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**LEXICAL AND SYNTACTIC PECULARITIES OF
ONLINE BRITISH NEWSPAPER HEADLINES**

**LEKSISKĀS UN SINTAKTISKĀS ĪPATNĪBAS
BRITU AVĪŽU VIRSRAKSTOS ELEKTRONISKĀ VEIDĀ**

BACHELOR THESIS

Olga Klimaševiča
Matriculation card No. ok12014

Adviser: lect. Irina Sokolova

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ANOTĀCIJA

Bakalaura darbs apskata leksisko un sintaktisko īpatnību izmantošanu britu avīžu virsrakstos elektroniskā veidā. Tēma ir diezgan aktuāla, jo tā tika pētīta agrāk. Šis darbs izpēta īpatnības, uz kuriem paļaujas žurnālisti, kā arī apskata iespējamo ietekmi uz lasītāja uztveri. Virsraksta struktūra ir paredzēta, lai saistīt lasītāja uzmanību uz rakstiem un raksta tematiem. Tas nozīmē, ka virsraksti ir īpaša veida teksti, pētījuma vērti. Šī darba mērķis bija pētīt leksiskās un sintaktiskās īpatnības un noteikt, kuras no tām ir sastopamas virsrakstos un vai tie ietekmē uz lasītāju. Darba praktiskajā daļā tika apkopoti un izanalizēti 60 virsraksti no „The Telegraph” un „The Sun” avīzēm, kuros minētās īpatnības tika atrasti. Bakalaura darbā pētījuma metode ietvēra literatūras apskatu teorētiskajā daļā, un teksta analīzi empīriskā daļā. Rezultāti norāda, ka visbiežāk tika izmantoti sintaktisko struktūru kombinācijas, slenga, vulgārie un avīžu valodas vārdi, un vārdu spēles. „The Sun” avīzes virsrakstos tika atrasts vairāk gadījumu ar leksiskām un sintaktiskām īpatnībām nekā „The Telegraph” avīzē, virsrakstu garuma un tabloīda stila dēļ. Pētījuma rezultāti demonstrē, ka visas izvēlētās leksiskās un sintaktiskās īpatnības ir sastopamas virsrakstos, kā arī tie ietekmē uz lasīšanas izvēli.

Atslēgvārdi: leksiskās un sintaktiskās īpatnības, virsraksti, virsrakstu valoda, Britu elektroniskās avīzes, „The Sun”, „The Telegraph”

ABSTRACT

The Bachelor thesis examines the lexical and syntactic peculiarities of headlines in online British newspapers. The theme of the research is topical, because it has been investigated earlier. The thesis investigates peculiarities on which the journalists rely very heavily, as well as it looks at the possible influence on readers' perception. The structure of the headlines is meant to draw the readers' attention to the articles and topics. It means that the headlines are a distinct type of text and are worth being investigated. The thesis aims to display which lexical and syntactic peculiarities occur in headlines and whether there is an impact on the reader. The corpus for the research consists of 60 headlines from *The Telegraph* and *The Sun*, where peculiarities were detected. In the present Bachelor thesis the literature overview is used for the theoretical part of the research and text analysis is used for the empirical part. The results indicate that the combinations of several syntactic structures, slang or vulgar words, wordplays and journalese words are peculiar to headlines. More variants of lexical and syntactic peculiarities of the headlines were detected in *The Sun* than in *The Telegraph*, due to the length of the headlines and the colloquial style of a tabloid. The results show that the chosen lexical and syntactic peculiarities do occur in the headlines and their aim is to influence the choice of reading.

Key words: stylistic and lexical peculiarities, headlines, headlinese, online British newspapers, *The Sun*, *The Telegraph*

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

A – adverbial

Adj - adjective

Adv – adverb

C - complement

N - noun

O – object

S – subject

V – verb

NP – noun phrase

PrC – prepositional complement

PrP – prepositional phrase

SV - subject-verb

SVA - subject-verb-adverbial

SVC – subject-verb-complement

SVO – subject-verb-object

SVOA - subject-verb-object-adverbial

SVOC – subject-verb-object-complement

SVOO – subject-verb-object-object

VP – verb phrase

INTRODUCTION

Newspapers have always been a very important part of mass media, and the Internet is one of the main channels which contributes to their spread in society. Nowadays, online newspapers are easily accessible on the Internet for almost every reader all over the world and sometimes people do not have to pay for them. The newspaper as an informational transporter has its own written language, style, features and communicative purpose which have been carefully studied and analysed. Furthermore, headlines in online newspapers serve a purpose not only to carry the necessary amount of information about the article, but also attract readers' attention in different ways, such as captivating, provocative or even shocking. It proves to be effective due to the use of headlines' special language or *headlinese*. Hence, the choice of the theme for the Bachelor thesis and the reasons for undertaking this research are driven by the interest to study the headlines: to observe how language works there, to find out why headlines sometimes have a power over readers' perception.

The theme of Bachelor thesis is challenging and interesting, because the lexical and syntactic peculiarities are the grand essentials of the style of headlines which usually work beyond the common language rules. From this follows, that the current research is devoted to the analysis of the lexical and syntactic peculiarities of newspaper headlines in two online British newspapers, namely *The Telegraph* and *The Sun*.

The goal of the paper is to study the lexical and syntactic peculiarities of online British newspaper headlines; it also includes exploring the headlines as a special kind of a text and examining a possible impact on the reader. In order to reach the goal the following research questions have been formulated:

- 1) Which lexical peculiarities occur in online British newspaper headlines?
- 2) Which syntactic peculiarities occur in online British newspaper headlines?
- 3) Which of peculiarities are most/least frequently used in online British newspaper headlines?
- 4) Which peculiarities discussed in the paper are most typical for each online British newspaper?
- 5) Does there is a possible influence of lexical and syntactical peculiarities on the language of headlines and later on the reader?

The enabling objectives of the present research are as follows:

- to analyse the theoretical sources related to the language of newspapers and their headlines in order to detect the lexical and syntactic peculiarities;
- to examine the lexical and syntactic peculiarities of the headlines of two online British newspapers, one of which is broadsheet newspaper *The Telegraph* and the other is tabloid *The Sun*;
- to interpret the results of the theoretical and empirical parts of the study and draw relevant conclusions.

The author has used the following research methods: the literature overview and text analysis.

The current paper consists of three chapters. The first two chapters provide the theoretical framework for the analysis of the lexical and syntactic peculiarities, as well as, some specific language features used in newspapers and the headlines. Chapter 1 introduces the concept of language and style used in headlines and in newspapers in particular. Chapter 2 discusses the lexical and syntactic peculiarities – their definitions and functions. Chapter 3 deals with the empirical research. It focuses on the description of the procedure of the research, the text analysis of the headlines and interpretation of the findings. Further, the results of the theoretical and empirical parts of the research and their interpretation serve as the basis for drawing the conclusions.

For the purpose of developing the theoretical part of the Bachelor thesis and the framework for the analysis in the empirical part the works by following authors have been used: Crystal, D. and Davy, D. (1963), Crystal, D. (2009), Biber, D. et al. (2002), Brown, G. and Yule, G. (1983), Yule, G. (2010), Conboy, M. (2007, 2010), Galperin, I.R. (1977), Hudson, G. (2000), Hudson, G. and Rowlands, S. (2007), Leech, G. (2006), Leech, G. and Short, M. (2007), Mayer, Ch. F. (2009) and others.

CHAPTER 1

THE LANGUAGE OF NEWSPAPERS AND HEADLINES, AND ITS FUNCTIONS

This chapter is devoted to the description of newspaper language and its function. The language is a very powerful tool, and almost always it is used with a certain intention in publications in order to achieve necessary effects (e.g. to attract and persuade the reader). Hence, there is a need to study the language of newspapers and its functions since all these factors influence the language used in the headlines. Therefore, the functions of the language and the functional styles of the English language need to be studied.

1.1 Functions of language

According to Mayer, ‘a human being will be born with the capacity for language (unless he/she has a physical or mental disability): the innate ability to speak a language [...] or to sign a language (i.e. use gestures to communicate)’ (2009:2). That means that the language is an essential part of human life and it has a certain purpose and functions. Some scholars even call it a code. There has always been an interest in the functions of languages which have been studied for centuries. It has always been a very attractive topic for scholars and researches, because the language is a part of human existence and civilization as such.

In accordance with Brown and Yule, there are two main functions of language:

- 1) *Transactional* – language serves in the expression of ‘content’
- 2) *Interactional* – language is involved in expressing social relations and personal attitudes (1983:1).

At the same time, Halliday proposes a different classification of language functions, where there are 3 functions in contrast to Brown and Yule:

- 1) The ‘*ideational*’ or ‘*representational*’ function – concerned with ‘ideation’; the grammatical resources for construing our experience of the world around us and inside us.
- 2) The ‘*interpersonal*’ function - concerned with the interaction between speaker and addressee(s); the grammatical resources for enacting roles in general, and speech roles in particular. The purpose of this function is to establish, change, and maintain interpersonal relations. Both presented functions are oriented towards the social and natural world.

- 3) The '*textual*' function – concerned with the creation of text. It serves to enable the presentation of ideational and interpersonal meaning as information that can be shared by speaker and listener in text (Halliday, 1997 as quoted in Lihua, 2010:21-22).

Although the authors classify these functions differently, all of them acknowledge that the mentioned language functions work simultaneously and are inseparable. Moreover, these functions cannot be viewed and analysed apart from one another.

According to Conboy, language has always been 'rooted in social activity' and it 'has the potential to signal the social positioning of the speaker and listener or writer and reader' (2007:2). Furthermore, it might be added, that language – spoken and written – is a developing phenomenon and could be adjustable to different circumstances. Hence, this is done due to the fact that the language is used 'in tandem with actions, interactions, non-linguistic symbol systems, technologies, distinctive ways of thinking, valuing, feeling, and believing' (Gee, 1999:5). For the reason that the language is such a powerful tool and this thesis looks in its usage in the newspapers and the headlines, there is a need to discuss functional styles of the English language.

1.2 Functional styles of the English language

Functional styles are the system where each style of writing has its own peculiar features and serves the different aim in communication. These styles connect different spheres of a human life in the communicative manner. However, one has to mention what the style is. The style is studied with the domain of stylistics, Crystal and Davy deliver that

[...] the aim of stylistics is to analyse language habits with the main purpose of identifying, from the general mass of linguistic features common to English as used on every conceivable occasion, those features which are restricted to certain kinds of social context; to explain, where possible, why such features have been used, as opposed to other alternatives; and to classify these features into categories based upon a view of their function in the social context. [...] 'features' mean any bit of speech or writing which a person can single out from the general flow of language and discuss - a particular word, part of a word, sequence of words, or way of uttering a word. (1969:10)

Different classifications were studied by the author of the Bachelor thesis by different scholars and linguists concerning the theme of the functional styles (Galperin, I.R., 1977; The Prague School's theory, Gurevich, V.V., 2007). It started when the Prague School tried to visualize the language as a complex whole and tried to introduce the styles such as: specialized (expert) style, poetic style, colloquial style, etc (Vachek, 2003:82). Later, Gurevich subdivided styles into formal and informal styles (2007:3-5). However, the classification proposed by

Galperin seemed to be more understandable, convincing, and detailed. According to the author, a functional style (FS) is

a patterned variety of literary text characterized by the greater or lesser typification of its constituents, supra-phrasal units (SPU), in which the choice and arrangement of interdependent and interwoven language media are calculated to secure the purport of the communication. (1977:249)

Also, Galperin identifies the difference between the FSs of language and the varieties of language, by saying that ‘the written and oral varieties of language are merely forms of communication which depend on the situation in which the communication is maintained’, but FSs are patterns of ‘the written variety of language calculated to secure the desired purport of the communication’ (ibid.). Further, the author explains that almost every functional style of language is marked by ‘a specific use of language means, thus establishing its own norms which, however, are subordinated to the norm-invariant and which do not violate the general notion of the literary norm’ (ibid.: 20). Furthermore, FSs are the models and schemes which ‘can be materialized in language forms’ (ibid.: 25). That is why, it is important to understand the styles of the language, before turning into the study of headlines. As claimed by Galperin, there are five main FSs in English language, namely *the belles-lettres style, the publicist literature, the newspaper style, the scientific prose style, the style of official documents* (ibid.: 33-34). All of these styles have their own substyles. Nonetheless, one should notice that this classification might not work in other languages due to the difference of the origin, development and structure of language.

FSs have their own peculiarities and characteristic features. However, as it concerns the theme of the current research it would be better to concentrate on the newspaper style, in order to describe its characteristic traits. According to Galperin, *the newspaper style* was ‘the last of all the styles of written literary English to be recognized as a specific form of writing standing apart from other forms’ (ibid.:295). The newspaper’s FS involves the following substyles: *the language style of brief news items and communiqués, the language style of newspaper headings, and the language style of notices and advertisements* (ibid.: 34).

In agreement with Gurevich, by the 19th century newspaper language was recognised as ‘a particular variety of style, characterized by a specific communicative purpose and its own system of language means’ (2007:24). The author further adds that the newspaper style is ‘a system of interrelated lexical, phraseological and grammatical means serving the purpose of informing, instructing, and, in addition, of entertaining the reader’ (ibid.). That is why this style differs from

the others while reading it, and therefore it has to be attractive for the reader. Gurevich also mentions that

[newspapers seek] to influence readers' opinion on various [...] matters, its language frequently contains vocabulary with *evaluative connotation*, [...] which cast some doubt on what is stated further and make it clear to the reader that those are not yet affirmed facts. A similar idea is expressed by *special grammar structures* [...]. Evaluation can be included in the headlines [...] where emotionally coloured vocabulary is widely employed. (Gurevich, 2007:25)

This can mean that headlines have a special vocabulary (e.g. highly emotional adjectives, words that produce dramatic effect, vulgar words, etc.) and special structures (e.g. questions, exclamations, etc.) which focus readers' attention on them and often 'force' the reader to scan quickly an article. Hereafter, the author explains the most characteristic features that make newspaper style so special. He differentiates these features in two main categories: **vocabulary** and **grammar**.

1) **Vocabulary** which is the choice of words and expressions in this style:

- the use of special political or economic terminology (e.g. *constitutional, election, General Assembly of the UN, gross output, per capita production*);
- the use of lofty, bookish vocabulary, including certain clichés (e.g. *population, public opinion, a nation-wide crisis, crucial/pressing problems, representative voting*), which may be based on metaphors and thus emotionally coloured (e.g. *war hysteria, escalation of war, overwhelming majority, stormy applause/a storm of applause, captains of industry, pillars of society etc.*);
- frequent use of abbreviations — names of organizations, political movements, etc. (e.g. *UN, NATO, UK, PM, MP* etc.);
- the use of neologisms, since newspapers quickly react to any new trends in the development of society, technology, science etc. (**ibid.:25-26**)

This could make a hint of what could be frequently used and observed in newspaper headlines. Moreover, one can make an addition to this list of words, which would include journalese words, slang or vulgar words, and wordplays (discussed further).

2) **Grammar** which includes the grammatical structures and followed by disregard of grammar rules:

- the use of complete simple sentences, of complex and compound sentences, often extended by a number of clauses.
- in newspaper headlines elliptical sentences [could be found], with the finite verb omitted or replaced by a non-finite form, and the grammatical articles also often omitted. (ibid.)

Regarding this disposition of the grammatical features of the style, one can add questions, exclamations, directives and different kinds of minor sentences which all together and separately provide a very alluring effect.

To sum up, Conboy says that ‘news is comprised of many genres’ and these genres are ‘stylistic and structural patterns which help us to recognize the meaning and purpose of particular writing strategies’ (2007:209) and also to differentiate various styles of writing. Therefore, the style of the newspapers and the headlines is distinctive from the other styles, and one of its prominent features is *journalese*.

1.3 *Journalese*

During the 19th century, *journalese* was called ‘joyous *journalese*’ and it has not been accepted by the broad public (Dickson and Skole, 2012:5-6). Further, the authors maintain that ‘it has been identified as a weakness of journalism for more than a century’ (ibid.). However this style of writing has been developing through the centuries and the outcome one can see today.

With the reference to Crystal and Davy, *journalese*, like ‘a jargon’, is a ‘label which seems to have a clear-cut sense until we begin to look closely at the way it tends to be used’ (1969:173). Further, the authors declare that there is not precise linguistic definition for *journalese* because this kind of writing is very vague and it is difficult to judge it (ibid.) *Journalese* is a kind of language which is used by journalists in their articles or headlines, but it is not a single thing, it is rather composite – it is ‘a blend of what is characteristic of a number of different kinds of journalistic material’ (Crystal and Davy, 1969:174). At the same time, Harcup slightly widens a perspective by saying that *journalese* is a combination of ‘words and phrases that typically will be used by journalists to describe events or people, notwithstanding the fact that such language is rarely if ever heard in real life’ (2014:147) (e.g.: *axe, bid, clash, tot, revelers, slam, mercy dash, shock, plea, blast, flue, clash, probe, slam, row*, etc.). The same point of view is held by Hudson and Rowlands who explain that *journalese* is the language of news. The authors say that it has its own style and is characterised by *journalese* words which are much shorter and fit neatly into headlines, since space limitations in headlines does not allow to use their longer equivalents (2007:144). Later the authors add that the main problem of *journalese* is that ‘people don’t speak like that’ in the real life (ibid.). Therefore, these words should occur in the headlines because they are short, they economise the space and they are indispensable features of newspaper and the language of headlines.

To sum up, *journalese* is the language that authors use in their articles and headlines due to saving the space, and sometimes short words are more often used than longer words which are used more frequently. Also, *journalese* has certain an impact on the choice of words in headlines.

Journalese words are also used in the headlines, because headlines have to be very concise and informative for the audience.

1.4 Headlines and headlines

Headlines are significant and necessary features of newspaper articles which convey the meaning of an article itself and whose main function is to catch the potential readers' attention and help them make a decision whether continue reading the article or not (Klimaševića, 2015:6-7).

Without headlines it could not be possible to know the theme and the subject of articles.

Headlines contain the smallest possible amount of words, but they try to convey the same meaning as the whole newspaper article. Headlines represent the most important part of newspaper articles, because the main purpose of headlines is to summarize the whole article/news/text, etc. (ibid.). Headlines belong to the linguistic field that causes an interest not only of the scholars, but also of the readers, because headlines' function is to attract and catch the attention (Šipošová, 2011:10). Bird and Merwin give a precise explanation of headline's essence by saying that a headline serves as 'a highly condensed summary of the story it covers, [and a headline is] a miniature of an article which consists of 1-2 lines and not more' (1955:178). It means that the headlines are vitally important, due to the fact that the headlines are made to catch the attention of the potential readers and only after observing a headline, the reader makes a final decision whether or not continue reading the article.

'The best headlines both "tell and sell", that is, they tell the reader quickly what the news is and persuade the reader that the story is worth reading' (Ludwig and Gilmore, 2005:107 as quoted in Prášková, 2009:9). This definition expresses headlines' main function and its aim, it presents headlines as 'traders' whose goal is to advertise the article in the newspaper. At the same time, Biber and Conrad represent the second function of the headlines by saying that 'headlines in newspaper stories facilitate reading comprehension, especially for readers who skim the stories in a newspaper' (2009:70). Hence, headlines make it easier to understand the topic of the article, so that readers do not spend much time on thinking what the author wanted to tell by using difficult words or constructions. All of the above-mentioned definitions were carrying the same idea expressed by different words. However, it was stated by the author of the paper that the explanation maintained by D. Dor is the shortest, precise and succinct, which covers the whole meaning of this term and its main functions – 'newspaper headlines are relevance optimizers: they are designed to optimize the relevance of their stories for their readers' (2002:2).

Headlines contain the features of the newspaper language and have ability to influence. In accordance to Salih, the language used in newspapers carries the informational function, but at the same time, it has ability to influence and persuade readers, and this is a directive function (2012:193-194). Therefore, headlines act as ‘traders’ who sell an article and readers get attracted by certain features, whether these features are the vocabulary or the structures. Furthermore, it was discovered, that the *headlines* (i.e. the language of headlines) is ‘in itself incomplete sentences and usually can be directly supplemented so as to relate to fully realized sentences’ (Wilson, 2014:71).

Considering all the above-mentioned, it is clear that syntactic and lexical peculiarities used in headlines could be different or even unique for this type of a text. Therefore, headlines could be viewed as a special type of text due to the choice of words, the space limitations in the newspapers, headlines’ multiple functions and authors’ manipulations with words in order to attract the reader. Additionally to that, it was revealed, that the headlines have to be short, clear, persuasive, and they have an attractive function, so that the readers were involved in the further reading of the articles or just skipped them if they are not interested in its theme (Klimaševića, 2015). Newspaper headlines achieve their aim and serve for the reader and author’s benefit by using the different choice of words and sentence structures in headlines, and their special language (i.e. headlines and journalese).

1.4.1 Functions of newspaper headlines

It was already slightly mentioned in the previous subchapter that the main goals of headlines are to be informative, persuasive and attractive, it is important to highlight the main functions of newspaper headlines. Crystal and Davy maintain that ‘the function of headlining is complex’ (1969:174), further they say that

headlines have to contain a clear, succinct and if possible intriguing message, to kindle a spark of interest in the potential reader, who, on average, is a person whose eye moves swiftly down a page and stops when something catches his attention. (ibid.)

The explanation of the function of headlines, presented by Crystal and Davy, is very precise, covers all the nuances of this term and it is very comprehensible. In addition to Crystal and Davy, some authors propose an acronym HEADS in order to remember five main functions of headlines:

- **H**eralds the days news; tells what is of importance.
- **E**ntices the reader with essential or interesting facts.

- Advertises the most important story by size or placement on the page (the most important stories are displayed at the top of the page).
- Dresses up a page with typography; helps make design attractive.
- Summarizes the story with a "super" lead; tells what the story is about. (Online 1)

This is the most precise explanation of the functions of headlines and their purpose in newspaper articles. The presented ideas are similar and they complete each other by discussing the functions of headlines in all levels (e.g. communicative, informational, designer, typographical, advertising, etc.). In order to maintain all their functions and achieve their purpose, headlines have to contain special peculiarities or features which would be characteristic features only of headlines and their language (headline).

It has been already discussed by Gurevich (2007) that typical peculiarities of headlines are: the use of special terminology, the use of journalese words and clichés, the use of abbreviations and acronyms, the use of neologisms, the use of complete simple sentences, of complex and compound sentences, the use of elliptical sentences and ellipsis. Furthermore, headlines use headlineese which is ‘a specific style of block language that not only omits major clause elements and close-system words, but also condenses grammatical structure by using phrases where clauses would be more explicit’ (J. Algeo, 1974:121).

To conclude, newspapers and their headlines are the texts which carry necessary information to the readers through the language. Headlines, during the particular period of time, have developed their own style which comprises different arrangement of the sentence structures, the different choice of vocabulary (*journalese*, *slang*), the omission of minor words and disregard of the basic grammar rules of the language. These features support the main functions of newspapers and headlines – to carry the information, to get attention and to ‘sell’ articles. From this also follows that headlines play an important role in this process and the further chapters are devoted to their lexical and syntactic peculiarities.

CHAPTER 2

THE PECULIARITIES OF NEWSPAPER HEADLINES

The current chapter is devoted to syntactic and lexical peculiarities which occur in newspaper headlines. The analysis of the selected peculiarities could bring the clarity to the style of the headlines, the word choice which could be different from ordinary styles; also it could show how headlines can be perceived by readers.

The term ‘peculiarities’ includes lexical and syntactic features which are present in the newspaper headlines. These peculiarities vary from the sentence structure up to the choice of vocabulary, which all are used in the headline. It is necessary to understand the mentioned individual traits of the headlines, to find the way of comprehension of how these features impact on the language, whether these are characteristic of headlines, and whether there is a purpose in their usage in the headlines. The combination of all the mentioned characteristics creates an expected effect and impacts on the potential readers. Furthermore, it causes the reader to pay his/her attention on the text, to make a pause and think about whether an article is worth the time spent on its reading or not.

The choice of words, text arrangement and arrangement in newspapers and their headlines have always been subjects of various researches and investigations. According to Saleh, headlines, which are meant to speak with the reader, contain cases of onomatopoeia, a wordplay; use of pronouns *I*, *we*, or *they*; also headlines have a conversational tone and ask questions, and surprise the reader’ (2014:129-130). Further Saleh mentions that

- the headline should be concise, crisp, accurate, and relevant. Therefore, active verbs and proper nouns are used when possible;
- the language of headline should be easy to understand (avoidance of jargonisms and difficult technological terminology);
- headlines can take the form of a question of informative phase;
- headlines benefit from such words as: *top*, *why*, *how*, *will*, *new*, *secret*, *future*, *your*, *best*, *worst* and by the use of numbers;
- headlines can incorporate elements of wordplay, alliteration, assonance;
- headlines are normally right branching (i.e. the subject and verb placed first). (ibid.)

From this follows that the theme under discussion has always evoked an interest to study lexical, syntactic, and other peculiarities in newspaper headlines, since headlines are a special genre of writing. Therefore, the headlines have their own particular features, syntactic structures, and the choice of words.

2.1 Syntactic peculiarities of newspaper headlines

The special language of headlines is created due to newspaper pages have restricted space limits and authors are confined in their choice of words. According to Quirk et al., this type of the language is called ‘a block language’ and it consists usually of simple block language messages (i.e. *headlines*), and which most often are ‘nonsentences, consisting of a noun or a noun phrase or nominal clause in isolation; no verb is needed, because all else necessary to the understanding of the message is furnished by the context’ (1985:845). Grazia Buzà mentions that in headlines

the need to use condensed, *highly synthetic language* has led to the development of a specific syntax, which preserves lexical words (words that carry the main meaning units, such as *nouns, adjectives, adverbs, main verbs*), but omits function words: those that serve a grammatical function, such as determiners (i.e., *the, a, an, this that*) or auxiliary verbs (i.e., forms of the verbs *be, have, do*). (2014:81)

Quirk et al. define that headlines ‘commonly contain block language because of pressure on space’ and they can generally be analyzed in terms of ‘clause structure, though sentence types and discourse functions frequently scrutiny of the text below a headline obliges us to reinterpret the structure’ (1985:845-846). It explains the unconventional types of the structures of the headlines. According to Swan:

- headlines are not always complete sentences. Many headlines consist of noun phrases with no verb;
- headlines often contain strings of three, four or more nouns; nouns earlier in the string modify those that follow.
- headlines often leave out articles and the verb *be*;
- headlines often use infinitives to refer to the future;
- auxiliary verbs are usually dropped from passive structures. (2007:240-241)

From this follows that syntactic structures do have an influence on headlines in general, and it contributes to the effect caused on the potential reader. Further, the sentential and non-sentential headlines are going to be discussed.

2.1.1 Sentential headlines

It is known that headlines are small texts which consist of different types of sentences. Such headlines are called sentential. *Sentential headlines* is the term proposed by Prášková. These are the headlines which ‘correspond to the regular sentence structures; [it means] that headlines have a subject and a finite verb phrase’ (Prášková, 2009:13). In addition to that, Biber et al., define that verb phrases (VP) ‘have a lexical verb or primary verb as their head’ (2002:42). Moreover, the authors have mentioned that the main verb ‘can stand alone or be preceded by one or more

auxiliary verbs’ and ‘the auxiliaries further define the action, state, or process denoted by the main verb’ (e.g. *he has finished the book*) (ibid.). Biber et al. discuss that ‘finite verb phrases show distinctions of tense (i.e. present and past) and can include modal auxiliaries’ (ibid.). It means that sentential headlines should contain subjects, and finite verb phrases, as different indicators with a purpose to deliver the necessary information to the reader.

Due to the fact that these headlines are sentential, one should understand what the sentence means. A sentence is ‘a textual unit which [...] has been convenient to adopt as the largest grammatical unit for the purposes of syntactic analysis [whose] typical role of the sentence is to express one or more ideas or *propositions*’ (Morley, 2000:25). Leech further differentiates the three main types of sentences – simple, complex, and compound sentences (2006:104). However, Quirk et al. distinguish only two types – simple and multiple types of sentences, where they subsume complex or compound in one large group (1985:987). For this reason, the classification Quirk et al. is used in the following subchapters, where the discussion of simple and multiple sentences is presented.

2.1.1.1 Simple sentences

Simple sentences are usually, but not necessarily, short and concise sentences. It makes a practical sense to use such type of the sentence in the headlines, because they could present the main idea in a small amount of words. According to Quirk et al., ‘a simple sentence consists of a single independent clause’ (1985:719). Simple sentences usually consist of the main elements - a subject (S) and a verb (V), object (O), adverbial (A), complement (C) or a verb phrase (VP), in agreement with the definitions presented by Quirk et al. (ibid.). The major clauses types distinguished by the authors:

- SV – e.g. *The sun^S is shining^V*
- SVO – e.g. *That lecture^S bored^V me^O*
- SVC – e.g. *The dinner^S seems^V ready^C*
- SVA – e.g. *He^S got^V through the window^A*
- SVOO – e.g. *He^S got^V her^O a present^O*
- SVOC – e.g. *He^S got^V his shoes^O wet^C*
- SVOA – e.g. *He^S got^V her^O into trouble^A* (ibid.:720-721)

Simple sentences present a perfect structure to be used in headlines, as they are relatively short, can easily catch the attention, and present the main information in a very comprehensible way by summarizing the whole article in one sentence.

However, it is worth discussing multiple sentences in order to present all types of sentences.

2.1.1.2 Multiple sentences: complex and compound sentences

The next types are complex and compound sentences, which could be also used in headlines in order to express some idea or some thought more vividly.

A multiple sentence contains ‘one or more clauses as its immediate constituents’ and they are either compound or complex (Quirk et al.,1985:719). Crystal adds that multiple sentences are those which ‘can be immediately analysed into more than one clause’ (2003:216). Further, Quirk et al. mention that multiple sentences are often classified into two broad types: compound sentences and complex sentences (1985:987), and Crystal maintains this position too.

In accordance to Crystal, *compound sentences* are usually linked by coordinating conjunctions (e.g. *and, or, but*) and ‘each clause of this sentence can stand as a sentence on its own’ (2003:226). While *complex sentences* are linked by subordinating conjunctions (e.g. *because, when, since*), and as a result of this, there are two clauses– independent and subordinate, where a subordinate clause cannot stand on its own, because it is dependent upon another (ibid.). From this follows that these types of sentences could be employed in headlines in order to present the necessary information in a more clear and detailed way.

As all types of sentences have been discussed, one should pay attention to the functions of the sentences because they play an important role in texts and in the headlines as well.

2.1.1.3 Functions of sentences

The previously discussed types of sentences can be also grouped according to their discourse functions and meaning. Traditionally there are four sentence types recognized by scholars: *statements, questions, commands/directive* and *exclamations*. According to Crystal, these are four ‘classical’ types, and some of their functions can be also applied to *minor sentences* (2003:218) (see 2.2.2.1).

Biber et al. mentioned that a *statement* ‘gives information and expects no specific response from the addressee, [also statements] contain the subject and it is preceded by the verb’ (2002:248). Furthermore, they are usually used in order ‘to state’, to convey information (Crystal, 2003:218). These statements could be frequently used in the headlines, in order to present the necessary information in a simplest manner, because it is one of their main functions. The *declarative* clauses are occasionally ‘used in asking questions’ (ibid:249). *Declarative questions* are used in order ‘to get a confirmation of the statement and to find out whether it is the truth or not’ (e.g. *So you want to be just friends?*) (ibid.). Further, Biber et al. explain that a *question*

‘asks for information and expects a linguistic response’ (2002:248). It is known that questions are often asked when a speaker wants to find out some information. Nevertheless, questions in the headlines could be one of the features which attract readers and arouse their interest. Thus, it involves readers into reading an article in order to find the answer. A *directive* or a *command* is used ‘to give orders or requests, and expects some action from the addressee’ (Biber et al., 2022:248). Directives can be different in their meaning: pleading, warning, suggesting, permitting, etc. (Crystal, 2003:219). Therefore, directives could have a perfect function of catching readers’ attention in a headline, and to have an influence on readers with the help of the sentence structure. An *exclamation* ‘expresses the strong feelings of the speaker/writer, and expects no specific response’ (Biber et al., 2002:248). Exclamations are often very short – a single word or a short phrase (e.g. *Gosh! Oh, dear!*). Crystal claims that exclamations could also begin with ‘*what*’ or ‘*how*’ (e.g. *What a lovely day it is!*) and they occur frequently in a reduced form (e.g. *What a lovely day!*) (2003:219).

All these types of the sentences used in the headlines and mainly their functions can attract potential readers. Hence, it involves them in reading the article because of the emotions, feelings and information that the headlines possess. The headlines can manipulate people’s minds without them knowing and noticing it.

The following subchapter is devoted to the discussion of non-sentential headlines, which are different from sentential.

2.1.2 Non-sentential headlines

Non-sentential headlines are those headlines, which do not have ‘regular sentence structure or those which are constructed in an unusual, irregular manner’ (Prášková, 2009:17).

These non-sentential structures could be minor sentences, non-finite clauses, phrases and ellipsis headlines which are going to be discussed further in this part.

2.1.2.1 Minor sentences

There are such cases when one can observe that headlines often contain exclamations, or just some peculiar words in order to attract the reader’s attention. As reported by Crystal, minor sentences are those which are ‘constructed in an irregular way’ (2003:216). He also delivers that minor sentences do not follow all the rules of grammar, and usually they do not allow systematic variations in them (e.g. change of tense or person) (ibid.). Further, Crystal classifies minor

sentences. Minor sentences could be the features of the spoken discourse in typical social situations (e.g. *Hello! Thanks. Cheers!*), or some emotional noises - interjections (e.g. *Ow! Eh?*), at the same time these can be proverbs and sayings (e.g. *Like father, like son*), or even words/phrases used as exclamations, questions, commands (e.g. *Nice day! No smoking!*) (ibid.). Minor sentences are very emotional and concise, for this reason these features are the perfect tools to use in the headlines. Hence, in the headlines could be used even the features of the spoken discourse, in order to create the bond with the reader and speak to the audience in their 'familiar' language.

2.1.2.2 Non-finite clauses

Non-final clauses are verbal dependent clauses which are composed with the help of infinitive, gerund and participle. Verbal clauses are also typical for headlines, since they are concise. Furthermore, a verbal could stand subjects or objects, it makes easier to grasp the essence of a headline. Biber et al. discuss that

non-finite clauses have no tense and they cannot include a modal verb, and moreover, non-finite dependent clauses usually have no overt link, but the non-finite verb form itself signals that the clause is subordinate. (2002:226)

These clauses cannot stand on their own as a sentence because they are bound to the main clause. Moreover, Biber et al. state that most non-finite clauses have no subject, and so the verb phrase typically begins the clause (e.g. *Having given her a book.*). At the same time, Leech distinguishes three types of non-finite clauses: **infinitive clauses** (e.g. *To do this was our aim.*), **-ing clauses** (e.g. *Working for 7 hours, he became exhausted.*) and **-ed clauses** (e.g. *The homework done, we can play football.*) (2006:71). In addition to the above-mentioned ideas, Biber et al. mention one more type – **verbless clause**, which is a specific type of a non-finite clause. The omission of the verb phrase is typical for the verbless clause, 'be' and the subject can usually be omitted by the ellipsis (e.g. *Although not a classic, this 90-minute video is worth watching; If possible, come earlier*) (2002:216). Due to their short structures, verbless clauses can be frequently used in headlines together with the ellipsis. Together these features affect the language of headlines.

2.1.2.3 Ellipsis

An ellipsis is often described as an omission of some parts in the sentence. Wales defines that the ellipsis 'can be seen as grammatical omission' and that it 'helps to focus on new information or more important information' (Wales, 2001:121). However, Biber et al. present the explanation

that 'ellipsis is the omission of elements which are recoverable from the linguistic context or the situation' (Biber et al.,2002:230). Both definitions concentrate on the fact that the ellipsis is an omission in the sentence.

Wright and Hope define ellipsis as 'a cohesive device involving the absence of an item that the reader or listener has to supply' (2005:132). Hence, if this feature occurs in headlines one can supply in by reading an article. Furthermore, Verdonk declares that the ellipsis 'is very often a feature of the language of headlines', which means that some words have been missed out and later he adds that the result of ellipsis is 'a succinct, pungent style, which has a direct and powerful effect on the reader'(Verdonk, 2002:4). Verdonk is the first who connects the ellipsis with the language of headlines and explains the peculiarity of ellipsis, so it could be clear to everyone what it means. Furthermore, he explains the role of the ellipsis in the newspaper headlines and its influence on the style of the headline. In addition, Brown and Yule describe ellipses as 'holes in the sentence' (1983:175). According to them, the ellipsis creates 'a *fundamental relation*' between the parts of the text where the omission was, and this relation forces the reader go back into the text to find and provide the necessary information (ibid.:193). In case of headlines, the readers have to read an article if something of great importance is missing. Moreover, the ellipsis instructs the reader to look for an antecedent expression in the text in order to fill the gaps in the text (ibid.:203). This explanation vividly represents the work of the ellipsis in newspaper headlines. Hence, one of the causes why readers start reading articles is that the headline catches their attention and they are interested in this theme and what to find more about in, and they search for similar expressions which were used in the headlines.

Comparing all explanations presented above by different scholars, there have been formulated a separate definition by the author of the thesis based on the ideas presented by scholars and linguists above. It says that the *ellipsis* 'can be described as a phenomenon of newspaper headlines of which the omission of word/words is typical, but the main concept and purpose of the sentence is still understood by readers' (Klimaševića, 2015:6)

The classification of ellipsis was proposed by Biber et al. who classify ellipsis in three types: *initial* ellipsis, *final* ellipsis and *medial* ellipsis (2002:230). According to authors, initial ellipsis is 'the omission of initial elements of the second clause, medial ellipsis is the omission in the middle of the clause and final ellipsis is the omission at the end of the clause' (ibid.). Further, Biber et al., explain that

- *initial ellipsis* is that words [...] that have low information value are dropped

- *final ellipsis* is the omission of any word following the operator¹
- *medial ellipsis* is characterized by the omission of the operator (Biber et al., 2002:441).

The role of the ellipsis in headlines is to make headlines shorter, to save the space, and at the same time contain the necessary information, and arouse interest in reading an article in order to reconstruct the omitted information.

2.1.2.4 Phrases

Phrases are the combinations of words which present a simple idea. According to Leech, a phrase is ‘a grammatical unit which may consist of one or more than one word and that is one of the classes of constituent into which simple sentences can be divided’ (2006:86). Biber et al. maintain that a phrase may consist of ‘a single word or a group of words and if it is located in the sentence, it can be moved as a unit to a different position’ (2002:38). The main function of a phrase is to create a clause. Furthermore, a phrase can be a part of another phrase in order to create a clause. Crystal adds to all the above-mentioned statements that a phrase ‘lacks the subject-predicate which is the feature of a clause’ (2003:222). Scholars distinguish five main types of a phrase: *noun phrase*, *verb phrase*, *prepositional phrase*, *adjective phrase* and *adverb phrase*. Each of the types is named after the word class (e.g. noun, verb, adjective, etc.) which plays the most important part in the phrase structure. In other words, it is the head of the structure. The verb phrase is ‘the most essential and pivotal element of a clause, and sentences without it could not be considered as complete’ (Leech, 2006:121). Regarding the fact that complete sentences containing VP have been already discussed in the previous subchapter, in this particular part the attention is focused on the NP, PrP, AdjP and AdvP.

Crystal delivers that a noun phrase is the main construction which can appear as the subject, object, or complement of a clause, and it consists essentially of a noun or noun-like word, which is the most important constituent of the phrase (2003:222). Moreover, a noun phrase can be preceded by different determiners (*the, a, her, etc.*) and can be accompanied by modifiers² (e.g. *A little girl next door*) (Biber et al., 2002:41). Sometimes, a measurable amount of information can be spaced into the one noun phrase together with determiners and modifiers because the authors ‘often put information into the modifier slot in the noun phrase, to produce a form of shorthand that is a very distinctive feature of newspaper style’ (Reah, 1998:21).

¹ *Operator* is the first verb used in verb clauses and it could be the first auxiliary verb in the verb phrase, the copula ‘be’ or the auxiliary verb ‘do’ (Biber et al., 2002:230).

² *Modifiers* - elements which describe or classify whatever the head refers to (ibid.:41).

Adjective phrases have ‘an adjective as their head, and optional modifiers that can precede or follow the adjective [...], also adjective heads can also take complements’ (Biber et al., 2002:43). In AdjP modifiers typically answer a question about the degree of a quality (e.g. *desperately poor*), but complements often answer the question ‘In what respect is the adjectival quality to be interpreted?’ (e.g. *guilty of a serious crime*) (ibid.).

The structure of adverb phrases is very similar to the structure of adjective phrases. The distinction is that the head of an adverb phrase is an adverb (e.g. *pretty soon*) (ibid.: 44). Furthermore, adverb phrases can take modifiers and complements (like AdjP), which answer the questions about the quality of an adverb.

Prepositional phrases mostly consist of ‘a preposition followed by a noun phrase, known as the prepositional complement’ (e.g. *in the morning*^{PrC}), also preposition can be thought of as ‘a link which connects the noun phrase to preceding structures’ (ibid.: 44-45). However, it is difficult to say whether phrases could be used in headlines by themselves and what effect phrases might bring on the audience’s perception.

In order to conclude, it is important to notice that there are certain conventions for headlines writing. These conventions prescribe that the headlines should be persuasive, concise, contain the main message of an article, and attract readers. Using the special syntax of headlines, headlines achieve their goals. Therefore, syntactic structures are essential components, which create headlines as they are, and make them differ from the other writing pieces.

The next subchapter focuses on the description of lexical peculiarities, which might occur in headlines.

2.2 Lexical peculiarities of newspaper headlines

Lexical peculiarities are one of the tools which are used in headlines by authors with intention to make the headlines more expressive, memorable, attractive, and striking. That is why authors have to create those headlines, using new features which would be interesting and persuasive for the reader. Conboy claims that

tabloidization [is characterized by] the use of pictures and sloganized headlines, vulgar language [...], the reduction in the length of words in a story and the reduction of the complexity of language and also a convergence with agendas of popular and in particular television culture (2010:130).

It is suggested that the newspaper headlines very often contain abbreviations, slang and vulgarisms, puns, metaphors, shortenings, compounds, also alliteration and assonance. Lexical

features of the English language create a field of lexical peculiarities that are used in the headlines.

2.2.1 Abbreviations and acronyms

It is known that the usage of abbreviations and acronyms helps to squeeze the headline to its minimal length. However, it is hard to declare that authors are using self-invented abbreviations and acronyms for that purpose.

According to Yule, acronyms are ‘new words formed from the initial letters of a set of words’ (2010:58). These are word forms such as *CD* (“compact disc”) or *VCR* (“video cassette recorder”), where the pronunciation of the word consists of saying each separate letter (ibid.). These words are called abbreviations, because they have to ‘be spelled up, while acronyms can be pronounced as a single word’ (Meyer, 2009:181). It is more typically that acronyms are pronounced as new single words as in *NATO*, *NASA* or *UNESCO* (Yule, 2010:58). Moreover, some new acronyms come into the general use very quickly that many people get used to them, and later they do not think about their component meaning as it is with *ATM* (automatic teller machine) and *PIN* (personal identification number) (ibid.).

Acronyming is a popular way of forming new terms in modern English and in many other languages too (McGregor, 2009:182). This process helps ‘to squeeze’ the large word into few letters and everybody understands the meaning of it. Therefore, abbreviations and acronyms could be ones of the most frequently used features in the headlines. Hence, they serve to the same purpose of creating headlines shorter without the loss of their meaning in particular.

In the following part clipping, blending and compounding are going to be discussed.

2.2.2 Clipping, blending and compounding

This subchapter presents the discussion on clipping, blending and compounding which could be observed in headlines.

Clippings are the words that could make a headline to be more expressive or even shorter. With reference to Crystal, **clipping** is a ‘part of word which serves for the whole’ (2003:120). In addition to Crystal, Meyer adds that clippings are words that have been shortened (e.g.: *flu* is a clipped form of *influenza*; *phone* is a shortened form of *telephone*) (2009:181). Further, he gives a bit more examples: *doc(tor)*, *sec(ond)*, *taxi(meter) cab(riole)*, *(omni)bus*, *auto(mobile)*, *gas(oline)*, and *(inter)net* (ibid.). The meaning of those words is still clear and comprehensible,

but the words are shorter. The main difference between clippings and abbreviations is that clippings ‘have spellings which have the appearance and pronounceability of English words’ (Hudson, 2000:242). Further, the author states that these are the shortened forms of words. Therefore, they are used so frequently that they absolutely replace their longer versions, and sometimes people could not recognize full versions (e.g.: *pub* refers to ‘*public house*’; ‘*fan*’ is the clipping from the word ‘*fanatic*’) (ibid.). Hereafter, it is clear why clippings should be applied in headlines because these features can save the space in headlines without the loss of the meaning.

Blending is described as ‘the combination of two separate forms to produce a single new term’ (Yule, 2010:55-56). Typically, blending is accomplished by taking only the beginning of one word and joining it to the end of the other word (e.g. *smoke* and *fog* produce *smog*) (ibid.). Meyer gives some more examples:

stagflation (*stagnation* + *inflation*); *chortle* (*chuckle* + *snort*); *informercial* (*information* + *commercial*); *snizzle* (*snow* + *drizzle*); *blog* (*web* + *log*); *docudrama* (*documentary* + *drama*); *podcast* (*ipod* + *broadcast*), etc. (2009:181)

In the same manner as clippings, blended words can be used in headlines in order to save the space, but also in order to present some new words in their blended versions.

Yule defines **compounding** as ‘the joining of two separate words to produce a single form and further he adds that this process is very characteristic of English’ (2010:55). Compounding is ‘the most productive type of word-formation in English, [and it includes] combining two base morphemes to create a word with a new meaning that is not necessary a sum of the meanings of the individual words’ (Meyer, 2009:179). Common English compounds are *bookcase*, *doorknob*, *fingerprint*, *sunburn*, *textbook*, *wallpaper*, *waterbed* etc., all these words are nouns, but also there are compound adjectives like *good-looking*, *full-time*, *low-paid*, etc. (Yule, 2010:55). Hardly to decide whether these types of words could be regularly used in headlines, but it is supposed that some of them do not have other synonyms to replace longer versions.

To sum up, it is necessary to mention that the use of clippings in the newspaper headlines could contribute to the style of writing and makes headline language more diverse and colloquial. Therefore, it could have a desired response from the audience. Considering blendings, one might say that it is a perfect feature for headlines, since instead of two words one can write only one. Furthermore, a new meaning would contain shades of the first and the second words. However, compounds may be out of use as these words are long and the space limits are more important.

The next subchapter is devoted to wordplay and puns, which is a very interesting phenomenon when it occurs in headlines.

2.2.3 Puns and wordplay

Wordplay or a pun can be used by authors, in order to create a particular effect of the reader. Such headlines influence the readers' feelings, since it is attractive and interesting to read. It could be one of the most eye-catching methods that are used in headlines in general. Meyer says that headlines often employ various literary devices, such as 'punning', 'rhyming', etc. (2009:96). Galperin describes that puns are 'based on the interaction of two well-known meanings of a word or phrase' (1977:151). Furthermore, punning is considered as a part of wordplay because wordplay is the general term for this linguistic phenomenon. It was mentioned that words sometimes could have different meanings, and it allows authors to play with them and create an ambiguity and double meaning in the headline (Shams, 2013:123). This type of headlines might cause an interest to read an article in order to discover something new or just because of interest. Moreover, these wordplays might not only be connected with homonyms, but also with some allusions to famous films or songs, or different word structures.

Although alliteration and assonance are phonetic devices and are not included in the syntactic or lexical peculiarities, these could be interpreted as play of sounds. These devices make headlines to show up and catch attention from the readers. According to Shams, alliteration refers to 'the repetition of the beginning of two or more words' (2013:37). Further, Gurevich mentions that the alliteration is 'a device based on repetition of the same or similar sounds at close distance, which makes speech more expressive' (2007:44). Then, he says that the assonance is just a variant of the alliteration and 'repetition of the same or similar vowels' is typical for it (e.g. *My shoes show signs of wear and tear, the wear and tear of city life*) (ibid.:45). In addition, the alliteration and assonance could be frequently used in headlines in order to produce a musical or poetic effect, sometimes 'to bind key words together or give them an emphasis' (Shams, 2013:37).

All these devices make headlines more appealing, eye-catching to the reader and increase the effectiveness in article reading by readers. Furthermore, the next peculiarity to be discussed – slang words, vulgarisms in the headlines.

2.2.4 Slang and vulgarisms

Headlines always try to catch reader's attention, to cause interest, and persuade them to read an article. Hence, their authors use many various methods, techniques and tricks in order to achieve

this aim. That is why slang words and vulgarisms might be applied in the headlines. Slang is 'highly informal language usually associated with younger speakers of language,' but also it tends 'to have a short lifespan and falls out of use quickly as the speakers who use it become older,' and after a new slang words are introduced into the language together with the next generations (Meyer, 2009:235). Yule states that slang is 'an aspect of social life' like clothing and music, a subject of fashion especially among adolescents and it can 'grow old' old very quickly (2010:260). In the course of time people replace words, thus *super* have been changed to *awesome* and a *hunk* (physically attractive man) became a *hottie*, instead of using *the pits* (really bad) one says now *That sucks!* (ibid.). Furthermore, the difference in the slang usage is between groups divided into older and younger users. Hence, it shows that the age is a very important factor in language development (ibid.). Further, Yule adds that 'the use of slang varies within the younger social group, as illustrated by the use of obscenities or taboo terms' (ibid.).

The main reason of using slang words, vulgarisms or taboo words in headlines is to share the common language with the audience. It is supposed that slang is usually closer to the reader. Thus, it does not matter whether the newspaper is tabloid or a broadsheet because slang can occur in both types of newspapers. Slang could be used instead of some difficult terms in the headlines, and the readers could quickly understand the message of it. Moreover, the function of these words is simple - to catch attention as quickly as possible, to discourage the reader by the *screaming* and *provoking* headline. Possible that at the first second the reader could not understand a purpose of using such words, but their eyes will definitely catch and read the headline unintentionally. Therefore, there is a possibility that they would be interested in further reading of an article, due to the effect caused by the vulgarisms in the headline.

To sum up, the headlines should be short, persuasive, contain the main message, and attract the reader. In order to become catchy, the headlines tend to use syntactic structures which often are working beyond grammatical rules. Moreover, the newspaper headlines have their word choice which is usually very specific and sometimes could be shocking. However, even if it is hard to combine everything due to space limitations, the headlines try to perfectly achieve their goals with the use of special lexical and syntactic peculiarities.

CHAPTER 3

INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULTS OF THE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

The chapter is devoted to the empirical part of the research which involves the methods and the procedure of the research, and the discussion on findings and results. It presents the detailed explication and description of the process of the research in order to introduce methods used during the analysis of headlines samples. Afterwards, the discussion on findings, results and the analysis of samples retrieved from online British newspapers follow.

3.1 Methods and procedure

For the empirical part 60 different articles from online British newspapers were considered as the source of the headlines where syntactic and lexical peculiarities could be detected and later analysed. For the research there have been chosen two popular online British newspapers, namely *The Telegraph* and *The Sun*. The main idea was to observe and analyse the use of the syntactic and lexical peculiarities in a daily quality newspaper and a tabloid and to see whether there are differences, as well as to try to distinguish types of peculiarities and classify them. During the period of March-April 2016, the headlines were randomly selected on their publication dates. In the compiled sample of newspaper articles there were detected, classified and analyzed 60 headlines. All headlines samples were arranged and presented in Table 3.1 (see Appendix 1). From each newspaper there have been retrieved 30 samples of headlines.

The method of the research is the literature overview used in the theoretical part of the Bachelor thesis and the text analysis of the selected online newspaper article headlines. According to Crystal, ‘text analysis focuses on the structure of written language, as found in such texts as essays, notices, road signs, and chapters etc.’ (2007:264). From this follows that this method was considered as the most appropriate for the purpose of the research. However, the method includes the calculations which are an element of a quantitative type of the research. The mentioned methods help to obtain answers to the stated research questions and achieve the aim of the research. The qualitative approach of headlines assists in identification of the discussed peculiarities in the previous chapters. Also, it shows which peculiarities are used in selected headlines, how these are different from one another and why authors tend to utilise these

peculiarities in the newspaper headlines. It is based on the theoretical part of the thesis and classification is made by the author of the paper. This method was considered as the most appropriate for the purpose of the research. Moreover, the results of certain calculations demonstrate the frequency and the exact numbers of occurrence of the peculiarities, expressed in tables and graphs, in the headlines. Furthermore, it helps to detect which of the peculiarities were employed most frequently in newspaper headlines. This type of analysis makes all the obtained data valid and the results more reliable. Thereafter, the answers to the stated research questions and results were found and necessary conclusions were made.

3.2 Discussion of findings: headlines in *The Telegraph*

On the basis of the theoretical part which contains the literature review, and in which different scholars, authors and researchers explain all the peculiarities, following analysis of the newspaper headlines was realised. Following subchapters will contain the discussion of the results of the syntactic and lexical peculiarities of the headlines of *The Telegraph*.

3.2.1 Syntactic peculiarities of headlines

The syntactic structure of headlines is very important, since the construction of headlines might be useful for economise space limits in the head of an article and it also catches readers' attention if something is unusual in this structure.

There have been carried an analysis of the headlines and gained data – both qualitative and quantitative – which were expressed in Tables 3.2 and 3.3 (see Appendix 2). The qualitative results and the results of necessary calculations of the research concerning syntactic peculiarities used in headlines in *The Telegraph* are displayed in Table 3.5. The results prove that the headlines contained different syntactic structures and the most frequent types are complex sentences and phrases. Also, one may notice that out of 30 headlines there have been detected 42 syntactic

Table 3.5 The frequency of using the syntactic structures in the headlines of *The Telegraph*

Syntactic structures	Frequency of the use	
Combination of several structures	6	
Complex sentences	5 (3*)	8
Simple sentences	5 (1)	6
Phrases	4 (3)	7
Non-finite clauses	3 (2)	5
Compound sentences	4	
Questions	2 (1)	3
Directives	1	1
Minor sentences	(1)	1
Compound-complex sentences	(1)	1
Total :	42	

*number indicates that the structure was used as a part of a combination

structures, since headlines often combine several structures in the one line.

The term 'combinations of structures' means, that the structure of one headline is complicate and contains different syntactic structures. These structures could be bound together to make one headline of an article. For example, a noun phrase and an interrogative question (5), or noun phrase and complex sentence (23), or even a complex sentence, noun phrase and compound-complex sentence (3):

(5) *Leap Year 2016: Why does February have 29 days every four years?*

(23) *Cure for cataracts: scientists use stem cells to grow 'living lens' in eye*

(3) *EU referendum: Sir Jeremy Heywood keeps a straight face... until he's told that ministers aren't stupid*

One can observe that these combinations are not necessarily long and cluttered, though they present the information in the most detailed manner.

The same concerns the use of complex sentences (10, 11) and compound sentences (27, 24) in the headlines which are usually longer due to their essence. For example:

(10) *Boy, nine, died of sepsis after being discharged from A&E with 'mild chest infection'*

(27) *Celebrity barrister admits supplying drugs that killed his teen lover*

However, authors tend to shorten these constructions by the use of the ellipsis and the omission of words which have low informational value, for example: articles, pronouns, prepositions, descriptive attributes, and operator.

(11) *Crufts: [the] Kennel Club [was] delighted as dog stars of Instagram boost dwindling breeds*

(24) *[a] Puppy [who was] severely burned in house fire has recovered and [he] is now trained as a firefighter*

As one can observe from the examples above, the addition of the omitted words does not change the sense of headlines. Hence, the headlines only gain by the omission of some words, when it is more important to use a bit longer structures and at the same time keep the headline concise.

Simple sentences were also used quite frequently in the headlines in *The Telegraph*. Such structures are succinct and there are easy to read, for example:

(7) *Lack of sleep can give you the 'munchies'*

(25) *Father saves his son from flying baseball bat*

It is worth mentioning that there have been detected 3 examples of questions used in the headlines (see Table 3.5). Questions in the headlines have a specific purpose to arouse interest. For example:

(4) *Would Brexit mean the end of green targets?*

(20) *Can Brazil's democracy survive Dilma Rousseff's fall?*

Questions in headlines make the reader want to find an answer to this question by reading and article.

To sum up, almost all types of syntactic structures do occur in newspaper article headlines used in *The Telegraph*. Some of them occur most frequently, some least, but they all create the structure of the headline and provide the necessary information for the reader in the most convenient manner for the all sides – the author and the reader.

3.2.2 Lexical peculiarities of headlines

With the reference to overviews of the previous chapters, where all peculiarities were discussed, the following analysis of article headlines was realized.

The results presented in Table 3.6 show the results of the analysis. It is seen that online articles' headlines from *The Telegraph* contained almost all of the discussed linguistic features, except wordplays. For some unexpected reason there have not been found any sample of wordplay in *The Telegraph*. Most probably it shows the level of the seriousness of this newspaper and the unwillingness of the authors to seem frivolous. The most frequently occurred features are the journalese and slang words, and compounding. As it can be noticed, out of 30 headline samples there have been detected 29 examples of lexical peculiarities.

Table 3.6 The frequency of using the lexical peculiarities in the headlines of *The Telegraph*

Linguistic and lexical peculiarities	Frequency of the use	
Combination of features	3	
Slang/Vulgarisms/informal word	4 (2)	6
Wordplays/Pun		
Journalese	6 (1)	7
Compounding	6	
Acronym/Abbreviation	2 (2)	4
Clipping	1 (1)	2
Blending	1	
Total:	29	

**number indicates that the feature was used as a part of a combination*

In the same manner like it was in the previous subchapter, there are combinations of several features, where headline contains more than one lexical or linguistic feature. For example, journalese and abbreviation (19), clipping and slang word (12):

(19) *Boris Johnson's fury over EU 'bullying scandal'*

(12) *Britain's cold call king: young tech geek who lives with his mother*

Journalese words were also used quite frequently. There are 7 examples of it and 6 were used on their own, 1 in combination. As it was mentioned previously, there are words which

authors of newspapers are often using, but ordinary people use them very seldom on the daily basis. For example:

- (6) *'Suffolk Strangler' officer blasts Leeds red-light zone*
- (15) *Harvard Law School to scrap crest over links to slavery*

Sometimes these words are applied in newspaper headlines in order to make the headline and texts more dramatic or powerful from the authors' point of view.

Very interesting feature of the headlines is when authors are using slang words or informal words, or even vulgarisms with a purpose of attracting readers' attention, for example:

- (7) *Lack of sleep can give you the 'munchies'*
- (28) *PMQs: Jeremy Corbyn's PMQ's performance a 'f***** disaster' as Cameron turns Party into a laughing stock, says Labour MP*

It is a very eye-catching feature newspaper headlines. One might think that the authors use such words in headlines because they want to share someone's opinion, as it was in the first example, or just reduce the distance between author and readers and decrease the formality level. Another way of such word usage is to focus readers' attention on these words.

The last thing which needs to be discussed is some peculiarities which were accidentally detected during the analysis of the headlines samples. It is worth mentioning that the alliteration and assonance occurred quite frequently in headlines. Concerning the fact that these features are not under the discussion of this Bachelor thesis, one can observe that these additionally found phonetic features occurred 13 times in headlines of *the Telegraph* as it is expressed in Table 3.4 (see Appendix 2). Furthermore, the cases of alliteration and assonance produced a melodious effect in headlines by making the rhythm in a headline. For example:

- (23) *Cure for cataracts: scientists use stem cells to grow 'living lens' in eye*
- (30) *Weird and wonderful religious relics*

This feature makes headlines more interesting and they look like small lines of poems. Moreover, there have been noticed 2 cases of idioms in the headlines of *The Telegraph*. For example, the headline (28) and (3):

- (3) *EU referendum: Sir Jeremy Heywood keeps a straight face... until he's told that ministers aren't stupid*

The results prove that the language of headlines is flexible and could be used in any way their authors want. Hence, the authors make and produce the expected effects, so that headlines were what they want them to be. The next subchapters are devoted to the discussion of headlines of *The Sun*.

3.3 Discussion of findings: headlines in *The Sun*

In the same manner and the analysis of headlines in *The Telegraph*, there has been realised following analysis of the headlines retrieved from *The Sun*, on the basis of the theoretical part and opinions of scholars and researchers.

3.3.1 Syntactic peculiarities of headlines

The use of the syntactic structures in the newspaper headlines has also its own unique peculiarities in the tabloid newspapers such as *The Sun*. The range of these peculiarities is vivid.

The results, expressed in Table 3.2 (see Appendix 2), helped to compose Table 3.3 (see Appendix 2) and Table 3.7 which present qualitative data and calculations for this research concerning syntactic peculiarities used in the headlines of *The Sun*.

The authors of headlines in *The Sun* tend to use combinations of several types – 21 cases, as it is exposed in Table 3.7. It has been detected that out of 30 headline samples there have been detected 67 syntactic structures because headlines often combine two or more structures. It means that the combination of structures increase the numbers of peculiarities used in the headlines.

There were 21 headlines containing combinations structures per headline. It is almost all examples that were collected during the current research. These combinations contain different varieties of the headlines, starting from directives together with a complex sentence (55), then follows a question and a simples sentence (34), a noun phrase and a complex sentence (39), and ending with a minor sentence with a simple sentence (52):

- (55) *Paw me another! These hilarious snaps show pets celebrating their birthdays in style*
- (34) *Remember that girl whose boyfriend faked proposing to her on Valentine's Day? She just got the best revenge ever*
- (39) *SSSStupid boy: Lad, 12, risks his life by stroking two deadly king cobra snakes*
- (52) *X-plosive! X Factor star Stevi Ritchie called Chloe-Jasmine a 'selfish b*tch' in blazing row*

Table 3.7 The frequency of using the syntactic structures in the headlines of *The Sun*

Syntactic structures	Frequency of the use	
Combination of several structures	21	
Complex sentences	4 (8)	12
Simple sentences	2 (10)	12
Phrases	(9)	9
Non-finite clauses	(1)	1
Compound sentences	2 (2)	4
Questions	1 (3)	4
Directives	(3)	3
Minor sentences	(1)	1
Total:	67	

**number indicates that the structure was used as a part of a combination*

It is obvious that these headlines are extremely long. However, each structure is in the right place and they all have their advantageous place in order to inform potential readers and attract their attention.

According to the results presented in Table 3.7, there are 4 examples with compound sentences (32), and 12 examples complex sentences (56):

(32) *Terrified Osama bin Laden feared [that] his wife had been fitted with a tracking device inside her TOOTH*

(56) [a] *Mum of four [who was] accused of killing her daughter claims [that] her 17-year-old son may have done it*

Furthermore, the authors of headlines use initial and medial ellipses in order to make the headlines shorter and not to lose the main idea or bits of information.

One can notice that simple sentences were mostly used in combinations of structures -10 examples, and there are only 2 examples, which are used on their own:

(49) *The internet is divided over this weird Mother's Day joke*

From this follows, that *The Sun* prefers more complex and structurally sophisticated headlines which present all the necessary and additional information to the reader.

Despite the fact that the usage of questions in the headlines is very appealing to the reader, from 30 samples, there was detected only 1 case of a question used on its own and 3 cases used together with other peculiarities:

(36) *Does this eerie 9/11 footage capture a GHOST rising from the wreckage of the World Trade Centre?*

Even if the question is working in headlines like 'a bait', the authors tend not to use many of these in headlines. Although, it seems logical that questions in the headlines might provoke curiosity to read an article, but the statistics of this research shows the opposite and this feature is not used much often.

To sum up, almost all types of the chosen syntactic structures do occur in newspaper article headlines were detected in *The Sun*. Furthermore, it is worth to mention that authors prefer long and sophisticated structures of headlines, in order to present all the information about an article because the audience of a tabloid is not interested in the article as such and concentrates its attention only on general ideas. Thereafter, the readers decide to read or not to read an article later basing on what they have learned from the headline.

3.3.2 Lexical peculiarities of headlines

The use of lexical and linguistic peculiarities in the tabloid newspaper like *The Sun* has its own features and to some extent these are very effective.

The results expressed in Table 3.8 show the gained data of the research. The analysis of the headlines of *The Sun* proved that the headlines contained all of the discussed and chosen linguistic features, except blending. The most frequently occurred features are slang/vulgar/informal words and the combinations of several features, and wordplay. It was revealed that out of 30 headline samples there have been detected 54 examples of lexical and linguistic peculiarities.

Table 3.8 The frequency of using the lexical peculiarities in the headlines of The Sun

Linguistic and lexical peculiarities	Frequency of the use	
Combination of features	13	
Slang/Vulgarisms/informal word	4 (8)	12
Wordplays/Pun	4 (8)	12
Journalese	1 (3)	4
Compounding	1 (5)	6
Acronym/Abbreviation	2 (1)	3
Clipping	(4)	4
Blending		
Total:	54	

**number indicates that the feature was used as a part of a combination*

The combinations of two and more features occurred in the headlines 13 times. Also, these combinations contained different variations of the headlines: slang/vulgarism used with the compounds (38), used with clippings, compounds and slang words (54):

(38) *Killer babysitter leads Moscow cops to flat where she beheaded girl,4, claiming 'voices' told her to kill*

(54) *Young Afghan vet was beaten to death by vodka-swilling thugs who celebrated random attack*

The catchiest peculiarity of *The Sun* headlines is wordplays and puns, there were found 12 examples of this feature. Sometimes they were based on popular sayings or expressions (31, 40):

(31) *Love flyangle: Stag do's drunk brawl on Ryanair flight over a girl*

(40) *And the Oscar for Bust Actress goes to... Kate Upton wears VERY revealing dress to awards party*

The first example is wordplay on the expression 'love triangle' and the second ironically plays with expression 'best actresses'. Also, it was just a play on words and sounds (39, 43):

(39) *SSSStupid boy: Lad, 12, risks his life by stroking two deadly king cobra snakes*

(43) *Rita Ora aims to ex-cel on album: Singer inspired by her love splits*

The first example is onomatopoeic wordplay, which represents the sound that snakes make and additionally intensifies the effect of the headlines. Furthermore, sometimes wordplays work as allusions to films or popular quotations (51, 58):

(51) *Feel the force, Duke! William and Harry have light-saber fight during tour of the Star Wars set*

(58) *To Bieb or not To Bieb: Youngsters know Justin's lyrics better than they know the Bard*

The first line is a wordplay of the famous quotation 'Feel the force, Luke', from the Star Wars films, while the second headlines contains the wordplay on a well-known quotation from Shakespeare's *Hamlet* - 'To be or not to be'. Such interesting and impressive play on words could definitely attract attention of a reader. Furthermore, all these features were used with the purpose to involve readers into the situation of an article, to stop him/her for a moment and to look on the headline. Afterwards, readers are supposed to think about the headlines and the information they have got, then they should decide whether an article is interesting enough and deserves reading judging by its 'cover'.

As it concerns the use of slang words or vulgarisms, article writers in *The Sun* make them very often. There were detected 12 examples, as it is expressed in Table 3.8. Sometimes it is just an informal word or expression (33), sometimes it is a provoking vulgarism (37), but there was even 1 euphemism, which may refer to the f-word (50):

(33) *Forget the stars...this girl's 'vagina dress' won the Oscars and the internet can't stop talking about it*

(37) *I'm not a f***ing supermodel': Vicky Pattison blasts 'judgemental' body shaming critics*

(50) *What the cluck? Men who eat chicken and eggs 'are more likely to die from prostate cancer'*

The use of these words is very attractive, since some of them are very provocative and 'screaming', and could make readers get interested in the whole article. Moreover, these words could be used in an exaggerated manner in order to attract, like it was with one example presented above (e.g. Nr.33).

The last thing that needs to be discussed, these are the peculiarities which were additionally and accidentally detected during the analysis of the headlines. The first additional peculiarities are the alliterations and assonances (35, 45, 46) which were used very frequently in *The Sun* - 17 cases detected, as it is displayed in Table 3.4 (see Appendix 2):

(35) *Sick CCTV footage shows men playing 'rock, paper, scissors to decide who gets to gang rape girl, 15, first'*

(45) *Arctic blast to batter Britain for a month with snow and freezing temps*

(46) *Striker... a daily dose of your favourite football strip*

Although, these features were not under the discussion, they were used more often than the other chosen peculiarities. Furthermore, they created a necessary effect in the headlines, so that readers could feel it while reading an article. Moreover, there have been noticed 2 cases of idioms (42) in the headlines and 3 cases graphic peculiarity - the uppercase (32,40,36). For example:

(42) *Hit and scum: Family release photos of teenager fighting for his life after being mown down by driver*

(32) *Terrified Osama bin Laden feared his wife had been fitted with a tracking device inside her TOOTH*

The usage of the uppercase letters is very attractive, because it looks like a scream, or excitement, or surprise. One can say that it usually represents shouting in the Internet domain. However, in headlines it might be applied in order to increase readability, catching readers' attention and offering a thrilling story in the article.

It is necessary to mention that almost all chosen linguistic features do occur in the headlines. Furthermore, the results show the authors' preferences in one or another feature. Some of them occur most frequently, some least, but they all create the language of the headline and provide the necessary information to the reader. Moreover, there have been detected the additional peculiarities, such as assonance, alliteration, idioms and the usage of the uppercase which play an important role in the headlines too. The next subchapter focuses on the comparison of the headlines of *The Telegraph* and *The Sun* newspapers.

3.4 Headlines of *The Telegraph* and *The Sun*: results compared

The Telegraph and *The Sun* are newspapers that have a different profile and different auditory. The true reason to compare these two newspapers was to see whether they also use different lexical and syntactic peculiarities in their headlines in order to enlarge the number of the potential readers, to attract them and arouse the interest in reading an article.

Pie charts in Figure 3.1 and Figure 3.2 (see Appendix 3) visualise the perceptual difference in the use of lexical and syntactic peculiarities in *The Telegraph* and *The Sun*. These newspapers have almost all mentioned syntactic and lexical peculiarities; however, there are some distinctions in their use. The results show that all headlines from these two newspapers combine several features in them, both syntactic and lexical. These combinations of two or more features are used in order to enrich the language of a headline and make it more colourful and catchier. The results demonstrated in Table 3.3 and Table 3.4 (see Appendix 2) allow to compare *The Sun* and *The Telegraph*. One can notice that *The Sun* uses more combinations of several peculiarities

in its headlines than *The Telegraph*. All headlines in *The Sun* are longer than in *The Telegraph*. Perhaps, the space limitations are not so important in tabloids than in quality papers. However, it can also be explained by the fact that they contain more lexical and syntactic peculiarities. Furthermore, the headlines of *The Sun* are supposed to be more emotionally explicit because the audience who reads tabloids is looking for it.

The results presented in Figure 3.3 (see Appendix 3) show that 26% of headlines in *The Sun* are complex sentences, and 26% are simple sentences, 9% for compound sentences, 20% are for phrases, 2% non-finite clauses. *The Telegraph* has almost the same percent for complex sentences - 22%, and then simple sentences follow – 17%, phrases – 19%, non-finite clauses – 14%, compound sentences – 11%. The difference is that *The Sun* has only 2% use of non-finite clauses, when *The Telegraph* has 14%. Only one case of a compound-complex sentence was detected in the samples of selected headlines only in *The Telegraph*, none were found in *The Sun*. The usage of the questions in the headlines is basically similar: *The Sun* has 9% and *The Telegraph* – 8%. However, in *The Sun* there are 6% of directives and only 3%. Nevertheless, it is necessary to mention, that the total number of the chosen syntactic peculiarities is bigger in the tabloid *The Sun*, since its headlines are longer and verbose. The discussed results are presented in Figure 3.3 in order to convey the general picture of the usage of the syntactic peculiarities in both newspapers.

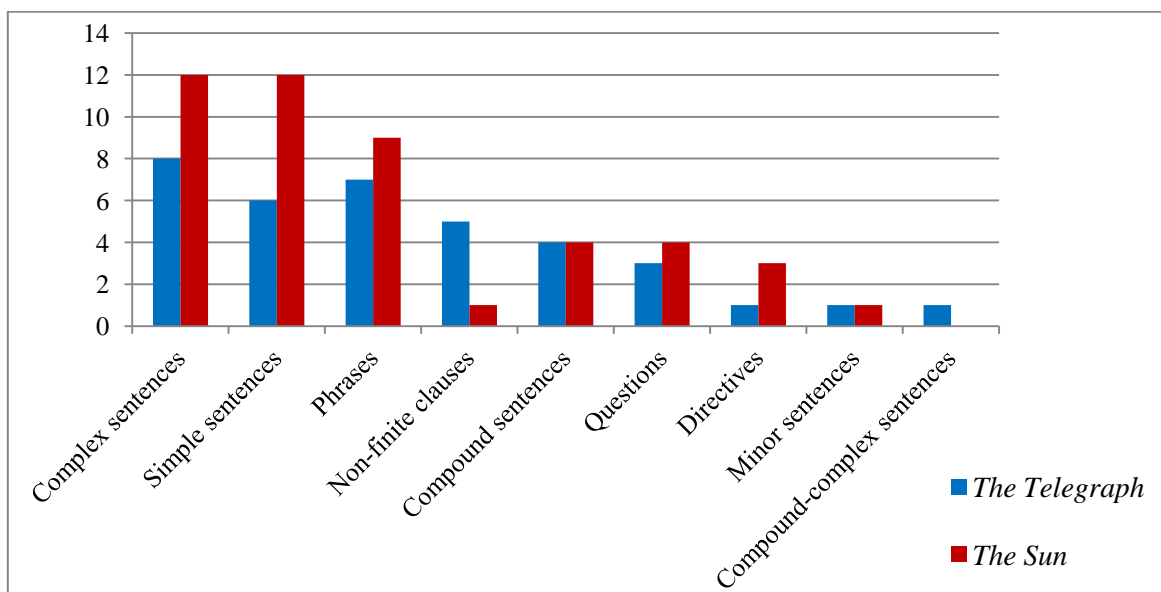


Figure 3.3 The comparison in the occurrence of the syntactic peculiarities in *The Telegraph* and *The Sun*

The comparison of the use of the selected lexical and linguistic peculiarities in *The Sun* and *The Telegraph* expressed in Figure 3.2 (see Appendix 3). The usage of slang words is higher in *The Sun* – 30% and 12 cases, while *The Telegraph* has only 23% and 6 cases. This could be dictated by the style of these newspapers, since one of them is the tabloid and it is more liberated in the choice of words and expressions, while the other is more conservative. Furthermore, it is easy to remark, that *The Sun* has 28% of wordplay in their headlines, while there were none detected in *The Telegraph*. Again, it shows the conservative style in the headlines of *The Telegraph*, and it proves the freedom of language in the tabloid newspaper. Although, one should mention that *The Telegraph* tends to use shorter headlines and the use such peculiarities is more frequent: of acronyms/abbreviations (15%), clipping (8%) and blending (4%) displays it, while *The Sun* does not have any example of blending at all, but has only 8% for acronyms/abbreviations and 10% for clipping. However, due to the use of all peculiarities in combinations of several features, *The Sun* still has more cases in almost all categories of peculiarities due to the length of its headlines. The usage of combinations of several features (e.g. simple sentence and question, complex sentence and phrase, etc.) is more frequent in *The Sun*. Results expressed in Table 3.4 (see Appendix 2) allow to compare, that *The Sun* has 13 cases of combinations of the selected lexical peculiarities and *The Telegraph* has only 3, and it again depends on the length of headlines in these two newspapers and their style. The discussed results are displayed in Figure 3.4 in order to describe the general overview of the usage of the lexical peculiarities in both newspapers.

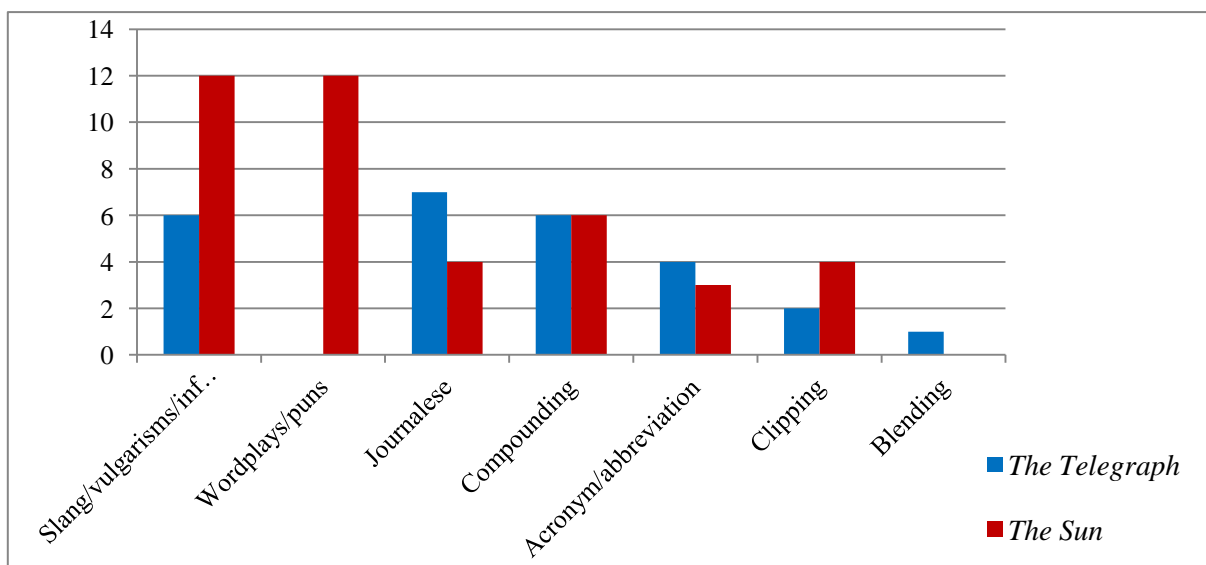


Figure 3.4 The comparison in the occurrence of the lexical peculiarities in *The Telegraph* and *The Sun*

To summarize, the language develops and it also affects the language used in headlines. All the selected and analysed peculiarities do occur in online British newspaper headlines – *The Sun* and *The Telegraph*. Some features occur often, some seldom, sometimes they are combined. *The Sun* has more examples of slag/vulgarisms and wordplay use than *The Telegraph*, but *The Telegraph* has more samples of journalese and abbreviations. All in all, headlines' functions remain – to present the information in the most comprehensible manner, convince the reader to pay his/her attention to the certain publication and sometimes feel a bond with the author. As a result, the headline catches the attention and causes the interest to read the article, and this is its main purpose and the true essence.

CONCLUSIONS

The theme of the Bachelor thesis is 'Lexical and Syntactic Peculiarities of Online British Newspaper Headlines'. The goal was to study the selected lexical and syntactic peculiarities in online British newspaper headlines, as well as to explore the main functions of the headlines and their possible impact on the reader.

The theme of the lexical and syntactic peculiarities in the headlines is very broad. Thus, there was a need to narrow syntactic and lexical features to selected ones which have been analysed during the research. The current theme might be interesting in a way that one can observe the use of the language of headlines and the authors' choice of words. One may say that it is very promising and perspective topic of the study or research because news is an essential part of modern society. Therefore, the headlines are those who are 'selling' the news. All of the chosen lexical and syntactic peculiarities differ from one another and have their own purpose to be used in headlines. The headlines are meant to catch readers' attention, to provide the necessary information about an article and to make readers' get interested and read it. Hence, the syntactic and lexical peculiarities to some extent facilitate achieving of this goal. Moreover, the overview of how the language is used in headlines can explain that headlines work for authors and reader's convenience – authors do not exceed a space limit and make headlines look more eye-catching, while readers may just quickly read the necessary information from the headline and choose whether it is worth reading and spending their time doing it. Though, sometimes readers might be caught in 'a trap', when in the headlines are used some unrecognisable acronyms or abbreviations, or blended words, or when authors are using slang words, vulgarisms, or even questions and directives to provoke potential readers, because it involves the reader in the further reading.

In this part of the research the author has summarized the results of the literature review which referred to the theme, as well as the results of the empirical research. During the process of the research it has been discovered that more than several researches had been carried out by different bachelor and master students in their theses. Furthermore, some researches and scholars made foreign publications in journals of the theme of the headlines and their prominent features. The overview of these works contributed to the current research. However, there still are various possibilities of enriching this theme and the field by widening the corpus of headlines and taking graphical and phonetic peculiarities of the headlines. This theme is topical and to some extent popular, due to the fact that people were/are interested in the effects of the headline and its

language. This was one of the main reasons for choosing this theme for the Bachelor thesis. Furthermore, it has a potential and relevance to be investigated in the future, considering different kinds of the peculiarities or only one of them as the subject of the research and the newspaper article headlines as the object.

During the empirical part of the research the answers to the stated research questions were provided. It was revealed that all the discussed peculiarities, both syntactic and lexical, do occur in the headlines of *The Telegraph* and *The Sun*. The most commonly used syntactic feature of the headlines is the combination. These are more than one lexical or syntactic peculiarity used in the one headline: noun phrase and a question, a noun phrase and a complex sentence, abbreviation/acronym and slang word, wordplay and compounds, etc. The combinations provide the whole information to the readers and influence on their perception. There have been detected 27 cases of combination of syntactic structures, and only 16 cases of combination of lexical and linguistic features in both newspapers. However, the most frequently used syntactic structure is complex sentences – 20 samples, then simple sentences follow – 18 samples. The most frequently used lexical peculiarities are: slang/vulgarisms and informal words – 18 samples, journalese words were used 11 times; the next frequently used feature is wordplays – 12 samples which occurred only in *The Sun*. In addition to that, there have been detected 30 cases of alliteration and assonance, though these peculiarities were not under discussion. Moreover, all these features impact on the language of headlines and on the reader: by asking a question in a headline – the reader might get interested in the answer, by using a vulgarism – the reader pays his/her attention to this headline, because it is provocative. Furthermore, the use of wordplay in the headlines creates an interesting effect which involves the reader into the situation of an article with the help of a play. Thus, it makes easier to appreciate the work of the author and gives a positive impression of an article in general. For this reason, authors try to use the language of headlines as a tool, which could help to ‘advertise’ an article. From it follows that the newspaper articles are strictly judged by their headlines and the more peculiar they are, the more interest the article will get from the readers and the more chances that it will be read.

Additionally, there was an attempt to detect some pattern in online British newspaper headlines for the newspapers. The use of features indeed differs in *The Telegraph* and *The Sun*. For example, all samples of wordplays were detected only in *The Sun*, none were found in *The Telegraph*. Due to the longer headlines *The Sun* has more peculiarities used in them and it has more different combinations of the lexical and syntactic peculiarities. The discovered pattern

shows that headlines in *The Sun* are not only longer, but also tend to use more colloquial language. It can be explained by the fact that *The Sun* is a tabloid, and it has a demanding audience which often is not interested in reading the whole article and often is content with the information gained from the headline. This is what contrasts *The Telegraph* and *The Sun* in particular. Nevertheless, all headlines are meant to inform readers and make the readers read an article or at least arouse their interest.

Furthermore, it is necessary to mention that due to the time and volume of the paper constraints, the author currently could not provide a more detailed and scrupulous analysis. Also, the results of the research gave an idea of how this research could be improved in the future in order to obtain more proper analysis and eliminate the percentage of ambiguity - there should be realised more investigations/researches. Personal suggestions are to check and create a corpus of more than 60 newspaper headlines in different British online newspapers, more than 30 headlines per each newspaper. This would provide a bigger corpus for a research and the statistic would be more reliable. Additionally, it would be more descriptive and beneficial for further researches if they could be based on different approaches and techniques. It would be advantageous, for example, to take only one peculiarity as a subject of the research and investigate it in the more detailed way (e.g. wordplays, or questions, etc.). It would make the future research/investigation less subjective. Moreover, it is worth creating a questionnaire-based survey in order to see the reaction of people on headlines and their components. It may contribute to the analysis of the effect of the headlines on reader's choice and perception.

Regarding the results of the theoretical and the empirical parts of the research, it was considered that the goal of the current research was achieved and all research questions were properly answered.

THESES

1. Headlines have to be short, clear, persuasive, and their main function is to attract the readers, so that they were involved in the further reading of newspaper articles.
2. Syntactic and lexical peculiarities are the essential components of the headlines which create the language of headlines, create their composition, and thus make them different from the other types of writing.
3. Syntactic and lexical peculiarities contribute to the achievement of the goals of the headlines – to catch readers’ attention, to provide the necessary information about an article, to make the audience get interested and read that article.
4. Headlines work for authors and reader’ convenience: authors do not exceed space limits, the audience quickly reads the necessary information from the headline and choose whether it is worth reading or not.
5. Headline works as a trap when it contains such peculiarities as: unrecognisable *acronyms*, *abbreviations*, *blended words*, *slang words* or *vulgarisms*, *questions* and *directives* which are used in order to provoke potential readers and ‘force’ them to read further.
6. All peculiarities under discussion, both syntactic and lexical, do occur in the headlines of *The Telegraph* and *The Sun*.
7. The tabloid *The Sun* has more cases of the usage of slang words, vulgarisms or informal words in headlines; these peculiarities are applied in order to minimize the distance between the author and the reader, and help to share the common language with the audience.
8. To catch the reader’s attention questions are used in the headlines which provoke the reader to answer it, thus influence to read further.
9. Lexical and syntactic peculiarities of the language of headlines have a certain impact on the reader: by asking a question– the reader might get interested in the answer, by using a vulgarism – the reader pays his/her attention to this headline, by using a directive – the reader focuses his/her attention on it, and thus these headlines are catchy and provocative.
10. The language of headlines is a tool, which helps to ‘advertise’ an article, so that it might be read later on by the audience.
11. Long and sophisticated structures of headlines of *The Sun* could be explained that the audience concentrates its attention only on general ideas and often is not interested in the further reading.
12. Readers judge an article by its headline and the more original they are, the more chances to get a response from the readers.

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APPENDIX 1

Examples of the headlines retrieved from *The Telegraph* and *The Sun* which were used in the empirical part of the research.

Table 3.1 Headline samples retrieved from online British newspapers

1. Animal rights organization attacks Italian chef for cooking pigeon
2. Wunderbar! Speaking only English may be beneficial to your brain
3. EU referendum: Sir Jeremy Heywood keeps a straight face... until he's told that ministers aren't stupid
4. Would Brexit mean the end of green targets?
5. Leap Year 2016: Why does February have 29 days every four years?
6. 'Suffolk Strangler' officer blasts Leeds red-light zone
7. Lack of sleep can give you the 'munchies'
8. Don't wipe out the Tory ground troops
9. 'Nanny' detained in Moscow carrying 'severed head of 4-year-old girl'
10. Boy, nine, died of sepsis after being discharged from A&E with 'mild chest infection'
11. Crufts: Kennel Club delighted as dog stars of Instagram boost dwindling breeds
12. Britain's cold call king: young tech geek who lives with his mother
13. Sackcloth and magpies the habits of the extinct friars
14. Teenager intervened to save life of pregnant woman stabbed in street knife attack
15. Harvard Law School to scrap crest over links to slavery
16. Famous braidmaids
17. Man dies after being stabbed near primary school
18. The deadly secret of Ben Nevis's man-made cairns
19. Boris Johnson's fury over EU 'bullying scandal'
20. Can Brazil's democracy survive Dilma Rousseff's fall?
21. 'No drugs' in body of British aristocrat who died in Kenyan police custody
22. Speeding up chemotherapy boosts breast cancer survival rates by a third
23. Cure for cataracts: scientists use stem cells to grow 'living lens' in eye
24. Puppy severely burned in house fire has recovered and is now trained as a firefighter
25. Father saves his son from flying baseball bat
26. Three schoolboys critical after taking legal highs
27. Celebrity barrister admits supplying drugs that killed his teen lover
28. PMQs: Jeremy Corbyn's PMQ's performance a 'f***** disaster' as Cameron turns Party into a laughing stock, says Labour MP
29. George Osborne clobbers the rich, not the poor
30. Weird and wonderful religious relics
31. Love flyangle: Stag do's drunk brawl on Ryanair flight over a girl

32. Terrified Osama bin Laden feared his wife had been fitted with a tracking device inside her TOOTH
33. Forget the stars...this girl's 'vagina dress' won the Oscars and the internet can't stop talking about it
34. Remember that girl whose boyfriend faked proposing to her on Valentine's Day? She just got the best revenge ever
35. Sick CCTV footage shows men playing 'rock, paper, scissors to decide who gets to gang rape girl, 15, first'
36. Does this eerie 9/11 footage capture a GHOST rising from the wreckage of the World Trade Centre?
37. 'I'm not a f***ing supermodel': Vicky Pattison blasts 'judgemental' body shaming critics
38. Killer babysitter leads Moscow cops to flat where she beheaded girl,4, claiming 'voices' told her to kill
39. SSSStupid boy: Lad, 12, risks his life by stroking two deadly king cobra snakes
40. And the Oscar for Bust Actress goes to... Kate Upton wears VERY revealing dress to awards party
41. Jurassic Purrrk: Scientists trying to clone Ice Age cave lion after finding two near-perfectly preserved cubs
42. Hit and scum: Family release photos of teenager fighting for his life after being mown down by driver
43. Rita Ora aims to ex-cel on album: Singer inspired by her love splits
44. 'We don't have a bitch in the band!' Little Mix on why being nice is no barrier to world success
45. Arctic blast to batter Britain for a month with snow and freezing temps
46. Striker... a daily dose of your favourite football strip
47. 43 years of lies: How the EU spent decades robbing Britain of power
48. 'My kids are living with Fred West's paedo son' - Dad reveals nightmare
49. The internet is divided over this weird Mother's Day joke
50. What the cluck? Men who eat chicken and eggs 'are more likely to die from prostate cancer'
51. Feel the force, Duke! William and Harry have light-saber fight during tour of the Star Wars set
52. X-plosive! X Factor star Stevi Ritchie called Chloe-Jasmine a 'selfish b*tch' in blazing row
53. Ex-soldiers cleared of raping female colleague who killed herself two years later
54. Young Afghan vet was beaten to death by vodka-swilling thugs who celebrated random attack
55. Paw me another! These hilarious snaps show pets celebrating their birthdays in style
56. Mum of four accused of killing her daughter claims her 17-year-old son may have done it
57. What will happen to your Facebook page when you die? Good news, you'll live forever in cyberspace
58. To Bieb or not To Bieb: Youngsters know Justin's lyrics better than they know the Bard
59. Game of Friends: On-screen enemies Alfie Allen and Iwan Rheon kiss and make up in TV interview
60. Gymeth Paltrow: Iron Man actress tries toddler gym class with funny man James Corden for late night chat show

Source: *The Telegraph* and *The Sun* newspapers

APPENDIX 2

The text analysis of the headlines samples.

Table 3.2 Analysis of the retrieved headline samples from online British newspapers

Headlines samples	Constituents of headlines	Analysis of syntactic structures	
<i>The Telegraph</i>			
1. Animal rights organization attacks Italian chef for cooking pigeon	1. Animal rights organization attacks Italian chef 2. for cooking pigeon	1. SVO <i>+for</i> 2. -ing clause	Compound sentence
2. Wunderbar! Speaking only English may be beneficial to your brain	1. Wunderbar! 2. Speaking only English may be beneficial to your brain	1. Exclamation 2. non-finite clause	Combination of exclamation (minor sentence) and non-finite clause
3. EU referendum: Sir Jeremy Heywood keeps a straight face... until he's told that ministers aren't stupid	1. EU referendum 2. Sir Jeremy Heywood keeps a straight face... 3. he's told 4. ministers aren't stupid	1. Noun phrase 2. simple sentence (SVO) <i>until</i> 3. dependent clause <i>that</i> 4. independent clause - simple sentence (SVC)	Combination of NP and compound-complex sentence
4. Would Brexit mean the end of green targets?		Interrogative question	
5. Leap Year 2016: Why does February have 29 days every four years?	1. Leap Year 2016 2. Why does February have 29 days every four years?	1. Noun phrase 2. interrogative question	Combination of NP and question
6. 'Suffolk Strangler' officer blasts Leeds red-light zone		Simple sentence (SVO)	
7. Lack of sleep can give you the 'munchies'		Simple sentence (SVOC)	
8. Don't wipe out the Tory ground troops		Directive (command)	
9. 'Nanny' detained in Moscow carrying 'severed head of 4-year-old girl'	'Nanny' detained in Moscow <i>[was]</i> carrying 'severed head of 4-year-old girl'	Non-finite clause – (verbless clause); medial ellipsis	
10. Boy, nine, died of sepsis after being discharged from A&E with 'mild chest infection'	1. Boy, nine, died of sepsis 2. being discharged from A&E with 'mild chest infection'	1. Simple sentence (SVC) <i>after</i> 2. dependent non-finite -ing clause	Complex sentence
11. Crufts: Kennel Club delighted as dog stars of Instagram boost dwindling breeds	1. Crufts 2. Kennel Club <i>[was]</i> delighted 3. as dog stars of Instagram boost dwindling breeds	1. Noun 2. non-finite clause – (verbless clause); medial ellipsis 3. dependent clause	Complex sentence
12. Britain's cold call king: young tech geek who lives with his mother	1. Britain's cold call king 2. <i>[a]</i> young tech geek 3. who lives with his mother	1. Simple sentence (SVO) 2. noun phrase 3. relative clause	Combination of simple and complex sentences
13. Sackcloth and magpies	Sackcloth and magpies <i>[are]</i>	Non-finite clause – (verbless clause); medial	

Headlines samples	Constituents of headlines	Analysis of syntactic structures	
the habits of the extinct friars	the habits of the extinct friars	ellipsis	
14. Teenager intervened to save life of pregnant woman stabbed in street knife attack	1. Teenager intervened to save life 2. of [a] pregnant woman stabbed in street knife attack	1. Simple sentence (SVO) 2. article drop; NP	Simple sentence (SVOC)
15. Harvard Law School to scrap crest over links to slavery	Harvard Law School [is about] to scrap crest over links to slavery	Non-finite clause – (verbless clause); medial ellipsis	
16. Famous braidmaids		NP	
17. Man dies after being stabbed near primary school	1. Man dies 2. being stabbed near [a] primary school	1. Simple sentence (SV) + after 2. dependent non-finite – ing clause	Complex sentence
18. The deadly secret of Ben Nevis's man-made cairns	1. The deadly secret 2. of Ben Nevis's man-made cairns	1. Noun phrase 2. modifier - prepositional phrase	NP
19. Boris Johnson's fury over EU 'bullying scandal'	1. Boris Johnson's fury 2. over EU 'bullying scandal'	1. Noun phrase 2. modifier - prepositional phrase	NP
20. Can Brazil's democracy survive Dilma Rousseff's fall?		Yes/no question	
21. 'No drugs' in body of British aristocrat who died in Kenyan police custody	1. [there is] 'No drugs' 2. in body of British aristocrat 3. who died in Kenyan police custody	1. Medial and initial ellipsis 2. prepositional phrases 3. relative clause	Elliptical complex sentence
22. Speeding up chemotherapy boosts breast cancer survival rates by a third		Simple sentence (SVOA) with non-finite –ing clause	
23. Cure for cataracts: scientists use stem cells to grow 'living lens' in eye	1. Cure for cataracts 2. scientists use stem cells 3. [in order] to grow [a] 'living lens' in eye	1. Noun phrase 2. simple sentence (SVO) 3. dependent clause non-finite clause	Combination of NP and complex sentence
24. Puppy severely burned in house fire has recovered and is now trained as a firefighter	1. Puppy severely burned in house fire has recovered <u>and</u> 2. [puppy] is now trained as a firefighter	Compound sentence with omission of a subject in the 2 nd clause	
25. Father saves his son from flying baseball bat		Simple sentence (SVOA) with non-finite –ing clause	
26. Three schoolboys critical after taking legal highs	1. Three schoolboys [are] critical 2. after taking legal highs	1. Simple sentence with medial ellipsis (SC) 2. dependent non-finite – ing clause	Complex elliptical sentence
27. Celebrity barrister admits supplying drugs that killed his teen lover	1. Celebrity barrister admits supplying drugs 2. that killed his teen lover	1. Simple sentence (SVO) 2. relative clause	Compound sentence
28. PMQs: Jeremy Corbyn's PMQ's performance a '***** disaster' as	1. PMQs 2. Jeremy Corbyn's PMQ's performance [is] a '***** disaster'	1. Noun phrase 2. simple sentence (SVO) with medial ellipsis + as	Combination of NP, complex sentence and a direct speech indicator

Headlines samples	Constituents of headlines	Analysis of syntactic structures	
Cameron turns Party into a laughing stock, says Labour MP	3. Cameron turns Party into a laughing stock, 4. says Labour MP	3. independent clause; simple sentence (SVOA) 4. part of a direct speech	
29. George Osborne clobbers the rich, not the poor	George Osborne clobbers the rich, <i>[but he does]</i> not <i>[clobber]</i> the poor	Compound sentence with ellipsis	
30. Weird and wonderful religious relics		NP	
The Sun			
31. Love flyangle: Stag do's drunk brawl on Ryanair flight over a girl	1. Love flyangle 2. Stag do's drunk brawl on Ryanair flight over a girl	1. Noun phrase 2. noun phrase and prepositional phrases	Combination of NPs and prepositional phrases
32. Terrified Osama bin Laden feared his wife had been fitted with a tracking device inside her TOOTH	1. Terrified Osama bin Laden feared <i>[that]</i> 2. his wife had been fitted with a tracking device inside her TOOTH	1. Simple sentence (SV) 2. independent clause; simple sentence (SVA)	Compound sentence
33. Forget the stars...this girl's 'vagina dress' won the Oscars and the internet can't stop talking about it	1. Forget the stars... 2. this girl's 'vagina dress' won the Oscars 3. and the internet can't stop talking about it	1. Directive (command) 2. simple sentence (SVO) 3. simple sentence (SVA)	Combination of a directive and compound sentence
34. Remember that girl whose boyfriend faked proposing to her on Valentine's Day? She just got the best revenge ever	1. <i>[Do you]</i> Remember that girl whose boyfriend faked proposing to her on Valentine's Day? 2. She just got the best revenge ever	1. Elliptical yes-no question 2. simple sentence (SVO)	Combination of a question and simple sentence
35. Sick CCTV footage shows men playing 'rock, paper, scissors' to decide who gets to gang rape girl, 15, first	1. Sick CCTV footage shows men playing 'rock, paper, scissors' 2. <i>[in order]</i> to decide who gets to gang rape girl, 15 <i>[years old]</i> , first	1. Simple sentence (SVOA) 2. dependent non-finite elliptical clause	Complex sentence
36. Does this eerie 9/11 footage capture a GHOST rising from the wreckage of the World Trade Centre?		Yes/no question	
37. 'I'm not a f***ing supermodel': Vicky Pattison blasts 'judgemental' body shaming critics	1. 'I'm not a f***ing supermodel' 2. Vicky Pattison blasts 'judgemental' body shaming critics	1. Simple sentence (SVO) as a quotation 2. simple sentence (SVO)	Combination of simple sentences
38. Killer babysitter leads Moscow cops to flat where she beheaded girl, 4, claiming 'voices' told her to kill	1. Killer babysitter leads Moscow cops to flat 2. where she beheaded <i>[a]</i> girl, <i>[age]</i> 4, claiming 'voices' told her to kill	1. Simple sentence (SVOA) 2. independent relative clause; simple sentence (SVOA) and non-finite clause	Compound sentence
39. SSSStupid boy: Lad, 12, risks his life by stroking two deadly	1. SSSStupid boy 2. Lad, 12 <i>[years old]</i> , risks his life	1. Noun phrase 2. simple sentence (SVO) 3. dependent non-finite	Combination of NP and complex sentence

Headlines samples	Constituents of headlines	Analysis of syntactic structures	
king cobra snakes	3. by stroking two deadly king cobra snakes	-ing clause	
40. And the Oscar for Bust Actress goes to... Kate Upton wears VERY revealing dress to awards party	1.And the Oscar for Bust Actress goes to... 2.Kate Upton wears VERY revealing dress to awards party	1. Elliptical simple sentence (SV) 2. simple sentence (SVOA)	Combination of simple sentences and ellipsis
41. Jurassic Purrrk: Scientists trying to clone Ice Age cave lion after finding two near-perfectly preserved cubs	1. Jurassic Purrrk 2. Scientists <i>[are]</i> trying to clone Ice Age cave lion 3.after finding two near-perfectly preserved cubs	1. Noun phrase 2. elliptical simple sentence (SVOO) 3.dependent non-finite -ing clause	Combination of NP and elliptical complex sentence
42. Hit and scum: Family release photos of teenager fighting for his life after being mown down by driver	1.Hit and scum 2.Family release photos of teenager fighting for his life 3. after being mown down by driver	1. Adj phrase 2. simple sentence (SVOA) 3.dependent non-finite -ing clause	Combination of a phrase and complex sentence
43. Rita Ora aims to ex-cel on album: Singer inspired by her love splits	1.Rita Ora aims to ex-cel on album 2.Singer inspired by her love splits	1.Simple sentence (SVOA) 2.simple sentence (SVC)	Combination of simple sentences
44. 'We don't have a bitch in the band!' Little Mix on why being nice is no barrier to world success	1. 'We don't have a bitch in the band!' 2.Little Mix <i>[are]</i> on why being nice is no barrier to world success	1.Simple sentence(SVOA) as a quotation and exclamation 2. complex sentence with medial ellipsis	Combination of simple and complex sentence with direct quotation and medial ellipsis
45. Arctic blast to batter Britain for a month with snow and freezing temps	<i>[the]</i> Arctic blast <i>[is about]</i> to batter Britain for a month with snow and freezing temps	Simple sentence (SVOAA) with medial and initial ellipses	
46. Striker... a daily dose of your favourite football strip	1. Striker... 2.a daily dose of your favourite football strip	1.Noun 2.noun phrase	Combination of a noun and ellipsis, and NP
47. 43 years of lies: How the EU spent decades robbing Britain of power	1.43 years of lies 2.How the EU spent decades robbing Britain of power	1.Noun phrase 2.statement; simple sentence (SVOC)	Combination of NP and simple sentence
48. 'My kids are living with Fred West's paedo son' - Dad reveals nightmare	1. 'My kids are living with Fred West's paedo son' 2.Dad reveals <i>[the]</i> nightmare	1.Simple sentence (SVA) and direct speech 2. simple sentence (SVO)	Combination of simple sentences
49. The internet is divided over this weird Mother's Day joke		Simple sentence (SVA)	
50. What the cluck? Men who eat chicken and eggs 'are more likely to die from prostate cancer'	1. What the cluck? 2.Men [...] 'are more likely to die from <i>[a]</i> prostate cancer' 3.who eat chicken and eggs	1.Question 2. simple sentence (SVA) 3. relative clause	Combination of a question and complex sentence
51. Feel the force, Duke! William and Harry have light-saber fight during tour of the Star Wars set	1.Feel the force, Duke! 2.William and Harry have <i>[a]</i> light-saber fight 3.during tour of the Star Wars set	1.Directive (command) 2.simple sentence (SVO) 3.dependent clause	Combination of a directive and complex sentence

Headlines samples	Constituents of headlines	Analysis of syntactic structures	
52. X-plosive! X Factor star Stevi Ritchie called Chloe-Jasmine a 'selfish b*tch' in blazing row	1.X-plosive! 2.X Factor star Stevi Ritchie called Chloe-Jasmine a 'selfish b*tch' in [a] blazing row	1.Exclamation (minor sentence) 2.simple sentence (SVOOC)	Combination of a minor and simple sentences
53. Ex-soldiers cleared of raping female colleague who killed herself two years later	1.Ex-soldiers [were] cleared of raping female colleague 2.who killed herself two years later	1.Simple sentence (SVOA) with medial ellipsis 2.relative clause	Complex sentence
54. Young Afghan vet was beaten to death by vodka-swilling thugs who celebrated random attack	1.Young Afghan vet was beaten to death by vodka-swilling thugs 2.who celebrated random attack	1.Simple sentence (SVAO) with medial ellipsis 2.relative clause	Complex sentence
55. Paw me another! These hilarious snaps show pets celebrating their birthdays in style	1.Paw me another! 2.These hilarious snaps show pets 3.celebrating their birthdays in style	1.Directive (command) 2.simple sentence (SVO) 3.non-finite verb clause	Combination of directive and complex sentence
56. Mum of four accused of killing her daughter claims her 17-year-old son may have done it	1. Mum of four accused of killing her daughter claims 2.[that] her 17-year-old son may have done it	Complex sentence	
57. What will happen to your Facebook page when you die? Good news, you'll live forever in cyberspace	1.What will happen to your Facebook page when you die? 2.Good news 3.you'll live forever in cyberspace	1. Question 2. noun phrase 3.simple sentence (SVCA)	Combination of question, NP and simple sentence
58. To Bieb or not To Bieb: Youngsters know Justin's lyrics better than they know the Bard	1.To Bieb or not To Bieb 2.Youngsters know Justin's lyrics better than they know the Bard	1.Non-finite infinitive clause 2.complex sentence	Combination of non-finite clause and complex sentence
59. Game of Friends: On-screen enemies Alfie Allen and Iwan Rheon kiss and make up in TV interview	1.Game of Friends 2.On-screen enemies Alfie Allen and Iwan Rheon kiss and [they] make up in TV interview	1.Noun phrase 2. compound sentence	Combination of NP and compound sentence
60. Gymeth Paltrow: Iron Man actress tries toddler gym class with funny man James Corden for late night chat show	1.Gymeth Paltrow 2.Iron Man actress tries toddler gym class 3.with funny man James Corden for late night chat show	1. Name 2. simple sentence (SVOAA)	Combination of a simple sentence and a name

Source: based on the results of the empirical research.

Table 3.2 Lexical analysis of headlines samples from online British newspapers

Headlines samples	Constituents of the headlines	Analysis of lexical and linguistic features	
<i>The Telegraph</i>			
1. Animal rights organization attacks Italian chef for cooking pigeon	organization <u>attacks</u>	'to criticize'	Journalese
2. Wunderbar! Speaking only English may be beneficial to your brain	Wunderbar!	'wonderful' in German	Slang (<i>borrowing</i>)
3. EU referendum: Sir Jeremy Heywood keeps a straight face... until he's told that ministers aren't stupid	1. EU 2. keeps a straight face	Acronym/Abbreviation (<i>an idiom</i>)	
4. Would Brexit mean the end of green targets?	Brexit	Britain + exit	Blending
5. Leap Year 2016: Why does February have 29 days every four years?	Why/February/days /every	Repetition of a vowel [i]	(<i>Assonance</i>)
6. 'Suffolk Strangler' officer blasts Leeds red-light zone	'Suffolk Strangler' officer <u>blasts</u> Leeds red-light zone	1.Repetition of consonants [s], [f], [l] 2. meaning 'to explode'	Journalese (<i>Alliteration</i>)
7. Lack of sleep can give you the 'munchies'	the ' <u>munchies</u> '	'a craving for a foods'	Slang
8. Don't wipe out the Tory ground troops	wipe out	Slang/informal	
9. 'Nanny' detained in Moscow carrying 'severed head of 4-year-old girl'	'Nanny' detained in Moscow carrying	Repetition of nasal consonants [n] and [ŋ]	(<i>Alliteration</i>)
10. Boy, nine, died of sepsis after being discharged from A&E with 'mild chest infection'	A&E	Accident and Emergency (department in hospitals)	Acronym/Abbreviation
11. Crufts: Kennel Club delighted as dog stars of Instagram boost dwindling breeds	1. Crufts: Kennel Club delighted as dog stars of Instagram boost dwindling breeds 2. to boost	Repetition of consonants [k],[d] and [b] 2. 'to increase'	Journalese (<i>Alliteration</i>)
12. Britain's cold call king: young tech geek who lives with his mother	1. Britain's cold call king : 2. tech 3. geek	1. Repetition of a consonant [k] 2. technology 3. 'a person with an unusual personality'	Clipping and slang (<i>Alliteration</i>)
13. Sackcloth and magpies the habits of the extinct friars	Sackcloth and magpies	Compounds	
14. Teenager intervened to save life of pregnant woman stabbed in street knife attack	Teenager intervened to save life of pregnant woman stabbed in street knife attack	Repetition of a vowel [i], and consonants [s] and [t]	(<i>Alliteration</i>)
15. Harvard Law School to scrap crest over links to	1. Harvard Law School to scrap crest over links to	1. Repetition of consonants [s] and [c]	Journalese (<i>Alliteration</i>)

Headlines samples	Constituents of the headlines	Analysis of lexical and linguistic features	
slavery	slavery 2.to scrap	2. 'to cancel'	
16. Famous braidmaids	braidmaids	Compound	
17. Man dies after being stabbed near primary school	Man dies after being stabbed near primary school	Repetition of consonants [s] and [b]	(Alliteration)
18. The deadly secret of Ben Nevis's man-made cairns	man-made	Compound	
19. Boris Johnson's fury over EU 'bullying scandal'	1.fury 2.EU	1. anger (more dramatic) 2. European Union	Journalese and acronym/abbreviation
20. Can Brazil's democracy survive Dilma Rousseff's fall?	fall	1. impeachment process (according to article)	Journalese
21. 'No drugs' in body of British aristocrat who died in Kenyan police custody	'No drugs' in body of British aristocrat who died in Kenyan police custody	Repetition of a consonants [b] and a vowel [o]	(Alliteration and assonance)
22. Speeding up chemotherapy boosts breast cancer survival rates by a third	Speeding up chemotherapy boosts breast cancer survival rates by a third	1. 'to increase' 2. repetition of consonants [s] and [b]	Journalese (Alliteration)
23. Cure for cataracts: scientists use stem cells to grow 'living lens' in eye	Cure for cataracts: scientists use stem cells to grow 'living lens' in eye	1. Repetition of consonants [k], [s] and [l]	(Alliteration)
24. Puppy severely burned in house fire has recovered and is now trained as a firefighter	as a <u>firefighter</u>	Compound	
25. Father saves his son from flying baseball bat	Father saves his son from flying <u>baseball</u> bat	1. Repetition of consonants [f], [s] and [b] 2.compound	Compound (Alliteration)
26. Three schoolboys critical after taking legal highs	schoolboys	Compound	
27. Celebrity barrister admits supplying drugs that killed his teen lover	his <u>teen</u> lover	teenage	Clipping
28. PMQs: Jeremy Corbyn's PMQ's performance a '***** disaster' as Cameron turns Party into a laughing stock, says Labour MP	1.PMQs 2.a '***** disaster' 3. a laughing stock, 4.says Labour MP	1.Acronym/abbreviation 2.slang/vulgarism 3.idiom 4.acronym/abbreviation	Acronyms/abbreviations, slang/vulgarism (an idiom)
29. George Osborne clobbers the rich, not the poor	<u>clobbers</u> the rich	'to criticize harshly'	Slang
30. Weird and wonderful religious relics	Weird and wonderful religious relics	(Alliteration)	

Headlines samples	Constituents of the headlines	Analysis of lexical and linguistic features	
<i>The Sun</i>			
31. Love flyangle: Stag do's drunk brawl on Ryanair flight over a girl	1.Love flyangle 2.Stag do 3.brawl	1.Love triangle 2. 'bachelor party' 3. 'noisy, rough, uncontrolled fight'	Wordplay/pun and slang
32. Terrified Osama bin Laden feared his wife had been fitted with a tracking device inside her TOOTH	1.Terrified and feared 2.TOOTH	1.Journalese (for dramatic effect) 2.use of uppcase	Journalese (<i>the use of uppcase</i>)
33. Forget the stars...this girl's 'vagina dress' won the Oscars and the internet can't stop talking about it	this girl's ' <u>vagina dress</u> '	Slang/vulgarism	
34. Remember that girl whose boyfriend faked proposing to her on Valentine's Day? She just got the best revenge ever	1.boyfriend 2. <u>faked</u> proposing	1.Compound 2. 'to trick, deceive'	Compound and slang
35. Sick CCTV footage shows men playing 'rock, paper, scissors to decide who gets to gang rape girl, 15, first'	1. Sick CCTV footage 2.who gets to gang rape girl	1.Repetition of consonants [s] and [g], and a vowel [i] 2. Closed-circuit television	Acronym/abbreviation (<i>alliteration, assonance</i>)
36. Does this eerie 9/11 footage capture a GHOST rising from the wreckage of the World Trade Centre?	GHOST rising from the wreckage of the World Trade Centre?	1.Use of uppcase 2.repetition of consonant [r]	(<i>Alliteration and the use of uppcase</i>)
37. 'I'm not a f***ing supermodel': Vicky Pattison blasts 'judgemental' body shaming critics	1.a f***ing supermodel' 2.Vicky Pattison blasts 'judgemental' body shaming critics	1.Salng/vulgarism 2. 'to criticize severely' 3.repetition of a constant [b]	Slang/vulgarism (<i>Alliteration</i>)
38. Killer babysitter leads Moscow cops to flat where she beheaded girl,4, claiming 'voices' told her to kill	Killer babysitter leads Moscow cops to flat where she beheaded girl,4, claiming 'voices' told her to kill	1.Compound 2.slang for 'a police officer' 3.repetition of a consonant [k]	Slang and compound words (<i>alliteration</i>)
39. SSSStupid boy: Lad, 12, risks his life by stroking two deadly king cobra snakes	1. SSSS Stupid boy 2.Lad 3. king cobra snakes	1.Alliteration and wordplay + onomatopoeia 2.slang/inf 3.repetition of a consonant [k]	Wordplay, slang/informal word (<i>Alliteration</i>)
40. And the Oscar for Bust Actress goes to... Kate Upton wears VERY revealing dress to awards party	1. <i>Bust</i> Actress 2. VERY	1.Best Actress 2. uppcase	Wordplay/pun (<i>the use of uppcase</i>)
41. Jurassic Purrkk: Scientists trying to clone	1.Jurassic <i>Purrkk</i> Scientists trying to clone	1.Jurassic park - wordplay +	Wordplay, compound (<i>Alliteration</i>)

Headlines samples	Constituents of the headlines	Analysis of lexical and linguistic features	
Ice Age cave lion after finding two near-perfectly preserved cubs	Ice Age cave lion after finding two <u>near-perfectly</u> preserved cubs	onomatopoeia 2. repetition of a consonant [k] 3. compound	
42. Hit and scum: Family release photos of teenager fighting for his life after being mown down by driver	1. Hit and scum 2. Family release photos of teenager fighting for his life after being 3. <u>mown down</u> by driver	1. Hit and run 2. repetition of a consonant [f] 3. 'knock someone or something down'	Wordplay (Alliteration and idiom)
43. Rita Ora aims to ex-cel on album: Singer inspired by her love splits	1. to ex-cel on album 2. <u>splits</u>	1. ex ^{boyfriend} + sell / excel 2. 'division'	Wordplay/pun and journalese
44. 'We don't have a bitch in the band!' Little Mix on why being nice is no barrier to world success	a <u>bitch</u> in the band !	Slang/vulgarism (Alliteration)	
45. Arctic blast to batter Britain for a month with snow and freezing temps	1. Arctic <u>blast</u> to batter Britain 3. freezing temps	1. repetition of a consonant [b] 2. 'a sudden strong blow of air' 3. temperature	Journalese and clipping (Alliteration)
46. Striker... a daily dose of your favourite football strip	a daily dose of your favourite football strip	(Alliteration)	
47. 43 years of lies: How the EU spent decades robbing Britain of power	EU	Acronym/abbreviation	
48. 'My kids are living with Fred West's paedo son' - Dad reveals nightmare	<u>paedo</u> son	Paedophile	Clipping and slang/informal word
49. The internet is divided over this weird Mother's Day joke	The internet is divided over this weird Mother's Day joke	(Assonance)	
50. What the cluck? Men who eat chicken and eggs 'are more likely to die from prostate cancer'	What the cluck?	euphemism for vulgar expression	Slang
51. Feel the force, Duke! William and Harry have light-saber fight during tour of the Star Wars set	1. Feel the force, Duke! 2. <u>light-saber</u> fight	1. 'Feel the force, Luke' 2. compound	Wordplay/pun and compound
52. X-plosive! X Factor star Stevi Ritchie called Chloe-Jasmine a 'selfish b*tch' in blazing row	1. X-plosive! 2. a 'selfish b*tch ' 3. <u>blazing row</u> 4. star Stevi Ritchie called Chloe-Jasmine a 'selfish b*tch ' in blazing row	1. Explosive 2. slang/vulgarism 3. 'a very angry dispute' 4. repetition of consonants [s], [k] and [b]	Wordplay/pun, slang/vulgarism and journalese (Alliteration)
53. Ex-soldiers cleared of raping female colleague who killed herself two years later	Ex-soldiers cleared of raping female colleague who killed herself two years later	Repetition of consonants [k] and [l]	(Alliteration)
54. Young Afghan vet was beaten to death by vodka-swilling thugs	1. vet 2. vodka-swilling 3. thugs	1. veteran 2. compound 3. 'a criminal'	Clipping, compound and slang word

Headlines samples	Constituents of the headlines	Analysis of lexical and linguistic features	
who celebrated random attack			
55. Paw me another! These hilarious snaps show pets celebrating their birthdays in style	1. Paw me another! 2. snaps 3. birthdays 4.in style	1. <i>Pour</i> me another 2. sn apshoot; slang 3. compound 4. ‘in luxury’	Wordplay, slang, clipping (<i>an idiom</i>)
56. Mum of four accused of killing her daughter claims her 17-year-old son may have done it	Mum of four accused of killing her daughter claims her 17-year-old son may have done it	(<i>Assonance and alliteration</i>)	
57. What will happen to your Facebook page when you die? Good news, you’ll live forever in cyberspace	What will happen to your <u>Facebook</u> page when you die?	1. Repetition of a consonant [w] 2. compound	Compound (<i>Alliteration</i>)
58. To Bieb or not To Bieb: Youngsters know Justin’s lyrics better than they know the Bard	1. To Bieb or not To Bieb 2. Youngsters know Justin’s lyrics better than they know the Bard	1. ‘To be or not to be’ 2. repetition of consonants [b], [n] and [θ]	Wordplay/pun (<i>Alliteration</i>)
59. Game of Friends: On-screen enemies Alfie Allen and Iwan Rheon kiss and make up in TV interview	1. Game of <i>Friends</i> 2. TV	1. Game of Thrones 2. television	Wordplay/pun and acronym/abbreviation
60. Gymeth Paltrow: Iron Man actress tries toddler gym class with funny man James Corden for late night chat show	1. <i>Gymeth</i> Paltrow 2. Iron Man actress tries toddler gym class	1. Gwyneth Paltrow 2. repetition of a consonant [t]	Wordplay/pun (<i>Alliteration</i>)

Source: based on the results of the empirical research.

Table 3.3 Occurrence of the syntactic structures in online British newspaper headlines

Syntactic structures	Online British newspapers			
			<i>The Telegraph</i>	<i>The Sun</i>
Combination of several structures	6		21	
Complex sentences	5 (3 [*])	8	4 (8)	12
Simple sentences	5 (1)	6	2 (10)	12
Phrases	4 (3)	7	(9)	9
Non-finite clauses	3 (2)	5	(1)	1
Compound sentences	4		2 (2)	4
Questions	2 (1)	3	1 (3)	4
Directives	1	1	(3)	3
Minor sentences	(1)	1	(1)	1
Compound-complex sentences	(1)	1		
<i>*number indicates that the structure was used as a part of a combination</i>				

Source: based on the results of the empirical research.

Table 3.4 Occurrence of the linguistic and lexical peculiarities in online British newspaper headlines

Linguistic and lexical peculiarities	Online British newspapers			
			<i>The Telegraph</i>	<i>The Sun</i>
Combination of features	3		13	
Slang/Vulgarisms/informal word	4 (2)	6	4 (8)	12
Wordplays/Pun			4 (8)	12
Journalese	6 (1)	7	1 (3)	4
Compounding	6		1 (5)	6
Acronym/Abbreviation	2 (2)	4	2 (1)	3
Clipping	1 (1)	2	(4)	4
Blending	1			
Alliteration and assonance			(13)	(17)
Idioms			(2)	(2)
Uppercase letters				(3)
<i>*number indicates that the feature was used as a part of a combination</i>				

Source: based on the results of the empirical research.

Table 3.5 The frequency of using the syntactic structures in the headlines of *The Telegraph*

Syntactic structures	Frequency of the use	
Combination of several structures	6	
Complex sentences	5 (3*)	8
Simple sentences	5 (1)	6
Phrases	4 (3)	7
Non-finite clauses	3 (2)	5
Compound sentences	4	
Questions	2 (1)	3
Directives	1	1
Minor sentences	(1)	1
Compound-complex sentences	(1)	1
Total :	42	

**number indicates that the structure was used as a part of a combination*

Table 3.6 The frequency of using the lexical peculiarities in the headlines of *The Telegraph*

Linguistic and lexical peculiarities	Frequency of the use	
Combination of features	3	
Slang/Vulgarisms/informal word	4 (2)	6
Wordplays/Pun		
Journalese	6 (1)	7
Compounding	6	
Acronym/Abbreviation	2 (2)	4
Clipping	1 (1)	2
Blending	1	
Total:	29	

**number indicates that the feature was used as a part of a combination*

Source: based on the results of the empirical research.

Table 3.7 The frequency of using the syntactic structures in the headlines of *The Sun*

Syntactic structures	Frequency of the use	
Combination of several structures	21	
Complex sentences	4 (8)	12
Simple sentences	2 (10)	12
Phrases	(9)	9
Non-finite clauses	(1)	1
Compound sentences	2 (2)	4
Questions	1 (3)	4
Directives	(3)	3
Minor sentences	(1)	1
Total:	67	

**number indicates that the structure was used as a part of a combination*

Source: based on the results of the empirical research.

Table 3.8 The frequency of using the lexical peculiarities in the headlines of *The Sun*

Linguistic and lexical peculiarities	Frequency of the use	
Combination of features	13	
Slang/Vulgarisms/informal word	4 (8)	12
Wordplays/Pun	4 (8)	12
Journalese	1 (3)	4
Compounding	1 (5)	6
Acronym/Abbreviation	2 (1)	3
Clipping	(4)	4
Blending		
Total:	54	

**number indicates that the feature was used as a part of a combination*

APPENDIX 3

The comparison of the occurrence of syntactic and lexical peculiarities in
The Telegraph and *The Sun*

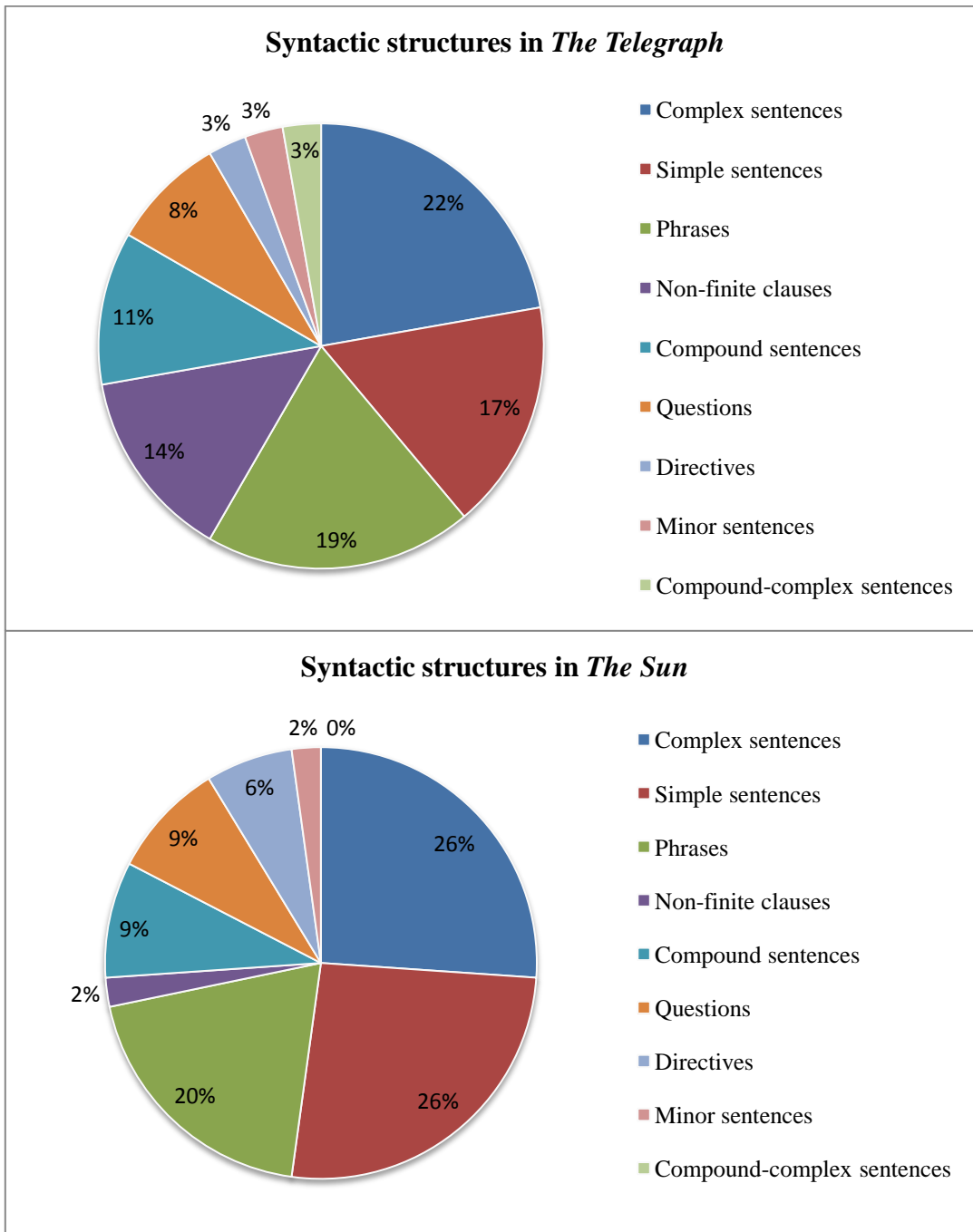


Figure 3.1 The percentage of occurrence of syntactic structures in *The Sun* and *The Telegraph*

Source: based on the results of the empirical research.

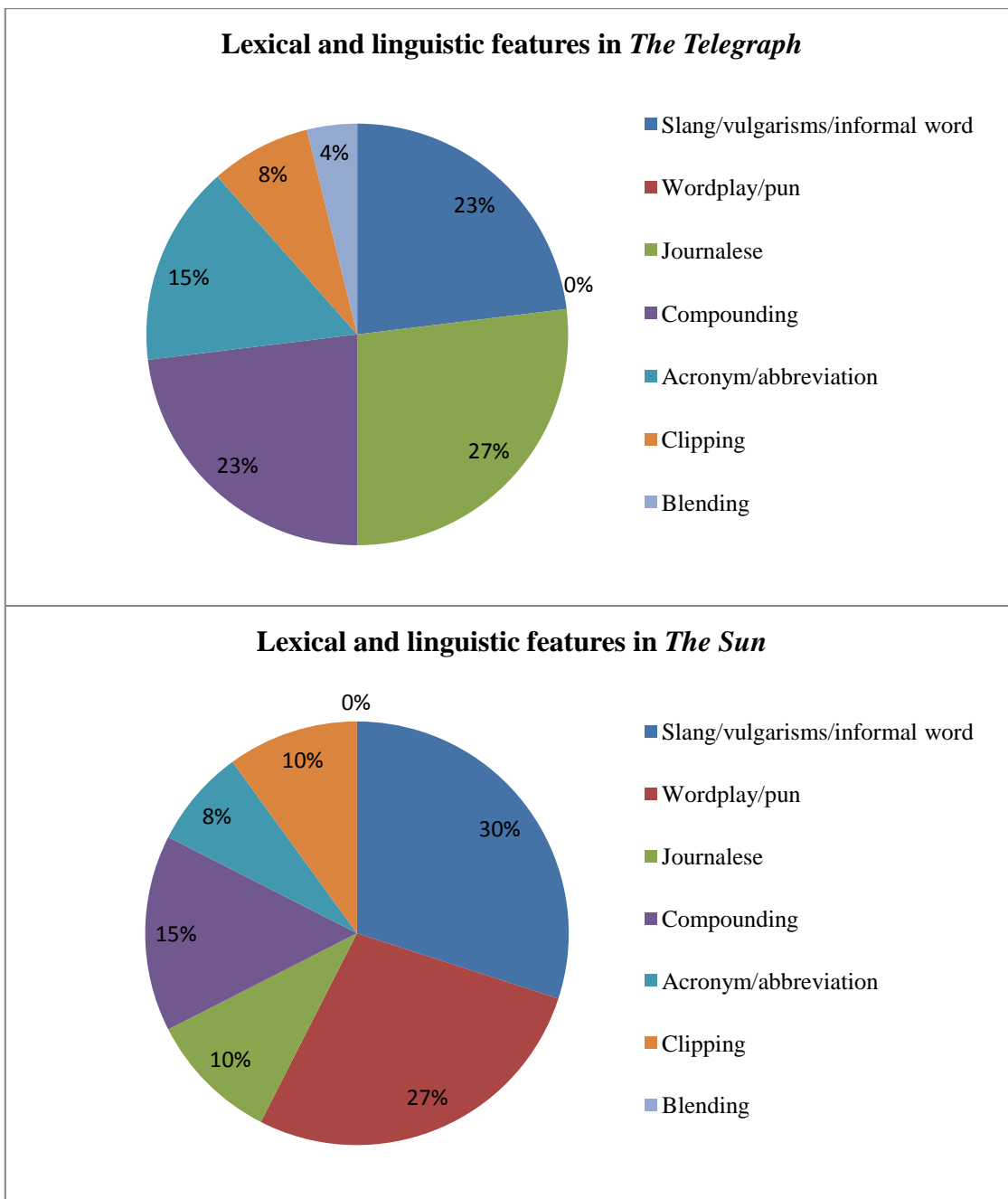


Figure 3.2 The percentage of occurrence of lexical and linguistic peculiarities in *The Sun* and *The Telegraph*

Source: based on the results of the empirical research.

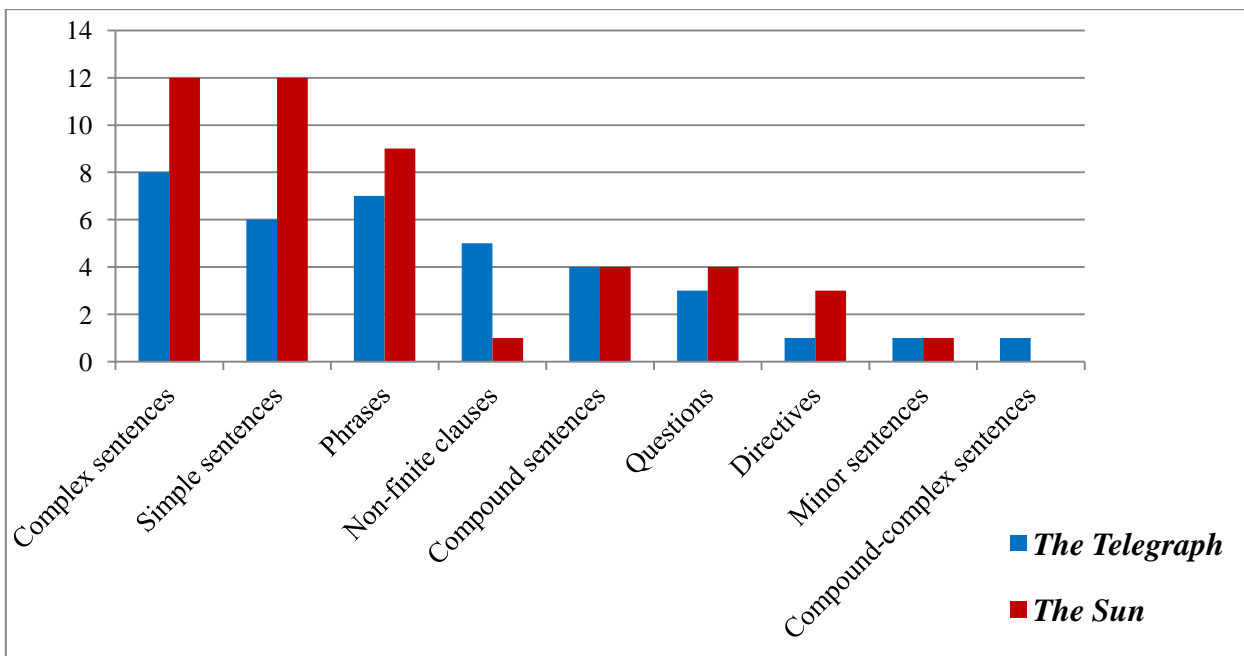


Figure 3.3 The comparison in the occurrence of syntactic peculiarities in *The Telegraph* and *The Sun*

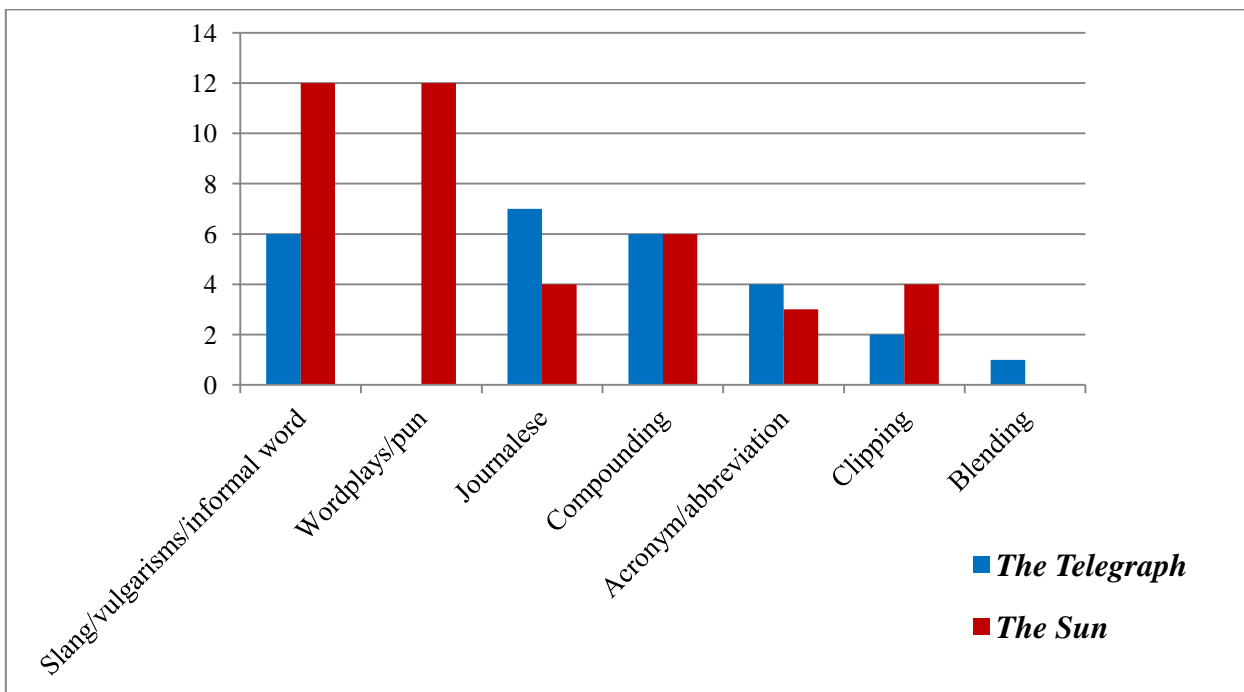


Figure 3.4 The comparison in the occurrence of lexical peculiarities in *The Telegraph* and *The Sun*

Source: based on the results of the empirical research.

Dokumentārā lapa

Bakalaura darbs „Lexical and Syntactic Peculiarities of Online British Newspaper Headlines” (Leksiskās un sintaktiskās īpatnības britu avīžu virsrakstos elektroniskā veidā) izstrādāts LU Humanitāro zinātņu fakultātē.

Ar savu parakstu apliecinu, ka pētījums veikts patstāvīgi, izmantoti tikai tajā norādītie informācijas avoti un iesniegtā darba elektroniskā kopija atbilst izdrukai.

Autors: Olga Klimaševiča

25. 05. 2016.

Rekomendēju/nerekomendēju darbu aizstāvēšanai

Vadītāja: lektore Irina Sokolova

25. 05. 2016.

Recenzents:

Studiju metodiķe: Sintija Zankovska

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