

CNNニュースキャスターの表現

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I. INTRODUCTION

Access to cable television networks has meant that an increasing number of TV programs are becoming available to us not only from within Japan but also from abroad. CNN is one of the cable television networks that has gained fame and credibility, especially through its coverage of the Gulf War. "Prime News" is one of CNN International's news programs broadcast throughout the world from its center in Atlanta, Georgia. It is aired (as of the time this recording was made) from 9:00 to 9:30 in the morning Monday through Saturday in Japan. This news program was recorded for five straight days from July 24 to 28, and was analyzed for features of the language used by its newscasters.

II. SEGMENTS OF PROGRAM

This is a 30 minute program anchored by two broadcasters, always a man and a woman, who take turns in introducing or reading news stories. Prime News can be divided into the following five segments: leads, greetings, news stories, commercial breaks and ending stories. The program begins with leads, which are followed by brief greetings from the two anchors. Immediately after the greetings come news stories, which range in number from three to five. There are two commercial breaks; one at the end of the first half of the news stories, the other before the ending story. The program returns following the break with two to five more news stories. At the end of the program the anchors thank the viewers as a closing remark. These segments are closely studied for their linguistic characteristics.

A. Lead

Every news presentation, whether in newspapers or on TV, contains a lead, usually at its beginning. The lead is aimed at arousing readers' or viewers' interest in the news and draw them into upcoming stories. The language of the lead, therefore, differs from that of other news stories to achieve its intended function.

In the five recorded editions of Prime News, there are a total of fifteen leads as each edition begins with three leads. Of these fifteen, all but the one on July 26 were introduced one after the other by two anchors who take turns in presenting the leads. This works effectively as a transition, as explained by Mayeux, who wrote:

Changing anchors gives the audience a non-verbal cue that the story subject is changing.

The July 26 leads are, however, all read by one anchor, as in the following:

A bomb aboard a subway brings terror to the heart of Paris.
Once united in the search for their sons, now divided by their death.
What did Susan Smith say to her ex-husband in court? At the O. J. Simpson trial, a battle of blood experts. Which story will the jury buy?

These leads may not be as easy for viewers to follow as leads introduced by two anchors because of the lack of the non-verbal cue provided by the change in voices. Although no specific transitions, verbal or non-verbal, are used here, each lead includes a word with a distinctive meaning like a proper noun to indicate the change of a story. The first lead has "bomb", "terror" and "Paris". Included in the second is "Susan Smith". The third contains "the O. J. Simpson trial". These names and words can stand on their own, helping to distinguish one lead from another. These words give the audience some idea about the changing story subjects.

The use of such words as proper nouns is a feature noticeable not only in the leads read by a single anchor but also in leads where two anchors present by turns, as seen in the underlined words of the following four days' editions:

Western allies send a message to Bosnian Serbs, no more attacks on U. N. safe areas. The jury found her guilty of murder, now the same jury must decide whether Susan Smith will die for her crime.

(And) after four months in an Iraqi jail, David Daliberti comes home to a warm Florida (7/24)

We were the Branch Davidians lying in waiting for federal agents, and did the government know? If so, why did it move in? Bosnian Serbs are closing in on yet another government controlled enclave as the U. N. sends reinforcements elsewhere. Traces of blood, a chemical and a scientist's conclusion. How close does it compare to O. J. Simpson's claim of a frame-up? (7/25)

Full of fantasy and full of threats, government tapes portray an unsteady David Koresh. That's the Senate Whitewater hearing. The first Lady's top aide denies wrongdoing. (And) a plea for mercy, Susan Smith's older brother asks the jury to spare his sister the death penalty. (7/27)

A surprise at the Susan Smith trial, her stepfather who molested her comes to plead for mercy. While NATO plans to defend one Bosnian safe area, there is fighting around another. (And) if the names like Inchan, Pusan or Pork Chop Hill mean nothing to you, there is something new you should see in Washington. (7/28)

“And” is often use as a transition in leads introduced by two anchors. The leads of three out of four editions (7/24, 27, 28) have “and” used immediately before the third or final lead, as shown by the (And) in the leads transcribed above. This serves as a transition implying that the following lead is to wind up the lead segment. Because “And”, when placed only before the last item in a series, indicates that the item is the last one.

B. Greeting

Leads are followed by greetings from both newscasters. The first greetings in each program are given by a woman anchor as with the leads. Their language is very brief and informal as if greeting their friends. This enhances the conversational aspect of their language, an essential element of broadcast reporting. This leaves the impression that the

anchors are talking to the viewers about the news stories, and not simply reading them. The conversational element can be especially noticed in their use of “thanks”, as in the following:

I'm Catherine Callaway in tonight for Bobbie Battista.

Thanks for joining us everyone, I'm Linden Soles.

“Thanks for joining us everyone” is used in the editions of July 26, 27 and 28. According to the Oxford Advanced Learner's dictionary, “Thanks” is a colloquial formula showing gratitude as opposed to “Thank you”, which is the usual form.

C. News story

1) Transition

The largest part of each news program is spent on the news stories themselves. News stories are first presented through leads, then further unfolded in this section. This is, therefore, a segment where various linguistic features of what the anchors say can be observed.

Although 5 to 10 subjects are dealt with in this segment, transitional words are seldom employed at the change of subjects. This occurred only twice throughout the five days' programs, both times at the very beginning. They are as follows:

First, at the Waco hearings a story--- (7/25)

Up first tonight, screams--- (7/26)

A close look at the beginning of each story, however, shows that they are headed most of the time by words or expressions with specific meanings just as with the leads. This feature, without any use of verbal transitions, can set one subject apart from another, as shown by the following:

7/24

The United Nations appear to ---.

Sarajevo is just one flash point ---.

In Union, South Carolina ---.

Officials say at the University of California ---.

The blossoming cellular phone business has ---.
In a hurricane much of the damage ---.
It was a homecoming to remember, former Iraqi prisoner
David Daliberti ---.

7/25

A suicide bombing has dealt ---.
As heavily armed British and French troops ---.
31 years ago, Kitty Genovese was murdered ---.
There is new evidence of a link between the vitamin ---.
President Clinton offered ---.
For the third time this week a computer ---.
Secret research into the effect of nicotine ---.
Shannon Faulkner has marched one step closer to ---.

7/26

Serb rebels have captured the town of Zepa ---.
NATO allies, meantime, are nearing an agreement ---.
In Union, South Carolina, ---.
At the O. J. Simpson trial defense attorneys ---.
New York senator Al D' Amato has taken ---.
The tobacco industry is facing tough, new scrutiny ---.
Country music has lost its silver ---.

7/27

Conflicting accounts today at the Whitewater hearing ---.
The senate is wrestling President Clinton for control ---.
In eastern Bosnia, ---.
It's just what the O. J. Simpson defense team ---.
When shuttle engineers examined ---.

7/28

Two double murder trials on ---.
Pentagon and NATO planners are ---.
The U. S senate today voted to ---.
The FBI rammed the Branch Davidian ---.
After vetoing a congressional first attempt, president Clinton ---.

There is also frequent use of structures which begin a story with phrases or sentences, followed by another sentence whose subject is “That”, a pronoun referring back to the beginning.

Nine days of lies and trickery. That's what the prosecution wants jurors to focus on as they decide --- (7/25)

A deal apparently was struck to end the Waco stand-off peacefully, but someone blew it. That's the testimony --- (7/26)

Kristen Tylor's life and promising career were cut short by asthma. That's the verdict of a Florida --- (7/26)

A mad man one day promising to come out peacefully, another day threatening to incinerate federal agents. That's the picture the Justice Department is --- (7/27)

2) Attribution

News stories are based on information gathered by reporters. It is, therefore, important to provide the source of the information to maintain credibility in reporting. There is so much information bombarding us in our daily life that we often find ourselves unable to confirm the reliability of news or wondering where it came from. This will keep us confused rather than informed. To avoid this problem, attribution is a vital element in broadcast writing.

In Prime News, attribution is always placed at the beginning of a sentence, never in the middle or at the end. In newspaper news, where readers can go back and forth in news stories until they have understood the content, attribution is often inserted in the middle or at the end of a sentence. Such double track comprehension is impossible for broadcast news, where words do not stay put and disappear as they are used. It is this linear kind of comprehension that requires attribution at the beginning to facilitate viewers' understanding. Knowing “who has supplied the story” will prepare viewers for what is to come. It is confusing to wait till the end of a sentence to find out “who supplied the story”.

Subject of attribution

Attribution is intended to establish the credibility of a news story. This can be achieved if the source is officially or widely recognized, as seen in the following:

The White House says any attacks on Gorazde will --- (7/24)
 Israel says it will resume negotiations --- (7/25)
 Federal appeals court has already said --- (7/25)
 But the judge says there is not --- (7/25)
 The medical examiner said --- (7/26)
 Researchers at New York's Rockefeller University say --- (7/27)
 The Clinton administration says --- (7/27)
 President Clinton says --- (7/28)
 The Attorney General told reporters --- (7/28)

Even if sources are provided, anonymity can still be maintained without losing the story's reliability. This can be seen in Prime News through the use in the attributions of the following words: officials, spokesman, observers. They are used in the sentences below:

One U. N. spokesman says --- (7/24)
 Dutch officials today are adding to reports that --- (7/24)
 Officials say --- (7/24)
 U. N. observers say --- (7/25)
 Officials say --- (7/27)
 A U. N. spokesman says --- (7/27)

These words do not require a specific source to be named. There is one expression used to avoid the mention of a specific source, as in the following:

CNN has learned that the Pentagon is actively considering --- (7/26)

Such an expression, however, is not used frequently, only twice throughout the five days studied. This is probably because of the danger of weakening the reliability of the story.

When a story is attributed to a particular person, it is a common practice to identify the person by his/her occupation or title. The additional information makes the source more reliable, resulting in increased news worthiness. Names are always preceded by identifications in Prime News, as in the following:

Governor Wilson says he is not using --- (7/24)

Congressman Henry Waxman pointed out --- (7/25)

Lawyer Zimmermann testified that --- (7/26)

Hillary Clinton's chief of staff Maggie Williams insisted --- (7/27)

This is to make the broadcast English easy to understand as comprehension is based on hearing.

If the identification is lengthy, however, it is placed ahead of the name, but in a separate sentence, because lengthy identifications before names are hard on the viewers. This can be noticed in the following:

An undercover federal agent who infiltrated the compound testified that David Koresh had been tipped off that a raid was coming. Robert Rodrigues says he then called raid commanders to --- (7/25)

On the stand, her ex-husband who sobbed as he recalled how he felt when he learned his wife had confessed to drowning their little boys. David Smith said --- (7/26)

Now the woman's confessed killer is back in court. Winston Mosely wants a new trial. (7/25)

Verb of attribution

The most frequently used verb in the attributions in Prime News is "to say". The word is in thirty four attributions in the program. This can be explained by referring to what Stephens wrote:

"to say" is the most used verb in broadcast news because saying is the activity that makes the most news.

In addition, "to say" is short, probably shorter than many other words of the same or similar meaning, such as "mention" and "emphasize". A short verb can make the sentence more readily understood in broadcast news, thus allowing more time for the news information.

Although "to say" is a fundamental verb in this context, there are some other verbs, all variations of "to say", used in the program, as in the following:

An undercover federal agent who ---testified that --- (7/25)

An FBI negotiator told CNN --- (7/26)

Lawyers for Davidians claimed --- (7/27)

Hillary Clinton's chief --- insisted she --- (7/27)

Boutros Ghali announced --- (7/27)

A quote is another form of attribution. Quotes, direct or partial, are cited to add impact or color to the story. With regard to the use of quotes, a major difference between newspaper and broadcast writing should be kept in mind. In newspaper writing, quotes can be easily indicated by quotation marks, which are impossible to use in oral English. There are three expressions used to indicate quotations in Prime News.

They are as follows:

Use of “quote” and “unquote”.

Deguerin said Koresh had (quote) a flexible view (unquote), adding --- (7/26)

Any attacks on Gorazde will be answered by punishing air strikes perhaps at (quote) unprecedented levels. CNN White House correspondent Jill Dougherty joins us --- (7/24)

“End quote” or “unquote” is normally inserted at the end of a quotation. Neither expression is used here. This is probably because the following words “CNN White House correspondent Jill Dougherty” sound different enough to show the break in meaning.

Use of in one's words and as one puts it.

Koresh's lawyer said the government used, in his words, excessive force.

as one agent put it, even the Archangel Cabriel couldn't have talked that guy out.

3) Numbers

Numbers are often used to present facts and figures in news stories. However, there are many instances in the program where numbers, especially large ones, are rounded off. This

is so that they are quickly absorbed the moment they are heard. The following expressions are used to indicate approximations on CNN:

“more than”

Congress wants to help the telecommunications industry erect more than 100,000 poles even if --- (7/24)

That’s the picture the Justice Department is painting --- in 10 minutes of audio tape heavily edited for more than 250 hours of siege negotiations. (7/27)

More than seven billion dollars of new spending --- (7/28)

“About”

About 150 civilians from Zepa were driven aboard --- (7/26)

About 150 people from the captured safe --- (7/27)

“Some”

The U. N says some 8,000 Muslims are on the run --- (7/27)

Some 16 billion dollars will come from --- (7/28)

“Close to”

The computer tracks close to 10,000 planes when it’s --- (7/25)

Specific rather than rounded off numbers are required for reporting on events, such as an accident, involving casualties, as illustrated by the following:

One person was killed and 30 others hurt in upstate New York --- (7/24)

13 people are dead and dozens missing after typhoon --- (7/24)

Serb shelling killed 5 civilians and wounded 24 others --- (7/24)

Koresh and 80 followers died in the --- (7/25)

---4 agents died in the ensuing gun --- (7/25)

---when she walked away from a similar bus bombing last October

that killed 22 people. (7/25)

4) Jargon

The use of jargon is followed by an explanation. When a technical term, whether medical or judicial, is used in a news story, it needs to be explained to make it understandable to those who may not be familiar with it. This kind of effort is seen in the following:

The state supreme court has decided sex offenders do have to register with the local police when they move to a community.

That's Meagan's Law, named for a 7-year old who was raped --- (7/26)

The U. S. senate today voted to continue funding programs that care for AIDS patients. The AIDS funding law is named for Ryan

White, the Indiana teenager who died --- (7/28)

5) Distinction between“that”and“which”

“that” and “which” can both be used interchangeably as a relative pronoun. There are two types of the relative pronoun in terms of whether it identifies the clause or not, it is necessary to distinguish between the two because a comma, an indicator of the difference, can not be used in broadcast English. Based on the following sentences from the program, it can be said that “that” is used as a relative pronoun identifying a clause and “which” is used as a non-identifying relative pronoun.

“that”

Dutch officials today are adding to reports that first surfaced last week. (7/24)

We'll tell you about a contest that most people would rather not win --- (7/25)

CNN's Jeanne Moss has some information that may make you feel a bit better --- (7/25)

This, despite two investigations that ruled the death a suicide. (7/26)

Senators defeated one amendment that would have required mandatory AIDS testing --- (7/28)

“which”

CNN's Peter Arnett has just returned from a visit to Zepa, which fell to the Serbs Tuesday --- (7/27)

It is not the defense's turn in this penalty phase, which, as
 CNN's Brian Cabell tells us, could be over by the weekend. (7/27)

Unlike the Smith trial, which has taken all of the two weeks, it is now day 119
 --- (7/28)

Rebel Serb forces --- are shelling towns inside the Bihac enclave,
which is another U. N. designated safe heaven. (7/28)

6) Introducing reporters

News stories often end with reports from correspondents in the field. Anchors alone can not present stories without information from their reporters. Part of the anchors' job, therefore, is to coordinate the work of correspondents by introducing their stories. The way the anchors contact reporters for their part of the stories can be shown by the following:

() has the latest,

---, Mark Austin has the latest, --- (7/24)

CNN'S Anne McDermott has the latest on the case, --- (7/28)

As () reports,

As Lisa Price reports, --- (7/25)

() reports.

CNN's Peter Hyumi reports, --- (7/26)

CNN's Anne McDermott reports on ---, (7/27)

Here's ().

Here's CNN's Jamie McIntyre with more on that. (7/26)

Here's CNN's Anne McDermott with the latest. (7/26)

() joins us live with the latest.

CNN White House correspondent Jill Dougherty joins us
 live with the latest. (7/24)

We get details from().

We get details from CNN's Jamie McIntyre. (7/25)

D. Pre-commercial language

The program has two commercial breaks. The sudden appearance of commercials on the TV screen is quite likely to confuse viewers. They should be inserted in such a way as to keep the viewers tuned in. This calls for the use of a transition. The following transitional phrases are frequently used in pre-commercial break language:

7/24 Still ahead on Prime News, ---.

When Prime News continues, we'll share ---.

7/25 And coming up, ---.

And still ahead, ---.

7/26 And still ahead, ---.

When we come back, ---.

7/27 Still ahead, ---.

---. We'll be back in a moment.

7/28 And still ahead on Prime News, ---.

E. Ending story

Four out of the five ending stories in the program deal with unusual and humorous topics, such as the World Eskimo Indian Olympics (7/24), a favorite gathering place for roaches (7/25), romance novels (7/27) and a swimming competition for woman life-guards (7/28). As most of the news items presented are of a serious nature in a variety of fields, political, economical, social and so on, such ending stories provide a pleasant contrast. This tone is reinforced by the way the anchors informally introduce the story while chatting with each other as if asking the viewers to join them.

For example:

(Anchorwoman) I think the woman with the asthma inhaler ought to win.

Where is the worst place you found a cockroach?

(Anchorman) Squashed under my dog's paw. ---

The story is followed by a closing remark which sounds as casual because of the repeated use of the following expressions:

Thanks for watching Prime News, I'm ().

Thanks for being with us, I'm ().

III. SUMMARY

This paper has examined features of the language used by anchors of CNN International's "Prime News", which is made up of five sections. The sections are in the following order: leads, greetings, news stories, commercial breaks and ending stories. Leads are centered around the use of specific nouns, particularly at the beginning. This indicates a break in meaning in the sentences without relying on the use of transitional words. Greetings from the broadcasters reflect the conversational element of their use of language. The news story section includes transitions, attributions, numbers, jargon, a distinction between "that" and "which" as a relative pronoun and the introduction of correspondents. Just as in the leads, words with distinctive meanings are used at the beginning of the first sentence to imply a different news item. This explains the sparse use of verbal transitions. The section is also scattered with attributions, an important element for maintaining the credibility of news stories. To make the program easier to follow even for those unfamiliar with stories, large numbers are frequently rounded off, difficult words explained, grammatical differences shown, and detailed information provided. Commercial breaks are preceded by transitional words in an effort to keep the viewers tuned in. The program very often ends with a story quite different from the other stories, most of which are politically, economically or socially important matters. The choice of ending stories is intended to add some humor to the program. All the features discussed above are combined to make the newscast as informative and interesting as possible.

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