

**HOW THE LANGUAGE OF TELEVISION
NEWS BROADCASTING
IS SHAPED BY AUDIENCE DESIGN**

BY MARY ANNE ROBERTSON

“It is the ‘mode of address’, the ‘tone’ of a newspaper or broadcast, that distinguishes it from its competitors and provides much of its appeal to us as viewers and readers” (Hartley, 1982).

Acknowledgement

I wish to thank and acknowledge Dr Mark Seba for the help and advice he has given me for this project and for his time.

CONTENTS

- 1) **Introduction**
 - Type of Data
 - Research Questions
- 2) **Literature Review**
- 3) **Reference to the Audience**
 - The Big Breakfast
 - Newsround
 - The BBC
 - Conclusion
- 4) **Representation of the News-reader**
 - The Big Breakfast
 - Newsround
 - The BBC
 - Conclusion
- 5) **Vocabulary**
 - Informal Language: Use of Slang, Vernacular and Informal Standard Vocabulary
 - Conclusion
 - Sensationalism and Loaded Terms
 - Conclusion
- 6) **Interviews**
 - The Big Breakfast
 - Newsround
 - The BBC
 - Conclusion
- 7) **Explanations**
 - The Big Breakfast
 - Newsround
 - The BBC
 - Conclusion
- 8) **Story Types**
 - The Big Breakfast
 - Newsround
 - The BBC
 - Conclusion
- 9) **Conclusion**
- 10) **References**
- 11) **Bibliography**

12) Appendix – Data

1) INTRODUCTION

The focus of my dissertation is to find out to what extent television news programmes differ in relation to audience design, that is, how they use different linguistic styles to appeal to their respective audiences. What Fairclough (1991) terms as ‘niche audiences’. Language is tailored with a particular audience in mind, as Bell (1991) pointed out that the audience is usually the most important factor in choice of language style; “The essence of style is that ... speakers are often primarily responding to their audience in the language they produce ... the audience are arguably the most important and certainly the most researched component of mass communication ... communicators do work with an idea of the audience they are speaking to and what they want” (Bell, 1991). Scannell also pointed out the centrality of the audience in the design of programmes, what he termed the; “cardinal importance of context and audiences”. Scannell went on to state; “All programmes have an audience-oriented communicative intentionality which is embodied in the organisation of their setting (context) down to the smallest detail: there is nothing in the discourses of radio and television that is not motivated ... Most importantly, all broadcast output is, knowingly, wittingly public” (Scannell, 1991).

Therefore the broadcaster must ‘know’ their target audience and what style of programme they will be drawn to; “The communicator must affiliate to the situation of their audience, and align their communicative behaviour with those circumstances. The burden of responsibility is thus on the broadcasters to understand the conditions of reception and to express that understanding in language intended to be recognised as oriented to those conditions” (Scannell, 1991).

The language of the news is particularly interesting to study because it is such an intergrated, yet taken for granted, part of daily life. Something we daily take in, but give little thought to the processes behind, as Allen (1999) terms it; “(the) everydayness of news”...“the embeddedness of television news in the cultures of everyday life”.

It is the language of mass communication, speech designed not for only a few people to hear but an unknown mass of the population, yet even in the mass production of language the audience (although largely unknown) is still key to the style of language that is produced and the content.

The manifestation of audience design is in the ‘tone’ or ‘style’ that is used by the broadcaster. Bell (1991) stated; “I believe the essence of *style* is that speakers are responding to their audience”. It is the tone or style that broadcast programmes use that makes them different.

Type of Data

I recorded and analysed data from three different news broadcast programmes; the Big Breakfast (on channel four), Newsround (on CBBC1) and BBC1. The Big Breakfast (a ‘magazine’ programme) contains short news bulletins lasting a few minutes and is aimed at young people – teenagers and twenty somethings. Newsround is a news programme aimed at children and younger teenagers and runs for about five minutes. BBC1 news is aimed at an adult audience and is half an hour in length.

To manage the different time spans I taped an average of two Big Breakfast bulletins per day, the whole of Newsround, and I picked out stories from each BBC bulletin that appeared on one of the other two channels (or both).

Research Questions

- 1:** How do the three programmes differ in their presentation of news in terms of overall content and linguistic form, in order to relate to their audiences.
- 2a:** Is the style of language used formal; standard, ‘official discourse’ (Fairclough, (1995), that is, language associated with ‘public’ speaking,
 - b:** or informal; language associated with the ‘private’, that is language used in daily life eg., in casual conversation, what Fairclough terms as; “a conversational public-colloquial discourse style”).
- 3a:** Is the style used informational; that is having a primary aim of providing information, what Fairclough (1995) terms ‘public discourse’,
 - b:** or of entertainment value; having a primary aim of making the news broadcast entertaining to watch, as well as being informational, (*‘infotainment’* - source unknown), making news into a *‘commodity’* on ‘the market’, that is, ‘private discourse’, (Fairclough, 1995), either through use of language style or by containing trivial news other than mainstream current affairs.

2) LITERATURE REVIEW

Theories Framing the Research

The original theory that frames this research is a psychological theory of ‘accommodation’ (Giles and Powesland, 1975). The accommodation theory states that speakers change their linguistic style in order to appeal to their audience. The theory relies on the notion that we are attracted to those with whom we are similar, ‘similarity-attraction’, that the speaker, in order to make themselves more attractive to their interlocutor, becomes more similar to them (by using the type of language which they use). The speaker *‘accommodates’* towards their hearer (Giles and Powesland, 1975).

Since 1958 a lot of data has been gathered which points to the fact that the way people speak is at least partly dependent on *whom* they are talking to (Giles and Powesland, 1975). The purpose of accommodating is that the speaker can gain the ‘reward’ of the hearer’s approval; “the accommodative act provides the sender (speaker) with rewards referred to in general terms as the receiver’s (hearer’s) approval” (Giles and Powesland, 1975).

The original theory of accommodation relates to interpersonal encounters, but can also be applied to the mass media (Bell, 1984). The theory of ‘audience design’ was proposed by Bell (1984) and is a sociolinguistic theory that has grown up out of the accommodation model proposed by Giles and Powesland (1975). The theory of audience

design is a modification of the accommodation model in relation to the mass media. What has been termed by Giles et al (1987) as; 'Communication Accommodation' (Bell, 1991). Bell proposes that the kind of style that a speaker uses is primarily dependent on the audience with whom they are speaking to, as opposed to other factors such as amount of attention paid to speech; "Speakers design their style primarily for and in response to their audience" (Bell, 1997). In the case of the mass media language is specifically 'designed' by the broadcaster with a particular audience in mind and this determines what linguistic forms and content are used; "... speakers respond primarily to their audience in designing their talk" (Bell, 1991). The 'reward' of the broadcaster in this case is that they gain an audience who watch their programme and ultimately large viewing figures; "mass communicators are under considerable pressure to win the approval of their audience in order to maintain their audience size or market share" (Bell, 1991). Giles and Coupland & Coupland (1991) state; "... communicators need the audience, whose approval must be won". In order to do this they must 'accommodate' to their audience by becoming similar to them.

The audience design approach developed from one particular study that Bell carried out on style (Bell, 1991). The study looked at the style of language used in radio news broadcasts in New Zealand. Because of the structure of the broadcasting system in New Zealand different radio stations broadcast their programmes from the same studio, and also used the same news-reader for the different programmes (Bell, 1991). The stations that Bell looked at were 'Station YA' – a national radio station with high prestige, and 'Station ZB', a local community station. Bell discovered that within the same broadcast studio, (with the same presenter and even news script), the way that the news was presented could be very different. The only differing factor was which audience the two stations were aimed at. Therefore Bell pointed out that the only reason why a change of style occurred must be because of a change in the target audience; "Single news-readers heard on two different stations showed a remarkable and consistent ability to make considerable style shifts to suit the audience ... only the audience correlated with these shifts ... In mass communication, a broadcaster's individual style is routinely subordinated to a shared station style whose character can only be explained in terms of its target audience" (Bell, 1991).

A study within the framework of audience design was also carried out by Jucker (1989). Jucker studied determiner deletion in newspapers, ranging from broadsheets to tabloids. This study showed that the lower down the social scale a newspaper was, the more determiners it deleted. This study also shows that a change in linguistic style in the media occurs in order to appeal to the audience, "The structure of determiner deletion reflects the social structure of the paper's readerships in some detail" (Bell, 1991).

In conclusion, in my own analysis of news broadcasting, the style that the different news programmes adopt will point to the kind of audiences that they target.

I suggest that the three programmes will structure their news in different and contrasting ways in order to meet the needs of their perceived audiences.

3) REFERENCE TO THE AUDIENCE

Because the audience is the most important factor in broadcasting an important question to ask is; Are the audience themselves overtly referred to and how is this reference

carried out and why. For the most part the news is given as narrative, which includes ‘others’ (the third person, eg ‘they’). One does not expect the audience to be addressed or referred to as they would be in face-to-face interaction. I analysed the three channels to see if this standard news narrative was used consistently.

The Big Breakfast

Direct reference to audience

No. of direct references	16	<u>Pronouns</u>	
% stories with direct ref.	11% (7 stories)	You (r, ‘d, ‘re)	10
Headlines	7% (1)	We (‘re)	3
Endings	7% (1)	Us	3
		Our	1

Direct Reference to the Audience Only

The Big Breakfast (the BB) features only 16 direct audience references (in 11% of the stories). Most of the references involve the pronoun ‘you’, for example in ‘POT OF GOLD’ (S19); “N1: **You’ll** have to be handy with a wand if (.) **you’re** hoping to conjure up some tickets ... **you** could always wait for it to come out on video”, (lines 40, 43). Here ‘you’ overtly and directly includes the audience and is used to give them information and make a suggestion to them in a direct way. In S47 ‘FLICK PICK’ the use of ‘you’ at the beginning of the story demonstrates that it is the audience themselves who have made this piece of news, crediting them as being a *part of* making the news eg; “**You** voted (.) star wars (.) the greatest film (.) ever (.) a giant channel four poll (.) has given the space epic ... top rating” (lines 34-35). Even a heading ‘FOR YOUR ENTERTAINMENT’ (S63, line 34) contains a direct reference to the audience. Therefore the *whole* story becomes overtly directed to the audience.

Finally, the use of ‘U2’ in H9 (line 4); “and **you too** can be an all time great” is particularly interesting because ‘you too’ is used here to make the audience think that it is referring to *them*, which gets their attention. However, the actual story has nothing to do with the audience (you) it is a play on different meaning. The real meaning here is ‘the band U2’.

The use of ‘you’ means that the audience are directly included and therefore made an active part of the news, especially by being credited with having a part in constructing it in S47. Importantly the use of the pronoun ‘you’ also informalises the programme by using references that are usually used in face-to-face conversation.

References Inclusive of Audience And News-reader

Some references are not exclusively aimed at the audience, but are inclusive of them. For example the pronoun ‘you’ is used in this way in ‘AIRPORT ANGST’ (S32 - interview) eg; “If **you** factor out the costs...and **you** weigh (.) those up ... **you’d** really actually start

looking to see that the industry really wasn't paying its way", (lines 35-38). Here 'you' is used in an interview, so it could be taken as being used to whoever is doing the interviewing (it is not so directly aimed at the audience as when the news-reader uses it directly to the audience), but it is still inclusive of the audience. The use of 'you' in this story is used as a suggestion to make the audience *think* for themselves, instead of just telling them what to think, in order to include the audience in the thought process. Again this makes the audience's involvement more active.

The inclusive pronoun 'we' is used in S44 'CLONE ALONE' eg; "**We** could be one step away (.) from creating a (.) master race (.) finding a cure for all known diseases (.) or both ..." (lines 4,5, 7,8). Its inclusiveness of the audience could also be seen as making them think more about the serious nature of cloning (that 'we' all are going to be part of it), therefore making it more relevant. In S46 'JAM DODGERS' (interview) 'our' and 'we' are again inclusive of all (as part of the U.K) eg; "Years (.) of politicians (.) failing to tackle the inevitable transportation crisis (.) have finally backfired on all of **us** ... **we** have (.) the worst gridlock transport ...left **us** with chaos ...The reason why the U.K. does not compare well (.) with **our** European competitors (.) is because **we** have consistently under-invested" (lines 29-30). This inclusive usage brings the audience onto the same level as the BB and again makes the story personally relevant to the audience by involving them directly, making the news more interesting to them.

Talk About the Audience

A unique feature of the BB is that as well as directly referring to the audience themselves, the BB also talks *about* the audience. 'Chats' are informal conversations between the BB presenters and the news-reader at the end of some of the broadcasts, (the two presenters are in a separate studio from the news-reader and talk to her on a T.V. screen). In C6 the news-reader and two BB presenters discuss the audience between each other eg;

55 N1: Oh (.) right (.) yes (.) do we like **the eight o'clock viewers** (.) your favourites
 56 are **the seven o'clock ones** (.)
 57 P1: Well (.) erm (.)
 58 P2 [No Richard's are **the seven o'clock**]
 59 P1: Well (.) **the seven o'clock v** (.) **viewers are the most loyal** (.) y' know **they** are (.)
 60 **they** are there and it's it's just
 61 N1: **They're** hard workers aren't **they** (.) **they're** up early (.)
 62 P1: **They** are ...

The audience is referred to as 'they' and by the time of day they view eg, 'the eight o'clock viewers'. Interestingly the audience is differentiated, rather than being massed together as being all the same. They are overtly labelled and are also evaluated eg; "the seven o'clock viewers are **the most loyal**", "They're **hard workers**... they're **up early**". This means that the audience is once more overtly included as being part of the BB (as opposed to being taken for granted and unmentioned), they are made to feel a 'part of it'. Such discussion also provides humour through the use of jocular banter and therefore provides entertainment, which also informalises the programme.

The Big Breakfast can get away with overt audience evaluations such as this because it contains a lot of light-hearted jocular banter, which is not supposed to be taken seriously.

If the BBC used this type of talk about the audience it would appear very rude and misplaced because such language does not fit in with the BBC's formal tone.

Newsround

Direct reference to audience

No. direct references	136		<u>Pronouns</u>	
% of stories with	86%	stories (43 stories)	You ('ve/ 'r/'re)	94
Headlines with	28%	(2)	We (inclusive)	6
Endings with	86%	(6)	Us “	3
			Our “	1
			<u>Other References</u>	
			Imperatives	23
			Questions	7
			Viewers' names	12

Newsround contained by far the most direct audience reference(120 more than the BB), with 136 direct references to the audience in 86% of the stories, 86% of endings and 28% of headings. I have singled out a select number of stories to analyse in detail.

The story containing the most direct audience references was the story on selling mobile phones (S4), containing 17 direct references to the audience. This included asking the audience questions and asking for their opinions. The lead in S4 begins; N1: “phones bosses are so keen to get **you** connected (.) that they've come up with (...) a rather interesting way to sell **you** phones ...” (lines 43-45). The use of 'you' directly involves the audience with the story straight away, drawing their attention.

It then begins with asking the audience questions eg; N2: “Do **you** have a head for business (.) are **you** a smooth talker ...” (line 46), involving them on a personal level. Then once their interest has been obtained, information is given to them directly eg; “they (phone bosses) reckon **you** and **your** mates know more about mobiles than most (.) and could persuade **your** friends into buying ... but **you** might have to wait awhile before **you're** earning thousands ... so the more phones **you** flog (.) the more money **you** make ... teachers have said it could put **you** off **your** school work ... better to concentrate on **your** exams”, (lines 50-54, 62, 71).

Finally the audience's opinion is asked for eg; “so we want to know what **you** think (.) a top career move (.) or (.) **your** hard work making other people rich (.) send **your** opinions to the usual address” (lines 72-73), which makes their opinion relevant.

This saturation of references to the audience means that *they* are made the main focus of the story, which is especially important because the story *is* about them (getting teenagers to sell mobile phones). Therefore it is important to get them involved by asking for their own opinions by relating the story personally and directly to them.

The BBC also ran this story (S3), but in sharp contrast to Newsround, related to their own audience by talking *about* teenagers (as opposed *to* them) for example; “the employment of **teenagers**” (line 75), the use of '**they**' eg; “... **they**'ll be exploited” (line 76) and '**them**' eg; “paying **them** three pounds an hour” (line 80). Other terms used include; “Some of these **youngsters** (.) are gonna be really bright” (interview, line 82),

“The attraction for some **children** could actually have ...” (interview, line 96) and; “it’s education that **teenagers** need”, (line 101). By talking *about* young people/children rather than *to* them, the BBC in contrast to Newsround, in effect *excludes* young people from their target audience. If Newsround had addressed its audience in this way it would have come across as extremely patronising, (talking down to the audience as opposed to them on the same level), especially by calling them ‘children’ (line 96).

In S31 (about the study of tuna fish) twelve direct references are made to the audience, using the inclusive pronouns ‘we’ (4 times), ‘us’ (1 time), and ‘you/r’ (7 times), in order to heavily involve the audience. Most of these references occur within an interview with a scientist (*Barbara Block, Scientist*, line 52). She uses inclusive ‘we’ eg; “The kinda data we’re (exclusive) getting (.) would (...) be similar t’ (.) is **we** found out (.) where **we** went (...) everyday (...) and what **we** ate everyday”, (lines 53-54), placing herself on the same level as the audience. And she uses ‘you’ to include the audience personally eg; “so imagine if **you** went into **your** fridge’ (.) and took uh (...) uh (...) dish of ice-cream (.) and **you** started eating it (.) well **you’re** a warm-bodied person (.) and when **you** ate that ice-cream (.) we get a little blip on our (...) tummy (...) transmitter (.) and we find out exactly when the cold stuff (.) hits your stomach”, (lines 55-59). This use of personal pronouns directly involves the audience in thinking about their *own* experiences in order to help them to understand the process of how data is collected. The scientist uses the prior experiences and background knowledge which the audience possess of ‘eating’ eg; “what we ate everyday” and ice-cream eg; ‘cold stuff’ in order to help them to understand what sort of data the scientists find out about tuna fish and how they get it. Including the audience also makes the story interesting for them because they can see the story’s relevance to them personally, which is stated by the news-reader eg; “it (.) will also show **us** how important it is (.) to protect the natural environment” (lines 64-65).

Referring overtly to the audience, including them by presenting news to them personally in terms which they are able to relate to and see the relevance of on a personal level, as well as further involvement of the audience by asking for their opinions, is central to Newsround’s style of broadcasting. Direct audience reference (predominantly by the use of pronoun ‘you’) plays a vital role in enabling the audience to understand and process information in a way that interests them.

The use of direct audience reference is also important in turning the narrative style of news into a more ‘conversational’ style, by talking as if the audience were a face-to-face interlocutor, what Fairclough terms ‘conversationalization’; “the tendency of public affairs media to become increasingly *conversationalised*” (Fairclough, 1995). Fairclough pointed out that there are two tensions in the media 1: between informing and entertaining and 2: between public and private; “tension affecting ... the public/private boundary and the privately oriented communicative ethos of broadcasting with extending use of a conversational style ... the construction of the audience as consumers and the colonisation of even the news media by entertainment” (Fairclough, 1995). Here we see the ‘public’, a newsbroadcast, becoming more like a *private* conversation – “the conversationalisation of the public language” (Fairclough, 1995). This serves to informalise the broadcast and its presenters; “... the presenter is constructed as an ordinary bloke talking to ordinary people, sharing with them a common ‘lifeworld’ (Habermas, 1984). This is important in removing any perceptions the audience may have of the news-reader being an authoritative figure in relation to them, constructing the news-reader on the same level as the audience, (a ‘friend’ rather than a ‘teacher’-like figure). Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999) also state that conversationalisation

incorporates the news into the common everyday world of the audience; “Systems (broadcasting here) sustain a necessary anchorage in the lifeworld (world of everyday experience) through the intersection of mediated quasi-interaction (news) with conversational discourse”.

Conversationalisation is also an indication that the broadcast’s objective is not only to inform, but also to *entertain*. Fairclough states that this tendency to ‘conversationalise’ means that the media is moving closer to being a form of entertainment; “become marketized” (Fairclough, 1995).

Audience Opinion

A unique feature of Newsround is that the audience is frequently asked questions in order to obtain their opinions, which gives them the opportunity to be ‘hands on’ in the news process, by getting them to make a personal contribution to the programme and actively think about issues. Eleven questions asking for the audience’s opinions are asked, for example; “**do you love it** (Harry Potter and The Philosopher’s Stone) **or hate it?**” (S16, line 50) and; “**what would you ask him?** (Bill Gates), (S50, line101). In story 26 the audience is actually given the chance to “make the news” (line 106) eg; N2: “2001 (.) has gone past (.) in a flash ... we want to know (.) what the biggest news event of the year was (.) for **you**” (lines 109-110). This encourages children to take an interest in the news and promotes their abilities and opportunities to give their own opinion eg; “... we want to know who’s been making the moves (.) in the music worlds... **who’s** your hero of the year? ... Harry Potter’s in there too (.) but was he **your** biggest craze ... vote (.) with **your** mouse ... so let us know what **you** think (.) by going to our website ...” (lines 114-117, 120-122).

A proof that Newsround does use viewers opinions in an active way is given by reference to specific audience members’ opinions eg; “**Ruth** in Jersey (.) is gloating (...) ‘cause they got it (the Harry Potter film) a week earlier ... now twelve-year-old **Emma** (.) in Stockton (.) said overall it was good ... **Anne Marie’s** (.) also twelve (.) and thought it was great ...” (S16, lines 46-47, 49). The participation of audience members in the news also makes it more interesting for the viewers because their opinions actually count by contributing to the news itself.

This ‘two-way’ system of news broadcasting (giving the news, then asking for feedback) also reduces the authoritativeness of the news reader, by giving the audience a voice. News is not merely dictated to the audience, they are given the chance to become part of the news process, participants rather than just passive listeners.

Commands

Another unique feature of Newsround is that it contains commands /directions/ instructions which are given to the audience, for example; “**check out our website**” (E1 line, 75), “**send us your thoughts by clicking (...) on the comments box ...**” (S16, lines 50-51) and; “**make sure you join Becky tomorrow**” (E7, line107). Commands also make the audience active participants (as opposed to passive viewers) by encouraging their own involvement, and therefore their interest. The use of questions and commands

also plays a big part in conversationalising the format of the news because they are features that are used in face-to-face conversation, further adding to the informal tone.

BBC1

Direct reference to audience

No. of direct references	8	<u>Pronouns</u>	
% of stories with	25% (3)	You (r)	4
Headlines with	0%	We (inclusive)	2
Endings with	60% (3, out of 5)	Us “	1
		<u>Other References</u>	
		‘The patients’	1

Direct Reference to the Audience Only

The BBC used very few direct audience references, only eight such references in all. There are six direct references that refer ‘straight’ to the audience for example; N1: “And (.) **you** can see all the latest developments ... on BBC news 24 ...” (E4, lines 44-45). And; N1: “they’ll be an update for **you** (.) of course (.) just before seven o’clock ...” (E6, line 32-33). Both of these references give the audience further information about where to get more news, rather than involving them personally in a story, as Newsround does. However, in S4 ‘your’ is used to make the story directly relevant to the audience eg; “It’s all about who controls the digital stuff inside **your** home ...” (interview, line123).

References Inclusive of Audience and News-reader/Interviewer

The other three audience references were used in interviews, and as I pointed out for the BB, the use of ‘you’ in an interview is partially an indirect reference to the audience because the interviewee is not talking directly to the audience, but through an interviewer eg in S5; “Well what I can tell **you** is ...” (interview line 49). In S6 ‘we’ (and ‘us’) are overtly inclusive eg; N2: “**we** are moving towards a new era (.) and era in which **we** (.) **the patients** (.) will know much more about the performance (...) of those who look after **us**” (lines 32-34). Inclusive ‘we’ here includes all. Interestingly ‘we’ is expanded to ‘the patients’ including both news correspondent and audience on the same level together. This is a mark of solidarity, making the audience as part of the news itself and therefore importantly makes the story personally relevant to the audience.

The fact that the BBC uses the least direct audience reference is a demonstration of their more formal tone, by using a public style of language as opposed to a conversationalised style.

Conclusion

For all three programmes direct audience reference is primarily important in making the news personally relevant to the audience.

Direct Audience reference is also a feature of conversationalisation and therefore informalisation, through the use of a more 'private' conversational style. Newsround significantly uses it in order to make the news more informal and accessible, giving the audience an overt identity and active role as Newsround viewers by heavily including them.

The Big Breakfast construct an overt identity for their viewers in the banter that occurs after some of the broadcasts through talking about them, providing entertainment as well as making the audience feel that they are a part of the BB.

The BBC's scant use of direct audience reference is a reflection of its more traditional, less personalised, official 'public' style. And therefore of a more formal news broadcast style.

4) THE REPRESENTATION OF NEWS-READERS

Another important question to ask is; How are the news-readers and their fellow colleagues presented to the audience, and how does this construct the identities of the news readers, and therefore their appeal to the audience. I looked at news-readers' self-reference, their reference to other reporters and references made to the news-reader.

The Big Breakfast

News-reader's reference to self (individually or as part of the team as a whole)

No. of times	20 (no stories)	<u>Pronouns</u>	
% of stories	0 %	I ('m)	11
% of endings	23% (3 endings)	Me	2
% of 'chats'	83% (5 chats)	We (exclusive)	6
		Us (exclusive)	1

Reference to other reporters by news-reader

No. of times 3

Names

Simone Sutcliffe 3

References to the BB presenters (excluding chat)

No. of times 3

Names

Richard and Amanda 3

References to the news-reader by BB presenters

No. of times 63 Pronouns

Names		You (r/re)	17
Jasmine	13	Her	1
Jasmine Lowsome	20	She	7
Jas	4	<u>Other</u> (the girls)	1

The BB has only one news-reader and very rarely refer to another reporter. The BB news-reader never used self-reference during the actual news broadcast, only at the end of a broadcast or during the ‘chats’. These chats were crucial in constructing the persona of the news presenter, ‘personalising’ her. She referred to herself 20 times eg; “**I’ll** have more at eight o’clock” (E9, line 47).

The BB presenters played a key role in constructing Jasmine’s identity eg., (C1);
 23 P1: Great Jasmine (...) **how do you think that bulletin went?** (loud)
 24 N1: OK (tentatively)
 25 P1: Yeah it was ok (.) could do better (.) **do so at nine o’clock** (.) Jasmine Lowsome
 26 (cheers from the studio audience).

Informal banter is used to provide entertainment value and also to personalise the news-reader through her relationship with the two presenters. Here P1 asks an unconventional question eg; “how do you think that bulletin went”? and gives a forceful command to N1 to do better. Of course this is light-hearted banter, which is conveyed by P1 acknowledging her as usual, ‘Jasmine Lowsome’, and by the studio audience cheering. In effect the interaction is turned into a *performance*, making it of entertainment value. As Fairclough (1995) stated; “there is an element ... of the media artist entertaining the viewer as consumer”.

The next such occurrence is in C2 eg;
 34 P2: Oh (.) thank you Jasmine (.) **are you alright this morning?**
 35 N1: Oh (.) hello (.) sorry (fiddles with headset)
 36 P2 Oh (.) oh
 37 N1: Oh (.) I couldn’t hear you then (.) I can now
 38 P1: [OK] **you look lovely Jasmine (.) that’s a lovely outfit** (...) um I mean (.) I’m
 39 seeing you from a distance today (.) normally I’m a couple of feet closer (.) can I say
 40 that (...) **from this angle you look terrific too** (laughs)
 41 P2: **Does it feel weird me being right beside you like this?**
 42 N1: [I know]
 43 P2: **Would you rather have Richard here?**
 44 N1: (Laughs) well it’s nice for us all to be (.) you know (.) a **close happy family** (.)
 45 p1:She’s not going to do any **bitchy comments** on air (.) **we know you’re threatened**
 46 **by each other** (.) but she’s not going to do them now is she
 47 N1: Yeah we are (.) **we have cat fights** (.) after the programme
 48 P2: Yeah right!
 49 P1: OK (.) that’s good ok (.) thank you Jasmine Lowsome
 50 P2: Thank you **Jas** (.) see you later

The interaction is an ‘un-scripted sketch’, purely for entertainment value. The representation of the news-reader in the ‘chats’ plays an important role in informalising her by displaying her in everyday banter between ‘friends’ with mock flirtation (of P1 towards N1) eg; “**you look lovely Jasmine**”... **you look terrific**”, and mock competition

between P2 and N1 eg, “She’s not going to do any bitchy comments on air (.) **we know you’re threatened by each other**”, N1; “Yeah we are (.) we have cat fights ...”. P2 also refers to N1 using a nickname “Jas”, reinforcing her informal identity.

The ‘sketch’ lightens the mood after the news by including the news-reader in the general banter of the studio, representing her as ‘part of the gang’ eg; N1: “well it’s nice for us to all be...a close happy family” (line 44). This construction of Jasmine counteracts her role of ‘serious’ news-reader, bringing her onto a par with the audience, enabling them to relate to her by constructing her as an ‘ordinary’ person, therefore making the news more accessible by reducing her role as a figure of authority.

The ‘chats’ function like a mini ‘soap opera’, containing ongoing ‘themes’. The flirtation theme of P1 towards N1 is continued in C4; P1 asks if N1 is still with her boyfriend and continues flirting with her eg; **‘She doesn’t text me or anything since she got this bloke’** (lines 73-74). P1 asks very personal questions about N1’s personal life i.e. her sleeping arrangements and the conversation becomes quite suggestive eg; “we have em (.) separate bedrooms” (line 58) and “... **I need a good night’s sleep**” (line 69). This is a means of informing the audience about Jasmine’s personal life and therefore generating their interest in her. P1 overtly questions her on behalf of the viewers eg; “we like to know about your life and **the viewers like to know too**” (line 57), the reason why informal banter occurs – to keep the viewers entertained by finding out more about the news presenter eg; “he’s still living with you?” (line). Jasmine (N1) retorts back to P1 with; **‘Are you still with your girlfriend?’** (line 54) and P2 shouts **‘you tell him girlfriend!’** (line 55), which shows female solidarity and adds to the ‘drama’ (which means more entertainment value). The *studio* audience takes part by whooping (C4, line 61) and laughing (line 75), also adding to the ‘performance’. The ‘soap’ is continued in C5 eg; 53 P1: Thank you very much Jasmine (.) remember y’ know (.) **feel free to text and phone me**, and 65 P1: **‘you’re always welcome for afternoon tea (...) er at Bacon Towers** (Bacon is the surname of P1).

Chats are used to provide entertainment value with gossip and funny banter. They are a way of holding on to the viewers until the end of the news, as well as personalising the news-reader. Kaplan sums this up by stating; “A typical news programme can be seen as a weave of fictions, the individual stories ... the ongoing drama of the slow revelation of the newscasters’ personalities and their saga of their relationship to each other and to us as spectators” (Kaplan, 1983). The importance of ‘chat’ in the media is pointed out by Fairclough (1995); “ ‘chat’ has emerged as an important studio-based discourse type in television, involving an articulation of conversation with elements of entertainment ...”. All of the newsreading is done by Jasmine and is narrative. Only three times did she introduce another reporter eg; **‘here’s Simone Sutcliffe’** (S1 line 8), **‘Beth Colson reports’** (S15, lines 7-8) and, **‘here’s Simone Sutcliffe’** (S55, line 9).

Newsround

Newsround has three main presenters who alternate roles between acting as studio news-reader and acting as an ‘outside’ reporter. Newsround is very distinctive in its representation of news presenters. One of the most significant features regarding the news presenters is constant self-reference *during* the news broadcast.

News-reader's reference to self (individually or as part of the team as a whole)

No. of times	75	<u>Pronouns</u>	
% of stories	20% (10 stories)	I ('m/ 'll/ 've)	27
		Our (exclusive)	18
		We ('ve) “	14
		Us “	10
		Me/my	6

References to other reporters by studio news-reader

No. of times	15
<u>Names</u>	
Becky	8
Liso	3
Matthew	3
Matt	1
Paul Arnold	3
Steven Holgate	1

References to the studio news-reader by other reporters

No. of times	5
<u>Names</u>	
Matthew	1
Liso	4

Other reporters reference to self

No. of times	1
<u>Name</u>	
Stephen Holgate	

Self-reference (or reference to the news team as a whole) is made 75 times in Newsround, in 20% of the stories, two endings and three headlines. The pronoun 'I' is used a total of 27 times, occurring within the news broadcasting. Unlike the BB, the news-readers play an active role in the news, becoming personally involved (as opposed to passive narration which is used by the BBC and the BB in their news programme) through the use of self-reference. This parallels audience involvement with frequent direct *audience* reference and involvement of the audience. The use of self-reference means that (unlike the narrative used by the BB and BBC), the news becomes even more conversationalised, with speaker (the news-reader) and hearer (the audience) both being involved in the process, as in face-to-face conversation, (although separated across space and time) - interaction versus narrative. The reporters also become personally involved in the news by giving their own opinions for example in S11; “**personally I'm** very excited ... as the stars from **my** favourite soap (.) Eastenders are going to be here ... and look who **I've** found (.) Helen from Big Brother ...” (lines 89-90, 92-93).

For the audience of Newsround it is important to have people presenting the news who can be related to, not passive, authoritative readers of narrative but someone who has an active role in the news and who is able to hold the attention of the audience.

Newsround is more of a group effort than the BB. Exclusive pronouns are used to bring not only the presenter themselves into the ‘picture’ but Newsround’ as a whole (therefore the faces of Newsround ie., the presenters) eg; ‘our’, (for example; “**our** top stories this afternoon” (H1, line 2), ‘us’ (for example; “join **us** again tomorrow” (E1, line 77) and ‘we’, for example; “**we** asked for your comments” (S49, line 68). And a second reporter is introduced by the presenters twelve times (8 more than the BB), always using their first name (except when the audience reporter Steven Holgate is introduced) eg; “**Here’s Matthew**” (S16, lines 43-44) or “**Becky’s got the details**”. There are also two ‘acknowledgements’ eg; “**back to you Liso – thanks Matt**” (S17, line 60) and; “**Well thanks Matthew**” (S11, line 87). The news reporters, by speaking to each other informally with first name terms are constructed as a ‘group of friends’, as opposed to professional colleagues. Banter is also used between them eg; “**please make your speech better than Liso’s!**” (S20, line 95), and; “**got it right in the end Liso!**” (S16, line 45), also contributing to this informalisation. This serves to personalise the presenters by identifying them as individuals. Consequently creating a style that makes them more accessible to the audience; “the age ... of participants (news presenters); the manner and style of how they talk to each other – all these give rise to warrantable inferences about the ... event ... the character and status of participants and the relation of event and participants to viewers or listeners” (Scannell, 1991). One of the most important uses of this informalised style is that the authoritative nature of the presenter is reduced. Fairclough (1995) points to the reduction in news-readers’ authoritative roles on behalf of the audience; “the accent is upon ... consumers ... detraditionalisation and informalisation which are problematising traditional authority relations (between news-reader and audience) and profoundly changing traditional constructions and conceptions of self-identity”.

The ‘Audience’ Reporter

Another unique feature of Newsround is that they sometimes feature audience members as reporters (‘press packers’), for example in S1, an audience reporter is introduced eg; “**we sent Steven Holgate to investigate**” (S1, line 7). Using audience reporters is important in relating to the audience because it means that the audience can relate to them on the same level. Steven evaluates the xbox (a new games console) and the choice of a child reporting on a games console and testing it out is very appropriate because he speaks on a level with the audience eg; **This game (.) ... is my favourite (.) I like it (.) because it (.) you 16 can fight on different levels ...**” (lines 15-16). It includes lots of his opinions and evaluations, which the news-readers themselves probably couldn’t get away with because of their professional position eg; **N2: “Well ... (?) xbox I think it’s a great console (.) I give it eight or nine out of ten”** (line 33), and more importantly the news-readers would not necessarily have the same opinion as the audience because they are older. This is another important reason for using child reporters and is important in letting the audience see that they too can be a part of the news. This is a further way of giving them an active role in making the news.

Role Plays

‘Role plays’ (small sketches that are acted out by the presenters) are also unique to Newsround. Unlike the unscripted sketches during chats in the BB, role-plays are used in

the actual news stories themselves (Stories 10, 16, 20 and 36). They are used to entertain the audience and add humour, (as in the BB), but they have a further purpose of informing. Fairclough (1995) pointed out; “Tension between the objectives of giving information and entertaining is widespread in the media”. In S10 the ‘role play’ provides a lead into an interview;

52 N2: Now (.) **I’ve** been told to come here to pick up a really important message (.) but
 53 **I’ve** no idea how it’s supposed to get here (music) Hedwig (.) **I** should’ve known
 54 Thanks to owl post **I’ve** been given the chance to quiz the people behind Harry
 55 Potter about the next movie....
 56 ... so how much have they filmed?

In this ‘scene’ ‘Hedwig’ (an owl) brings a message to N2 (owls bring post in the Harry Potter movie) supposedly containing a message, which enables N2 to interview the actors in Harry Potter and makers of Harry Potter. It makes the lead into the interview more interesting and therefore entertaining. The news presenter taking on the role of actor further promotes their accessibility, by putting them in informal situations, adds to the informalisation of their ‘authoritative’ role as news-reader (as do the ‘sketches’ in the BB).

Role-plays are also used to enable the audience to understand information more clearly. In S19 a role-play is used to inform the audience what *not* to submit for a competition. By simply telling children not to do something it may not be taken in eg; N2: “(speech writing) **isn’t that easy (...)** **we don’t want the same (.) old (.) boring stuff**” (line 83). The acting out of a poor ‘speech’ by a presenter (which they had to write to enter) shows them what would happen if they didn’t follow instructions! eg; 84 N1: “**Uh** Wow (.) **I** (.) **I** can’t believe it (.) **I** was so not expecting this (.) ever since (...)

85 **I** was a little boy **I** wanted one of these....

91 We’re all one big happy family (.) what can **I** say (...) it’s amazing (.) this (...) this 92 is just (.) this is just my life”.

This role-play also provides entertainment and generates banter between the news-readers eg; “**please make yours better than Liso’s**” (line 95) and, “**Charming!**” (line 96) in reply, which further personalises the news-readers.

In story 36 the role-play’s purpose is to help the audience *understand* the concept of cloning, making an explanation of cloning more concrete by applying it to the news-presenter eg;

11 N2: **I** know you think you don’t see enough of **me** (.) well (...) what about this
 12 (multiple pictures of Liso on screen) or this (...) ooh (.) scary thought (.) what the
 13 scientists have done (.) is called cloning (.) it means making a copy (.) of a living
 14 thing **like me ...**”.

The presenters are therefore involved personally in informing the audience, rather than simply reading through a narrative.

The BBC

News-reader’s reference to self (as an individual or part of the team as a whole)

No. of times	6	<u>Pronouns</u>	
% of stories	0%	I (‘I)	1

% of endings	33%	We (inclusive)	1
		Our (exclusive)	4

References to other reporters by news-reader

No. of times	14
<u>Names</u>	
Jill McGivern	1
Jill	2
Navdit Darawell	1
Rory Keflin- Jones	1
Stephen Cape	1
Stephen	3
Daniela	2
Margaret Gilmore	1
Margaret	2
<u>Pronouns</u>	0

References to the news-reader by other reporters

No. of times	5
<u>Names</u>	
Anna Ford	1
Anna	4
<u>Pronouns</u>	0

Other reporters reference to self

No. of times	7
--------------	---

The BBC have a few studio news-reporters who only occupy that particular role. Along with several 'outside' correspondents who only act in that role. Self-reference made by BBC news-readers occurs only 6 times. As with the BB, this does not occur during the stories themselves, but at the end of a broadcast. In comparison to the large proportion of 'I's used in the BB and Newsround, 'I' ('ll) occurs only once throughout the BBC data eg; "I'll be back a little later with an update" (E1, line 54-55). This and the first name terms is the only personalisation of the news-reader (apart from them being referred to by name during interviews).

The BBC is portrayed corporately, as opposed to being personalised as a group of individuals (as Newsround and the BB are). 'Our' is used four times eg; "our social affairs correspondent" (S3, lines 76-77) incorporating the BBC as a whole. Whereas exclusive 'we' in Newsround is similar, the audience would probably only associate it with the visible presenters themselves. The BBC 'our' seems to contain a more corporate value for the audience. The representation of the news-readers for the BBC is very much part of the 'corporation' of the BBC versus a team of individuals eg; "from the **one o'clock news team** (.) good afternoon" (E1, line 75) and; "but from **the one o'clock news** (.) ... good afternoon" (E3, line 117), rather than personalised eg; "make sure you join **Becky**

tomorrow” (E7, line 107), in Newsround. This adds to the authoritativeness of the BBC. This is in direct opposition to the construction of Newsround presenters.

The representation of BBC news reporters is much more formalised. Unlike Newsround, other reporters are introduced with title and full name, for example; “**our correspondent (.) Jill McGivern (.)** is there” (S1, line 20). This is often accompanied later by a subtitle giving information about exactly who they are eg; ‘**Jill McGivern, South Asia Correspondent**’ (line 55). Or verbal information is given about the reporter eg; “**here’s our social affairs correspondent (.) Navdit Darawell**” (S3, lines 76-77). This makes the programme more ‘official’ sounding and means that the reporters are represented authoritatively as professionals, work colleagues, rather than as individuals (as in the BB and Newsound). It also gives the viewers extra information.

Many stories involve more than one reporter, a studio news-reader and outside correspondents. There is also a great deal of one-on-one interviewing between the news reporter in the studio and an outside correspondent.

When engaged in an ‘interview’ the studio news presenter and outside reporter do use first name terms, building up a rapport outside of the formality, but this only occurs after the correspondent has been formally introduced, for example in (S8);
77 N2: ... “our correspondent Margaret Gilmore (.) is (.) at Scotland Yard (.) **Margaret ...**
107 N2: **Anna (.)** many senior officers ...
114 N1: Thankyou **Margaret (.)**

News reporters also ‘sign themselves off’, which is again more official eg; “**Andrew Castle (.) BBC news (.) Edinburgh**” (S9, line 41). Formalising the change back to the studio presenter and providing the audience with more information.

Conclusion

The BB presenter plays no personal part in the actual news broadcast. However, the end ‘chats’ between her and the BB presenters play an important role in constructing her personality for the viewers, personalising and consequently informalising her, and therefore making the news more accessible, as well as providing entertainment value, with gossip etc.

Newsround attaches the most importance to the personalisation of the news. The news-readers’ personal involvement is very important in further informalising the news (and therefore making it more accessible to children) through conversationalisation of the narrative and constructing the presenters un-authoritatively as a group of ‘friends’, who take on roles other than the role of ‘news-reader’.

The BBC places more emphasis on its value as a corporation than on individual news-readers, which gives it a more authoritative and ‘official’ tone. This increases its reputation as an ‘authority’ on current affairs and therefore authoritative source of information. This serves to formalise its broadcasts.

5) VOCABULARY

Informal Vocabulary: Slang, Vernacular Language and Informal Standard Language

I looked at the use of 'informal' vocabulary by the three channels. Here I include slang, non-standard vernacular vocabulary and informal standard vocabulary. Slang terms are specialised jargon used by particular groups (mainly children and young people) eg 'check out'. As Holmes (1992) stated; "Slang is another area of vocabulary which reflects a person's age. Current slang is the linguistic prerogative of young people and generally sounds odd in the mouth of an older person. It signals membership of a particular group – the young". Slang is therefore an important ingroup marker. This means that its use is often a signal of solidarity with the hearer as joint members of a specific group. It is a way of excluding those who do not use it and are not part of a certain group (older generations), promoting 'exclusiveness'. The use of slang in news broadcasting can be a way of appealing to, and therefore including, a particular audience and excluding others. It is consequently a strong signal of audience design.

Vernacular language here includes terms such as 'getting hitched', which are non-standard, but are in general use, as opposed to being restricted to certain ingroups (ie., the young) as slang is. However, Holmes (1992) pointed out that vernacular language is also used the most by young people. 'Standard informal vocabulary' means informal use of standard vocabulary eg; 'mum' instead of 'mother', 'hi', 'b'bye' etc., which is used by everyone to some degree in informal conversation.

No. of Slang/Vernacular/Informal Standard terms Used

The BB	155 (excluding 'chats')
Newsround	164
The BBC	22

The Big Breakfast

I found approximately 155 instances of slang/vernacular/informal standard language in the BB data. The written headlines that appear on screen also contain such terms eg; '**WISE UP**' (Headline18, line 34), and '**YOU PLONKERS**' (H37, line 30). Informal vocabulary most importantly serves to informalise the linguistic style that is used because it is the type of language that is used in informal conversation eg; "The **geek** in glasses (Bill Gates) (.) is hoping it'll be **game over** ..." (S14, line 38), "... Kim Marsh ... and Eastenders hero (.) Jack Rider (.) they're **getting hitched** ...", (S34, lines 45-46) and; "**mum** of two ..." (S34, lines 46-47).

Therefore, the use of informal vocabulary in the news serves to conversationalise the news. Fairclough (1995) stated; "Conversationalisation is also realised in a variety of linguistic features. Most obvious are items of colloquial vocabulary ...". This makes the news more accessible to the audience because it uses the type of language they use in their everyday lives, and therefore is vocabulary that they can relate to personally. Fairclough (1995) further pointed out; "use of colloquial vocabulary ... by using it claims co-membership, with the audience, of the world of ordinary life and experience from which it is drawn, and a relationship between (newspaper) and audience".

Slang/vernacular usage such as; “**like** (.) strive for world peace **’n stuff**” (S9, lines 37-38), would sound alien on the BBC because it is not part of the language that the audience use. But in the BB brings the news onto a parallel level with the audience, using language they feel comfortable with and that is, concerning slang terms, unique to their generation. Informal language also brings the linguistic style used on to a par with the type of story that is being featured i.e., trivial ‘informal’ stories. Terms such as ‘her madge’ (her majesty) brings ‘her majesty’ down to the level of the story that it is included in; an entertainment story about a pop singer eg; “J Lo clearly **lost it** ... she insisted on more security than **her madge**” (S48, lines 42-43), also making the story less serious and increasing its entertainment value.

The inclusion of vernacular vocabulary is used in an exaggerated way in order to make the news more humorous and entertaining, for example using alliteration eg; “Everyone was there (.) from Greek gods to **loin cloth larries**” (S9, lines 34-35) and humorous names/titles eg; “... a row between **telly lovies** ... sadly **drama queens** at ITV (.) **pulled the plug** (.) after their couterparts at the **beeb** ...” (S37, lines 32-34).

Newsround

Newsround contained the most informal vocabulary. As with the BB, this makes the overall style more informal. Slang/informal language also serves to ‘conversationalize’ the style in Newsround. Some examples are; “I **popped down** to ...” (S21, line 21), “... killed **Mums and Dads**” (S27, line 11), “**Got it right** in the end Liso” (S16, line 45), “someone else **reckons**” (S49, line 80), “**ooh** (.) and no gold stars ...” (S30, line 38) and “a bit **pricey**” (S41, line 30).

Informal language is also used *towards* the audience, making the tone that of ‘chat with mates’ eg; ‘**Fancy it?**’ (S20, line 88), ‘**Hi**’ (S1, line 4) and; ‘**b’ bye**’ (E5, line 115) and “**good luck**” (S50, line 106), along with the use of personal pronouns, further conversationalising the news.

Newsround uses more slang than the BB eg; “check out” and “hanging out”. It appears that the presenters are trying hard to bring their ‘lingo’ onto a par with their audience, become ‘one of the gang’ with the audience, by converging towards them by using their language. As Crystal (1995) pointed out; “The chief use of slang ... is to show that you are one of the gang ... (it is) one of the chief markers of ingroup identity”. The BB presenter doesn’t need to try as hard because she is the same age as the BB’s target audience and uses vernacular and slang language in a non-serious humourous way eg; “loin cloth larries” (S9, line 35). However, the presenters of Newsround are quite a bit older than their target audience. They come across as trying hard to bring themselves down to the audience’s level by using a great deal of slang and vernacular vocabulary in a ‘serious’ manner eg; “**check out** our website” (E1, line75), “**hanging out** (.) with all the best bands” (S20, line 77) and; “who’s been **making moves**” (S26, line 114). Making the presenting of news more ‘cool’ and down to earth and enabling the audience to relate to them as equals. Holmes (1992) in talking about ‘positive politeness’, (such as when a boss asks their subordinate to use their first name) points out that such politeness is; “solidarity oriented ... expressing solidarity and minimising status difference”. Holmes (1992) goes on to state that; “a shift to a more informal style using slang ... will function similarly ...”. This points to the fact that the use of informal vocabulary is important in reducing the news presenters’ authoritativeness.

The use of slang is also important in designing the programme exclusively for children. As mentioned earlier slang excludes those who are not familiar with it, this way adults are 'excluded' from being the addressed.

Other examples of slang/vernacular/informal terms used in Newsround include;

- | | |
|---|----------------------|
| 1) the graphics are awesome | (S1, line 21) |
| 2) To help sell (.) their latest gear | (S4, line 50) |
| 3) They reckon you and your mates | (S4, line 50-51) |
| 4) The more phones you flogg | (S4, line 62) |
| 5) 6) you've shelled out sixteen million quid | (S12, line 6) |
| 7) Harry Potter earned a whopping ... | (S12, line 22) |
| 8) Loads of comments (.) coming to us | (S16, line 45) |
| 9) you could be smoozing with celebs | (S20, line 76) |
| 10) they've already bagged the big names | (S20, line 79-80) |
| 11) was he your biggest craze (.) or just a total turn off | (S26, lines 116-117) |
| 12) they're really chuffed (.) that loads of kids ... | (S35, line 103) |
| 13) He started out as your average techy | (S50, line 92) |

The BBC

The use of informal language was very rare in the BBC and only consisted of informal standard terms, no slang or vernacular terms were used. It is not the sort of language that appeals to the BBC's audience. Their audience wants an informational and serious programme. The use of slang particularly would alienate their viewers because it is not part of their daily language, unlike the viewers of the BB and Newsround. Examples of informal terms used are; "the government's heart **supremo**" (S6, line 15) "Pop **mogul** Jonathon King" (H4, line 2) and; "It's all about who controls the digital **stuff** inside you home ... and computer **stuff**" (S4, lines 123-124). Other examples include; "the eight were **bundled** out of Kabul" (S1, line), "**no doubt** about that at all" (S5, line), "more planes (.) **hammer** Kunduz" (H3, line), "they'll be an update for you (.) **of course**" (E6, line, 32), "Catholic **ones**" (S10, line 24), "**Now then** ... it's nearly half past six" (E6, line 32), and; "tempt **teens**" (S3, line 79).

The use of mainly standard formal vocabulary demonstrates that the BBC uses a more formal and serious linguistic style. Its sole purpose is to inform the audience in a serious manner, which indicates that the news that they are broadcasting is a serious presentation of the facts. Use of slang and other informal language by the BBC would only jeopardise its reputation as a highly respected and serious broadcasting corporation, who are thought to broadcast reliable information. The BBC has no purpose in entertaining its audience.

Conclusion

Informal language is a very important part of the style of the BB and Newsround. For both programmes slang and other informal vocabulary is important in informalising the news broadcasting process by using informal language associated with ordinary conversation.

The BB uses such vocabulary because it makes the news more accessible to young people, by using language that is part of their 'culture'. Vernacular and slang vocabulary

are also important in the BB in order to add humour, making the news more entertaining by using such language in an exaggerated manner.

Newsround uses the most informal language overall, and also the most slang, primarily in order to bring the tone of the presenters onto the same level as the audience (especially important because the audience are quite a bit younger than the presenters).

The BBC contains no slang or vernacular language, and little standard informal vocabulary. Slang would exclude their audience because it is not part of their language, and standard informal language as well as vernacular language in particular, contrasts with the BBC's formal tone. Its use would take away from the seriousness of the programme and the presenters' authoritative role, and therefore its credibility as a reliable source of information.

Sensationalism: Loaded Terms

Loaded terms are words that contain strong connotations (often negative) which sensationalise a story and contain biases; "loaded towards or against a given set of attitudes ... (with) strong connotations" (Leech, 1974). Many slang/vernacular terms are loaded. Often another use of slang/vernacular language is to sensationalise language (see 'Informal Vocabulary' above).

No. of loaded terms

The BB	36
Newsround	23
The BBC	13

The Big Breakfast

Sensationalism is a major part of the way in which the BB present the news. It is a way of appealing to their audience by making the news more sensational and dramatic, and therefore more exciting than it really is. I counted approximately 36 loaded/sensationalist terms in the BB data eg; "in a quest for a bigger (.) slice of the fortune (.) they make for T.V. **fat cats**" (S35, line11) and; "A senior police officer (.) has (.) been **blasted** by Scotland Yard (.) for sparking (.) a new **storm** over drugs" (S36, line 24-25). The loaded vocabulary 'spices up' the news, giving it more entertainment value than 'neutral' language. It can also bias audience opinion, the use of 'T.V. fat cats' in alluding to the T.V. companies who make money from football, overtly supports the strikers.

Story 10, on 'cloning', particularly generated sensationalist language eg; "**Boffins** (.) **crack the recipe for a human**" (H10, line1), "Fears raised (.) by (.) new doctor **Frankinsteins**" (H11, line 1) and; "we could be one step away (.) from **creating a master race**" (S44, line 4). Language such as this dramatises the story making it 'worse'. 'Boffins' suggests rather eccentric mad scientist types (versus neutral 'scientist') and 'recipe for a human' puts cloning into a very dramatic bare form. The use of 'doctor Frankensteins' in the headlines of the second broadcast of this story becomes much more sensationalist than 'boffin', in effect calling the scientists 'monsters'. This also generates a strongly biased approach. Leech (1974) calls such strongly sensationalist words 'snarl'

words, as he pointed out; “maximising the unpleasant associations of a term” (Leech, 1994).

In contrast Newsround’s presentation of the story is much more neutral. Conversely *de-sensationalising* the story eg; “**a new technology** (.) for starting human life” (S35, line 6), (versus ‘recipe for creating humans’), which put it in ‘technological’ terms, “**a team** in America has taken the first difficult step towards cloning” (S35, lines 17-18) and; “**the scientists**” (line 24) (versus ‘boffins’) to label the creators of cloning. The BBC scientist interviewed about the story *played down* the dangers of cloning eg; “it could be misused ... but the government are moving fast (.) to put a stop to that” (lines 47, 50). Although it is mentioned that some people are worried about it eg; “not everyone supports the research (.) some people are scared (.) this Italian scientist (.) is already saying he wants to turn cells like these (.) into babies (.) and they think that’s dangerous” (S35, lines 28-30), but attributes this attitude to other people.

The BB also uses connotative language with suggestive covert undertones eg; “whilst some just about managed **not to reveal all (.) their hidden talents** (.) one group threw royal caution to the wind and **pulled out all the stops** (.) to spice up the show” (S58, lines 44-45). This is loaded in a different kind of way; “managed not to reveal all their hidden talents” means that some kept some clothes on, whereas; “threw royal caution to the wind and pulled out all the stops” is a covert way of saying some performers at the royal variety show did a strip. The audience need to be of a certain age to understand this connotation. This also applies to the loaded and suggestive language used in C4 (see ‘Representation of the News-reader’).

Headlines

The BB also uses written headlines printed in bold (displayed on its screen next to the news-reader) which often contain sensationalist language eg; ‘**SWISS NIGHTMARE**’ (S52, line 37) and ‘**TWISTER TERROR**’ (S53). They also often contain puns on words as well eg; ‘**PINT-SIZED PROBLEM**’ (S4, line 37) a headline about teenagers (small – pint-sized) drinking too much (pint) and ‘**ROAR DEAL**’ (S42, line 35), about a lion that was given a *raw* deal. The headlines work in the same way in which the Tabloids use large eye-catching sensationalist headlines to draw the audiences’ attention. They are also sometimes humorous eg; ‘**YOU PLONKERS**’, again providing entertainment value.

Newsround

Newsround contained approximately 23 sensationalist words, less than the BB, yet more than the BBC. Although they use some sensationalism, they generally use more neutral language than the BB. Seeking to present stories in an unbiased factual way (see the previous section), yet still providing a little extra appeal eg; “the console **wars** continue” (H1, line 2), “... mobile **mania** has hit new heights” (S4, line 43), “... Prescott got into a **punch-up**” (S26, line 112) and; “Manchester United ... were **spectacularly felled** (.) by Arsenal” (S40, lines 87-88).

The BBC

The BBC used the fewest sensationalised terms, (approximately 13) eg; “the vision for John Caudwell (.) is to try and **tempt** teens” (S3, lines 78-79), ‘**lucrative** companies’ (S3, line 86), “the **lure** (.) of becoming a future millionaire may prove too **tempting**” (S3, line 100), “how the Health Service rations the **wonder drug** (.) for ...” (H5, line 5) and; “but Microsoft has shown (.) just how **ruthless** it can be (...) in **a fight**” (S4, line 127-128). The scarcity of loaded terms demonstrates that a serious, factual and down to earth news presentation is what their target audience expects. The BBC do not need to use sensationalism to entice the viewers, who are concerned with getting unadulterated hard facts that are neutral and unbiased, rather than entertainment value. Sensationalist language does not give rise to neutral reporting.

In contrast to the BB, who use language to making stories *more* sensationalist, the BBC (like Newsround) use *counter* sensationalist language to *play down* any sensationalism that may be generated by a story eg;

“N2: Now (.) these figures (.) have to be treated with some **caution** (...) because the **actual** number of deaths (.) is **really quite small** (...) so the difference (.) between a very good hospital ... and others (.) lower down the table (.) is **not as great (.) as it might seem**” (S6, lines 29-32)

Again this appeals to the audiences desire for being well-informed - neutral facts that are not altered by sensationalism, which is often used for entertainment value. The BB, in comparison, sensationalise this story and give no such warning to look at the figures with caution eg; ‘**HEART BREAKING**’ “... a West Midlands hospital has been named and **shamed** (.) for the **worst** survival rate ... **three times more likely to die** ...” (S24, lines 24-27). This makes the story more entertaining and eye-catching, but therefore more biased, favouring entertainment value over sound information.

A comparison of a story that all three programmes featured about a meeting of Afghanistan clan leaders demonstrates that the BB uses more sensationalism eg; The BB; “... just as **war -lords** (...) are meeting (.) with UN negotiators” (S59, line 10). Newsround; “... **leaders** from Afghanistan (.) have been holding talks”(S42, lines 33-34). BBC1; “twenty five **delegates** (.) from (...) four anti-Taliban groupings” (S11, lines 4-5). The BB issues a sensationalist term ‘war lords’, with connotations of blood thirsty fighters, to label Afghan clan leaders. Whilst Newsround and the BBC use neutral terms; ‘leaders’ and ‘delegates’. The Newsround term ‘leader’ is a general term that a young audience can relate to. The BBC uses a political term which a younger audience might not be able to relate to. This small difference in choice of vocabulary reflects differing audience designs.

Conclusion

Sensationalism plays an important part in the BB. It is used to make the news more dramatic, exciting and to add humour. Therefore creating more entertainment value.

Newsround uses sensationalism, but not to a lesser extent than the BB. It presents a more ‘serious’ broadcast in this way, whilst still seeking to make it a little more entertaining.

The BBC uses very little sensationalism because their audience expects them to provide reliable information (which sensationalism does not provide) rather than entertainment value.

6) INTERVIEWS

Interviews are part of all three programmes. However, the extent to which they are used and the manner in which they are involved in the news broadcasts differs.

The Big Breakfast

Interviews

No. of	24
% of storys	31% (20 storys)
Total lines	74
Length (av.) per int.	3
No. per story (av.)	1 (5 storys/25% with 2 interviews)
% with children	0%

The Big Breakfast included 24 interviews. They were mostly only clips of interviews. None of them were introduced by the news-reader and were only an average of three lines long (74 lines in total). The stories only contain one interview at a time, (except for story 35, which contains two interviews). On the 26th at 8.00 am the story about cloning (S49) contained an interview with an interviewee *against* cloning, but the 8.30 broadcast contained an interview with a scientist *for* cloning. However, the two opinions were not given at the same time. One interview per story gives little scope for broad coverage of events. Well informing the audience (by giving them different sides of a story) does not seem to be a priority.

Subtitles were displayed to name interviewees and say who they were, for example; 'Rajeev Singh, **hunted man**' (S9, line 39) and 'Gordon Taylor, **Keepie Uppie King/Union Chief**' (S35, 13). Entertainment value was incorporated into these two subtitles by using humorous titles eg; 'Keepie Uppie King'.

Interestingly the news-reader made a response to what interviewee Rajeev Singh said in S9 eg; R: "I came here with ... lots of material things (.) now I'm going back with forty two friends ...".

N1: "**How touching**", (S9, lines 40-42). This informalises the interview with the use of a personal comment from the news-reader. It adds humour because the news-reader is making fun of what the interviewee said by saying 'how touching' in a sarcastic way. Overall it removes the seriousness from her position as a news-reader.

Newsround

Interviews

No. of interviews	30
-------------------	----

% of storys	30% (15 storys)
Total lines	129
Length (av.) per int.	4 (lines)
No. per story (av.)	2
% with children	50%

Newsround contained more interviews, 30 in all, which took up a total of 129 lines (55 more than the BB). There was also an average of two interviews per story, which means that more differing opinions were given. For example, S25 (about a single being released after Damilola Taylor's death), contained *six* different interviewees. The first two interviews were with two celebrities and this was followed by a *group* interview with some children from Damilola's school. This appeals to the audience because it provides a basis for children to discuss issues that concern them as part of a group and be active participants. The most important point concerning audience design is that 50% of interviews were with children. This again gives children a chance to voice their opinions, which is important in enabling the audience to be able to relate personally to the news, rather than just listening to adults' versions of it.

Another interesting point is that the interviews are done by the news-presenters themselves. The interview in S25 was set up as a discussion forum with the actual news-presenter on that day giving the interview. This relates back to the construction of the news-presenter as someone who is familiar to the audience – someone they 'know' and can relate to, rather than some 'outside' correspondent whom the audience does not 'know'. The audience often gets to 'see' the news-presenter's role in the interview (they are not cut just to show the responses of the interviewee, (as with the BB). This means that interviews also become '*conversations*', containing question and answer sequences, making the interview more informal eg;

"N2: And **look who I've found** (.) Helen from Big Brother (.) hello! What are you up to tonight?

H: Well (.) the Big Brother gang are gun' (.) singing and dancing along to 'I will survive'

N2: **I smell trouble** (laughs) (S11, lines 95-97).

Another interesting point is that the news-presenter asks a question overtly on behalf of the viewers, for example in S10, what the interviewee thinks about what *the audience* thinks about them;

"N2: And what's it like seeing all **those people** (the audience) there going (.) oh Rupert (.) **we think** you're fabulous (.) and typing to this message board **we think** you're the best (.) **we really fancy you** Rupert (.) what's that like?

R: Weird (.) but it's cool as well (.)" (S10, lines 77-80).

This further adds to the audience's participation.

The audience also gets to actually do interviews themselves, and they are even given their own title 'press packer'. In story 1 the 'press packer' Steven Holgate gets to do two interviews (lines 17-21 and 29-32), a further instance of audience participation.

The BBC

Interviews

Number of	24
% of storys	67% (8 storys)

Total lines	135
Length (average)	11 (lines)
Per story (average)	3
% with children	0%

The BBC contained 24 interviews, taking up the most space out of all three programmes; 135 lines in 67% of the stories. The stories that used interviews had on average 3 interviews per story and an average of 11 lines (excluding two ‘correspondent’ interviews where the correspondents gave long reports). This meant more different opinions were able to be given, and therefore more information.

As with Newsround, some of the interviews were two way interviews, with the studio news-reader playing a questioning role. There are four such interviews. No interviews except those interviewing BBC reporters are shown in this conversation format. The rest are edited statements which only show responses by the interviewee and exclude the questions asked (as mainly used by the BB).

Interviews conducted by news-readers with outside BBC correspondents are specific to the BBC. The studio news-reader remains fixed within the studio environment (unlike the presenters in Newsround). This fixed role further constructs them as being in an authoritative position. The interviews with the correspondents are informalised by using first name terms eg;

49 N1: **Daniela** (.) what real chances are there (.) of this strike going ahead?

50 N2: ‘*Daniela Relph, Sports Correspondent, Central London*’

51 It does seem unthinkable (.) **Anna** (.) but (.) th (.) that’s the situation ...

60 N1: If the strike does go ahead (.) what action (.) is likely to be taken (.) against these 61 players?

62 N2: Well (.) some of the club chairmen have made it clear ...

71 N1: **Daniela** (.) thank you (.) (S7)

However they are also formalised by providing a subtitle with the correspondent’s full name eg; ‘Daniela Relph’, title; ‘Sports Correspondent’, and their location; ‘Central London’, giving extra information.

Providing interviews such as this means that the audience receives further information, importantly from a ‘reliable’ source (the BBC correspondent), as well as that of the studio reporter, someone who is ‘on the scene’ and who is specialised in the particular field of concern, (sport in this case). A professional figure who knows what they are talking about and therefore an authoritative source.

It is all about informing the audience as fully as possible, this is quite the opposite to the BB example of interviewing concerning cloning where only one viewpoint was given at a time.

Conclusion

The BB contained the least interview material and the least broad range of views. This demonstrates that their emphasis is not upon well informing their viewers.

Newsround contained more interviews and importantly half them were with children, enabling the audience to relate to the news more. The interviews were also personalised by the news presenters themselves conducting the interviews. And by them conducting

the interviews as a two way conversation, rather than just showing interviewees' responses. Again making the news more accessible to the audience.

The BBC featured a lot of interview time. The interviews between the studio presenter and outside correspondent were important in well informing the audience and providing the audience with a great deal of first hand information.

7) EXPLANATION

This section looks at explanation given for terms/concepts or processes. I am considering here explanations of terms, concepts or processes that are given in order for the audience to *understand* (or better understand) the information being given and which obviously is *not* expected to be general knowledge that the audience already has.

The BB

Explanations

No. of	2
% of stories	3% (2 storys)
No. of lines	4

There are only two such examples in the BB, taking up 4 lines. Both the explanations are of terms that are *not* general knowledge already eg; 'free light show in the sky' eg; "this weekend's free light show in the sky (.) **otherwise known as (.) the leoniz meteor display**" (S25, lines 35-36) and 'shooting galleries' eg; "shooting galleries (.) **special areas (.) where addicts (.) can legally inject heroin**" (S36, lines 28-29).

Newsround

Explanations

No. of	9
% of storys	18% (9 storys)
No. of lines	43

In Newsround, however, one of the key aspects of audience design *is* 'explanation'. In the other two news programmes concepts and terms are often taken as given knowledge, that the target audience already possess. For example, the concept of 'cloning'. Newsround, however, does not take this concept as given knowledge. Their target audience is special because, as they are young, it can't be taken for granted that they have a broad general knowledge. Newsround features nine different examples of explanation. Two of the examples are not terms that are general knowledge eg; 'the xbox' (a new invention) eg; "... the xbox is **microsoft's game console**" (S1, line 10) and 'Gaelic football' eg; "... Gaelic football is (...) **a bit of a cross between football (.) and rugby**" (S33, lines 86-87).

However, four of the explanations are from stories which feature in one of the other two news programmes and contain extra explanation to that given in the BB or BBC. For example the story about Holy Cross primary school children;

73 **Problem was (.) that Holy Cross was a Catholic school (.) and to reach it (.)**
74 **children and parents (.) walked through a Protestant (.) area (.)** for several months
75 (.) protesters have said they didn't want them walking there (.) but Catholic parents (.)
76 and pupils said they had a right to (S39).

An overt explanation of the 'Holy Cross' situation is given by Newsround (the problem between Catholics and Protestants), but in BBC1 (S10) the audience are expected have background knowledge about the situation already.

The following example features an expert giving an explanation of a *processes*. The scientist is explaining how a piece of equipment works. Interestingly, the scientist explains the process by relating it to the audience's *own* experiences of daily life, particularly that of eating ice-cream eg;

53 The kinda data we're getting (.) would (...) be **similar t' (.) if we found out (.)**
54 **where we went (...) everyday (...) what we ate everyday (.)** we get that by
55 temperature (.) from the (...) the tag (.) that is inside the fish (.) **so (.) imagine if you**
56 **went into your fridge (.) and took uh (...) uh (...) dish of ice-cream (.) and you**
57 **started eating it (.) well (.) you're a warm-bodied person (.) and when you ate**
58 **that ice-cream...we get a little blip on our (...) tummy transmitter (.) and we find**
59 **out (...) exactly when the cold stuff (.) hits your stomach (S31).**

The scientist relates this everyday experience to how the process of finding data from tuna works, therefore getting the audience to understand the process in their own terms, making it relevant to their own level of understanding. As Bell pointed out; "Relevance (van Dijk 1988b:122) is the effect on the audience's own lives or *closeness to their experience*".

This also applies to Newsround's explanation in S3 about why the freed aid workers had been imprisoned for preaching Christianity eg; "A group of aid workers held captive by the Taliban ... arrested because the Taliban thought that they were trying to encourage Christianity (.) **which is banned under their rules**" (S3, lines 39-41). Here the explanation is given in terms relevant to the audience with the notion of 'rules' that children are used to having to adhere to. The BBC also gives the same explanation but in different terms using the language of 'law' eg; "the aid workers were charged (...) with preaching Christianity (.) **a serious crime under Taliban law**" (S1, lines 48-49), which their audience will be able to relate to. This demonstrates the subtle ways in which the language of news broadcasts differ concerning audience design.

Role-plays also play an important part in giving explanations, in a way that makes concepts easier to understand, more entertaining, and therefore more interesting. For example the explanation of 'cloning' eg;

N2: I know you think you don't see enough of me (.) well (...) what about this (multiple picture of Liso on screen) or this (...) oh scary thought (.) what the scientists have done (.) is called cloning (.) **it means (.) making a copy (.) of a living thing like me ...** they've managed to grow copies of human **cells (.) the things that our bodies (.) are made up of ...** (S36, lines 11-14 and 18-19).

Here the use of a role-play helps to make an abstract concept 'cloning' become more concrete. By using the role-play (with the multiple pictures on screen) the audience can actually *see* what the process of cloning means, as well as hear an explanation of it.

The BBC

Explanations

No. of	3
% of storys	25% (3 storys)
No. of lines	6

There are 3 explanations in the BBC (including the aid workers example featured above). As with the BB, the other two explanations are of terms that are not general knowledge. The first explanation concerns a new noun for a new 'invention' (the 'xbox') eg; "**new computer games system**...Microsoft's Bill Gates (.) has launched his much hyped xbox system ..." (S4, lines 103-105) and the second involves a highly specialist term ('wake turbulence') eg; "Air accident investigators (.) in New York (.) think (.) wake turbulence (.) **the swirl of air (.) caused by an aircraft in front ...**" (S2, lines 61-62).

Conclusion

The use of 'explanation' is one of the most overt markers, which differentiates Newsround from the other two programmes. 'Explanation' is a uniquely important part of Newsround's audience design because their audience do not have such an extensive background knowledge. An important aspect of explanation is that it is made specifically relevant to the audience's own experiences.

The contrasting language used by Newsround and the BBC to explain the same thing demonstrates how language can be subtly used to specifically target a particular audience. It need not be obvious differences, for example the use of slang or role-plays, that provide a completely different audience design framework. Subtle word variations are of importance too.

8) TYPE OF STORY

One of the main distinguishing factors between the three news programmes is whether the stories they feature are about general current affairs (mainstream news) that is primarily informational. Or 'infotainment' stories, (trivial news, primarily about the world of show business), which seeks to entertain as well as to inform.

The Big Breakfast

Type of Story

% Informational	70% (45 stories)
% Infotainment	30% (19 stories)

Seventy percent of stories in the BB were informational eg;

BIN FREED; (Story about aid workers being freed - S1)

AID ENTERS; (Story about aid entering Afghanistan - S2)

CRASH PROBE; (Story about attempts to discover why a plane crashed - S6)

However, a fairly large proportion of the stories (30%) that the BB featured were ‘trivial news’ – that is of entertainment value, for example;

BOYS FROM BEIJING; (Mr World contest - S9)

YOU PLONKERS; (New addition of T.V. show ‘Only Fool and Horses banned S37)

MOP TOP FLOP SHOCK; (Pop group the Beatles knocked off top spot by U2 – S43)

FLICK PICK; (Which films were voted the best – S47)

SPICE APPEAL; (Pop group ‘The Spice Girls’ being taken to court – S62)

FOR YOUR ENTERTAINMENT; (about T.V. presenters Richard and Judys’ new show – S63). This last headline overtly states that the story is about entertaining the audience.

The key point to make concerning many of the stories in the BB is their *triviality*. In a study carried out by Jensen (1995) people emphasised the appeal of unimportant news; “respondents’... emphasised the appeal of ‘nice, trivial information” (Allen, 1999). Therefore, for some audiences it is not being well-informed informationally about important current affairs that interests them, but rather the ‘easy listening’ entertainment value of trivial ‘news’. As Bell points out; “different media regard different things as news” (Bell, 1991). The BBC would certainly not consider the Mr World competition newsworthy! However, this obscure type of story provides extra interest and entertainment for the audience because they *are* ‘unique’ stories that will only be featured on the BB.

Type of Entertainment story

Pop	3	<u>Others</u>
T.V.	3	Mr World Contest
Film	3	Fundraising Concert
Celebrities	5	Thieves Steal MTV Awards
Games/sport	2	

Most of the ‘entertainment’ stories are about pop music, T.V, film and celebrities – the world of entertainment. This is specifically designed for people who are interested in pop music etc., (primarily young people). The stories used are designed for viewers who already possess background knowledge about the world of entertainment.

Four of the ‘informational’ stories also have an entertainment element in them, blurring the border between the informational (public discourse) on the one hand and entertainment (the market) on the other (Fairclough, 1995), for example; ‘**FAST SHOW**’ - which is an informational story - has a headline that is taken from the world of entertainment; ‘the fast show’ is a T.V. comedy show. And ‘**CLONE ALONE**’ (S25) – a story on cloning, has a headline that is a play on the *movie* title ‘Home Alone’ (S44). Only those with background knowledge about films/T.V. would ‘get’ these meanings.

In Story 35 ‘**LORRA TROUBLE**’, the BB turns a story about the football strike (an informational story) into a part entertainment story by firstly using a headline that alludes to T.V. presenter Cilla Black (by using her catch phrase ‘lorra’) and by saying how the strike will affect her T.V. show ‘Blind Date’, which is replacing football on Saturday evenings, making Blind Date the focus eg.;

5 N1: It’s not just Michael Owen striking these days (.) the whole of the English and 6 Welsh football (.) is about to (.) **Cilla Black will no doubt (...) be (...) delighted...**

8 N2: You pay twice to view (.) or have **Blind Date kick your only Saturday night**

9 **football into touch (.) thanks to Cilla’s rescheduling (.) of ITV ...”.**

And in S56, '**ONE WISEMAN**' – (A story about what people want the chancellor to do with the budget), an informational story is given an 'entertainment' twist by referring to the *book/movie* character 'Harry Potter' eg; "**he may need (.) some of Harry Potter's magic (.)** though (.) as very few are prepared to pay more tax for it" (S56, lines 33-34).

These stories are designed to appeal to an audience who is interested in the world of entertainment by making informational stories more appealing by linking them to the entertainment world.

Other Stories Specifically Accomodating to the Audience

Other stories are featured that are designed to appeal specifically to the target audience. The first story is about teenagers. The second and third are also aimed at young people. eg; '**PINT SIZED PROBLEM**' (about teenagers drinking - S4)
'**WISE UP**' (about an increase of sexually transmitted diseases - S18)
'**DECISIONS DECISIONS**' (about gay women - S20)

Newsround

Type of story

% Informational	62% (31 stories)
% Entertainment	38% (19 stories)
% About Children	36% (18 stories)

Only 62% of the stories featured on Newsround were informational eg;

A story about floods in Algeria	(S2)
A story about Aid Workers being freed	(S3)
A story about the Football Strike	(20)

Newsround featured the most 'entertainment' stories, 38% (8% more than the BB) eg;

A story about the release of the 'Xbox'	(S1)
Two stories about a Top of the Pops competition	(S3, 20)
Three stories about Harry Potter	(S10, 12, 16)
Two stories about the 'Children in Need' event	(S11, 15)
A story about Natalie Umbrulia's album	(S22)
A story about a pop single in memory of Damilola Taylor	(S25)
A story about the pop group S Club Seven	(S38)

Type of Entertainment story

Pop	7
T.V.	4
Film	4
Games/sport	4

As with the BB, the entertainment stories involve pop music, T.V, film and also games. However, the most important aspect of Newsround is that 36% of their stories are about children themselves. Newsround give stories a specific twist by looking at how children are affected by current affairs. For example, they turn a story about the state of Afghanistan into a story about how some children living there are affected (S27) eg;

10 N1: **The unhappy faces (.) of Afghanistan** (...) at the Dwali town orphanage (.) there
 11 are no families (...) twenty years of fighting here (.) have killed (.) mums (.) and dads
 12 and grandparents (...) when the American bombings started (...) even the charity
 13 workers fled. The phrase ‘the unhappy faces of Afghanistan’ personifies Afghanistan
 as ‘children’, therefore the audience can relate to events that are occurring in the world
 (such as the war in Afghanistan) more because they see how children like themselves are
 affected. Making a story relevant to the audience is very important. This occurred with
 the use of a role-play to explain the concept of cloning (making an abstract term concrete
 – something the audience could ‘see’). This example seeks to make a far away concept,
 ‘Afghanistan’, seem real and relevant. Bell (1991) stated; “*personalisation* indicates that
 something which can be pictured in personal terms is more newsworthy than a concept, a
 process, the generalised or the mass”.

Examples of other stories specifically designed for children are;
 S6; Children Workers - story about children in India fighting for their right to work
 S35; Gaelic football – story about children learning Gaelic football
 S39; Holy Cross – story about Belfast primary school children
 S45 Children in Prison - story about children who are in prison

Audience Opinion

Audience opinion that has been given in response to requests actually *makes* stories. Here we see the *result* of asking for the audience’s opinion. Two stories in the data are solely based on the opinions of the audience. The first is about thoughts on the Harry Potter film (S16) eg; N1: “Right (.) we promised to bring you your thoughts on (.) Harry Potter (.) so here’s Matthew at the wizard desk ... N2 ... loads of comments (.) coming to us about the film (.) Ruth in Jersey (.) is gloating (...) ‘cause they got it a week earlier ...” (lines 43-46). The second story is based on e-mails sent in about Manchester United not performing very well (S49) eg; “N1: Now (.) have Manchester United (.) lost the plot (.) we asked for your comments ... N2: Well ...Ronfan says (.) Man.U. are the best ever ... Nitestar (.) agrees (.) saying that (.) why does everyone hate Man. United (.) they’re the best team in the world ...” (lines 68, 71-72, 74). This actively involves the audience’s opinions.

Competitions

Another unique feature of Newsround is that it features competitions that are open to its viewers. There are two competitions in the data; the Top of Pops competition (S5, 20), and a competition to meet Bill Gates (S50). The competitions uniquely involve the audience and contain prizes that enable the winner to meet and interview famous people eg; “... to the first ever Top of the Pops awards ... **we’re looking for a press packer** (...) report back on it (.) **you could be smoozing with celebs** (.) congratulating the winners (.) and hanging out with all the best bands” (S20, lines 74-77), “... and it won’t be Liso (.) or Matthew getting to grips with the stars (.) **you’ll be Newsrounds showbiz reporter** ... to enter you need to write (.) an awards acceptance speech ...” (S20, lines 80-82). This again demonstrates the audience’s involvement.

The emphasis is also on the world of entertainment here eg; “you could be **smoozing with celebs ... hanging out with all the best bands**”, and ‘**showbiz reporter**’. The next example is from the ‘Bill Gates’ competition; “**your chance (.) to meet the world’s (.) biggest computer bod ... but can he cope with a press packer grilling ...**” (S50, lines 88-90), “... if you were face to face with him (.) **what would you ask him (.) send us your top five questions ... you have to be free to interview Bill Gates (.)** on Thursday (.) the sixth (.) of December (.) good luck” (S50, lines 100-101, 104-106), providing the audience with the opportunity to meet and interview someone famous. Giving the audience exciting opportunities to meet famous people as well as take part in the news-making process.

Adding competitions in with the news broadcast helps to informalise it by making the programme more like a childrens ‘magazine’/variety programme rather than just a news broadcast.

Other Stories Specifically Accomodating to the Audience

There are several other ‘trivial’ stories that are specifically designed to appeal to the audience. The most unique one is S30, which is about Tony Blair making a spelling mistake eg;

N1: “Ooh (.) and **no gold stars (.) in the Prime Minister’s spelling book (.)** in a hand written letter ... Tony Blair mis-spelled the word tomorrow (.) three times (.) writing too (.) morrow instead (.) **it’s just too bad Tony!**”.

The story is related to the audience’s own experiences (of getting gold stars at school for good work). And humour is added by making a pun with the word ‘too’ eg; “it’s just too bad Tony!”. Other such stories include;

S33 - a story about Santa having a web cam.

S24 – a story about a turtle being returned home after being smuggled into the country.

S48 – a story about kissing being good for breathing.

The BBC

Type of story

% Informational 92% (11 stories)

% Entertainment 8% (1 story)

Type of Entertainment story`

Games 1

The BBC does feature one ‘entertainment’ story, which is about the release of the games console the ‘xbox’. The reason that it featured such a story was because it was a main story of the day (featured on all three channels), for informational purposes specifically. Once again this leads to the conclusion that the BBC design their broadcast to appeal to the audience by being purely a source of information on the day’s *main* current affairs, rather than incorporatin trivial stories into their programme. The BBC audience are not interested in ‘triviality’, but in important news.

10) CONCLUSION

The three channels all differ from each other in how they present the news in terms of overall content and linguistic form, in order to appeal in different ways to their audiences.

The language style used by the BB and Newsround is to a large extent informal, through the use of informal vocabulary, and in Newsround's case, the conversationalisation of the news narrative (direct audience reference, self-reference of the news-reader and the use of questions and commands). The use of informal language by the BB and Newsround reduces the formality of the news, which means that it becomes less authoritative and more accessible to children and young people, because it is similar to the language style that these two audiences actually use in their own everyday conversations. It also informalises the news-reader, enabling the audience to relate to them more by reducing their authoritativeness and placing them on the same level as the audience. The BB uses 'chats' after the news to informalise the news presenter, overtly including the audience and further increases the accessibility of the news. The chats are important in providing entertainment through the ongoing 'sketches' between the news-reader and the BB presenters.

Informal language in the BB is also used as a source of entertainment through overt slang/vernacular usage in order to create humour. The BB has a very sensationalist 'tabloid-like' approach overall, making the news more dramatic and exciting, (and therefore entertaining).

The BBC in contrast uses very little informal language and there is practically no entertainment value in their language. It is for the most part informational. The purpose of this is to present a 'serious' image, in contrast to the BB and Newsround, constructing the news-reader in an authoritative role. This in turn is seen by the audience as providing a service of giving reliable information, which will well inform them of mainstream current affairs.

The BB and Newsround, unlike the BBC, both contain a lot of trivial 'infotainment' news (such as showbiz stories etc.). This emphasis on 'entertainment' makes the news more interesting for young audiences. Informing them about the world of entertainment (pop music, films, T.V. etc.), which is often a big part of their own lives, meaning that they find such stories personally relevant. Such stories are also more entertaining because of their triviality.

Both programmes 'blur the border' between the informational and the entertainment value of news (Fairclough, 1995), by mixing entertainment value with informational stories.

The BBC concentrate on mainstream current affairs and do not generally feature stories on the world of showbiz, giving an emphasis on information versus infotainment. This also reflects an audience who are more interested in being well-informed about mainstream current affairs than trivial showbiz news, which will probably not be of much importance to them in their own everyday lives, and therefore is not as relevant as it is to a younger audience.

Out of the three programmes, Newsround is the most unique and informal in its appeal to its audience. This is predominantly through the 'conversationalisation' of the news narrative and 'personalisation' of the programme (both of the audience and of the presenters), reducing the 'authoritative' role of the presenters. It is also unique in actively involving the audience and making stories personally relevant to the audience, therefore

making the news more interesting to them. Newsround also uses more 'explanation' about terms/processes, which is specifically needed for a younger audience.

Allen (1999) pointed out that news broadcasts were generally thought to be unappealing to children; "seen to be lacking the qualities which those programmes actually popular with children possess to attract and hold their attention ... some research suggests that children are likely to consider television news to be too 'serious' and 'boring'" (Allen, 1999). Newsround's specific design, however, works for children in that it is neither 'serious' nor 'boring'. It possesses qualities found in childrens' 'magazine' programmes through its unique use of role-plays and competitions, making the broadcast into a 'variety' show. The audience is included in the major areas of news broadcasting – presenting and interviewing. The uniqueness of Newsround's design demonstrates the uniqueness of its audience.

The BBC are a straightforward 'no nonsense' news broadcast, giving narration of mainly neutral information to its audience, using little sensationalism. Its serious tone means that it is an important authoritative source of reliable information. The broadcast is designed primarily to well inform the audience, for example by the use of specialised reporters (correspondents) and more interviews, giving more sides of a story, therefore more balanced, well-informed, less biased information. Their broadcast is de-personalised by the news-readers referring corporately to the BBC as a whole, rather than referring to themselves personally. This emphasises the authoritative role that the BBC holds in information-giving. Bell (1991) has stated; "National newscasts still retain the de-personalised status-oriented flavour", whilst this is not true of the BB and Newsround, it would seem that it is still applicable to the BBC.

11) References

- 1) Allen, S. (1999) *News Culture*: OUP; ch5, pgs; 120-121, 124, 128.
- 2) Bell, A. (1991) *The Language of the News Media*: Blackwell; ch 2pg 9; p.84-85, 89, ch 6 p. 104-106, 109, 157-158.
- 3) Bell, A. (1997) *Language Style as Audience Design*.
In Coupland, N. and Jarworski, A: *Sociolinguistics a reader and coursebook*.
MacMillan Press, ch.19; pgs. 242-244.
- 4) Bell, A. (1991) *Audience Accomodation in the Mass Media*.
In Giles, H, Coupland, J. & Coupland N. (eds) (1991) *Contexts of Accomodation*.
CUP, ch 2; p. 69, 72, 74.
- 5) Chouliaraki, L. and Fairclough, N. (1999) *Discourse in Late Modernity*. Edinburgh
University Press, ch3, pg. 43.
- 6) Crystal, D. (1995). *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language*. CUP,
pg. 182.
- 7) Fairclough, N. (1995) *Media Discourse*. Edward Arnold: pgs. 4-5, 66, 71, 73.
- 8) Giles, H. & Powesland, P. (1975) *Accomodation Theory*.
In Coupland, N. & Jarworski, A (1997): *Sociolinguistics a Reader and Coursebook*.
MacMillan Press, ch.19, pgs; 232-233.
- 9) Hartley, J. (1982) *Understanding the News*. Methuen, pg. 88.
- 10) Habermas (1989)
In Fairclough, N (1995) *Media Discourse*. Edward Arnold: pg 10.
- 11) Holmes (1992). In *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. Longman, pgs.183, 297.
- 12) Leech, G. (1974). *Semantics*. Penguin, pgs. 50-51, 54.
- 13) Scannell, P. (ed) (1991) *Broadcast Talk*. Sage Publications, ch1; pgs 3, 6, 11.
- 14) Stam, R. *Television News and its Spectator*.
In Kaplan, E. (1983) (ed) *Regarding Television*. University Publications of America
Inc. pgs. 31, 33.
- 15) T. van Dijk (1997) (ed) *Discourse as Structure and Process*. Sage Publications,
pg 11.

12) Bibliography

- 1: Allen, S. (1999) News Culture. Open University Press.
- 2: Bell, A. (1991) The Language of News Media. Oxford: Blackwell
- 3: Chouliaraki, L and Fairclough, N. (1999) Discourse in Late Modernity. Edinburgh University Press.
- 4: Coupland, N and Jarworski, (1997) Sociolinguistics a reader and coursebook. Macmillan Press.
- 5: Crystal, D. (1995) The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language. CUP.
- 6: Fairclough, N. (1995) Media Discourse. Edward Arnold.
- 7: Giles H. Coupland J. and Coupland N. (eds) (1991). Contexts of Accomodation: developments in applied sociolinguistics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- 8: Hartley, J (1982). Understanding the News. Methuen.
- 9: Holmes, J. (1992). An Introduction to Sociolinguistics. Longman.
- 10: Kaplan, E.A. (1983) Regarding Television. University Publications of America Inc.
- 11: Leech, G. (1974). Semantics. Penguin.
- 12: Scannell, P. (ed) (1991). Broadcast Talk. Sage Publications.
- 13: T. van Dijk (ed) (1997). Discourse as Structure and Process. Sage Publications.

Word Count: Approx. 10, 942 (excluding all data and references).