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## A CONTRASTIVE STYLISTICS ANALYSIS OF COVID – 19 NEWS IN THE GUARDIAN AND THE SUN BRITISH NEWSPAPERS

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**ABSTRACT**

The language of newspapers helps people learn a wide range of topics. Its language serves primarily as a means of conveying information. Besides persuading and entertaining the people, that is what makes its style special. Its vocabularies and sentence structure have to be chosen efficiently to affect all readers. Hence, this study seeks to analyze texts from British newspapers to determine how journalists use language when reporting on some sensitive subjects, such as the writing on the current topic that has occupied the global press, Covid19. Therefore, this study sets to fulfil several aims; the most important of them are identifying the stylistic features at the syntactic and lexical levels used in The Guardian and The Sun newspaper news on the coronavirus pandemic. Besides, it aims at finding out the similarities and differences at the levels mentioned above between the Guardian and the Sun newspapers news on that specific subject.

Taking into consideration the above aims, the present study hypothesizes that: The Guardian's news on the coronavirus pandemic is more complex in terms of sentence and noun phrases structure than the Sun's news. Nevertheless, the Sun news tends to use passive voice more than The Guardian's, which uses negative language in its news. Besides, it hypothesizes that The Guardian newspaper makes extensive use of fuzzy words and proper nouns to make its language more accurate and clearer to its readers. By contrast, The Sun's newspaper makes extensive use of abbreviations, compound phrases, and numbers to fit with its shortened paragraphs. As a result, its language is briefer and more succinct in reporting coronavirus news than the Guardian's language.

Worthy to mentioning that, the study chooses two news texts from the two newspapers to be analysed. The data are analysed using both quantitative and qualitative approaches depending on an eclectic model developed along the study. The findings of the analysis verify the validity of the second, and third hypotheses, whereas the first and fourth hypotheses are partially verified and partially refuted.

**Keywords:** *The Guardian, The Sun, Newspapers language, the inverted pyramid structure, Style, Stylistics.*

## INTRODUCTION

The language of newspapers helps people learn a wide range of topics. Its language serves primarily as a means of conveying information. Besides persuading and entertaining the people, that is what makes its style special. Its vocabularies and sentence structure have to be chosen efficiently to affect all readers. That is why most people regard the language of newspapers as a complete, sufficient, and fulfilling source of current information. (Donnelly, 1996: 210, cited in Hassoon, 2016: 128).

Furthermore, Galperin (1981: 281) agrees that the newspaper style is one of those styles acknowledged to be peculiar. He perceives the style of a newspaper as an interrelated lexical, phraseological, and grammatical means whose purpose is to deliver information to the reader. He distinguishes four distinct styles in newspapers: the language style of brief news and communiqués; the language style of newspaper reports; the language style of solely news articles; and that of notices and advertisements. Hence, this study will attempt to focus on the third type, which is the news articles.

Therefore, this study sets to fulfill a number of aims, they are:

1. Pointing out the stylistic similarities and differences between the Guardian and the Sun newspapers news on the covid-19 pandemic at the syntactic level, namely sentence complexity, noun phrase, and voice.
2. Outlining the stylistic similarities and differences between the Guardian and the Sun newspapers news on the covid-19 pandemic at the lexical level represented in the use of fuzzy words, compound words, numbers, proper nouns, and abbreviations?
3. Developing an eclectic stylistic model for analyzing the Guardian and the Sun British newspapers news.

Taking into consideration the above aims, the present study hypothesizes that:

1. The Guardian news on the Covid- 19 is more complex in terms of sentence and noun phrase's structure than the Sun's, while The Sun news is simpler.
2. The Sun newspaper tends to use passive voice more than The Guardian since it tends to use negative language in its news.
3. The Guardian newspaper makes extensive use of fuzzy words, proper nouns to make its language more accurate and clearer to its readers.

4. The Sun newspaper makes extensive use of abbreviations, compound words, and numbers to fit its shorten paragraphs. As a result, its language is briefer and more succinct in reporting corona news than the Guardian's language.

### NEWS MEANING AND STRUCTURE

Linguists and journalists have offered numerous interpretations and versions to characterize or define news, but no one has been universally accepted and acknowledged till now (Xie, 2018: 399).

For Rule, and Anderson (2003, cited in Drid, 2018: 702) news should be uncommon, extraordinary, and specific enough to attract the recipient's consideration and attention. *"News was known as an excitement and a departure from the ordinary "When a dog bites a man, this is not news, but when the man bites a dog, this is the news"*.

On his part, Reah (2002: 4) states that *"News is information about new events that are interesting or affect enough people's lives."* Furthermore, Bates (2016: 32) agrees with Reah's definition that news is current information that focused on a specific type of events. Additionally, he

points out that these events are not exhaustive but rather a compilation of significant occurrences. For example, significant events including wars, serious accidents, disputes, and crimes are covered. Nevertheless, he concludes that there are other times when news becomes more prevailed and takes more space of the news allocated space. One of these times is when there is a significant disaster as such happenings break in the newspapers as the case nowadays with the pandemic of coronavirus that recently swept the world, this is on one hand.

On the other hand, it is known that an important structural feature of news structure is a top-down importance hierarchy. According to this perspective, the most crucial or pertinent information is throughout the text and inside individual sentences. This is achieved by providing the most critical information first. After that, previous topics are reintroduced with increased material. Instead of a left-to-right arrangement of themes within a thematic structure, a top-down arrangement occurs when the general to particular hierarchy corresponds to the critical—less significant dimension (Van Dijk, 1988, 55).

To make it easier for people who do not have time to read or listen to the complete

article to find the essential information in the first paragraph (the lead), news organizations nearly always utilize the inverted pyramid style (McKane, 2013: 60 ). According to Busa (2014: 80) "depending on the inverted pyramid's structure, the most critical components of news are (*the headline, the lead, and the first five paragraphs*). As a result, this study will address these components in its analysis.

### **THE GUARDIAN AND THE SUN AS BROADSHEET AND TABLOID NEWSPAPERS**

According to Crystal and Davy (1969: 172), broadsheet and tabloid newspapers have unique and unusual audiences. Consequently, the language and style used in these newspapers are distinctive. Likewise, they keep up that by keeping the topic steady, using different stylistic coloring when writing the story.

The Guardian is a broadsheet newspaper founded in 1821 with an average daily circulation of 280,000 in 2011. It frequently identifies with the political mainstream's center-left readership. It is wider than tabloids but narrower and shorter than broadsheets. Its proportionate width and height made it simpler to read in public, allowing for more page design options. The news style makes

The Guardian the first British national newspaper in full colour. The format shift was a huge success, and the newspaper became highly popular (Zemen, 2012: 25).

On the other hand, the most significant latest development in British tabloid newspaper history occurred in 1969, when the Sun relaunched. The Sun appealed to younger readers, embraced the permissiveness of the era, and promoted a contemptuous, anti-establishment, entertainment-oriented message. It bolstered its popularity through television advertising and an increased interest in the characters' off- and on-screen lives in British television soap operas (Conboy, 2010: 127). The Sun is more concerned with television news, and it has the most noteworthy measure of prizes offered to its readers. It is an influential tabloid newspaper, employs a straightforward style, numerous images, and occasionally sensationalism and emphasis in stories to increase their drama and entertainment value. In contrast, The Guardian, an influential broadsheet newspaper, maintains neutrality and is more objective (Nita, 2012: 2).

### **THE LANGUAGE OF NEWSPAPERS AND NEWS**

The newspaper language is recognized as a distinct style of writing that is defined by

distinct communicative purpose and by its own set of linguistic conventions. (Goumovskaya, 2007:1, as cited in Hassoon, 2018: 3).

In a similar vein, Crystal (2008: 388) asserts that "there is no chance of identifying a consistent style of writing or linguistic qualities shared by all newspapers. There are, of course, superficial parallels amongst newspaper styles due to the medium's inherent limits", for example, frequent subheadings, concise paragraphs, and precise phrases. Similarly, Tayeva and Orazbekova (2014:50) agree that newspaper style comprises a collection of lexical, phraseological, and syntactic devices to inform, direct, and amuse the reader. As a result of these distinctions, newspapers include not only information but also evaluative themes, comments, and views of the news-writer.

Furthermore, Van Dijk (1988:76) says that newspaper language synthesizes stylistic features and diverse forms of information, whereas news language, in particular, has its style sentences. Its sentences are pretty complex in structure. Most of them are complex, with several nested clauses expressing multiple propositions. It is uncommon to come across sentences entirely formed of simple types.

As part of newspaper language, the news text is usually present physically (in print or on television) following certain conventions: brief paragraphs or short stories, as well as vocal emphasis or repetition: they are all motivated by a desire to be heard, read and understood by newsreaders (Cotter 2010: 23).

To be written objectively, news must be reported in the third person; use direct or indirect speech attributed to someone other than the writer; use a few passive verbs to establish objectivity. Typically, the news is written in the past tense. It is straightforward, with brief sentences and words and a few familiar clichés. In addition, the news must pique the reader's attention. Hence, it usually uses concise rather than long sentences, a more specific vocabulary than abstract; imagery that helps the reader develop a clear mental image. (Bakhshandeh et al., 2003, cited in Hassoon, 2018: 5).

### **STYLE AND STYLISTIC CONCEPTS**

Numerous and varied definitions from various scholars addressed the terms style and stylistics, but this study will concentrate on presenting definitions pertinent to its topic. To begin with Wales (1989:435) who indicates that the word style is difficult to define due to varying interpretations. However, it may be related to affecting

stylistic features. He ( 2011: 370) elaborates that style refers to a distinct expression in writing or speaking.

Leech and Short (2007: 9) define style as how language is used in a particular context and environment to convey a specific notion or thought. In short, to them, “style refers to the way in which language is used in a given context, by a given person, for a given purpose.”

'Stylistics,' on the other hand, comes to investigate the concept of style in language via linguistic technique (Finch, 2000:188). The premise is that when a person uses language, he must select an appropriate style for the communication aim. In this case, style requires deciding on a variety of syntactic and lexical alternatives. Stylistics, according to Finch, is "the study of language and literature." From his perspective, Simpson (2004: 3) explains that stylistics' purpose is to investigate language, and more precisely, investigate the creativity of language use and its commitment to meaning construction and development. It conveys a sense of the language's "rules," as it frequently examines texts in which those rules are bent or stretched to breaking point. Moreover, Mozuraityte (2015) asserts that stylistic devices are employed in literary styles and even in publicist and newspapers styles.

## THE STYLISTIC SYNTACTIC AND LEXICAL LEVELS

Halliday (1962, as cited in Spencer, 1986: 420) assures that stylistic analysis of any text is usually fulfilled by methods drawn from general linguistic theory. Thus, it employs the levels of language description in general. Being so, the study is mainly concerned with the following two levels with their including stylistic characteristics, they are:

### A. *The Syntactic level*

This level is concerned mainly with the syntax of the text, i.e., what the distinct stylistic features the newspapers texts contain. Here are some of these syntactic features that this study will cover:

#### 1) *Complexity*

In their book "*Style in Fiction*," Leech & Short (2007: 76) explain sentence *complexity* as the syntactic structure of a sentence. It can be assessed stylistically by evaluating its composition, such as the use of simple, complex, or compound sentences.

##### a) *Simple Sentence*

Quirk et al. (1985: 719) define a *simple sentence* as the one that comprises only one clause. E.g., *Richard drinks a cup of coffee.*

### b) Compound Sentences

It is that type of sentence which composed of two or more coordinated independent clauses; these clauses serve as examples of a paratactic relationship. E.g., *Richard learns English, and Julia writes a letter*(Quirk, 1985: 986).

### c) Complex Sentence

In contrast to a compound sentence with coordinating conjunctions, the sentence's two clauses in the complex sentence are not equal: The subordinate clause is dependent on the main clause.

E.g., I cannot go with you *because I am studying this evening* (DeCapua,2017: 288).

### d) Compound-Complex Sentences

Those sentences are composed of at least two independent clauses and one or more dependent clauses. A compound-complex sentence is formed when a compound sentence is combined with a subordinate clause, a complex sentence is connected to a simple sentence, or when numerous complex sentences are combined in specific instances.

E.g., *He said that would come early, but he was stuck in the traffic jam* (Joshi, 2014: 28).

### 2. Noun Phrases

Noun phrases are the most prevalent constructs into which nouns enter and they are the head word. The structure of the noun phrase is primarily composed of the noun (or a noun replacement such as a pronoun); the constructions preceding and following the noun are frequently referred to as *premodifiers* and *postmodifiers*, respectively (Crystal, 2008: 334).

Noun phrases can also be divided into two main types: simple and complex.

a. *Simple Noun Phrases* consist of pronouns, numerals, or nouns with articles (indefinite, definite, or zero) or nouns with other closed-system items that occur before the noun head, including pre-determiners like *all*, central determiners like *these*, and post-determiners like *last* or *few*

E.g., *All these last few days*(Quirk et al.: 1241).

b. *Complex Noun Phrases* contain three components: (pre-modification, head noun, and post-modification).

E.g., The blonde girl in blue jeans. 2. The blonde girl wearing a blue jeans (ibid).

### 3. *The Voice*

The term 'voice' refers to the aspect of a verb that determines whether the action is performed by or received by a grammatical subject. When a sentence is written in the active voice, the subject is the one who performs the action; when the sentence is written in the passive voice, the subject is the one who receives the action.

E.g., -Active: *The secretary typed the report.*

Passive: *The report was typed (by the secretary)* (Eastwood, 1994: 137).

#### B. *Lexical Level*

*This level* concerns with individual words and expressions in different linguistic contexts (Crystal, 2008: 54). The current study concentrates on five lexical features for their significance, they are : *fuzzy words, compound words, proper nouns, numbers, and abbreviations.*

##### 1. *Fuzzy words*

Some linguists employ fuzzy words to describe the indeterminacy inherent nonlinguistic unit or pattern analysis. A fuzzy term is one that indicates numerical values. For instance, the terms faster, higher, less, least, more, and most all convey ambiguity (Sen, 2009: 16).

In fact, fuzzy terms can be perceived as either those with no clear limit, such as *recently, these days, and previous years*, or as those without a clear extent, such as *big, short, blue*, and so on. To be more precise, fuzzy words fall into four categories: 1. *Abstract Nouns* (e.g., *love, hatred, democracy, freedom, life, spirit*, etc.), 2. *Numerals* (e.g., *tens, dozens, hundreds, or thousands* of, etc. ). 3. *Hedges with Fuzzy Meaning* (e.g., *about, approximately, probably, almost, to some extent, strictly speaking, generally speaking, basically, more or less, somewhat*, etc.), and some *Adjectives* (e.g., *vast, more light, most famous, incentive and hollow* (Li and Zhang, 2014: 115).

2. *Proper Nouns* are those nouns that refer to specific individuals (e.g., Shakespeare), places (e.g., Milwaukee), months (e.g., September), days (e.g., Thursday), festivals (Christmas), and publications (e.g., Vogue), among others. In addition, they are usually written in capital letters at the beginning of a sentence (Quirk, 1985: 288).
3. *Compound words* are those words which result from combining lexical categories (noun, verb, adjective, or

preposition.) to create a larger word with a meaning distinct from the constituents (Srijono, 2010, cited in Wibowo: 2014: 53). Compound words are generated by adding stems in which two independent words are combined to make a single word. However, Wibowo (2014: 1) classifies compound words into three different types. Compound nouns, verbs, and adjectives.

4. *Numbers* are the lexical feature that enables news to be accurate. A news report should be brief enough for readers to grasp the main point in the shortest amount of time possible (Zhang Jian, 2014, cited in Li and Zhang, 2014: 118).
5. *Abbreviation* is described as "a concise explanation of the original large phrase. The entire name of the Association for Computational Linguistics (ACL) is an example of an abbreviation (Zhang, Li, Wang, Sun, & Meng, 2012, cited in Fumani, 2016: 81).

## THE ECLECTIC MODEL OF THE STUDY

To meet the study's aims, this study will adopt an eclectic model for analyzing its data from three distinct models as none of them is capable of fulfilling the study aims on its own.

These models are:

- ❖ Leech and Short's (2007) "*Style in Fiction*." In this book, Leech and Short create a linguistic feature checklist that helps people collect the data more systematically, i.e., it to produce stylistically relevant data. This study chooses to adopt some features of this model at both the syntactic and lexical levels. To be more precise, it prefers to focus on complexity, noun phrases and adds to them the active and passive at the syntactic level.

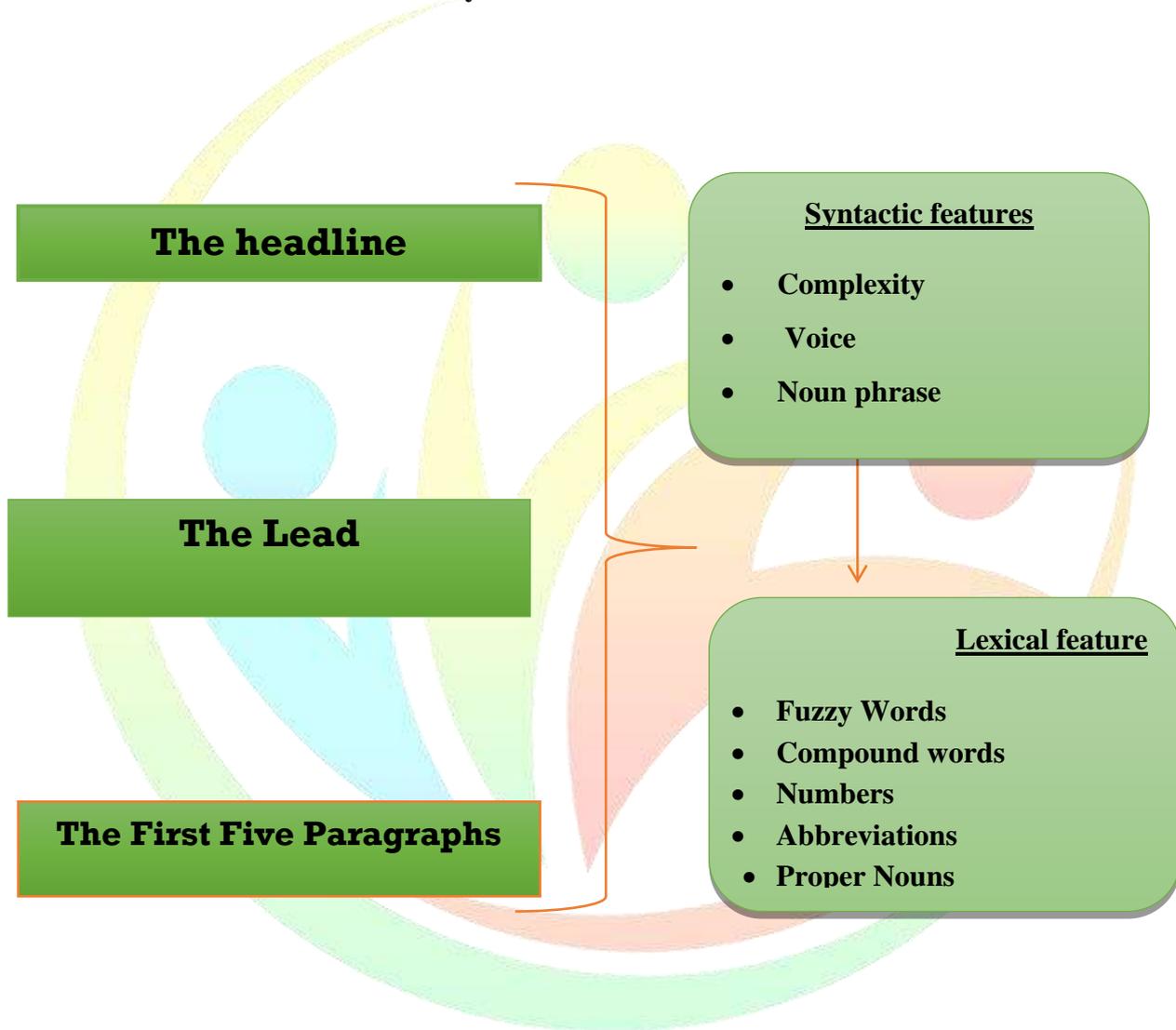
- ❖ Zhang Jian (2007) "*English in News*." In this study, Zhang Jian identifies numerous lexical characteristics of English news. This study depends on this model in terms of lexical features at the lexical level.

- ❖ Busa (2014) "*Introducing the Language of the News*" in which he shows that the ideal style for assessing any news is *the Inverted Pyramid structure*. To him (2014:80), *the headline, lead, and first five*

paragraphs of each news story are the most important aspects of the Inverted Pyramid structure. Therefore, this study relied on the

Busa division in analyzing corona news. For more clarification the following diagram can reflect the model of the study.

**The Eclectic Model for This Study**



**DATA COLLECTION**

The data to be analyzed are two articles from the two newspapers. The first one is from the Guardian, and the second from the Sun. They are collected from the official websites of these newspapers.

**METHODS OF ANALYSIS**

This study conducts a qualitative-quantitative analysis of the data. According to Vanderstoep and Johnston (2009:7), qualitative research generates narrative or textual descriptions of the

phenomena under investigation, whereas quantitative research provides numerical values for phenomena under investigation. As a result, this study is both quantitative and qualitative; though it is qualitative in nature, quantitative features such as the counting of stylistic features for comparison are included.

The researcher of this study believes that by combining qualitative and quantitative approaches will aid in interpreting the study problem and contribute to having acceptable outcomes, as Casebeer, and Verhoef, (1997: 130) asserts.

### **STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF THE GUARDIAN NEWS**

Prior to Britain's Christmas celebrations, the Coronavirus had swept the world, imposing stringent restrictions from the governments and health institutions on citizens in order to prevent infection as much as possible. The researcher chooses this piece of news from the Guardian to demonstrate how its writers employ a distinctive style while covering news during this time period.

#### **Text 1**

**The Headline**-- *'Covid loves a crowd': Britons urged to stay home on New Year's Eve*

**The Lead** -- *Scientists, police and the prime minister are urging people to welcome in the new year in their own home, with an NHS chief warning it is "absolutely vital" to avoid meeting family and friends because "Covid loves a crowd".*

#### **The First Five Paragraphs**

1) *Prof Stephen Powis, the national medical director of NHS England, told Wednesday's No 10 press conference that the new UK coronavirus variant was fuelling a steep rise in infections, and said any plans to meet with those from other households should be postponed.*

2) *"Its absolutely vital that this year everybody continues to follow the guidance by staying at home and not mixing," he said. "Covid loves a crowd so please leave the parties for later in the year."*

3) *The prime minister, Boris Johnson, also instructed people to follow local restrictions and see in the new year at home.*

4) *"That means not meeting up with friends or family indoors, unless they are in the same*

household or support bubble, and avoiding large gatherings of any kind,” he said.

5) Prof Jonathan Van-Tam, the deputy chief medical officer for England, told the briefing: “I know new year is coming up, I know it is normally a time of great festivity

and enjoyment, but you have just got to play your part now in bringing us back from this very dangerous situation that we find ourselves in.”

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/dec/30/britons-urged-to-stay-home-on-new-years-eve-as-covid-cases-soar>

**a. The Syntactic Level**

The Syntactic Level								
Sentence Complexity			Noun phrase			Voice		
Type	No.	Perc.	Type	No.	Perc.	Type	N.	Perc.
Simple	0	0%	Simple NP	48	84 %	Active	26	96 %
Compound	1	12.5%						
Complex	2	25 %	Complex NP	9	16 %	Passive	1	4%
Compound-complex	5	62.5%						
<b>Totals</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>100 %</b>

**1. Complexity**

The numbers and percentages of the table above illustrate how complex this piece of news is. The simple sentence gets zero percent, which indicates that this text is of long, complex sentences. The second type of sentence is the compound which gets a tiny percentage, amounts to 12.5%. The following direct speech is the only compound sentence in the entire

news: “Covid loves a crowd, so please leave the parties for later in the year.” A compound sentence unites two clauses that have similar ideas. Thus, the writer used it to demonstrate that if people continue to celebrate Christmas despite government instructions, the virus will spread, giving the expression, “Covid loves a crowd.”

Considering the other two types, they get the highest percentages. The complex

sentence is used twice in the whole text, which gives it a percentage of 25 %: ***“It’s absolutely that this year everybody continues to follow the guidance by staying at home and not mixing,” he said.*** This is an example of the complex sentences used here where the writer uses direct speech making the verb of the main clause at the end of the sentence. In comparison to the other sentence types, compound-complex sentences receive the highest percentage. Five out of the eight sentences are compound-complex sentences. This means that more than half of the sentences are compound-complex which makes 62.5% of news. The first paragraph is an example of this type, as it contains a single compound-complex sentence. The writer is attempting to convey a large quantity of information in a single sentence, and so employing this type of sentence to assist him in this goal: ***“Prof Stephen Powis, the national medical director of NHS England, told Wednesday’s No 10 press conference that the new UK coronavirus variant was fuelling a steep rise in infections, and said any plans to meet with those from other households should be postponed.”***

## 2. *Noun Phrases*

The majority of noun phrases in this piece of news are from the simple type, which equals 84 %. These nouns consist primarily of nouns without modifiers: *covid, crowed, Scientists, police,* or of nouns plus one sort of pre-or post-modifier. This does not mean that the writer avoids using complex noun phrases such as the following two examples: *“it is normally a time of great festivity and enjoyment,” “Prof Jonathan Van-Tam, the deputy chief medical officer for England.”* The text focuses on a single point which is the cancellation of New Year's celebrations. As a result, it does not require many complex noun phrases to reduce the complexity of the news.

## 3. *Voice*

Twenty-seven finite verb phrases are used throughout the whole text. Only one of these verbs is used in the passive voice, whereas all the others are in the active voice. Therefore, the percentage of the active becomes 96% while it is only 4% for the passive. This gives the impression that most of the sentences state the doer of the action, which is ‘*covid*’. Thus, the active sentences declare and state facts just as boldly as possible, as in *the headline:*

*"Covid loves a crowd: Britons urged to stay home on New Year's Eve."*

The only passive sentence used here is the following sentence *"any plans to meet with those from other households should be postponed."* The national medical director of National Health Service in

England directs people to abstain from making plans to meet with other families until the new variant of coronavirus is eliminated; therefore, this sentence aims to focus on the object, which is any plans rather than on who ordered that.

**b. The Lexical Level**

Lexical Level						
Type	Fuzzy words	Compound Words	Numbers	Proper Nouns	Abbreviation	Total
No.	7	5	0	14	8	34
Perc.	20.5 %	15 %	0 %	41 %	23.5 %	100 %

**1. Fuzzy Words**

'Absolutely,' 'any plans', 'any kind', these are examples of the fuzzy words used that account for 20.5 % of all lexical words used in this piece of news. There is a new strain of coronavirus in the United Kingdom, and all government officials advise against hosting Christmas parties for the anxiety of an uncontrollable spread of infection. The writer uses fuzzy words to fit the news's objective, which is categorically opposed to all types of celebrations and with no exceptions. This means that the news does not address specific issues. However, it absolutely forbids holding any celebration outside the homes: "Prof

*Stephen Powis,..., told ... that the new UK coronavirus variant was fuelling a steep rise in infections, and said any plans to meet with those from other households should be postponed".*

**2. Compound words**

This text contains approximately 15 % of the compound words. The words used here are: 'everybody,' 'households', 'coronavirus.' In addition to two verbs: 'postponed on' and 'come up.' The writer effectively draws attention to his news by merging two concepts into a single word; it can also quickly deliver vital information. Additionally, he attempts to

include brevity in the news in order to cover as much information as possible.

### 3. Numbers

There are no numbers used in this text. Obviously, the Guardian's news articles, on the whole, make limited use of numbers. The authors make no reference in their text to the number of people infected, the number of virus victims, or any other number. This is because that this piece is released before to the New Year's celebrations. So, It is not appropriate for a publication to annoy the readers with information that they have already acquired through daily life and numerous media sources.

### 4. Proper nouns

When it comes to proper nouns, the writer includes a good deal of them in this text. For example, in this paragraph: "*Prof Stephen Powis, the national medical director of NHS England, NHS chief warning, The prime minister, Boris Johnson.*" *Prof Stephen Powis, NHS England* the writer uses proper nouns to provide brief evidence to support his words without resorting to a more detailed explanation, such as the use of modifiers or others. It is well known that proper nouns

are self-explanatory and do not require adjectives or other modifiers. For example, when the writer cites the name of the *'Prime Minister,'* the reader knows that the matter is categorical and indisputable. Proper nouns receive 41 %, the highest percentage of all lexical features.

### 4. Abbreviation

By employing more abbreviations in writing or speech, the writer can convey his or her message more efficiently, economically, and quickly. Consequently, the writer incorporates several of the abbreviations into this text. For example, *'Prof,' 'UK,' 'NHS,' 'Covid,'* etc. Abbreviations account for 23.5 % of all lexical features.

## STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF THE SUN NEWS

Here, a text on coronavirus news is chosen from the Sun's tabloid newspaper to be analyzed stylistically. Also is worthy of indicating that the time of publication this chosen text is near to that of the Guardian.

### Text 2

*The Headline - Doctors urge Brits not to party with pals on New Year's Eve as hospitals are 'wall to wall' with Covid patients .*

**The Lead** - Hospitals are facing a rise in pressure as the number of coronavirus patients receiving treatment rockets past the April peak.

**The First Five Paragraphs:**

1. The number of people being treated for the killer bug in hospitals in England is now 20,426, compared to 18,974 patients recorded on April 12.

2. Public Health England has warned "hospitals are at their most vulnerable" after a record 41,385 cases of the killer bug were confirmed today.

3. Dr Katherine Henderson, the president of the Royal College of Emergency

Medicine, described her experience in hospital on Christmas Day as "wall-to-wall Covid" and begged Brits not to gather for New Year's Eve celebrations.

4. She told BBC Breakfast: "Please, don't take a chance on this, please don't make it likely that we have an additional surge [on New Year's Eve.]

5. " Don't mix, wear masks, wash your hands, keep separate — all the things we know we really need people to take very, very seriously."

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/1359126/0/doctors-urge-brits-not-to-party-new-years-eve/>

**A. The Syntactic Level**

The Syntactic Level								
Sentence Complexity			Noun phrase			Voice		
Type	No.	Perc.	Type	No.	Perc.	Type	N.	Perc.
Simple	0	0 %	Simple NP	32	74 %	passive	1	7 %
Compound	0	0%				Active	14	93 %
Complex	4	57 %	Complex NP	11	26 %	Total	15	100%
Compound complex	3	43%						
Totals	7	100%	Total	43	100%	Total	15	100%

## 1. Complexity

The selected paragraphs of this news text are composed of complex and compound-complex sentences entirely, where there is no single sentence of the first two types, namely the simple and the compound sentences. Hence, the percentage of the first two types is 0%. The news text comprises seven sentences, out of which four are complex, and three are compound-complex. This means that the complex sentence constitutes 57% and the compound-complex 43%. The headline and the lead are examples of the complex sentences used here: "*Hospitals are facing a rise in pressure as the number of coronavirus patients receiving treatment rockets past the April peak.*" This sentence is complex as it is composed of the independent clause "*Hospitals are facing a rise in pressure*" and a dependent clause presented by the conjunction "*as*" in "*as the number of coronavirus patients receiving treatment rockets past the April peak.*" In addition to the non-finite clause, "*receiving treatment rockets past the April peak.*"

The third paragraph consists of the second type of complexity, which is compound-complex sentences: "*Dr Katherine Henderson, the president of the*

*Royal College of Emergency Medicine, described her experience in hospital on Christmas Day as "wall-to-wall Covid" and begged Brits not to gather for New Year's Eve celebrations.*" As news of the coronavirus spread rapidly worldwide, obscuring any other news, the situation became more complicated. As a result, the writer attempts to homogenize this complexity by relying entirely on the complex structure of the sentence that serve multiple functions, including conveying a series of sequential events and elucidating the writer's cause and effect argument that if people attend Christmas celebrations, this will result in an exacerbation of infection cases in the country.

## 2. Noun Phrase

This news article contains thirty-two simple noun phrases, which means that 74% of the noun phrases are simple. For instance, to keep the news headline brief and concise, the writer attempted to avoid using complex noun phrases and instead, only simple noun phrases are used: "*Doctors urge Brits not to party with pals on New Year's Eve as hospitals are 'wall to wall' with Covid patients.*" Complex noun phrases, on the other hand, account for nearly a quarter of all noun phrases. For example, the lead contains two of them: "*Hospitals are*

facing a rise in pressure as the number of coronavirus patients receiving treatment rockets..". "a rise in pressure" is a complex noun phrase that is used to provide readers with a comprehensive explanation of the current state in hospitals.

**3. Voice**

The finite verb phrases in this news text are used twenty times. Only one of these verbs is in the passive voice, whereas all the others are in the active voice state. So, the active voice percentage amounts to 95%. By using the active voice in such a high percentage, the

writer attempts to stress the doctors' warning as the focus of the sentence and the news topic. By contrast, there is only one single sentence in the passive voice, which is: "Public Health England has warned "hospitals are at their most vulnerable" after a record 41,385 cases of the killer bug were confirmed today." Thus, the passive voice percentage amounts to 5%. By using of the passive voice only once along the text, the writer attempts to stress the sentence's object, the statistic of coronavirus infections, by making it the subject that obtains the emphasis of the sentence.

**b. The Lexical Level**

The Lexical Level						
Type	Fuzzy words	Compound Words	Numbers	Proper Nouns	Abbreviation	Total
No.	5	2	4	15	6	32
Perc.	16 %	6 %	12.5 %	47 %	18.5 %	100%

**1. Fuzzy Words**

Five fuzzy words are used in this piece of news, as in the fourth paragraph in which the writer uses two of them: "please don't make it likely that we have an additional surge on New Year's Eve." the percentage of fuzzy words in this text is 16 %. The speaker, a physician, specializing in emergency medicine, informs the British public that an additional coronavirus

outbreak is expected if people do not adhere to the corona virus's restrictions. Due to the nature of the speech, which is based on expectations, the writer uses fuzzy language devoid of precise numbers.

**2. Compound Words**

Compound words received the lowest percentage, 6 % of the lexical features. The writer uses only two words, one of

which is the theme of this piece of news: 'coronavirus,' and the second is the word 'Breakfast' in the fourth paragraph. It seems that the writer relies heavily on other lexical features, such as proper nouns and abbreviations, rather than on compound words in this text.

### 3. Numbers

The numbers feature receives 12.5 %, putting them on par with fuzzy words in terms of percentage. This percentage is not far from the percentage of fuzzy words, demonstrating that the writer strikes a balance between relaying numbers and statistics precisely as they are in order to earn the reader's confidence and fuzzy words when the writer is unsure of his information. The writer begins the body by comparing the number of people infected with coronavirus now and in April of last year. While the second paragraph contains a statistic provided by Public Health England regarding the number of people infected by the virus in a single day: "*The number of people being treated for the killer bug in hospitals in England is now 20,426, compared to 18,974 patients recorded on April 12.*"

### 4. Proper Nouns

In this piece of news, proper nouns account for the majority of remaining lexical features. They record a percentage of 47 %. Proper nouns provide higher credibility and make reading easier for readers because they do not require further modification and description. For example, in the headline: "*Doctors urge Brits not to party with pals on New Year's Eve as hospitals are 'wall to wall' with Covid patients.*" Here, the writer employs three proper nouns: 'Brits,' 'New Year's Eve,' 'Covid.' The heavy use of proper nouns helps to simplify information for the reader, as they are all well-known in European society.

### 5. Abbreviation

The last feature of this level is the abbreviation, which is ranked the second in its percentage at 18.5 %. Two of the abbreviations are frequently used due to their relevance to the topic of this piece of news, namely 'Covid' and 'Brits,.' The others are 'DR,' which indicates the speaker's identification, the person directing the British to stay at home, and 'BBC' which indicates the place, where this person announced these directions. The use of abbreviations contributes to

presenting more significant information with fewer words that fits the shortness of the text in Sun news.

## CONCLUSIONS

This section is concerned with finding out the main conclusions that come out of comparing and contrasting the results of analyzing one text of the Guardian as a British broadsheet newspaper and one text of the Sun as a British tabloid newspaper

### 1. The Syntactic Level

**Table (1) The Overall Analysis of the Stylistic Syntactic Features In the Guardian and Sun Newspapers**

The Overall Analysis of the Stylistic Syntactic Features in the Guardian and the Sun Newspapers			
Type	The Newspaper	The Guardian	The Sun
Complexity	Type	Percentage	Percentage
	Simple	0%	0 %
	Compound	12.5%	0 %
	Complex	25 %	57 %
	Compound-complex	62.5%	43%
	Total	100%	100%
Noun Phrases	Simple NP	84 %	% 74
	Complex NP	16 %	26 %
	Total	100%	100%
Voice	Passive	4 %	7 %
	Active	96 %	93 %
	Total	100%	100%

To compare the percentages of complex sentences in the Guardian and Sun newspapers, the table above demonstrates that the Sun uses complex sentences more frequently than the Guardian. The Sun has a 57 % complex sentence rate, whereas the Guardian has a 25 % complex sentence rate. The Guardian's text, on the other hand, is more rich with compound-complex sentences than the Sun's. It totals 62% in the Guardian, but only 43% in the Sun.

The final level of complexity is compound sentence, which accounts for 12.5 percent of all sentences in the Guardian, whereas the Sun no longer uses compound sentence. Both newspapers have discontinued their use in terms of simple sentences, giving them a 0% percentage.

As demonstrated by the table above, British newspapers such as The Guardian, which is classified as a broadsheet, and the Sun, which is classified as a tabloid, rely heavily on complexity in their sentence structure. As indicated by the percentages in the table, the Sun uses complex sentence more frequently in its news, which may benefit its brief paragraphs by offering greater detail via a single complex sentence. Additionally, both newspapers' texts contain compound-complex sentences, but to a greater extent in the Guardian, corroborating the assertion that the Guardian has a more

diverse range of sentence types than the Sun. Finally, compound sentences may be less frequently utilized due to the writers' implied usage of them in compound-complex sentences. It is used once in the Guardian's text, while its use in the Sun newspaper is entirely absent.

By contrast, the Guardian and the Sun newspapers writers do not use the simple sentence in these pieces of news. One may argue that corona's news is rich with rapid information, compelling the writers of the two newspapers to employ complex sentences that fit with the complexity of the news, so they neglect using a simple sentence in their news.

As for the *noun phrase*, the preference of these types of nouns used in the two newspapers are nearly comparable. Their distribution is as follows: the simple type occurs 84 % in the Guardian texts and 74 % in the Sun's, but the complex type appears 16 % in the Guardian texts and it is higher at 26 % in the Sun.

The widespread use of the noun phrases in British newspapers indicates the importance of brevity of expression that the newspapers tend to use in the news language as the frequent use of noun phrases in the two newspapers allows the writers to convey much information without excessive words.

Most of these proper nouns include the names of well-known figures in the government and health institutions and for the places where the coronavirus has spread, as these names are already familiar to the British people. Besides relying heavily on simple noun phrases, the writers of both newspapers want to keep their readers focusing on the main topic rather than distracting them with long, c complex noun phrases that span two or more lines. As a result, the news can easily be understood by both educated and uneducated readers of the two newspapers. However, the Guardian has the highest rate of a simple noun phrase. By contrast, the Sun newspaper uses more complex noun phrases to fit its shortness of sentence structure.

From another angle, although both newspapers employed the passive voice only once, its percentage is high in the Sun at 7% as its text paragraphs are shorter than those in The Guardian. The exceeded use of passive in The Sun newspaper implies that the newspaper's tone emphasizes the coronavirus's negative consequences. This style will be bolstered by the newspaper's

frequent use of hyperbole in its language, which heightened readers' dread and worries.

❖ Accordingly, the first hypothesis, *The Guardian's news on the coronavirus pandemic is more complex in terms of sentence and noun phrase's structure than the Sun's, while The Sun news is more simple*, is partially refuted and partially verified because the analysis shows that; the complex sentence is more prevalent in Sun texts than in the Guardian; although the compound-complex and compound sentences are more prevalent in the Guardian. Also, the second part of the hypothesis refuted as the percentage of simple sentences is zero; as they are not used by both newspapers. As for the noun phrases, the Sun's texts also contain more complex noun phrases than the Guardian's.

❖ For the second hypothesis which is *The Sun newspaper tends to use passive voice more than The Guardian since it tends to use negative language in its news*, is verified as the passive voice rate is higher in the Sun than in the Guardian.

*The Lexical Level***Table (2) The Overall Analysis of the Stylistic Lexical Features In the Guardian and Sun Newspapers**

The Overall Analysis of the Stylistic Lexical features in the Guardian and the Sun Newspapers		
The Name of Newspaper	The Guardian	The Sun
Type	Percentage	Percentage
Fuzzy words	%23	20 %
Compound words	14 %	16 %
Numbers	0 %	12 %
Proper Nouns	40 %	% 37
Abbreviations	23 %	15 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

First, the only feature that receives a higher rating in the Guardian than in the Sun is *proper nouns*, which obtain 40 % and 37 % respectively in both newspapers. The Guardian's high use of proper nouns is due to the newspaper's substantial dependence on simple noun phrases, for which proper nouns serve as the head. In addition, proper nouns facilitate the reading process, as these nouns are already familiar to the readers.

The second lexical feature that receives the same weight is *fuzzy words* and *abbreviations*. The Sun's news texts include 20% fuzzy words, whereas the Guardian's articles contain a slightly

greater amount of fuzzy terms at 23%. These rates indicate how frequently the two newspapers employ fuzzy terms, since their writers attempt to be extremely accurate in their reporting and avoid delivering inaccurate information. They rely on these words to safeguard themselves from legal obligations while also garnering the trust of their readers. The Guardian's high proportion, on the other hand, indicates that the newspaper is more dedicated to providing reliable information to its readers than the Sun. Additionally, the Guardian's text also has more abbreviations than the Sun's, at 23% and 15%, respectively. The Guardian's style favors abbreviations over full forms

in order to eliminate unnecessary lengthy comments. By contrary, *compound words*, appear less frequently in the Guardian accounting for 14 %, compared to 16 % in the Sun. Compound words are a simple method to add interest to news writing, as these terms are readily accepted by the audience. In terms of *numbers*, the Guardian's use is zero percent, while its use in the Sun is at 4%. The significant increase in the Sun's use of numbers supports the previous claim that the Sun is more dedicated to providing its readers accurate information.

Hence, the third hypothesis which is "*The Guardian newspaper makes extensive use of fuzzy words, proper nouns to make its language more accurate and clear to its readers*" is verified by the fact that the Guardian's rate of fuzzy words and proper nouns is higher.

Finally, the last hypothesis, which is "*The Sun's newspaper makes extensive use compound phrases, numbers, and*

*abbreviations, to fit with its shorten paragraphs,*" is partially verified as the rates of compound phrases and numbers are high in the Sun than in The Guardian news, and it is partially refuted by the fact that the Guardian's rate of abbreviations is higher in The Guardian than The Sun news.

#### **To summarize**

1. The language structure of both Britain newspapers is frequently complex as  
The Sun's news has a higher percentage of complex sentences and noun phrases.
2. The Guardian newspaper is more committed to accuracy and trustworthiness in covering coronavirus news than The Sun's, as seen in the Guardian's higher percentages of lexical features.

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