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**“A linguistic analysis of the representation of ‘foreign’ in the national news section of
The Times and *The Guardian* during a one week period”**

A Paper by Shane M. Coughlan

Supervised by Dr. U. Clark

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“The world of the Press is not the real world.”
(Fowler, 1993: 11)

Dedication:

To Zoe, for telling me why it mattered.

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Shane Coughlan, May 2002

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Abstract:

“Institutions of news reporting and presentation are socially, economically and politically situated, all news is always reported from some particular angle. The structure of the medium encodes significances which derive from the respective positions within society of the publishing or broadcasting organisations.”

(Fowler, 1993, pp10)

If we recognize Fowler’s statement as correct then ‘newspapers’ are deceptively named. They are not carriers of ‘news’ in a factual sense, but create certain interpretations and hold bias in relation to the world they observe. This paper accepts Fowler’s assertion, and applies his reasoning to selected texts. It examines the linguistic representation of ‘foreign’ as a concept in two broadsheet newspapers in their respective national news sections, focusing on bias and story construction, with Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), especially through the grammatical functions created by M. A. K. Halliday, being employed to explicitly illustrate methods used to create preferred readings in newspaper stories. The research thus illustrates representative construction in newspapers using linguistic analysis, and questions the assumed objectivity of the broadsheet press. By doing so, it highlights the constructed nature of press texts, and shows ‘news’ reporting to be far removed from a neutral reflection of the ‘truth’. It is a supplementary document to existing texts on newspaper and media representation, and is unique because of its treatment of broadsheet publications instead of the previously examined tabloids (e.g. Engel 1996).

Introduction:

The press are “an example of a process found in *all* discourse, the structured mediation of the world.”

(Fowler, 1993: 120)

This paper examines the linguistic representation of identifiably ‘foreign’ subjects in the broadsheet press. It is an analysis of the way that language is used to encode certain meanings that readers of newspapers decode and understand, and is placed in context by Shoemaker’s assertion that in non-academic reading “we forget that the information we see and hear has been carefully filtered at several levels” (Shoemaker, 1996: 17). The purpose of this paper is to examine linguistic mediation, and to suggest that representation in broadsheet news articles is not neutral. The broadsheet press of the United Kingdom form the subject matter, and representative articles from *The Guardian* and *The Times* are analysed.

Previous linguistic examination of the printed press has tended to focus on the tabloid media (e.g. Engel, 1996), and not broadsheet publications. This paper proposes that overlooking any area of press representation erroneously allows the uncritical presentation of information as ‘fact’ whilst disregarding ideological content. It recognizes Curran and Seaton’s statement that the “influence of the media has been immense – on institutions, the conduct of affairs, and the way in which people think and act politically” (Curran and Seaton, 1991: 1), and asserts that uncritical academic acceptance of any media text is questionable.

This paper uses Critical Discourse Analysis (known as CDA hereafter) as its linguistic foundation. CDA “sees discourse – language used in speech and writing – as a form of ‘social practice’” (Wodak in Gunnarsson *et al*, 1997: 173), and not as a separate and isolated system of symbols. This depiction of language is particularly useful for examining the broadsheet press, given that they both reflect a given society and are part of it. Of primary importance is the work of M. A. K. Halliday into what he terms *functional grammar* (Halliday, 1994). Halliday attributes functions known as the ideational, interpersonal and textual to language, with each function describing certain meanings, constructions and effects that language conveys (see **Appendix 4**).

CDA, and most especially M. A. K. Halliday's model of linguistic functions, provides tools with which to challenge the Liberal Theory of Press Freedom (Curran and Seaton, 1991: 277). The Liberal Theory of Press Freedom suggests that the press should be regarded as representative of the public and accountable to it. Alongside the slightly more disparate model of 'objectivity' described by McQuail (McQuail, 2000: 172), this theory asserts that in a liberal market the press will become a 'fourth estate' that holds government, civil service and judiciary to account. The Liberal Theory of Press Freedom and the model of objectivity therefore assume that the press do not play a part in the creation of what Barthes called 'myths' (Barker and Galasiński, 2001: 5; Wodak in Gunnarsson *et al*, 1997: 175), which are the legitimisation of specific ideologies through cultural codes and representation.

It is important to remember that newspapers are a part of the formation and continuation of cultural ideologies. They present news and commentary on editorially selected events to readers each day, and they do so as 'reporters' of events, assuming a perspective that pertains to neutrality. Given that 'knowledge' of any type "is never a neutral or objective phenomenon but a matter of the place from which one speaks, to whom, and for what purposes," (Barker and Galasiński, 2001: 22) it is perhaps rash to regard press texts as something other than ideological representations of events.

This paper understands that "bias in news content can refer, especially, to distorting reality, giving a negative picture of minority groups of many kinds" (McQuail, 2000: 322). Even before the events of September 11th 2001 aided in polarising the perceptions of 'native' and 'foreign' in the United Kingdom I had observed apparently consistent textual and conversational divisions between those presumed to be native British and those who are not. I selected the national news sections of the newspapers for examination because of the close proximity of content of these sections to the supposed interests of the readers. This text is based on the proposition that there are "properties of relations between social groups" (van Dijk in Wetherell *et al*, 2001: 302) that we can understand linguistically, and that CDA applied to a defined textual sample can create a representational understanding of the way texts are encoded.

To accomplish the proposed linguistic analysis this project is split into four sections. These comprise of a short chapter introducing the reader to literature used in the creation of this text, a chapter on the methodology employed in this text, a chapter examining the selected news articles from

The Times and *The Guardian*, and a closing summary of information uncovered. Each of these chapters deals with a specific aspect of the reasoning, subject matter and conclusions of this text.

This research primarily functions as a way to understand the construction of news in broadsheet newspapers, and the extent to which they impose preferred readings on their texts. The findings of this research will be useful to both linguistic and media readers, and will result in a qualitative linguistic research document with a clearly defined sample and findings. By the conclusion of the paper the reader will have a clear idea of how newspapers like *The Times* and *The Guardian* use linguistic construction in representation, and of how identifiably 'foreign' people, events or places are represented in the national news sections of these publications.

Chapter 1: A Review of Literature

The literature used in the construction of this paper can be broadly split into two groups of texts; those dealing with the media (e.g. Curran and Seaton, 1991; Fowler, 1991; Keeble, 2000; McLuhan, 1987), and those concerned with communication, discourse and linguistics (e.g. Galasiński, 2000; McQuail, 2000; van, Dijk 2001; Halliday, 1994). These texts share an interest in the construction of types of discourse, though they approach their analysis in completely different ways. The media texts tend to qualitatively examine the historical development of professional discourse (e.g. Curran and Seaton, 1991), and postulate on the impact of such discourse from learned experience. Conversely communication, discourse and linguistic texts adopt a structured pattern of linguistic and communicative theories in attempting to understand the place of professional (and non-professional) discourse in society (e.g. Halliday, 1994).

The key texts of this project are those that place CDA and the media into context, and provide tools with which to analyse the material gathered in the sampling process. With regards to media and press texts, Curran and Seaton's *Power Without Responsibility* (Curran and Seaton, 1991) has been very useful for providing historical, political and ownership information about the print media, as well as supplying a clear explanation of the Liberal Theory of Press Freedom, one of the key theories employed in this paper. Keeble's *The Newspaper Handbook* (Keeble, 2000) has provided a wealth of practical information on the methods and aims of the media, and as a text intended to teach future journalists carries some authority. Invaluable in the understanding of the effect and meaning of media is McLuhan's work (McLuhan, 1987) in the way media both contain and *are* messages in their own right.

Roger Fowler's *Language in the News* (Fowler, 1991) is essential to the arguments in this project, asserting as it does that news is a practice involving ideology, and explaining in detail how one might perceive ideological discourse construction. Supplementary to this text, and providing a bridging gap between the press and discourse theory is Gunnarsson et al with *The Construction of Professional Discourse* (Gunnarsson et al, 1997). This book provides little in the way of theory, but acts as a practical guide explaining how one might construct a professional (non-personal) text.

McQuail's *Mass Communication Theory* (McQuail, 2000) provides the theoretical framework for communication in this project. As well as supplying detailed information on concepts, models and

theories of media and society, it is McQuail's definition of connotation and denotation that is applied in this research. Van Dijk's *Discourse as Structure and Process* (van Dijk, 1997) is the bridge between communication theory and discourse theory, covering a diverse range of topics ranging from discourse semantics to discourse grammar. It also contains a history of discourse analysis, and is used alongside O'Grady's *Contemporary Linguistics* (O'Grady, 1996) to lay the foundations of my study of discourse and meaning. Pinker's *The Language Instinct* (Pinker, 1994) contains theoretical information on how languages works, and is used to look for contradictions to the tenets of discourse analysis in the books mentioned above.

Fairclough's *Language and Power* (Fairclough, 1989) supplies the foundation of CDA theory used in this project, though it is Barker and Galasiński's *Cultural Studies and Discourse Analysis* (Barker and Galasiński, 2001) and Galasiński's *The Language of Deception* (Galasiński, 2000) that provide the most lucid information on CDA, its origins, and the reasoning behind it. Building from this theoretical foundation comes M. A. K. Halliday's *An Introduction to Functional Grammar* (Halliday, 1994). Halliday, through his ideational function, supplies the means to the analysis of the newspaper articles in chapter 3 of this paper, and provides what can only be described as the key theoretical base of this research. Wetherell *et al*'s *Discourse Theory and Practice* (Wetherell *et al*, 2001) was used for secondary information, and provided background information – largely unused in the actual text of this project – on linguistics as understood by Saussure, Bakhtin and Foucault.

This project marries media and CDA linguistics together to understand how the press create representations. In doing so it has a narrow remit and aims to demonstrate some clearly stated goals, namely how the broadsheet press construct representations of 'foreign' and the lack of evidence to support claims that may be made regarding the objectivity of the press. The literature used to construct this project was chosen for its relevance to the subject matter, and its utility in constructing a linear paper with limited word-length. Media theory - such as the Liberal Theory of Press Freedom (Curran and Seaton, 1991: 277) – provides a simple theoretical space in which to apply clear and plausible linguistic theory – such as the grammatical functions (Halliday, 1994). This permits an analysis of material through defined key concepts like 'objectivity' and the 'ideational function'.

Media and linguistics are well-researched fields with many texts and theories currently available, and this project must be selective about what texts will be used. Interesting texts on corpora or quantitative linguistic studies were discounted as key texts because of their lack of relevance to our

stated objectives. Likewise, texts on the media or press that did not directly concern themselves with objectivity or power relations were not included in this paper. At all times clarity – built on a strong theoretical foundation – is valued over digression or unnecessary diversity of concepts.

Chapter 2: An Examination of Methodology

The research methodology of this paper is to define a media sample, apply a press theory to it, and to then deconstruct actual text from the sample using linguistic theory. The Liberal Theory of Press Freedom (Curran and Seaton, 1991: 277) with the assumed objectivity of the press (McQuail, 2000: 172) provides the context from which to apply the primary theoretical framework of this dissertation, that of functional grammar inside the framework of CDA (Halliday, 1994).

The first stage of this research identifies ‘foreign’ subject articles from *The Times* and *The Guardian*’s national news sections during a selected week of publication, and is conducted using copies of *The Times* and *The Guardian* from Monday 8th of April 2002 until Saturday 13th of April 2002. ‘Foreign’ is defined by filtering the newspaper texts to find certain key words. Rather than a quantitative and comprehensive listing of all words that may be related to the concept of ‘foreign’, this research defines a representative and unambiguous collection of words that denote our selected meaning. They are as follows: African, American, Asia, Asian, Asylum Seeker, Black, Brussels, Chinese, Deport, Deportation, EU, Europe, European, Foreign, Foreigner, French, German, Immigrant, Irish, Japanese, Naturalised, Oriental, Refugee, Yardie. These words have non-UK orientated denotation or connotation, denote exclusion for those outside the nation, or describe expulsion for those inside it.

The word-filter described above defines a sample of articles from which the qualitative examination of language can begin. To limit the linguistically examined articles to usable proportions three articles from each newspaper are selected from our defined sample. These selected articles are chosen by using a measure of article length, and therefore make up a fair and unbiased sample. The measure of article length used is column inches, which is a method of counting the length of newspaper articles in vertical size alone, and discounts typeface, column width and paragraph spacing. The selected articles contain the average number of column inches devoted to the defined subject as measured from the initial sample (see **appendix 1**).

If CDA is to be employed regarding the planned construction of texts, the context in which they relate to each other, and the preferred reading that they hold, it must be built on a firm understanding of both communication and media theory. It follows that the second stage of research is to clearly define an understanding of such theory. For this paper mass communication is defined as a

“body of ‘messages’ and ‘meanings’ [...] continuously being transmitted and received from all kinds of different media” (McQuail, 2000: 304). Communication is about information, and it represents meaning through *signs* in language. These signs *signify* certain things in the physical world. Language and communication, therefore, are about the depiction of reality or thought through signs. This is best explained by O’Grady’s statement that:

“Underlying the use of words and sentences to express meaning in human language is a conceptual system capable of organizing and classifying every imaginable aspect of our experience, from inner feelings and perceptions, to cultural and social phenomena, to the physical world that surrounds us.”
(O’Grady in O’Grady *et al*, 1996: 276)

Discourse in communication serves to represent certain ideologies and therefore ‘myths’ (Wodak in Gunnarsson *et al*, 1997: 174), and consequently discourse reflects certain power relations in a society. These in turn involve the control of one group by another (van Dijk in Wetherell *et al*, 2001: 302). Thus language – and communication – is an element of the power relations of a society, and it is language that perpetuates power relations in society by helping “people to sort things, [and encouraging] them to think of the world in terms of certain artificial categories tacitly felt to be ‘common sense’” (Fowler, 1993: 30).

Humans rely on *paradigms* (Shoemaker, 1996: 17); ways of representing reality that are useful rather than supplying ‘truth’. The press – like every other communication medium – linguistically represents reality through paradigms, and does “not mirror an independent object world” (Barker and Galasiński, 2001: 1). It is fascinating then to note that public perception of the press supposes something quite different. According to McLuhan, his students could not accept that the press might be used with any “base intent” (McLuhan, 1987: 209). The press, in standing with what might be called the Liberal Theory of Press Freedom (Curran and Seaton, 1991: 277), is regarded as a transmitter of factual information. A certain objectivity – or lack of bias – is assumed to exist in print publications.

According to the Liberal Theory of Press Freedom the press should have the right to manage its own affairs as it sees fit, and in doing so that it will constitute what might be called the “fourth estate of the realm” (Curran and Seaton, 1991: 277). It is assumed that the press will adopt a “position of detachment and neutrality towards the main object of reporting” (McQuail, 2000: 172), and will act as a regulating system to report on the actions and mediated discourse of government, civil service and

judiciary. There is a stark contrast between the ideological position of the press – as the neutral fourth estate – and the reality of its position as a mediated discourse of power.

The third stage of research deconstructs the ‘myths’ or ideologies that the press has built around itself, and challenges both the Liberal Theory of Press Freedom and assumptions of press objectivity. It does so – as stated earlier – through what is known as CDA. CDA is an ideal tool for deconstructing press discourse and analysing the linguistic representations that lie therein, as it “studies real, and often extended, instances of social interaction that takes a (partially) linguistic form” (Wodak in Gunnarsson *et al*, 1997: 173), and it does so through a “close analysis of written or spoken texts” (Barker and Galasiński, 2001: 62).

CDA takes its inspiration from Foucault in that it examines the production of meaning in discourse (Hall, 1997: 51), and sees discourse as a form of “social practice” (Barker and Galasiński, 2001: 173). The conception of discourse as a social practice, especially espoused by the Vienna School of Critical Discourse Analysis (Wodak *et al*, 1999: 7-10), removes any disconnection traditional linguistics has had with actual language use, and regards discourse as a mediator of power in society. Van Dijk describes CDA as being interested in power and its place in discourse, with a particular interest in power abuse (van Dijk in Wetherell *et al*, 2001: 302). CDA is intended to provide tools to allow researchers to examine such abuses of power, and in doing so connect discourse and language with power relations in society. Furthermore CDA does not assume researcher neutrality in analysis, as it perceives everyone as ‘cultural’ or involved in discourse. Instead CDA suggests that research must take bias into account, and balance analysis with “certain agreed features of the analysed text” that create a context for interpretation (Barker and Galasiński, 2001: 24).

This research uses CDA to deconstruct the actual output of the broadsheet press, and builds on the British branch of functional linguistics premise that language is connected to society (de Beaugrande in van Dijk, 1997: 49). M. A. K. Halliday developed tools with which to discern what speakers actually say and – more importantly – why they say it (Halliday, 1994). This *functional grammar*, or group of *ideational*, *interpersonal* and *textual* functions (see **Appendix 4**), is well suited for the qualitative analysis of texts such as those defined in the sample for this project, and the understanding of language being connected to society and power is integral to the justifications for this research. The purpose of this project is to examine what ideological and political bias – if any –

broadsheet news articles contain, and how this bias may affect judgements we might make regarding their role in society.

Halliday's *interpersonal* and *ideational* functions provide the tools with which to analyse the sampled articles (Halliday, 1994: chapters 4 & 5). The *interpersonal* function is applied to consider mood and metalanguage in the sample, uncovering in the process the construction of discourse inside the articles (e.g. is it declarative, interrogative or imperative?) and the way that words are used (e.g. are people *reassuring*, *informing* or *claiming* when they speak?). The *ideational* function is applied to consider the transitivity and vocabulary used in the sample, uncovering in turn the representation of events (e.g. are things being *done* or *felt* by people?) and the vocabulary used to describe them (e.g. are the words technical or emotive?).

Chapter 3: Results of the Research

The defined sample of broadsheet news articles is selected from *The Times* and *The Guardian*'s national news sections between the 8th of April 2002 and 13th of April 2002. Certain key words (see **Chapter 2: An Examination of Methodology**) are applied to the sample to uncover articles dealing with the 'foreign'. Twenty-three articles from *The Times* and twenty-two from *The Guardian* contain these key words. The average number of column inches devoted to articles using the key words in *The Times* is 12", and in *The Guardian* the average number is 15.5" (see **Appendix 3: Table 3**). The three articles closest to this average number from each paper make up our research sample.

The three selected articles from *The Times* are entitled "*£100,000 did not provide access to No 10, says Levy*" (see **Appendix 4: T1**), "*Reid denies deal as IRA spikes guns*" (see **Appendix 5: T2**), and "*America softens defiance on steel tariff*" (see **Appendix 6: T3**), and are known as T1, T2 and T3 hereafter. The three selected articles from *The Guardian* are entitled "*Eight years in jail and 800 lashes for Briton*" (see **Appendix 7: G1**), "*Unionists angry at tribute dinner for IRA dead*" (see **Appendix 8: G2**), and "*Damilola police accused of fabrications*" (see **Appendix 9: G3**), and are known as G1, G2 and G3 hereafter.

All six articles are declarative in mood, and present seemingly factual information intermixed with quotes from identified third parties. Examples of this are T3, where "STEEL tariffs imposed by the United States on struggling British companies threatened to sour talks" (see **Appendix 6: T3**), and G1, where "A Briton accused of running the most successful drinking club in Saudi Arabia was yesterday sentenced to 800 lashes" (see **Appendix 7: G1**). 'Facts' are being declared to the reading audience, and comment is apparently limited to that of the named third parties.

However, the metalanguage used in the sampled articles is slightly less unambiguous than might be presumed by the casual reader. In T2 John Reid "denies" a deal with the IRA instead of 'refuting' allegations of such a deal (see **Appendix 5: T2**), and in T3 Tony Blair "urged" the US president to give favourable treatment to British steel instead of 'conversing' with him about a compromise (see **Appendix 6: T3**). In both articles the way people talk about events or to other people suggests a possible interpretation of events; this is best highlighted by the portrayal of Tony Blair

emotively asking for concessions rather than striking a balanced deal with the US. The relationship between the US and the UK is presented as unequal, with the US being the dominant party.

The transitivity in all six articles is material, with things being done rather than being felt. Examples of this are T2, where the “head of the independent arms decommissioning body, confirmed that the IRA had put beyond use a “varied and substantial quantity of ammunition”” (see **Appendix 5: T2**) and G1, where “O’Nions, who is in solitary confinement, is planning to appeal against his sentence” (see **Appendix 7: G1**). This material construction reads as more factual than emotive, and does not appear to reflect the thoughts and opinions of the text’s author. This is deceptive, given that the author both reports on events and mediates the representation of the event through the language used.

The choice of vocabulary in all six articles is interesting. In T3 British companies are ‘struggling’ instead of ‘inefficient’, and the steel tariffs provoked ‘fury’ in the European Union instead of ‘concern’. The presentation of information suggests that the US has unfairly imposed tariffs on EU nations, and delegitimises their declared aim of “working to create the prospect of a better future for steelmakers” (Paul O’Neill, US Treasury Secretary quoted, see **Appendix 6: T3**). In G2 unionists are “angry” with a republication tribute dinner rather than ‘upset’, and therefore appear to be aggressive rather than offended about such an event (see **Appendix 8: G2**).

The research uncovers some very interesting similarities in structure and presentation in all six of the sampled articles. The mood is always declarative, and always pertains to the reporting of events mixed with comments from named sources. The transitivity is always material, with people doing things, events occurring, and actions changing events. The metalanguage places the speech acts of named actors into a context usually reinforced by the ‘factual’ reporting surrounding the quote (e.g. Blair and steel tariffs in T3). However, it is in vocabulary that all six texts reveal the most fascinating examples of constructed representation. Our examples show “fury” instead of ‘concern’ and “anger” instead of ‘upset’ (T3 and G2 respectively). The uniformity of representational construction is all the most startling when one considers that the sampled articles come from two completely different broadsheet newspapers with different political ideologies – *The Times* is traditionally right-wing and *The Guardian* traditionally left-wing.

The articles are not ‘neutral’ in construction, and favour certain agents represented over others. This is exemplified in G1, where the imprisoned Briton is allowed a voice through quotes from

his wife and the British Foreign Office, while Saudi authorities – his prosecutors – are allowed no spokesperson (see **Appendix 7: G1**). There is clear bias in construction of the articles for both newspapers, and the metalanguage and vocabulary used reflect certain planned textual positions for actors. This is not to say that the sampled articles represent co-ordinated discrimination against the foreign actors they mention. Indeed, in T1, T2 and G2 the foreign actors are undefined, and apart from a lack of speaking rights they are unbiased in their representation. The critical construction is used instead to represent the UK nation in certain ways, and to reflect internal power struggles instead (e.g. Unionists and Republicans in Northern Ireland, T2 and G2).

The empirical results of this research show that *The Times* and *The Guardian* have systematic and virtually indistinguishable methods of constructing their news articles. The sampled articles from both publications display a uniform textual structure, have identical declarative mood and material transitivity, and share emotive vocabulary. Bias is also present in all the articles sampled, and is exclusively concerned with the representation of internal UK figures or groups. The representation of foreign in *The Times* and *The Guardian* does not show explicit prejudice against foreign agents or people, even if those labelled as foreign lack voice to either represent themselves or comment on the events reported. In conclusion, though the representation of ‘foreign’ in the two broadsheets is noticeably passive and the foreign takes a secondary role to UK agents, directly xenophobic bias is completely absent from the defined sample.

Conclusion:

“It is striking how much the evaluation of media content comes down to the question of relation to reality, as if the media ought to reflect more or less proportionately some empirical reality and ought always be ‘fair’ as between the advantaged and the disadvantaged.”

(McQuail 2000: 323)

The results of the research fit neatly into the framework of CDA. A clear and unambiguous sample of material from *The Times* and *The Guardian* produced results suggesting that these newspapers construct representations to reflect certain stances or beliefs regarding various power relations. Both *The Times* and *The Guardian* use apparently factual representation to create texts laden with bias and preferred reading. These results are consistent with previous studies of the press (Curran & Seaton, 1997; Fowler, 1991), and present a legitimate challenge to the Liberal Theory of Press Freedom. They are also consistent with previous studies of power and (mis)representation in CDA, with a pertinent example being Galasiński’s *The Language of Deception* (Galasiński, 2000).

This research was an education to the author regarding the dangers of presupposition in approaching a subject area. While the examined newspapers contain provable bias in construction, they do not represent the foreign in any overtly prejudiced fashion. The sampled articles all refused voice to the foreign, but restricted their use of emotive vocabulary and biased metalanguage to national (non-foreign) subjects. I had supposed – especially given previous personal study into tabloids – that *The Times* and *The Guardian* would have not had such a restriction. The lack of intentional bias against the foreign, and indeed the total lack of ideology found in the articles on the subject, is both interesting and relevant. However, it does not detract from the constructed nature of the press, and in no way invalidates the assertion at the start of this paper that “bias in news content can refer, especially, to distorting reality, giving a negative picture of minority groups of many kinds” (McQuail, 2000: 322). Newspapers do construct preferred readings of their texts, and *The Times* and *The Guardian* construct their respective texts using what appear to be identical techniques.

The research supports the claim that news and its reporting is a value and opinion orientated field, and shows the notion of news possessing a ‘straight’ report of events to be clearly based on false assumptions. As Boyd says, a “journalist can only be the sum of his or her beliefs, experience and attitudes, the product of society, culture and upbringing” (Boyd 2001: 200). It is important to remember that “that far from being spontaneous reactions to random events, news is selected, shaped and structured according to a range of ideological conventions, institutional practices and assumptions about the audience, as well as the more obvious practical considerations” (O’Sullivan 1997: 250). Likewise, news companies have ideological, institutional and assumptive influences as a whole. News can only be a way of presenting material deemed important by its producers to an audience, and is a product of the power relations in society.

To conclude the author would like to stress that though significant bias in *The Times* and *The Guardian* regarding ‘foreign’ is absent from the defined text sample, the Liberal Theory of Press Freedom is challenged by the research conducted, with the alleged ‘Fourth Estate’ of arbitration being entirely absent from the stories examined. Halliday’s functions show the press creating preferred readings in their texts, and unearths consistent methods of construction that are common to theoretically opposed and supposedly quite dissimilar newspapers. Further research is called for, particularly in the way that the broadsheet publications formulate their articles and in the way that *The Times* and *The Guardian* produce such linguistically similar copy.

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Primary Newspaper Articles:

Bowcott, O. (10/4/02) *Eight years in jail and 800 lashes for Briton*, The Guardian, London and Manchester

Cowan, R. (12/4/02) *Unionists angry at tribute dinner for IRA dead*, The Guardian, London and Manchester

Charter, D. (8/4/02) *£100,000 did not provide access to No 10*, says Levy, The Times, London

Kite, M. (13/4/02) *America softens defiance on steel tariff*, The Times, London

Lister, D. (9/4/02) *Reid denies deal as IRA spikes guns*, The Times, London

Morris, S. (13/4/02) *Damilola police accused of fabrications*, The Guardian, London and Manchester

Appendix 1: Table 1

Table 1 shows the column inch length of articles sampled from the newspapers.

Column inches are the amount of space given to a story in inches of print, and are the standard measure of length applied in the journalistic trade. They are not an exact measure of space allocated, and all the column inch measurements here have been rounded to the nearest 10th of an inch. In some cases, where there was a choice between a measure of 0.5 and 0.6, the final number selected was always 0.5

You can see the selected sample articles here (marked **T1**, **G1**, **T2** etc.). These are the articles that are closest to the average column inch length devoted to this type of story in each newspaper.

No.	The Times	The Guardian
1	12" (8/4/02) T1	10" (8/4/02)
2	15" (8/4/02)	22" (9/4/02)
3	14" (8/4/02)	30" (9/4/02)
4	18" (8/4/02)	20" (9/4/02)
5	10.5" (8/4/02)	18" (10/4/02)
6	6" (8/4/02)	13.5" (10/4/02) G1
7	12" (9/4/02) T2	8" (10/4/02)
8	24" (9/4/02)	20" (11/4/02)
9	16" (9/4/02)	19.5" (11/4/02)
10	1.5" (10/4/02)	1.5" (11/4/02)
11	14" (10/4/02)	13.5" (11/4/02)
12	13.5" (11/4/02)	16" (12/4/02) G2
13	2.5" (11/4/02)	42.5" (12/4/02)
14	4.5" (12/4/02)	1" (12/4/02)
15	7" (12/4/02)	24.5" (13/4/02)
16	17" (12/4/02)	8" (13/4/02)
17	5.5" (12/4/02)	16.5" (13/4/02) G3
18	10" (13/4/02)	1" (13/4/02)
19	14" (13/4/02)	24" (13/4/02)
20	20" (13/4/02)	10" (13/4/02)
21	25.5" (13/4/02)	4" (13/4/02)
22	12.5" (13/4/02) T3	18.5" (13/4/02)
23	2.7" (13/4/02)	
Total	277.7"	342"
AV	12"	15.5"

Table 1 Key

Total = the total number of column inches in each newspaper to this type of story.

AV = the average number of column inches devoted to this type of story in each newspaper.

Appendix 2: Table 2

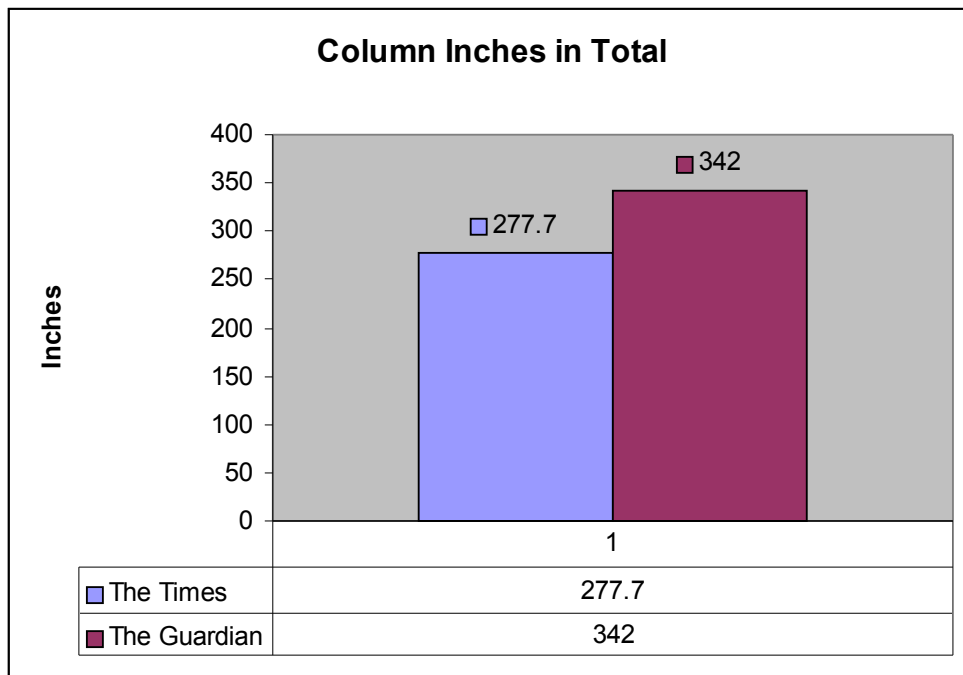


Table 2 shows the total amount of column inches dedicated to our defined area of “foreign” in the national news sections of *The Times* and *The Guardian* in the week of the 8th of April 2002 through to the 13th of April 2002.

Appendix 3: Table 3

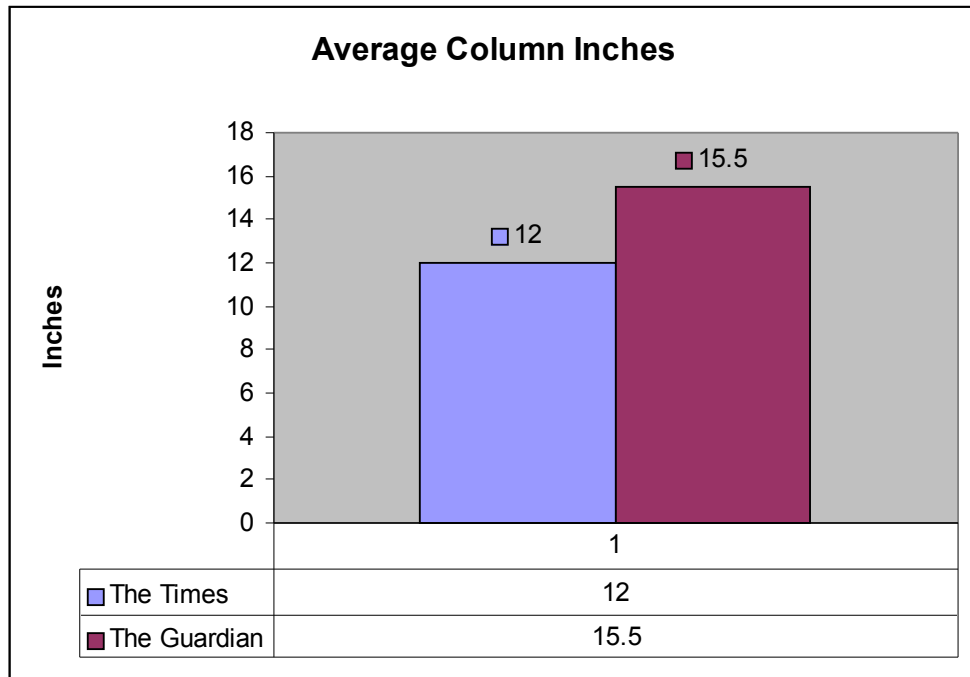


Table 3 shows the average amount of column inches dedicated to our defined area of “foreign” in the national news sections of *The Times* and *The Guardian* in the week of the 8th of April 2002 through to the 13th of April 2002.

Appendix 4 – Halliday’s Functions

Ideational Function

- Transitivity

- Material (doing, happening, creating, changing)
- Mental (feeling, thinking, sensing)
- Relational (being or having an attribute)
- Behavioural (laughing, smiling, signing)
- Verbal (promising, talking, warning)
- Existential (things that exist...being there)

- Vocabulary

What words are used and why? What effect do these words have?

Interpersonal Function

- Mood

- Declarative
- Interrogative
- Imperative

- Metalanguage

Words that talk about words...Do you *reassure*, *inform* or *claim* something?

- Modality

Reader’s attitude:

- Something is
- Might be
- Must be
- Should be
- Ought to be
- Must do
- May do

Textual Function

- Coherence

- Reference (what it is the words refer to)
- Conjunctions (words connecting...like ‘therefore’ and ‘because’)
- Ellipsis (presupposition – deleting of some of message - due to previous text content already covering ground)
- Lexical cohesion (use of repetition)

- Theme-rheme structure

- Theme (agent, or what comes first in the clause)
- Rheme (effect, or what comes next in the clause...what we are told about the theme)

Appendix 5: T1

Appendix 6: T2

Appendix 7: T3

Appendix 8: G1

Appendix 9: G2

Appendix 10: G3