

Advanced Research in English Series



NEWS AS SOCIAL PRACTICE

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Pós-Graduação em Inglês
Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina

**ADVANCED RESEARCH
IN ENGLISH SERIES**

ARES

CARMEN ROSA CALDAS-COULTHARD

**NEWS AS SOCIAL PRACTICE:
A STUDY IN CRITICAL
DISCOURSE ANALYSIS**

ADVANCED RESEARCH IN ENGLISH SERIES
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ABSTRACT

In this study, I examine **news** in the British written press as a genre within the discourse of the media. By using a critical discourse analytical approach to the language of the news, I demonstrate that news is not a natural phenomenon emerging from facts in real life, but socially and culturally determined. News producers are social agents in a network of social relations who reveal their own ideological stance towards what is reported. **News** is not the event, but the **report** of the event.

I am particularly concerned with one of the major features of narrative texts: the report of what people say. Most of the time, **news is what is said**. I explore here, therefore, the concept of accessed voice: who is given voice and how this voice is reported in the press. The values and words of a privileged body of people who have special roles in society are generally put forward. Women, according to this research, are part of the unaccessed voice group, while authority and important people are generally present in the press. Unequal access is evident in what is reported and who speaks, and as a consequence, the linguistic code imposes and reinforces attitude and values on what it represents.

By deconstructing news as narrative texts, I make visible the ways newspapers handle social identities and gender relations in terms of ‘difference’. I try to show here that specific textual features invoke extra textual, social, cultural and ideological practices. We can then start to be aware of how language is used to manipulate and control people. If texts are read critically, discrimination and social asymmetries can be challenged. And social change can be achieved.

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INTRODUCTION¹

News as Social Practice

The language of the media is nowadays one of the most pervasive and spread languages that people from all sorts of literate societies are exposed to. With the advances of technology within communication systems and networks, the production of written and spoken news invades our lives daily. Newspapers, television, radio and magazines are the main source not only of information, but also particularly of entertainment for a large amount of people all over the world. People talk about the latest news in their work and family environment, a news item can produce reverberations and other news stories are then produced based on the initial one, people take sides and argue about different reports of events, etc. In sum, news has a social, a political and an educational role - by being exposed to news, people make connections and try to understand and explain how events reported in the media relate to society as a whole.

Within a variety of genres, like advertising, editorials, personal accounts of experience, news seems to be the most constant and perhaps primary language type in the discourse of the media. However, like rituals, art, games and other symbolic configurations, news texts are cultural constructs that encode values and are an entrance point into a culture. Different countries and cultures have their own ways of determining what is newsworthy. Crime, for instance, in the British press, is a very important topic; the quality papers present reports of police in their second pages. This signifies the relevance attached to stories of law and order. In other countries, like Brazil, on the other hand, police reports tend to appear in the last pages of the first supplements, and sometimes they are even relegated to posterior pages. Political affairs, on the other hand,

1 Trabalho submetido ao Concurso Público para Professora Titular em 1992
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occupy most of the first pages of Brazilian newspapers and are the first items to be reported in the oral media.

In all literate societies, the language of newspapers is a part of a pre-existing discourse of a social institution which is also an industry. We learn its codes and conventions and as Hartley suggests (1982: 5), we become 'news-literate'. Its meaning, however, is always socially constructed. The producers of this language are agents in a network of social relations - they are representatives of institutional discourses - the state, the law, the educational systems and are therefore constrained in their representations of the world. The language of news reporting transmits, thus, values associated with these different institutions.

Halliday (1978: 23) says that in a theory of society, language plays a central part - language is controlled by the social structure, and the social structure is maintained and transmitted through language. "Culture shapes our behaviour patterns and a great deal of our behaviour is mediated through language."

By looking at how the practitioners approach social events through text, we start to understand the cultural meanings involved in the textual production. Hartley points out (1982: 6) that social determinants "will shape what it said, the ways it develops, the status it enjoys, the people who use it, the uses to which it is put and so on." In discourses, social practices and linguistic codes meet.

The main purpose of this study is to consider news as a linguistic genre which has a narrative structure but which is also a part of many discourses. News is a very specific example of 'language in use', of socially structured meaning. Because news is so important as a genre, I decided to examine it more closely in order to find out how hidden (or explicit) meanings transmit and reinforce discrimination, especially of a sexist nature. I will analyse here what journalists call 'hard news' or the account of what is considered of factual importance in our daily routines. **Hard news** has a narrative macro-structure and fills vast quantities of space and time in the language of the media.

A critical discourse analysis which I intend to do here, deconstructs texts by placing them in social contexts and by trying to explain the social forces behind the discourse. A critical reading makes connections between language use and relations of power and control. Language plays a significant role in the production and maintenance of discriminatory discourses. But it is also through language that social subjects can interfere and try to change practices.

After almost two decades of research on oral and written interaction, scholars are turning in the 90's to the application of Discourse Analysis to social practice and to the implications of critical linguistic analysis for social change. This is the main objective of a study like the present one.

In the first chapter, I will discuss the theoretical basis to language studies which contributed in many ways to the development of what is nowadays called Critical Discourse Analysis. I will do so in order to place the analysis of newspaper discourse in a critical perspective. I will also define the terminology used throughout this work, and terms like **discourses**, **genres** and **texts** will be discussed.

In chapter 2 and 3 I will analyse the special status of news as discourse. Within media discourse, news is one of the most popular genres. One of the explanations for the dominance of news in the media is that news is **story** and therefore the most attractive kind of discourse. I will discuss here the structural components of news and the process of news production. News is the **report** or **account** of an event. The meanings transmitted therefore are constructed socially and culturally. The treatment of any topic will always depend on who is chosen to comment and whose opinion and definitions are sought. Journalists abide to a series of criteria to determine what is newsworthy. News therefore, is not an objective representation of a fact.

In chapter 4, I will examine the ways newspaper reporters **represent** oral interaction in the news. Most of the time, **news is what is said**, and the values and words of a privileged body of people who have special roles in society are generally put forward. I want to examine how this is textually realised and consider the social

implications attached to the given choices. Social identities are constructed and authority emphasised in the representation of talk.

Finally, in Chapter 5, I will examine, in terms of **gender relations**, (the cultural and social concepts of achieved sexual roles), the concept of **accessed voice** in the representation of speech. Women, in general, are part of the **unaccessed voice** group and the small quantity of female speech reported in the press, is sufficient to demonstrate that their social role has special or deviant status.

The data used for this study was collected from English quality and tabloid newspapers during the years of 1989/1992. For Chapter 4, I also used the **COBUILD** (The Collins University of Birmingham International Language Database) computerised corpora of **The Times** (5 million words) and of **The BBC World Service** (20 million words).

I hope to make visible in this study, how a linguistic code can reflect and reinforce stereotypes and doubtful assumptions about the world. As Halliday (1985) puts it “the purpose of analysing a text is to explain the impact that it makes, why it means what it does and why it gives the particular impression that it does.”(p.345). News, in quality papers, gatekeepers of linguistic production, reinforces **discrimination** and **bias**. It also reinforces **sexism**, a system in which women and men, for example, are not simply different, but unequal.

My critical analysis has the main purpose of uncovering procedures and values implicated the linguistic usage. News like other discourses, should be understood in social and semiotic terms. Language is perhaps the most important aspect in the social construction of reality.

I have chosen news as discourse because the Press treats matters that concern most of us. By decoding newspaper narratives, we will become more aware of inequality and social asymmetries. If our consciousness is raised, we will perhaps be able to change the society we live in.

CHAPTER 1

1.1 - Language Studies Theoretical Background

In the last two decades, the focus of linguistic studies has changed from the description of formal properties of languages as systems to the description of how people communicate through language. It is important now to make statements on what people do through language and how they identify themselves through a linguistic code as subjects in social contexts. Up to the sixties, however, the academic discipline of linguistics (or linguistics proper) studied ‘grammar’ in a broad sense: the sound systems, the grammatical structure of words and of sentences and more formal aspects of meaning (semantics).

In this chapter, I want to discuss briefly some of the most important statements made by recent and current approaches to language studies that contributed to the development of a new insight into interaction called **Critical Discourse Analysis**.

1.2 - Saussure, Voloshinov and Social Semiotics

Saussure, considered by many the founding father of linguistics, at the beginning of the century, reacted to the dominant approach to language study which dealt with the relations between languages and traced their descent. He decided to look at languages as structure, proposing therefore to cut through time dimensions and to examine a given language systematically at a point **in time** instead of studying linguistic change and development **through time**. He called this ‘synchronic’ linguistics, opposing it to ‘diachronic’ (historical) study. He postulated that linguistic systems are made up of **langue** (the abstract system, which is a social contract, and not the property of an individual) and **parole** (the actualisation of this system, an individual’s behaviour regulated by language, or particular

instances of speech). For him the **état-de langue** was a network of relationships in which the value of each element ultimately depended, directly or indirectly, on the value of every other. A **langue** was made up of signs (signifier and significant), but individual signs could not be considered in isolation since both form and meaning were defined by their contrast with the other sign systems.

For Saussure, a language was a sign system, a kind of entity which sociologists call *social facts*. Social facts, according to Durkheim (1895), are ideas (representations) in the collective mind of a society.

The collective mind of a society is something that exists over and above the individual members of the society, and its ideas are only indirectly and imperfectly reflected in the minds of the people who make up that society. (Sampson, 1980: 44).

Saussure placed the investigation of symbolic systems such as languages at the centre of a new science, the science of signs - semiology. Although Saussure was referring to the sign as a social fact, the linguists of the first part of this century, up to the 50's and even into the 60's, developed theories of language based exclusively on the saussurean notion of **langue**. The assumption behind the scholarship was that a language should be regarded as invariant across the community which it was spoken and that the study of language was synchronic since the system should be viewed as a static product existing at a given point in time and not as dynamic process that changes through time.

The American descriptivists and structuralists studied languages as self-contained systems, rather than as historical phenomena, or as social or pedagogical tools. They were also concerned with 'scientificity', in other words, a description meant 'objective investigation'. Their tradition was positivist and empiricist but their assumptions and the dissociation of language practice from a social environment led to an idealised view of language. From the American descriptivists of the 40's and 50's, to the structuralists of the 60's

Semioticians, like Hodge and Kress, currently propose that what Saussure excluded should now be taken into consideration if we are to make any statements about language and social meaning. Hodge and Kress (ibid.) suggest that Saussure seemed to have “affirmed the social over the individual, but only as an abstract, immobilised version of the social order.” (p. 17) An alternative Semiotics will incorporate, according to the authors, the following components:

- 1- culture (society and politics) as intrinsic to semiotics;
- 2- other semiotic systems alongside verbal language;
- 3- parole (the act of speaking) and concrete signifying practices in other codes;
- 4- diachrony (time, history), process and change;
- 5- the processes of signification, the transactions between signifying systems and structures of reference;
- 6- structures of the signifié;
- 7- the material nature of signs. (p. 18)

At approximately the same time that Saussure was postulating the theory of the sign, another very important scholar was suggesting that “the utterance is a social phenomenon.” Voloshinov, writing in 1929, pointed out that the problem with the Saussurean tradition, which he labelled “abstract objectivism”, was that there was a rejection of the parole in the dichotomy ‘langue and parole’. He proposed that the form of signs must be conditioned by the social organisation of the people involved and also by the conditions of their interaction (1973:21).

Hodge and Kress (ibid.) say that “Voloshinov’s work foregrounds the speech act as an exchange between individuals whose consciousness is already socially constructed”. The importance of his work is that Voloshinov makes a close connection between the study of language and semiotics and the study of ideology. For him, the social dimension is essential in any semiotic analysis. He says that:

1- Ideology may not be divorced from the material reality of the sign.

2- Signs may not be divorced from the concrete forms of social intercourse (seeing that the sign is part of organised social intercourse, and cannot exist as such, outside it).

3- Communications and the forms of communications may not be divorced from the material basis.

For Voloshinov, therefore, language and ideologies are not monolithic phenomena. Society, for him, is characterised by conflicts and people are constantly renegotiating their roles and relations within a community. A certain way of dressing or a certain way of speaking reflect social meanings and at the same time, create other meanings by their interactions with other signs.

Voloshinov's basic ideas can still be considered as a basis for any investigation into a semiotic act. He leaves unexplored, however, as Hodge and Kress (ibid.) point out, the relationships between speech roles and social interactions in class societies. His postulations of 'conditions of interactions and social organisation of participants' were picked up again as important features only at the beginning of the 80's when the connections between society and language began to be made.

1.3 - Sociolinguistics

Sociolinguistics, which claimed to analyse language in a social context, has developed in reaction to the practice of 'linguistics proper'. Under the influence of disciplines outside linguistics, specially anthropology and sociology, the American linguist William Labov and his team felt that a more socially relevant discipline, concerned with the problems of disadvantaged groups, was necessary. They were also reacting against the orthodox model of the time (Chomskyan transformational grammar) and the dichotomy

competence/performance. They wanted to show that a theory which excluded history and parole was artificial and unsatisfactory. Quantitative Sociolinguistics, as it is now known, took as its object of study linguistic ‘variation’ or how speakers produce ‘variants’ (a given pronunciation or grammatical structure) according to their social class, educational background, age and biological sex. For the first time, quantitative studies correlated linguistic structures with social features.

The opposition between the sociolinguistic approach to language studies and the Chomskyan one was that the former was concerned with the linguistics of use and community while the latter was concerned with knowledge and the individual. Halliday (1978) refers to these approaches as ‘intra-organisms’ and ‘inter-organisms’ perspectives. For the ‘intra organism’ perspective, the emphasis is on the investigation of language as ‘knowledge’, of what the speaker knows. The ‘inter-organism’ perspective is concerned with language and social behaviour. It concentrates on the social aspects of language, or language in relation to the social environment.

It is now generally accepted, after the sociolinguistic studies of variation, that there is a correlation between linguistic production, particularly in terms of form (phonological, morphological, syntactic) and social variable - the social background of a speaker, the social relationships between participants in a given context, topic choice, etc. The studies have also shown that variation can be systematic and that speakers can be socially and communicative competent in the same way as they have the ability to construct grammatical sentences.

Sociolinguistics challenges the dichotomy ‘synchronic’ and ‘diachronic’, by arguing that these two aspects are interrelated. The social significance of variation in the present can determine future linguistic changes.

However, the problem with variational theory is that it is highly influenced by positivist concepts. Linguistic variation is a set of facts that should be observed from an outside point of view (the observer’s paradox) through a methodology very similar to the one used in the

social sciences. For this theory, observation done in a scientific manner has the status of value-free facts. However, in social interaction, any observation is value-laden. All participants are involved in the process, including the observer who is going to interpret ‘facts’ according to her/his perspective.

Another important point to be made about quantitative studies is that although ‘social class’ and ‘sex’ are sociolinguistic categories, there was no attempt in variation theory, to explain social relations of power or gender.

Feminist studies have now pointed out that the instruments for measuring data had serious theoretical implications based on bias and stereotyped interpretations. Sex, like race, was one of the areas of social relations where domination was invariably justified by difference. Women were invisible or excluded from data collections. Labov’s important works (1977a, 1972b), for example, were mostly based on male production. And this data was taken as representative of all types of speech. Labov himself stated, according to Cameron (1989) that the main representatives of vernacular culture were men (Labov et al, 1968:41).

Some qualitative sociolinguistic studies (derived from the work of Hymes and the notions of communicative competence), where interaction is the main focus of analysis, (Milroy, 1987, Cheshire, 1982, Russell, 1982), now prove that the classic sociolinguistic assertion that women use a language closer to the standard form is a simplistic generalisation. Other factors like the social context and social roles determine linguistic production. And variables like communicative networks, neighbourhood, local work organisations, living conditions and above all, power relations, influence linguistic production. Variationists could only account for the ‘what’ of variations, but not for the ‘why’ and ‘how.’ Nevertheless, it is thanks to ‘Sociolinguistics’ that the socially constituted nature of language practice became a focus of empirical study.

1.4 - Discourse Analysis

Many disciplines have contributed to what is now considered a new cross-discipline: anthropology, linguistics, sociology, psychology, etc. There are many approaches to discourse analysis and the variety of descriptive methods is extensive (see for a detailed discussion, Van Dijk, 1985). Conversational analysis and text analysis are the most prominent ones. The methods are, however, bound to the specificity of the different disciplines. According to Van Dijk (ibid.:1) “since discourse is first of all a form of language use, it goes without saying that linguistic methods of analysis have played a predominant role in the study of text and talk”. The concentration of discourse analysis was mainly on how sociocultural knowledge is related in the performance of what has been called speech acts.

American ethnomethodologists (Conversational Analysts, for example), investigated the production and interpretation of everyday action through conversation while European text analysts (Sinclair and Coulthard, Winter and Hoey, among others, looked at texts in terms of their internal organisation. In both cases, the first studies were concerned with the description of forms of oral and written interaction.

The research has so far demonstrated that both oral and written texts are systematically structured and socially organised (classroom and casual talk, doctor-patient interaction, lectures, meetings, etc.)

There is nowadays an increasing concern with language and society, especially derived from the work of Michael Halliday, one of the founders of systemic/functionalist linguistics. Halliday seemed to have initiated the critical interpretation of discourses when he first proposed that language is a social semiotics. Halliday took his inspiration from the work of Firth, the academic who turned linguistics into a recognised distinct subject in Britain. Firth and his colleague Malinowsky were interested in investigating how languages function as social acts. For Malinowski, a language, in its primitive use,

“...functions as a link in concerted human activity... It is a mode of action and not an instrument of reflection” (1923: 312). Halliday, continuing in the same tradition, postulates that linguistic form is affected systematically by social circumstances. He says:

Why is language as it is? The nature of language is closely related to the demands that we make on it, the functions it has to serve. In the most concrete terms, these functions are specific to a culture... The particular form taken by the grammatical system of language is closely related to the social and personal need that language is required to serve. (1970: 142)

The body of research on discourse developed so far can therefore, be divided into two groups according to the nature of their social orientation to language studies. We can distinguish between non critical and critical approaches.

The non-critical approaches simply describe discursive practices, while critical approaches not only describe but also show how discourse is shaped by relations of power and ideologies. According to Fairclough (1992) critical language studies demonstrate “the constructive effects discourse has upon social identities, social relations and systems of knowledge and belief, neither of which is normally apparent to discourse participants.” (p.129) Examples of non-critical discourse analysis are the American work on conversational analysis (Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson, 1974, among others), therapeutic discourse (Labov and Fanshel, 1977), the British classroom discourse analysis in Sinclair and Coulthard (1975), the text description in Winter (1977) and Hoey (1979,1983).

The Critical approaches include the “critical linguistics” of Fowler et al (1979,1991), the work of Fairclough on Language and Power (1989,1992a, 1992b), the French approach to discourse analysis developed by Pêcheux (1982), the cultural studies recently developed (Scanell, 1991) and the works on Language and Gender.(Cameron, 1989, 1992, Coates and Cameron, 1988, Mills, 1996, Caldas-Coulthard and Coulthard, 1996, among others. etc.)

1.5 - Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is, according to Fairclough (1992b) an orientation towards language which associates linguistic text analysis with a social theory of the functioning of language in political and ideological processes. It criticises linguistics proper “for taking conventions and practices at face value, as objects to be described in a way which obscures their political and ideological investment. “ (Fairclough, *ibid.*: 7).

Although Voloshinov in the late twenties laid down the basic principles for a critical analysis, and Firth around 1935 suggested that language is a way of behaving and making others behave, only in the past decade, has a critical orientation become well established. The first works known nowadays as ‘critical linguistics’ were developed by a group based at the University of East Anglia in the 70’s (Fowler et al, 1979, Kress and Hodge, 1979). This work, which was linguistically centred, drew heavily upon the functionalist theory of Halliday.

More recently, theorists like Pêcheux (1982), Kress (1985) Fairclough (1989, 1992a, 1992b) are extending the boundaries of analysis and a ‘new theory of language’ is being born. The most important influences on CDA have been the social theories of Foucault, Bordieu, Althusser and Habermas and the linguistic theory of Functional Systemics. The central concern of a critical discourse analyst is to relate the discourse process of text production and interpretation with social practice.

Discourse is socially constructive since social subjects and social relations are constituted in and by it. Previous discourse analysis tended to describe interaction and therefore text as products without placing them in a social context. Critical discourse analysts, however, see discursive practices or Discourses (with capital D) as

...modes of behaviour which place us in determined social groups. They operate to integrate people in societies.

...Interacting, valuing, thinking, believing, speaking and often reading and writing that are accepted as instantiations of particular roles by specific groups of people, whether families of a certain sort, lawyers of a certain sort, bikers of a certain sort, etc. Language, as well as literacy, is always and everywhere integrated with and relative to social practices constituting particular Discourses.(Gee, 1991: xix)

The social group determines the discursive practices we are brought up in. Gee (ibid.) suggests that every cultural group has its own home based Discourse which is connected to that particular group's ways of behaving in and acting upon the world. This Discourse marks its identity. However, each one of us is also a member of many Discourses - the school, the work, the church, the business, etc., are sites where Discourses operate to integrate people. Since we act in many different sites, discursive practices represent our many identities. However, Discourses in general often do not have compatible values and in many instances, they can be conflictive. This has a crucial significance for education in general. The white middle class home based Discourses in many ways share features of the white middle class school Discourse - children of white middle class parents value books, for instance. A black child, who comes from a different home based Discourse (where, for example, oral communication is more appreciated than written communication), when entering the white middle class school Discourse, will be at a disadvantage in relation to the white child. The whole process of literacy for this black child can be hindered, therefore

Discourses have their own theory. Theories, for Gee (ibid.), are a set of generalisations about an area (in this case language and language acquisition) in terms of which descriptions of phenomena in that area can be couched and explanations offered. Theories, in this sense, ground beliefs... (p.15)

and count as 'normal' what is a practice to a certain type of Discourse,

excluding (and rejecting) whatever is different. These ‘theories’ are ‘ideologies’ and language is inevitably connected to them.

Different Discourses form different systems. Possibilities of ‘meaning’ are considered, according to Pêcheux (1982:112) to be marked out through a “system of relationships of substitution, paraphrases, synonymies, etc., which operate between linguistic elements - ‘signifiers’ in a given ‘discursive formation’”. Meaning, therefore, arises from the social and institutional position from which the discourse comes: “words, expressions, propositions, etc., change their meaning according to the positions held by those who use them” (Pêcheux, *ibid.*: 111).- All institutions and social groupings have thus, specific meanings and values which are articulated in ‘language’ in systematic ways.

Kress (1985:7) suggests that

Discourses define, describe and delimit what it is possible to say and not to say (and by extension) what is possible to do or not to do) with respect to the area of concern of that institution... A discourse provides a set of possible statements about a given area, and organises and give structure to the manner in which a particular topic, object, process is to be talked about. In that, it provides descriptions, rules, permissions and prohibitions of social and individual actions.

If we want to practise any kind of linguistic analysis, therefore, we must not dissociate linguistic production from ideological values.

The School, for example, as an institution, fails to recognise that there is difference in Discourses and instead of initiating children into an educated form of interaction where ‘difference’ is tolerated, it excludes the ones that do not belong to the ‘accepted’ type of Discourse. In other words, it considers ‘difference’ as deficit.

Literacy activities are therefore, bound to particular Discourses since one does not learn to read or write, one learns to read or write texts of a certain type, selected and interpreted by certain people generally associated with dominant groups. There are, therefore,

many literacies, since texts can be read in many different ways. Each literacy involves control over a different Discourse and the ideal school should be able to expose and teach children to control several interactive modes.

Power relations and the effect they have upon social practices is a main concern of CDA. The main objective of a critical reading therefore, is to expose misrepresentation and discrimination in different genres of discourse and by doing so, produce social change. Everything we say, think, feel and do is always indebted to the social context we live in.

Language, according to the functional theory of language, (Halliday 1985), is a “system for making meaning” (p. xvii). Meaning derives from the relationships and the interactions people have with each other. There are many links between linguistic structure and social practices - one shapes and is shaped by the other. Whenever we communicate, we take a particular point of view or perspective on whatever we want to transmit. This ‘perspective taking’ signals our views of the world and consequently our ideologies. To be competent in one language is not simply to know the grammar and words of a linguistic code. ‘Variability’ and ‘multiplicity’, concepts fundamental to language, account for different ways of saying things according to different situations. These different language ‘styles’ are tied to signals of status and solidarity. When we communicate, we manipulate the sociolinguistic variables in order to display various identities. Therefore, when we speak, we express and reproduce social structure. Language, according to Gee, is inherently ideological, since it is “both an assessment and expression in both form and function, of ideology” (p.131).

1.6 - A Three Dimensional View of Discourse

Fairclough (1992a and b), is one of the most active proponents of the critical orientation to language studies. He says that every discursive instance has three layers or dimensions: it is *text*, spoken

or written and it is an *interaction* between people. This interaction involves *processes* of text production and interpretation. Interactions are systematically-organised ways of talking. The processes of text production and interpretation also called ‘discursive practices’ are a part of social action. These layers of discourse are inseparable, since social action and text are mediated by interaction and the nature of interaction. The ways texts are produced and interpreted are inherently dependent upon social action. Every text has its own environment, or what Malinowski (1935) called ‘the context of situation’ which is placed in a ‘context of culture’. The context of culture determines the nature of the linguistic realisation. So, any text chosen by any person is predictable from that person’s place in social and institutional structures. Any member of a society is situated in a network of relationships which determine the set of texts in which s/he participates as a consumer-producer.

The text itself, on the other hand, reflects in its formal and stylistic aspects, the processes of production and presents ‘cues’ for its interpretation. It is the job of an analyst to investigate, for example, how texts arise, how and why they get produced and how any reader comes to read a particular text.

Discourse Analysis, according to Fairclough (ibid.: 11) has also three dimensions: *description* of the text, *interpretation* of the interaction and *explanation* of how the two first dimensions are inserted in social action.

In description, the text is analysed in terms of its formal characteristics. A text, for Halliday (1985: p.xvii) is a semantic unit, not a grammatical one. But meanings are realised through the grammatical system. So, texts can be looked at in terms of their vocabulary, grammar, cohesion or text structure (micro or macro structures). These headings form a kind of rank scale. Texts can also be analysed in terms of their ‘illocutionary force’ or in terms of their coherence and intertextual properties.

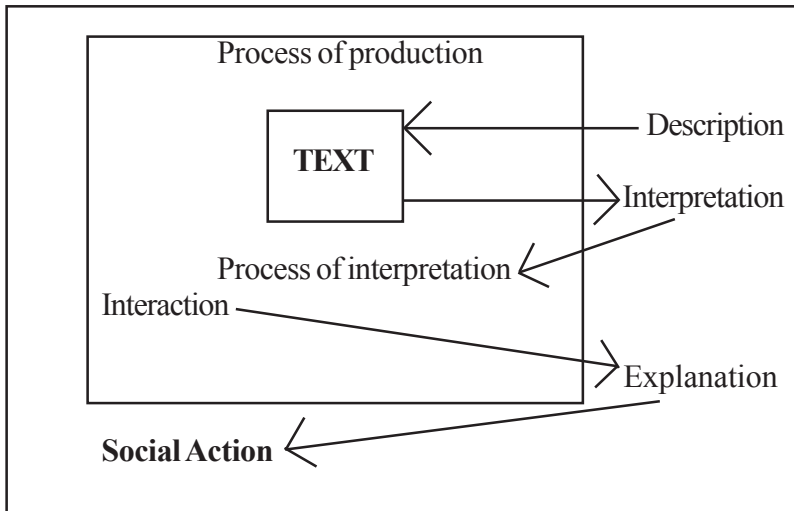
The suggested headings constitute the skeleton for an analytical framework and cover all aspects of language production and

interpretation as well as the formal properties of texts. Analyses published so far have dealt with one or more of these headings. (see Fowler et al, 1979, Kress and Hodge, 1979 or Van Dijk, 1988, Caldas-Coulthadr and Coulthard, 1996, for example).

In interpretation, conventions are scrutinised. Here, for instance, the analyst would draw upon various ‘interactional genres’ in order to see how the interactive conventions are used. ‘Genres’ or discourse types, are formal conventional categories whose meanings and forms arise out of the meanings, functions and forms of the conventionalised occasions of social interaction. Genres provide an index and catalogue of the relevant social occasion. Interviews, lectures, medical examinations, etc., are all bound to specific rules that govern the interaction.

In explanation, the aim is to explain how the properties of interaction work by reference to social action. The analyst will also assess the contribution of the discourse to social action, specifying its political and ideological uses. Here, power relations and discriminatory values can be uncovered.

Fairclough summarises his framework in the following diagram (1992b:10):



Language use helps to constitute and change knowledge, social relations and social identity, since ‘discourse’ “constitutes the social” (Fairclough, 1992b:8). The dimensions of the social, that is, *knowledge*, *social relations* and *social identity* correspond to the three metafunctions of language or components of meaning proposed by Halliday (1978, 1985). The **ideational metafunction** is the manifestation in the linguistic system of a general purpose which allows us to understand and experience the environment; the **interpersonal** or **relational** metafunction allows us to constitute and change social relations and social identities and these are realised through the **textual** metafunction through which the other functions are realised linguistically. The metafunctions occur at the same time as the three dimensions of the social develop. In this way, knowledge, social relations and identities are simultaneously enacted and re-enacted.

Fairclough (1992b) proposes a series of statements which are the theoretical basis for an adequate critical approach to discourse analysis. Here are some of the most important ones:

- 1- The object of analysis is linguistic texts which are analysed in terms of their own specificity.
- 2- In addition to text, the processes of text production and interpretation are themselves analysed. Analysis is interpretation.
- 3- Texts may be heterogeneous and ambiguous and configurations of different discourse types may be drawn upon in producing and interpreting them.
- 4- Discourse is socially constructive, constituting social subjects, social relations and systems of knowledge and belief.
- 5- Discourse analysis is concerned not only with power relations in discourse, but also with how power relations and power struggle shape and transform the discourse practices of a society or institutions.

6- Analysis of discourse attends to its functioning in the creative transformation of ideologies and practices as well as its function in securing their reproduction.

7- Texts are analysed in terms of a diverse range of features of form and meaning (properties of dialogue and text structure as well as vocabulary and grammar) appertaining to both the ideational and interpersonal functions of language. (pp. 35/36).

Critical discourse analysts like Fairclough and Gee, among others, argue in this way for a **socially-based linguistics**. For Gee (1991), a linguistic theory should be the one that “claims that all practice (human action) is inherently caught up with usually tacit theories that empower or disempower people and groups of people “ (xx).

One of the roles of a critical linguist therefore, is to make visible the relationship between language and social practice. Gee even claims that it is a moral obligation “to render one’s tacit theories overt when they have the potential to hurt people” (ibid.).

Having considered the main points which are the basis for a critical analysis, I turn, in the next and subsequent chapters, to the study of how language is used in newspapers to form ideas and beliefs. I am concerned here with the role that linguistic structure plays in the construction of values and ideologies in the Press. I will use some of the analytical tools suggested by Fairclough and will try not only to describe the textual properties of the news genre, in terms of its macro structural properties (news-as-narrative), but will also look at how vocabulary and grammar help to shape social relations and identities.

I want to point out in the following chapters, that the linguistic system is not ‘neutral’ and the ‘content of newspapers is not about facts, but it reflects ideas and beliefs of an institution. Language, as Fowler (1992) suggests, “is a highly constructive mediator” (p.1).

CHAPTER 2

2.1 - The special status of news as discourse

News in the written press is a specific kind of mass media discourse which for many people enjoys a privileged and prestigious position in our culture's hierarchy of values. In western societies, people are exposed to media language probably more than any other kind of language, since its production is immense. People watch or read 'news' because they think 'news' is about society. The implication is that if you are exposed to news you are more knowledgeable about social facts. However, as I intend to show here, news is a reconstruction of reality through the eyes of many people. The reality observed depends on how it is looked at.

The relationship between the ones that are in control of media discourse, like producers and presenters, and the receivers of the messages is highly asymmetrical - there are only a few people who produce and present 'news' to a too large audience, who in a sense, receive messages passively. The controllers of the semiotic (images and scenarios) and the linguistic production (the texts) can therefore establish norms and values without being questioned.

Within media discourse, news is the most important language genre. Hours of radio and television and many pages of newspapers are dedicated to the report of events that happen in the world. However, as Bell (1992) points out, there was a time when news was not a dominant genre.

The year 1930 was early days for radio. The youthful British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) sometimes found there was a shortage of news deemed worthy to be broadcast. If this happened, no attempt was made to fill the gap. The announcer just said: 'There is no news tonight.' (Bell, *ibid.*: 1)

We can not image this happening nowadays. There are always topics to be reported in our daily media. In fact, news carries the daily stories of our times.

The concept of **news** can be ambiguous. It implies in the first place, that a given source will display some kind of new information to a general public, and in the second place that this new information is passed on objectively and from an outside point of view . Many of us watch the major television news or read the daily newspaper for information and ‘believe’ that what we listen to or read is a faithful account of recent events happening in the world.

In recent years, however, the professional journalist’s self image on the question of impartiality has come under strong examination from students of the media (see, for example the work of The Glasgow University Media Group work, 1976, the work of University of Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (Hall et al, 1980) and the publications of authors like Hartley, 1982, Van Dijk, 1988 and Fowler, 1991). The question of faithfulness and impartiality has been challenged definitely.

We now know that ‘news’ is a socially and culturally determined genre. It is a representation of the world as any other kind of discourse, since all meaning is socially constructed. It is also a product of social practice, as I have already suggested. Any thing that is said or written about the world is articulated from an ideological position.

In this chapter, I will discuss ‘news as text’ and specifically, news in the written press. I will concentrate on :

- 1-The different types of text produced by the media discourse and the concept of news as a genre.
- 2- Criteria of news worthiness and factual and fictional distinctions.

2.1.2 - News as Genre

In newspaper discourse, we find many kinds of genres, most of which have specific linguistic realisation - editorials, letters to the

editor, documentaries, etc. Each genre presents certain textual strategies that indicate a certain type of discursive experience with a given view on some specialised area. It is interesting to see how different people prefer some genres to others. Is it true for example, that men are more interested in the Sports and Business sections than women? According to Fowler (1992: 227) little is known so far about the characteristics of these genres. It is clear nevertheless, that there is no 'standard' form and style for some of these text types and some genres are mixed. Advertising, for instance, can be disguised as a consumer's report, or some article may 'sound' like a scientific report.

Although keeping in mind that some genres can be intertwined, we can broadly classify this variety into four categories:

- 1 - service information,
- 2 - opinion,
- 3 - advertising
- 4 - news.

In *service information*, we find texts like sports results, television and cultural information, weather forecast, etc., and in *opinion*, we include the editorials, the articles signed by professional experts and letters to the editor.

Advertising, like *news*, is one of the most powerful discourses in the media. There is no newspaper, television or radio without some sort of advertising. Here we can include paid adverts, as well as classified columns.

News is the primary discourse. One important aspect to keep in mind is that 'news' is not the event itself, but the **report** or **account** of an event. (I will discuss this point in chapter 3). It is a discourse made into a meaningful 'narrative'.

Nearly all newspapers present some kind of news. Sometimes, however, it is impossible to separate what is news (supposedly

factual) and what is opinion. In most newspapers, these two categories are definitely marked apart. The major topics covered are politics, the economy, foreign affairs, domestic news, occasional stories and sport.

News can be thus subdivided into three further categories.

1 - hard news

2 - soft news or feature news

3 - special topic news (sports, racing, business, arts, etc.)

Hard news is the core product - the basic content is conflict. It is the report of accidents, crimes, etc. from a 'supposed' impersonal perspective. It appears in sections like "local", "national" and "international". It covers events that have just happened and it is concerned with the public sphere. A second major category of hard news covers is politics. All hard news is marked by a narrative structure. The stories reported do not express private beliefs or opinions. They are statements of a 'fact' retold through an institutional voice.

Soft news is often defined by the journalistic profession (Hartley, 1982: 38) as having 'a woman's angle'. (The adjective 'soft' is significantly used in relation to 'the woman's angle'. It makes explicit the contestable assumption behind the saying - women are soft and by implication, weak!). Soft news include humour and human interest and is concerned with the private sphere (I will come back to this point in chapter 4 when discussing the role of women in the press). Soft news is not time bound for immediacy and is licensed to deviate from the structures of hard news. They are longer feature articles, rather than 'stories', they provide background information and they generally carry the writer's personal opinion.

According to Bell (1991:14), for news workers and researchers, the boundaries between hard and soft news are unclear, "...indeed, journalists spend much of their energy trying to find an angle which will present what is essentially soft news in hard news terms." (ibid.)

Special topic news appear in specialised sections of newspapers in terms of subject matter. Politics, sport and business are examples of this kind of news.

Although we might think that media discourse covers a wide range of the social life, there seems to be an overwhelming bias toward certain aspects of society. Hartley (1982) points out that the public is more targeted than the private and that there is an explicit bias towards men rather than women, for example. He says:

Little is said about the lives of ordinary people, only about the decisions made in politics, the economy, etc. Personal relations, sexuality, family and working conditions, and the more or less coherent voices which sound a different note to that of the familiar spokesman - all these are invisible in news. The question arises: are the events that get so much coverage there because they already affect our lives, or do they affect our lives largely because they are constantly reported in the news? (p.39)

The treatment of any topic will always depend on who is chosen to comment and whose opinions and definitions are sought. Choice and selection, therefore, will determine how a certain event will be reported and the implications derived from this choice will have ideological consequences. Clearly, therefore, news does not tell us about society. It show us, as Hartley suggests, *certain aspects of* society. News is not a separate force outside the social relations it portrays but it is inherently part of it. News organisations are themselves determined by the relationships that develop between them and other agencies. “The two most important agencies likely to have a say in the news are capital and the State - commerce and government”. (Hartley, *ibid.*: 48)

2.2 - Criteria of news worthiness

Events do not get into the news simply by happening. They must fit into a system of priorities laid down by the institution of

news making. Events need to be recognised as worthy of reporting and they should come from a known and representative source. Therefore, they need to fulfil a number of criteria. Journalists use a paradigm of what Hartley (1982:76) calls **news values**.

Galtung and Ruge (1965) put forward a series of conditions applicable to news-selection, which they list as 'general news values':

- 1- frequency or the time taken by an event.
- 2- threshold or the size of the event
- 3- unambiguity' or the clarity of the event
- 4- meaningfulness or cultural proximity
- 5- consonance - the predictability of an event
- 6- unexpectedness or the rarity or unpredictability of an event
- 7- continuity or the running story
- 8- composition - mixture of different kinds of events
- 9- reference to elite nations
- 10- reference to élite persons
- 11- personalization
- 12- negativity

Van Dijk (1988:122) and Bell (1991:158/159) add:

- 13- relevance - the effect on the audience's own lives or closeness to their experience
- 14- facticity (based on Tuchman 1979) - the amount of facts and figures which support the veracity of the story
- 15- competition - the exclusive story
- 16- composition - a mixture of different news
- 17- predictability - the prescheduling of an event.

Only the events that fulfil at least one of these values will survive the process of selection.

It is interesting to note that the report of law and order is a major focus of news, specially in the British society. This has an ideological significance since crime reporting or the reporting of

deviance interprets and emphasises changes in the patterns of behaviour, and by so doing, it identifies the major crises of law and order. According to Chibnall (1977:x), law and order news focuses on themes that illustrate the society's system of beliefs, values and understanding, and there is no other domain of news interest in which latent press ideology becomes more explicit. Nowhere else are the limits of newspaper values such as neutrality, objectivity and balance revealed with such clarity. Crime and deviance represent, simultaneously, a challenge to newspapers' "liberal and consensual view of society and a source of ideological reinforcement" (ibid.).

The mode of existence of this kind of professional journalism is grounded in an ideological framework of concepts and values which systematically excludes certain realities and promotes others. According to Chibnall, these concepts and values are based on "a belief in the essential justice and desirability of the present organisation of society... and legitimacy is only available to those who respect the rule of law and the democratic processes which it symbolises." (pp. 14/17).

Law and order in the British society are fundamental concepts of the framework together with: "the British way of life, the national interest, the democratic process, the rule of law, anarchy, subversion, militants and moderates, minority and majority, the public, private property, free enterprise, state interference and monopoly, family life." (p.21)

Chibnall suggests that the dominant values of the ideology which provide criteria for evaluation of forms of behaviour are the following:

Positive legitimating values Negative legitimating values

Legality	Illegality
Moderation	Extremism
Compromise	Dogmatism
Co-operation	Confrontation
Order	Chaos
Peacefulness	Violence
Tolerance	Intolerance
Constructiveness	Destructiveness
Openess	Secrecy
Honesty	Corruption
Realism	Ideology
Rationality	Irrationality
Impartiality	Bias
Fairness	Unfairness
Firmness	Weakness
Industriousness	Idleness
Freedom of choice	Monopoly/uniformity
Equality	Inequality (p.21/22)

Positive evaluation by the press derives from the positive legitimating values, while negative evaluation is associated with the negative values. The professional imperatives of ‘immediacy, dramatisation, personalization, simplification, titillation, conventionalism, structured access, novelty’, according to Chibnall, control and order the framework of concepts and values and are guides to the construction of news (p.23). They will also support and articulate the newspapers’ ideology.

The report of crime and scandal, for example, offers an opportunity for the redefinition of the moral boundaries of communities and the celebration of conformity and respectability and it can draw members together against the threat of disorder. The rationale behind these reports is that if readers know about crime, they can guard themselves against it. Crime reports, a main

source of information about the normative shapes of society, tell us what is right and what is wrong.

Newspapers not only seek membership of the same speech communities as their readers, they also aim to reflect and manipulate sentiments within those communities in their provision of information, comment and understanding. “Law and order news may serve as a focus for the articulation of shared morality and communal sentiment... they provide a chance for a newspaper to appropriate the moral conscience of its readership”. (Chibnall, *ibid.*)

Because hard news frames the image of crises, it has a significant political role in the society and “becomes the object and prize of urgent political conflict.” (p.46) But it can also obstruct fundamental structural, political and social problems, because at times of social change, the press can be the disseminator of fantasies of the established order:

Right wing order fantasy may be legitimately identified as a constant theme in the press. It appears to generate the everyday predisposition and interpretative conventions of the genre, the tone of shocked indignation and the undertones of vicarious sagacity or celebration apparent in so much crime, tragedy and scandal journalism. This is because fantasy lies at the root of sensationalism. It is a latent presence in routine stories of robbery and rape just as it manifests itself in headline news of crime wave, menace, bomb and butchery. (p. 48)

Each crime or tragic story is written against the background of other similar stories and they become part of a larger myth about values. The reporting represents both an attack on a symbol of order in society and evidence of change. It “neutralises deviant world views by either denying their status as beliefs which should be taken seriously by sensible people, or condemning them as manifestations of wickedness or corruption.” (p.115)

The constant mentioning of ‘police’ and ‘court’ as sources of information in news of law-and-order is then explicable, since these

institutions represent symbolically the values of established order, righteousness and honesty, but also, and very significantly, these sources play a very important role in the control and management of information, since reporters rely to a great extent on what the source makes available.

Chibnall also suggests that news reporting, apart from reflecting the basic concepts and values of society has to keep the stories 'alive' and therefore, the search of 'new angles' is indispensable. He quotes a crime correspondent who states:

When you're working for a pop paper where there is always this desperate search for a thing called an angle, it isn't enough that something has happened, there must be an angle, there must be something different, we must have something different, we must have something that somebody else hasn't got, and because we've got something that somebody else hasn't got it must be right up the top. The plain facts are distorted round to suit this particular angle. (Chibnall, *ibid.*: 42)

So, another essential ingredient of the news genre, apart from the ideological positioning it portrays, is the fictionalisation of facts. "Reality must accommodate news, just as news must trade off reality." (p.30). But this representation of reality in news or what Chibnall calls 'newspaper fiction' is not the antithesis of factuality, but an accommodation and consequent distortion of the fact, according to the interests of the newspapers and their informants, as I will demonstrate in chapter 4. The reality is therefore shaped by the constraints imposed upon the writers - constraints originated from institutionalised conventions and ideologies:

As a distortion of reality, [newspaper fiction] it is far more persuasive than mere fiction. Even for the sceptic, it may still pass as an approximation to truth... The impact of newspaper stereotypes and approximations on the real world has the effect of translating fantasy into reality.(Chibnall, *ibid.*: 206)

This happens because in the process of reporting ‘fact’, professional communicators, as I will discuss in the next chapter, are divided into ‘news-gatherers’ and ‘news-processors’ and an ‘event’ undergoes stages until it becomes a ‘report’: news-gatherers collect the news which is then passed on to the news-processors who will then select, abbreviate and organise the ‘event’ into narrative. So the end product, like literature, is a result of ‘creation’, since the writer is seldom the person who witnesses and testifies to the fact.

The raw material is generally an account by somebody else and the writer rarely utilises her/his own perception of the event. This is a very important aspect of ‘fact as fiction’.

The framework of ideologies and the fictionalisation of events therefore is revealed and reflected in the language. Because language is an instrument of communication, but also an instrument of control, a particular linguistic choice from a range of options can convey a fact or distort it and readers can be informed or manipulated. That is why particular choices can be so significant in terms of discourse interpretation.

CHAPTER 3

3.1 - News as Narratives

One of the explanations for the domination of news in the discourse of the media is that news is **narrative** or story telling and therefore, the most attractive and vivid representation of experience through language.

As Barthes (1975) suggests, narrative is present in every age, in every place, in every society.

Narrative starts with the very story of mankind. There is not, there has never been anywhere, any people without narrative; all classes of human groups have their stories... Like life itself, it is there, international, transhistorical, transcultural. (p.237)

Like any other narrative texts, news is centrally concerned with past events, which develop to some kind of conclusion. In contrast with commentary/opinion and political evaluation, news focuses on event orientation and causality.

3.1.1- News Production

In every act of communication, there is an addresser who sends a message in a determinate code to an addressee (Jakobson, 1972). Both addresser and addressee are present (explicitly or implicitly) in the discourse: ‘I tell you that...’

In the linguistic structure of ‘report’ (Sinclair, 1972) the first segment of the utterance:

“I tell you that I am tired”

is the reporting clause, which is the statement of what the reporter is doing while the second one, is the reported clause or the message.

I want to extend here the concept of ‘report’ (the reporting and reported clauses) to a whole discourse. In any narrative, the

teller recounts a series of events that are temporally and causally related. However, by convention, the reporting clause is generally not present in the discourse:

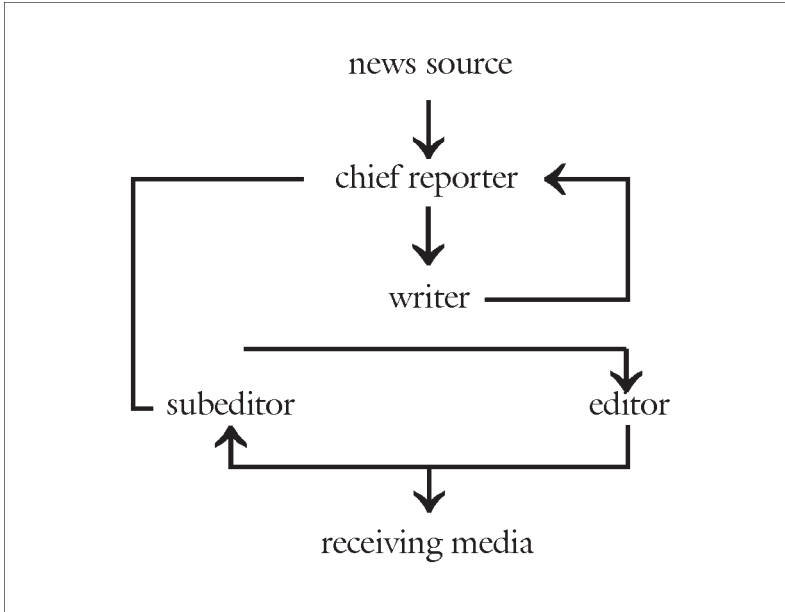
“I recount that [sequence of events] (message)”.

(**first segment**) (**second segment**)

Narratives in general are, therefore texts produced by a teller, who recounts actions or events prior to the recounting act or occasionally in the process of happening - prophesy is one of the few kinds of narratives that project future events.

In the written press however, narratives are not produced by one single source. According to Bell (1991), news as narrative is a text produced by multiple parties: principal sources of information, agencies, institutions, other media and authors, copy editors, editors, etc.

The ‘copy’, in other words, the actual written text, is handled by many people and undergoes transformations as it follows its way to printing. According to Bell, the copy follows a path, which is itself, a narrative of changes: a document arrives at the chief reporter’s desk, who then assigns the topic to a **journalist** (the first writer). This person will read the written report and will look for background information, basing her/himself probably on other similar accounts. Then, the **chief reporter** receives back the first version of the text. If there are problems, the chief reporter can alter or send the text back to the writer for corrections. A **subeditor** now edits the text - cutting, pasting, adding, etc. The text is sent back either to the journalist or to the **editor**, who will give the story a final check. The editor then sends text to the subeditor, who finally sends it to the printers. The diagram below illustrates the process of news production:



(Bell, *ibid.*: 35)

The number of people involved therefore in the production of a text is quite big. This naturally accounts for one of the major characteristics of news as narrative texts - embedding. Version 1 is embedded in version 2 which is embedded in version 3 and so on. The text therefore undergoes many modifications and authorship and responsibility for the text is diluted in the process. Ultimately, the newspaper editor is responsible for what is said, although all the versions are based on other authors including the unknown ones who write for the agencies.

In a classical narrative, in contrast, there is a teller who is somehow identifiable and who can choose to aver, in other words, to be responsible for what s/he recounts or to detach her/himself from the responsibility of what is being uttered by transferring the averral to other tellers and creating other narrators.

Another important and very common feature of (both fictional and factual) narratives is the introduction of other people speaking.

Direct or indirect quotation is hence a pervasive textual and ideological strategy common to all narrative discourses.

In the press, given the state of production pointed out above, or unless the author signs her/his name, we do not know who is responsible for what is reported, and the complicating process of production blurs the factual and fictional distinction, as I have already mentioned.

The text below exemplifies this point (the text is divided in paragraphs for reference) (see Caldas-Coulthard, 1988, 1992 for a detailed discussions):

Man Shot Dead After Car Blast

1- A Market trader was shot dead outside his home yesterday after two men blew up his car and van.

2- Mr Alex Syme, aged 34, raced from his home in Hamilton, near Glasgow, Lanarkshire, as the vehicles went up in flames.

3- He chased two men who had placed incendiary devices in the vehicles, causing an explosion which ripped the roof from the van.

4-One of the men turned and fired a leaded shotgun into his stomach.

5- Mr Syme, a father of two girls, aged 11 and six, staggered towards his home but collapsed before he could reach his door.

6- A neighbour, Mrs Martha Riddock, said: "I came out when I heard his wife, Marion, screaming. Alex chased the men then I heard a shot and he came staggering up the lane clutching his stomach."

7- A relative said: "He was a quiet man who hardly spoke to anyone. We can't understand why this happened".

8- Police are investigating a theory that Mr Syme was the victim of a market traders war. (*The Guardian* - 4/11/81)

In this text, there is a voice who is not present explicitly in the discourse - possibly the newspaper writer (the second person in the process of production). This reporter gives voice to two people, Mrs Martha Riddock and a neighbour, who then become the recounters and evaluators of the same events. The first reporter, by making other people speak, therefore, transfers the responsibility for averring that Alex Syme's wife screamed and he staggered, and that he was a "quiet man..." Here, the particular formulation chosen - [I recount that] 'Mrs Riddock (or a relative) **said** that...', does not question the reported averral. Options however, like - [I recount that] 'Mrs Riddock **claimed** that...' do.

Tellers of narratives, whoever they are in the press, are also in charge of selecting, ordering and organising the sequence in which events will be recounted. There is always a choice and a construction, therefore, since events are interpreted and then recounted by a teller who lives in a particular society at a given time.

The temporal relations, for instance, allow us to see how the recounter constructs the narrative. The events in the **Market Trader** text are by no means presented in linear temporal sequence - the relationships between the temporal order and the linguistic realisation of the events is complicated. Contrary to simple and linear narratives, events in the press are not presented in chronological order. The most important event comes first. This serves to demonstrate that a given series of events can allow many different recountings and interpretations, of which the matching of temporal and linear sequence is just one. This also shows that perspective or point of view determines how a text will be interpreted and posteriorly produced. The cyclical nature of news production, therefore, makes it difficult to identify whose hands has produced which language and the representation of an event, through many interpretations, becomes very similar to a fictional representation.

3.2 - Structural Properties of News as Narrative

So far I have been referring only to the reporting of a series of events, but this in itself does not constitute a narrative. Since I consider ‘hard news’ as narrative I now need to account for the whole ‘structure’ in order to be able to distinguish a narrative from a presentation of a sequence of events.

3.2.1 - Narrative Placed in the Context of Other Genres

Longacre (1974, 1983) suggests that there are four broad types of prose discourse: narrative, expository, hortatory or behavioural, and procedural. He says that:

Narrative is story telling and the most vivid kind of discourse. Expository includes essays, scientific articles and descriptive material. Hortatory includes sermons, pep talks, etc. Procedural is how-to-do-it or how-it-is-done text . (1974:358)

He distinguishes the ‘intent’ of any text type which he relates to a ‘deep structure’ (the notional or semantic structure) from the ‘form’, related to a ‘surface structure’. Drama, for example, is narrative text which consists entirely of dialogue and for him, it is only a surface phenomenon, i.e. the liveliest way of story-telling.

The primary aims of the various genres are different - narrative (and drama) aim at entertaining or informing; procedural, at telling ‘how to do’; expository, at explaining or describing and behavioural at influencing conduct. So, the purpose (or intent) of any type of text can be expressed in terms of performative verbs: narration employs I **recount** in its notional structure, procedural discourse employs I **prescribe**, expository I **explain**, and behavioural discourse employs I **propose, suggest, urge** or **command** (1983:12). Longacre also stresses that a given purpose can be realised on the surface mainly by text which seems to belong to another category. Thus, a moral lesson is in intention hortatory but

may be presented in narrative form. One version of Little Red Riding Hood, for instance, is apparently a narrative until it ends

“... and Little Red Riding Hood promised never to disobey her mother again!”

All notional discourse types are classified by Longacre, according to four parameters, contingent temporal succession, agent orientation, projection and tension.

Contingent temporal succession refers to a framework of temporal succession in which some (often most) of the events or doings are contingent on previous events. Agent orientation refers to orientation towards agents with at least a partial identity of agent reference running through the discourse. Projection has to do with a situation or action which is contemplated, enjoined or anticipated but not realized... Tension is the parameter which distinguishes a struggle or polarisation of some sort. (ibid.: 3,4)

For Longacre, not all monologue discourses are of the same kind - there are broad categories and specific ones within each main category. The fairy tale, the novel, the short story, for instance, are all a kind of story-telling. There are, nevertheless, similarities between the other types of discourses.

A first person novel may have much in common with a first person account of an informal sort. First person accounts, newspaper reporting and historiography all make pretensions to factuality. Historiography is very similar in some ways to certain varieties of the novel. Essays and scientific papers share much in common as do sermons and pep talks. Food recipes have something in common with how to do it booklets, but the former are more stereotyped and restricted in content and application.(Longacre, 1983:2)

Narrative is distinguished from the other discourse genres in the following way:

1- narrative discourse is usually in the first or third person, while ‘procedural’ can employ a non-specific person, ‘we’ or ‘you’ or even a third person, depending on different options. ‘Expository’ discourse is usually in the third person and ‘hortatory’ generally involves a second person component;

2- narrative discourse is actor-oriented, while ‘procedural’ is goal-oriented, ‘expository’ is subject-matter oriented and ‘hortatory’ is addressee oriented;

3- narrative discourse encodes accomplished time, and chronological linkage is necessary; chronological succession is also important for procedural discourses, but not for expository or hortatory types, which are characterised not by chronological but by logical linkage;

4- narrative is also distinct from other genres because of ‘plot’.

A narrative can be episodic (- tension) or climactic (+ tension).

Labov and Waletzki (1967) and Labov (1972) define narratives as

one method of recapitulating past experience by matching a verbal sequence of clauses to the sequence of events which (it is inferred) actually occurred (1967:287).

Then they arrive at a structural description of oral narratives of personal experience by categorising the narrative text as divided into 5 sections. These categories answer the following underlying questions:

1- abstract - what was this about?

2- orientation - who, when, what, where?

3- complicating action - then what happened?

4- evaluation - so what?

5- result - finally what happened?

6- coda - explicit signal of end of narrative.

Similarly, Hoey (1979, 1983, 1986) says that narratives are linguistic patterns organised in terms of a situation, a problem and a response (or solution), which can be evaluated positively or negatively. If negatively, there is a tendency to expect a further response. Alternatively, within a situation, a goal may be identified for which a response is necessary.

If we examine the **Market Trader** text in terms of Labov's and Hoey's categories we can determine clearly the structure of the text.

The title and paragraph 1 are the **abstract** - they summarise the main point and present a **situation**, which indicates a **problem** - the shooting.

Paragraphs 2, 3, 4, 5 present at the same time **orientation** - name, age, place, and the **complicating action** - the sequence of dynamic events (he raced, he chase, the men turned, fired a loaded shot gun, Mr Syme staggered but collapsed).

Paragraphs 6 and 7 break the thread of the narrative, sub layering it (another problem/solution pattern is then repeated) with the introduction of new voices, who tell the same events again. This is an **evaluatory device** used by the teller, in Labov's categories.

Paragraph 8 is an overt statement that there is no resolution to the killing. It does offer, however, a possible **solution** to the enigma (Mr Syme could be the victim of a market traders war). It also marks **coda**, since the present tense takes us back to the reporting time ("police is investigating...").

All Labov's and Hoey's categories, therefore, are present in the discourse, making this a complete narrative.

A recounting of events of the kind: 'I got up at seven o'clock this morning, then I had breakfast, then I got dressed and went out to work' does not seem to constitute a complete narrative because no (orientation) situation indicating a 'problem' seems to be presented. The listener or reader of this recounting could ask the question 'so what?' or 'Why are you telling me all this?' since there is no 'evaluation' of the actions either. Because there is no problem,

consequently, there is no resolution. The audience of a narrative expects thus, a teller to recount something which is interesting and has a reason to be told (reportability in Labov's terms), since they make judgements and evaluate what is being recounted.

Narrative competence also allows us to predict what is necessary (and likely) at a certain point in the narrative to make it complete. If one of the categories is not present in the discourse, the hearer/reader notices its absence and tries to supply it, in order to make sense of the narrative.

I would like then, to distinguish in this study the terms: **recounting** and **narrative**. A recounting will be taken to be a set of propositions encoded with a sequence of dynamic verbs that are temporally and causally related. A recounting, therefore, which presents only a problem, but not the solution (or Labov's 2,3,5) can not be considered a 'narrative' in my terms, since a 'narrative' is created by the relationship between all the categories. A 'recounting' either presents information in such a way that categories can not be assigned or presents only one of the categories without markers that others should be expected. But, as a general rule, although not all recountings are narratives, all narratives are recountings.

Newspaper discourse, or the presentation of factual events, especially political reports or reports of the kind "Mrs. Thatcher announced yesterday that..." for example, are mainly marked by the pattern of 'recounting'. Newspaper narratives, however, are realised by the situation/problem/solution or goal/achievement patterns.

3.2.2 - Hard News as Stories

Journalists, when reporting 'hard news' write narratives. Their stories have to have a situation and a problem, a direction and evaluation and a point of view. As Bell suggests (1991:147), the fairy tale starts:

"Once upon a time..."

The hard news begins:

“Fifteen patients have died at North Manchester General Hospital in the past month....” (*The Independent*, Jan. 10, 1992)

Hard news has the main components Longacre, Labov and Hoey refer to, but with some structural variations. The main ones (according to the Labovian model) are the **headlines**, the **lead** (the first paragraph that summarises the whole story- a micro story), the **resolution** and the **coda**. Source attributions, actors, time and place are also important features of all media narratives. In fact, according to Bell (1991: 175), journalists have a short list of what should go in a story , the five W’s and a H’ - who, when, where, what, why and how.

Another important characteristic of news as narratives (and different from other kinds of narration) is that readers are indirectly present in the discourse. Readers are addressed as a large group defined by political, ideological allegiance undifferentiated at personal level.

Because there is no reader addressed directly, (no ‘you’ as reader in the text) there is a constraint in the speech acts produced by the news writer - acts like ‘promises’, ‘threats’, etc... are not present and ‘assertions’, as formulations of meanings, and the main speech act produced, are accepted as possible truth.

In personal narratives or fictional stories, the **title** does not necessarily give the listener/reader a clue to the topic to be developed. A recent film, for example, called *Best Intentions* (directed by Billy August, winner of the 1992 Cannes Film Festival and about the early married life of the famous film director Ingmar Bergman’s parents) does not tell us anything about the theme of the narrative.

In newspaper language, on the other hand, the **headline** is crucial. It is a summary of a summary (the lead paragraph). It should contain the basic information about the topic. In fact, many readers choose to read a story only if the lead line calls her/his attention.

Labov's **abstract** and **orientation** are substituted by the **lead**, or the first paragraph of a news story. The **abstract** summarises the central action and it is used to answer the questions: What is this about, why is this story being told. Orientation sets the scene: the who, when, where and what of the story. It establishes the 'situation' of the narrative.

In hard news the **lead**, in most cases, fulfils the dual function of the **abstract** and **orientation**. It is the most important paragraph of the story. It establishes the main theme, it gives information about the basic facts and people involved in the event. **Orientation**, on the other hand, can also continue through the story, and characters can be introduced as the events develop. The **headline** and **lead** of the text discussed above illustrate the points:

Man Shot Dead After Car Blast

1- A Market trader was shot dead outside his home yesterday after two men blew up his car and van.

Evaluation is a very important category in all kinds of narratives. There is no basic difference between media and other narratives, but it is important to say now that it is through **evaluation** that the recounter or writer indicates her/his position vis-à-vis the events being reported. It is also through **evaluation** that ideological values are passed. In newspaper language, **evaluation** is a crucial entrance point to hidden discourses. I will come back to evaluation when discussing the report of speech in the next chapter.

For stories of personal experience or other kinds of story, the problem must be solved, otherwise the questions "so what?" or "why are you telling me all this?" could be asked. Hard news, on the other hand, often does not present a clear-cut end and sometimes, they are not even rounded off. See for example the end of the Market trader story

8- Police are investigating a theory that Mr Syme was the victim of a market traders war.

Here, the reader does not know what will happen and the **solution** to the problem of Alex's death is not given. Nobody is caught or put in prison, for instance.

The **coda**, as a category, is not present in news story either. In an oral narrative, the coda concludes the account and brings the listener back to the present. Obviously, in a newspaper account, this is not necessary.

Concluding this discussion, I want to say that although hard news and other kinds of narratives share similarities in terms of their structural properties, they also present differences. **Orientation** and **evaluative material** tend to occur right at the beginning, the central action is generally told in non-chronological order. One feature that all narratives share, however, is the **report of what people say**.

Speech representation is a textual feature present in most media discourse. 'Quote' (or even indirect citation) is a powerful strategy used to avoid the constraints on impersonality, opinion and formality. However, newsmakers will always have the control over what other people say - they are the ones who interpret a set of events according to their point of view and the ones who structure in language these events according to given news values. These issues will be treated in detail in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4

4.1 - News is what is said

Direct observation of facts or first hand evidence is a basic condition sought by newsmakers. The immediacy of descriptions and the closeness of the reporter to the event, in a sense, guarantees the truthfulness of the news. However, news, most of the time, is about events that are not observed directly by media producers. As I suggested previously, news agencies, and other media supply ‘stories’ to reporters. The initial sources can be **primary**, in other words, an immediate participant who describes facts ‘in loco’ (an eyewitness or an opinion giving person), or **secondary**, somebody who retells the report of a primary participant. However, in both cases, much of what finally is reported is filtered through the news process.

Sources are ‘accepted’ in a hierarchical order. People linked to power relations or institutions tend to be more ‘reliable’ than others, so a lot of what is reported is associated with power structures. In all cases, what is seen as a direct quotation or even as a quasi direct quotation is interpreted as being a direct link to a source. Direct and indirect reporting in hard news have, thus, the function of legitimising what is reported. It is one of the rhetorical strategies used by the media discourse to implicate reliability. Besides, this representation makes the narrative more lively: “...introducing participants as speakers conveys both the human and the dramatic dimension of news events.” (Van Dijk, 1988: 87), which is why much of what is reported has to do with ‘**saying**’.

In this chapter, I will discuss the following issues:

- a- the implications of inserting one text into another;
- b- the difference between face to face interaction and reported interaction;

- c- the question of veracity and truthfulness;
- d- the construction of identities through the report of ‘saying’.

4.1.1 - Quotation as Intertextuality

Linguistically, ‘quote’ is the final layer in a hierarchy of narrative levels, since it is the introduction of one text into another. Halliday (1985) refers to the notion of projection - “the logical-semantic relationship whereby a clause comes to function not as a direct representation of (non-linguistic) experience, but as a representation of a (linguistic) representation” (p. 287/8). The projecting clause: ‘**he said...**’ is a verbal process of saying, while the projected clauses in

‘ he said: “**I will come..**”

or

‘he said **that he would come...**’,

represent what is said. Although quoted material represents interaction, the represented speech is always a mediated and indirect discourse, since it is always produced by someone who interprets the speech acts represented according to her/his point of view.

4.1.2 - Represented Interaction as Intratextuality

Writers, when representing oral interaction, make use of their assumptions about real interactive strategies in order to create their intra-textual interactions. A report of interaction is a reduction of an initial communicative event, especially because the reported talk is embedded in a text which has a different purpose from the original communicative event. The speech represented in factual narratives is a ‘supposed’ transcription of what someone said in a real interactive situation. The reporter may be a witness of the speech act or a participant in an exchange, or simply a journalist trying to reconstruct what was said from an office. In any case, most reporters reconstruct or ‘represent’ the real speech event and therefore interfere in this representation.

Another important aspect is that, because text is linear, it forces tidiness on written conversation. Reported talk is therefore a cleaned-up version of real talk. The representation of speech is a simplification and a reduction of the organisational characteristics of real interaction. There is no place, for example, for the interpersonal features of conversations to be reported. **Openings, closings** (see Schegloff and Sacks, 1973) or **phatic communion**, for example, are not present in reported interaction. Readers, however, use their interactional competence, and assume that some kind of beginning to the conversation reported took place.

In terms of structural organisation, the *exchange structure* is also simplified. In naturally occurring interactions, the exchange is generally realised by three moves - initiation, response and follow-up (see Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975). In written dialogues, by contrast, the exchange structure is reduced and the vast majority of interactions is represented by an informing move which is evaluatory in its discursive function. In the example below, only one move is represented in 'quotation' form. However, the illocutionary verb of saying *admit* makes explicit that there was a previous move not reported:

Top Model Jerry Hall is in the clear, a vital witness told her drugs smuggling trail yesterday. Airline employee Jane Branker *admitted* to the court: "Don't blame Jerry - it was all my fault. *Daily Mirror*, 14/2/1987.

Exchanges are not reported in full because both factual and fictional writers can rely on the reader to reconstruct the interaction.

Fairclough (1988b), in his discussion of reported representation in media discourse suggests that one of the tendencies which emerges from the analysis of this discourse is that what is represented is to a large extent the ideational meanings of the words used, rather than their interpersonal meanings. Quoting Voloshinov (1973: 119) he goes on to say that:

...it may be that ours is a highly ideational culture, that another speech is received as one whole block of social behaviour, as the speaker's indivisible, conceptual position - in which case only the "what" of speech is taken in and the "how" is left outside reception.

Newspaper reports tend to exclude interpersonal and social features of interaction and, and reduce structural features, because what is important, I assume, is the informational and therefore again, the ideational meaning.

Writers who report speech in factual reports are extremely powerful because they can reproduce what is most convenient for them in terms of their aims and ideological point of view. So, if they witness a whole conversation, they can reproduce it in full (though this is unlikely due to space constraints), or reproduce the parts they think are important, allocating turns to people they also think are important and leaving aside all the contributions that might be relevant from a different point of view.

Newspaper reports basically reproduce the 'interview' situation, which although sharing some of the characteristics of casual conversation (the syntax of clause-chains, hesitations, false starts, etc.), differs from this genre in significant ways. As Kress (1985: 21) suggests, the overt characteristic of casual conversation is "to develop the text by 'agreement', and hence the textual strategies employed by the participants are exemplification, modification, reformulation and development of the previous speaker's text." The interactional nature of the interview genre, by contrast, is "much more foregrounded and a number of formal features are present to structure the interaction." (Kress, *ibid.*: 22) - the interviewer has the power to start the interaction with a question, turns are taken at the instigation of the interviewer, who also determines the topic of the conversation, and s/he also has the power to end the interaction. The form of an interview is motivated by difference and according to Kress (*ibid.*)

is not developed by ‘agreement’, but by ‘direction’. The textual strategies are direction and questioning, on the part of the interviewer, and response, information, and definition, on the part of the interviewee.

Factual reporters are, in the main, interviewers, but in their report, what seems to be presented is what the interviewee says. The presentation of turns, therefore, is very reduced. In newspaper narratives (I am not referring here to explicit interviews, marked as such in the written media), the ‘news’ is what the ‘interviewee’ produces, all the interventions from the reporter seem to be absent and consequently only single turns are reproduced. The example below exemplifies this point:

LIBERACE SLIPPING AWAY-Palm Springs, California. Fans began gathering outside Liberace’s desert home Tuesday as word came that the flamboyant showman was clinging to life moment to moment. “There is not much time”, his publicist, Denise said. She said he was being attended at his bedside by his family and close friends. *Birmingham Daily News* - 4/2/87

Here, there is a voice saying something in direct speech and then in indirect speech. A turn is therefore given to someone that seems to be important. The reader, however, is never told who the publicist is talking to, if a question was asked and by whom.

If a dialogue is reported at all, this is what happens:

Cynthia Payne, the sex party hostess, employed a male slave to do her boring household chores, a court was told yesterday. He did the housework, painting and decorating and in return she rewarded him with “a little bit of caning, insults and mild humiliation”, she told the Inner London Crown Court. Asked if she ever had sexual intercourse with her slaves, Mrs Payne said: “No, slaves are not interested in sexual intercourse. It would be like growing spuds in a Ming vase.” *The Independent* - 5/2/87

Mrs Payne is given the direct turns, since her answers are the new information the reporter is trying to convey. Her language is inherently more vivid and interesting than the language of the questioner, so the rest of the conversation is reported indirectly.

Given the discussion above, we can conclude that, although writers make use of real interactive strategies, the main organisational features of represented interaction are simplified and reduced.

4.2 - Fact and Fictions

Sinclair (1986) proposes two contrasting terms and one relationship in order to handle the distinction between *fact* and *fiction*. He defines as *fact* states of affairs in the real world which do not require verbalisation. The verbal assertion of any fact, he calls **averral** - "an averral is an utterance; therefore it is said by someone to someone on some occasion." (p.44) **Correspondence** is the relationship between fact and averral, since participants "devise or deduce that what is being averred corresponds to a state of affairs" (ibid.). If there is no correspondence between a state of affairs and an averral, "the speaker or writer is seen to be either **misleading** or **mised**" (p.48). A participant as a speaker in a discourse is misleading when s/he believes that there is no correspondence between the terms and still makes the averral, and mised, as a hearer, if s/he believes that there is such a correspondence.

The status of fiction, which is a distinctive feature of narratives, according to Sinclair, is reserved for utterances "which are averred by a speaker without regard for their correspondence, and where this curious relationship is recognised by other participants, who are expecting that the correspondence will be irrelevant." (ibid.: 49). Sinclair (1981) also suggests that this status is

...brought about by an author detaching himself from the responsibility of averring each successive utterance, but not attributing them to any other author in the real world - either no one at all, or a fictitious narrator. The utterances, therefore,

lose their status as being identified with a participant in any real situation. (p.11)

The factual status, in contrast, entails authorial averral. The main difference, for example, between real conversation and a fictional dialogue is that in the first instance, there is a speaker who avers what is said and in the second, an author who invents a fictional narrator who reports what a character supposedly said. However, when a speaker in a real conversation reports another conversation, s/he only avers that another speaker said something, s/he does not aver the factuality of what has been said, i.e., s/he detaches her/himself from the propositions and thus, the reported utterance is in many ways comparable to a fictional one. This is emphasised in the following fabricated example:

“Mary talked to Peter and complained that she was being misinterpreted. At least that’s what she said she said.”

The last part of the utterance makes it clear that the speaker is saying: “Don’t take me as averring the truth of what Mary said, or that she said anything, but only as averring that Mary said what I say she said.”

One point in common between a factual and a fictional representation of interaction is that facts are made reportable by a reporter who chooses to make them significant. In this sense, the two kinds of accounts are not different. There is one person who interprets the world (or facts) according to her/his perceptions, ideology and situation as a woman/man living in a social context at a particular time (which may or may not be different from that of her/his subject matter). There is no text, therefore, as Fowler (1981a:108) suggests, in which the context has not been filtered by an author who has selected the propositions and has a particular posture or point of view towards them. Many people, however, continue to think, according to Bird and Dardenne (1988) that factual reporting, because it has a basis in reality/factuality, is objective,

fair, impartial, balanced, and it reflects reality and true representation. Ironically, the authors quote a crime reporter who said:

When I needed quotes, I used to make them up, as did some of the others... for we knew what the “bereaved mother” and the “mourning father” should have said and possibly even heard them speak what was in our minds rather what was in theirs. (Bird and Dardenne, 1988: 72)

Sinclair (1986) suggests the notion of **verisimilitude**, which is “the evaluation of an utterance as simultaneously fictional and factual.” (p.50) Usually we do know the stance of the writer with reference to actuality. Sinclair points out two important aspects:

a- fiction and fact in relation to sentences are not in contrast with each other. If they were, they would be mutually exclusive. A writer of fiction would have to avoid anything he or she knows to be a fact;

b- fictional status takes preference over factual, where both are relevant. That is to say, verisimilitude does not confer the status of factual averral on an utterance. Once a fiction, always a fiction. (p.50)

Sinclair also suggests that we can distinguish factual from fictional discourses by applying the ‘accusation of untruth’ criterion. A journalist would have to face up to such an accusation - is the text true or not? The fictional writer can dismiss this accusation as irrelevant. In some cases, however, the averral identification is not explicit and the reader may have problems in deciding what is fact and what is fiction.

If a journalist reports events which can be shown not to have happened, and a fictional writer reports with great accuracy events which did happen (Truman Capote, **In Cold Blood**, for example), readers read and evaluate them differently, because the medium

determines for them what sort of text they are exposed to. Newspapers and biographies, for instance, are supposed to inform about facts. If ‘personas’ are given a voice, readers assume that the speech presented is a close approximation of what was actually said. The averral depends on a fact outside the text. In fiction, on the other hand, a fact (or a simulated conversation) is created by the averral, since there are no facts in a fictional world (Sinclair, 1986:54). In many cases, however, the two modes come very close.

An interesting example of confusion in the distinction between what is fact and what is fiction in the representation of speech is the controversy about the Falklands film, **Tumbledown**, shown on British Television, in June 1988. The film is based on the book **When the Fighting is Over**, by Scots Guards lieutenant Robert Lawrence about his experiences in the war and how he was seriously injured. At one point, Mr Lawrence describes an incident in which a young officer told him, while in a state of shock, after being caught in the back blast of anti-tank weapon:

Don't go on. It's horrific. You'd be better off turning round, and shooting anyone who tried to stop you going back.
(transcribed in *The Times*, 7/6/88)

A 12 second sequence including the supposed words uttered by the officer had to be cut from the film, after Captain James Stuart, who felt that the reference in the play and the book pointed to him, took legal action against the BBC. Bloomsbury publishers were also asked to remove the ‘saying’ from the original book. The interesting fact is that Captain Stuart was not named either in the play or in the book. He, however, issued a “statement denying that he had ever spoken words attributed to ‘a young officer’” (*The Times*, 8/6/88)

The authenticity of these specific words could be challenged on the grounds that the TV drama at least was presented as fictional, but since the BBC did not make clear that the statements were fictional and presented real facts in the retelling of the events, the controversy was established. After these events, the BBC decided

“to crack down on TV drama that mixes fact with fiction”, according to R. Evans, the Media Editor of *The Guardian* (13/7/88) because the issue of what he calls ‘factional’ drama need to be re-evaluated and discussed. The BBC even ran a seminar called ‘Representing Reality’ in November 1988!

The examples below are also interesting cases. Because they are reports presented in a newspaper, we readers take for granted that the averrals are based on fact. So we have two accounts of criminal offences reported on the same day (12/2/87), by the same reporter (Pam Newbold), in the same newspaper (*Birmingham Daily News*).

The first narrative has the following title: **Mother is victim of sex attack** and is summarised in Labov’s (1967) abstract:

A young mother-of-two stood screaming in a city street after being attacked by a sex-fiend as passers-by turned a deaf-ear to her pleas for help, police revealed last night. *Birmingham Daily News* - 12/2/87

The headline of the second narrative is: **Mates save stab victim from death**, followed by the abstract in the first paragraph and the beginning of Labov’s complicating action:

A man cheated death after a vicious mugger stabbed him in the neck, severing an artery.

The attacker plunged a five inch blade through 24-year-old Raymond Gee’s cheek, mouth and throat, and left him bleeding in the street on Tuesday. Police said it was a miracle he survived. *Birmignham Daily News* - 12/2/87

In both cases, although there is an explicit reporter, Pam Newbold, what she recounts has been reported by the police: “Police revealed last night” and “Police said it was a miracle he survived”. This means, of course, that the reporter was not present during the events and her reports are second layer narrations. However, she

also reports, in direct speech, the policemen's evaluation of the happenings. The reader assumes, therefore, that the reporter really talked to the policemen:

first report:

Digbeth-based *Sgt Roger Billington said*: “**It was a particularly nasty attack** because the woman was with her children.”

second report:

Det Con Alan Jones, of Dudley Road police station, said it was a miracle Mr Gee was still alive. “**It was a particularly vicious attack**. He was in a very bad way for a while.”

We are given names and places in order to place the policemen in the real world and as proof of the veracity of the report. However, it is open to question whether two men, in different places, could produce almost exactly the same evaluation: “It was a particularly nasty/vicious attack.” This suggests that the reporter, using direct speech as evaluation of the action and as evidence for her report, may have created, as in fiction, sayings that the two policemen did not produce.

The **correspondence** between a verbal and state of affairs, it could be suggested by a sophisticated reader, is a **misleading** one, although the reporter of the *Birmingham Daily News* could prove the contrary, if she had a recording of her conversation with the policemen, and she could show they really did use the same words.

A final example comes from the Colombian writer García Márquez (in Mantilla, 1979: 32). In his early career, he was a journalist, who had to write a daily column for a local paper. On many occasions, he said, he did not have enough material. One day he decided to invent a major accident in the mountains of Colombia, so he wrote a full detailed report of the happening. Next day, reporters from other papers were sent to the place as well as curious visitors to see in ‘loco’ what had happened. Obviously, they could

not find anything. This is an explicit (and extreme) case of readers being **mised**.

These examples, however, because they are received as fact by readers, could be submitted to the ‘accusation of untruth’ criterion and both reporters could be taken to court. Factual representations should, in principle, match fact and averral. If the averral is established as fictional, (a book signalled as a ‘novel’, for example) any accusation of untruth is irrelevant. This is exactly what happened to García Márquez’s book, *Chronicle of a Death Foretold* (1983). The author was accused of revealing details of somebody’s life. The accusation however, was dismissed, since the author argued that his was a fictional book.

From the discussion above, we can state the following: words produced by a primary source very rarely get replicated verbatim in the final **copy**. Even a report of a live face to face interview can be altered, since the reporter will cut and paste whatever s/he thinks is more adequate. Although in many cases we could arrive at an outside source who produced some ‘saying’ in the real world, the complicating situation of authorship in the discourse of the media makes the process of reporting factual speech very problematic. In some cases two explicit layers of narration could be arrived at - the primary source and the reporter, but both of them could be submitted to questions of truthfulness. However, because of the linguistic property of ‘recursiveness’ - ‘He said that she said that Mary said that...’, the quoted saying can be presented through many different voices and the ‘real’ words become as fictionalised as any dialogue created by a fictional narrator. The example from **The Times** (20/1/92) illustrates this point:

BBC Television quoted Mr Nazarbayev as saying of his republic’s nuclear weapons: “We are prepared. We are ready to sign all of the treaties....”

In this case, the reporter from *The Times*, Susan Viets, quotes the institutionalised voice (The BBC) as quoting Mr Nazarbayev!

The multi-layering of saying makes the direct quote very doubtful.

The problem is that the words of a real person who takes part in a reportable event, are already interpreted and represented according to the point of view of a first reporter, are reinterpreted (and probably changed) by a chain of people. In most cases, a direct attribution to characters in a direct mode:

Mary said: "I will not go there"

or the averral by the teller in an indirect mode

Mary refused to go there

have nothing to do with people speaking in the real world. The direct mode is as I mentioned previously, a textual strategy which dramatises the narrative, legitimates or evaluates the story being told. The indirect mode marks the explicit interference of the reporter in her/his report. In this mode, there is 'integration' of the secondary discourse into the discourse of the narrator: the primary discourse absorbs the secondary one. The author, therefore, is in complete control of the character's supposed talk, since a speech act verb generally introduces reported utterances that are averred by the author (I will discuss this point in Chapter 5). There is not even the pretence that the voice of the character is heard. In both cases, however, the recounter is always in control of what is being reported and faithfulness to the words originally produced can always be challenged.

The choice of who is given voice depends on the importance given to some people instead of others. But again here the selection of the speakers reflects cultural belief systems and power structures.

4.3 - Voice, authority, social identities and ideological implication

In real interaction participants are differentiated by their individual roles and status, so their mode of conversation will exhibit

inequalities, the distribution of power, the status of the powerful and of the powerless, etc. Speakers, therefore, by using specific linguistic choices (turn taking techniques, introduction and maintenance of topics, etc.) act out their ascribed social roles, and try to establish their relationship with other members.

In factual written narratives, by contrast, the writers are in control of what to represent if a dialogue is to be reported. **Voice** is given to social subjects with a particular purpose and according to a particular interpretative view of the person who is reporting a prior speech event. The analyses below exemplify the points raised throughout this discussion.

4.3.1 - The Drama of Villains and Heroes

The media has the power to categorise people as villains and heroes and to give prominence to particular events. Schudson quoted by Bird and Dardenne (1988) says that “the power of the media lies not only (and not even primarily) in its power to declare things to be true, but in its power to provide the forms in which the declarations will appear” (p.81). The writer is also powerful because s/he is supposed to have the ‘knowledge’ of the event reported. In this sense, readers can not choose what to receive as information. Intratextually, writers also express power within the event reported.

In real conversation, the manipulation of the turn taking system is one of the most powerful strategies used by speakers to control and dominate other speakers. Writers, when reporting interaction, use the mechanisms of the turn taking system to allocate power and dominance to particular characters. By giving voice to a person, the writer’s positioning in relation to the event is implicitly stated. In this way, interactive mechanisms be can exploited in order to control the information given and this procedure is significant for the overall interpretation of the text.

The texts analysed below are reports of Court Proceedings in England. The first two are telling the resolution of the same narrative: a man is sentenced to six years for murdering his wife 22 years

earlier. This is a typical case of passionate crime that the press concentrates on merely for its sensationalist aspect, since the people involved are unknown and not in themselves newsworthy. This kind of crime is moreover reported for its moral value and the characters are portrayed as ‘villains’ of a drama.

From February 24th till February 28th, both quality papers and tabloids reported the progress of the court proceedings daily. Readers who follow the serial reports are placed in the role of spectators and are in a sense encouraged to participate vicariously in the action, whose impact derives from the suspense of the continuous report - “case continues tomorrow”.

This is the complete text of the report in *The Guardian*:

Man gaoled for Manslaughter of Wife

A prison officer who killed his wife 22 years ago was yesterday gaoled for six years for her manslaughter.

Bryn Masterman, aged 47, whose “perfect crime” was disclosed when he left the woman who became his second wife, was cleared of murder. The jury found him guilty of manslaughter by hitting his wife, Janet, who was 25, over the head with a stool and pushing her down the stairs, fracturing her skull.

Mr Justice Boreham, sentencing him said it was one of the worst possible cases of manslaughter. “I know it happened 22 years ago, but there is no doubt in my mind that to fulfil your own sexual desires a young woman died. She had done nothing wrong. She deserved nothing wrong. She deserved nothing but your affection and understanding.” An inquest had recorded a verdict of accidental death on Mrs Masterman when she died in 1965 after a row over his affair with a woman at his workplace.

Less than a year later he married his lover, Selina, now 51, and told her his secret. She kept it until their marriage began to

collapse last year, and he decided to leave her. She went to the police and agreed to trap him with a tape recorded conversation.

“It was the fury of a woman scorned” said Mr Brian Appleby, prosecuting. The incriminating tape was played to the jury, who heard Mrs Masterman ask her husband: “Did you do it because you loved me?”

He replied:” Yes,” but added: “It’s something I can barely live with.”

According to Selina “he never expressed any regret about the death. He bragged about it. He said Nottingham police were as thick as two short planks and he had got away with the perfect crime.”

Masterman admitted hitting his first wife with the stool and pushing her down the stairs at their house in Wilford, Nottingham, but the jury accepted his story that the push was a reflex when she tried to slap him and he did not intend to kill her. *The Guardian* - 28/2/87

In this text, the title and the first 3 paragraphs report about the main events of the narrative. The first direct voice is given to the representative of the law, Mr Justice Boreham, who evaluates the crime. We then hear indirectly (‘Masterman told his second wife his crime’ .. ‘she agreed to trap him.’) a more detailed description of the events, and again another voice of authority is introduced directly, this time, Mr Brian Appleby, the prosecutor. An incriminating question and answer is then reported from a tape, where the murderer and his wife talk directly. To finish off the text, we have “according to Selina + direct speech” and a final word from Masterman, who “admits”. The point to be made here is that the voice of authority is given the longer turns in direct speech, evaluating the events, and not developing further on the narrative line.

The next text, from *The Sun*, again reproduced in full, is different in some respects:

Wife-Killer Selina Vow to Man She helped Jail For 6 years

By Brian Dixon

Wife Killer Bryn Masterman began a six-year jail sentence last night as the woman who betrayed him vowed: "I still love him."

Second wife Selina - who shopped him to the police after he ditched her added: "I realized he has gone from my life - but I'll never get him out of my mind."

Prison officer Masterman, 47, killed his first wife Janet TWENTY-ONE YEARS (sic) ago in a row over Selina, who was then his stunning blonde mistress.

He bludgeoned Janet with a bedroom stool, and as she tried to hit back he pushed her down the stairs. She died in hospital - and he put a death notice for his "dearly loved wife" in the local paper.

Selina said yesterday: "He always said that our love was like Edward and Mrs Simpson. Edward had given up his crown for her and Bryn had killed for the woman he loved."

Police investigated the death, but an inquest decided it was an accident.

He only confessed the killing to Selina after they married - and she shopped him when he walked out on her 20 years later. But a jury at Nottingham Crown court yesterday accepted his plea that he did not intend to kill 25-year-old Janet.

Silver-haired Masterman, 47, turned to the jurors and sobbed

“Thank you”, drying his tears with a white hanky as they brought in a verdict of manslaughter. NOT murder.

But Mr Justice Boreham, jailing Masterman, said it was one of the worst possible cases of manslaughter. The judge said: “It may have happened 22 years ago, but to allow you to fulfil your sexual desires a young woman died at your hands. She had done nothing wrong. She deserved nothing but your affection and understanding. The jury has brought in a merciful verdict. I accept that for 20 years things have been worrying for you. But the burden you carried was brought about by your own clever deceit.”

Masterman had plunged passionately in love with shapely Selina during a torrid two-year affair in which they made love EVERY DAY.

They were workmates at a Boots soap factory in Nottingham, and spent their lunch time having steamy sex sessions on a canal bank in a borrowed van.

Masterman, then 25 and with two sons by Janet, was besotted with Selina, who was 31, and unhappily married.

He once told her: “I would live in a rat infested cell with you.”

They married 19 months after Janet’s death, but he claimed it crumbled after only three months - because Selina used his confession to make his life a misery.

He said she threatened to reveal his secret when she wanted to win arguments - and when he threatened to walk out.

When he eventually did leave, she went to police who bugged her home. Selina lured him there and got him to repeat the confession - with every word taped on a hidden recorder.

His lawyer Igor Judge, QC, said both Masterman’s sons supported their father, and would stick by him “as long as it takes.”

Masterman's youngest son, Lee, 22, said after the trial: "It was the right verdict, but he did not deserve the sentence - he has served it already. My father did not kill my mother deliberately. I love my father very much - we are closer than ever before."

Last night Selina, now 51 told why she kept the grim secret so long. She said: "I loved him - that was the real reason I didn't tell. I should have done it a long time ago. I didn't report him because I lived under threats of being scarred if I did, or of him committing suicide. But I was relieved to get it off my chest."

She insisted their marriage was not a wreck - and that she went on her hand and knees begging Masterman to stay. "We were happy for years", she said. *The Sun* - 28/2/87

The Sun's report is more vivid/dramatic because the proportion of speech representation is higher than *The Guardian*'s. The development of the narrative is entirely based on 'she said', 'he said'. The speech representation clearly reveals the elements of the drama:

"He always said that our love was like Edward and Mrs Simpson. Edward had given up his crown for her and Bryn had killed for the woman he loved."

Silver-haired Masterman turned to the jurors and sobbed: "Thank you" while drying his tears with a white hanky.

Before examining turn allocations, I want to compare how the two texts 'formulate' (Schegloff, 1972:80) or identify the actors of the action they refer to.

In *The Guardian*, Masterman is referred to in the title as 'man', then as a 'prison officer', as 'Bryn Masterman, aged 47' and finally as 'Masterman'. Masterman's first wife is referred to as 'his wife', 'his wife Janet, who was 25' and as 'Mrs Masterman'. The second wife Selina is called 'the woman who become his second wife', 'his lover', 'Selina, now 51', 'Mrs Masterman' and 'Selina'. The authorities

are ‘Mr Justice Boreham, sentencing’, and ‘Mr Brian Appleby, prosecuting’.

In *The Sun*, Masterman is called ‘wife-killer Bryn Masterman’, ‘prison officer Masterman, 47’, ‘silver-haired Masterman, 47’ and ‘Masterman’. The first wife is referred to as ‘first wife Janet’ and ‘Janet’; second wife as ‘the woman who betrayed him’, ‘second wife Selina who shopped him to the police after he ditched her’, ‘stunning blonde mistress’, ‘Selina’, ‘shapely Selina’, ‘Selina, now 51’. Then we are given ‘police’ as a non-specific source of averral and ‘Mr Justice Boreham, jailing Masterman’, Masterman’s lawyer as ‘Igor Judge, QC’, and ‘Masterman’s youngest son Lee, 22’.

The ways people are ‘classified’ and ‘named’ exert power and reflect ideologies. By comparing the way the two reports formulate the social roles, we can detect in *The Sun* a bias against Selina because she is constructed within a sexist discourse. Selina is older than Bryn (this information is given almost at the end of the text, while his age is given twice, right at the beginning of the text), she was first ‘unhappily married’ and then was left by Masterman. She is now taking revenge and being judged by *The Sun* as worse than the man who killed the wife: ‘she shopped him when he walked out on her 20 years later’.

The Guardian, trying not to pass judgement on the actors of the crime, gives however, prominence to the voice of the law and in this sense, by specifically reporting this crime as news, reinforces the positive legitimating values of the society and condemns the illegitimate ones: legality against illegality, peacefulness against violence, rationality against irrationality, firmness against weakness, etc.

The Sun, although also condemning the crime, plays more with the imperatives of dramatisation, titillation and novelty - the story should be presented through a personalised and therefore more lively angle in order to be more appealing to a particular audience.

In terms of turn allocation, *The Sun* gives Selina 5 direct speeches, which are purely self-evaluatory: “I realized he has gone

from my life - but I'll never get him out of my mind" or "I loved him". The implication behind these non-informative contributions to the narrative thread is 'why did you tell the police, then?'

Masterman is given one direct speech which again does not contribute to the narrative development. The reported saying

'turned to the jurors and sobbed: "Thank you" ...'

is there to show how 'kind' and sensitive he is. This report is a very interesting case. As I have pointed out previously, interpersonal markers are generally not present in speech representation. When they are reported, they are performing an extra function to the act of communication itself. Here the reporter, by explicitly representing a second part adjacency pair and a marker of Masterman's politeness, implies good things about him. He also works on a real interaction criterion or what Schegloff (1972a:363) has named "conditional relevance", that is, we assume that the 'thanking' is occasioned by a preceding verbal event or an action. So its presence in the text becomes relevant.

Masterman is also given another direct speech, but although not explicitly reported, this is a second layer report told by Selina, again to evaluate the action. "He once told her..." A reporter could not make this averral without her report. This kind of representation makes factual discourse certainly fictional. His other speeches are reported indirectly: "he claimed" his marriage with Selina had crumbled after 3 months, or "he said she threatened to reveal" his secret contradicting her statements of love.

Although Selina is given prominence in terms of direct speech representation, she is constantly being evaluated sexually by the reporter ('shapely Selina', 'stunning blonde mistress', 'during a torrid two year affair', 'they made love EVERY DAY', 'steamy sex sessions'). The imperative of titillation, which controls the framework of concepts and values, especially in the tabloids, is made evident in this text and the sexist moral here plays a sophisticated role.

Other voices represented are Masterman's son, who speaks directly in order to defend his father, and Masterman's lawyer, who, in a slipping mode (from indirect to direct speech) brings the accused family support to strengthen his case.

Although Mr Justice, just as in *The Guardian*, is also given a long turn, evaluating negatively the accused, the positioning of this turn in the text is significant, because for *The Sun*, the voice of the actors is more important than the voice of authority.

The manipulation of who is given a voice at what time is indicative, therefore, of how authors interpret the event. By giving voice to a particular person, power relations are determined by the author. The two next examples show how contrastive in terms of meaning turn allocation can be. Like the previous examples, these are also reports of criminal court proceedings. (I will transcribe now only extracts of the texts)

In the first text, **Woman Judge Jails Rape 'Bishop' for 16 Years** (*Daily Mirror* - 14/2/87), the voice of authority is made prominent:

Judge Nina Lowry told perverted preacher Cecil Gilbert, who sat in the dock clutching a bible, that he was "evil beyond belief".

Last night MPs welcome the tough sentence...

Judge Lowry - the only woman judge at the Old Bailey - told Gilbert, who: "I have no confidence at all that your propensity for this evil behaviour will diminish"...

Judge Lowry told Gilbert: "You were plausible, you were cunning, you were presentable, and you gained the confidence of susceptible people. They trusted you to help them or their children, but you had no good or charitable or religious purpose".

She sentenced him to 16 years...

The criminal and his wife are given only two non-informative turns:

As Gilbert, 57, hobbled from the docks he smiled to journalists and said: "It's all over, gentleman."

His wife, 27 years his junior, whispered: "Oh God Oh God" as the sentence was passed.

The contribution of the Judge are purely evaluative and they function to emphasise the scale of the crime.

A very different text, in terms of turn allocation is Mrs Payne's 'appearance in court' text (*The Independent* - 5/2/87). Mrs. Payne was a brothel owner who became known in England for her involvement with politicians and for her appearances in the media. In this text, although the speech event and situation are similar to the text above (a person is being judged for a wrong doing), the author chooses to give prominence to the accused and not to authority, who is then hidden in non-personalised indirect speeches and passive voices.

Sex party hostess 'hired male slave to chores'

1- Cynthia Payne, the sex party hostess, employed a male slave to do her boring household chores, a court was told yesterday.

2- He did the house work, painting and decorating and in return she rewarded him with "a little bit of canning, insults and mild humiliation," she told the Inner London Crown Court.

3- Asked if she ever had sexual intercourse with her slaves, Mrs Payne said: "No, slaves are not interested in sexual intercourse. It would be like growing spuds in a Ming vase."

4- Mrs Payne, 53, said she hated housework and used "devoted slaves" to do the work for her.

5- "The slave thinks a woman is the superior sex, he adores one particular woman," she said, adding that her slaves did not attend her wild parties. "But they are very useful for cleaning up the next day."

6- Mrs Payne said one of her slaves was devoted to her for 20 years until he died recently. She would leave some stiletto shoes - the higher the better - inside her front door "to excite him a little." "He said his sex started the minute he opened my front door," she said.

7- Mrs Payne, of Streatham, south of London, denies nine counts of controlling prostitutes at her home between December 1985 and May 1986.

8- She told the court that for years she lived with Sqn Ldr Robert "Mitch" Smith. "He was a bit of a kink. He liked to be caned and whipped" She said he was about 70-years-old and could not manage sex unless he was stimulated "He was interested in flagellation and bondage."

9- David Spens, for the defence showed the court a collection of whips, belts... and asked why she had them.

10- She said when the squadron leader died in 1981, she took the sex aids from his flat in Purley, south London, so his family would not find them. She denied the equipment was ever used at her parties.

11- As Mr Spens held up a large leather belt, Mrs Payne said the squadron leader had made it for himself to protect his kidneys during a sex session and added with a giggle: "He put it around his waist before anyone gave him one."

12 - Mrs Payne told the court about the private side of her life, and said her wild parties were a cure for loneliness. "I enjoyed having parties because basically I was lonely. I think everyone else who came was lonely too," she said.

13- Mr Spens asked Mrs Payne about comments she had made in an Australian magazine article.

14- She agreed that she had several lovers, but had been lonely since her brothel was closed down. She has suffered the loss of three close members of her family and had been through “a miserable time.”

15- Mrs Payne also agreed that then, as now, the cure for her black moods was to “throw another party and stuff the lot of them.”

16- She said she had two sons. One was married with children and lived close to her. The other was adopted at birth, and she had only recently been reunited with him.

17- She said that since her release from prison...

18- Cross-examined by Tony Longden, for the prosecution, Mrs Payne agreed that her parties were sex parties - but not to be paid for... She said the girls were a mixed group...

19- She said: “I have strip-teasers and scantily dressed girls at my parties. They make everyone happy and give them a nice time.”

20- Mr Longden suggested Mrs Payne provided the bondage equipment for her guests, but she denied it was used at her parties.

21- Judge Brian Pryor, QC, asked Mrs Payne whether she would provide the equipment if someone wanted caning or whipping.

22- “I haven’t got the time for that sort of thing at my parties, she replied.

23- “What about the bondage stuff?” asked the judge.

24- “It takes too much time, “ said Mrs Payne.

25 - “Yes, I suppose there would be an even longer queue on the stairs,” the judge said.

26- Mrs Payne complained that the police had frightened her guests, “you can’t see any of them for dust. It’s exactly the same as the last raid” she said.

27- Mr Longden ran through her list of party guests, suggesting that most of the men were considerably older than she wanted to admit.

28 - He pointed out a one 84-year old, a 72 year old bowls player from Brighton and a 74 year old with a double-barrelled surname. “But he was a very young 74-year old”, Mrs Payne said.

29 - Mr Longden suggested that Mrs Payne knew £25 was the going rate for sex in her bedrooms at her parties. She said what the girls did was up to them.

30 - She admitted that the police searching her bedroom had found a jar of cream - recommended in her biography as the best lubricant - but she said she used it as a make-up remover and not for sex.

31 - The trial continues today.

The distribution of turns is very significant in this text. While Mrs Payne has 25 turns, the voice of the law has 12 turns. The first authority turns are not identified: ‘a court was told’, ‘asked if’. Only on paragraph 9, the voice of David Spens, for the prosecution is introduced indirectly. Mrs Payne has a sharp answer for every question, sometimes qualified sympathetically by the writer:

As Mr Spens held up a large leather belt, Mrs Payne said the squadron leader had made it for himself to protect his kidneys during a sex session and added with a giggle: “He put it around his waist before anyone gave him one.”

Mr Spens has one more indirect turn, to which Mrs Payne’s answers are represented at length, both indirectly and directly. Then,

two other voices of the law are quoted: Tony Longden, for the prosecution, who cross-examines Mrs Payne in Indirect Speech, **suggests** three times and **points out** once. The use of these illocutionary verbs (see discussion in the next chapter) here is again very significant. The verb **suggest** marks tentative averral, in other words, Mr Longden is not sure about the veracity of what he is saying and therefore the reporter is likewise unsure.

The dialogue reported in paragraphs 21 to 25 between the judge and Mrs Payne is odd. It is reported for its humorous aspect, but Mrs Payne's answers to the judge are inappropriate if not irreverent.

Judge Brain Pryor, QC, asked Mrs Payne whether she would provide the equipment if someone wanted caning or whipping.

"I haven't got the time for that sort of thing at my parties," she replied.

"What about the bondage stuff?" asked the judge.

"It takes too much time", said Mrs Payne.

"Yes, I suppose there would be an even longer queue on the stairs," the judge said.

Another point is that many of the exchanges are not reported in full, only Mrs Payne's answers are represented - 'she agreed', 'she admitted'. Again, the answers are made more prominent than the questions of the law.

By the representation of Mrs Payne's turns, we can conclude that her assertiveness is well viewed by the reporter. Even a 'complaint' is reported. An unusual speech act from a person who is being judged in court! Mrs Payne faces up to the asymmetrical relationship of power of the speech situation (authority versus crime) and the reporter, by representing her speeches, shows this.

The examination of how people are given voice in text, therefore, is an important area which can reveal how reporters allocate prominence to certain characters to the detriment of others. We can

see how the interpretation of a same event can be different according to different points of view. We can also detect that by particular linguistic choices, some people are turned into villains or heroes and how they are evaluated according to the fundamentals concepts of law and order.

The concept of ‘accessed voice’ is a crucial one for the understanding of power relations. I will continue to discuss this question, but now specifically in terms of gender relations. Do women and men have equal access to voice? This is the issue I will address in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5

5.1 - Accessed voice and gender bias

In this chapter, I will continue to explore the concept of ‘**accessed voice**’ (Hartley, 1982) in other words, who is given voice and how this voice is reported in the press. As I mentioned in the previous chapter, much of the time, ‘news is what is said’ and the values and words of a privileged body of people who have special roles in society are generally put forward. Women in general are part of the **unaccessed voice** group and the small quantity of female speech reported in the press, as I shall point out below, is sufficient to demonstrate that their social role has a special or deviant status. Unequal access is evident in what is reported and who speaks, and as a consequence, the linguistic code imposes and reinforces attitudes and values on what it represents.

The discourse of the media, as I have been suggesting throughout this study, is an instrument of cultural reproduction, highly implicated within the power structures and reflecting values about the world. One of them is male supremacy. Writers in quality papers seem to abide by and to be dominated by this ideology.

Newspapers in general, both quality and the tabloids, are basically oriented to a male audience and exclude women from the speaking position.

Although women constitute 52% of the population, they are misrepresented in the news. They are also described differently, in other words, women are a separate category, generally dissociated from power structures. Men in general, are represented speaking in their public or professional roles, while women when speaking, are identified with their private sphere (see examples in 4.3.1) They are the mothers, the daughters, the wives, the widows, the page three girls, the stars. The private/public distinction is a very important feature of social

organisation. If women are represented mostly speaking in their personal roles, they are marginalised in terms of public or ritual speech.

Newspapers, as I intend to show here, handle men and women in terms of different sets of categories or different stereotypes. 'News' in the quality papers, one of the institutional gatekeepers of linguistic production, reinforces sexism - a system in which women and men are not simply different, but unequal.

If, in the media, women are less heard than men, and their contributions less reported, newspapers continue to encode bias and legitimate assumptions about linguistic behaviour and social asymmetries.

5.2 - Data

The sample for this analysis consists of 200 narratives from English quality papers - (*The Guardian*, *The Independent* and *The Times*) collected during a period of 10 consecutive days (Jan. 1992). 130 Home and 70 International hard news were selected.

My choice was motivated by the following assumptions:

- quality newspapers, because targeted to an educated audience, were likely to have a 'serious' insight of what is considered 'important';

- news in quality papers would be addressed to a non gender-marked population since both women and men read (and watch on TV) the news daily. These texts, therefore should not in principle, favour one of the sexes. However, as I quickly realised by examining the sample and will demonstrate here, this was not the case.

In order to back up and confirm my findings, I also made use of concordance lists of verbs of 'saying' from a 5,000,000 word corpus of *The Times* and frequency counts of some significant lexical items from *The Times* corpus and from a 20,000,000 word corpus of *BBC World Service*. Both corpora are part of *The Bank of English*, at COBUILD - Collins Birmingham University International Language Database.

5.2.1 - Page Two Man

It is not insignificant that *The Times* of 21/1/1992 presents a section on page 2 labelled MAN IN THE NEWS.

After examining 35 pages of Home News and 22 pages of International News, it became evident that most texts were about men and written by men. Of the 200 total stories, 149 were written by male writers, 29 by female writers and 22 were press releases.

A frequency count of some reference items, in the table below, illustrates the differential presence of women and men in the Cobuild *Times* and *BBC World Service* corpora.

	<i>The Times</i>	<i>BBC World Service</i>
Miss	1078	2271
Mrs	2462	8505
Ms	165	207
Mr	15586	94951
<hr/>		
spokeswoman	60	477
spokesperson	6	20
spokesman	643	7747
<hr/>		
chairwoman	6	23
chairperson	2	5
chairman	1817	3255

It is interesting to note that the words ‘chairperson’ and ‘spokesperson’ generally refer to a woman and not to a man. In one of the examples, ‘chairperson’ was glossed, as if necessary:

Frances D’Souza, female chairperson of the Rushdie Committee...(*BBC World Service*)

I also looked at frequency counts of other significant lexical items. These items demonstrate again the under-representation of women in the written press:

	<i>The Times BBC</i>	<i>World Service</i>
She	5417	11103
He	27255	97389
<hr/>		
Woman	639	2115
Man	1949	7555
<hr/>		
Wife	637	1218
Husband	337	581
<hr/>		
Widow	89	250
Widower	1	1

The pairs wife/husband and widow/widower are very important. Although these words do not have a high frequency in the overall corpora, they signal world views. Women are more frequently labelled in their roles of wives and widows than men are as husbands and widowers.

I also counted the adverts published in two sections of all the newspapers examined. Not surprisingly, cars, banks, building societies, xerox machines, business links and hotels for the business men were there. There was only one advert for fitted bedrooms and one clothes shop, which, even then, was advertising shirts for men!!! Again, the adverts significantly tell us to whom the discourse is addressed.

If we consider the topics explored in ‘hard’ news (politics, economy, foreign affairs, relations between governments, report of wars, tragedies or accidents, crime and court reports) we can see that they basically cover the public sphere. ‘Soft’ news, on the other hand, produced from a ‘woman’s angle’, is concerned with the private life. However, there is an overwhelming bias towards the public as opposed to the private life. Decisions about the economy, politics, working relations are given priority while topics like personal relations, sexuality, family and working conditions are invisible in the news.

5.3 - Accessed voice or where are all these 'talkative women'? Some figures

Since most news is about public issues, it is normal that voice is given to representative personalities. Typically, therefore, the exploitation of a topic includes the opinions and 'arguments' of a privileged body of powerful members of the society. As Fowler (1991) suggests, access is a reciprocal relationship between the powerful and the media.

...the media conventionally expect and receive the right of access to the statement of these individuals, because the individuals have roles in the public domain; and reciprocally, these people receive access to the columns of the papers when wish to air their views. (p.22)

The political effect between the accessed and the unaccessed provokes

an imbalance between the representation of the already privileged, on the one hand, and the already unprivileged, on the other, with the views of the official, the powerful and the rich being constantly invoked to legitimate the status quo (Fowler, *ibid.*).

Women in general, are part of the unaccessed voice. To demonstrate this point, I selected from the *Cobuild The Times* corpus, one example (the most frequent one) of the subcategories of a general taxonomy of **verbs of saying** (Caldas-Coulthard, 1987, 1988). I classified the verbs of saying according to their function in relation to the reported clause. **Neutral** and **structuring** 'glossing' verbs are the ones that introduce a 'saying' without explicitly evaluating it. So, verbs like **say**, **tell**, **ask**, **inquire**, simply signal the illocutionary act - the saying.

By using these verbs, the author only gives the reader the 'literal meaning' (sense and reference in Austin's terms) of the speech. The

intended meaning, (illocutionary force) has to be derived from the saying itself. The **illocutionary glossing verbs** are the ones that convey the presence of the author in the text, and are highly interpretative. They name a supposed speech situation, they clarify and make explicit the illocutionary force of the quote they refer to. These verbs are not only **metalinguistic**, they are also **metapropositional**, since they label and categorise the contribution of a speaker. Verbs like **urge**, **declare** or **grumble** mark, for example, a directive, an assertive or an expressive proposition. Other verbs are **descriptive** in relation to the represented interaction. Verbs like **yell**, **shout**, **scream** or **whisper**, **murmur** mark **manner** and **attitude** of speaker in relation to what is being said. Finally, **discourse signalling verbs** are not speech reporting verbs, but very often they accompany Direct Speech. They mark the relationship of the quote to other parts of the discourse, like **repeat**, **add**, or they mark the development of the discourse - **pause**, **continue**, **go on**. The table below summarises this taxonomy:

SPEECH REPORTING VERBS

NEUTRAL STRUCTURING	{ say, tell ask, inquire reply, answer
------------------------	--

META-PRO- POSITIONAL	{ assertives directives expressives	{ remark, explain agree, assent, accept correct, counter
		{ urge, instruct, order accuse, grumble, lament confess, complain, swear

METALINGUISTIC	narrate, quote, recount
----------------	-------------------------

STAGE DIRECTION VERBS

PROSODIC	cry, intone, shout, yell, scream
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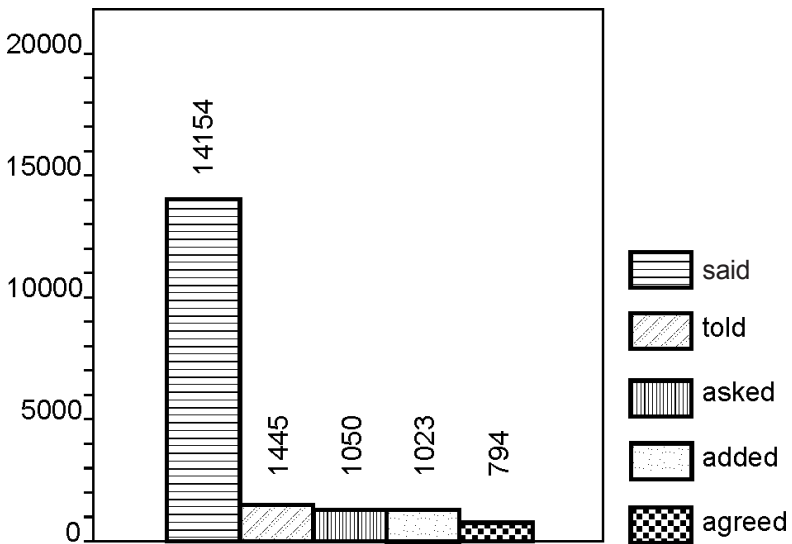
PARA LINGUISTIC	{ voice qualifier (MANNER) voice qualification (ATTITUDE)	{ sigh, gasp, groan whisper, murmur, mutter
		{ laugh, giggle,

TRANSCRIPT VERBS

DISCOURSE SIGNALLING	{ relation to other parts of discourse	{ repeat, echo, add, emend
		{ discourse progress

The neutral verb **say** in its past tense form **said** is the most frequent verb in the corpus, with a total occurrence of 14154 instances. The present form **says** occurs 3634 times. The verb **tell** also in its past form is the next more frequent neutral verb, occurring 1445 times. The structuring verb **ask**, in its past form, appears 1050 instances. By contrast, all the other reporting verbs, occur less that 500 times. The discourse signalling verb **add** (**added**) occurs 1023 times and the metapositional **agree** (**agreed**), 794. The diagram below shows these figures:

Data from "verbs of saying"



I examined 250 occurrences of the more frequent verbs and 150 of the less frequent ones. I also looked at 100 occurrences of those verbs that appear between 100 to 200 times. These were the metapositional **suggest** (**suggested**) and the discourse signalling **continue** (**continued**).

All the other verbs that occur in the corpus less than 100 times were disregarded.

The main thrust of this research was to verify whether the sayer was a woman or a man. The results are indicative.

Men are quoted 497 times, women, 62 times.

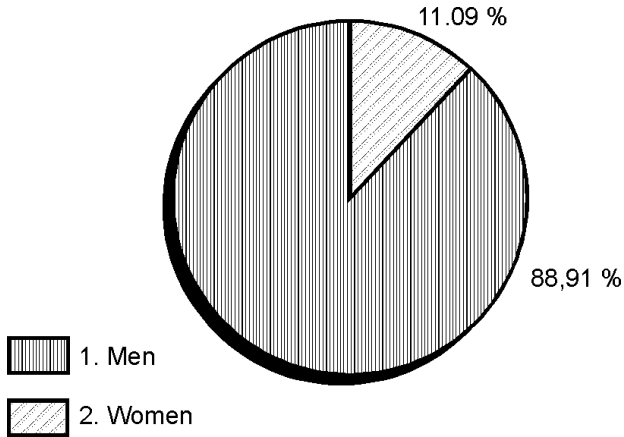
As expected, the frequency of the descriptive verb is naturally very low. However, these verbs point to a crucial linguistic assumption about gender relations. Men **shout** and **groan** while women (and children) **scream** and **yell**. Other verbs like **nag**, **gossip**, **chatter**, etc. are also associated with beliefs which are accepted as common sense within a society and mark 'stereotypes' of particular groups. There is a vocabulary, according to Cameron (1985: 31), which denigrates the talk of women who do not conform to the male ideas of femininity. 'Screaming', 'yelling', 'nagging' mark the negative image of the 'housewife', the 'mother-in-law', the 'mother'. The quote below exemplifies these assumptions:

The Labour party is like a wife ... who is always **complaining** about her husband to the neighbours and **nagging** him at home...(Alan Watkins, *The Observer*, 9/2/92)

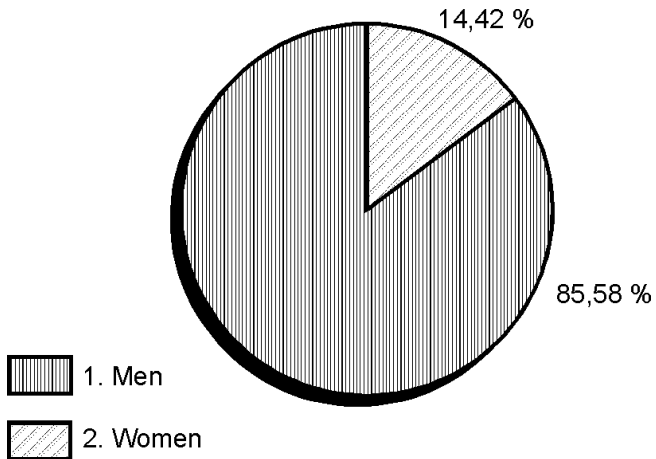
Returning to my own corpus of texts, I isolated 451 instances where men were given voice as compared with 76 times for the females.

The pie charts below summarise the findings:

Cobuild Data
Men and Women Speaking



Press Texts
Men and Women Speaking



These figures show that there is a rhetoric of silencing and alienation at work in the way women are excluded from speaking in the news. The figures confirm the theoretical model proposed by the anthropologists S. and E. Ardener (1975) of the ‘dominant and muted’ groups. They suggest that in every society the communicative channels are under the control of a dominant group. Women are the ‘muted group’. Although they generate a reality of their own, they do not have the access to ways of expressing this reality linguistically. Cameron (1985:103), discussing the Ardeners’ theories, suggests that for them, silence is not the defining characteristic of a muted group, since women can speak a lot. The question is whether they are able to say what they want to say, in the appropriate place and time.

In the context of the news, women are in statistical terms under-represented linguistically. When given voice, they are not given the same speaking space. Sara Dunn, writing for the **Women** page of *The Guardian*, (20/2/92 - pg. 36) states, for example, that women make up 10 per cent of Britain’s four million anglers and hold the most coveted salmon fishing record, and she asks the question: “So why do they get so little coverage in publishing and the press?”

5.4- How women are described in the press

The other question I want to discuss here is the differential manner in which women are described when given voice. As I suggested earlier, access is given to representatives of some kind of power - the more powerful or established a person is in an institution, the more attributes she/he will have when introduced as a speaker.

Naming is a powerful ideological strategy. Different names, or titles for a person represent different ways of perceiving this person.

I found a cline of modification ranging from the personal name of the speaker through the simple term of address, (Mr, Mrs, Miss or a title - Dr, Lord) to highly complex nominal groups. The categorisation of the sayers depends on his/her role in the power structures.

Generally, male speakers are glossed by their professional designations or position in the government or in some kind of public institution:

The following examples (in a cline from simple to complex nominal groups) illustrate the point:

Mr. Maxwell

Dr. Bartell

Lord Deborough

Jades Camel, the broker

Keith Wafter, medical director of Cilag

Mr. Paul Davie, economist

Mr. name+surname, the chairman of Warner

“ “ “ , the Australian syndicate chairman

“ “ “ , chief opposition spokesman on employment

Mr. (name+surname) Northern Ireland Education

Minister

Prof. Patrick Minford, of the University of Liverpool, a monetarist and supply side economist,

Denis Giffod, the founder of ACE the association for Comics Enthusiast and owner

Dr. Jan Pentreath, chief scientist of the government authority

Sir Charles Tidbury, former chairman of Whitbread brewers

The prominent conservative activist, Paul Weyrich, Clinton, front runner for the Democratic presidential nomination, the Arkansas Governor

Women, on the other hand, are described differently:

Jane Grigson

Mrs Reagan

Miss Hillary Campbell, of Edinburgh

23-year-old Nicole Stewart

His grandmother, Mrs Barbara Wilkinson
Mrs. Frances McDaid, his mother
Ursula Vaughan Williams, widow of the composer
Richard's cousin Anne, chain smoking behind the bar
Tricia Howard, 48, the woman with whom the Liberal
Democrat leader dallied in 1986

Mrs. Clasper, a mother of two and part time charity
worker

Hillary, Mr Clinton's politically attuned wife
The wife of the front-running Democratic presidential
contender, Bill Clinton

The 18-year-old Miss Black America beauty pageant
contestant

Miss Asia Chorley, of Sotheby's

Lyz Stayce, policy director of Mind

Miss Ann Widdecombe, Conservative MP for

Sara Keays, the colonel's daughter who once hoped
to marry the then Conservative Party chairman Cecil
Parkinson and become an MP

Miss Keays, aged 44, left with an epileptic eight-year
old daughter

Although we could say that unimportant people, both male and female are described similarly, either by full name or by a simple term of address, the striking difference between the two columns is that women are in the main, characterised in terms of marital or family relations, especially in their relationship with a man, and also in terms of age. I could not find any examples where a professional male is presented in relation to a female.

The following made up examples are unlikely to occur:

'Lord MacGregor of Durris, husband of the chairwoman of
Blogg, Dr. Mary Smith'

or

‘Mr. Ted Hughes, widower of the famous poet Sylvia Plath...’

However, I found this counter example:

“The wife of Dr. Wyatt, Dr Vall Hall said that...”

Even when women are described in their professional status, the nominal groups qualifying them tend to be shorter, as we can see from the list and examples above.

Clark (1992) in a study of how women are represented in *The Sun*'s reporting of crimes of sexual violence, discusses in terms of naming and classification how the tabloid newspaper conveys blame for an attack. In the report of cases of rape and murder, the attacker (in the cases reported, a man) is not always held responsible and the victim (always a woman) may be blamed (p.208). If women are named as *blonde*, *unmarried mum*, *Lolita* (in *The Sun*'s language, a sexually active under-aged girl), *vice-girl*, *blonde divorcee* as being sexually available. If they are sexually available, they are in some sense, held responsible for the attack and the blame is somehow mitigated. The male attackers, on the other hand, are named in some cases sympathetically, and this is done by building apparent excuses into an attacker's name - *hubby*, (like in **Hubby kicked no sex wife** (Clark, *ibid.*: 212). In this case, according to Clark's analysis, there is an implication that 'wife' and 'no-sex' are incompatible, since a 'normal' wife would have sex with her husband. In the headline **Sex starved squaddie strangled blonde, 16**, the victim is named according to the colour of her hair, which again, implies sexual attractiveness. The sex-starved man, therefore, could not help responding to (p. 218).

Naming therefore, both in the cases of report of violence against women and in the report of voice is a manipulative strategy which encode world-views and it is an accurate pointer to the ideology of the person who names, since different connotations of legitimacy are carried by the different classifications.

In concluding this chapter, I want once more to say that quality

newspapers, as I indicated here, see women as a minority group that is marginalised by being denied the role of speakers. The linguistic differences in the way women are represented in hard news are a reflection of women's lack of access to power, since language is located in a power structure which is, in its turn, reflected in the linguistic production. The male representatives of powerful institutions, frequently accessed, "provide newspapers with the modes of discourse which already encode the attitudes of a powerful elite" (Fowler, 1991: 23). And women, according to this research, are far from being in powerful positions. The striking disproportion between the two genders makes clear a disproportion which most people do not reflect upon.

By pointing out the differences between the amount of talk given to men in relation to what is given to women, I tried to make visible these differences showing that quality newspapers handle women and men as different categories. There is no doubt that language simply reflects 'facts' and the ways society in general treats the genders, but by ignoring the asymmetries, we tend to reinforce the stereotypes. As Fowler (*ibid.*: 105) says, "it would be complacent to accept that the relationship between language and society is merely reflective". By pointing out the asymmetrical reproduction of power relations between the genders, I hope to make readers aware of the discrimination in practice to which we are exposed daily.

CONCLUSION

I treated 'hard' news in the written press in this study as a specific genre within the discourse of the media. I claimed that news is not a natural phenomenon emerging from facts in real life, but a product and a representation of reality through somebody's interpretation. News, therefore, reflects, and in so doing, shapes values of social groups.

By using a critical discourse analytical approach to news as narrative, I showed how ideologies are related to the representations that underlie news production. My critical analysis demonstrated how language continuously shapes ideas presented, moulding them in the direction of established beliefs - authority is given prominence, social roles are created, gender values are assigned, women are excluded from a speaking position.

News as narrative is a disposable and fast fading text - events are presented as instantaneous and are quickly erased from the reader's mind. But like other narratives, news is always an intertextual production since it is based on other stories and in a sense, on other discursive practices. Newspaper reporters, as I demonstrated throughout this work, are greatly dependent on externally produced texts: speeches, debates, and most of all, simple sayings produced by privileged accessed voices. The importance of 'who is the sayer of what is said', in other words, the importance of averral for the overall interpretation of the text is evident in media texts. By transferring averral, reporters detach themselves from the responsibility of what is being reported in order to either distance themselves or to evaluate what is being said. This is a very important strategy used by reporters to pass their own judgement on the action.

In the stage of selecting and processing what to report, writers reveal their own stance towards what is represented. Through the comparison of the different texts reporting the same events, my

evidence shows that no speech representation is objective or simply neutral. The power of the writer to distort the interpretation of a 'saying' can even be frightening.

My analysis also suggested that 'quoting' what people say is a very dangerous activity. Sayings are transformed through the perspective of the teller, who is an agent in a discursive practice. In this way, social identities and roles are created in the press according to the values of who reports and the institution that this person represents.

The Press is also thoroughly preoccupied with what **important** people say. The concept of 'importance', however, is directly linked to power and social structures. Only a number of institutionalised speech situations are regularly accessed and *women*, as I showed in the last chapter, *are often silenced by the press*.

I also demonstrated that the distinction between fiction and fact depends exclusively on the stance of the averrer in relation to what is represented, and on how readers interpret texts. Some of the factual representations I have analysed are highly fictionalised, but they are received as 'fact' because readers interpret them as being correspondent to an outside 'state of affairs'.

The description of formal linguistic characteristics of the texts analysed here and the subsequent interpretation and explanation of the linguistic practice in a social context helped me, as an analyst, *to find out* that the independence of the press is an illusion. The examination of how language is used brought this hidden process to consciousness. According to Fowler, "the practice of analysis makes ideological structure 'tangible'." (1992: 232)

Another important aspect to be considered here is that the reader is highly implicated in the discursive articulation of values and beliefs. In a sense, newspapers construct readers. A critical discourse analysis can help readers to change their position as passive subjects to conscious interpreters. Handling newspapers daily is a routine activity for many people. Educating people to read critically is an objective that we should aim at, as educationalists and linguists. A

reader, aware of manipulatory strategies and 'common sense' beliefs, can intervene in the deconstruction of the too comfortable position held by newspapers as the 'gatekeepers' of language and values.

My analysis reflected only on questions of speech representation and classification of authority, social identities and gender relations. Many other linguistic aspects of language in use in social practice could and should be looked at. According to Halliday, the 'grammar' of a language constructs 'reality'.

This is a limited study, but it has raised several areas for further research. Other genres in the discourse of the media can be analysed in terms of gender, race and class relations. Advertising, for example, is a site of discrimination and objectification of women.

Other basic units of analysis, which I also referred to in this study, like the turn taking and the exchange structure are discursive dimensions through which ideology and power relations operate and should be given more attention in other discursive practices.

The investigation of how interviews and police interrogations are subsequently reported in the Press is an interesting area for more investigation. A comparison of text with tape recording would show how 'what is said' is shaped and rephrased by the reproducer of the written discourse to fit traditional formulations.

The comparison between the same event reproduced in TV news and in newspaper news in terms of speech representation and averral would be an interesting topic to be investigated, since the two versions could reveal different institutional points of view and consequent ideological positioning.

The importance of my analysis (and future ones on the same line) is, I think, the attempt to show that specific textual features may be understood to invoke extra-textual, social, cultural and ideological relations. By making explicit the strategies used by authors to represent what other people say, we can start to be aware of how language is used to manipulate and control people. This is, per se, the value of an investigation of this kind.

No discourse is impartial, neutral, without a point of view, or as Eco (1985) puts it, 'free of the teller's premises'. We can no longer disassociate linguistic production from what it represents and what it reflects.

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News as Social Practice launches the series. Carmen Rosa Caldas-Coulthard, the author, taught at UFSC for many years and is currently working at the University of Birmingham, England. Her main areas of research are Discourse Analysis and Applied Linguistics. She has been concerned with the relationship between language and social practices, especially with the representation of gender in the language of the media.

This study is the result of the research carried out for her advancement to Full Professorship at UFSC in 1992. She demonstrates here that in the language of the media, the genre "news" is not a natural phenomenon emerging from facts of real life, but is socially and culturally determined. By examining news as narrative texts and particularly the concept of accessed voice, she makes visible the ways newspapers handle gender identities in terms of difference. One of her major claims is that women are under-represented in the press: their voices are less heard, their presence is less significant. Her analysis shows that we should be aware of how language is used to misrepresent, manipulate and control people.

