

Comparing two Newspaper Articles

The purpose of a newspaper is to state the facts about what is going on in the world around us; such as politics, showbiz, sports, etc. However in the media, the variety of news state their facts and opinions. We believe that whatever is portrayed as 'News' is fact, but often the facts are twisted to support the political views of the Newspaper or the journalist's views. This means that if the political party or journalists disagree with an event that has taken place they will state their own opinions as facts.

This essay will explore the way in which the newspaper presents biased news to the reader. I will do this by comparing two newspapers. They will both focus upon the same article and I will compare the similarities and differences by giving examples from the text.

There are two types of newspapers, tabloids and broadsheets. Tabloid newspapers are the most popular type of newspaper that people buy. They are more colourful, often smaller than broadsheets and they have a lot of gossipy news to attract readers of different ages and genders. However, broadsheets are generally larger in size than tabloid newspapers. They are less colourful and more serious.

Since I have been told to compare two different newspapers with the same story, I have chosen The Times (article one) and The Mirror (article two). They are both dated 25th January 2002.

The Layout is important as this catches the readers' attention before reading an article. It is aimed at a certain audience, which is based on the gender and age of the reader. The Times (article one) is a larger article compared to The Mirror (article two) in size. It is factual and an international paper with loads of numbers and figures used. The article contains two photographs of John Walker (an American Taleban fighter). John Walkers' article is about him killing a member of his own army.

The first photograph of John Walker shows him with his head shaven off on his way to court. The picture is coloured and large in size. Below the picture, there is yet another photograph of John Walker, but with wild bushy hair all over the place. There is a caption in between the two pictures, which reads, "The American Taleban fighter John Walker, his head shaven, on his way to his first court appearance yesterday." Then it reads on introducing the second image, "Below, soon after his capture in Afghanistan."

The Article is continuous with no sub headings breaking it up, but below the second image, there is a small sub heading highlighted in bold large print. It reads, "US fighter sheds Taleban beard." This heading clearly emphasizes that the beard symbolises Talebans. For the US fighters it is a disguise so they reduce the demand characteristics of Talebans' fighter about them being Americans soldiers. Below the heading there are only two sentences summarising the article.

There is also another image in between the article. The image is a map of Afghanistan. This image breaks up the article. The map is in coloured dense print. With this map shown the newspaper article shows that the paper is aimed at higher-

class people, as you have to understand the map in order to relate it to the article. It shows where the event (which the article is talking about) took place.

The headline of the News draws attention to the reader, as it is bold and extremely large in font. It reads "Taleban army rises again to face down Americans". The word 'face down' itself draws attention to the reader as it shows that Taleban is gaining the upper hand and Americans are losing the war.

This article is aimed towards a more intellectual type of audience such as educated professional, business class, people of between the ages of twenty to seventy years, stockbrokers' lawyers. This is because of the language and word structure in article two is much more intellectually based, for example "Amid growing concern that powerful pockets of resistance loyal to Osama bin Laden remain in Afghanistan". The words and sentences are longer and more complicated; the sentences also flow more easily. Article one goes into great detail on the situation in hand, it interviews many people and gives you more facts than you can handle.

The Times is of a lower case Title with older version print type broken up by paragraphs and picture.

The language is very complicated to understand. The words in the sentences don't go beyond seventy words. The shortest words per sentences is no less than twenty five words, and the longest word is about twelve letters long such as 'negotiations' or 'Intelligence'. These sorts of words are complicated to understand and not used in everyday life. It has to be understood that this newspaper broadsheet is aimed at those of an upper class who tend to appreciate the type of news the newspaper reports. For example: the first sentence says, "A RENEGADE army of 5,000 Taleban soldiers with 450 tanks, armoured carriers and pick-up trucks is locked in a tense stand-off with American special forces in Afghanistan." Clearly as you can see the words and sentences are not as simple to understand. This first sentence gives the reader a broad outline of the article. There are large uses of 3 or more syllables used throughout the article. Also there is a use of loads of unfamiliar places name to the English audience such as Kandahar or Ghazni (a village).

The tone of article one is a lot more serious and informative, it states how an American Taleban fighter turned his back towards his army and betrayed them. E.g. "He was charged with conspiring to kill his fellow Americans". Which brings the article to another level of seriousness, because the question crosses your mind that. Why would he kill a member of his own army?

This article does not seem to be biased at all. It's rather factual reporting and leaves the article open-ended so you can make your own decision.

This article interviews many people from special officers, commanders, of which they get a mixed response. This article in my opinion authenticates.

In this particular article there is no definite message. As I stated earlier it is left remarkably wide open for your own judgement.

The Mirror (article two) is smaller in comparison to The Times. The newspaper is for human interests in gossip and showbiz news. It is not interested in war so therefore John Walker has been given a short article.

Article two differs greatly in layout compared to article one. The article is broken up into small sentences. Article two has a small headline, which does not drag attention to the reader as much. The headline states the basic idea of the article, which reads “Renegade 5,000 in a standoff”, this headline does not include a pun or a bias twitch. Accompanying the headline is a small photograph, which illustrates the person whom it’s speaking of and a small caption with the name of the person. The photograph is of the same one used as in The Times but in black and White of John Walker. It is really small in size and you can just see his shaven head and his eyes.

Article two is on the twelfth page. This clearly shows the least amount of interest the press takes of war and world news. It doesn’t seem as the article seems that important to the press as it does to The Times.

Article two is aimed at a very broad audience between the ages of sixteen to sixty-five. It’s simplistic enough to reach a wider audience, with short simple facts about the situation. But crams in enough information in such a way to meet the needs of a more intellectual people.

In Article one the language is very simplistic and casual. The sentences don’t exceed 18 words, and the longest word is about seven letters long. There is casual use of three syllables or words such as “appeared”, “governor”, “yesterday” and many more. Again, this is because it has to be understood by a lower class person. You don’t need to have a large attention span to read it and the first paragraph usually gives a broad outline of the article. However both the articles are informal but in The Mirror, the article does not go into too many details as it does in The Times.

The tone of the article yet again is informative. The article does not provoke fun of the situation by using puns because the news is of seriousness.

Yet again this article does not seem to be biased. It is informal and left for your own judgement.

Article two has only interviewed a Senior Aide. He was interviewed because he spoke to the new governor of Kandahar about the attack.

In my opinion I prefer the mirror because it’s simpler to understand what the article is portraying. The language is casual and simplistic. The article gives a brief summary of John Walker and doesn’t go into too much detail.

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