

## **Literary and Linguistic Analysis of News Headlines of the English Newspapers of Kashmir Valley**

**Sameer Ahmad Kuchay**

Ph.D Scholar

Department of Linguistics  
University of Kashmir, Srinagar  
&

**Sayantani Banerjee**

M.Phil Scholar

Department of Linguistics  
Jadavpur University, Kolkata

### **Abstract**

In Linguistic and literary studies, stylistics is a very complex domain and a very fertile ground for investigation. There is an intricate web of linguistic stylistic functions in any text i.e. literary and non literary that pleat so as to create the individuality of the discourse itself, and the impact of the text on the reader. This is obvious in the newspapers reportage under study. . In order to attract reader's attention, journalists make the headlines as ambiguous and confusing as possible so that readers are curious to know the content of the whole story and they would read it. Moreover, in presenting the information or events, different reporters will have different linguistic choices which include the choice of words and expressions and different linguistic structures. Given this backdrop, this paper aims to analyze how the different linguistic choices and various style features used in the headlines of the english news papers of Kashmir Valley would construct different linguistic representations of events happening within and outside Kashmir

**Key Words:** Headlines, Stylistics, Figurative Language, Register, Code Switching

### **Introduction**

Headlines serve an important function in a news paper as a digest and condensation of the whole story. They play an important role in orienting the interpretation of the reader. Simon Vandenberg (1981) defines headlines as the potential sentences in all cases, with structural, lexical, semantic and contextual factors favoring a more left or right ward position on a scale going from non-sentence to sentence. The closer a headline is to an orthodox sentence pattern the more right ward on the scale it will be. As revealed by the studies in mass communication and

psychology, the headline plays a special role in information processing and is also a prime factor in determining the quality and circulation of a news paper.

Style is not just ornamental to writing; it results from the many choices the writer makes in the course of his writing and it is these choices that set apart one writer from the other. The headlines have different stylistic varieties related to function, typography and audience. Based on the function the headlines have news-style heads and free style- heads (Evan, 1971:13). The news style heads always give information impartially while the free style heads involve a question, a joke etc. Due to its highly interdisciplinary nature, linguistic stylistics displays multiple levels of analysis related to various language- study domains, i.e. lexical classes, morphology, syntax, semantics, discourse analysis, etc.

### **Lexico-Semantic Analysis**

Words are essential in language and they influence the outcome of whatever we write or say. The diction a writer uses has great influence on the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the message being passed across. If a register is inadequately used, communication will be impeded. The writer may decide to employ simple and concrete words or abstract and obscure words and expressions. A writer's choice of words determines the aesthetic appreciation of that piece of writing. In this section, attention will be paid to the meaning(s) generated by the lexical items. The headlines in their choice of lexical items draw from a wide range of registers. Simple diction that is appropriate to the situation of things is used in the headlines.

- i. Register associated to crisis is pervasive in all newspapers.

Examples of the registers is as follows:

Unrest, Protests, Stone Pelter, Amnesty, Massacre, Genocide, Shootout, Ceasefire Voilations Casualties and Calamity, Inhuman Cruelty, Killings, Hapless Victims, Killing Field, Critically Wounded, Arson, AK 47 Assault Rifles, Rescue Operations, Carnage, Ruthlessness " Massacres and Riots Open Confrontation, Gun Fire Havoc. In fact the list of words associated with crisis used in the headlines under study can go on and on.

- ii. Another register that is prevalent in the headlines is that of the legalese:

Apprehend, Investigate, Law, Prosecute, Face Trial, Crimes, Jurisdiction, Court Arrest, Culprits International Criminal Court, Rights Violations,

**Code-Switching:** it is used to refer to utterances that draw from elements of two or more grammatical systems, here lexical elements from two languages or two varieties of a language are alternatively used in a sentence.

1. Late night wedding parties put waza's in the soup(Greater Kashmir)
2. Overdependence on non-local bakers leaves srinagar craving for Tshoet(Kashmir Reader)

**Figurative Language Analysis** Any study of language and style which ignores the figurative use of language is to a large extent impoverished. We use figures of speech sometimes when we speak or write to make our ideas clearer, vivid and even to add aesthetic value to what we say or write. This feature has not been ignored by the editorials under study.

### **i. Metaphoric feature**

Metaphorical statements are essential in good writing. It is a kind of spice of good writing and reading. The editorials reveal this feature and style of language. This is evident in the data below: The federal and Plateau State governments must take stock of events

1. Red faced, govt apologises for cabinet ministers behavior.(Greater Kashmir)
2. Traffic signals: new address of beggars( Greater Kashmir)
3. Late night wedding parties put waza's in the soup(Greater Kashmir)
4. ECI drags feet on Gujrat made EVMs(Greater Kashmir)
5. PDP looks set to paint saffron town green(Rising Kashmir)

### **ii. Personification**

Non-animate object is given animate attributes or animate to inanimate. This feature is seen in the headlines under study. Examples are:

1. ...more so that the nation still lays claim to...
2. It will naturally disappear when the circumstances that gave birth to it cease to exist
3. ...the world wakes up to the news of carnage in Jos with its usual casualties and...
4. Weapons are paraded by triumphant security operatives in a glare of publicity

### iii. Simile

Simile is a direct comparison making use of words as „like“ and „as“. Examples from the editorials are as follows:

1. In short, they behave as if they are laws unto themselves
2. Like a love story turned awry, Kashmir has metamorphosed from a tourist haven to a nightmare

**Iv. Metonymy:** Another instance of figurative language used in the headlines of the selected was Metonymy. It is a figure of speech in which one word or phrase is substituted for

another with which it is closely associated. The use of this rhetoric device can be identified in the following. In general, analysis of headlines in terms of this rhetoric device,

metonymy, indicated the importance of the device in newspaper genre in general and headlines in particular

1. tourist hub demands dustbin(Greater Kashmir)
2. (Residents of tourist hub of Dalgate have appealed SMC to place dustbins for the area)
3. working out fresh strategy to counter Delhis fast changing stance. Omar(Rising Kashmir,)
4. PDP looks set to paint saffron town green(Rising Kashmir,)

### v. Rhetorical Question

This is an emotive device used to appeal to ones feelings or sentiments. They are questions that require no actual reply. The answers are already implied in the context. Examples from the text are:

1. When will Kolhai melt our hearts?(Kashmir Reader)
2. Is vertical expansion the solution to decongest city?(Greater Kashmir)

### References

Crystal,David 1997. *English as Global Language*, UK:Cambridge University Press  
 Harold Evans 1974. *News Headlines*, Holt, Rinehart and Winston.