is speaking, the gestures of the speaker, the time or place of speaking, the current location, and who the relative recipient is.\textsuperscript{49}


Person deixis depends on several aspects, one of which is that meaning depends on who the person speaking is and who the person is speaking to; for example, the use of the pronouns *I* and *you*, in this case *I* would be the speaker and *you* recipient. Person deixis can also commonly be expressed by possessive nouns, agreement affixes of verbs and as in the example above, pronouns. Examples of first person deixis: singular pronouns such as, *I*, *me*, *mine*, and *my*; examples of plural pronouns, *us*, *we*, *our*, and *ours*.

Second person deixis is the reference to the identified recipient such as, *you*, *your*, *yourself* etc. Place deixis is a reference to a place or location that is relative to the speaker or recipient. Examples of place deixis are place adverbials such as, *here*, *there*, *this way*, etc. Time deixis is a reference to time and examples of common time deixis are time adverbials such as, *now*, *yesterday*, and *tomorrow*. The references of the words used in person deixis, place deixis and time deixis are called indexical words their functions in language are called deictic.

Implicature is the term for what is implied without the context cancelling it. Grundy argues that implicature is problematic since it depends on several aspects such as relevance and context. The utterance Grundy uses to exemplify implicature is, *I’m here now*. Grundy states that this utterance can mean several things dependent on context and relevance. In his example there are two students uttering the same thing for themselves, *I’m here now*, on the day they arrive as students in Newcastle. One student infers from *I’m here now* to the fact that he is in Newcastle, while the other student infers from the same utterance that he is in Britain. The context is different since the first student comes from Southampton and his *here* refers to Newcastle and the second one comes from China and his *here* refers to Britain. The utterance, *I’m here now*, is therefore dependent on context and relevance of the implied meaning which is called an implicature.

Grice claims that the cooperative principle can explain the implicated meaning along with the four maxims, quantity, quality, relation, and manner. The cooperative principle deals with people cooperating, working together, to exchange meaning. Grice’s overarching cooperative principle is expressed as follows:

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Make your conversation contribution such as required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged.\textsuperscript{55}

The maxims are considered to be norms of a conversation that people unconsciously follow. The people conversing are engaging in a co-operative action which is governed by the maxims. The quality maxim says that people should try to tell the truth and the quantity maxim says that people should be informative, but not more than required for the purposes of the interaction. The relation maxim proposes that a speaker’s utterance is assumed to be relevant to the hearer. The maxim of manner encompasses aspects of speech including being clear, brief, orderly and avoiding ambiguity as central to the transmission of speaker meaning.\textsuperscript{56} Clarke explains this further as follows:

In brief, the claim is that we expect people who are contributing to a conversation to be informative but not too informative, to be truthful, to base their statement on adequate evidence, to be relevant and to speak in an appropriate manner.\textsuperscript{57}

The maxims and the cooperative process are integrated, and meaning is conveyed through this process. According to Clark, the responses to Grice’s ideas were positive even though problems were identified. Clark argues that the relation maxim was criticized for being vague about what relevant or relevance meant, while the maxims were criticized of being redundant. Clark claims that the development of Relevance Theory (RT) derives from Wilson and Sperber’s critical discussion of Grice’s work. Wilson and Sperber’s development of Grice’s work included improvements such as modifying the maxims, since they did not seem equally important and some were not needed at all.\textsuperscript{58}

Wilson and Sperber claim that the Gricean maxims were involved in both what was said and what was implied. Wilson and Sperber state that a communicative principle of relevance governed interpretation and not different maxims. Their idea of a principle of relevance was inspired by and derived from what Grice’s maxims were aimed to explain.\textsuperscript{59}

\textsuperscript{56} Clark, B 2013, Relevance Theory, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.
\textsuperscript{57} Clark, B 2013, Relevance Theory, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013. p.57
\textsuperscript{58} Clark, B 2013, Relevance Theory, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.
According to Clarke, a word can be encoded by three types of entry or information, lexical, logical and encyclopaedic. Clarke demonstrates all three types of information with the example of the word *bear*. The lexical information or entry of the word *bear* is that it is a noun and that it is pronounced /bɛə/. The logical information is that *bear* is an animal of a certain type and the encyclopaedic is the facts about *bear*. The encyclopaedic information might include various facts like the size, where it is found, what it feeds on, how it looks etc. 

2.4. Previous Work on Newspapers in the Classroom

According to Sanderson, newspapers can be useful to work with when teaching English. The activities and examples that Sanderson presents stretch from elementary to advanced level of English. The newspapers, and how one can work with them, are categorised into chapters with each chapter including ways of working with the chapter foci. The chapters are structured as follows: headlines, articles, photographs, advertisements, horoscopes, problem page letters, TV-guides, cartoons and strip cartoons, weather forecasts, and the whole newspaper.

The focus of this essay includes the first three chapters, headlines, articles, and photographs. Below is a short summary of the headlines, articles, and photographs chapters that will be included in this essay.

2.4.1. Summary of Sanderson’s Headlines

In this chapter, headlines are used for various activities with one common denominator, to use newspaper headlines. The chapter begins with an activity most suitable for elementary and intermediate level. The activity concerns and deals with using headline words to construct sentences. A number of headlines are selected and reduced to individual words. The individual words are then to be linked with each other in order to create news sentences. The other activities deal with: matching headlines and headline halves, playing “hangman”, writing activities, answering questions, writing headlines, changing headlines, understanding headline words with aid of synonyms, working with structural and stylistic features in headlines, etc. For further headline activities see Sanderson (pp. 19-47). The examples and activities are both productive and receptive, as well as creative and playful. Some deal with specific language aspects like ambiguity, while others are more general, like the ones dealing with writing or guessing if a story is true or false.

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In short, activities deal with: writing, matching, searching for answers, grammar, language stylistics, production and reception, creativity, truthfulness, etc.

2.4.2. Summary of Sanderson’s Articles

This chapter deals with the text that naturally comes after the headline in a newspaper. It commences with an activity that relates to categorising articles to subject-matter. The text as a whole is important and what general content the text contains. Other activities that Sanderson suggests include: finding facts in introductory paragraphs, understanding long information-packed sentences, answering questions, reconstructing a text, etc. For further article activities see Sanderson (pp. 47-90). In short, activities deal with: reading comprehension, matching, memory, retelling, deconstructing – reconstructing text, writing, creativity, grammar, vocabulary, similarities and differences, etc.

2.4.3. Summary of Sanderson’s Photographs

The photographs chapter discusses the photographs in newspapers, and also the text associated with the photograph and the first activity is focused upon reconstructing such captions. The captions would be in jumbled order and the correct caption and photograph should be matched together. Other activities include: predicting content of photographs, writing profiles of famous people, matching newspaper stories to people, writing thoughts of people in photographs, matching new vocabulary to newspaper photographs, etc. For further photographs activities see Sanderson (pp. 92-110). In short, activities deal with: reconstructing, matching, writing, storytelling, etc. Each one of the chapters and activities is preceded by a preparation and some are followed by extensions, variations, and comments. This makes it easy to follow and or change the activity so that is can be modified to fit the class that is assigned the activity.

Nyström conducted a research study on newspaper use in Swedish schools. He executed his research by interviewing teachers and students about newspapers as a classroom material. Nyström’s research questions are as follows: How do English language teachers say they use newspapers in their teaching? How do L2 learners of English perceive the use of newspapers as learning objects? What potential do language teachers and L2 learners see in using newspapers for the teaching and learning of English?

Nyström states that most of the teachers he interviewed used newspapers as updates to current world events even if some used newspapers for other reasons.

He claims that all teachers used online newspapers and that the reason for their choice was that they were easily accessible, free, and that a variety of newspapers and articles could be accessed in a short time. He argues that students felt that newspapers were only used as reading comprehension, that they believed that newspapers had more potential, and that they wanted to work with newspapers as preparation for the national tests. Nyström’s conclusion also includes teacher and student thoughts on the potential of using newspapers in the classroom, even though it was concluded that there was a lack of exercises and lesson plans including newspapers.

2.5. The language of Newspapers

Reah claims that news is a word derived from late middle English that means *tidings, new information of recent events*. However, Reah problematises this definition since it is vague and very broad. Recent events cover notable stories of events that have happened anywhere in the world and newspapers cannot cover everything, and therefore selections must be made. The newspapers select what they think their specific readers might be interested in, which means that they include and exclude certain recent events according to what they believe will interest the reader. Usually, readers have no input on what should be included or not since the news ‘not worthy’ of telling is excluded and therefore the reader is likely to be unaware of it.

The selection of news can sometimes influence readers and the public in decision making. Reah presents an example of a possible change of legislation, namely restricting handling and ownership of certain dog breeds, after a large number of news stories about dog attacks surfaced in newspapers. Another issue with newspaper coverage, according to Reah, is that unless a person himself/herself has been misrepresented or ignored in an event worthy of news, he/she does not think about what else is misrepresented or ignored by media. To the majority of readers, this might not be an issue of which they are aware. Misrepresentation of news, or the wilful ignoring of significant news is sometimes also referred to as "fake news". Reah explains this by arguing that newspapers are read for more reasons than their content of information, which is also why this type of text is referred to as ‘news stories’.

Furthermore, it is explained that the difference in texts between examples such as news stories and reports differ because a “story” implies there to be a form of interpretation, a narrative, and an elaboration of the text which is not the case of a report.\textsuperscript{69}

Headlines should, in theory, attract the reader to the paper and/or to the story, as well as summarise the story in a few words. Headlines are never or rarely written by the journalist who has written the story. The fact that headlines have a special function and are supposed to follow a particular pattern, including several functions, might make the headline unclear and ambiguous.\textsuperscript{70} The readers, whether they are aware of it or not, are part of a societal group which is defined by the newspaper they read, and these are referred to and ‘spoken’ to by the newspapers. The audience are users of language and, through this language context, shared beliefs and shared values are spread as readers respond to and receive the messages that the language communicates. For the text to create meaning, syntax is important. How elements of a clause are structured and the words in a sentence are ordered can diminish, expand, or change meaning of certain aspects. The lexical and syntactic patterns together give the text coherence and cohesion. Bagnall further explains the language of journalism as follows:

The language of journalism is nearer the spoken word than business language is on the one hand, or academic language on the other. In fact it is closer to the spoken word than it ever was in the past.\textsuperscript{71}

Bagnall’s claim has become increasingly germane in the in the current era when newspapers are a multimedium, often read, listened to, or watched online. Bagnall adduces that the radio and the television are the reasons for this. According to Bagnall, people expect the same language in newspapers as they are used to encountering in the broadcast media.\textsuperscript{72}

The language used in newspapers is referred to as the common language by Bagnall. Bagnall puts the language used by journalists on a par with politicians’ and experts’ use of words. He claims that experts use incomprehensible and vague words only understood by themselves and their colleagues and that politicians use words that might sound impressive, but the words they use might not convey an actual meaning. Journalists on the other hand work from a converse perspective; they try to be as clear as possible and reveal what others try to cover.

He also argues that some words should stay where they belong i.e. *locate*, should stay in engineering and real estate and the word *find*, should be used instead.\textsuperscript{73} 

Orwell’s formula, that is, never use a long word where a short one will do, has former been misunderstood according to Bagnall. The formula, which means that one should not use long words unnecessarily, was understood as meaning that short words where better than long ones. Jargon is something one should avoid, since it is specialised language that only a specific group of people will understand.\textsuperscript{74} 

Bagnall claims that there is a difference in aim between the quality papers and popular press. Even though their function might be the same or overlap, what is considered as good in one might be seen as bad in the other, which also works the other way around. The similarity is that both popular press and quality papers aim to produce stories, but the difference is that they use language in a different way to match to their respective audiences. Since popular newspapers write in a similar way and try to secure the reader’s attention, some words become overused according to Bagnall. Exaggeration and the search for stronger words is therefore crucial for reporters writing for popular newspapers in order to retain the interest of their readers and avoid overusing words.\textsuperscript{75} In formerly print newspapers, exaggeration might be compared to current online papers’ use of clickbait. Clickbait can be explained to be a hyperlink of some sort, designed to make readers want to click on it and is intentionally used to gain the interest of the reader.\textsuperscript{76} Following are a few examples of why and how clickbait might be used; generating income from advertisements (often per click), increasing the number of views of an article, video, or photograph, increasing the number of views of a newspaper as a whole, deliberately spreading fake news, and in one way or another increasing subscriptions or registered readers. 

The popular press also uses opinionated words often noticeably biased whereas the quality press may be subtler in using language and words which exhibits biases and opinions. Tabloid newspaper have a speciality in puns, according to Bagnall. They are usually found in the headlines; he argues that the weakest puns need hyphens to ensure the desired meaning is recovered.

\textsuperscript{76} https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/clickbait [2018-05-31]
Other important parts of writing in newspapers include how to begin a story and how to structure a text. It should not be necessary to read a news story twice; the point of the story should not be left to the end of the story, repetition should be avoided, and consistency of style should be maintained.\footnote{Bagnall, N. 1993, \textit{Newspaper Language}, Focal Press, 1993.}
3. Method

The method for gathering information and analysing newspapers is based on a qualitative analysis of newspaper articles. Each newspaper article is analysed in the same way, in three stages, with the same focal points. The three stages include analysis of the headline, the photograph, and the article text. The news stories are analysed by using the same perspectives namely, focus points consisting of signs, myths, metaphors, metonymy, idioms, synonyms, antonyms, hyponymy, context, encyclopaedic knowledge, and deixis. The findings and examples are presented in the result and analysis chapter and a summary of the used articles can also be found in the result and analysis chapter. Due to copyright, the analysed articles cannot be included in this essay, however, an article composed by the author, hereafter referred to as the "mock article", will be included in order to demonstrate how the analysis procedure was done in this essay and how a hypothetical analysis might be done. The mock article is accompanied by a small-scale analysis together with examples and explanations. Copyright is further discussed in the ethical considerations chapter.

3.1. Material and Selection

The selection was strictly based on ‘popular’ newspapers, ‘quality’ newspapers and their corresponding circulation. The distinction between ‘popular’ and ‘quality’ papers are based on previous correlation to ‘tabloid’ and ‘broadsheet’ newspapers. In recent years, quality papers have reduced in size to tabloid format and online versions of both popular and quality papers are further similar in size, format, and layout. The distinction in the UK is considered that quality papers include the most important world and national news items, though biased politically. Popular papers, on the other hand, have a tendency to include large photographs and tend to be read by less educated readers. The distinction between the two in the US is that tabloids are considered to be more irrelevant and more likely to rapport about celebrity gossip, while broadsheets are considered to rapport ‘serious’ news. For further detailed explanations on broadsheet and tabloid newspapers, see Nyström. One popular and one quality newspaper was chosen from both Britain and the US, based on how many readers the newspaper has, ‘circulation’.

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The article choices were based on the main story of the day from each one of the papers, that is, four main articles from four of the most read newspapers in Britain and the US. Relevance was considered by using newspapers in English from two countries which Swedish students studying English possibly have most knowledge of, and might be most interested in, the UK and the US. Since these countries are influential and popular for several reasons in Sweden, one reason being popular amongst Swedes to emigrate to and live in,\(^\text{82}\) a selection was made to use these and not any of the other possible alternatives. All the considerations led to the analysis of the main article in, free and online versions of, *The Sun* and *USA Today* as popular-tabloid newspapers and *The Daily Telegraph* and *The New York Times* as qualitative-full format/broadsheet newspapers. All the main stories were gathered from the same date, May 3-2018, which was another consideration for an impartial selection of articles to analyse. The last consideration, to use main articles from the same date, has led to two of the articles covering the same news story, something that will be discussed further in the discussion chapter.

3.2. Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations in this essay mainly concern copyright. This essay is for educational purposes and only small parts of newspaper texts are used for these purposes, so most copyright issues do not apply. Nevertheless, only minor elements of the newspaper articles have been used to exemplify linguistic concepts in the result and analysis chapter. The news articles used in this essay were assembled from online newspaper sources with free online access.

4. Results and Analysis

Since the articles that are analysed cannot be included in full in this essay for copyright reasons, a mock article has been written in order to demonstrate linguistic features, the stylistics, graphics and formatting of newspapers. A short analysis of the mock article follows it and a summary of the actual analysed articles and analysis is then presented. This study addresses the use of newspapers in the classroom and the potential of teaching advanced English studies through linguistic theories and concepts by using newspaper articles. The results and analysis of the news articles will be categorised in the same way Sanderson’s method of using newspapers is categorised, under the categories of headlines, photographs, and articles. The categorization is deliberately structured in the same way to make suggestions and connections to existing activities simpler and avoid unnecessary complications.

4.1. Mock Article

* = hypothetical elements that could have been included in a real article.
red = examples used in the analysis of the mock article.

‘Cat’astrophe: Chihuahua dressed as Jerry chased by horde of starving stray cats miraculously saved by Catnip responding to a practical joke

* [photograph of John Catnip holding up a terrified chihuahua dressed as Jerry]

A chihuahua dressed as a famous cartoon character was chased for several minutes by the town gang of stray cats before namesake hero arrived.

It was last Tuesday afternoon on April 1 that the officer got a call he thought was a practical joke. Officer Catnip was at the end of his shift ready to head back to the station when he responded to a call about worried witnesses claiming that the town stray cats had gone mad which apparently had caused panic and interruptions in traffic.

J. Catnip who is known at the station for pulling pranks on co-workers thought that this was a scheme to get him as part of the April fool’s day pranks the co-workers annually pull on each other. He thought that the other officers had staged a prank, mocking his family name.

The officer was shocked when he arrived at the scene, people were gathered on the streets, screaming and shouting. He said when he arrived that he had seen a small dog dressed as a rodent cornered by two dozen bloodthirsty cats which made him realise the seriousness of the situation.
The officer was forced to fire a warning shot to get to the dog in time and out of harm’s way as the big cats formed an impenetrable wall consisting of sharp claws and hungry mouths, something a bystander said, “looked like hungry lions hunting prey”. The cats finally spread out and ran away when officer Catnip got to the dog.

The Chihuahua whose real name is Brenda had escaped from a birthday party themed BYOD – bring your own dog, in costume. Six-year-old Frank, the birthday boy, had lost his dog as he was petting Timmy, another dog dressed as a famous superhero.

*photograph of Frank hugging Brenda*

Franks parents, Francis and Julia, were told that their BYOD – in costume party was the reason for the incident and that animals should not be dressed in tight clothing. Catnip let them off with a warning and they promised that it was the last time they dressed the dog up.

*fact box about animal abuse*

Catnip tells the reporter that he almost ignored the call thinking it was a prank, something that could have ended with serious consequences for Brenda. Catnip mentions the old saying “one should not cry wolf” and continues with saying “I’m done with pranks” before going back into the patrol car and heading back home for some well-deserved hero sleep.

4.1.1. Analysis of Mock Article

This analysis is a small-scale basic analysis with a few examples (the examples used from the mock article are therefore intentionally coloured red) demonstrating in a simple way how a similar analysis might be done. A few examples are used to demonstrate some key points in a hopefully imaginable manner.

The headline consists of several elements and the multimodality of the text is mainly noticeable on the layout and format. The first word, which also functions as wordplay since the text is about cats, is in bold style and the word is in slightly larger size than the rest of the words in the headline. The headline is ambiguous and encyclopaedical knowledge is necessary for encoding the meaning of the headline. Jerry and Catnip are written with the first letter of the words as a capital letter, indicating in this case that they are names. The headline is enigmatic and the fortunate coincident of the story and the officer's name creates a humorous and vague headline which appears to be intended to capture the attention of the readers, and to entice them to continue reading the story beyond the headline. The apostrophes in the word ‘cat’astrophe indicate that the word is a pun related to the story, which is common in popular news article headlines.
The possible examples of photographs and or fact boxes which are included in the article function to connote evidence and actuality, and these are claimed by Bignell to be the main functions of a photograph. Photographs provide the reader with context in forms that provide an alternative to words and, as such, provide variation. Since there are no actual photographs, the analysis is of necessity limited; however, it is possible to focus on the photographs caption, signs in the photographs, what is portrayed, etc. The fact box provides the reader with additional information about a specific aspect; in the example from the article, the topic appears to relate to a story of animal abuse, but there would be other possibilities such as April Fools’ Day, stray cats, facts about dogs, etc. According to Barthes, photographs consist of a range of discontinuous signs, and these are elements which provide data for analysis in this essay.

The article text is similar to the headline text, and again consisting of several possible concepts to analyse. The vagueness in the headlines is clarified in the article text and context is given to the reader for fully understanding the story. For example, Jerry is explained to be associated to a cartoon show and Catnip is an officer responding to a call and not a plant which cats usually are intensely attracted to. Synonyms and hyponymy are stylistic features and used to avoid repetition. Examples of synonyms are Catnip and the officer and examples of hyponymy are animals, dog and chihuahua. Deixis is used to give the reader a sense of who the story is about and who has done or said what, etc. The text also invokes cultural myths where Catnip is seen as a hero for saving the dog. A hero is otherwise usually referred to as someone acting in a courageous way often beyond limitations; however, in journalistic writing, it is usually less spectacular and it is more for the purpose of providing the text with meaning through contrasting elements. In the example from the mock article, the cats are the villains and Catnip is the hero for saving the dog from the villains. Catnip’s profession might also indicate societal myths about occupations, such as police officers and firefighters being everyday heroes and not just ordinary people working ordinary jobs.

Metaphors and idioms provide the text with variation and function as describers of the abstract. Cultural and or linguistic knowledge is important for understanding metaphors and idioms. Examples of possible metaphors are warning shot, pulling pranks, and was shocked and an example of an idiom is one should not cry wolf.

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An example of a simile, *looked like hungry lions hunting prey*, can also be analysed and the indicator for understanding that it is a simile and not a metaphor can be presented in this example by the indicating and comparing word, *like*. Possible antonyms can also be found in the article where the oppositional antonyms *big* and *small* are used to contrast the relative sizes of the animals mentioned. The acronym *BYOD* is explained in the article the first time it is used to avoid misunderstanding and vagueness and is related to the term *BYOB* – bring your own beverage, sometimes used in party contexts.

To avoid copyright issues, the mock article was written inspired by real articles to exemplify how an actual ‘popular’ news article might look and how examples might be found and analysed. This small-scale and intentionally basic analysis is used to demonstrate how the actual articles used in the essay have been analysed. However, prominently in a simpler and more basic manner and not as thoroughly as the actual articles analysed in this essay. The learning outcomes for such an analysis or for more progressive studies of articles such as the analysed articles in the essay might vary and could be adapted to fit a wide variety of learning outcomes and aims.

### 4.2. Summary of Articles

The actual articles analysed in this essay are summarised below, and the words used to explain the newspaper articles and/or subjects are similarly used as to the words used in the articles.

#### 4.2.1. Article 1.

Article 1 is a news story from the British newspaper *The Sun*. *The Sun* is a UK based newspaper within the category of ‘popular’ newspapers. The online version consists of various sub-categories of news, such as football, sport, money, motors, and technology. The news story analysed from *The Sun* covers the death of a career criminal, his funeral, a procession, and other events and people involved in the funeral and procession. In this article, several photographs are published in the article representing a broad spectrum of scenes consisting of people, objects, and other elements from the story. The career criminal and an old age pensioner, who stabbed the burglar during a break-in which lead to his death, are the main subjects in this news story.85

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4.2.2. Article 2.

Article 2 is from The Daily Telegraph, also a British newspaper. The Daily Telegraph is a newspaper in the category of ‘quality’ newspapers. The sub-categories in The Daily Telegraph consists of, politics, sport, money, and culture, to name a few. The article analysed from this newspaper deals with an accusation of a cover-up in relation errors in routine breast cancer screening. The main entities at the core of this news story are a former nurse, a Health and Social Care Secretary, and the National Health Service. One photograph is included in the article which comprises a portrait of a subject from the news story. The article is accompanied by a few fact-boxes, providing statistics and facts about breast cancer.86

4.2.3. Article 3.

Article 3 is a news story from USA Today, an American ‘popular’ newspaper. USA Today is sub-divided into categories such as, news, sport, money, and opinion. The article in question relates to an ongoing story in which the sitting president of the United States allegedly knew of a payment made on his behalf to an actress involved in adult films. The president had previously denied knowing about the payment, allegedly changing his story in terms of what he knew, in this article. The main entities of this news story include the president of the United States, the actress, and other key persons related to both of them. The article incorporates a photograph of the president and Twitter posts.87

4.2.4. Article 4.

Article 4 is the second article from an American newspaper, namely The New York Times. The New York Times is a newspaper within the ‘quality’ category and consists of sub-divisions such as, world, U.S., sports, and real estate. It covers the same news story as article 3, though seemingly without photographs and Twitter posts. The president of the United States and the adult film actress are the main subjects, along with persons related to them in the news story.88

4.3. Headlines

Bignell states that headlines function as attention drawers and that existing knowledge is crucial for the reader to be able to distinguish the meaning. In article 1, the headline draws attention in many ways. Firstly, the multimodality of the text is noticeable in the form of the layout and format. The letter case is mixed, and the reader’s attention is drawn by it. The first word is not just in capital letters; it is also a colour other than that of the rest of the words in the headline.

Secondly, references to people, objects, and currency are used and the reader’s encyclopaedic knowledge is required to decode the meaning. If someone does not have the requisite encyclopaedic knowledge, parts of the meaning or the whole meaning might be obscure for them, resulting in not understanding the headline and thereby not reading further in the article. However, a headline might deliberately be written in an obscure or enigmatic way to create interest and thereby induce the reader to continue reading in an effort to make sense of it.

Thirdly, neomania and cultural myths can be identified as being imbedded in the headlines for various reasons. Descriptions of objects referencing to success and wealth as the example, limo, draws attention and the reference to currency, £100k, is another example of a connection to wealth. In a consumer society these examples might well be associated with neomania and cultural myths. The use of the word hero gives the reader a sense of good and bad and might be seen as a cultural myth. Heroes are associated with kindness and moral ethics which, in structuralist terms, must have a negative converse, which is wicked or harmful, and this sets up an antonymic relation. On the other hand, the example hero might also be seen as a metonymy referring to a person. In the example hero, from article 1, the word is referencing a subject of the story. The word is a reference to a subject who has performed a heroic act, stopped a burglar.

Fourth and last, a metaphor or a metaphorical expression is used to explain something abstract. The metaphor’s function in this case is to explain an action and orientation of an action, stick fingers up, which also might be associated with Grundy and deixis, especially dealing with gesture.

The example, stick fingers up, might arise questions about what is meant and what is being signalled which ultimately can be associated with Peirce's triadic of signs.\textsuperscript{96}

When analysing and comparing the headlines from article 1, article 2, article 3, and article 4, both similarities and differences are manifest. Metaphorical expressions seem to be common and some encyclopaedic knowledge is required for the understanding of the meaning and personal deixis the headlines are referencing to. Article 1 has the largest, by size, and longest headline consisting of 31 words, whereas the second largest article by size, article 2, consists of 20 words. Three of the four headlines mention currency in one way or another (two of the main stories cover the same topic) but only one, article 1, is multimodal in the sense of having a mixed layout and formatting, as Kress defines as multimodality in text.\textsuperscript{97}

As a summary, the headline in article 1 is the most conspicuous at the same time as possibly being the headline that is most ambiguous, requiring more encyclopaedic knowledge than the rest of the article headlines, not only as a consequence of the word selection and how the words are combined, but also because the headline as a whole is the longest headline of the four headlines.

4.4. Photographs

Bignell claims that newspaper photographs function to connote evidence and actuality.\textsuperscript{98} In article 1, there are more than thirty photographs included in the newspaper article. The photographs portray people, objects, signs, roads, and maps. In article 2, only two photographs are included, one of which is part of a ‘fact box’ presenting statistics. The other photograph is connected to the news story. Article 3 consists of one photograph displaying who the story is about along with twitter post and article 4 excludes photographs completely. Article 1 and article 4 stand out in comparison with the other news articles when it comes to photographs where article 1 includes more than 30 photographs compared to article 4 which excludes them totally.

Barthes claims that a press photograph by itself is a message without a code which can be accompanied with words and text. The photograph does on the other hand have a style and a supplementary message.\textsuperscript{99}

Articles 2 and 3 have a similar ‘style’ of photographs, although the size and some parts of the composition are slightly different.\textsuperscript{100} The similarity of the photographs in article 2 and 3 portray the ‘key’ person of which the story is about, and both are composed in a similar way with the focus in the centre of the photograph.\textsuperscript{101} The caption underneath the photograph in article 3 only lets the reader know who the photographer is and the caption in article 2 also consists of credits, but more so of a contextual explanation about the person in the photograph. Article 1, on the other hand, has the credits imbedded in the photograph, and underneath the photograph, the caption is the only focus. The captions include and exclude certain aspects and elements of the photograph, some explaining the people in it and some are explaining objects, actions, and/or signs in the photograph.

Peirce’s three types of signs can be analysed from the pictures since they include all three major types of signs as described in his triadic typology, namely icons, indexes, and symbols. For analysing signs, article 1 might be the best choice since there are plenty of photographs included in the article enabling various of portrayals and signs to be discussed and analysed in comparison to the other photographs, the main function of which is to portray one person.\textsuperscript{102} The captions also include context, facts, metaphors, synonyms, hyponymy, implicature, and deixis etc.

The combination of the primary and secondary function of the photograph together form what Barthes calls a ‘duality of messages’ or the ‘culture.’\textsuperscript{103} Not only has the photograph been taken for a specific reason, it has also been edited by experts. The caption has been written to present to the reader a hegemonic reality according to the perspective of the journalist about what is pictured, and the caption helps the reader to interpret the photograph and receive the intended message with aid from the context, encyclopaedic knowledge, and the codes/norms established by a specific paper, article, or photographer.

4.5. Articles

The articles, the main texts, are as headlines and photographs both similar and different in context in several ways. Primarily, synonyms, hyponymy, metaphors, idioms, and metonymy are consistent and frequently used in all the analysed articles.

Synonyms and hyponymy seem to be used mostly to avoid repetition, and this is something Bagnall claims to be important in newspaper writing.\textsuperscript{104}

Examples of synonyms and hyponymy from the articles include, cop/police, car/limo/van/Mercedes/Ford, deadly/terminal, etc. Metaphors are frequently used in one way or another in all the articles. They are usually used when describing something abstract like in the example used in the headline chapter, \textit{stick fingers up}. Other examples of metaphors in articles 1-4 include:

Article 1: \textit{take out the trash and turf-war and around here and is devastated}

Article 2: \textit{cover up and pick up and let down and were shocked and spot the problem}

Article 3: \textit{knew nothing and money came from and tweet storm and if that came out}

Article 4: \textit{hush money and they funnelled and payment related to them}

All of the examples above can be seen as metaphorical expressions since they express abstract meaning, are cultural, and mean something different than what their literal meaning would suggest. Some of the examples might be understood, as they stand, without context and some might need context and encyclopaedic knowledge for their proper understanding. The examples show how diverse metaphorical expressions can be and how wide-ranging concepts, such as metaphors are. Some of the examples above are used to give directions and boundaries of place, some of abstract feelings, and some to explain a relation amongst objects and people.

Second, antonyms are not used as much as synonyms, hyponymy, and metaphors but are used to give a sense of contrast, as in an example from article 3, \textit{acknowledge and deny}. Antonyms are similar to idioms in frequency in use. All three of the concepts are used more sparsely in comparison to concepts like synonyms and metaphors. Idioms are, like metaphors, also used in newspapers, but not nearly as regularly as metaphors are used. A possible reason for this might be that newspapers use a common language and the aim is to be as clear as possible according to Bagnall.\textsuperscript{105} This is also problematised by Lakoff, who states that idioms cannot be understood by the meaning of their individual words and are, like certain metaphors, highly cultural.\textsuperscript{106} Idioms are not just similar to metaphors in the way that both are cultural, they are also used in a similar way, often to express something abstract.

Examples of idioms from the articles include, *going public, under investigation, justice is served,* and *week in week out.* Idioms, unlike metaphors, only work if the reader has knowledge about what they mean or what they ‘represent’. The reader can, as Clark states, encode the message or meaning by lexical, logical, and encyclopaedic knowledge.\(^{107}\)

Without the existing knowledge or the ability to decode it, an idiom can seem like a combination of random words which the reader cannot make sense of and therefore the news story misses its function.

Third, metonymy is used in a similar way to synonyms in the articles. Metonymy is seemingly used to avoid repetition as seen in the following examples, *the Commons* and *the House* referring to the House of Commons in article 2, or *king* and *hero* referencing subjects of the news story in article 1. Abbreviations, which can be connected to more than one concept are common and used widely in articles 1-4. Many words have potential homonyms and it is up to the reader, through both the co-text and context, to access the intended meaning through the correct interpretations of these. Nevertheless, examples of potential homonyms can also be found in the articles. Examples of true homonyms such as *can, case, current,* and *right* are present in the articles.

Fourth, deixis and context help the reader in terms of understanding what is said, who the speaker is, and what the message is implying. Throughout the whole text, indexical words and deictic functions are used to guide the reader to meaning and understanding of the text.\(^{108}\) Indexical words like certain pronouns enables the writer to avoid repeating certain words, making the text more varied and less repetitive. Several forms of deictic expressions are used and crucial for the text to convey meaning to the reader. The context can only be analysed when all the three parts of the article are combined into one combination, the news article as a whole. The news articles, as isolated texts, are as their separate parts both similar and different compared to each other. The analysed articles vary in length, layout, modes, shape, style, etc. Their components are different and how the reader might perceive the text or message may also be different. The news articles are written for different reasons considering their ‘audience’ and aim. What Barthes defines as neomania, the quest for something new, is something which ultimately keep the newspapers in existence.\(^{109}\) Bagnell claims that exaggeration and the search for stronger words are crucial for newspaper stories.\(^{110}\)

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For newspaper stories, metaphorical expressions and synonyms might be equally important and crucial for newspapers as exaggeration. The popular newspaper articles seem to include more pictures and other content, such as Twitter posts etc., while the quality newspapers seem to be shorter and more specific. The rest might be influenced by what Bignell refers to as the "code" of the newspaper.111 As seen in the other examples in the result and analysis chapter, there are many ways of structuring, portraying, formatting and using of concepts, expressions and combinations of words to convey meaning and producing a story in a specific manner for a specific purpose.

Lastly, the multimodalities of the main texts in the articles are seemingly different. All the texts consist of a narrative although the narratives are structured differently. According to Reah, the readers are ‘spoken to’ through this narrative and the readers are part of a social group whether they know it or not, defined by the newspaper they read.112 The newspapers’ specific narrative, the codes of the newspapers and the readers form a sort of symbiosis, where both the newspapers and the readers expect something. The stories from the same newspaper are therefore similar in style. They readers are claimed to expect it and therefore newspapers keep to their codes and norms. Reah claims that, by knowing their audience, newspapers might include or exclude news they know will, or will not, interest their readers.113 Exceptions might occur when little is known about an event, making it hard to write about it in a different way and when something consequential happens which can be expected to be reported by most newspapers. An example of this can be seen in the news article selection in this essay, where both American articles cover the same story, although they present, include, and exclude different aspects and the style and code of the newspaper determinates how something is portrayed etc.

4.6. Summary and Suggestions

This study addresses the following questions:

*To what extent can newspaper articles be used to analyse linguistic theories and linguistic concepts in a classroom environment for advanced ESL learners?*

*Assuming newspapers can be used for teaching linguistic theories and concepts for advanced learners, how might this work in practice?*


The result and analysis chapter evidentially illustrate that newspapers, as a teaching material for advanced learners, can be used to analyse linguistic theories and concepts. The results and analysis chapter highlights examples from actual newspapers. The forthcoming suggestions for teaching linguistic theories and concepts are based on Sanderson’s ideas of using newspapers in the classroom. Sanderson’s ideas may offer a basis from which more advanced concepts related to meaning could be explored with advanced students. Each of the concepts and the examples in the result and analysis chapter with their associated theories, such as semantics, can subsequently be taught in various ways. Below are some general and specific suggestions, inspired by Sanderson’s activities, listed as well as adapted for introducing linguistic concepts for advanced learners:

4.6.1. Suggestion 1 - Headlines

From Sanderson’s headline chapter the following activities and exercises have been selected as suggestions for an introduction and adaption for advanced learners:

Activity: 1.7 - Understanding tabloid headlines words through synonyms in the article.\(^\text{114}\)

Activity: 1.8 - Finding stylistic and structural headline features.\(^\text{115}\)

Adaption: While working with synonyms, stylistic and structural features, an integration and further use of linguistic concepts could be included. By using headlines and working with features Sanderson describes, such as synonyms, stylistic, and structural elements, his ideas could be broadened to include other linguistic phenomena, and also some more theoretical approaches to meaning as may be appropriate for advanced students. An example of this might be to include antonyms, metonymy, and hyponymy when working with synonyms and continue further on with multimodality, including layout, and format, etc. Students could, by working with multimodality theories advanced by Kress and Van Leeuwen, conduct more in-depth analyses, comparing and contrasting word use, format, layout, style, etc. This way, teachers might introduce similar concepts which are relevant to the ones already known or studied by the students. The more basic activities devised by Sanderson might lead to motivating and stimulating students for further linguistic or language studies they may later embark upon in higher education, as well as interest them in pleasure reading newspapers and the adoptions might lead to a deeper understanding of language.


4.6.2. Suggestion 2 - Photographs

From Sanderson’s photographs chapter the following activities and exercises have been selected as suggestions for an introduction and adaption for advanced learners:

**Activity: 3.2 - Predicting the content of newspaper photographs:**

**Activity: 3.5 - Writing the thoughts of people in photographs:**

Adaption: By working with meaning and abstract subjects in photographs, such as thoughts and predictions beforehand, the next step could include working with abstract concepts, such as meaning, messages, codes, signs, metaphors etc. Students could, for example, be invited to speculate or draw inferences about what is occurring in the photographs, but without the use of metaphorical expressions at all, or by only using metaphorical expressions when explaining and/or decoding a photograph. Their inferences could be presented with the actual content in the end of the exercise and similarities and differences may also be analysed. Another example of metaphorical use might include to discuss metaphors as something crucial to language and moving on with working on different categories of metaphors and what their respective features include or moving on working with idioms. A third example might include analysing signs and deictic features, such as gestures in photographs and answering questions about implied meaning, any messages being conveyed and why signs are presented as they are etc. Students could be asked to innovate their own signs, such as symbols or icons, and then invite other students to suggest their meaning. Modern technology has reached the point that it is possible to create, recreate, and edit photographs beyond recognition which could be a theme for a classroom debate about photographs and reality, but also about context and critical thinking. According to Bignell, a photograph’s function is to connote actuality and evidence, but can ultimately also be used the other way around, i.e. to deceive and connote an alternative truth which can be problematised and discussed in class. An activity could include, using digital tools or programs to alter photographs or discuss and analyse edited photographs of for examples celebrities on social media. Modern cameras and smartphones usually come with programs especially made for editing such as by adding filters and effects which could be used to alter photographs or videos in seconds. Possibilities and risks of such programs could also be included as discussion topics when working with photographs as well as discussing other elements and meaning.

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4.6.3. Suggestion 3 - Articles

From Sanderson’s articles chapter the following activities and exercises have been selected as suggestions for an introduction and adaption for advanced learners:

Activity: 2.26 - Finding common points shared by pairs of articles:119

Activity: 2.29 - Finding differences between two versions of the same story:120

Adaption: Both chosen activities deal with two or more articles and connections to concepts might include stylistics and narrative among others. Students could work with answering questions about how news stories are told and why they are told in a specific way. Finding similarities and differences in articles could be a first step of doing so and further, the structures of newspapers could be discussed from a multimodal perspective, and analysis of language, such as word use and expressions. Idioms, metaphors, signs, myths, neomania, metonymy, antonymy, hyponymy, etc., can be tools for finding similarities and differences in articles. Context and encyclopaedic knowledge might also be useful and meaningful to discuss and analyse before or during the analysis of articles. An example of an activity might consist of allowing students to underline parts which they do not understand and discuss why the journalist may have chosen to write the article in the way it is written and then rewriting articles to make them clearer or more factual, unbiased, and objective. Another example could consist of removing, changing, or mixing parts of similar news stories and trying to rewrite or change parts to make sense of the newly constructed context or mixing parts of several stories to create a meaningful new story. Other activities could deal with meaning and context and an exercise of this might consists of removing as many words or components, such as photographs as possible without disrupting the meaning and or context of the article.

5. Discussion

The analysis of newspaper articles or news stories with all their constituent parts has led to the realisation that news stories could serve as a useful teaching material for an introduction to teaching linguistic theories and concepts. News stories are to a large extent complex texts with several distinct elements, each of which can be analysed in several different ways. Teachers using journalism as a source of material for their students to analyse should attempt to include a diversity of newspapers and especially a mix of popular and quality publications as doing so maximises the possibility for exploring different linguistic features. However, since news articles are complex multimodal texts, it might ultimately be precarious to use them as teaching material if an idea or a plan of how they could be used is not specific.

The choices of concepts chosen for the analysis were inspired by previous research, theoretical background, and connections to meaning, which afterwards might seem very broad and incoherent for an analysis. A few concepts, maybe two or three, would have been sufficient to analyse more deeply. Another problem occurred when analysing the content; most concepts are only vaguely or imprecisely defined and, as such, they are subject to interpretation. Some concepts on the other hand are rather similar and used in similar ways, such as metaphors and idioms, which make it problematic when bringing forward examples. Other examples might be interpreted to be parts of several concepts which makes a clear-cut definition of concepts difficult to convey. The analysis of concepts led to interpretations of concepts and the content in the newspaper articles. The newspaper choice and the distinction between ‘popular’ and ‘quality’ newspapers might also be problematic, since most free online newspapers can resemble each other through having similar layout, size, formatting and consisting of similar parts, such as photographs, headlines, captions, pop-up advertisements, etc.

The suggestions in the essay are not precise and might supposedly be considered as tentative ideas rather than finished adaption ready to be taught in a classroom environment. The primary purpose of this essay was mainly to analyse newspaper articles and explore the potential use of articles in teaching linguistic concepts which evidently is answered, though the answer on how this should occur is not developed.

A future study might include focusing mainly on activities and exercises of such nature, for example making lesson plans and complete material ready to be used for a specific group of learners, such as specific activities and exercises for advanced students.
This study might contribute to further understanding of news articles as teaching material as well as providing ideas for introducing linguistic theories and concepts for advanced learners, including ideas and considering developments of Sanderson’s suggestions for using newspapers in the classroom.

Nyström provides a view on newspaper use from teacher and student perspectives. He claims that students recognise the potential of newspapers and generally want to use them more, but that they also claim that they only are used as reading comprehension. Teachers, on the other hand, report that they mostly use newspapers as a teaching material to inform students of current world events. The positive attitude towards using a teaching material such as newspapers with an often-overlooked complexity should not be excluded in teaching since it provides a range of opportunities for teaching. Not only can students come in direct societal contact with an English-speaking country and culture, they could also be introduced to several other important language aspects such as the concepts analysed and exemplified in this essay.

The results and analysis chapter demonstrate examples of linguistic concepts related to meaning in the articles chosen for this essay. However, this does not mean that all news articles include similar features and could be analysed in a similar way. When selecting articles as teaching material for use in class, or for an analysis that will form part of an essay, it may be advantageous to perform a pilot study beforehand in order to be able to establish the degree of suitability of the chosen text in terms of meeting the desired teaching aims. Nevertheless, for future studying of newspaper use in the classroom for advanced learners, I recommend using and including newspapers from other English-speaking countries as well as British and US newspapers. By using newspapers from several English-speaking countries identification and analysis of diverse culture and varieties of English could be identified, enabling meaning and language to be analysed even further than suggested in this essay. An analysis of a broad spectrum of newspapers from several English-speaking countries could benefit students in gaining a more complex understanding of meaning and a more comprehensive understanding of the English language as used around the world as well as understanding the complexity of text in varied material such as newspapers.

As a summary, the results confirm that newspaper articles might be useful and suitable for teaching linguistic concepts as well as using Sanderson’s ideas as an introduction and inspiration for teaching of linguistic concepts. There seems to be a positive attitude towards newspaper use in the classroom, according to Nyström.
However, suggestions need to be tested, reflected upon, and discussed in order to determine what might work well and what might not work as well. For future studies an inclusion of other newspapers from English-speaking countries could be beneficial, as well as an analysis of student and teacher impressions of using newspapers in the classroom.
6. Conclusion

This study addresses the following questions:

*To what extent can newspaper articles be used to analyse linguistic theories and linguistic concepts in a classroom environment for advanced ESL learners?*

*Assuming newspapers can be used for teaching linguistic theories and concepts for advanced learners, how might this work in practice?*

The conclusion drawn from the hypothesis and problem statements in this essay evidently present examples which arguably can conclude that newspaper articles can be used to teach linguistic concepts and theories for advanced learners. The result and analysis chapter also provide examples and suggestions for how the findings could be used as teaching material in practice. Working with newspapers as an introduction of teaching linguistic theories and concepts could benefit students in developing knowledge of the cultural, societal, and socio-political features of the English-speaking countries, as well as develop language awareness. However, the essay is hypothetical, and the findings have not been tested in practice. For future studies an inclusion of newspapers from other English-speaking countries could be analysed, as well as further investigating student and teacher impressions of using newspapers in the classroom with further suggestions for teaching.
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