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**Satya Rao Uppuleti**  
Research Scholars, Department  
of Linguistics, Andhra  
University, Visakhapatnam-  
530003, Andhra Pradesh,  
India.

**Tonia Grace Ganta.**  
Research Scholars, Department  
of Education, Andhra  
University, Visakhapatnam-  
530003, Andhra Pradesh,  
India.

**Correspondence:**  
**Satya Rao Uppuleti**  
Research Scholars,  
Department of Linguistics,  
Andhra University,  
Visakhapatnam- 530003,  
Andhra Pradesh, India.

## Newspaper headlines - A comparative study of two Telugu dailies

**Satya Rao Uppuleti, Tonia Grace Ganta**

### Abstract

It is observed that Newspaper headlines use a lot of borrowed words, figures of speech like simile, metaphor, alliteration, pun etc. aiming to catch the reader's interest. Some newspaper headlines pervade more information, while some other newspapers use straightforward, factual headlines which are simple and yet still dramatic. It is not just the linguistic structure of the headlines that varies but the presentation of ideas also differs. The present study aims to compare the headlines of two Telugu Newspaper dailies, namely Andhra Jyothi and Sakshi. An attempt is made to analyse as to how the same event is presented in different manner by both the newspapers by making elaborate use of loan words along with the native language words to make the headlines shorter and more sensational.

**Keywords:** Newspaper Headlines, News language, Reader.

### 1. Introduction

Newspapers have a vast audience; it is a few speaking to the many and therefore the News language has enormous power to influence the world. Fowler opines that the 'content' of newspapers is not facts about the world, but in a very general sense 'ideas' (Fowler 1991:1). Hence, according to him, language in the newspapers is a construction of ideas, beliefs or values and therefore definitely not objective and neutral and as a consequence clashes with the journalist's image of impartiality and neutrality. "Thus, news is a practice: a discourse which, far from neutrally reflecting social reality and empirical facts, intervenes in what Berger and Luckmann call 'the social construction of reality'." (Fowler 1991:2) Fowler also argues that language in this context is 'a highly constructive mediator (Fowler 1991:1).

### 2. Formal or informal style

The purpose of a newspaper is usually to give the reader information in an interesting but objective way. To achieve this motive they often use the passive voice as it makes the report sound more formal. By putting the object of the verb at the beginning of the sentence, they take our attention away from the subject. Using words with similar meanings in a news report keeps it interesting. As there is a lot of information in a very short time, it is important that the reader pays attention. If we read the same word being repeated more than once or twice we might get bored and stop reading. Newspapers contain varied items related to current events, political stories, celebrities, entertainment, advertisement, economics, sports, scandals, business etc. News related to Politics, Economy, War, Disasters, Accidents, Science, Technology, Law, Crimes, and Protests etc. is considered as Hard News which is serious and timely. It loses its value after two or three days. It usually gives an account of what happened, when, how, why, to whom and where it happened. News that focuses on People, Places, and Issues that affect the reader's lives, Communities, problems etc. is considered as soft News. A mixture of colloquial (spoken) and written languages is used. The style of the headline reveals much about the ideology and aims of a Newspaper. The formal style of writing is associated with the conventions expected of standard written English. It is marked by complex, complete sentences, impersonality, avoidance of colloquial or slang vocabulary, whereas the informal language is characterized by a simpler grammatical structure i.e.

Loosely connected sentences and phrases, personal evaluation, and a colloquial or slang vocabulary.

### 3. The structure of headlines

Headlines are not full sentences, but short summaries designed to attract attention. As a result, some words are omitted. The role of linguistic structure is very important in the construction of news headlines. The headline is usually a phrase, rather than a sentence. The language features that are commonly observed in newspaper headlines are omission of words, the use of short words, the use of loaded words (words with a strong positive or negative connotation), the use of nominalization, the use of noun phrases, the use of gimmicks (puns, word play, metaphor, alliteration, rhyme). In nominalization a noun can be used instead of a verb. Headlines may not contain a verb. The action is frequently nominalised (turned into a noun) into a dynamic noun. The headline and the lead are the basis for how the story will develop. Similar information may be found in the body of the story. The lead, which follows the headline, often in bold font, elaborates the headline but it is not an introduction. It can contain the main idea of the news story that is the focus of the story or what the story is about. The event can begin at the point which is considered to be of the greatest interest. The lead should also give some or all of the 5 W's (who? What?, where?, when?, and why/how?) The headline may also be followed by a subhead or summary line which qualifies or elaborates the headline before the lead, and by-line, which tells who wrote the story. An over-line can appear above the headline to clarify it.

### 4. Types of headlines

Newspapers use different types of headlines. The specific type is based on the structure and content of the news story. Headlines summarize the news story featured under it in a few striking words aiming to get and hold the attention of the reader and draw him/her into the story. Headlines are no longer than one, two or in some cases three lines.

#### 4.1 Flush Left Headline

It is one of the more modern headline forms in use consisting of two or three lines where each line is set flush left to the left side of the space. The design allows freedom in writing and flexibility in unit count. This type is popular as it is simple and easy to write. There are no rules to govern the writing of flush left headline. However, a uniform style for better results is generally adopted. It provides a feeling of airiness to the page with the white space.

#### 4.2 Banner Headline

Banner headlines are the ones printed in extra large letters across the top of the front page of the newspaper on exceptionally important issues. This type of headline is not used frequently, but when they are used they have a tremendous impact.

#### 4.3 Inverted Pyramid Headline

In this fast moving generation people are always in a hurry and they seldom have time to read each and every word of a news story. In this milieu the inverted pyramid headline is

advantageous as it concentrates on presenting the pertinent facts first. It generally consists of three lines where the first runs across the column and the other two lines are shorter than the first line. The headline is created from the informative facts presented at the beginning of the story, giving the reader the most important points quickly in a nut shell.

#### 4.4 Cross-Line Headline

It is quite similar to a banner headline. Though it is a large headline it does not span the entire page, but it does run across all the columns of the story it pertains to. It is one of the simplest types of headlines, consisting of a single line and one or most often more columns in width. It can flush on both sides of the paper or it can have the words centred over the columns. This type is usually used in order to create a formal look.

### 5. Analysis of headlines

Each of the following pairs of headlines report on the same event but presentation is different. They make a greater use of shorter words and more sensational words. Loan words are frequently used along with the native words. For the present study the headlines of the two Telugu Daily Newspapers Andhra Jyothi (A.J) and Sakshi (S) are considered. The Telugu newspaper headlines are presented in Italics followed by analysis and comparison of the headlines.

1. *A.J- Carlson e king –malli vodina Anand padakondava game lone mugisina aata 6.5-4.5 to Anand votami. S- 'King' Carlson – Padakondava game lo Carlson 45 va ettu lo Anandnu chittu chesadu. 6.5 -4.5 to Title nilabettukunnadu.*
  - ❖ In these two headlines, a play on the word King can be seen. The headlines signify that the article is related to chess as the King plays a key role in chess. The usage of the word king also figuratively suggests that Carlson is the winner.
2. *AJ- 'Jharhead' – Dhoni. naya hairstyle lo Mahi S- Dhoni new look. Australia paryatana lo Dhoni hairstyle ila marchadu.*
  - ❖ 'Jharhead' is a type of Hairstyle. Here we can see a play on the word Jharhead as it is equated to Dhoni who hails from Jharkhand. AJ borrows the Hindi word naya while Sakshi borrows the English word new look.
3. *AJ- Adaragodutunna Indian aces. ITPL lo varusaga nalgava vijayam. 30-11 tedato gelupu. S- eduru leni Indian aces. UAE Royals pai 30-11 to gelupu(ITPL)*
  - ❖ The phrases adaragodutunna Indian aces and eduru leni Indian aces both are loaded with a strong positive connotation.
4. *AJ – Anand e London classic. England ku chendina Michael Adams ni Anand kevalam 36 ettullo odinchadu. S- Anand ku London title. London classic tournamentlo tolisariga Vijethaga nilichadu.*

- ❖ AJ Metaphorically equates Anand to London classic. While sakshi says that Anand won the London title in the London classic tournament.
5. **AJ- Khelkhatam Gambhir, Harbhajan singh, Yuvaraj, BCCI pratatinchina 30 mandi lo veella perlu levu. S- Sorry meeru vaddu... (Bharata world cup probables) Yuvaraj, Gambhir, Sehwaag, HarBhajan veellandaru empika kaledu.**
    - ❖ AJ borrows the hindi phrase Khelkhatam to say that Gambhir, Harbhajan and Yuvi are not in the BCCI list of world cup 2015 probables, while Sakshi starts by saying sorry to the three who are not selected and within the brackets uses the English phrase world cup probables.
  6. **A.J - Inka okka aduge final lo Sindhu – Macapu Grand prix S – Final lo Sindhu Macapu open badminton.**
    - ❖ Though there are Telugu equivalents like tudi samamram etc both the newspapers chose to borrow the English word final.
  7. **AJ – Batsmen... badesaru. Raninchina Kohli, Pujara CA Eleven to practice match draw. S- Batsmen adurs 5 arda centurilu, satta chatina Kohli and co. CA Eleven to match draw.**
    - ❖ Batsmen, CA Eleven and match draw are commonly used by both. Additionally AJ uses practice, while Sakshi uses calques – adurs, centurilu and the English abbreviation co denoting company.
  8. **AJ- CBI Director Ranjit pai supreme korada. 2G daryaptu nunchi tappukovalani adesam. S - 2G nunchi Ranjit out. Ee case nunchi CBI Directornu tapinchina supreme court.**
    - ❖ CBI Director, 2G, Supreme, Supreme Court are used because of the prestige motive. The word out is used by Sakshi as the phrase Ranjit out is rhyming.
  9. **AJ- Batting adirindi. Naluguru arda centureelu. CA Eleven to rendava practice draw. S-Aussies lo full practice. Aakattukunna Bharat batsmen. CA Eleven to match draw. Naluguru batsmen arda centureelu.**
    - ❖ Batting, CA eleven, practice draw, full practice, batsmen, match draw are borrowed from English due to the need motive. Centureelu, Aussies are calques used by sakshi. Bharat batsmen is used as an alliteration. These headlines are written in the form of Inverted Pyramid Headline.
  10. **AJ-Fedex arangetram adurs, mixed, purushula doubles, singles lo Federer adbhuta pradarsana. S-Federer super show muudu matchla lo neggina swiss diggajam. Antarjaateeya premier tennis league (IPTL) Singles mixed doudles mens doubles lo gelupu.**
    - ❖ The English words mixed, doubles, singles are used due to the need motive. Super show is used by Sakshi in place of adbhuta pradarsana by AJ. FedEx his nick name is used by AJ while sakshi calls him Swiss Diggajam. These headlines can also be termed as Inverted Pyramid Headlines.
  11. **AJ- ACB vala lo brake inspector. Adanapu load to vunna lorry ni vadilesenduku 5 velu demand. Vidhula lo cherina rendava roje. S- Vudyogam vachina vaaraanike katakatalu. ACB vala lo Assistant MV Inspector.**
    - ❖ ACB, the abbreviation of Anti-corruption bureau is used instead of avineeti nirodaka samsta. AJ names the designation as brake inspector while Sakshi calls him the Assisstant MV Inspector. Load, lorry, demand are the other English words used due to the need motive.
  12. **AJ- Manollu dummu reparu. Kohli satakam, Raaninchina Rehane, Pujara. Bharat 369/5. Adelaide test. S-Jawabu jabardust. Australia 517/7 declare, India 1<sup>st</sup> innings 444 all out (Adelaide Test). Clark, Warner, Steven Smith centureelu chesaru, Bharat nunchi Kohli century chesadu.**
    - ❖ There are no alternatives in Telugu for the words Test,declare and innings, all out. AJ uses the word satakam while Sakshi chooses to use the English word Century. Jabardast is a hindi word but is used alongside Jawabu to give the alliteration effect.
  13. **AJ- Wats App to paper leak. Jawabu cheppataniki 30 mandi brundam. Wireless ear phonlu, divicela dwara jawabulu. 10 mandi vidyardulato 5 lakshalaku oppandam. S- Railway Group D pareekshalo mass copying. Wats app sahayam to prasnapatram leak. Bluetooth dwara samadhanalu cheraveta, 20 mandi muta sabyulu 10 mandi arrest.**
    - ❖ These headlines used a lot of terms related to the latest technology for which the Telugu equivalents are difficult to find. Wats App, wireless ear phone, device, Bluetooth are used in order to fill the lexical gap. AJ uses the phrase paper leak while sakshi calls it prasnapatram leak. Railway Group D and arrest are also used due to the need motive.
  14. **AJ-Governor hands up. Inter parikshalu pratyekanga antu TS, vummadi ga antu AP CSlu annaru. Evari vadana varu vinipincharu. Ippudu emi chestaro cheppandi. S-Iddaru spastamaina avagahanaku randi. Inter parikshala pai iru rastrala CS laku Governor adesam. Ummadi parikshalaku saanukulam cheppina AP, board ma paridiloki vaste abhyantaram ledanna Telangana.**
    - ❖ Inorder to say that the Governor gave up AJ uses a pun and says Governor hands up. The words Inter, board, CS, Governor are used due to the need motive.
  15. **AJ- Sindhu malli kottindi. Title nilabettukunna Telugu tejam. Macapu open grand prix. 5.59 lakshala prize money. Akari samvatsaram kuda gelichindi. S- ‘Macau’ lo Sindhu keka. Title nilabettukunna Telugu tejam. 5 lakshala 60 vela prize money sontam. Career lo Grand prix gold title.**
    - ❖ Both the headlines carry an emotional load which goes beyond the literal meaning.The words Title, prize money, career are used due to the prestige motive and Macapu open grand prix is used due to the need motive.

16. **AJ-Banking joru – market lo husharu.** 267 pointlu labham (Sensex). Nifty 75 pointlu labham. 28,334 (Sensex). Nifty 8,477 vadda mugisindi. **S-Banking sharela rally.** 8,500 cherina nifty, 28335 vadda mugisina sensex. *Europe china package la effect.*
- ❖ The words banking, market, Sensex, Nifty, rally, package, effect are used to create sensation among the readers. The morphemes share and point are borrowed from English and the Telugu affix 'lu' is added though there is no change in the grammatical structure of the sentence.
17. **AJ- China chinnode champion. Ati pinna vayaskudiga record. Prapancha snooker championship. S-14 ellake prapancha champion. Yan bing tao ki world snooker title.**
- ❖ The sound/ch/ is repeated thrice to attract the eye of the reader. It is a strategy to create ambiguity and arouse curiosity. Champion is used due to the prestige motive while record is used due to the need motive. AJ uses Prapancha snooker championship, while Sakshi calls it World Snooker title.
18. **AJ-Pankaj ku shock ichina school pilladu. Pankaj 4-6 teda to Yan chetilo parajayam. Prapancha snooker quarters lo inti dari. S-Pankaj ku shock. 14 ella china kurrodi chetilo votami. Prapancha snooker championship.**
- ❖ Both the headlines are loaded with emotion, the newspapers use the word shock to express the intensity of Pankaj's emotions on his defeat. The words Snooker, championship, quarters, School are used due to the need motive.
19. **AJ- Chela regina sensex. 519 pointla labham. Bhari labalato Asia marketlu. S- Bul... Dhana dhan. Kotta all time garista sthai ki stock market. Sensex 519 pointlu high jump. 27,866 vadda close.**
- ❖ Sensex, point, market, stock market, Bul are used in order to fill the lexical gap. While all time, high jump and close are used as stylistic variants though there are Telugu equivalents.
20. **AJ-GO 398 ki brake. GO pai rastra vyapta andolana. Anadhikara lay out registration lanu nilipi veyya daniki jari chesina G.O. S- Cheekatilo GO. MRO nivedika tappanisari. Prajagraham to vennakku taggina sarkaru, GO vyavasaya bhoomulaku minahaayimpu. GO motham raddu cheyyalani prajala demand.**
- ❖ GO, MRO, brake, demand, lay out, registration are borrowed as these words are more familiar to the readers and help in better comprehension than the Native words.
21. **AJ- Bonu lo Manmohan. HINDALCO ku Talabhira – 2 boggu blocklu. Modata aayanane vicharinchali. Aayana to patu PMO adhikarulanu kuda. S-Manmohan nu vicharinchali. Coalgate lo CBI ki pratyeka courtu aadesam. HINDALCO ku Talabhira – 2 ketaayimpula pai vicharana. Marinta daryaptu avasaram.**
- ❖ Both the headlines aim to attract the reader's attention. Words like coalgate, court, block, CBI, PMO, HINDALCO are used adding a dramatic impact.
22. **AJ-ISRO 'MARK' success. GSLV MARK-3 prayogam saphalam. S-Charitra srustincham ... GSLV MARK-3 prayogam super success.**
- ❖ AJ names it as 'MARK' success, while Sakshi calls it super success as a strategy to attract the interest of the readers.
23. **AJ-Pokireela panipattina akka chellella ku sarkar satkaram. Teaserlaku Belt to buddi cheppina Arti, Pooja. Nagadu bahumati ivvanunna Haryana 'sarkaru'. S-Tiraga badda yuvatulaku sanmaanam. Rohtak akka chellilanu gauravincha nunna Haryana sarkaru. Republic day rojuna sanmaanichaalani government nirnainchindi.**
- ❖ The English words teasers, belt, Republic day, government and the Hindi word sarkar are used owing to the prestige motive though there are Telugu equivalents.
24. **AJ-Aayudam kannu atyuttama nigha vyavasta minna. Smart policing ravali. Policenu vilanga chestunna cinema – Modi. S-Police vyavasta smart ga vundali. Desa bhadrataku nigha samacharam keelakam police vyavastaku chedda peru ravadaniki cinema parisrama karanam. DGP sadasu lo pradani.**
- ❖ The words Smart Policing, police, villain, cinema, DGP are used extensively in both the headlines as there is greater social cachet attached to these words.
25. **AJ-Team India nava bharaat ku sari kotha pranalika. 3 jatluga kotta vibhagam. PM, CM lu oka jattu. Kendra cabinet maro jattu. Adhikarulu 3va jattu. S-Rastralaku mukhya patra, pranalika sangam staanam lo CM la mandali. Kendra cabinet mantrulu vividha rangala nipunulaku chotu, 'Team India' ga namakaranam CM la sadassu lo Modi.**
- ❖ The English words Team India, PM, CM, cabinet are borrowed so as to simplify and present the sociolinguistic content to the readers.
26. **AJ- Raju... doshe. Nampalli aardhika nerala pratyeka courtu teerpu. Satyam scam aaru kesullo near nirdharana. Naalgu kesulalo aaresi nelalu jailu siksha. S-Satyam directorlaku aaru nelala jailu. Company la chattanni vullangincharanna aardhika nerala pratyeka courtu.**
- ❖ It is interesting to note that some of the terminology like Court, scam, jail, director, and company is reflective of the social and cultural role assigned to a language by the society.
27. **AJ-ANu bandham. Bharat lo 12 annu reactor la nirmanaaniki Russia sidham. 20 voppandhala pai iru desala santakalu. Russia maku mukhya maina rakshana bhaga swami. S-Bandham balopetam. Bharat Russia la Madhya 20 keelaka voppandhalu.**

- ❖ AJ calls it ANu bandham signifying that the news item is related to Nuclear reactors while Sakshi says Bandham balopetam to signify that the ties between India and Russia were strengthened due to the 20 key MOUs.

28. *AJ-TET ku mangalam. DSC ki pacha janda... TET + DSC = TET cum TRT. Ippatike TET lo qualify aite 20% weightage. S-TET, DSC la ku okate pariksha. TET cum Teacher recruitment test ga kotta peru.*

- ❖ AJ tries to present the headline in a stylistic manner while Sakshi is more straight -forward in this case.

29. *AJ- Badi. nettuti madi. Pak sainika patasalalo Talibanlu naramedham. 130 mandiki gayalu. 8 gantalu kalpula horu. Mushkarulanu mattubettina sainya. 'Terrorisitan'. S-School lo nara medham. Pakistan lo petregina Talibanlu. Army patasala pai dadi. 141 mandi mruvi, 130 mandi ki gayalu paluvuri paristiti vishamam.*

- ❖ AJ uses the rhyming words Badi and madi in its headline it also coins the word Terroristan for Pakistan. Thus making the headline more figurative, while sakshi restricts itself to the literal facts and uses a straightforward, factual headline which is simple and yet still dramatic.

30. *AJ-Modi no.1 Time readers poll lo 16% votlu. Online survey lo Person of the year ga nilichaldu. S-Time readers poll lo Modi vijeta. Time magazine person of the year title potilo online poru lo 16% votlu sadinchadu.*

- ❖ Although there is an adequate means of expressing the headline in Telugu, words like No.1, Time readers' poll, online survey, person of the year, title are borrowed from English owing to the greater social cachet attached to these words.

## 6. The role of headlines

The journalism industry is highly competitive and for that reason attracting the attention of the readers/audience becomes the most important thing. The audience have a reason for choosing a particular newspaper, television news channel or radio station. Headlines play a key role in attracting the attention of readers, especially in the print media. The headline of a news story is the short summary which introduces the story at the beginning of a news report. Headlines play a key role in attracting the attention and leaving an impact on the reader. Headline is the basis for how the story will develop. It contains the main idea/ focus of the story; it highlights the point which is of greatest interest. Headlines are often short, simple, easily readable, appropriate to the kind of paper in which they are printed and also ambiguous to grab the reader's attention towards the article. They use the rhyme, rhythm and alliteration to make it sound poetic, attractive to the eye and also memorable. It can be just a string of Nouns or an ambiguous word play. The choice of words for a headline is affected by the ideas to

be expressed and by the kind of readers associated with a paper. The structure is often described as telegraphic. For reasons of space, headlines tend not to use finite verbs (i.e. verbs in the past, present or future tenses), auxiliary verbs or adverbs. In these cases there is no time reference. Alternatively, the verb may be incorporated in a noun phrase by class-shifting, or nominalization, becoming a dynamic noun. Sometimes a headline can be ambiguous; it can have two meanings. For example, ambiguity can occur when a word could be interpreted differently depending on its word class. Newspapers are identified as that medium of mass communication which is capable of providing all the basic and necessary information essential for a regular reader. The daily newspapers do not require any sort of significant information. They try to give most authentic information by overcoming all the influences. The headlines cater to the readers and ensure to present the news in an attractive and popular manner.

## 7. Conclusion

Newspapers contain a range of items and different newspapers express different opinions differently. The style of some newspapers is distinctive with its sensational approach and dominant front page headlines, while the style of some newspapers is distinctive with its factual approach. The ultimate aim is to catch the reader's interest. In the present analysis and comparison of the two Telugu dailies Andhra Jyothi and Sakshi, it is observed that the loan words borrowed from English and Hindi are almost the same. However the style of Andhra Jyothi is quite different from that of Sakshi, and the readerships of the two papers are very distinct in socio-political terms. Looking at the way news is presented, the extent to which the aspects of culture and society are influenced can be assessed. The present study proves that the headlines represent the construction of social, political and cultural values and not just a value-free reflection of facts which is objective and neutral.

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