

MASTER'S THESIS

Oral and written media coverage of mundane news in Hong Kong: a case study of a fire incident

Woo, Yuen Ying Grace

Date of Award:
1995

[Link to publication](#)

General rights

Copyright and intellectual property rights for the publications made accessible in HKBU Scholars are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners. In addition to the restrictions prescribed by the Copyright Ordinance of Hong Kong, all users and readers must also observe the following terms of use:

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from HKBU Scholars for the purpose of private study or research
- Users cannot further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- To share publications in HKBU Scholars with others, users are welcome to freely distribute the permanent URL assigned to the publication

ORAL AND WRITTEN MEDIA COVERAGE OF MUNDANE NEWS IN HONG KONG - A
CASE STUDY OF A FIRE INCIDENT

BY

WOO YUEN YING, GRACE
STUDENT NO. 93401965

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL
FULFILMENT OF THE

MASTER OF ARTS IN LANGUAGE STUDIES

HONG KONG BAPTIST UNIVERSITY

AUGUST 1995

Abstract

This study examines newspaper and television news discourse based upon two news stories of a single event - a fire incident. Newspaper and television reports in English are compared and contrast as a means of arriving at the discourse differences between the two media. The study aims at looking into the discourse strategies of the two news stories so as to identify how those linguistic devices are employed by individual media. By careful examination of the texts of the news reports, the study sets out to analyse news discourse through studies of thematic structures, schematic structures, mode of presentation and lexicon used of the stories.

The findings of this study suggests that the coverage of this fire incident by the two media is different in the following ways: the newspaper coverage is found to include more detailed and specific information on the background and contexts, there are more vocabulary items suggesting a dramatic effect on the story used in the press. It is found that the verbal text of television report tends to be simpler than that of newspaper report in terms of the above findings. Nevertheless, television report is complicated by the inclusion of the visual presentation and the range of the 'orality' continuum.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	
Acknowledgements	
Table of contents	
Chapter 1 Introduction	P. 1-2
Chapter 2 Literature Review	
2.1 Discourse Analysis - the development.....	P. 3-5
2.2 News Discourse - background and different approaches to the study of news.....	P. 5-11
2.2.1 Anecdotal Accounts	
2.2.2 Sociological Accounts	
2.2.3 Content Analysis	
2.2.4 Linguistic Accounts	
2.2.5 The study of News in Hong Kong	
2.3 van Dijk's framework for the structures of news discourse.....	P. 12-18
2.3.1 Thematic Structures	
2.3.2 News Schemata	
2.4 Written and Spoken Discourse.....	P. 19-20
2.5 Audio - visual Analysis.....	P. 21-23
Chapter 3 Background of the Study	
3.1 Media Communication in Hong Kong.....	P. 24-26
3.1.1 The Press	
3.1.2 Television	
3.2 The News Story.....	P. 26-31
3.2.1 Situation: The shopping arcade in North Point	
3.2.2 Data collection	
3.2.3 Data Transcription	
3.2.4 Data Analysis	
3.2.5 Limitations	
Chapter 4 Analytical Issues	
4.1 Thematic Structures.....	P. 32-43
4.1.1 Newspaper	
4.1.2 Television	
4.1.3 Newspaper and Television in contrast	
4.1.3.1 Amount of information	
4.1.3.2 Headlines	
4.1.3.3 Leads	
4.1.3.4 Verbal Reactions	
4.2 Schematic Structures.....	P. 44-48
4.2.1 Newspaper	
4.2.2 Television	
4.2.3 Newspaper and Television in contrast	

4.3	Visual Images Analysis.....	P. 49-54
4.3.1	Newspaper - photographs	
4.3.2	Television - news film	
4.4	Mode of Presentation.....	P. 55-61
4.4.1	Newspaper	
4.4.2	Television	
4.5	Lexicon used.....	P. 62-65

Chapter 5	Conclusions.....	P. 66-68
-----------	------------------	----------

Notes

References

Appendix 1: Fire in Shopping Arcade Story: Hong Kong Standard,
14 May 95.

Appendix 2: Photocopy of Hong Kong Standard original.

Appendix 3: Schematic Structures of Fire in Shopping Arcade
Story: Hong Kong Standard.

Appendix 4: Verbal Presentation of Fire in Shopping Arcade Story:
Pearl, 13 May 95.

Appendix 5: Visual Presentation of Fire in Shopping Arcade Story:
Pearl, 13 May 95.