BETWEEN NARRATIVE AND NON-NARRATIVE: MAKE UP OF THE NEWS STORY

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ABSTRACT

This paper analyses the generic pattern of news stories in the press adopting a fundamental distinction between narrative and non-narrative discourse. Providing several examples of news writing about the War on Iraq published in a short span of time, the article examines the organization of hard news in two British national newspapers, the quality newspaper *The Times* and the popular *The Sun*. In order to differentiate stories in the quality and popular press, special emphasis is laid on popular news reports dominated by storytelling tendencies which show affinity with narratives of personal experience.

KEY WORDS: Discourse analysis, hard news, narrative and non-narrative mode, news discourse, news schema.

RESUMEN

Este artículo analiza el esquema genérico de las noticias adoptando una distinción entre el discurso narrativo y el no-narrativo. A través de ejemplos de noticias relativas a la guerra en Irak y publicadas en un corto período de tiempo, se examina la organización de las noticias directas en dos periódicos nacionales británicos, el periódico de calidad *The Times* y el popular *The Sun.* Con el fin de diferenciar las historias en la prensa de calidad y en la popular, se hace hincapié en las noticias populares caracterizadas por tendencias narrativas que muestran similitudes con la narrativa de la experiencia personal.

PALABRAS CLAVE: análisis del discurso, noticia directa, modo narrativo y modo no-narrativo, discurso de la noticia, esquema de la noticia.

1. INTRODUCTION

The importance of news reports in the press lies in its urgency and immediacy. Through news discourse one can take in information, reflect and form an opinion of what has been read. Without pretending that today newspaper articles always provide the right facts or the right interpretation of events as they happen, it can be argued that they do provide something which is much more important, a chronicle or record of important or public events.

It can be argued that news discourse, like all other discourses, is a social force in its own right. Accordingly, two major aspects should be taken into account

in order to understand news: the language in which the news is encoded and the social forces which determine how its messages are produced and read. These two aspects point up two related determinants of the meaning of news discourse. Firstly, news communicates more than just inert information, and part of the meaning of the news is derived from the social structure in which it is uttered. Secondly, meaning is a product of interaction. News means nothing at all at the time it is printed: it has to be read. And the same social determinants that are at work in news itself will also be at work when one reads it. In this regard, Fairclough (65) claims that it is important both for linguists to be sensitive to how discourse is shaped by and helps to shape social structures and relations, and for sociologists to be sensitive to how social structures and relations are instantiated in the fine detail of daily social practices, including discourse.

Despite the fact that there has been an increasing research into the nature of news in the mass media, few studies have focused on the detailed discourse properties of news (see Glasgow University Media Group *Bad*, *More*, *Really*; Hartley; Bell; Fowler; Scollon; *inter alia*). To this effect, van Dijk points out that most work studies news in terms of sociology, economics, or mass communication (Tuchman; Gans; Fishman) and that "news discourse itself is seldom studied in its own right, so that no attention is paid to the detailed relationships between processes of news production, whether sociological or psychological, and the resulting structures of news reports" ("Schemata" 157). Concerning this view and assuming that the structural properties of news discourse can be described in terms of strategies for the use of news, the study I report here tackles the generic pattern of news reports in the press, considering in the discussion of the material the structures of news within the context of news processing by newsmakers, its uses in social situations as well as cultural aspects of the context of situation referred to.

2. AIM AND SCOPE OF THE RESEARCH

I have already suggested that a news report is meant to be communicative written discourse embedded in social and cultural practices, shaping and being shaped by them. The present article argues that newspaper reports can also be understood as instances of one of the two central modes of discourse: the narrative and the non-narrative mode. This basic distinction is intended to be used to bring these two modes of discourse together and describe their interaction in terms of the use of news in its communicative environment, that is, in its context. In particular, the approach I present here describes the use of narrative and non-narrative discourse in the generic pattern of quality and popular daily news[1] in two British

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[1] National newspapers are often thought of as either "quality" or "popular" papers depending upon their format, style and content. Quality newspapers are directed at readers who want full infor-

national newspapers: *The Times* and *The Sun*.[2] In the ensuing discussion the description is illustrated throughout with the study of concrete examples comprising a selection of 24 reports in each newspaper on a common topic, the War on Iraq, during a few crucial days in March and April 2003 before the American final attack on the capital. For this research, the data collected span a short period of 28 days, from 24th March to 20th April. Due to the limited scope of this article, most references will be made here to day April 7th, when an important event came to the limelight of international scene: American troops storming into the heart of the Iraqi capital Baghdad, seizing key buildings including Saddam Hussein's new presidential palace.

The study looks at the interaction of the narrative and non-narrative modes in the organizational patterns of news discourse by dealing with *hard*, *straight* or *breaking* news.[3] A typical hard news is divided into an introductory section, containing the headline and the lead and the main news story (van Dijk, "Structures," "Schemata," "Case," *News, Racism*). Unlike other story types, hard news stories do not represent events in their chronological or casual order. Rather, throughout the headline and the lead and in the body of the story the news shows a relevance structure by which the most important or relevant information is placed first. Although the generic pattern of news discourse may stay constant across contexts of occurrence, it will be argued that the degree of interaction between narrative and non-narrative in British national newspapers is variable. It is my purpose to examine and elaborate the hypothesis that news reports in the press draw on both narrative and non-narrative resources to make their point by paying detailed attention to the general news writing strategy adopted by the British popular press to follow a narrative organization in the expression of events. Such an approach to the nature of news stories, comparing them with the structure of narratives of personal experience (Labov & Waletzky; Labov) will account for their likely manipulation by written media news makers.

3. NEWS DISCOURSE: NEWS STRUCTURE AND NARRATIVE STRUCTURE

I have so far stated how the narrative and non-narrative modes fuse or interact with each other in news discourse. As already noted, this intermingling of

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mation on a wide range of public matters and are prepared to spend a considerable amount of time reading it. Popular newspapers (or tabloids) appeal to people wanting news of a more entertaining character with more human interest, presented in a more concise form and with ample illustrations.

[2] The reports were taken from the websites of the two newspapers, <http://www.thetimes.co.uk> and <http://www.thesun.co.uk>.

[3] Hard news stories make up the bulk of news reporting. They typically consist of basic facts. They are news of considerable public events which have significance for large numbers of

narrative and non-narrative is not unmotivated but serves strategic purposes. The remainder of this article is concerned with the discourse of hard news, taking account of the several properties that narratives and news reports have in common (Thorndyke). I will firstly pay attention to news schemata and how they are exhibited in the surface structures of news reports in the press. This theoretical framework will be then illustrated by providing a critical analysis of the functional organization of the topics in news discourse.

3.1. Generic Structure of a News Article

The most detailed description of news discourse from a discourse analysis perspective can be found in van Dijk ("Development," "Structures," "Schemata," "Case," *News*). In his approach to news discourse, van Dijk presents a major theoretical contribution to the analysis of news stories, examining the hypothesis that news reports in the press are organized by a conventional news schema he describes as "abstract structural properties of discourse, as representations, and as socially shared systems of rules, norms, or strategies for the use of news" ("Schemata" 155). Story schemata should be thought of then as mental processes that contain culture-specific categories (Kintsch & Greene; Harris et al.). To that effect, research has shown the significant role that schemata play in the organization of the relations of elements in a text and their importance in comprehension as well as in the production and uses of news discourse in mass communication and society (Whitney et al.).

Textual schemata can be tree diagrammed, as Figure 1 shows (van Dijk, "Schemata" 169), to display the discourse structure of the story. Different types of texts, like hard news stories and personal narratives, have different schemata.

Schematic superstructures order textual sequences of sentences, assigning definite functions to the sequences. Following van Dijk, the discourse structure of a news story is divided into an initial *Summary* category, which is kept apart from the actual news story, containing the *headline* (the main headline and possible upper and lower headlines) and the *lead*, and the body of the news story. The lead (also called first paragraph) establishes the main point of the story, summarizing the central action. In hard news stories, the lead as summary or abstract is obligatory and its function is not just that of a summary but it also serves as an introduction. While the lead reduces the story to its essential point, press news headlines

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people and tend to be very timely and immediate. There is a standard technique used to report hard news. In the print media, it is the traditional inverted pyramid form, with the information provided to readers in descending value of importance (Garrison 76). The main facts of the story are delivered in the first paragraph (called the *lead*) and less important facts come next, with the least important and most expendable facts at the end. The approach is not rigid so that writers can use variations of the inverted pyramid, often depending on the information they must report.

NEWS DISCOURSE

SUMMARY · NEWS STORY

HEADLINE · LEAD

EPISODE · COMMENTS

EXPECTATION · EVALUATION

EVENTS · CONSEQUENCES/ REACTIONS

MAIN EVENT · BACKGROUNDS

EVENTS/ ACTS · VERBAL REACTIONS

CIRCUMSTANCES · HISTORY
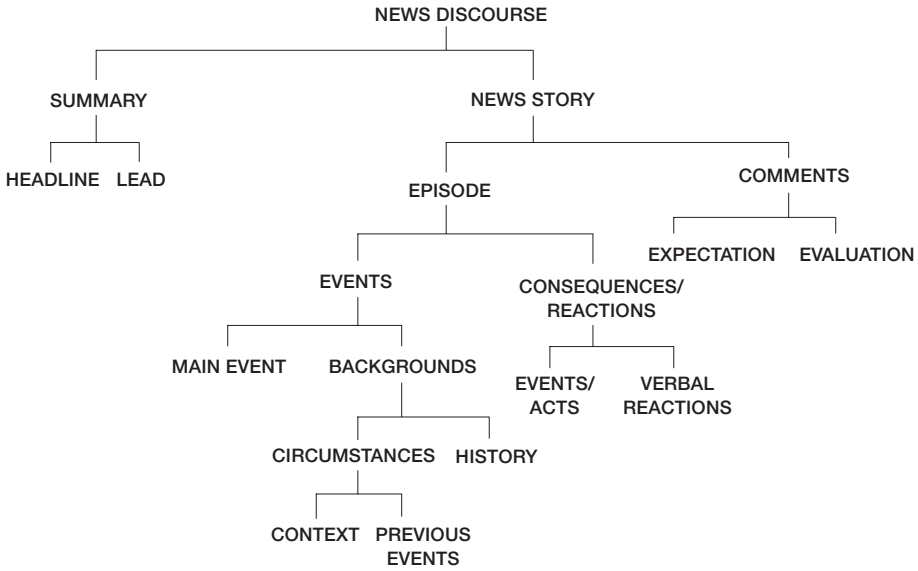
CONTEXT · PREVIOUS EVENTS

Figure 1. Superstructure schema of news discourse

abstract the lead itself. The headline is, thus, an abstract of the abstract (Bell 150). Regarding this, van Dijk states that: "If a headline does not express in part the highest macroproposition of the news report, but rather some lower level detail, we may conclude that the headline is biased" ("Schemata" 161).

After the Summary category the body of the story contains at least a *Main Event* category which deals with all the information related to the recent events that have given rise to the story and have taken place or have been discovered in one or two previous days. The information contained in the Main Event category forms the basis for news values.[4]

The main event section combines the description of what happened with the *Backgrounds* category which is, according to van Dijk, the next standard category of news reports. Although background information is not obligatory in hard news stories it is usually given some since it makes news comprehensible and allows

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[4] In a famous study, Galtung & Ruge included a number of conditions that have to be fulfilled before events get into the news. Some of them apply to selection of news all over the world while others are "culture-bound." These are newsworthy events in the north-western corner of the world. The general news values are *frequency*, *threshold*, *unambiguity*, *meaningfulness* (*cultural proximity* and *relevance*), *consonance*, *unexpectedness*, *continuity* and *composition*. In addition to these eight general news values, Galtung & Ruge propose other four which are of prime importance in western media. They are *reference to élite nations*, *reference to élite persons*, *personalization* and *negativity*.

readers to update their cognitive models of the world, those representations of accumulated personal experiences and knowledge about specific situations (van Dijk & Kintsch; Johnson-Laird; van Dijk, *Communication*). This category covers events which are previous to the current action. The present background of a news event is classed as *Context*, covering all the information in the news report about the actual situation. If the background covers comparatively recent events that have preceded the main news event, it is called *Previous Events*. The Previous Events together with Context forms the *Circumstances* category for the main news event. If the background goes beyond the near past months or even years, dealing with the past context that leads to the actual situation and its event it is classed as *History*.

A *Consequences* category (*Events/Acts*) covers any action subsequent to the main action of an event that may be seen as caused by the main event. There is one subcategory of consequences called *Verbal Reactions* including information about the declarations of participants, specially "of leading national and international politicians who have opinions or comments on the news events" (van Dijk, "Schemata" 166). Main Event, Backgrounds and Consequences together constitute what may be called the complete news *Episode*, the core of a news story.

Finally, the *Comments* category, which is distinguished from the Episode, provides observations from the journalist or on the action. It may express expectations on what could develop next (*Expectation*) or it may be explicit evaluation (*Evaluation*) held by the journalist about the actual news events. Nevertheless, because of the journalistic ideology that facts and opinion should be separated, it is not frequent to find explicit information that has evaluative dimensions in hard news stories.

It should be noted that not all the categories are obligatory. A hard news story should have at least a Summary and a Main Event category. The categories follow a particular order, a structural tendency by which Main Event is presented first and then Backgrounds, Consequences and finally Comments. However, by means of the relevance ordering, variation is possible. In fact, one of the most remarkable characteristics of news discourse is the non-chronological order of its constituent parts: the nature of the lead, time structure by which the journalist extracts bits of information and reassembles them in newsworthy order (Bell 172), and what van Dijk (*News* 43) has called the *instalment* method by which an event is introduced and then realized in instalments, returned to in more detail later in the story.[5]

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[5] News articles were not always written this way. A century ago, most writers wrote in chronological form since it was easier to write and file stories that way. But the unreliability of the telegraph made some stories to be chopped off in the middle. The inverted pyramid style was thus developed so at least the most important information would get through and less important one would be lost in case of telegraph failure. As Schudson's research on news narratives styles shows, the inverted pyramid structure was a development of American journalism, and by 1910 the lead as summary was the standard form (Schudson, "Politics," "Sociology").

3.2. The Organization of Natural Narratives

As an approach to the nature of news stories and a way to show what news has in common with other story-telling and where it differs, we can compare news discourse with another kind of story: narratives of personal experience. In general terms, a narrative can be defined as the encoding of previous experiences that took place at a specific point or over a specific interval in a past-time-story-world (Polanyi, *Story* 41). The most familiar model proposed to describe the organization of natural narratives is that elaborated in Labov & Waletzky, and Labov, which I adopt here in its latest formulation. In this model, a narrative is defined as one method of recapitulating past experience by matching a verbal sequence of clauses to the sequence of events which (it is inferred) actually occurred. A fully formed narrative shows the following elements: *Abstract, Orientation, Complicating Action, Evaluation, Result* or *Resolution*, and *Coda*. These six components occur in the above order and each of them answers to underlying questions:

TABLE 1. LABOV'S MODEL OF NARRATIVE STRUCTURE
a. *Abstract*: what was this about?
b. *Orientation*: who, what, when, where?
c. *Complicating Action*: then what happened?
d. *Evaluation*: so what?
e. *Result* or *Resolution*: what finally happened?
f. *Coda*: what is the relation to the present context?

Labov observes that only the Complicating Action is essential if we are to recognize a narrative. The Abstract, Orientation, Resolution and Evaluation answer questions that bear on the functions of an effective narrative: the Abstract, Orientation and Resolution to clarify referential functions, and the Evaluation to state why the story is told. The Coda is not given in answer to any of these questions and is found less frequently than any of the other elements of the narrative. It puts off a question: it signals that questions *c* and *d* are no longer relevant, providing definite closure.

The skeleton of a narrative consists of a series of temporally ordered clauses called narrative clauses. A complete narrative begins with an Abstract, an Orientation, proceeds to the Complicating Action, is suspended at the focus of Evaluation before the Resolution, concludes with the Resolution and returns the listener to the present time with the Coda. The Evaluation of the narrative forms a secondary structure which is concentrated in the evaluation section although it may be found in various forms throughout the narrative, forming a secondary structure (Labov). This latter view has been confirmed in studies of storytelling (Shaul et al.).

The Abstract summarizes the main point of the story and is used by the narrator to express what the story is about and why it is being told. The Orientation sets the scene and identifies the time, place, story participants and their activity or the situation, before the beginning of the story's action. The Evaluation makes explicit the means used by the narrator to show the point of the narrative – *its raison d'être*. It should be noted that in personal narratives one has to distinguish between *internal* and *external* evaluation: while the former is embedded into the narrative through a variety of strategies (Labov 372; Eisner 23-44; Polanyi, "Narrative"), in the latter the narrator addresses a comment directly to the addressee(s), breaking the story's flow. The Complicating Action is the backbone of the story proper integrated by the sequence of narrative events that make up the story. It answers the question "what happened (then)?" The Resolution contains the last of the narrative clauses that began in the Complicating Action, telling us what finally happened to conclude the sequence of events. Finally, a narrative can end with a Coda, a general observation which wraps up the action and returns the conversation from the time of the narrative to the present time, connecting past events to the speaker-now.

Since Labov collected his stories in interviews, the stories did not occur in spontaneous conversational settings. His model was originally designed to represent the structure of simple natural narratives, very usually with a single point to make. Research has shown that this classic pattern of narrative exhibits variants in real world conversational contexts, depending on the purpose of the story (Longacre, "Spectrum") and that Labov's framework can be adapted to structurally more complex texts (van Dijk "Action"; Longacre, *Anatomy*; Pratt; Carter & Simpson; Prince; Watts). In this respect, the data of the present study bear out this claim, presenting a framework for the description and analysis of news discourse as an interaction between the narrative and non-narrative modes.

4. INTERACTION OF THE NARRATIVE AND NON-NARRATIVE MODE IN HARD NEWS STORIES: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Narrative and Non-Narrative Resources in Quality News Articles

To illustrate the theoretical framework sketched above, I will start adopting van Dijk's framework in order to define the discourse structure of hard news stories. Firstly, I will focus upon a concrete example of a news story taken from the corpus and published in *The Times* April 7th, 2003 (see Appendix). Under the headline *US forces enter central Baghdad*, this report is an instance of how particularly the British quality press lends itself better to represent events by means of a relevance ordering or instalment structure, result of a general news production strategy that places first the information that is most important or relevant (van Dijk, "Schemata" 170). To follow the discussion, the analysis of the news schema categories is presented in the order in which they occur in the news article.

Summary. The lead or first paragraph presents one main action – the fact that American troops have entered Baghdad and seized Saddam Hussein's new presidential palace on the banks of the river Tigris. As summary or abstract, the lead makes the reader get the main point of the story from the opening sentence and does not concern itself with anything but the most basic of facts. This lead depends on four parts, but not all, of the traditional five Ws (*who, what, when* and *where*) in as few words as possible (22 words) saving the other elements that are judged less important for later in the story. The headline of this news report abstracts the lead itself, highlighting the US assault on Baghdad.

Consequences (Verbal Reactions). After the introduction of the headline and the lead, the second paragraph delivers the first instalments of verbal reactions from two different sources: troops comments on the assault and the classical official reaction on international events (here Pentagon officials). Paragraphs 3 and 4 also comment on the assault but from the point of view of a different source. The citation of these news sources is all important for the credibility of the news.

Main Event. The fifth paragraph gives the most important information of the main event summarized in the lead: how the US forces rolled into Baghdad and when. The main event is continued in paragraph 6 by offering further information about the entering.

Consequences (Events/Acts). A first instalment of consequences is given in paragraph 7, covering information about the events that immediately follow the main news event (the first television pictures showing the assault). The same paragraph combines a proposition belonging to a different category, delivering further details about the main event.

Main Event (continued). The main event is continued in paragraphs 8 and 9 by offering details concerning the US army in one of Saddam's palace.

Consequences (Verbal Reactions). Similarly, another instalment of verbal reactions is given in paragraph 10, in the form of a quotation by one US officer. This declaration is further summarized in the next eleventh and twelfth paragraphs.

Main Event (continued). Paragraph 13 may be seen as part of the main event, as the usual results of the fighting (*The bridges* [...] *were badly damaged in the fighting*).

Consequences (Events/Acts and *Verbal Reactions).* The final paragraphs (14-18) of the news story provide information from different sources. All of them are leading participants who have opinions on the news event, satisfy criteria of newsworthiness and measure its political implications.

From the schematic representation sketched above it can be observed that Verbal Reactions is the most extensive subcategory in this hard news story and, according to van Dijk ("Structures"), Verbal Reactions is indeed one of the most extensive subcategories in international news reports. This is due to the fact that the expression of verbal reactions usually attempts to create a shared point of view

between addresser and addressee (Hunston), encoding the speaker's stance towards the information presented. The brief analysis outlined also demonstrates that the hard news story cycles round the main event, returning for more detail on each paragraph, gathering all the main points at the beginning and progressing through less relevant information. Most of the categories which van Dijk has identified in news discourse are used in the example given. Nevertheless, some of the categories are embedded under others. For instance, the category of Backgrounds is embedded in this story under Consequences in paragraph 4 (*what we saw on Saturday*) and paragraph 14 (*about 100 Iraqis in military uniform had been killed earlier in the day*). Although the schema in Figure 1 above suggests a fixed order of the categories, van Dijk ("Schemata" 171) points out that the canonical ordering may be altered depending on communicative context. Thus, the news given exemplifies how important information from consequences may be given in the first positions of the report presenting later the actual main event.

On the basis of the above features, it is assumed that a hard news story is an instance of the non-narrative mode of discourse. Its main focus is on generic truths, opinions and beliefs, and its aim is to gain the readers' support by informing them with the need to convince, to prove and refute. As a result, the news story is built around a central subject which does not follow the temporal sequencing of events. However, news reports can use shifts between story and presentation of information as a strategic device. Paragraph breaks, for instance, play a crucial role as a way to signal sequential relation (Sinclair; Stark). In this way, the main event part in paragraphs 5-8 from *The Times* report is an example of narrative exposition.

Regarding this, a way to show the order and interaction of narrative and non-narrative constituent parts in hard news stories is to compare van Dijk's theory of news in the press with Labov's model of narrative analysis.[6] To begin with, a typical news story consists of a Summary category, attribution and the story proper. Attribution can include agency credit and/or journalist's byline, and optionally place and time. The Summary category consists of the headline and the lead. The lead includes the main event incorporating information about the actors involved in the story as well as the setting. The lead can also contain some supplementary categories. The headline abstracts the lead itself as in *The Times* report (*US forces enter central Baghdad*). The lead has the same function in a hard news story as the abstract in personal narratives; however, while in a personal narrative the abstract is optional, in hard news stories the summary lead is, as a general rule, obligatory.

Orientation is the next standard category in personal narratives. It is usually placed before the beginning of the story's action to set the scene, identifying the actors, where and when the events took place as well as the initial situation of the

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[6] The comparison between news and narratives of personal experience told in face-to-face conversation was previously established by Bell (148-155) using as an example one spot news story from *The Dominion,* Wellington (April 2nd 1990).

story. In a hard news story, the answer to basic facts as *who*, *what*, *when* and *where* is typical. They usually concentrate at the beginning of the story, in the lead, although they may be expanded further down. Thus, in the lead example from *The Times*, *who* is referred to the *US forces*, the action names *a new assault*, the time of the assault is specified as *today* and the detail of the exact site of the assault is *on Baghdad*, the capital city.

Evaluation is the narrative part that shows the narrator's attitude towards the events related, comprising the devices by which the significance of the story is established. A nucleus of evaluation is also present in news stories with the same function as in personal narratives. From the very beginning of *The Times* story, the headline and the lead make the contents of the news felt to be tellable. As Bell has noted, "The lead focuses the story in a particular direction. It forms the lens through which the remainder of the story is viewed" (152). Evaluative devices may also occur throughout the story to present events as newsworthy. Thus, in *The Times* story *full-scale battle* (paragraph 2), *armoured raid* (paragraph 4), *assault fire and rocket-propelled grenades* (paragraph 6) or *heavy armour* (paragraph 13) stress the importance of the main event.

While in Labov's model Complicating Action is the backbone of the narrative made up by the sequence of events which have taken place (a series of temporally ordered clauses called narrative clauses), the description of the main event part in a news article is usually organized through a non-narrative exposition. In Bell's view (153), perceived news values overturn temporal sequence in the presentation of the news story, imposing an order completely at odds with the linear narrative point, moving backwards and forwards in time and picking out different actions on each cycle. Accordingly, information is provided to readers in descending value of importance so that the least important information will be the ending of the story. In doing so, the nearest thing to a resolution is usually expressed in the headline and the lead, before the action which caused it. Since the news story is not brought to a complete well-ordered state, the final reported events are just the latest step in more coming related events. Considering, for instance, the example given from *The Times*, the fact that the US forces are fighting in the city for the first time is not the ending of the assault on Baghdad since the battle for the city would continue in the near future.

It will be noted finally that there is no coda to the news story. The reason is that in the personal narrative the coda is a device for returning the verbal perspective to the time frame of speaker-now, being its function unnecessary in a newspaper article.

4.2. Narrative and Non-Narrative Resources in Popular News Articles

The preceding analysis shows similarities and differences between the structure of hard news stories and personal narratives. The categories outlined for describing a news into its constituent structure, drawn from van Dijk and Labov, provide an adequate starting point to learn how narrative and non-narrative fuse or interact with each other in news discourse practices.

The last point I would like to lay special emphasis on is the British popular news writing strategy to follow a narrative organization in the expression of events, as a way to demonstrate that popular stories do not qualify for the classical pattern of a news schema. To this end, I will firstly consider the news schema categories as they appear in an example story taken from the corpus and published in the popular daily newspaper *The Sun* on April 7th 2003, under the headline *US Army in Saddam palace* (see Appendix).

Summary. The headline in this news states the event of the seize of one of Saddam's presidential palaces, an event which is not summarized in the lead but in the body of the story (paragraph 2) as part of the main event. The headline is biased – it has an important strategic function in the sense that it conveys to the reader what the semantic macrostructure of the text is supposed to be, when in fact it only constitutes a detail taken from the main event. By contrast, the lead abstracts the story itself, answering the basic Ws: *who* (*American troops*), *what* (*launched another raid and seized a number of key buildings*), *when* (*this morning*) and *where* (*on the Iraqi capital Baghdad at the heart of Saddam Hussein's power base*).

Main Event. After the headline and the lead, the body of the news firstly features the information about the recent events that have given rise to the story. Previous events are also represented here (in the second paragraph) by brief reference to the offensive made by tank divisions (*after a lightning ground offensive by several tank divisions*).

Consequences (Verbal Reactions). The following third, fourth and fifth paragraphs contain information about the declarations of leading participants regarded as highly valued news sources. The declarations quoted in paragraphs 3 and 4 follow a sequential ordering in the expression of events. These declarations coincide with the ones published in *The Times* news item (paragraphs 10 and 11).

Main Event (continued). Paragraphs 6 and 7 offer further details about the main event. The concreteness of individual reference is heightened by official reactions on the moment of the assassination of the marines (paragraphs 8 and 9). Presumably, its function is to promote straightforward feelings of identification and empathy. These declarations are also organized to represent events in their causal order.

Backgrounds (Context). The context is introduced in paragraph 10 by the textual indicator *meanwhile*. It refers to current events that take place during the specific main event, contrasting radically with US declarations. The reactions of Iraq's authorities against the allegations of US troops favour Iraq's Information minister Mohammed Saeed al-Sahhaf's declarations in paragraph 11. The contrast with these declarations is established with the reactions from the Allied Forces, from paragraph 12 to paragraph 15. The verbal reactions introduced by *but* represent events chronologically. As far as our example is concerned, the US official reactions on the event are the most extensive ones, giving special prominence to the actions carried out

by its government. The declarations coincide with the ones published in *The Times* example (paragraphs 16, 17 and 18).

Consequences (Events/Acts and Verbal Reactions). Paragraph 16 covers an action subsequent to the main action of the event. It includes non-verbal consequences related to the assault on the Iraqi capital, and the verbal reactions on this news event concentrated in paragraph 17. The words *echoed that view* in paragraph 16 make reference to the information from previous paragraphs, showing events chronologically. A repetition device can be appreciated in paragraphs 18 and 19 with the re-instalment of Events/Acts and Verbal Reactions to specify further details of the events that immediately follow the main news event.

Main Event (continued). More details about the major event are given in paragraphs 20, 21 and 22 through a sequential organization in the expression of events.

Consequences (Verbal Reactions). In the final paragraphs the reported talk of the news actors involved in the story is presented again. The information contained in the verbal reaction in paragraph 23 makes reference to an action previous to the main event (*before the operation*). The final paragraph of the news article finishes with a declaration that gives special prominence to US actions, favouring the policy adopted by US government (*this* (*the regime*) *is over*).

The discussion so far, based on the organizational pattern of hard news in the British quality and popular press, demonstrates that the telling of a story on a common topic, in different settings and aimed at different readers affects and shapes the ways in which the story is evaluated as well as the story's point. As Polanyi observes: "what stories can be about is to a very significant extent culturally constrained" ("Point" 207).

Thus, *The Sun* story points up a general strategy adopted by the popular press in order to create a dramatic effect, hide or delay the outcome for readers and keep them interested in the story. This is the use of a more chronological ordering for the expression of events. Even though one of the formal characteristics of a hard news story is the absence of explicit connectives that allows for the constituent parts to be easily deleted or rearranged (Georgakopoulou & Goutsos 166), the British popular press shows a particular preference for paragraph breaks introduced by explicit connectives. And this also plays a crucial role in signalling sequential relations (Sinclair; Stark).

In this context, Labov's pattern of narrative presents variants. As Longacre ("Spectrum") has claimed, the flow of a narrative —and of other types of discourse— may be analysed in terms of the existence of more than one climax. Accordingly, stories very often reach a peak point or climax, release the tension or slow down their pace, and then mount to another peak point. This can go on at some length so that they present a wave-like movement of ups and downs. On the whole, it can be said that peaks act as a zone of turbulence in the otherwise placid flow of a story (Longacre, "Spectrum" 351). Although Labov's model represents the structure of simple natural narratives with a single point to make, his framework can be adapted to more complex texts. In this way, depending on the purposes that a news story's occurrence serves, news reports mark different points or peaks in the main

news story at which the discourse tension rises and declines again and again. Peaks are frequently marked by various devices, including repetition and paraphrase, insertion of a mass of detail beyond what is called for in routine narration, and direct speech frequently introduced by a verb in narrative present (Fleischman 141). The clearest illustration of this from the data collected for the present study is to be found in popular news reports. In fact, the generic pattern of news discourse in the British popular press involves considerable recursion, with the effect of dramatising the story. *The Sun* story exemplifies in this respect that after an apparent resolution new main event sections arise, reach their respective peaks and lead to a new resolution.

More specifically, *The Sun* story reveals that the construction of popular news discourse depends to a great extent on the exploitation of narrative along with non-narrative resources in a variety of ways. The range of narrative techniques employed by the popular press varies and is related to its basic functions and concerns. One of the most defining properties associated with popular news stories and personal narrative is the direct high-involvement strategies in the two modes. In relation to this, while the news story in the quality press focuses less on experiences and more on generic truths convincing the readers rather than moving them by means of encoding distance from the elements of discourse, the news story in the popular press, concerned with strengthening the bonds between the reader and the newspaper, aims at luring the audience in a story of exciting and unexpected events, seeking to encode feelings and subjectivity more than information and gaining the reader's support for the views presented with the inclusion of details, images and direct speech with different eye-witnesses who dramatise the events narrated.

One typical involvement strategy used by the popular press in order to create a sense of familiarity is based on various forms of repetition. This gives the discourse a sense of familiarity, contributing to the emotional experience of connectedness between the discourse participants (Georgakopoulou & Goutsos 135). This hypothesis is confirmed by *The Sun* news story (paragraphs 14 and 15): "We're in there, we're staying, please come out now, surrender, save damage and save the loss of life. Let's get this over and done with." "We have taken your palace, we have taken your information ministry. We are here. We are now in control."

Another fruitful device exploited by the popular press is the representation of the characters' speech as direct quotation, which achieves involvement through dramatisation. On occasions, striving for personalization brings the popular press to grief, a device that can be hardly imagined in a quality hard news story. An example of this is the verbal reaction contained in paragraph 9 in *The Sun* story: "It was bad, there were body parts all over the place."

Concerning evaluation, this element was originally associated with basic parts of its structural patterning (orientation-climax-evaluation in narrative). Subsequent research, however, has employed evaluation both as a term that refers to a specific identifiable part of a structure and as a term that covers numerous expressive devices. These are instances of affective (expressive) devices which are often labelled in the literature as *intensity markers* (in Labov's model) and which encode the speaker's attitudes and emotions in the story and show the subjective orientation towards the message. Numerous studies have looked into the validity of the evaluative de-

vices which Labov first identified, including a broad set of evaluative devices as negative encoding, hyperbole, aggravated signals, marked emphasis in voice, negation, repetition, causal explanations, characters' speech and references to characters' mental and emotive states (Chafe; Peterson & McCabe; Polanyi, *Story*; Georgakopoulou & Goutsos). Appropriately, the popular press draws on a series of intensity markers to evaluate the tellable experience. As an example, the main event in *The Sun* story is evaluated as "big thing" (paragraph 13), "dramatic show of force" (paragraph 23) or "their new freedom" (paragraph 24). Furthermore, the intensification of the events narrated is put forward by verbs that denote feelings, thoughts and beliefs. One of the clearest examples of this evaluative device is expressed in *The Sun* news in the quotation "I heard the round come across my head" (paragraph 8).

As a final observation, it is worth mentioning as relevant to our examination of the degree of interaction between narrative and non-narrative in relation to news discourse one of the most recognised features of oral narrative: its paratactic organization. Regarding oral narrative, artistic or conversational, Fleischman points out that "Formal grammatical apparatus for textual cohesion, in particular for coordination and subordination, is often at minimum, with clauses merely juxtaposed asyndetically or linked by the minimal connectives "and" or "then"" (185). With respect to subordinating conjunctions, its use constitutes an indicator of a text's difficulty. Accordingly, texts that include more subordinate than coordinate clauses are assumed to be more complex and difficult. From this point of view (Halliday & Hassan; Segal, Duchan & Scott), non-narrative texts are expected to be more difficult than narrative texts and written narratives more difficult than spoken narratives. The examples from the corpus studied reveal that the paratactic organization is particularly illustrated in newspaper articles from the popular press, whereas the (sometimes) striking coordinative parataxis of the popular news reports is replaced by a more highly subordinating language as regards quality news texts. As an instance of this, the leads in the two examples included in the appendix show that *The Times* makes use of subordinate clauses for the expression of events whereas the expression of events in the lead from *The Sun* story is dominated by coordinate clauses.

In brief, Table 2 below shows the extensive interaction of the narrative and non-narrative modes in the generic pattern of news discourse:

TABLE 2. DEFINING CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NARRATIVE AND THE NON-NARRATIVE MODES (GEORGAKOPOULOU & GOUTSOS 52)		
	NARRATIVE DISCOURSE	NON-NARRATIVE DISCOURSE
Ordering	temporal sequencing	multiple (logical, temporal, etc.).
Particularity	particular events	generic truths
Normativeness	disruption and re-establishment of equilibrium	stating (arguing, etc.), what the norm is
Reference	reconstructed events	verifiable events
Perspective	personal	impersonal
Context	under negotiation	permanent across contexts

5. CONCLUSION

In this article I have adopted a fundamental distinction between narrative and non-narrative discourse as a tool to analyse the generic pattern of news discourse. I have concentrated on the degree of interaction between narrative and non-narrative in hard news stories collected from two British national newspapers, the quality newspaper *The Times* and the popular *The Sun*, emphasising in the discussion of the material its overall contexts of occurrence.

The results obtained point to the conclusion that hard news stories fuse with narrative and non-narrative in discourse practices. It has been observed, however, that a different treatment of news in quality and popular newspapers is established, what makes possible the exploration of cultural and ideological aspects associated with the use of the two modes in these publications. We have seen that each of the two newspapers makes use of different organisational patterns and a preference for a particular set of devices. Thus, one major point of divergence arises in the area of temporal text strategies, far more important in popular news writing than in quality newspapers discourse. Another significant point of divergence underlies differences between the two types of publications in the area of interpersonal relations: while *The Times* is most likely to activate detachment strategies, *The Sun* opts for a specific set of devices, such as repetition patterns, speech presentation, etc., for the encoding of involvement through dramatisation.

To sum up, I would argue that all these differences reveal the role and position of each newspaper in the construction of text. Ultimately, the above findings suggest that the ways in which discourse is arranged depends on socio-cultural modes of expressing experience and that different news texts from different social and cultural settings are likely to structure their discourse in different ways.

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APPENDIX

TRANSCRIPTION OF THE NEWS ITEMS PUBLISHED
IN *THE TIMES* AND *THE GUARDIAN* ON APRIL 7TH, 2003

The Times, April 7th, 2003

0. US forces enter central Baghdad

1. US forces launched a new assault on Baghdad today seizing key buildings, including one of Saddam Hussein's presidential palaces on the Tigris.

2. Troops on the ground claimed the city was now theirs for the taking, but Pentagon officials warned against assuming that a full-scale battle for Baghdad was under way.

3. Captain Frank Thorp, a Central Command spokesman, said that the movement was another raid through the city and not a seizure of any territory or targets.

4. He said: "What you're seeing here is similar to what we saw on Saturday, with an armoured raid through the city."

5. With A10 Warthog tank-buster jets giving air support, the 2nd Brigade of the 3rd Infantry Division rolled into central Baghdad at 6am local time, 3am GMT.

6. Entering on the western side of the Tigris, which divides the city, they came up Highway 8 meeting only moderate resistance – mostly assault fire and rocket-propelled grenades from infantry.

7. Television pictures showed US tanks moving up the Tigris, firing at retreating Iraqis, US forces seized key buildings in the heart of the capital, including the Information Ministry and the al-Rashid Hotel and the Kasafaw palace compound on the east side of the Tigris.

8. A company of the US 3rd Battalion, 7th Infantry entered the compound of one of Saddam's palaces. Inside, troops rifled through documents and took an inventory of the building.

9. In Baghdad, US troops appeared jubilant at their progress with reports that a US flag was taken into a presidential palace.

10. One officer with the US 3rd Infantry Division told Fox News in a live broadcast: "Saddam Hussein says he owns Baghdad. We own Baghdad."

11. He said he was planning to "turn on one of the golden faucets in Saddam Hussein's bathroom" and take his first shower in a month.

12. Two US Marines were killed and many injured in fighting to secure two bridges on the edge of Baghdad, the US military said.

13. The bridges, which span Nahr Diyala, a tributary of the Tigris that flows up the eastern flank of the capital, were badly damaged in the fighting, rendering them impassable for tanks and heavy armour.

14. US military officials said that about 100 Iraqis in military uniform had been killed earlier in the day in a fight at Baghdad's airport after a seven-hour exchange.

MARÍA JOSÉ GONZÁLEZ RODRÍGUEZ

15. Mohammed Saeed al-Sahhaf, the Iraqi information minister, held an impromptu open air press conference in the capital to again deny that US forces were in the city.

16. He claimed that the US forces were "slaughtered" and said: "There is no presence of the American columns in Baghdad at all."

17. But Group Captain Al Lockwood, the UK military spokesman at Central Command in Qatar, said: "They are in Baghdad and they probably mean to stay this time."

18. Western journalists in the city, who were able to see US forces fighting in the city for the first time, echoed that view. The BBC's Rageh Omaar said: "It's hard to underestimate the massive symbolism of this move."

The Sun, April 7th, 2003

0. US Army in Saddam palace

1. AMERICAN troops this morning launched another raid on the Iraqi capital Baghdad and seized a number of key buildings at the heart of Saddam Hussein's power base.

2. At least one —and possibly up to three— of the Iraqi dictator's Presidential palaces have been taken over by Allied forces after a lightning ground offensive by several tank divisions.

3. One officer with the US Third Infantry Division told Fox News in a live broadcast: "Saddam Hussein says he owns Baghdad. We own Baghdad."

4. He said he was planning to "turn on one of the golden faucets in Saddam Hussein's bathroom" and take his first shower in a month.

5. US troops claimed the city was now theirs for the taking, but Pentagon officials warned against assuming that a full-scale battle for Baghdad was under way.

6. Two US marines are understood to have been killed when Iraqi troops blew up at least two bridges into Baghdad in a bid to slow the Allied advance.

7. The Marines died when an artillery shell landed on the turret of their amphibious assault vehicle, blasting through its armour.

8. "I heard the round come across my head," Master Sergeant Marvin Crawford said.

9. "It was bad, there were body parts all over the place."

10. Meanwhile, in another extraordinary show of defiance, Iraq's Information minister Mohammed Saeed al-Sahhaf held an impromptu open-air press conference to again deny that US forces were in the city.

11. He claimed US soldiers were slaughtered and said: "There is no presence of the American columns in Baghdad at all."

12. But Group Captain Al Lockwood, the UK military spokesman at Central Command in Qatar, confirmed the troops were in the city. He said: "They are in Baghdad and they probably mean to stay this time."

13. He added: "The big thing is it sends a significant signal to what's left of Saddam Hussein's regime."

14. "We're in there, we're staying, please come out now, surrender, save damage and save the loss of life. Let's get this over and done with."

15. "We have taken your palace, we have taken your information ministry. We are here. We are now in control."

16. Western journalists in Baghdad, who were able to see US forces fighting in the city for the first time, echoed that view.

17. The BBC's Rageh Omaar said: "It's hard to underestimate the massive symbolism of this move."

18. TV pictures showed US tanks moving up the Tigris, firing at retreating Iraqis.

19. Sky News reporter David Chater said he could hear a lot of explosions to the west of the city and could see flames and large plumes of smoke rising.

20. US forces seized key buildings including the Information Ministry and the Al-Rashid Hotel.

21. With A 10 Warthog tank-buster jets giving air support, the 2nd Brigade of the 3rd Infantry Division rolled into central Baghdad at dawn —3am London time.

22. Entering on the western side of the Tigris, which divides the city, they came up Highway 8 meeting only moderate resistance —mostly assault fire and rocket-propelled grenades from infantry.

23. Col David Perkins told his troops before the operation that the mission was intended to be a "dramatic show of force" to demonstrate that US forces could enter Baghdad at any time, anywhere.

24. "I hope this makes it clear to the Iraqi people that this (the regime) is over and that they can now enjoy their new freedom," Col Perkins said.