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# **Evaluation in the headlines of tabloids and broadsheets: A comparative study<sup>1</sup>**

LAURA ALBA-JUEZ

## **1. Introduction**

This paper presents a comparative study of the use of the evaluative devices used in the headlines of four different on-line British newspapers: two broadsheets, *BBC Online* and *The Guardian*, and two tabloids *The Mirror* and *The Daily Mail*. Some authors (e.g. Fowler 1991, Convoy 2004) have written about the distinguishing characteristics of tabloids as opposed in many ways to those of broadsheets. The main motivation leading to this study originated in the observation that all newspaper articles (whether in tabloids or broadsheets) seem to contain a given evaluation that is generally condensed or made relevant in their headlines, where the main stance of the article is thus reflected, a stance that may influence the reader's decision to make the effort of reading the whole article, or on the contrary, to reject it in the first place.

The analysis carried out herein is multimodal, as not only the text of the headlines of the articles, but also the images which very frequently accompany them, were analyzed, given that these images interact with the text in various and complex ways, and that consequently they may also contribute to the evaluative meaning as a whole, as other authors (e.g. Breeze, 2014) have pointed out. The headline semiotic space in an article (including both text and pictures) normally seems to synthesize the evaluative stance of the whole article, for it usually contains the

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abstract (Labov, e.g. 1997) of the narration, and as Dor (2003: 695) observes, it is “designed to optimize the relevance of their stories for their readers”. Thompson and Hunston (2000: 19) note that even though it is clear that evaluation tends to be found all throughout a text, there are some strategic points where the pervading evaluation of the whole text is condensed and can be easily identified. In the particular case of journalistic articles, the headline seems to be one of those strategic points.

Another of the motivations for the present study has arisen from the observation that in 21<sup>st</sup> century online communication, the ‘conversationalization’ (Fairclough, 1995) of media discourse is apparent in all the media, a fact which some authors believe to have contributed to blur the distinctions between broadsheets and tabloids to a certain extent. Connell (1998), for instance, writes about the phenomenon of ‘tabloidisation’ to designate the process by which supposedly rationalist discourses are transforming into sensationalist ones. This is a homogenizing view which maintains that the journalism which once seemed to be confined to the media for lowbrow consumers, has now permeated all the other media. It should also be noted that the old physical distinction between broadsheets and tabloids concerning their size, i.e. the fact that broadsheets had ‘broader sheets’ than tabloids, is no longer true (*The Times* and *The Independent* are tabloid size, for instance), and for that reason the distinction is sometimes now made by using the terms ‘quality’ vs. ‘popular’ newspapers. However, in this work I will not use the latter pair of terms, considering that in spite of the fact that the size distinction is no longer valid, in general the terms ‘tabloid’ and ‘broadsheet’ have been maintained, and are commonly used by English speakers. The comparative study carried out herein, however, will exclusively look into the ‘evaluative blueprint’ of both types of headlines, irrespective of other similarities or differences that might exist between both types of press.

The main research question of this work, therefore, aims to elucidate whether or not there are significant differences between broadsheets and tabloids in the expression of evaluative meanings in the semiotic space occupied by the headlines. Precisely, one characteristic usually attributed to tabloids in contrast with broadsheets is that they focus more on the emotional side of stories. Fowler (1991) has pointed out that in the tabloids evaluation seems to be used as one more of the linguistic and 'poetic' devices employed to build a sense of community among their readers. Conboy (2004) remarks that an important feature of the English used in tabloids is that "it shifts language from reporting to an engaged and often enraged personalization of the political sphere" (2004: 47), a shift that is prototypically carried out by means of the stances taken and expressed by the journalists and/or the tabloid as a whole. Furthermore, if we ask the layperson or search the internet for opinions about the differences between a broadsheet and a tabloid, we shall find that in most cases broadsheets are considered 'more serious and objective', while tabloids are seen as 'less serious and more subjective'. Regarding the headlines of both, it is believed that those of the tabloids are syntactically shorter and simpler, more dramatic and emotive, and more biased. Those of broadsheets, in contrast, are considered to be longer and syntactically more complex, truthful and unbiased (O'Connor, 2011).

The definition of evaluation adopted for the analysis is Alba-Juez & Thompson's (2014: 13), which views evaluation as a dynamical, intersubjective phenomenon that permeates all levels of linguistic description, but which cannot be described or analyzed in 'purely' (whatever that may mean) linguistic terms, for it always occurs within a given personal/ social/ emotional/ cultural/ etc. context, and therefore reflects the values of a person, group, society or culture:

We [...] define evaluation as a dynamical subsystem of language, permeating all linguistic levels and involving the

expression of the speaker's or writer's attitude or stance towards, viewpoint on, or feelings about the entities or propositions that s/he is talking about, which entails relational work including the (possible and prototypically expected and subsequent) response of the hearer or (potential) audience. This relational work is generally related to the speaker's and/or hearer's personal, group, or cultural set of values.

In the case of our corpus, the values *inscribed* or *invoked* (to use Martin & White's (2005) terminology for overt vs. covert evaluation, respectively) in the headlines will normally not be ascribed to the journalist's own personal set of values, but to the newspaper, group, society or culture s/he is representing. On occasions the headline just poses a question, which might be interpreted as the decision on the part of the editors to let the readers draw their own evaluative conclusion, although these questions may be biased and therefore invoke or try to provoke in the readers a given evaluation of the topic or people depicted in the article. This constitutes one of the factors of the intersubjectivity and dynamicity of the phenomenon, and raises the issue of the "Russian doll" dilemma discussed by Thompson (2014), faced by the analyst when having to categorize the type of evaluation found in any given utterance or text. The dilemma has to do with the fact that an expression of one category may function as a token (i.e. an indirect expression) of a different category (and that token may even function as an indirect expression of yet another category, and so on). Furthermore, as the results of this study will show, in the same headline we may find co-occurring inscribed evaluations having opposite polarity values, or the picture accompanying the headline may contain an evaluative message that is not totally in sync with that of the headline. I have certainly been confronted with this dilemma not only at the stage of the qualitative analysis, but more importantly, when trying to quantify the frequencies of occurrence of some of the evaluative variables analyzed, such as the linguistic level at which the evaluation is manifested, and, more

importantly, the subsystem of evaluation (within Martin & White's (2005) Appraisal model) where each particular headline should be placed. In the upcoming sections I shall try to show how I have dealt with this and other issues which inevitably showed up in the course of research.

The research presented in this paper, therefore, is oriented towards 'cracking the evaluative code' of both broadsheet and tabloid headlines, so as to be able to compare what might be called their 'evaluative blueprint'. The method used to achieve this aim involved looking into the syntactic constructions used in the headlines and, more importantly, the different variables that form part of the 'evaluative functional relationship' (Alba-Juez, forthcoming).

## 2. Corpus and methodology of analysis

The corpus on which the analysis is based consists of 100 articles from broadsheet newspapers (50 from *BBC Online* and 50 from *The Guardian*), and 100 articles from tabloids (50 from *The Mirror* and 50 from *The Daily Mail*), published between October 2014 and May 2015. The main research question was the following: Are there any significant differences, both qualitatively and quantitatively, between the evaluation found in the headlines of broadsheets and tabloids?

The act of evaluating someone or something can be done along several different parameters, because there are many different variables that intervene and interact in the phenomenon. The methodology followed in this study aims at shedding light onto what seem to be the most relevant knowledge resources or variables of the evaluative function of language. Thus, the study consists in the comparison of the evaluation found in the headlines of broadsheets and tabloids, by examining (both qualitatively and quantitatively) the following aspects: 1) the syntactic constructions used in the headlines; 2) the different 'ingredients' or

qualitative variables of the *Evaluative Functional Relationship* (Alba-Juez, forthcoming), whereby evaluation is treated as a function of a number of variables that interact with one another. In mathematical symbols, the evaluation equation can be represented as consisting of two terms (E and F), the variables being the arguments of the functional relation F, as in (1):

$$(1) E = F(\text{PH, LL, Deg, ContPos, P, Mo})$$

The arguments (or *knowledge resources*) of the evaluation equation are the following: 1) Phase of the evaluation (PH); 2) Linguistic Level at which the evaluation is realized (LL), 3) Degree of (in)directness of the evaluative meaning (Deg), related to whether the evaluation is overt or covert, 4) Position along the evaluation continuum (ContPos), which has to do with the polarity of the evaluative act; 5) (main) Parameter of evaluation (P), which in this study will be drawn from the Appraisal model categories (Martin & White 2005); and 6) Mode of the evaluation (Mo), a variable which contemplates the modes through which the evaluation is expressed (e.g. linguistic, paralinguistic, or/and through other visual/auditory means (images, videos, emoticons, etc.). These are all qualitative variables that are thought to be (un)consciously considered and appropriately weighed by the interlocutors for either the expression or the interpretation of their evaluative act during discourse. In the upcoming sections of this paper we shall explore each one of them in relation to the newspaper headlines in the corpus. The qualitative analysis and comparison of both broadsheet and tabloid headlines will be complemented by a frequency analysis where the significance of the differences (related to the variables) found between one type of press and the other will be tested by means of the  $\chi^2$  test, given the fact that the variables are qualitative, and consequently the statistical test used has to be of the non-parametric kind.

### 3. Analysis

#### 3.1. Syntactic constructions used in the headlines

Before delving into the analysis of the six variables contemplated in the evaluation equation in (1), we shall look into the syntactic constructions used in the headlines in order to test what seems to be the common belief that broadsheet headlines are longer and more syntactically complex than those found in tabloids (e.g. O'Connor 2011). This is deemed necessary because the length or complexity of the headlines can have certain effects on their evaluative content. One might think, for instance, that if the headlines are longer and more syntactically complex, they will contain richer and more varied evaluative forms and meanings, or that there will be more room for semantic or discourse prosody<sup>2</sup> in a longer and more complex headline than in a shorter and simpler one. My analysis, however, does not seem to confirm such common belief. In order to compare the complexity of the headlines, I analyzed them syntactically, and I found that some of the headlines contained only phrases, while others contained simple, complex or compound clauses<sup>3</sup>, or a combination of all these possibilities. My assumption was that complex and compound clauses would be longer and syntactically more complex. Thus I divided them into eight main categories, based on what I found, as shown in Table 1, where their frequencies of occurrence and one example of each are exhibited:

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<sup>2</sup> The phenomenon of semantic/ discourse prosody refers to the frequent occurrence, in a given text, of words or expressions containing the same evaluative valence (either positive or negative) in relation to a certain expression that at first sight might appear to be neutral.

<sup>3</sup> I have used Downing & Locke's (2006) definitions for the classification: "The simple sentence consists basically of one independent clause...[...] The compound sentence consists basically of two independent clauses, linked in a relationship of coordination" [...] The complex sentence consists basically of one independent clause and one dependent clause, linked in a relationship of dependency..." (pp. 272-273).



**Table 1: Comparison of the frequencies (and examples) of the main categories of syntactic constructions found in the headlines**

Type of construction	Broad-sheets	Tabloids	Examples and syntactic analysis
<b>PHRASES</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>6</b>	<i>Charlie Hebdo hunt: Double hostage crisis in France</i> <sup>4</sup>  NP: NP[PrepP] <sup>5</sup>
<b>SIMPLE CLAUSES</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>25</b>	<i>Andrew Flintoff makes a duck on debut in Australia's Big Bash</i> <sup>6</sup>  SPOCirc
<b>COMPLEX CLAUSES</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>34</b>	<i>Cheaper oil could damage renewable energies, says Richard Branson</i> <sup>7</sup>  [O→SPO]PS (Reported speech)
<b>COMPOUND CLAUSES</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>	<i>Shocking crash splits car IN HALF - but family somehow walk away UNHARMED</i> <sup>8</sup>  SPOCirc+but+SCircPCs
<b>COMPOUND/ COMPLEX</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>	<i>'She passed away in my arms': Mother tells how healthy teen who died from virulent mutated flu was struck down by the strain sweeping America</i> <sup>9</sup>  SPCirc: SP[O→wh-cl[SPAg]]

<sup>4</sup> BBC Online, 9 January 2015.

<sup>5</sup> See notation used in the Annex.

<sup>6</sup> The Guardian, 21 December 2014.

<sup>7</sup> The Guardian, 16 December 2014.

<sup>8</sup> The Mirror, 23 November 2014.

<sup>9</sup> The Daily Mail, 2 January 2015.

<b>PHRASES + SIMPLE CLAUSES</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>8</b>	<i>Charlie Hebdo: Gun attack on French magazine kills 12</i> <sup>10</sup>  NP: SPO
<b>PHRASES + COMPLEX CLAUSES</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<i>Brewers Unfayre: Family told to pay £400 in parking fines because their Christmas lunch in the pub took too long</i> <sup>11</sup>  NP: SP[O→ to-inf cl][Circ→subSPCirc] (Elliptical passive without be)
<b>PHRASES + COMPOUND CLAUSES</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<i>Jesus Christ Superfast... Andrew Lloyd Webber calls for wi-fi in EVERY church - and tells of his love for Cats star Nicole Scherzinger</i> <sup>12</sup>  NP+ SPOCirc+and+(S)PO
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	

As can be seen just by looking at the raw frequencies, contrary to what seems to be the common belief, the broadsheets contain more instances of phrases and simple clauses than the tabloids, while there is a higher frequency of complex and compound clauses in the tabloids. The results of the statistical  $\chi^2$  test<sup>13</sup> show that these differences are significant, with a p value of 0.00001 at  $p < 0.05$ .

But in order to check the complexity of the constructions, it was also thought necessary to count the number of constituents found in each one of the headlines<sup>14</sup>. The types of syntactic constructions found in

<sup>10</sup> *BBC Online*, 7 January 2015.

<sup>11</sup> *The Daily Mail*, 4 January 2015.

<sup>12</sup> *The Daily Mail*, 3 January 2015.

<sup>13</sup> The tables obtained for the  $\chi^2$  values are not included here for space reasons.

<sup>14</sup> When counting the constituents, I included those of the main clause and those found down to the first level of embedded clauses in complex sentences.

both broadsheets and tabloids were manifold, displaying a great variety of combinations of constituents. Table 2 shows the number of headlines, both in the broadsheets and the tabloids, that have a given number of constituents (between 1 and 13). So, for instance, the table shows that 27 of the headlines in the broadsheets had 3 constituents, and that there were 15 headlines in the tabloids with 7 constituents. In general, it can be seen that the tabloid headlines present a tendency towards a higher number of constituents, as in effect, the  $\chi^2$  test significant results show (p value 0.00001 at  $p < 0.05$ ).

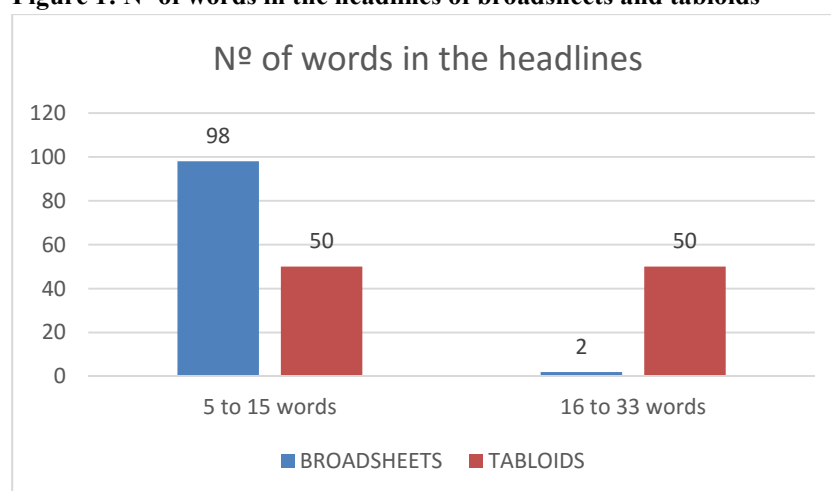
**Table 2: Number of syntactic constituents in the headline clauses**

<b>N° OF CONSTITUENTS IN THE HEADLINES</b>	<b>BROADSHEETS</b>	<b>TABLOIDS</b>
<b>1</b>	7	3
<b>2</b>	12	5
<b>3</b>	27	1
<b>4</b>	27	25
<b>5</b>	15	14
<b>6</b>	6	15
<b>7</b>	5	15
<b>8</b>	0	10
<b>9</b>	1	6
<b>10</b>	0	4
<b>11</b>	0	0
<b>12</b>	0	1
<b>13</b>	0	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

It was also deemed necessary to look at the number of words in the headlines, considering that the length was one of the characteristics attributed to broadsheets which could also contribute to their complexity. The results are shown in Figure 1, where it is obvious that the majority of the broadsheet headlines have fewer words than the

tabloid ones, a result that was corroborated by the  $\chi^2$  values obtained (p value of 0.00001).

**Figure 1: N° of words in the headlines of broadsheets and tabloids**



The results shown in Tables 1 and 2, thus, present evidence to the contrary of some authors' previous assumptions that broadsheet headlines are longer and more syntactically complex than tabloid ones. Furthermore, it has also been observed that, even though both broadsheets and tabloids include subheads which are longer and more explanatory than the main headline, the subheads in the tabloids tend to be longer, and in the case of *The Daily Mail*, the customary style is to include a list of subheads, not just one<sup>15</sup>.

And precisely because of the length and higher syntactic complexity of the tabloid headlines, it was found that the analysis of the evaluation found in them was also more complex, for they normally include more evaluative categories (nested or interrelated) than the broadsheet ones. But irrespective of the length or complexity of the headline, in both

<sup>15</sup> The analysis of the subheads, however, goes beyond the scope of this paper.

broadsheets and tabloids the syntactic constructions used seem to serve certain and various evaluative purposes. It was observed, for instance, that the use of reported speech is not the only means used to allow for dialogistic communication; many times journalists resort to interrogative clauses instead of declarative ones, an option that is equally located within the evaluative subsystem of Engagement (Martin & White, 2005) of the Heteroglossic kind.

We shall now proceed to describe and examine the different variables of which evaluation is a function, according to the methodology proposed and anticipated in 2 above.

### 3.2. Phase of the evaluation (Ph)

In Alba-Juez & Thompson (2014) we identified three phases of evaluation in discourse: 1) the pre-realization phase (a purely cognitive but active stage, in the sense that the speaker has a certain stance and/or emotion s/he may choose to express in a verbal way or not); 2) the textual phase (the actual verbal expression of the evaluation); and 3) the metaevaluative phase (the interlocutor's reaction phase, where s/he expresses his/her stance related to what was said, which simultaneously constitutes another textual phase)<sup>16</sup>. In this study the analysis was centered on the textual phase, given that, on the one hand, it is impossible to know the nature of the evaluation in the pre-evaluative phase of the writer, and on the other, we have no access to the reaction of the audience or readers, unless I made an analysis of my own reactions when reading the headlines, which is neither pertinent nor objective, and would besides go beyond the scope of the paper.

Thus in all 200 headlines analyzed, the focus of analysis was the Textual Phase. The word *textual* here is used in its broader, discursive

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<sup>16</sup> The characterization of the phases has been simplified here for space reasons. For a more detailed account of the phenomenon see Alba-Juez & Thompson (2014).

sense, which entails looking into both text and context, the context including not only the linguistic, but also the paralinguistic or pictorial context given by the images accompanying the headlines, as well as any other type of context (social, cultural, etc.) available to the reader of these newspapers. Without the information given by the different types of context, it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to interpret the evaluative meaning of any message, including the headlines under scrutiny. For instance, in the headline *Russia says drivers must not have 'sex disorders'*<sup>17</sup>, apart from the Heteroglossic Engagement made evident by the use of reported speech, which makes it very clear that this is not what the journalist or the newspaper says, we find the use of quotation marks on the expression *sex disorders*. This has to be viewed within the social and historical context of a country (Russia) wherein, despite being in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, transsexual and transgender people are considered mentally ill, and therefore not qualifying for a driving license. The quotes, therefore, come across as ironic, this time showing the stance of perhaps both the journalist and the newspaper editors, who, like many people and organizations in the Western World, would not accept (or at least view as 'politically incorrect') to label transsexual and transgender people as having mental or sex disorders. It is therefore clear to the eye of the reader that in this headline there is an invoked (or covert) negative evaluation of the Russian government's decision to legally forbid these people to drive. Furthermore, the headline includes a picture of a Moscow street jammed with cars, with the inscription *Moscow streets: various mental 'disorders' are seen as the cause of road accidents*, which again uses quotation marks not only to report what the Russian government says or believes, but also to mark the ironic stance taken by the newspaper writer and editors towards the consideration of these conditions as disorders.

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<sup>17</sup> BBC Online, 8 January 2015.

### 3.3. Linguistic level at which the evaluation is manifested (LL)

Evaluation can be manifested at each and every one of the levels of linguistic description (phonological, morphological, lexical, syntactic or semantic/pragmatic), a fact that is reflected in the corpus analyzed herein as well. Even though the corpus is written, the mode of evaluation carried out by means of capital letters or quotation marks has been here labeled within the phonological level, as cases of ‘prosodic’, paralinguistic evaluation, considering that these are strategies used in written discourse to mark what in spoken discourse would be marked by, for instance, a higher pitch or an ironic tone of voice. By way of example, consider the headline *TWO MILLION obese Brits to get free gastric band operations on the NHS*<sup>18</sup>, where the number of obese people getting gastric band operations in Britain is capitalized, thus showing the evaluative subsystem of Graduation at work (Martin & White, 2005), not only through the subcategory of Quantification at the lexical level (by specifying a number or quantity), but also through the subcategory of Intensification (given by the capitalization).

Evaluation at the morphological level is generally manifested through the pejorative or affectionate use of certain prefixes or suffixes. The use of diminutives in English in words such as *sweetie* constitutes an instance of morphological affective evaluation. In the headlines analyzed herein, only one case of morphological evaluation was found in the headline *Brewers Unfayre: Family told to pay £400 in parking fines because their Christmas lunch in the pub took too long*<sup>19</sup>, whose first phrase contains a pun on words related to the name of the pub (*Brewers Faye*). Here a negative prefix (un-) and the letter *r* in the root (*faye* has been transformed into *fayre*) have been purposely added in order to make it sound like the word *unfair*. In this way the writer is implying a negative judgement of the owners of the pub, who sent a letter to their customers with a fine of £400 for having stayed a bit more

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<sup>18</sup> *The Mirror*, 27 November 2014.

<sup>19</sup> *The Daily Mail*, January 4th, 2015.

than three hours (the allowed time) having their Christmas lunch at the pub.

Lexical evaluation is perhaps the most easily identifiable level at which evaluation can be manifested, by simply using words or expressions carrying an evaluative load, such as *good*, *bad*, *beautiful* or *ugly*, in which case we are confronted with clear cases of inscribed or overt evaluation, as illustrated in the headline *Brian Cox's Human Universe presents a fatally flawed view of evolution*<sup>20</sup>, where the adjectival phrase *fatally flawed* clearly presents an appreciation of the view of evolution to be found in a BBC television program. Things are not always so clear-cut for the analyst, however, and this is when evaluation at the semantic/pragmatic level, which is normally context-dependent and invoked or covert, comes into play and may co-occur with the overt evaluation which is inscribed in some terms.

The syntactic level is also a fertile ground for the realization of evaluation. For instance, thematically-marked constructions where the normal or expected order of constituents in the mood structure of the clause has been changed, may constitute a strategy for expressing a given kind of evaluation. In our headlines it has been observed that such may also be the case, for instance, with the use of a negative clause construction where *No* is fronted as if it were the response to a yes/no question (which does not appear in the headline, but is evoked), as in *No, Argentina's president did not adopt a Jewish child to stop him turning into a werewolf*<sup>21</sup>, where the fronting of the negative particle focuses on the evaluation of the proposition contained in the clause as not true.

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<sup>20</sup> *The Guardian*, 4 October 2014.

<sup>21</sup> *The Guardian*, 29 December 2014.



Thompson (2014: 51) illustrates the semantic/pragmatic<sup>22</sup> kind of evaluation by means of the utterance *He wears sandals with socks*, which might seem an innocent statement to some people, but is recognized by many British readers/hearers as “a token of scornfully negative judgement of the sandal-wearer’s sartorial taste and, as an extension, of the political and social beliefs that are assumed to be reflected in his dress”. The evaluation here is totally context-dependent on the values and assumptions of the particular social group or discourse system in which the utterance occurs. An instance of semantic/pragmatic evaluation is found in the headline *Bisexual dad beat boyfriend to death with table leg - then calmly watched England match*<sup>23</sup>, where we not only find the negative evaluation which is already inscribed in the expression *to beat someone to death*, but also the one invoked in the socially and morally sanctioned act of calmly watching a football match after murdering someone. Furthermore, the nominal phrase “bisexual dad” could also have very negative connotations among a given group of readers having certain moral values related to sexual orientation. This is precisely one of the cases in which it was difficult to assign one category (lexical) or another (semantic/pragmatic) to the evaluation found in the headline, and for that reason, some practical decisions had to be taken for the categorization, in order to avoid problems at the time of quantifying the occurrences of the different kinds. Considering, then, that not all headlines exemplified a single ‘pure’ category, those which exhibited combinations of two or more categories were treated separately from those containing only one of the five described above (phonological, morphological, lexical, syntactic and semantic/pragmatic), as presented in Table 3.

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<sup>22</sup> Thompson does not use the term *pragmatic*, but I have added it in order to differentiate it from the ‘purely’ semantic kind of Evaluation found at the lexical level, and because this is a clear example of invoked evaluation, where pragmatic considerations play an crucial part in the interpretation of the utterance as negatively evaluative.

<sup>23</sup> *The Mirror*, 3 December 2014.

**Table 3: Corpus occurrences of evaluation at the different linguistic levels**

LINGUISTIC LEVEL (LL)		BROAD-SHEETS	TABLOIDS
PHONOLOGICAL		1 (Prosodic)	0
MORPHOLOGICAL		0	0
LEXICAL		66	50
SYNTACTIC		8	8
SEMANTIC/PRAGMATIC		17	8
COMBINED	Lexical & Prosodic	2	13
	Lexical & Pragmatic	6	7
	Lexical & Syntactic	0	11
	Lexical, Prosodic & Syntactic	0	1
	Lexical, Syntactic & Pragmatic	0	1
	Syntactic & Prosodic	0	2
	Syntactic, Pragmatic & Prosodic	0	1
	Morphological & Pragmatic	0	1

The table shows that the level at which evaluation is most frequently expressed is the lexical one, both in the broadsheets and the tabloids, and that while in the broadsheets there seems to be a tendency for the evaluation to be expressed at a single level of analysis, in the tabloids there is a tendency towards a greater variety and complexity of combinations. A relevant difference is observed as well in the use of semantic/ pragmatic evaluation, which presents a higher frequency of occurrence in the broadsheets than in the tabloids. This might indicate a preference, on the part of the broadsheet journalists, to leave the evaluation of the topic or people depicted in the headline to the ‘free’ interpretation of the reader, leaving fewer ‘inscribed prints’, so that they may be labelled as more objective than their tabloid colleagues.

These differences are reflected in the significant results obtained through the  $\chi^2$  test, showing a p value of 0.00001 for the LL variable. Within the headlines which showed a combination of levels at which the evaluation is manifested, there are also significant differences (a p value of 0.0139 was obtained when comparing the *Lexical & Prosodic*, *Lexical & Pragmatic*, and *Lexical & Syntactic* combinations separately). The combination of *Lexical & Syntactic*, and *Lexical & Prosodic* level evaluation presents a higher frequency of occurrence in the tabloids, the latter being a phenomenon which, as we shall see in 3.6., seems to be partly related with the more frequent occurrence of evaluation within the subsystem of Graduation, given the fact that the prosodic type (manifested in the corpus mainly by the use of capitals and inverted commas) in the tabloids generally co-occurs with some kind of *intensification*, *upscaling*, or *maximization*<sup>24</sup>.

### 3.4. Degree of (in)directness of the evaluative meaning (Deg): Inscribed vs. invoked evaluation

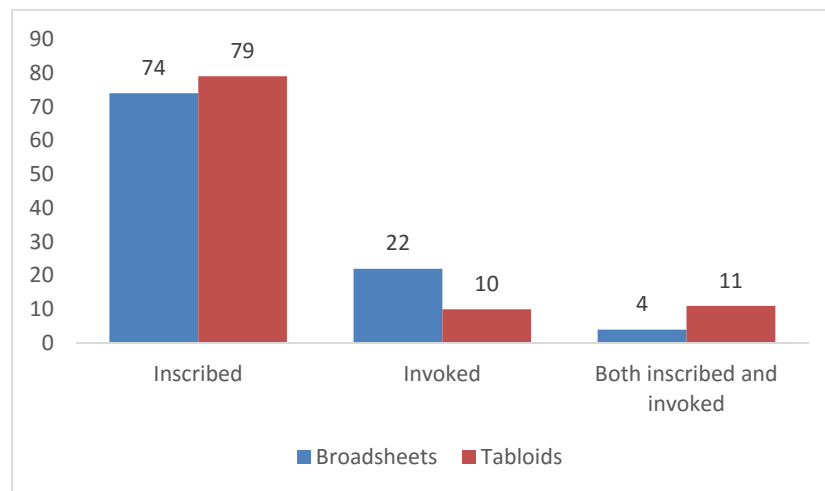
Evaluative meanings may be expressed either in an overt or a covert manner. To use Martin & White's (2005) terms, the evaluation may be either 'inscribed' –and therefore, directly and openly expressed in the text– or invoked (i.e. 'hidden' behind the literal meaning of the words used), and thus conveyed in an indirect manner. As Figure 2 illustrates, in the majority of the headlines examined, both in broadsheets (74%) and tabloids (79%), the stance or evaluation was inscribed in some of the words or expressions used. The frequencies are much lower for invoked evaluation, (22% of the broadsheet headlines and 10% of the tabloid ones), which are nevertheless higher for broadsheets. In some of the headlines both types of evaluation co-occur, and therefore a third

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<sup>24</sup> These are three of the categories within Graduation in the Appraisal Model.

category reflecting this fact was deemed necessary, which, as the figure shows, seems to be slightly more frequent in the tabloids.

**Figure 2: Percentage of occurrence of the *Deg* variable in broadsheets and tabloids**



The results of the  $\chi^2$  test for this variable show a significant p value of 0.0189, which indicates that the use of inscribed and invoked evaluation varies significantly from broadsheets to tabloids in a general way. If the variables are tested separately in pairs however, the results show that, as the observed frequencies indicate, the difference is not significant for the *Inscribed* cases of evaluation (p value: 0.1075), while it is significant for the *Invoked* and the *Both Inscribed & Invoked* categories (p value: 0.0068). The tendency for broadsheets to resort to invoked evaluation more often may be related to the intention of not leaving ‘traces’ of overt evaluation so as to appear ‘objective’, as other results within this study seem to point to.

### 3.5. Position along the evaluation continuum (ContPoss): Polarity.

The simplest and most accessible parameter that comes to mind when dealing with evaluative meanings is the positive-negative one. As Thompson & Hunston (2000: 25) note, “the most basic parameter, the one to which the others can be seen to relate, is the good-bad parameter”. These authors also point out that evaluations of good and bad are dependent on the value-system underlying the text. This can be clearly observed in the headlines, some of which have a clearly positive orientation, such as *Real-life Santa 16-year-old brings Christmas joy to needy in memory of great-grandmother*<sup>25</sup> (bringing Christmas joy to the needy is considered as something good in Western Christian society), and some others a clearly negative one, such as *I’m being emotionally abused by my husband*<sup>26</sup> (being emotionally abused by one’s husband is considered bad in Western and other cultures).

However, given the complexity of the human mind and language, it is not always the case that an evaluative act can be clearly labelled as either totally good/positive or totally bad/negative. The linguistic phenomenon of evaluation is viewed herein (as in Alba-Juez & Attardo 2014) as a continuum where intermediate or mixed stances can be identified. Put simply, evaluative language can be found at any of the different points of a continuum that includes different positions from one pole to the other, the central one being the neutral stance. In the corpus examined for this study, some of the headlines display a neutral stance, such as *Kieron Richardson says Hollyoaks wedding was 'dress rehearsal' for his own nuptials*<sup>27</sup>, where there is evaluation within the system of Engagement (Heteroglossic) but there seems to be no sign as

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<sup>25</sup> *The Mirror*, 21 December 2014.

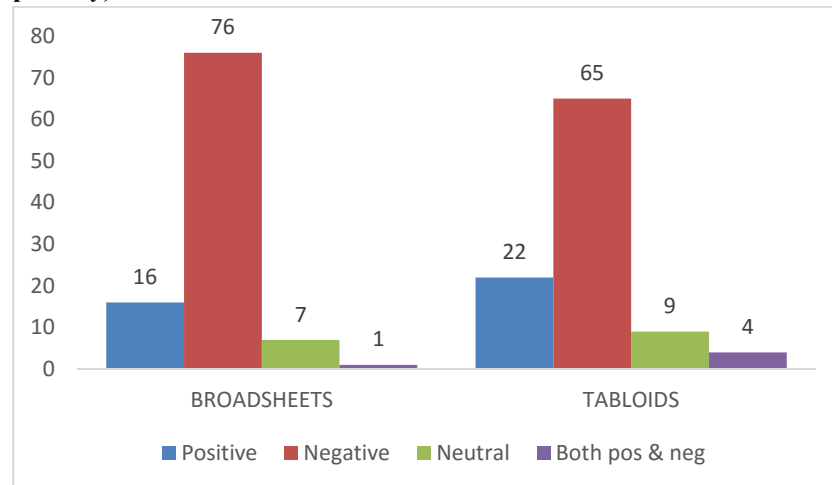
<sup>26</sup> *The Guardian*, 26 December 2014.

<sup>27</sup> *The Mirror*, 15 December 2014.

to whether what is reported is considered good or bad. Some other headlines express both a positive and a negative evaluation at the same time, as shown, for instance, in *Shocking crash splits car IN HALF - but family somehow walk away UNHARMED*<sup>28</sup>, where we find an invoked negative evaluation of the crash (which is normally associated to fatal or undesired consequences), intensified by the capitals used in the phrase *IN HALF*, in opposition and co-occurrence with the inscribed positive evaluation contained in the word *UNHARMED*, which is also intensified by the use of capital letters, but in an obviously different direction from those of *IN HALF*.

Taking all the above aspects into consideration, the sub-variables considered for both the qualitative and quantitative analysis of the (ContPos) argument of the Evaluative Functional Relationship were four: *positive*, *negative*, *neutral*, and *both positive and negative*, whose frequencies of occurrence in the corpus are illustrated in Figure 3:

**Figure 3: Percentages of occurrence of the ContPos variable (evaluative polarity) found in the headlines of broadsheets and tabloids**



<sup>28</sup> *The Mirror*, 23 November 2014.

As the figure shows, the most frequent kind of evaluation found in both the broadsheets and the tabloids in terms of polarity is the negative one, a fact that correlates with ‘newsworthiness’<sup>29</sup>, and that will not surprise anyone who is used to reading the news on a regular basis. Another result that would have normally been expected is that, considering the sensationalism normally ascribed to tabloids, they would contain more negatively-biased evaluation in the news than the broadsheets, an expectation that has not been confirmed by the results of this study, for as can be seen, the percentage of negatively-evaluative meanings in the broadsheets is higher than that of the tabloids. The tabloids contain a slightly higher percentage of occurrences of positively-charged headlines than the broadsheets, the amount of neutral headlines in both types of press is similar (7% in the broadsheets and 9% in the tabloids), and the tabloids contain a slightly higher percentage of instances in which the headlines contain a combination of both positive and negative evaluation. The results of the  $\chi^2$  test for the ContPos variable show a p value of 0.3660, which presents strong evidence in favor of the null hypothesis. The polarity of the evaluation is predominantly negative in both tabloids and broadsheets, with the positive stance in second place, the neutral one in third place, and the combination of both positive and negative constituting a very small portion of the total number of occurrences, inferior to 5% in both cases.

### 3.6. The evaluation Parameter (P) variable of the evaluative functional relationship: The Appraisal Model.

Different authors have explored different patterns and categories of evaluation. Traditional approaches (e.g. Cruse 1986), for instance, have mainly worked with the basic positive-negative parameter presented in 3.5. Labov (1972) has looked into the evaluation found in narrative

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<sup>29</sup> See Bell (1991), who places negativity in the list of factors that make a story newsworthy.

structure. Winter (1982) points out that clauses have two kinds of basic information: what we know and what we feel about it, the latter being crucial for the manner in which we deliver such information. Hunston (1993) provides a list of values for the judgment of concepts and activities in academic discourse. Bednarek (2006, 2008a) puts forward a taxonomy with ten parameters of evaluation, seven of which she considers to be “core” parameters, and three of which she labels as peripheral<sup>30</sup>. Among all these and others, Martin & White’s (2005) Appraisal Theory stands out as the most elaborate and fully developed model of evaluation in the literature to date, and is the model chosen for the analysis of the (P) term of the evaluative functional relationship in this study.

Because the reader is expected to be familiar with Appraisal Theory (or at least be able to refer to it), I shall give a very brief account of the model. Appraisal is located by Martin & White as “an interpersonal system at the level of discourse semantics” (2005: 33). The three main interacting domains or resources on which Appraisal draws are the following.

- 1) **Attitude:** the subsystem concerned with our feelings, including emotional reactions, judgements of behaviour and evaluation of things). It is divided into three further subsystems: *Affect*, *Judgement* and *Appreciation*.
- 2) **Engagement:** the subsystem dealing with the source of attitudes and the play of voices in discourse.
- 3) **Graduation:** the subsystem concerned with adjusting the gradability of an evaluation.

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<sup>30</sup> The seven core parameters are *comprehensibility*, *emotivity*, *expectedness*, *humorousness*, *importance*, *possibility/necessity* and *reliability*, and the three peripheral ones *evidentiality*, *mental state*, and *style*.



Though extremely thorough and detailed (or perhaps because of this), the Appraisal model, as Thompson (2014) and Macken-Horarik and Isaac (2014) point out, presents some difficulties when dealing with varied textual contexts, one of them being the “Russian doll” syndrome (Thompson 2014), a term used in a metaphorical way to refer to the problem of the different layers of evaluative meanings that may be found in the same utterance or text under consideration. It is very common, as has been the case when analyzing the headlines of broadsheets and tabloids, to find instances where an expression of one kind of Attitude is nested inside another kind, or where an expression of one kind of Attitude serves to invoke another kind of Attitude. In order to facilitate the task of analysis within this model, then, Thompson proposes a way of analysis which draws on the principle of “trusting the text” (using Sinclair’s 2004 term) by “tracking the layers of appraisal ‘outward’”, in such a way as to make explicit “that each step represents a further move into interpretation” (2014: 62). This way of analysis is exemplified in (2), where Thompson analyzes an utterance which contains an inscribed expression of Judgement (about Henry James’ qualities as novelist and short-story writer), found within a wider co-text which critiques James’ short stories. In context (the preface to his short stories), it is primarily negative judgment (he isn’t a good short-story writer) and it functions as a token (*t*) of negative appreciation of his short stories, supporting the inscribed negative appreciation of the stories that follows in the text:

- (2) Henry James is a greater novelist than short-story writer  
because he always needed space.  
*t* - - *appreciation [-judgement]* (2014: 62)

In my analysis of the (P) variable in the headlines, I have followed Thompson in his view that one should ‘trust the text’ wherever possible,

and therefore the wording was taken as the basis for the initial assignment of categories. Thompson explains that

“the constraint of taking the wording as the basis for the analysis on at least the initial categorization seems essential if an examination of appraisal in a text is to retain as much of a footing in replicable linguistic analysis as possible, rather than being a subjective commentary on one person’s reading of the text” (2014: 58)

In an attempt to make the analysis in this work as objective as possible, then, I have tried to ‘trust the text’ and give an account of the different layers or co-occurring types of evaluation, first looking into any traces of inscribed evaluation in the wording, and then considering any possible invoked evaluative meaning nested or in co-occurrence with it. In some of the headlines, however, and as was shown in 3.4., the evaluation is exclusively of the invoked kind: to use Jordan’s (2001) terminology (in italics), an experiential *Basis* is given, and the newspaper readers are left to reconstitute the *Assessment* for themselves, an assessment that will depend on the values that are assumed by the editors and journalists to be shared with their readership. For instance, in the headline *What difference would it make if Ched Evans said sorry?*<sup>31</sup>, the writer/journalist uses a question, instead of an assertion, to make the evaluation ambiguous and dialogic -as if it were a conversation with the readers- however guiding them to believe or think that it would really make a difference if Evans (a football player who returned to the field after serving two-and-a-half years in jail for rape) apologized for what he did.

In my examination of the Appraisal subsystems present in each of the headlines, I have followed Thompson in his philosophy of analysis,

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<sup>31</sup> BBC Online, 7 January 2015.

although I have not used the same notation. (3) and (4) illustrate the notation used in square brackets, as well as two of the ways in which the three subsystems of Appraisal interact in the headlines:

(3) *Father fatally* [Attitude (negative, inscribed Appreciation] *shook baby* [Attitude (negative, invoked Judgment)] *in momentary* [Graduation (downscaling)] *loss of self-control* [invoked, negative Judgement], *court told*.<sup>32</sup> [Whole headline: Engagement (Heteroglossic)].

(4) *Unlucky* [(Negative) Attitude (Judgement)] *goalkeeper breaks neck for the SECOND* [Graduation (Quantification and intensification)] *time - but still plays on*<sup>33</sup> [(positive, invoked) Judgement] [Whole headline: Engagement (Monoglossic)]

In (3) we find a combination of Heteroglossic Engagement (the journalist is reporting what the Court said), two types of Attitude (an Appreciation of the way in which the father shook the baby, and an invoked Judgment of the father as a murderer). There is also Graduation (the father's loss of self-control is assessed as "momentary", perhaps in an attempt to minimize the murdering intention, in the sense that it was not premeditated but only the result of a moment of loss of self-control) and invoked negative Judgement in the expression "loss of self-control". The headline in (4) is an example of Monoglossic Engagement which contains an instance of Judgement related to the goalkeeper, as well as an instance of Graduation (quantification and intensification) in the modifier *SECOND*, both by specifying the number of times the goal keeper has broken her neck, and by using capital letters, which adds to the intensification of the Graduation of the unlucky accident. There is also invoked positive Judgement in the subordinate clause *but still plays*

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<sup>32</sup> *The Guardian*, 18 December 2014.

<sup>33</sup> *The Mirror*, 28 November 2014.

on, suggesting that the fact that she continued playing even after having broken her neck is something to be praised and admired (because we later know that this fact aided in obtaining a better score for her team). As can be seen, the analysis can become rather complex because most of the headlines contain more than one type of appraisal, and for that reason, when performing the quantitative analysis of this variable, it was deemed appropriate to group the types according to the different combinations of the subsystems found in each of the headlines. And since both the (ContPos) and the (Deg) variables (related to the polarity of the evaluation and to whether the evaluation was inscribed or invoked, respectively) have already been analyzed in previous sections, in dealing with the (P) variable, only the combinations of types of appraisal will be listed in the comparative table (Table 3).

It should be noted that some of the headlines contain neither instances of Attitude nor of Graduation. The one subsystem that is always at work, however is that of Engagement. This makes perfect sense if we take into account that in their model, Martin & White (2005) express their agreement with Stubbs (1996: 197) regarding the view that “when speakers (or writers) say anything, they encode their point of view towards it”. This view originates in Bakhtin’s (1981) notion of *heteroglossia* and his idea that all verbal communication is dialogic, i.e. that speaking or writing always reveals the influence of what has been said or written before, and simultaneously anticipates the responses of actual, potential or imagined interlocutors. Thus, when analyzing the data, I have taken these considerations into account; nevertheless, I have not labelled all the headlines as heteroglossic, because even though it is true that all kinds of text are dialogic and intertextual, I have followed Martin & White’s (2005) two-way categorization of Engagement, classifying as *Monoglossic* those headlines that make no reference to or recognition of other voices, and as *Heteroglossic* those which invoke or allow for dialogistic alternatives. Thus (5) is an example of a Monoglossic headline, while (6), which acknowledges the

voice of someone other than the writer (the gamers) illustrates a Heteroglossic one:

(5) *Sri Lanka's Rajapaksa suffers shock election defeat*<sup>34</sup>.

(6) *Gamers warned overusing Nintendo Wii could lead to chest bleeds and even strokes*<sup>35</sup>.

Let us now examine the ten most frequent combinations of Appraisal subsystems found in the corpus, summarized in Table 4. The table shows that in both broadsheets and tabloids the most frequent evaluative combination is that of Heteroglossic Engagement and the Judgment subsystem within Attitude. The difference between both types of newspaper here is not significant (20% for broadsheets and 22% for tabloids), which means that both of them resort to this possibility as a productive one. It is interesting to see how this combination allows the journalist/ writer to negotiate Attitude by means of Engagement, since the Judgement is normally attributed to other people, in such a way as to apparently maintain the writer's 'objectivity', when in fact the journalist is guiding the reader towards a given (desired) evaluation. The headline in (7) exemplifies this fact:

(7) *Oh, Rob Lowe, what were you thinking of?*<sup>36</sup>

Once more, an interrogative clause is used in order to show recognition of voices other than the writer's own, thus allowing her to avoid responsibility for the invoked negative Judgment of Rob Lowe as a frivolous person, who does not in fact think much before talking and

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<sup>34</sup> *BBC Online*, 9 January 2015

<sup>35</sup> *The Mirror*, 16 December 2014

<sup>36</sup> *The Guardian*, 28 December 2014.

acting (he is later in the article depicted as having had “monumentally stupid outbursts”).

The second most frequent combination in both broadsheets and tabloids (13% in both cases) is the one involving Monoglossic Engagement and Judgement (within Attitude). An example is found in (6), where the writer of the article says that a teenager attacked a woman on New Year’s Eve (taking responsibility for his assertion to be true, thence its labelling as Monoglossic), at the same time that he guides the reader towards both an inscribed (*Yob*) and invoked negative judgment of this teenager (the fact that he attacked a woman is socially sanctioned as something bad or undesirable), reinforced by the word ‘shamed’ at the beginning of the headline.

(8) *Named and shamed: Yob who attacked a woman on New Year's Eve identified as 19-year-old scaffolder*<sup>37</sup>

It is apparent, then, that the subsystem of Judgment within Attitude is a very frequent and productive one in both broadsheets and tabloids, used in different combinations with other subsystems of Appraisal, since it is the resource of Appraisal which is most frequently used in the headlines.

Because of the common belief that tabloid discourse is ‘more emotive’ than broadsheet discourse, the number of occurrences of evaluation within the subsystem of Affect were counted independently of the combinations in which they appear, considering that Affect is the field devoted to the “emotive dimension of meaning” (Martin & White, 2005: 42). The results yield exactly the same percentage of occurrences of Affect (24%) for both types of newspaper, thus presenting no evidence in favor of this hypothesis. However, I adhere to Thompson’s

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<sup>37</sup> *The Daily Mail*, 3 January 2015.

(2015) view that both *Emotion* and *Emotional talk*<sup>38</sup> may overlay the other areas of Attitude (Judgment and Appreciation), as well as the other two subsystems of Appraisal (Engagement and Graduation), which make the picture of emotion much more complex, and that is the reason why it was decided that looking into the different combinations of Appraisal systems would give a better and more complete picture of how the evaluative resources are used to obtain certain effects. Due to space restrictions, however, not all the combinations found can be discussed here, but in Table 4 it can be observed that there is a certain balance between broadsheets and tabloids with respect to the other combinations as well. The third one is the combination of Monoglossic Engagement together with the subsystem of Appreciation within Attitude, which seems to be a bit more frequent in broadsheets than in tabloids (14% as compared to 9%). The remaining seven combinations also show minor differences in frequency of occurrence. One interesting difference, however, is that there is a higher occurrence of Graduation (which is normally of the upscaling or maximization type) in the tabloid headlines than in the broadsheet ones, which may be an indicator of one of the commonly alleged ‘flaws’ of tabloids: their exaggeration resulting in sensationalism.

**Table 4: Most frequent combinations of the Appraisal subsystems in the corpus**

<b>Most frequent combinations of Appraisal subsystems</b>	<b>BROADSHEETS (%)</b>	<b>TABLOIDS (%)</b>
1. Heteroglossic Engagement / Attitude (Judgement-social sanction)	20%	22%

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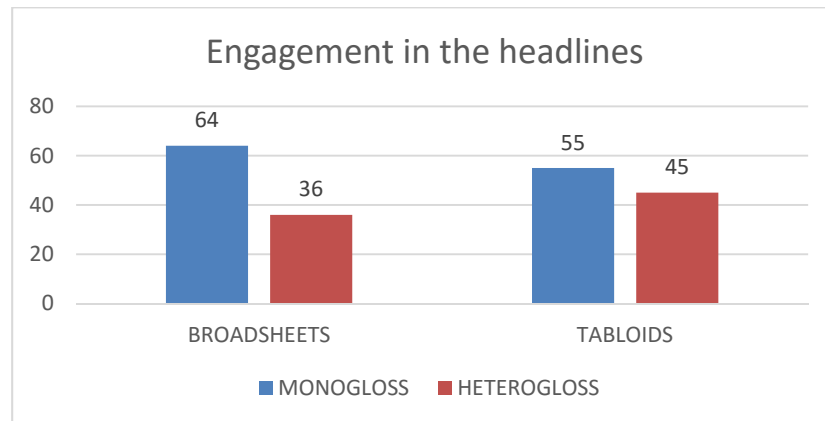
<sup>38</sup> These terms are drawn from Bednarek (2008b, 2009).

2. Monoglossic eng / Attitude (Judgement: social sanction)	13%	13%
3. Monoglossic engagement / Attitude (Appreciation)	14%	9%
4. Heteroglossic engagement	13%	5%
5. Monoglossic engagement / Attitude (Affect)	12%	7%
6. Monoglossic engagement	9%	5%
7. Monoglossic eng / Graduation (force)	5%	8%
8. Heteroglossic eng. / Graduation (force)	3%	9%
9. Heteroglossic Attitude (Affect)	8%	3%
10. Monoglossic eng. / Attitude (Judgement) + Graduation	2%	8%
Other (infrequent and varied) combinations	1%	11%



The  $\chi^2$  test results for this variable present a p value of 0.0499, which is very close to the level of confidence ( $p < 0.05$ ), therefore instantiating a marginal case, where they could be interpreted either way (as significant or not). It could be thought, however, that if we looked exclusively into the two main types of Engagement, we could find some significant results, and for that reason the bare occurrences of Monoglossic and Heteroglossic Engagement –irrespective of their combinations– were counted as well, as shown in Figure 4. The figure shows that broadsheet headlines contain a higher number of Monoglossic cases than the tabloids. This would mean that broadsheets present their headlines as unquestionable more often than tabloids do, and tabloids, on the contrary, resort more often to a negotiable stance. However, the statistical results of the  $\chi^2$  test for these two variables show that the difference is not significant (p value of 0.1949 at  $p < 0.05$ ), which again leaves us with uncertain results concerning the P variable of the evaluative functional relationship. Further research on a larger corpus would be necessary to accept or reject the null hypothesis, but in any case, the statistically marginal results for the combinations in Table 4 and the non-significance of those in Figure 4 confirm the previous observation that, as far as the evaluative subsystems are concerned, the differences between broadsheets and tabloids are not so clear-cut or easily identified.

**Figure 4: Occurrences of the two main Engagement subsystems in the headlines**



We now turn to the last one of the arguments of our evaluation equation, i.e. the Mode of the evaluation.

### 3.7. Mode of the evaluation (Mo) in the headlines

The last variable to be examined in the evaluation of the headlines has to do with the mode in which the evaluation is conveyed. I have followed Kress and van Leeuwen (2001: 21) in their definition of mode as “semiotic resources which allow the simultaneous realization of discourses and types of (inter)action”. Language, music, or images are examples of modes. In the newspaper headlines, this variable may have one, or a combination of any two, or of the three following values:

- 1) Linguistic evaluation (L), i.e. evaluation carried out by means of the language used
- 2) Paralinguistic (PL), which in the headlines is realized by means of the use of capital letters or quotation marks. In this particular corpus,

all the examples of paralinguistic evaluation coincide with those labeled as ‘prosodic’ within the phonological level of the (LL) variable examined in 3.3. For this reason, no further examples will be analyzed in this section.

3) Evaluation conveyed through images and/or symbols other than writing (e.g. photos, drawings, emoticons, videos, etc.) (Im). In the corpus used for the present analysis, the majority of the headlines, in both broadsheets and tabloids, were accompanied by images, whose evaluative meaning interacts with that of the language used.

Table 5 shows the percentage of headlines in the corpus which were accompanied by pictures, as well as the different combinations of Modes of evaluation found. In addition, in the last row the figures tell us the percentages of the images whose evaluation seemed to match that of the linguistic part of the headlines, and those of the images whose evaluation did not seem to be in agreement with the prevailing evaluative tone of the language used. I am aware of the fact that the assessment of this kind of evaluation contained is bound to be more subjective than that of the wording in the headlines<sup>39</sup>. However, and even though this is not the main concern of the present study, an examination of the evaluation conveyed by these images was carried out, in order to see if it was coherent with the evaluation expressed by linguistic means, taking into account previous studies (e.g. Breeze 2014, Richardson & Meinhof 1999). Breeze (2014: 305) points out that:

“It is possible that an article which offers a balanced assessment of an issue might be found to have a headline with negative overtones, or a photograph that appears to show a positive

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<sup>39</sup> Stökl (2010), for instance, points out that images, though immediate in their cognitive and relational effect, are semantically vague and open-ended.

vision of a particular issue, simply because of the time pressures in the production process.”

In my analysis of the images (which is much less delicate and detailed than Breeze’s, but was inspired by it), I examined their main and most salient features (such as the colors or light in the picture, the possible codification<sup>40</sup> of some meanings in certain images, the expressions in the faces of the people portrayed, or the clothes or costumes they were wearing) in order to gain additional insight regarding the equal or different status of the different modes found in the headlines, which would in turn constitute a clue as to the evaluative coherence of the whole semiotic space devoted to the headline.

**Table 5: MODE of the evaluation found in the headlines**

<b>MODE of the evaluation</b>	<b>BROADSHEETS</b>	<b>TABLOIDS</b>
<b>N° of headlines with pictures</b>	84 (84%)	73 (73%)
<b>Linguistic mode</b>	17 (17%)	26 (26%)
<b>Linguistic &amp; paralinguistic modes</b>	0 (0 %)	1 (1%)
<b>Linguistic and Image modes</b>	78 (78%)	59 (59%)
<b>Linguistic, paralinguistic and image modes</b>	5 (5%)	14 (14%)

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<sup>40</sup> See Forceville & Clark (2014), who argue that some nonverbal behaviors, such as pictures, can contain coded meanings, which would allow for the possibility of non-linguistic explicatures.

<b>Does ling eval coincide with the image?</b>	<b>Yes:</b> 67 out of 84: 79.8% <b>No:</b> 17out of 84: 20.2%	<b>Yes:</b> 72 out of 73: 98.6% <b>No:</b> 1 out of 73: 1.4%
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As the table shows, in the majority of cases, both in the broadsheet and tabloid headlines, the evaluative message of the picture seemed to match that of the wording. However, the percentages show that in this respect the tabloids were more coherent than the broadsheets, for only one case (within the 100 tabloid headlines explored) was found in which these two modes had a different evaluative status, while in the broadsheets the number of incongruities in that respect amounted to 17. An example of coherence between words and picture is found in the headline *Ashley Roberts flashes a LOT of sideboob in sexy plunging dress*<sup>41</sup>, which is accompanied by a picture of Ashley where, in effect, she is wearing a dress with ample cleavage that allows her to show a great part of her breasts. In contrast, an example of incoherence between words and image can be observed in the article entitled *Vaccines move to Ebola frontline*, published in *BBC Online* on 9 January 2015: While the wording of the headline inspires hope in the readers, telling them that vaccines will be taken to West Africa (the Ebola frontline) to be administered among the population, the image<sup>42</sup> accompanying the headline seems to inspire fear instead, because it shows a man or woman whose face cannot be seen because s/he is completely covered by and dressed in a hazmat suit, walking through a dark and very narrow alley between rocky walls, in the foreground of which a blurred image of some African people can be glimpsed. If we follow Forceville and Clark's (2014) idea that some images or pictorial elements contain

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<sup>41</sup> *The Mirror*, 16 December 2014. The picture cannot be reproduced here for copyright reasons, but can be seen at <http://www.mirror.co.uk/3am/celebrity-news/ashley-roberts-flashes-lot-sideboob-4823860>

<sup>42</sup> The picture can be seen at <http://www.bbc.com/news/health-30742769>

coded meanings, it could be argued that a hazmat suit encodes all kinds of negative concepts related to disasters such as nuclear war or dangerous diseases. In addition, dark alleys evoke difficult or dangerous situations which one would hardly associate with hopeful thoughts. This mismatch between text and picture might reflect the writer's conscious or subconscious skepticism about the power of these vaccines to finally eradicate the Ebola epidemic, or about the extent to which these measures will be taken in West Africa. In fact, this fear is somehow verbalized by the writer of the article later on, when he writes that "It is still unclear how much protection against Ebola, or for how long, the vaccines might provide", in which case it can be deduced that the picture is more in agreement with the information given in the body of the article than with that of the headline, which, if read in isolation, will most likely provide the reader with an excessive dose of optimism.

As to the comparison of the frequencies of each of the modes of evaluation in broadsheets and tabloids, the  $\chi^2$  results show a general p value of 0.0205, which is significant at  $p < 0.05$ . A more detailed analysis (carried out by isolating the variables where there were greater differences in the observed frequencies) shows that the modes which vary significantly (but only slightly, with a p value of 0.0460, which makes them marginal cases) from one type of press to the other are the Linguistic Mode (which is significantly more frequently used as a unique mode in the tabloid headlines), the Linguistic and Image Mode (which appears to be a more frequent combination in the broadsheet headlines) and the Linguistic, Paralinguistic and Image Mode (which is more frequent in the tabloids, a result which is in-sync with that obtained for the subsystem of Graduation in 3.6, considering that the paralinguistic effect is obtained in the headlines by means of its different categories, such as intensification or quantification ).

Finally, the  $\chi^2$  results obtained (p value 0.0021) for the question in the last row of Table 4 suggest significant differences in the coherence

between picture and wording in the headlines, the tabloids presenting a more coherent whole than the broadsheets. This may be due to the fact that broadsheets tend more towards ambiguity or ‘objectivity’ by letting the reader draw their own conclusions and evaluations, while tabloids are more consistent in matching their words with the realistic<sup>43</sup> images included.

### 3.8. The ‘evaluative blueprint’ of the headlines captured in the ‘evaluation equation’: An example.

After assigning the qualitative values to each of the variables of the evaluative functional relationship, where many different aspects affecting the final result of the evaluation of a given utterance or text have been included, we obtain what might be called the ‘evaluative blueprint’ or general evaluative picture of each of the headlines in question. By way of example, (7) shows the summarized complete characterization of the variables for the headline in (1) above:

(9) *Father fatally shook baby in momentary loss of self-control, court told.*<sup>44</sup>

$E = F(T, Lex \ \& \ Sem-prag, Ov \ \& \ Cov, Neg, [H \ Eng, Att \ (Judg \ \& \ Appr), Grad], Ling)$

The equation synthesizes the information related to the fact that Evaluation is a Function of the variables whose values are specified between parenthesis, which tell us that this function (E) in this

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<sup>43</sup> By saying that the pictures in the tabloids are more ‘realistic’ I mean that, rather than suggesting or ‘implying’ a given meaning, they tend to show the real thing being depicted, such as the picture of a car-crash with the blood stains of the injured people, or the bruised face of a woman who has been beaten by her husband, without much restriction.

<sup>44</sup> *The Guardian*, 18 December 2014.

particular headline: a) is found in the Textual Phase; b) is found at both the Lexical and the Semantic-Pragmatic Levels of linguistic analysis; c) presents a combination of both the overt (Inscribed) and the covert (Invoked) kinds; d) is negatively-oriented; e) presents a combination of Appraisal subsystems and categories which includes Heteroglossic Engagement, two of the subsystems of Attitude (Judgement and Appreciation) and Graduation; and f) is only found in the Linguistic Mode (this is one of the minority cases in which no picture accompanies the headline).

This characterization is to be viewed as the evaluative ‘skeleton’ of the headline as it were, which in all cases was complemented by the detailed analysis and categorization of each evaluative expression found, as was shown in (1) above. Thus, and considering that all the steps taken have proved to be useful and insightful, the method followed in this study is proposed here as a possible method of analysis of the evaluative content of any type of text.

#### **4. Summary and conclusions**

In this paper I have presented a comparative analysis of the evaluative resources used in the semiotic space occupied by the headlines of broadsheets and tabloids. The method followed in the analysis has mainly consisted in scrutinizing each one of the six variables or knowledge resources of evaluation which constitute the arguments of the evaluative functional relationship  $E = F(PH, LL, Deg, ContPos, P, Mo)$ , and its results and conclusions can be summarized as follows:

- As far as the complexity and length of the headlines are concerned, significant results, both qualitative and quantitative, have been obtained in favor of the thesis (which is contrary to



what other authors have stated) that the headlines of the tabloids are longer and syntactically more complex than those of the broadsheets. The majority of the broadsheet headlines in our corpus were shorter in number of words and contained fewer constituents than the tabloid headlines. However, an important point to take into account for the purposes of this study is that some of the syntactic constructions used tended to favor certain types of evaluation, irrespective of their length. Interrogatives, for instance, are very frequently used as a means to negotiate Attitude by means of Engagement.

- The *Ph* variable looked into has been exclusively the Textual one, in both tabloids and broadsheets, given the nature of this particular text type.
- Regarding the LL variable, the results have shown that Lexical Level evaluation is the most frequent one in both types of headlines. However, both the qualitative and the quantitative results have thrown light on some relevant differences in the management of this evaluative resource. Tabloids show a greater tendency towards prosodic evaluation (at the Phonological Level, manifested in written form mainly through the use of capital letters and quotation marks), as well as towards the combination of different linguistic levels of evaluation in the same headline, while broadsheets present a higher tendency towards the use of pragmatic evaluation and a lower tendency towards combining evaluation at different linguistic levels. This might indicate a preference, on the part of the broadsheet journalists, to leave the evaluation of the topic or people depicted in the headline to the ‘free’ interpretation of the reader, leaving fewer ‘inscribed prints’, so that they may be labelled as more ‘objective’.
- As to the Deg variable, it has been shown that the use of inscribed and invoked evaluation varies significantly from broadsheets to tabloids, the invoked type being more frequent

in the broadsheet headlines (a result which is in agreement with the higher incidence of Pragmatic Level evaluation found for the LL variable), and the mixed type (both Inscribed & Invoked) being more frequent in the tabloid ones (though not a very productive combination in any of them). The Inscribed type is the most frequent option in both types of headlines.

- In terms of the polarity of the evaluation (ContPos variable), Negative evaluation is by far the most frequent and exploited type in both broadsheets and tabloids, the statistical test showing a strong result in favor of the null hypothesis. There is very little doubt, therefore, as to the fact that both types of press focus more on negative news stories than on positive or neutral ones.
- For the treatment of the P variable, a qualitative method for the analysis of the headlines in the line of Thompson's (2014) was followed and defended, so as to try to capture as many nuances as possible regarding the interaction of the different Appraisal subsystems. The quantitative results have shown that there are no significant differences between tabloids and broadsheets in the use of the two main subsystems of Engagement (Monoglossic and Heteroglossic), and that the most frequent combination of Appraisal subsystems in both tabloids and broadsheets is that of Heteroglossic Engagement together with the Judgment subsystem within Attitude, which displays a general tendency in both types of newspapers to use Engagement to negotiate Judgement. The possibilities here are infinite and complex, this fact probably being the reason for obtaining statistical results which show a marginal case, with weaker evidence both towards accepting the null hypothesis and its counterpart (which would argue in favor of the existence of significant differences regarding the P variable). If, however, the mere occurrences of the different subsystems of Appraisal were counted, it was observed that there is a greater tendency

for tabloids to resort to Graduation than broadsheets (a fact that might be related with the tabloids' alleged tendency to exaggerate and maximize evaluation and emotion),

- Significant differences have also been found in the Mode variable, both qualitatively and quantitatively. Pictures accompany the words of the headlines very often in both broadsheets and tabloids, but the Paralinguistic Mode is more often used in the tabloids, the latter being a result which is in-sync with the results of the LL variable (showing a greater occurrence of prosodic evaluation in the tabloids as well). It has been interesting to discover, through the results of the  $\chi^2$  test that, with respect to the evaluative content of the images accompanying the headlines, the tabloids present a more coherent picture of evaluation than broadsheets. This may be an indication that tabloid journalists are more open in their evaluative intention than broadsheet ones, who might want to appear more 'objective' by being ambiguous and guiding the readers indirectly towards their 'own' evaluative conclusions.

All in all, it has been argued and shown here that the Evaluative Functional Relationship *E* may be a useful 'formula' for deconstructing and analyzing the different resources of evaluation in the corpus of this study, as well as in any other type of text.

Both similarities and differences have been found between the headlines of tabloids and broadsheets. The similarities might lead to the thought that broadsheets are undergoing a process of 'tabloidization' or at least that the differences between them are diminishing. And this is a process that might very well apply more to the headlines than to the body of the article, considering that the headlines are always meant to be eye-catching. The differences found, however, seem to indicate that this process is far from complete in the present state of affairs, since it has been made apparent that the broadsheet headlines make use of

resources such as Invoked, Pragmatic Level evaluation, or pictures whose evaluative message does not coincide with the wording, in order to leave fewer inscribed marks than the tabloids, while the tabloids make more use of the Graduation resources, and appear to be more overt and coherent regarding their evaluative intentions. The marginal results obtained for some of the variables might confirm, however, that the distinction between tabloids and broadsheets is not so clear-cut or easily identified as might have been expected.

No research results can boast of being totally complete or categorical, and the ones obtained in the present study are no exception. While allowing for the need of further research on the topic (by using a bigger corpus, for instance), I hope this has been, however, a good start.

## Annex

### Notation used in the examples of syntactic analysis (Table 1)

<b>NP:</b> Noun Phrase	<b>[...]</b> : Embedded clause in complex main clause.
<b>PrepP:</b> Prepositional Phrase	<b>Cs:</b> Subject Complement
<b>S:</b> Subject	<b>Ag:</b> Agent
<b>(S):</b> Unexpressed, implicit subject	<b><i>wh-</i> cl:</b> <i>Wh-</i> clause
<b>P:</b> Predicator	<b><i>to-inf</i> cl:</b> <i>To-infinitive</i> clause
<b>O:</b> Object	<b>sub:</b> Subordinator
<b>Circ:</b> Circumstantial adjunct	

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