



**ANALYZING THE LANGUAGE AND RHETORIC OF
HEADLINE NEWS: A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY ON
COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES AND PUBLIC
PERCEPTION**

BY

THAMONWAN PRADIT

**AN INDEPENDENT STUDY SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
OF MASTER OF ARTS IN CAREER ENGLISH FOR
INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION
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ENTITLED

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the techniques employed in news headline writing on the BBC and CNN websites. A sample of 100 headlines published between 2022 and 2024 was analyzed using Zhou's (2017) framework, which identifies ten techniques: metonymy, hyperbole, alliteration, oxymoron, personification, quotation, irony, rhetorical question, pun, and metaphor.

The findings indicate that nine out of ten techniques were observed in BBC news headlines, while CNN headlines utilized seven out of ten techniques. The analysis reveals that quotation is the most frequently employed rhetorical device in both BBC and CNN headlines, followed by rhetorical questions in second place. Thus, quotation emerges as the predominant rhetorical device utilized in news headline writing across both BBC and CNN platforms.

Keywords: Headline, News, Rhetorical Devices, Writing Techniques, World News

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Thamonwan Pradit

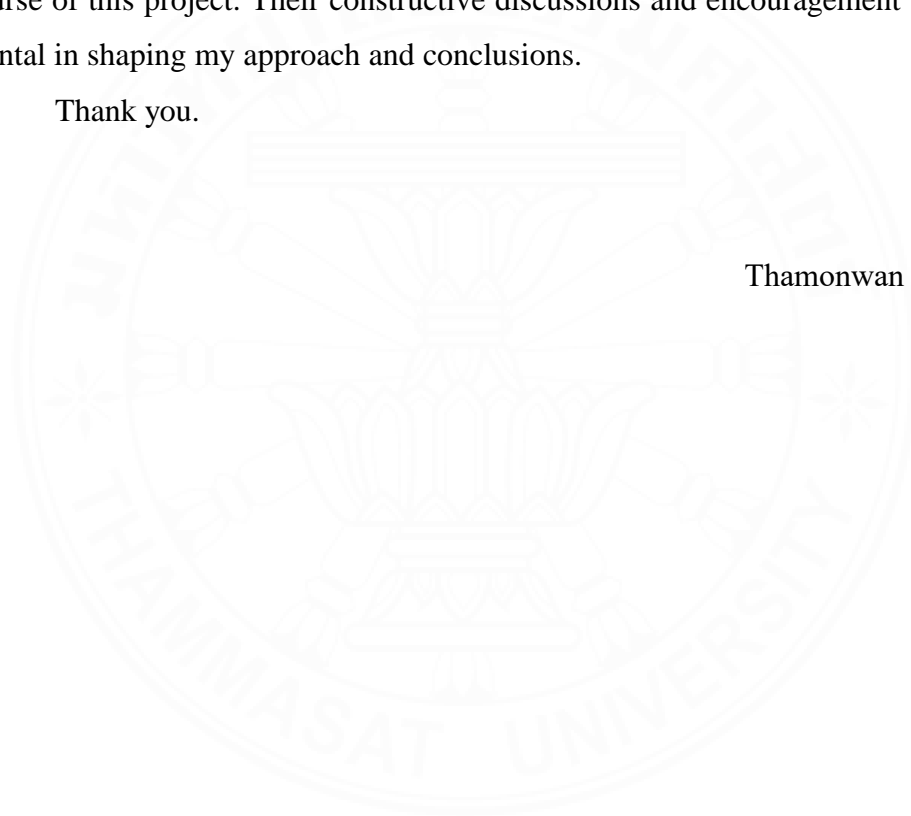


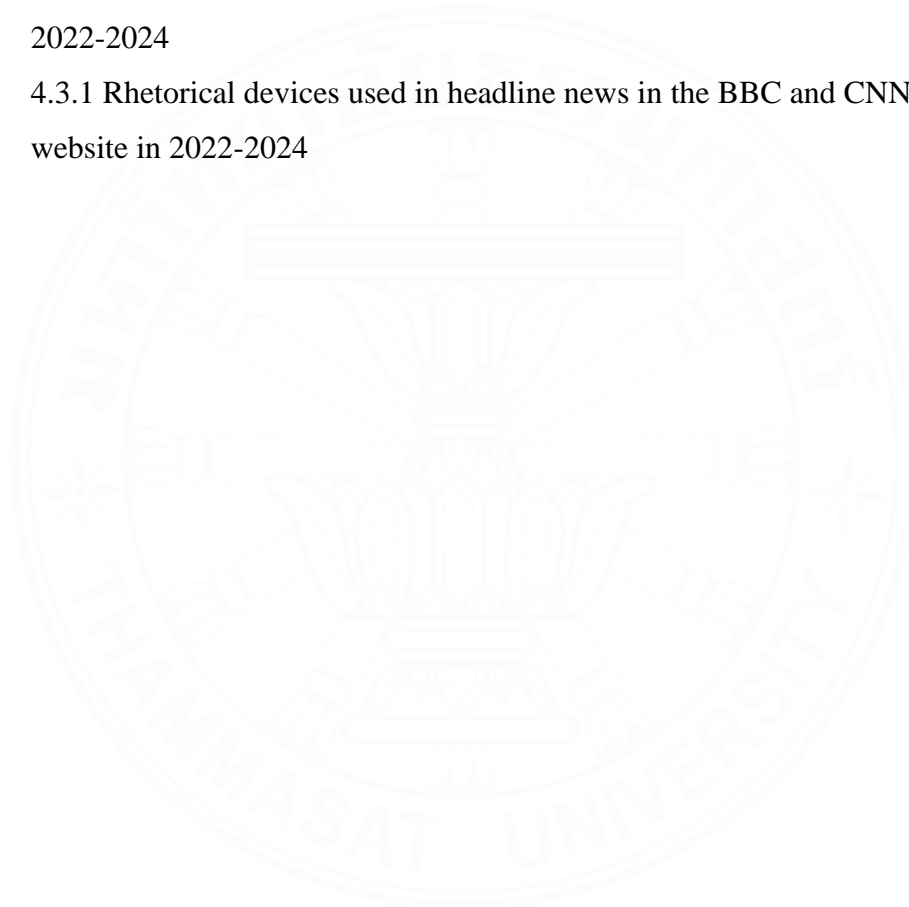
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

In the current rapid-paced world of today, headlines are like the front door to the news world. They have a big role in shaping how we think about things in society. The words and how they're used in headlines are like tools that shape what we think. It's important to understand how headlines work because they affect how we see and react to news stories. Language is a big part of this. The words chosen for a headline can make a big difference in how we understand it. Each type of news story—like breaking news, human-interest stories, or opinion pieces—has its own style of language. This style affects how we feel about the news and what we think about it.

Our study looks at the language and style of headlines in a specific type of news. By looking closely at how these headlines are written, we hope to learn more about how language affects how we see things in society. This will help us understand better how headlines shape what we think and feel about the news.

1.2 Research Objectives

- 1) To investigate the linguistic patterns and rhetorical devices used in news headlines by BBC.
- 2) To investigate the linguistic patterns and rhetorical devices used in news headlines by CNN.
- 3) To compare the linguistic patterns and rhetorical devices employed in news headlines from BBC and CNN to identify differences in their approach to shaping social attitudes and opinions.

1.3 Research Questions

- 1) What are the linguistic patterns and rhetoric devices used in news headlines by BBC?

2) What are the linguistic patterns and rhetoric devices used in news headlines by CNN?

3) How linguistic patterns and rhetoric devices in news headlines from BBC and CNN are different?

1.4 Definitions of Terms

1) Linguistic Patterns: Refers to recurring language structures and forms used in news headlines in BBC and CNN.

2) Rhetoric Devices: Encompasses persuasive language techniques in BBC and CNN employed to influence readers' perceptions.

3) Social Attitude: Denotes the collective sentiment or viewpoint held by a society towards particular issues.

4) Public Perception: Involves the way individuals perceive and interpret information presented through news media.

1.5 Scope of the Study

This research focuses on the language and rhetoric of news headlines across various genres and sources. The analysis will encompass a diverse range of events, allowing for a broad understanding of communication strategies and their impact on public perception.

1.6 Significance of the Study

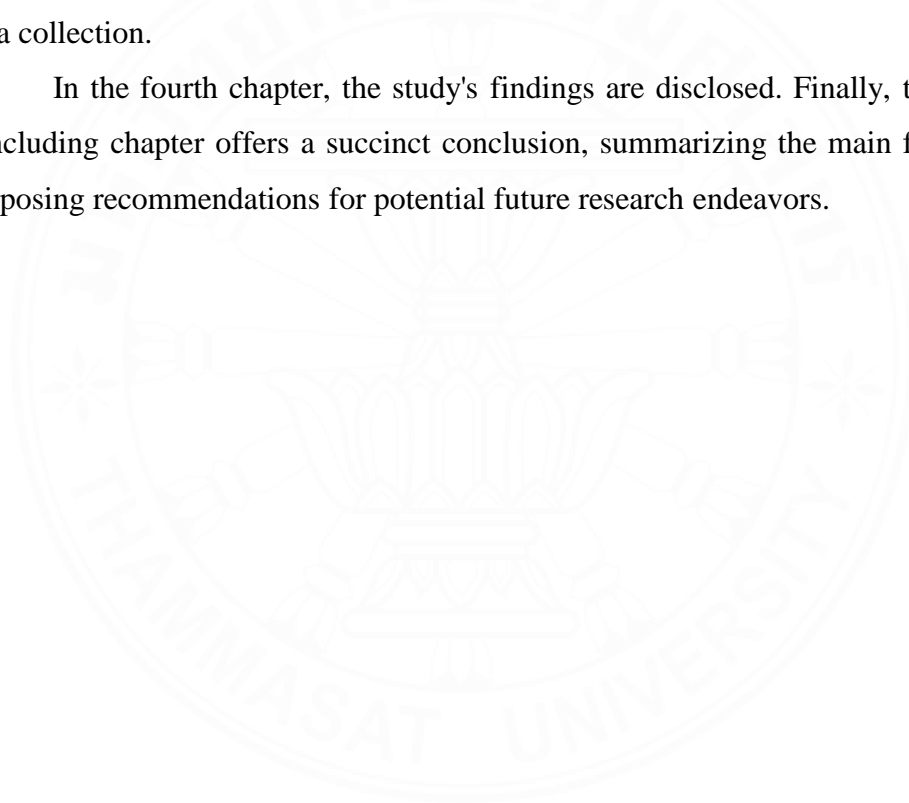
This study holds substantial significance in multiple realms. Firstly, it enriches the academic landscape by contributing new insights to media studies, unraveling the complex interplay between language, rhetoric, and public perception. Secondly, by decoding the intricacies of news language, the research seeks to empower the public with improved media literacy, fostering a more discerning readership. Lastly, for media outlets and journalists, the study offers valuable insights into the implications of language choices, promoting responsible reporting and ethical journalism practices.

1.7 Organization of the Study

This research titled "Examining the Language and Rhetoric of Headline News: A Comprehensive Study on Communication Strategies and Public Perception" is structured into five main chapters. The introductory chapter presents the background, research questions, study objectives, definition of terms, scope, and significance of the research.

The second chapter conducts an extensive literature review, exploring previous studies on news language, rhetoric, and their impact on public perception. The third chapter details the methodology, including the research design and methods chosen for data collection.

In the fourth chapter, the study's findings are disclosed. Finally, the fifth and concluding chapter offers a succinct conclusion, summarizing the main findings and proposing recommendations for potential future research endeavors.



CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter provides an overview of the relevant literature, organized into four main themes, followed by a summary:

- 2.1 Headline news
- 2.2 Linguistic patterns
- 2.3 Rhetorical devices
- 2.4 Relevant Research

Headline news serves as the gateway to our understanding of current events, offering concise summaries that capture our attention and provide essential information. However, beyond their brevity, headline news is crafted with meticulous attention to linguistic patterns and rhetoric devices, which play crucial roles in shaping public perception. Linguistic patterns, the underlying structures of language, determine how headlines are constructed and convey meaning. These patterns, along with rhetoric devices, such as catchy phrases or emotive language, are strategically employed to engage readers and influence their interpretation of the news. Understanding the significance of linguistic patterns and rhetoric devices in headline news is essential for comprehending how language shapes our understanding of the world around us.

2.1 Headline News

A news headline is a concise summary of the main point or points of a news article. It's meant to grab the reader's attention and give them a quick understanding of what the article is about. The importance of a news headline lies in its ability to attract readers and compel them to read the full article. A well-crafted headline can influence whether someone decides to click on an article to learn more, making it a crucial element in journalism and communication. Additionally, headlines often serve as a point of reference when discussing news stories, shaping public perception and understanding of current events.

A headline is intended to highlight the primary point or category of information, so that visitors may anticipate what they will see if they continue reading. Headline news serves as the primary interface between the public and unfolding events, offering

succinct summaries that encapsulate the essence of current affairs. Within the realm of headline news, linguistic structures and rhetoric devices play a pivotal role in shaping communication strategies and public perception. Smith (2018) emphasizes the importance of linguistic patterns in headline composition, highlighting their influence on reader comprehension and interpretation. Moreover, rhetoric devices, as explored by Brown and Williams (2019), enhance the effectiveness of headline language by imbuing it with persuasive elements that engage and captivate audiences.

2.2 Linguistic Patterns

Linguistic patterns form the backbone of headline news, dictating the structure and style of language used to convey information to the public. These recurring patterns, as discussed by Jones (2017), encompass the grammatical and syntactical elements that shape headline language and influence reader interpretation. Moreover, linguistic patterns serve as a framework through which rhetoric devices are applied, influencing the overall tone and impact of headline news. Thongkren (2012) indicates that There are five main characteristics of a typical headline.

- **S + v1**

The first will be the event that the full sentence is. S + v2 simple (Past simple)

: Suvarnabhumi fire kills 1 worker

From sentence “ Suvarnabhumi fire killed 1 worker.”

- **S + to infinitive**

The second would be an event in which the actual sentence refers to the future. (future)

: PM to visit Japan

From sentence “Prime Minister is going to visit Japan.”

- **S + v 3**

The third is used to say that the subject is being acted upon (passive)

: 3 cops killed in the series of fatal attacks

From sentence “3 cops were killed in the series of fatal attacks.”

- **S+ v .ing**

The fourth is used to show that it is still continuous. (Continuous)

: 10 missing in flash flood

From sentence “ 10 people is still missing in the flash flood.”

- **S + to be v3**

The fifth will say that the subject will act in the future.(Passive - Future)

: Abducted American to be released soon

From sentence “An abducted American will be released soon.”

Green and Miller (2016) highlight the importance of understanding linguistic patterns in media communication, underscoring their role in shaping public attitudes and responses. Zhou (2017) indicates that different news sources have their own language preferences when reporting news, often showing a "media bias" to express a particular political viewpoint on an event. This bias is usually seen when journalists choose which facts and events to include in their stories based on their own ideological or political beliefs. When this bias is combined with language patterns, examining the deeper meanings and messages in news articles can reveal why certain words are chosen and how they affect our understanding of the news. The linguistic patterns used in news headlines play a significant role in shaping public attitudes and responses for several reasons:

- **Attention-grabbing Linguistic Devices:** News headlines often employ linguistic devices such as alliteration, puns, or catchy phrases to capture the reader’s attention. These devices are designed to stand out amidst a sea of competing headlines and compel individuals to click on the article to learn more (Hockin, 2013).
- **Framing Effects:** Linguistic patterns in headlines can frame how readers interpret the news story. Framing theory suggests that the way information is presented (i.e., the frame) can influence individuals’ perceptions and judgments about that information (Entman, 1993). By emphasizing certain aspects of a story or using loaded language, headlines can shape how readers understand and interpret the events being reported.
- **Emotional Language:** Headlines often use emotional language to evoke strong reactions from readers. Research has shown that emotionally charged headlines are more likely to be shared on social media platforms, as individuals are drawn to content that elicits a

visceral response (Berger & Milkman, 2012). By tapping into emotions such as fear, anger, or curiosity, headlines can shape how individuals engage with and respond to the news.

- **Stereotypes and Biases:** Linguistic patterns in headlines can reinforce or challenge existing stereotypes and biases. For example, the choice of words used to describe individuals or events can subtly perpetuate stereotypes based on race, gender, or socio-economic status (Van Dijk, 1993). By framing news stories in certain ways, headlines can shape public attitudes towards various groups and issues.
- **Social Influence:** News headlines play a crucial role in shaping public discourse, particularly in the age of social media. Headlines are often shared, liked, and commented on by users, contributing to the spread of information and the formation of public opinion (Kwak et al., 2010). Linguistic patterns in headlines can influence how individuals engage with and discuss the news online, ultimately shaping public attitudes and responses on a larger scale.

2.3 Rhetorical Devices

Rhetorical devices are instrumental elements in crafting persuasive and impactful headline news, enhancing its effectiveness in shaping public perception and engagement. These devices, as explored by Thompson (2019), encompass a variety of techniques such as emotive language, vivid imagery, and persuasive appeals that are strategically employed to capture reader attention and influence their interpretation of news events.

Rhetorical devices are frequently used in news headlines to capture attention, convey information succinctly, and persuade readers to engage with the article. Some common rhetorical devices found in headlines include:

2.3.1 Alliteration

The repetition of initial consonant sounds in adjacent words, which can craft a striking and memorable headline. For instance, "Persistent Protest Persists."

2.3.2 Parallelism

The use of similar grammatical structures or phrases for emphasis and clarity. For instance, "Breaking News: Mayor Announces New Initiative, Vows to Tackle Crime."

2.3.3 Hyperbole

Exaggerated statements that grab attention and emphasize the significance of the news. For example, "Massive Storm Threatens Coastline: Historic Flooding Expected."

2.3.4 Irony

Employed to convey a meaning that is opposite to the literal interpretation, often for humor or emphasis. For instance, "Surprise! Tax Cuts Lead to Increased Government Revenue."

2.3.5 Pun

A clever use of language that plays with multiple meanings or similar-sounding words to achieve a humorous or witty effect. For instance, "Beekeepers Excited About Record Honey Harvest."

2.3.6 Rhetorical Question

A question posed for effect rather than to elicit an answer, often to engage readers' curiosity. For instance, "Is Your Cellphone Spying on You?"

2.3.7 Metaphor

In headline news, metaphors are often used to create vivid imagery or make complex ideas more accessible. For example, "The Economy's Roller Coaster Ride: Stocks Plunge Amidst Trade Tensions" uses the metaphor of a roller coaster ride to describe the fluctuating stock market, making it easier for readers to understand the volatility of the situation.

2.3.8 Metonymy

Metonymy involves using a word or phrase to represent something closely associated with it. In news headlines, metonymy can help condense information and draw attention to key elements of a story. For instance, “The White House Responds to Allegations” uses “The White House” to refer to the administration or government’s official response.

2.3.9 Oxymoron

Oxymorons are contradictory terms used together for emphasis or effect. While less common in headlines, they can still be employed to highlight paradoxes or tensions within a news story. An example might be “Jumbo Shrimp: Small Business Owners Struggle with Government Regulations,” where “jumbo shrimp” emphasizes the contrasting experiences of small business owners.

2.3.10 Personification

Personification is the act of assigning human qualities to objects or ideas that are not human or are abstract in nature. This technique can infuse news headlines with drama or emotion by making the subject more accessible. For example, "Hurricane Devastates Coastal Communities: Mother Nature's Wrath Unleashed," personifies nature to underscore its formidable destructive impact.

2.3.11 Quotation

Quotations in headlines can be used to directly convey statements or opinions from relevant sources. They lend credibility and immediacy to the news story. For example, “Mayor Declares State of Emergency: ‘We Must Act Swiftly,’ Urges Residents to Evacuate” uses the mayor’s quoted statement to emphasize the urgency of the situation.

These rhetorical devices help news headlines stand out, convey the essence of the story, and pique readers' interest, ultimately influencing their decision to read the full article.

2.4 Relevant Research

This section provides a review of five previous studies that examined the use of linguistic patterns and rhetorical devices in news headlines.

Zhou (2021) found that various news outlets exhibit distinct language preferences when reporting news, often displaying what is commonly referred to as "media bias" to convey a particular political standpoint or perspective on a given event. This bias typically manifests through journalists selectively presenting facts and events that align with their ideological, partisan, or political leanings. When coupled with language patterns, scrutinizing the underlying meanings and discourses within news articles can unveil the cognitive and social functions associated with language choices. In general, the linguistic structure, particularly its complexity, plays a role in determining the credibility of the information presented. Moreover, the tailored nature of news coverage by different media outlets can further accentuate bias, potentially influencing both the objectivity of the events themselves and readers' interpretations.

An effectively crafted article has the potential to impact both the impartiality of the event being reported and how readers interpret it. Language holds significant sway as it can evoke emotions and cater to specific ideologies. Consequently, readers must strive to cultivate a more impartial assessment when consuming diverse news reports from various media outlets.

Zhou (2017) examines and evaluates newspaper headlines by analyzing their purpose, persuasive techniques, and use of rhetorical devices across 50 samples from Thai English news media. Additionally, statistical data from two prominent daily newspapers in Thailand, namely the Bangkok Post and The Nation, is also considered. The findings reveal that there isn't a clear correlation between the headline section and the type of persuasive appeals employed. Among the most frequently utilized rhetorical devices in the analyzed headlines are metonymy, metaphor, alliteration, oxymoron, personification, and quotation.

Kongthai (2017) investigates how language usage in text production and interpretation influences news discourse. The study examines 139 online news headlines related to Gerwani, a banned women's organization during Indonesia's New Order regime. These headlines were gathered from various online news platforms spanning the years 1999 to 2016. The research highlights the significant role of

rhetorical devices in directing readers' focus towards the editorial perspective of the headlines, which aims to influence readers' perceptions of the Gerwani case. Among the 139 headlines analyzed, 106 incorporated rhetorical devices. The most frequently observed device was metonymy, appearing 52 times, followed by parallelism in 15 instances, alliteration in 12 cases, testimonial in 10 instances, and rhetorical questions in 9 occurrences. Less frequently used rhetorical devices included antithesis, irony, and out-of-context quotations, each appearing 5, 2, and 2 times, respectively.

Ifantidou (2023) underscores the importance of emotions in verbal communication by exploring the interaction between language, headline readers, and their emotional responses. When ordinary headlines are perceived as engaging, the role of emotive states in language processing becomes apparent. It may be feasible to identify the essential elements necessary for capturing readers' interest and ultimately shaping public opinion. The diverse linguistic expressions found in newspaper headlines, even when covering the same story, along with their vagueness and creative style, diminish the effectiveness of convention and regularity in explaining the factors influencing headline interpretation. Emotions and experiential responses play a crucial role in eliciting inferences and achieving optimal cognitive effects. Thus, the primary aim of involving the reader in the narrative by evoking the story's emotions is fulfilled.

Konnikova (2014) emphasized that initial impressions hold significant importance—our first encounter with something influences how we perceive the remainder of it, whether it's what we see, hear, feel, or experience. Articles are no exception to this rule. Just as individuals can shape the impression they make through their choice of attire, crafting a headline can subtly alter readers' perception of the ensuing text. By directing attention to particular details or facts, a headline can impact which existing knowledge is activated in the reader's mind. Through its phrasing, a headline can shape the reader's mindset during reading, leading to the retention of details that align with their initial expectations. For instance, the headline of this article I authored—"A Gene That Makes You Need Less Sleep?"—is factually accurate but likely steers attention toward a specific aspect of the content. If instead, I had titled it "Why We Need Eight Hours of Sleep," readers would likely recall it differently.

In this chapter, the five studies revolve around the significant influence of language in news reporting, headline construction, and reader interpretation. Zhou (2021) and Kongthai (2017) highlight the distinct language preferences and rhetorical devices employed by news outlets to convey specific political perspectives, shaping readers' perceptions of events. Ifantidou (2023) emphasizes the role of emotive language in newspaper headlines in capturing readers' interest and influencing public opinion. Additionally, Zhou (2017) and Konnikova (2014) underscore the impact of language on reader interpretation, with Zhou analyzing persuasive techniques in newspaper headlines and Konnikova discussing how headline phrasing can subtly alter readers' perceptions of news content. Overall, these studies collectively demonstrate the profound influence of language in shaping news discourse, reader interpretation, and public opinion.



CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Data Collection

The primary data for this case study comprises 100 news headlines, evenly split between 50 headlines sourced from CNN and 50 from BBC. The analysis centers on examining rhetorical devices within these headlines, aiming to identify and classify techniques such as metaphor, alliteration, personification, and others.

Table 3.1.1

Headline News in the BBC and CNN Website in 2022-2024.

BBC	CNN
-US Supreme Court to decide if Trump has immunity in election interference case	-Your questions about Trump's immunity claim at the Supreme Court, answered
-Ukraine war: US secretly gives Kyiv long-range missiles	-US secretly sent long-range missiles to Ukraine after months of resistance
-Arizona indicts Trump allies over 2020 fake elector scheme	-Meadows, Giuliani among indicted in Arizona in latest 2020 election subversion case
-Biden vows to 'quickly' supply new military aid to Ukraine	-New US military aid package to Ukraine expected to be worth around \$1 billion
-Ukraine army chief says Russia making significant 'gains' in east of country	-As Ukraine waits for US military aid, Russia makes further advances in the east
-UN rights chief 'horrified' by mass grave reports at Gaza hospitals	-UN demands investigation after mass graves found at Gaza hospitals raided by Israel.

-TikTok vows to fight 'unconstitutional' US ban	-TikTok vows legal challenge to potential US app ban
-Myanmar military loses border town in another big defeat	-Myanmar military loses control of key town on Thai border, rebels say, in major win for anti-junta resistance
-Gaza protesters clash with police at US universities	-Arrests at U.S. university campus protests
-Arizona takes major step toward repealing near-total abortion ban from 1864	-Arizona House votes to overturn 1864 abortion ban, paving way to leave 15-week limit in place
-Gaza hostage Hersh Goldberg-Polin urged to 'stay strong' after new video	-Israeli-American hostage Hersh Goldberg-Polin appears in Hamas video, the first proof he survived October 7 injuries
-Tel Aviv protests: Thousands demand Netanyahu resign	-Crowds gather in Tel Aviv, marking 200 days of hostages being held in Gaza
-Germany spying: Far-right party aide held in China spy probe	-Germany arrests aide to far-right MEP on suspicion of spying for China
-What was in wave of Iranian attacks and how were they thwarted?	-Why Iran attacked Israel and what comes next
-Israel Gaza: Netanyahu making a 'mistake', says Biden	-U.S. President calls Netanyahu's approach to the war in Gaza a "mistake"
-Israeli government says it will block Al Jazeera from broadcasting	-Netanyahu temporarily shuts down Al Jazeera operations in Israel

-Russian deputy defence minister Timur Ivanov accused of taking bribes	-Russian deputy defense minister dismissed after arrest on corruption charges
-Evan Gershkovich: Waiting for her brother, Putin's 'bargaining chip' in Russian jail	-Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich spends one year in Russian detention
-Moscow attack: Did Russia ignore US 'extremist' attacks warning?	-US had warned Russia ISIS was determined to attack
-Russia concert hall attack suspects dragged into Moscow court	-Moscow attack suspects dragged into court
-Gunmen kill 133 at Crocus City Hall in Moscow attack	-More than 130 dead in Moscow attack
-IS-K: Who are the Islamic State jihadists blamed for Moscow attack?	-What we know about ISIS group claiming responsibility for Moscow terror attack
-Ukraine war: Zelensky says 31,000 troops killed since Russia's full-scale invasion	-Zelensky says 31,000 Ukrainian soldiers have died
-Zelensky calls for army renewal as top general replaced	-Zelensky fires Ukraine's military chief in major shakeup nearly two years into war
-Ukraine suffers heavy bombardment from Russia	-Ukraine bombarded by Russian strikes
-HK security law is final nail in coffin, say critics	- Hong Kong implements a second national security law, strengthening enforcement measures and aligning more closely with mainland China

Harvey Weinstein's 2020 rape conviction overturned in New York	New York appeals court overturns Harvey Weinstein's sex crimes conviction and orders a new trial
Antony Blinken tackles a tough China visit. Will it help?	Blinken expected to deliver strong warning on Russia support as he arrives in China for key meetings
India opposition criticises Modi for 'hate speech'	Modi's remarks on Muslims stir accusations of 'hate speech' amid India's extensive election
Congress, AAP and others: India's battered opposition takes on Modi	India's opposition appears increasingly feeble against Modi's overwhelming momentum
What is the UK's plan to send asylum seekers to Rwanda and how many could go?	UK passes contentious bill to relocate asylum seekers to Rwanda after two years of setbacks
David Cameron says UK won't suspend arms exports to Israel	UK government faces mounting pressure to cease arms sales to Israel
Why have Israel and Iran attacked each other?	Reasons behind Iran's attack on Israel and its future implications
Papuan leader dismisses Biden 'cannibalism' remark	Biden faces backlash in Papua New Guinea over controversial 'cannibalism' remarks
Trump trial: Prosecution say hush money was 'pure election fraud'	Key insights from Day 8 of Donald Trump's hush money trial
US media organisations push Biden and Trump for TV debate pledge	Opinion: Trump is poised to engage with an unprecedented audience
Bernie Moreno: Win for Trump candidate sets up Senate showdown	Trump's candidate Bernie Moreno wins Ohio GOP primary, set to challenge Sen. Sherrod Brown

Trump bond: Lawyers say he is unable to get \$464m guarantee in New York fraud case	Trump fails to post \$464 million bond in civil fraud case, as per his legal team
Biden and Trump set for election rematch after clinching nominations	Biden and Trump secure nominations, gearing up for another general election showdown
North Korea TV censors Alan Titchmarsh's trousers	North Korean TV censors British gardening show host for wearing jeans
North Korea fires most powerful long-range missile after South Korea-US meeting	North Korea test-launches ballistic missile capable of reaching US and Japan
Sunak announces increase in defence spending to 2.5% of GDP by 2030	Britain plans to increase defense spending
National People's Congress: China sets ambitious 2024 economic target	China sets ambitious target of achieving 'around 5%' economic growth in 2024, pledges to 'revolutionize' its economy
China tightens stock market rules after sell-off	China replaces head of securities regulator following stock market turbulence
Biden calls Chinese President Xi Jinping a 'dictator'	Biden called Xi a 'dictator.' See how China reacted
US and China agree to resume military communications after summit	Biden hails productive talks with Xi as agreements reached on fentanyl and military communication
EU to open membership talks with Ukraine and Moldova	Europe isn't giving Ukraine the consistency it needs right now
Ukraine war: US denies masterminding Moscow drone attack	Russia claims US is behind Kremlin drone attack. Hear John Kirby's response

French Senate backs enshrining right to abortion in constitution	French Senate votes to enshrine abortion rights in constitution
Farmers' protests: EU to cap some Ukrainian tariff-free imports	Up to 10,000 farmers protests in Poland over Ukrainian imports

3.2 Framework of Rhetorical Devices Used in Headline Writing

The framework utilized in this study for data analysis was based on Zhou's (2017) research. It includes ten techniques of headline writing, namely:

- 1) Metonymy
- 2) Hyperbole
- 3) Alliteration
- 4) Oxymoron
- 5) Personification
- 6) Quotation
- 7) Irony
- 8) Rhetorical question
- 9) Pun
- 10) Metaphor

3.3 Data Analysis

The procedure for analyzing the data is as follows:

The framework outlined in the previous section served as the basis for identifying the techniques evident in each headline, with detailed explanations provided accordingly. Throughout the analysis process, the researcher maintained a receptive approach, acknowledging the possibility that certain headlines might employ additional techniques not explicitly outlined in the framework, or might utilize a combination of multiple techniques.

Following the analysis of all chosen headlines, each rhetorical technique was tallied and measured in terms of both frequency and percentage, presented in tabular form. Statistical methods were employed to determine how often each technique appeared.

This research is a qualitative method utilized in order to interpret the use of rhetorical devices in headlines to understand how they shape meaning and influence public perception. Even though it is the same news, the patterns in news headlines of each news agency are different. These variations in writing news headlines could influence reader engagement and attitudes towards news topics, which will be discussed in the following chapter.



CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

This is a study analyzing the language and rhetoric of headline news: a comprehensive study on communication strategies and public perception. This study aims to look at the language and style of 100 headlines from BBC and CNN. This chapter provides the study's findings concerning the research questions.

4.1 Results and Discussions of Research Question 1

R Q 1: What are the linguistic patterns and rhetoric devices used in news headlines by BBC?

The analysis results of the rhetorical devices are displayed in the table below, organized by their frequency of occurrence.

Table 4.1.1

Rhetorical Devices Used in Headline News in the BBC Website in 2022-2024.

Headline Writing Techniques	Frequency of Occurrence	Percentage
Techniques from the framework	50	100%
1.Metonymy	1	2%
2.Hyperbole	1	2%
3.Alliteration	6	12%
4.Oxymoron	1	2%
5.Personification	3	6%
6.Quotation	24	48%
7.Irony	4	8%
8.Rhetorical Question	8	16%
9.Pun	2	4%
10.Metaphor	0	0%
total	50	100%

4.1.1 Techniques from the Framework

According to the framework used, nine out of ten techniques were detected in 50 news headlines published on the BBC website from 2022 to 2024. These techniques encompass metonymy, hyperbole, alliteration, oxymoron, personification, quotation, irony, rhetorical question, and pun. Metaphor did not appear in the study. The findings are presented based on their respective frequencies as follows:

(1) Metonymy:

Harvey Weinstein’s 2020 rape conviction overturned in New York

The headline uses “Harvey Weinstein’s 2020 rape conviction” as a metonym for Weinstein himself, referring to him indirectly through the legal outcome of his case.

(2) Hyperbole:

Sunak announces increase in defence spending to 2.5% of GDP by 2030

This headline employs hyperbole by emphasizing the substantial increase in defense spending to 2.5% of GDP by 2030, highlighting the scale and importance of the announcement.

(3) Alliteration:

Congress, AAP and others: India’s battered opposition takes on Modi

The repetition of the ‘t’ sound in “Congress, AAP and others” creates a rhythmic effect and emphasizes the collective action of India’s opposition parties against Modi.

(4) Oxymoron:

Trump trial: Prosecution say hush money was ‘pure election fraud’

The headline uses “pure election fraud” as an oxymoron, juxtaposing the idea of purity with the illegal act of election fraud, highlighting the seriousness of the prosecution’s allegations.

(5) Personification:

Farmers’ protests: EU to cap some Ukrainian tariff-free imports

The use of “Farmers’ protests” personifies the collective action of farmers, portraying it as a force that influences or triggers the EU’s decision to cap Ukrainian tariff-free imports.

(6) Quotation:**Biden and Trump set for election rematch after clinching nominations**

The headline attributes the term “election rematch” directly to Biden and Trump, framing their upcoming electoral contest as a rematch based on their previous nominations.

(7) Irony:**Ukraine war: US denies masterminding Moscow drone attack**

The irony here lies in the denial by the US of masterminding the Moscow drone attack, suggesting a contradiction or skepticism regarding the veracity of the denial.

(8) Rhetorical Question:**Antony Blinken tackles a tough China visit. Will it help?**

By asking “Will it help?” the headline prompts readers to consider the potential effectiveness of Antony Blinken’s visit to China, engaging them in speculation about its outcomes.

(9) Pun:**North Korea TV censors Alan Titchmarsh’s trousers**

The pun here is on the word “censors,” playing on the idea of censorship and also suggesting a humorous interpretation involving the literal act of censoring trousers.

4.2 Results and Discussions of Research Question 2

RQ 2: What are the linguistic patterns and rhetoric devices used in news headlines by CNN?

The analysis results of the rhetorical devices are presented based on their occurrence frequencies, as displayed in the table below.

Table 4.2.1*Rhetorical Devices Used in Headline News in the CNN Website in 2022-2024.*

Headline Writing Techniques	Frequency of Occurrence	Percentage
Techniques from the framework	50	100%
1.Metonymy	0	0%
2.Hyperbole	1	2%
3.Alliteration	2	4%
4.Oxymoron	0	0%
5.Personification	1	2%
6.Quotation	32	64%
7.Irony	4	8%
8.Rhetorical Question	8	16%
9.Pun	2	4%
10.Metaphor	0	0%
total	50	100%

4.2.1 Techniques from the Framework

Out of the ten techniques outlined in the framework, seven were identified in the news headlines published on the CNN website between 2022 and 2024, based on an analysis of 50 headlines. These techniques include hyperbole, alliteration, personification, quotation, irony, rhetorical question, and pun. Metaphor was notably absent from the study. The results are presented based on their respective frequencies as follows:

(1) Hyperbole:

New US military aid package to Ukraine expected to be worth around \$1 billion

The headline exaggerates the value of the new US military aid package to Ukraine to emphasize its significance.

(2) Alliteration:

Arizona House votes to overturn 1864 abortion ban, paving way to leave 15-week limit in place

The headline uses alliteration to draw attention to the Arizona House's decision to overturn the abortion ban, adding a rhythmic quality to the reporting.

(3) Personification:

Up to 10,000 farmers protests in Poland over Ukrainian imports

The headline personifies the farmers' protests by describing them as capable of 'protesting' over Ukrainian imports, adding depth to the reporting.

(4) Quotation:

Biden called Xi a 'dictator.' See how China reacted

China's reaction to Biden calling Xi a 'dictator' is reported through a quotation, offering insight into diplomatic relations.

(5) Irony:

Russia alleges US involvement in Kremlin drone attack; John Kirby responds The headline highlights the irony in Russia's claim about the Kremlin drone attack, contrasting it with a response from John Kirby.

(6) Rhetorical Question:

Why Iran attacked Israel and what comes next?

By posing a rhetorical question, the headline encourages readers to consider the motives behind Iran's attacks on Israel and their potential consequences.

(7) Pun

North Korean television censors British gardening program presenter's denim attire, employing a pun to inject humor into the story.

4.3 Results and Discussions of Research Question 3

RQ 3: How linguistic patterns and rhetoric devices in news headlines from BBC and CNN are different?

To determine how often rhetorical devices appeared in BBC and CNN news headlines, the analysis involved examining and calculating their occurrence using a percentage formula, as depicted in the table provided.

Table 4.3.1

Rhetorical Devices Used in Headline News in the BBC and CNN Website in 2022-2024

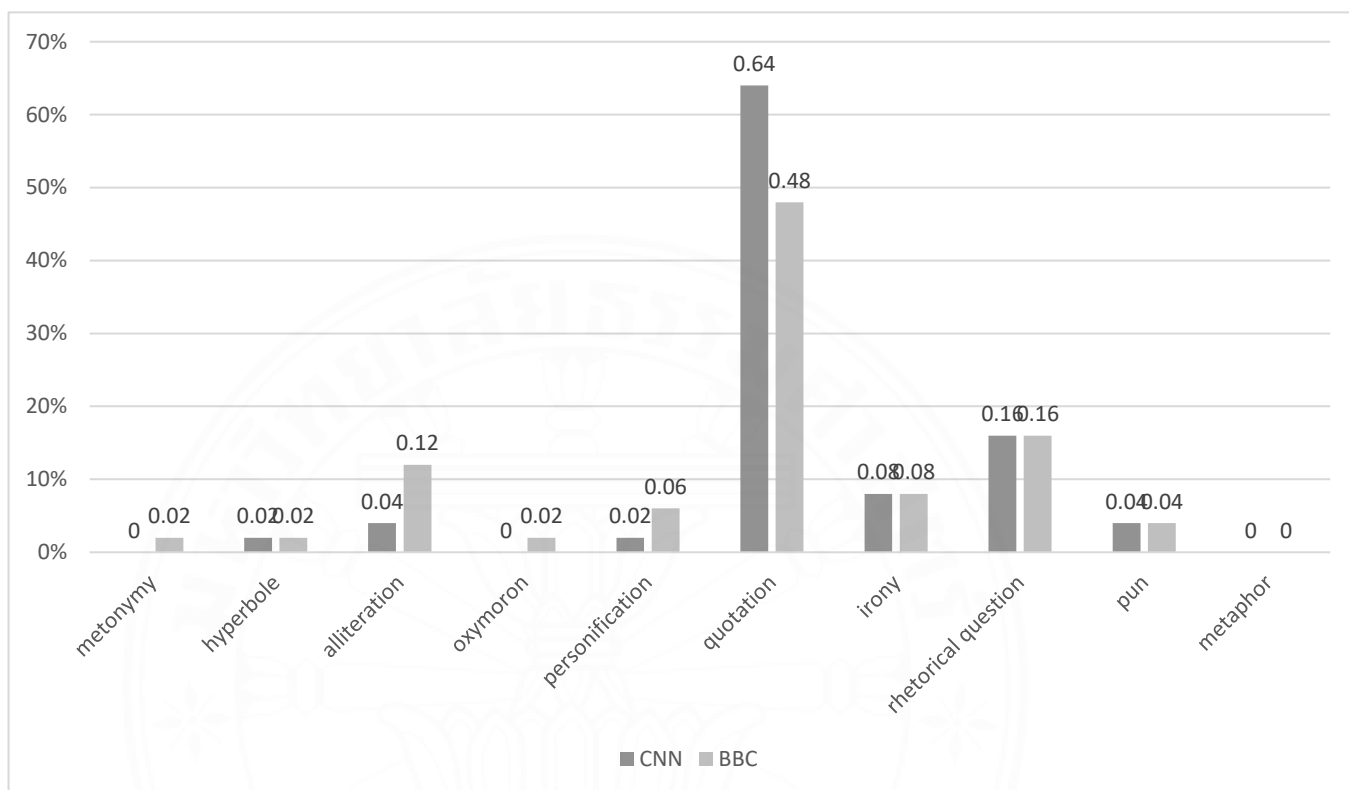


Table 4.3.1 presented the occurrence rates of rhetorical devices observed on the BBC and CNN world news websites. The findings revealed that nine out of ten rhetorical techniques were utilized in BBC news headlines, while CNN used seven out of ten techniques. It was noted that quotation was the most frequently employed technique in both BBC and CNN headlines, with rhetorical questions following closely in second place. According to Song (2023), quotations play a crucial role in establishing credibility in news headlines, as they visually highlight reliable citations. Therefore, quotation emerged as the predominant rhetorical device in the headlines of both BBC and CNN news articles.

In summary, the rhetorical devices identified in this study as used in news headline writing, ranked in order of frequency, are: 1) quotation, 2) rhetorical question, 3) irony, 4) alliteration, 5) pun, 6) personification, 7) hyperbole, 8) metonymy, and 9) oxymoron.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

This research investigates the rhetorical strategies utilized in headlines of global news articles featured on the BBC and CNN websites between 2022 and 2024. Employing Zhou's (2017) framework, the study analyzes the frequency of each rhetorical device employed in these headlines.

The examination of rhetorical devices in BBC and CNN news headlines uncovers interesting patterns and preferences in journalistic writing. Table 4.3.1 displays the occurrence rates of these devices, emphasizing their strategic deployment to attract reader interest and effectively communicate meaning.

First and foremost, the prevalence of quotations as the most utilized rhetorical device underscores its fundamental role in news headlines. According to Song (2023), quotes serve not only to provide direct information but also to enhance the credibility and authoritative tone of the headlines. This finding resonates across both BBC and CNN, suggesting a universal journalistic practice aimed at establishing trustworthiness through direct citation.

Following closely behind quotations, rhetorical questions emerge as another prominent feature in news headlines. This device engages readers by prompting thought and encouraging active engagement with the content. Its frequent appearance in both BBC and CNN headlines reflects a deliberate effort to stimulate curiosity and provoke reflection among audiences.

Further down the list, devices such as irony, alliteration, pun, personification, hyperbole, metonymy, and oxymoron demonstrate varying degrees of usage across the sampled headlines. While not as prevalent as quotations or rhetorical questions, these devices contribute to the stylistic richness and nuanced expression found in journalistic discourse. They serve to convey layers of meaning, evoke emotions, or draw attention to specific aspects of news stories.

The comparative analysis between BBC and CNN reveals subtle differences in the adoption of rhetorical devices. BBC headlines tend to incorporate a wider variety

of these devices compared to CNN, with nine out of ten techniques observed as opposed to seven out of ten for CNN. This variance may reflect differing editorial styles or audience preferences, suggesting that rhetorical strategies are tailored to meet specific journalistic objectives and reader expectations.

In conclusion, the study underscores the integral role of rhetorical devices in news headlines across major media outlets. By examining their frequency and impact, we gain insights into how these devices are strategically employed to enhance readability, credibility, and engagement. Moving forward, further research could explore the evolving use of these devices in digital media and their influence on audience perception and comprehension of news content.

The findings of this research could benefit journalists who might incorporate these methods into their writing. For instance, employing various rhetorical strategies can enhance headlines by emphasizing or spotlighting specific elements. Additionally, the headline techniques uncovered in this study could be applicable beyond journalism, extending to areas like advertising and the titling of various forms of literature. Furthermore, for readers, this study could enhance their recognition and comprehension of these writing strategies.

5.2 Limitation and Problems of the Study

The study focused exclusively on 100 headlines sourced from world news articles on the BBC and CNN websites between 2022 and 2024 within a specific genre of news. As such, its findings are constrained to this particular subset and may not be extrapolated to all types of news headline writing. Moreover, since BBC and CNN are considered broadsheet news platforms known for their in-depth reporting and editorial standards, the observed rhetorical device usage may not be representative of headline writing techniques across all news outlets, including tabloids or niche publications. These platforms often employ different stylistic approaches and cater to distinct audience demographics, which could influence the prevalence and types of rhetorical devices used. Therefore, while insightful for understanding trends within BBC and CNN's headline practices, caution should be exercised in generalizing these findings to broader contexts of news headline writing across diverse media landscapes.

5.3 Recommendations

This study focused solely on examining headline practices within the BBC and CNN news websites. Future research could enhance this scope by exploring other prominent English-language news platforms globally, such as AP, Reuters, AFP, or English-language publications in Thailand like the Bangkok Post or the Nation. Comparative analysis of headline strategies across these diverse platforms could yield valuable insights into cross-cultural and regional variations in journalistic practices and techniques for engaging audiences.

Moreover, broadening the study to encompass a wider array of news outlets would provide a more comprehensive view of how rhetorical devices are employed across various journalistic contexts and audience demographics. Such comparative research could also illuminate the impact of cultural norms, editorial policies, and audience preferences on headline writing strategies within the global media landscape. Therefore, examining additional news websites beyond the BBC and CNN would enrich our understanding and facilitate more nuanced discussions regarding the role of rhetorical devices in contemporary news reporting.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

**ANALYSIS RHETORICAL DEVICES USED IN NEWS HEAD-
LINE WRITING**

(1) Metonymy

1. **Harvey Weinstein's 2020 rape conviction overturned in New York**
(April 28, 2024)

(2) Hyperbole

1. **North Korea launches its strongest long-range missile following South Korea-US summit** (July 13, 2023)
2. **Anticipated new US military assistance package for Ukraine valued at approximately \$1 billion** (April 23, 2024)

(3) Alliteration

1. **Myanmar military loses control of border town in significant defeat**
(April 6, 2024)
2. **Gaza demonstrators clash with law enforcement at US universities**
(April 25, 2024)
3. **Gunmen attack Moscow's Crocus City Hall, resulting in 133 deaths**
(March 23, 2024)
4. **Ukraine faces intense bombardment from Russia** (January 2, 2024)
5. **Congress, AAP and others: India's opposition confronts Modi's leadership** (April 23, 2024)
6. **Tel Aviv witnesses protests as thousands call for Netanyahu's resignation** (April 7, 2024)
7. **Arizona House votes to overturn 1864 abortion ban, preserving 15-week limit** (April 25, 2024)
8. **Tel Aviv sees crowds gather, marking 200 days since Gaza hostages were taken** (April 7, 2024)

(4) Oxymoron

1. **Trump trial: Prosecution say hush money was 'pure election fraud'**
(April 23, 2024)

(5) Personification

1. **UN rights chief 'horrified' by mass grave reports at Gaza hospitals**
(April 24, 2024)
2. **Russia concert hall attack suspects dragged into Moscow court** (March 25, 2024)

3. Farmers' protests: EU to cap some Ukrainian tariff-free imports

(March 20, 2024)

4. Up to 10,000 farmers protests in Poland over Ukrainian imports (March 20, 2024)

(6) Quotation

1. Biden pledges swift delivery of new military assistance to Ukraine

(April 23, 2024)

2. Ukraine's army chief reports significant Russian advances in eastern region (April 13, 2024)

3. TikTok commits to challenging 'unconstitutional' US ban (April 25, 2024)

4. Arizona moves closer to repealing nearly complete abortion ban dating back to 1864 (April 25, 2024)

5. Gaza hostage Hersh Goldberg-Polin encouraged to persevere after new video emerges (April 28, 2024)

6. Germany espionage: Far-right party aide detained in Chinese spy investigation (April 23, 2024)

7. Israel Gaza conflict: Biden criticizes Netanyahu's actions as a 'mistake' (April 10, 2024)

8. Israeli government announces intention to block Al Jazeera broadcasting (April 2, 2024)

9. Russian deputy defense minister Timur Ivanov accused of bribery (April 24, 2024)

10. Evan Gershkovich: Waiting for her brother, referred to as Putin's 'bargaining chip' in Russian custody (March 29, 2024)

11. Zelensky reports 31,000 troops killed since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine (February 26, 2024)

12. Zelensky calls for military renewal as top general is replaced (February 10, 2024)

13. David Cameron states UK will not halt arms exports to Israel (April 10, 2024)

14. Papuan leader rejects Biden's 'cannibalism' comment (April 22, 2024)

15. Bernie Moreno's victory for Trump sets stage for Senate showdown (March 20, 2024)

16. Trump's legal team says he cannot secure \$464 million bond in New York fraud case (March 19, 2024)

17. Biden and Trump to face off again in election rematch after securing nominations (March 13, 2024)

18. US secretly sends long-range missiles to Ukraine after prolonged resistance (April 24, 2022)

19. Sunak announces defense spending increase to 2.5% of GDP by 2030 (April 24, 2024)

20. National People's Congress: China sets ambitious economic target for 2024 (March 5, 2024)

- 21. Biden labels Chinese President Xi Jinping a 'dictator'** (November 16, 2023)
- 22. US and China agree to resume military communications following summit** (April 3, 2023)
- 23. EU to begin membership talks with Ukraine and Moldova** (March 22, 2024)
- 24. French Senate approves enshrining right to abortion in constitution** (February 2, 2024)
- 25. Meadows, Giuliani among those indicted in Arizona over 2020 election subversion case** (April 25, 2024)
- 26. Ukraine anticipates US military aid as Russia advances further in the east** (April 13, 2024)
- 27. TikTok pledges legal challenge against potential US app ban** (April 25, 2024)
- 28. Myanmar military loses control of key town on Thai border, rebels claim victory** (April 6, 2024)
- 29. Arrests made during protests at US university campuses** (April 25, 2024)
- 30. Israeli-American hostage Hersh Goldberg-Polin appears in Hamas video, confirming survival** (April 28, 2024)
- 31. Germany arrests aide to far-right MEP on suspicion of spying for China** (April 23, 2024)
- 32. US President criticizes Netanyahu's handling of Gaza conflict as a "mistake"** (April 10, 2024)
- 33. Netanyahu temporarily shuts down Al Jazeera operations in Israel** (April 2, 2024)
- 34. Russian deputy defense minister dismissed following corruption allegations** (April 24, 2024)
- 35. Wall Street Journal journalist Evan Gershkovich spends one year in Russian detention** (March 29, 2024)
- 36. Suspects in Moscow attack brought before court** (March 25, 2024)
- 37. Over 130 casualties reported in Moscow attack** (March 23, 2024)
- 38. Zelensky confirms 31,000 Ukrainian soldier deaths** (February 26, 2024)
- 39. Zelensky removes Ukraine's military chief in significant shake-up amid ongoing conflict** (February 9, 2024)
- 40. Ukraine subjected to Russian airstrikes** (January 2, 2024)
- 41. New York appeals court overturns Harvey Weinstein's conviction for sex crimes, orders new trial** (April 28, 2024)
- 42. Biden's controversial remarks on 'cannibalism' face backlash in Papua New Guinea** (April 22, 2024)
- 43. Blinken expected to issue stern warning on Russia support during China visit for key meetings** (April 25, 2024)
- 44. India's opposition weakened in the face of Modi's strong political momentum** (April 23, 2024)
- 45. UK government under increasing pressure to halt arms sales to Israel** (April 10, 2024)

46. **Insights from Day 8 of the Donald Trump hush money trial** (April 23, 2024)
47. **Trump-backed candidate Bernie Moreno wins GOP primary in Ohio to challenge Sen. Sherrod Brown** (March 20, 2024)
48. **Trump unable to meet \$464 million bond in civil fraud case, his lawyers inform court** (March 19, 2024)
49. **Biden and Trump secure nominations, preparing for another general election showdown** (March 12, 2024)
50. **North Korea tests ballistic missile capable of reaching entire US, Japan confirms** (July 23, 2023)
51. **Britain increases defense spending** (April 24, 2024)
52. **China sets ambitious economic growth target of 'around 5%' for 2024, pledges economic transformation** (March 5, 2024)
53. **Biden praises productive talks with Xi Jinping, agreements reached on fentanyl and military communication** (April 3, 2023)
54. **Europe's support for Ukraine lacks consistency at present** (March 22, 2024)

(7) Irony

1. **Ukraine conflict: United States clandestinely provides Kiev with long-range missiles** (April 24, 2022)
2. **Critics view Hong Kong security law as decisive blow** (March 20, 2024)
3. **India's opposition condemns Modi for 'inflammatory rhetoric'** (April 22, 2024)
4. **Ukraine conflict: US refutes accusations of orchestrating Moscow drone strike** (May 5, 2023)
5. **The UN urges an investigation after mass graves are found at Gaza hospitals raided by Israel** (April 24, 2024).
6. **Hong Kong implements a second national security law, strengthening enforcement measures and aligning more closely with mainland China** (March 20, 2024).
7. **Opinion: Trump faces an unprecedented audience** (April 14, 2024)
8. **Russia alleges US involvement in Kremlin drone attack; John Kirby responds** (May 5, 2023)

(8) Rhetorical Question

1. **The US Supreme Court will determine if Trump has immunity in an election interference case** (January 19, 2024).
2. **Moscow attack: Did Russia disregard US warnings about 'extremist' attacks?** (March 23, 2024)
3. **IS-K: Who are the Islamic State jihadists blamed for Moscow attack?** (March 26, 2024)
4. **Antony Blinken faces a challenging visit to China. Will it yield positive results?** (April 25, 2024)
5. **What are the UK's plans for sending asylum seekers to Rwanda and how many might be affected?** (March 25, 2024)
6. **Why have Israel and Iran attacked each other?** (April 19, 2024)

- 7. US media organisations push Biden and Trump for TV debate pledge** (April 14,2024)
- 8. China tightens stock market rules after sell-off** (January 29, 2024)
- 9. Your questions about Trump’s immunity claim at the Supreme Court, answered** (January 19,2024)
- 10. Why Iran attacked Israel and what comes next** (April 15,2024)
- 11. US had warned Russia ISIS was determined to attack** (March 23,2024)
- 12. What we know about ISIS group claiming responsibility for Moscow terror attack** (March 26,2024)
- 13. Why Iran attacked Israel and what comes next** (April 19,2024)
- 14. China replaces head of securities regulator after stock market meltdown** (January 29,2024)
- 15. Biden called Xi a 'dictator.' See how China reacted** (November 26,2023)
- 16. French Senate votes to enshrine abortion rights in constitution** (February 29,2024)

(9) Pun

- 1. Arizona indicts Trump allies over 2020 fake elector scheme** (April 25,2024)
- 2. North Korea TV censors Alan Titchmarsh's trousers** (March 27, 2024)
- 3. Modi’s Muslim remarks spark ‘hate speech’ accusations as India’s mammoth election deepens divides** (April 22,2024)
- 4. North Korean TV censors British gardening show host’s jeans** (March 27,2024)