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**LEXICAL AND STYLISTIC FEATURES OF NEWSPAPER HEADLINES OF MODERN ITALIAN PRESS**

Ekaterina Geim (a)\*

\*Corresponding author

(a) Chelyabinsk State University, Chelyabinsk, Russia, meinheim@mail.ru

***Abstract***

This article is a study devoted to identifying lexical and stylistic features of headlines in Italian Newspapers. The newspaper discourse has become the object of language research, since the study of the originality of the organization of the discourse under consideration is of increased interest to linguists. The material of this study was the headlines of articles published in the Italian Newspapers Corriere della sera, La Stampa, IlMessaggero and IlSole24ore, which are among the most popular periodicals in Italy. The specificity of the newspaper-journalistic style is a special expressiveness. One of the characteristic features of newspaper expression is the expressive power of headlines. An important aspect in studying a title is to determine its functions. Linguists do not give a clear definition of header functions, sometimes they mix functions with their means of expression. The newspaper headline briefly informs the reader about the content of the newspaper material, about the meaning, nature and degree of importance of the events reflected on the pages of the newspaper. The most striking characteristics of newspaper article headlines are informative content and impact strength. It is also important to identify the lexical and stylistic features of headlines, since it is in the expressiveness that the specificity of this element of the newspaper text lies, which should attract the reader's attention and encourage him to read the article. Therefore, this article discusses the features of the use of vocabulary and stylistic tools that contribute to the creation of expressiveness of headlines in Italian Newspapers.

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**Keywords:** Headline, newspaper style, newspaper discourse lexical and stylistic features, expressiveness.



## 1. Introduction

Newspaper discourse occupies a special place among other styles, as the printing shows the modern state of the language, because it is a system of language elements that are interconnected and aimed at achieving a certain goal - to communicate information to the reader in an accessible form. As for the Italian newspaper style, Majkova (2015) writes the following:

there is a significant decrease in the literary and bureaucratic components of the language; rejection of complex syntactic constructions; widespread use of spoken language elements. Thanks to this, the newspaper ceased to be a publication for a narrow circle of people who understand the jargon of journalists (p.113).

The newspaper headline is traditionally the subject of linguistic research. Aspects of the study of the headline are dealt with by various sciences: philology, journalism, sociology, stylistics, etc. The study of the title is based on various kinds of research Kostomarov (1965), Melnik and Teplyashina (2004), etc. The title forms a single system with the text of a newspaper article, it can prepare the reader for understanding the text or it can become completely understandable only after reading the article. Headlines are an integral part of newspaper discourse. The title should be expressive enough to elicit an active reaction from the reader, who can think, be interested, switch to waiting - in other words, prepare for the perception of the text.

## 2. Problem Statement

The headings name the text, act as its names, signs, which gives the reader the opportunity to highlight the text. The headline evokes readers "emotions, focuses on individual sense and evaluation parts of the publication. Within our research we put a task to analyze the lexical and stylistic features which are found in headings of the Italian newspapers for the purpose of identification of the main expressional means of impact on the reader and also, when studying lexical and stylistic features of newspaper headings, to define tools for their expressiveness.

## 3. Research Questions

The newspaper publicistic style has a certain social purpose: to inform people about events and to influence them emotionally. This style has a variety of linguistic and stylistic features. The subject of the study is the headlines of Italian newspapers. The subject of the study is lexical and stylistic features of Italian newspaper headlines. Newspaper discourse can be called a special creative form, as it is related to the functioning of public opinion, and therefore determines the social activity of people. The interests of journalists include economy, politics, sports, science and education, as well as other spheres of modern life and consciousness. Newspaper discourse is characterized, according to Bakhtin (1991), as "a special kind of social activity, the main function of which is to disseminate knowledge, ideas, artistic values and other information in order to form certain views, perceptions and emotional states, and through them to influence the behavior of people".

Exploring newspaper headlines in the Italian press, we understand newspaper discourse as a special form of language existence, in the form of text and simultaneously a "communicative event" aimed at a certain audience at a certain point in time and in a certain social situation. This definition is given by Larionova (2015).

Newspapers are a medium of information and persuasion, and the headline as an integral part of a newspaper is something readers immediately pay attention to. In the defining dictionary of Efremova (2020) the title is defined as "the name of any work (literary, scientific, musical, etc.) or its separate parts". By the definition of the Italian defining dictionary Treccani Vocabolario online (2020), a headline is a name noun or phrase that serves to highlight, individualize literary work, theatrical, artistic or musical production, film or articles of a daily or periodical publication, magazine, pointing more or less clearly to the subject or content. Besides, "heading is a text sign" (Zagolovok). The title and article are interrelated elements of a single semiotic system. In thematic terms, the title gives a name to the text, marking the subject of the article. The title summarizes the contents of the following message and has a number of language features. The newspaper headline stands in front of the text and gives initial information about the newspaper. It attracts the attention of the reader and allows people to select the news of interest from the stream of articles in the newspaper. Therefore, it is important to understand by which expressive means the main functions of the headline are achieved - nominative and evaluation-expressive.

Whether headlines belong to a nominal or verbal style will indicate different types of information submission: expanded (if the title is a sentence or expanded phrase) or compressed (if the title consists of separate words and phrases) (Chertousova, 2016, p.76).

The main stylistic techniques used in the headlines of newspaper articles to attract the attention of readers and to realize their main functions are epithets, metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, rhetorical question, allusion, use of set expressions.

Expressive syntactic creation of heading can be also considered a means of pragmatically influencing the audience.

#### **4. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the presented article is to identify the means of expressiveness used by journalists of printed publications in Italy to attract the attention of readers, having analyzed lexical and stylistic peculiarities of Italian newspaper headlines.

#### **5. Research Methods**

In our research we used the method of continuous sampling of language material of the study, as well as methods of analysis and synthesis, which are necessary when describing the peculiarities of the titles of newspaper articles. These methods of research help to gather facts, systematize them, identify dependencies and determine causes and consequences.

## 6. Findings

For our research we took articles from Italian newspapers *Il Corriere della Sera* (<https://www.corriere.it/>), *La Stampa* (<https://www.lastampa.it/>), *Il Messaggero* (<https://www.ilmessaggero.it/>) and *Il Sole 24 Ore* (<https://www.ilssole24ore.com/>). As a result of analyzing the headlines of Italian Newspapers, various language tools were identified that serve to impart expressiveness. We found that the main lexical and stylistic tools were metaphor, metonymy, and synecdoche.

*L'ex braccio destro di Blair: "La gente non si fida dei Tory, ma teme Corbyn. Nuovo referendum in caso di stallo"* (Simoni, 2019, para.1) Blair's former right-hand man: "People don't trust the Tories, but they fear Corbyn. Another referendum in case of stagnation." The metaphorical meaning of the expression "right hand" makes the title more expressive and attractive to the reader.

*Crisi diplomatica fra Berlino e Mosca. Espulse due spie* (Bianchi, 2019a, para.1) Diplomatic crisis between Berlin and Moscow. Two spies were expelled. We can highlight the synecdoche in this title (Berlin and Moscow - meaning the city authorities, officials).

*Di Maio senza cravatta e acclamato da 200 persone: a Bologna prima uscita Dell'ex capo politico* (Giubilei, 2019, para.1) Di Maio without a tie is greeted by 200 people: in Bologna, the first appearance of a former political leader. A metaphorical expression "without a tie" means in a friendly, relaxed environment.

*Usa e Cina arrivano alla tregua commerciale. L'europa Sarà il prossimo obiettivo di Trump?* (Goria, 2020, para.1) the US and China have reached a trade truce. Will Europe be Trump's closest target? (synecdoche: the USA and China (instead of the government of these countries) and metonymic transfer "came to a trade truce").

*Piazza Fontana, la riconciliazione grazie al Quirinale: "Finalmente possiamo piangere tutte le vittime"* (Riotta, 2019, para.1) Piazza Fontana, reconciliation thanks to the Quirinal Palace: "at last we will be able to mourn all the victims" (synecdoche: referring to the President of Italy, since the Quirinal Palace is his residence).

The significance of the metaphor for newspaper headlines is undeniable. The same applies to metonymy and synecdoche. They enliven the official text, help to vividly present a phenomenon of reality and hold the attention of readers. Using these tools, you can avoid repetitions, add new colors to the basic information and clarify it with additional shades.

Another way in which the title can be more appealing is by using the comparison: *La "catastrofe" di Villa Borghese: gli alberi centenari stanno cadendo come birilli* (Monello, 2019, para.1) Disaster "at Villa Borghese: age-old trees fall like skittles or" *Profitti alti e investimenti minimi. Le autostrade come una zona grigia* (Salvaggiulo, 2019, para.1) High returns and small investments. Highways as a gray area (meaning a term related to the topic of abuse of power) was first introduced by the Italian poet, prose writer, and translator Primo Levi. This term has changed its meaning over time and in this case, the gray zone means that money is allocated, but does not go to the maintenance of highways, so the roads are in poor condition) This example can also be considered as an allusion. Another example of an allusion is the following headline: *Rivoluzione Brexit: dimmi che immigrato sei, ti dirò che futuro avrai* (Bianchi, 2019b, para.1) Revolution Brexit: tell me what kind of immigrant you are, and I will tell you what your

future is. Used as an allusion to the saying *Dimmi chi è il tuo amico e ti dirò chi sei*-Tell me who your friend is, and I will tell you who you are.

Titles also become more vivid and expressive due to borrowings from different languages. The vast majority of identified borrowings are from English.

Stadio smoking free. Continua la campagna del sindaco Giuseppe Sala (Luce, 2020, para.1) non-Smoking stadium. The campaign of mayor Giuseppe Sala continues (meaning the mayor of Milan and the implementation of a program to combat Smoking in public places) Using the English phrase in this case is probably a way to attract attention to the title, making it non-standard.

Come spendono i soldi le associazioni di beneficenza? Una startup darà i voti (Pinna, 2019, para.1) Where do charities spend their money? The new startup will give an assessment.

Da flash-mob improvvisato fino a piazza San Giovanni: metamorfosi delle Sardine (Perina, 2019, para.1) From an improvised flash mob to Piazza San Giovanni: metamorphoses of the "Sardines" movement.

In these examples, the use of borrowings from English is necessary because they express concepts that can only be described in Italian. Since one of the features of the title is its brevity and capacity, the use of borrowings is justified.

Grugliasco, poliziotto spara tre colpi contro l'auto del pusher in fuga (Massenzio, 2020, para.1) Grulasco, a police officer shoots three times at the car of an escaping drug dealer. In English, the noun pusher has several meanings, but in Italian it came with only one meaning and is a jargon.

We also met with a loan from French – the name of the French cuisine: Tartufo, foie gras e selvaggina: terzetto del gusto per Charlotte e Jérôme (Angileri, 2020, para.1) Truffle, foie gras and game: a trio of flavors for Charlotte and Jerome.

Perhaps the use of borrowed vocabulary in newspaper headlines can be replaced by a description using the means of the Italian language of an object or phenomenon. But one of the main requirements for titles is brevity, and the choice of vocabulary is determined by taking this feature directly into account. That is why authors often use foreign language vocabulary, because they must keep up with the times and take into account, and maybe even guess the preferences of readers, their reaction to non-standard titles.

Another means to attract attention is the question title, which plays the role of a motive, prompting the reader to take action and offering him to understand the problem. This is especially evident in the alternative question, which involves a choice: Un minipartito in favore di Giuseppe Conte, può servirgli o lo danneggia? (Capurso, 2019, para.1) The mini-Party for Giuseppe Conte, will it benefit or harm him?

The General question in the title provokes doubt, forcing you to think about the problem, to make sense of what is written: Smog, i blocchi del traffico permettono di limitare l'inquinamento? (Amabile, 2020, para.1) Smog. To allow the restriction of traffic in order to reduce pollution?

The task of a private question is to find out or clarify something, it assumes some awareness of the reader in some issues: Cosa cambia per l'europa dopo l'accordo Russia-Ucraina sul gas? (Agliaastro, 2019, para.1) What will change for Europe after the gas agreement between Russia and Ukraine?

Chi deve pagare per la morte dei tifosi? Who should pay for the death of fans? (Pinna, 2020, para.1) in this case, we see a specific issue that requires certainty, resolution of the problem, clarification of the situation.

Often in the headings there are substantive adjectives that are formed from phrases by not using the noun, so the adjective becomes an independent noun. Thus, there is a language economy, we observe a tendency to brevity that characterizes newspaper headlines.

Regionali, affluenza in Emilia-Romagna al 23% alle ore 12: oltre il doppio del 2014. Local elections, turnout in Emilia Romagna 23% at 12 o'clock: twice as much as in 2014 (Morosi, 2020, para.1) - (elezioni regionali local elections goes to regionali-substantive adjective)

La ciclabile finisce sul muro? Does the bike path run up against the wall? (pista ciclabile bike path goes into the substantive adjective la ciclabile)

In addition, language economy is manifested in the use of a nominal style, which is understood as texts with a high frequency of nouns. Thus, the nominal style is opposed to the verbal style and is a characteristic of a large number of headlines in Italian Newspapers. The absence of a verb is most often associated with the desire to more accurately and economically present the material, the verb predicate is not used, due to which there is a language economy and this makes the title short and capacious:

Guasto a Roma Termini, treni con ritardi fino a 60 minuti (Cronaca, 2020, para.1) Malfunction at Roma Termini station, trains are up to 60 minutes late.

Rifiuti, 23 mezzi bruciati a San Severo: quarto caso nel Foggiano (Borrillo, 2020, para.1) Waste, 23 garbage trucks were burnt in San Severo: the fourth case in the province of Foggia.

Su WhatsApp posti di blocco e insulti agli agenti (Redazione cronache, 2020, para.1) In the WhatsApp app (notifications) about roadblocks and insulting police agents.

Nuovo Codice della strada: in auto a 150 kmh, ma senza fumo. Telefonino, ipotesi ritiro patente (Pucci, 2020, para.1). New traffic rules: driving up to 150 km / h, but no smoking. For using the phone – deprivation of driver's license.

## 7. Conclusion

We reviewed the headlines of Italian Newspapers in order to identify their lexical and stylistic features. Stylistic tools help to make the title more expressive and attractive to the reader.

After analyzing the material we came to the conclusion that in the newspaper style the most common means of giving special expressiveness to headlines are metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, foreign language vocabulary, and comparison

The presence of such means as the non-use of verbs or the use of abbreviations is a distinctive feature of newspaper headlines, since one of the most important characteristics is their brevity. In addition, many titles contain interrogative sentences, which encourage the reader to take action, make them think and analyze what they read.

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