

CBS イブニングニュースにおける ダン・ラザーの表現

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以下はアメリカのニュース番組 CBS イブニングニュースを6日に亘って録音し、ダン・ラザーキャスターの表現の特徴につき考察を加えたものである。

This paper attempts to analyze the language and lead-ins of Dan Rather on the CBS Evening News. Based on 6 days' recording of the program—July 8 through 12 and 15, Dan Rather's part as anchorman was transcribed and is here closely looked at in terms of linguistic features.

I. INTRODUCTION

There are two major sources of news easily available to us in our daily life—the newspaper and the television. Although the nature of the latter is focused on, it will be useful to start with some basic differences between the two from the viewpoint of the recipients of the information.

Compared with newspaper reporting where readers can go through an article at their convenience, going back, if necessary, to what they have previously read, television news is transitory, not allowing viewers further reference to what has already been reported. In other words, newspaper readers can stay with the news as long as desired until they understand, whereas television viewers must comprehend the news immediately, being given no another chance to listen to the story. Therefore, television news needs to be presented, within its time constraints, in ways that make it easy for the viewers, young or old, well or poorly informed, to follow the news story as it is delivered.

Because of this, the language used for television news should be brief and clear enough to facilitate the viewers' understanding. Unless these points are considered both in the choice of words and in the structure of a story, the news may sound too confusing to comprehend. The news also should be presented in such a way as to capture the attention of viewers and keep them interested in what is to follow. This calls for the consideration

of how to begin a news story in as interesting a manner as possible. If the beginning of the story sounds interesting, it is likely that the viewers will watch further, if not interesting, those same viewers may as well find the story not worth their attention. As viewers decide quickly whether to watch or not, the lead-in to the news story is of great importance to the success of the program. With these basic characteristics of television reporting in mind, the language and lead-ins of Dan Rather on the CBS Evening News are analyzed here.

II. FEATURES

A) Brevity

There are so many events needing media coverage that the length of time available for a TV news story is usually limited. Care, therefore, should be taken to make the language brief. Two ways Dan Rather's language achieves this are through the frequent use of the genitive 's and through the omission of "that" introducing an objective clause.

1. Use of the genitive 's

a. time expressions + 's

1. Still ahead on tonight's CBS Evening News..... (7/8)
2. In today's incident a Hawkeye from the carrier Fireball caught fire while supporting allied relief efforts for the Kurds in northern Iraq. (7/8)
3. Joe DiMaggio and Ted Williams flew Air Force One to this evening's All-Star game in Toronto. (7/9)
4.or he is laying the groundwork for next year's campaign. (7/10)

b. place names + 's

1. It found the United States the only one of the world's top seven industrial countries (7/9)
2.is Warren Christopher, one of the country's most experienced and respected diplomats and jurists. (7/9)
3. America's new found authority has not swept away any of the world's other problems. (7/15)
4. The historic collapse of communism is arguably America's greatest foreign policy victory. (7/15)
5. The state began moving to take control of the company to head off what would be America's largest insurance failure yet. (7/15)
6., some of Mutual Benefit Life's 400,000 customers rushed (7/15)

c. people's names + 's

1. President Bush's spokesman is playing down any concern over the NAACP's lack of a quick endorsement today for Thomas. (7/8)
2. They all met in Moscow today and endorsed Gorbachev's strategy of seeking money and other economic aid from the West. (7/8)
3. President De Klerk welcomed the action, Nelson Mandela's African National Congress did not. (7/10)
4. In Tokyo, a professor who translated Salman Rushdie's "Satanic Verses" into Japanese was found stabbed to death. (7/12)
5. …… but ordered the trial judge to reconsider Barry's six month prison term. (7/12)

The use of the genitive 's can shorten expressions which might otherwise be long with the addition of prepositions or phrases. For example :

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| a. 2. might be | In <u>the incident that happened today</u> a Hawkeye from ……. |
| a. 3. might be | Joe DiMaggio and Ted Williams flew Air Force One to <u>the All-Star game to be held this evening</u> in Toronto. |
| b. 1. might be | It found the United States the only one of the <u>top seven industrial countries in the world</u> . |
| b. 6. might be | some of <u>the 400,000 customers of Mutual Benefit Life</u> rushed ……. |
| C. 1. might be | <u>A spokesman for President Bush</u> is playing down ……. |
| C. 4. might be | In Tokyo, a professor who translated <u>"Satanic verses" by Salman Rashdie</u> ……. |

2. Omission of "that"

By leaving out "that" which introduces an objective clause of a sentence, the sentence can be shortened. It also can make the language more conversational, another aspect of broadcast English. For example :

1. Now meeting in Texas, leaders of the civil rights' group say (that) they need to know more about Thomas …… (7/8)
2. In London Prime Minister Major let it be known (that) he talked with …… (7/11)
3. Don't forget (that) there are many quality newscasts on this CBS …… (7/11)

B) Clarity

Clarity needs to be considered in the structure of lead-ins, especially when several topics are introduced together. If the lead-in has only one sentence with one topic, clarity is likely to be automatic, but it is important for a multiple sentence lead-in involving multiple

topics to be carefully structured to avoid confusion. The opening lead-ins of the CBS Evening News usually seem to deal with three topics using three sentences, as can be seen in the following examples :

1. The Los Angeles Police Chief is asked to step down amid charges of racism and brutality. Has South Africa earned the right to do business again with the United States. And Clarence Thomas courts Senate votes on Capitol Hill. (7/9)
2. New revelations about Saddam Hussein's game of nuclear hide and seek. White South Africans welcome the lifting of U. S. sanctions. And coming to your neighborhood, paroled convicts who've served just a fraction of their time. (7/10)
3. There won't be anything quite like this again in your life time. Will a history with marijuana make the Thomas nomination go up in smoke ? And a new sound as high-tech recordings got a legal go-ahead. (7/11)

The sentences could be arranged in any one of the following three ways :

1.,,
2. and and
3.,, And

Of the three patterns, the third one using a single "And" is employed throughout the program, as can be noticed in the examples. This "And", preceding the final sentence, is more effective than the others in making it aurally clear to the viewers that the lead-in is to end. Such an effect can not of course be achieved aurally by using commas or "and" between each sentence.

Interviewing is another occasion where clarity of language needs to be ensured. This is especially noticeable when Dan Rather interviews guests.

For example :

1. Likely or unlikely that he will express his views about abortion ? (7/8)
2. Isn't it or is it the betting that he will actually get confirmed ? (7/8)
3. Chief Gates says he isn't going to resign, doesn't it or does it now lay out the prospect of ? (7/9)

As the underlined parts of the examples show, he sounds very clear as to what his question is, thus easing confusion which an interviewee might otherwise experience when thinking of a response.

C) Conversational features

Unlike newspaper reporting which relies on written language, television news depends on spoken language. It is a kind of interpersonal communication where an anchorman sits in

front of viewers speaking to them as if in daily conversation. So, the language used in the TV news should reflect this conversational and informal aspect, although it should be kept from becoming rambling, which daily conversation tends to be. This feature is evident in the CBS Evening News in the following respects :

1. Use of the informal word “get”.
 - a. There was yet another new push on to try and get a strategic arms reduction treaty wrapped up. (7/8)
 - b. Phone company officials at a computer firm got permission to fix a glitch in new equipment …… . (7/10)
 - c. …… patients with arthritis of the knee got equal relief from acedometafin. (7/10)
 - d. A new sound as hi-tech recordings got a legal go-ahead. (7/11)
2. Use of the conversational phrase “by the way”.
 - a. By the way, this London Summit is not strictly business, all business. The leaders, all male this time, brought their wives. Their job is to have fun. (7/15)
 - b. By the way, the Soviets announced today that on Gorbachev’s last night in London he will go to the Royal Opera to see …… . (7/15)
3. Use of incomplete sentences. This helps enhance the conversational tone.
 - a. In Michigan, the aftermath of wild summer weather, a storm strong enough to put a sun porch up a tree and cut off electricity to hundreds of thousands. (7/8)
 - b. And EYE ON AMERICA – older and older women becoming new mothers. (7/11)
 - c. A strong accusation today against a former U. S. ambassador to Iraq, April Glasby. (7/12)
4. Use of contractions. This makes the language more natural and conversational.
 - a. …… it’s good to be back. There’re indications …… . (7/8)
 - b. …… but Gates says he won’t resign …… . (7/9)
 - c. And that’s part of our pretty amazing world …… . (7/11)

D) Attribution

It is important to let the viewers know the source of information in the news. This helps establish credibility for the news and convince the viewers of the importance of what is to be reported. Without such acknowledgement, viewers may be left uncertain as to the reliability of the story. The following are some of the attributions used by Dan Rather :

- a. A study just out from the National League of Cities says American cities are stretched thinner than ever financially with declining federal help. (7/8)
- b. The U. S. Army announced today that an American serviceman stationed in Panama

- was killed over the weekend in a drive-by shooting. (7/8)
- c. The head of a special U. N. commission said he will recommend further easing of sanctions against Iraq. (7/12)
- d. Federal officials announced the latest high-profile drug bust today, a record haul of 100 tons of hashish,……. (7/12)
- e. Now researchers in Indiana report that patients with arthritis of the knee got equal relief from acedometafin,……. (7/12)

As seen in the above examples, most of the attributions in the CBS Evening News come at the beginning of the lead-ins. This makes the news more convincing than do attributions introduced in the middle or at the end, easing viewers' confusion as to what to believe and what not to.

E) Immediacy

Whenever something newsworthy happens, whether in another part of the country or in a remote part of the world, journalists will hasten there to cover the event and gather first-hand information. Immediacy is a key factor in providing news to viewers. The language for television reporting must also reflect this element.

There are two words often used in the lead-ins which reinforce this idea of immediacy.

1. "amid" meaning "in the middle of……".
 - a. The Los Angeles Police Chief is asked to step down amid charges of racism and brutality. (7/8)
 - b. Clarence Thomas did so amid the latest indications that a bruising confirmation battle is shaping up. (7/9)
 - c. Also in Washington, amid growing public concern about getting AIDS from infected health care workers, the United States government came out today with new voluntary guidelines for doctors……. (7/15)
2. "growing" meaning "……is increasing or becoming serious".
 - a. In tonight's EYE ON AMERICA—health correspondent Eddie Magnus reports on the growing debate over genetic testing. (7/8)
 - b. Correspondent Bill Maclaughlin reports on the growing unrest that sparked this call for a crack-down. (7/8)
 - c. As Bill Maclaughlin reports, it comes at a time of growing anti-Japanese feeling in Europe. (7/11)

The use of these two words indicates that something is intensifying or unfolding, which

reflects the sense of immediacy.

Time references are another way of improving immediacy in the news. Since this is an evening news program, there are two time references that are very often used in the program—“today” and “tonight”, as shown below :

- a. Clarence Thomas today began calling on senators who……. (7/8)
- b. President Bush finally announced tonight that he will……. (7/10)
- c. At least 50 servicemen in Kuwait were injured today when ammunition depot……. (7/11)

F) Objectivity

To provide viewers with as accurate information as possible, the news needs to be dealt with objectively and fairly. Caution, therefore, should be exercised to maintain objectivity in presenting information. The sense of objectivity can be noticed in the lead-ins in the repeated use of the word “indications” and of the clause “what could / would be……”.

1. Use of the word “indications”.
 - a. There’re indications tonight about a nasty confirmation ahead for President Bush’s Supreme Court nominee. (7/8)
 - b. Thomas did so amid the latest indications that a bruising confirmation battle is shaping up. (7/9)
 - c. Indications now are that L. A. Police Chief Robert Gates will leave his post office after all, but not for several months yet at least. (7/12)
 - d. Indications tonight that President Bush’s nominee to be the new chief of the CIA will face an even tougher confirmation fight on Capitol Hill than had been expected. (7/10)

The use of the word “indications” conveys an impression of unfolding situations instead of expressing personal opinions, thus adding an objective tone to the news.

2. Use of “what could / would be……”.
 - a. Word from California tonight on what could be the next big wave in cutting pollution from automobiles nationwide.
 - b. In tonight’s EYE ON AMERICA—Ray Brady reports on the U. S. versus united Europe in what could be the trade battle of the decade. (7/15)
 - c. The state began moving to take control of the company to head off what would be America’s largest insurance failure yet. (7/15)

The use of this clause helps the anchorman avoid sounding dogmatic. This is especially

important when there is only a possibility, not a certainty, that situations or events may develop into something larger or more serious. Exaggerations must also be avoided, as in the third example using a superlative, to maintain objectivity, because the interpretation of superlatives may differ from one person to another.

G) Variety

Variety is another element to be kept in mind to help make the news interesting. Brevity and clarity are the key elements in television news, however, the monotony of language must be avoided. The same word or phrase can be repeated for an emphatic purpose. But there is a danger of making the story boring, which is quite opposite from the intended result of arousing the interest of the viewers in the story. A variety of expressions should, therefore, be considered to give the language some flavor. There are many examples of this in the CBS Evening News :

1. a. The standard of living for Americans was down last year for the first time in almost a decade.
 - b. It found the United States the only one of the world's top seven industrial countries in which living standards dropped. (7/9)
 - * "The standard of living" is the same as "living standards"
 - * "was down" is the same as "dropped"
2. a. In France, charges that racism is behind a new plan to deport illegal aliens.
 - b. The socialist Prime Minister of France is taking a hardline on illegal immigrants.
 - c. She suggested today that tens of thousands may soon be rounded up and expelled from France. (7/8)
 - * "deport" = "expel"
 - * "illegal aliens" = "illegal immigrants"
3. a. In Hawaii, the solar eclipse at sunrise lasted seven and a half minutes.
 - b. In Mexico, the greatest solar blackout for the next 150 years brought reactions ranging from fear that it was a bad omen to unbridled excitement. (7/11)
 - * "solar eclipse" = "solar blackout"
4. a. The Los Angeles Police Chief is asked to step down amid charges of racism and brutality.
 - b. Gates says he won't resign.
 - c. Indications now are that Los Angeles Police Chief Roberts Gates will leave his post.

* “step down” = “resign” = “leave his post”

5. a. A testy President Bush defends his choice to head the CIA.

b. President Bush went on the attack today for his nominee to head the Central Intelligence Agency. (7/12)

* “choice” = “nominee”

* “CIA” = “Central Intelligence Agency”

6. a. The government reported today that retail sales fell two tenths of one percent last month and wholesale prices were down three tenths percent. (7/12)

* “fell” = “were down”

* “……tenths of one percent” = “……tenths percent”

7. a. Gorbachev insists he won't be begging for Western aid.

b. Gorbachev himself let it be known today that he will not be going to the Economic Summit next week with hat in hand. (7/15)

* “won't be begging for” = “will not be going ……with hat in hand”

H) Color

In addition to a variety of expressions, there are also two other means used to add color to the language of the program. They are plays on words and rhyme.

1. Plays on words

a. Will a history with marijuana make the Thomas nomination go up in smoke ?

(7/11)

* “a history with marijuana” and “go up in smoke”, which means “something fails or ends without anything being achieved”(COUBILD), are humorously connected.

b. Some churches are turning economic adversity to financial solution, our correspondent Eddie Magnus has the story : chapter and verse. (7/13)

* “chapter and verse” means detailed information. As the story is about church, this phrase is probably used to indicate some religious connection.

2. Rhyme

a. In tonight's EYE ON AMERICA – Ray Brady reports on paroled convicts doing less time and more crime. (7/10)

* “time” rhymes with “crime”

b.…… real estate and the first estate, converting shopping malls into worship halls.

(7/12)

* “malls” rhymes with “halls”

I) Language before commercial breaks

The CBS Evening News has a number of commercial breaks. Immediately before these breaks, the lead-in to the story to follow is inserted in an effort to keep the viewers interested and tuned to the channel. There are two set phrases Dan Rather uses to introduce pre-commercial lead-ins, reminding the viewers of what is coming following the break.

The phrases are : 1. Coming up next…….
2. Still ahead…….

For example :

1. a. Coming up next—EYE ON AMERICA. Tonight, the secrets hidden within us all. Should science reveal them ?
- b. Coming up next on the CBS Evening News—a look at the class of '41.
- c. Coming up next—EYE ON AMERICA. Tonight, a battle that could shake U. S. trade relations to their bedrock.
- d. Coming up next from London—Gorbachev's big PR ; selling the summiteers on his perestroika reforms.
2. a. Still ahead on tonight's CBS Evening News—a plea bargain today could fire up the missiles to the Ayatollah criminal investigation.
- b. Still ahead on tonight's CBS Evening News—Boris Yelstin takes the oath. And a new treatment that preserves the dignity of cancer patients.
- c. Still ahead—with so much talk about law and order, EYE ON AMERICA tonight deals with inmates released from prison after serving only a fraction of their time.
- d. Still ahead on tonight's CBS Evening News—Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas responds to reports that he was an admirer of controversial minister Louis Farrakan. And the Los Angeles Police Chief wants out, but when ?

The lead-ins following these phrases are noun-oriented, as in the following :

1. a. the secrets hidden in us all.
- b. a look at the class of '41.
- c. a battle that could shake U. S. trade relations to their bedrock.
- d. Gorbachev's big PR ; selling summiteers on his perestroika reforms.
2. b. a new treatment that preserves the dignity of cancer patients.

Because of the time constraints, nouns and noun phrases can make the information more easily absorbed than do full sentences.

J) Expressions for introducing stories from reporters in the field.

Dan Rather often finishes his lead-ins by introducing reporters in the field who provide more details on the story. There are about eight kinds of expressions he uses for this purpose :

1. "has the story"
 - a. CBS News correspondent Bob McNamara has the story.
 - b. CBS News correspondent Rita Braver has the story.
 - c. CBS News correspondent Jonathan Sanders in Moscow has that story.
2. "has more"
 - a. Correspondent Bob Schieffer has more on that.
 - b. David Daw has more about this spectacular tale from the dark side.
 - c. Wyatt Andrew in Washington has more on the census winners and losers.
3. "has the latest"
 - a. CBS News correspondent David Martin has the latest from the Pentagon.
 - b. Bob Schieffer has the latest on that.
 - c. Jerry Bowen has the latest on this confusing story.
 - d. Bill Plante has the latest at the State department.
4. "begins our coverage"
 - a. Chief Washington correspondent Bob Schieffer begins our coverage.
 - b. Correspondent Barry Peterson begins our coverage.
5. "has our report"
 - a. State Department correspondent Bill Plante has our report.
 - b. Bruce Morton has our report on that.
 - c. CBS newsman Randall Pinkston has our report.
 - d. CBS News health correspondent Eddie Magnus has our report on that.
6. "reports on"
 - a. CBS News business correspondent Ray Brady reports on what is said to be a much cleaner gasoline.
 - b. Correspondent Bob Fow reports on medical answers and ethical questions.
 - c. Ray Brady reports on the U. S. versus united Europe in what could be the trade battle of the decade.
 - d. Health correspondent Eddie Magnus reports on the growing debate over genetic testing.

- e. Correspondent Bill Maclaughlin reports on the growing unrest that sparked this call for a crack-down.
7. "reports"
- a. CBS News law correspondent Rita Braver reports what prompted Thomas to do that.
 - b. Correspondent Mark Philips reports the latest debate today over how old is too old for nuclear power plants.
 - c. Johnathan Sanders reports from Moscow.
8. "reports" used in an adverbial clause. When adverbial clauses including "report" are inserted, "as" is the only connective used in the program
- a. As law correspondent Rita Braver reports tonight,.....
 - b. As Bill Maclaughlin reports,.....
 - c. As David Martin reports,.....
 - d. As Barry Peterson reports,.....

The words and expressions, as shown in the examples, are not necessarily difficult. Rather, the language used by Dan Rather seems to be the one familiar to us in our daily life.

III. CONCLUSION

There has been an increase over recent years in the number of bilingual programs, including news, on TV in Japan. The CBS Evening News, one of such programs (although it stopped being broadcast on Channel 6 as of September 31, '91), has been studied here for its linguistic features, especially through the language and lead-ins of its anchorman, Dan Rather. It was noticed that the following factors seem to be taken into consideration : brevity, clarity, conversational features, attribution, objectivity, variety, immediacy, color and so on. These are all centered around the idea of how to keep viewers informed of what is happening in our world as quickly and accurately as possible.

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