



A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE HEADLINES OF THE PUNCH NEWSPAPER AND INSTABLOG IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The mass media in Nigeria and the world are going through a series of changes and developments that accompany the gradual evolution of the internet. The spread of information and news gradually and steadily moves from print and audio broadcasts to digital platforms. With the emergence of smartphones, new forms of news and information from social media, websites and blogs, become the primary means of accessing media broadcasts. Every news report begins with headlines. However, with this new development, news headlines are accompanied by different features that deviate from the common forms found in newspapers. Thus, this study aims to analyse the news headlines in the print media and news blogs on social media. It compares and contrasts both headlines, specifically analysing Nigerian Newspaper headlines and Instablog which is one of the most popular social media news blogs in Nigeria. This paper elaborated on an overview of news headlines, online journalism and blogs in Nigeria, news blogs and social media, news and the mass media, the language of print media, theoretical framework and conclusion. The paper recommends among others that the contents should be relevant, there is a need to preserve the culture of writing words in full, The purpose of news consumption should also be achieved, The goal of consuming the information in the news should not be stuck in the discursive aspect alone but also translate to holistic growth and development in the political, socio-cultural and ideological shifts in the orientation of the general public, and Further research should be conducted on areas like syntactic patterns of headlines and other linguistic studies that interrogate the grammar, phonology, semantics and stylistics of the headlines of newspaper and news blog headlines in general.

Keywords: Headlines, Punch Newspaper, Nigeria, Instablog, Media

Introduction

The advent of social media, the proliferation of smartphones and the age of the Internet have had a major impact on how information is accessed across the globe. With the emergence of Web 2.0, even traditional media is obliged to keep up with new technologies and advancements in social media. As globalization continues to change the way things are done, a massive shift in

media outlets becomes inevitable as the mode of dissemination of news and information becomes diverse. The newspaper as an outlet for dissemination of news via print has its methods of passing information to the public. As social media becomes a mainstay, different blogs on the internet serve as tools through which news and information are passed to the public.

Before this time, traditional media depended on disseminating news in print. The print media dominates broadcasting and news is shared via newspapers. Gradually, news and information move to broadcast media in the form of radio broadcasts as the primary medium to disseminate information. Then the broadcast media gradually evolves to what is referred to as traditional digital media which involves computer and television broadcasts, where news and information are shared via television, and people can watch news videos. This gradual shift culminates in the latest form of media which is referred to as the new form of digital media that comprises social media, websites, smartphones, even video games and tablets (Chen, 2022). This new media outlet is unique because it provides a variety of presentations ranging from texts to audio and even video materials. News blogs and social media blogs present news both in written form and in video representations to give the audience details and a variety of options.

The smartphone and the emergence of the internet which includes websites and blogs pioneered this shift. People can access news and information easily because of the smartphone. The popularity of print media depreciates massively in Nigeria due to the advent of social media. Currently, the use of newspapers to access news in Nigeria is considered old-fashioned among the youth population but acknowledged by elderly people, as a result of this different news blogs and social media news blogs effectively erase the popular traditional digital media, and print media forms.

Instablog is a Nigerian news blog on Instagram known to be a major news outlet and increasingly become popular among the youth population over the newspaper because it is easily accessible to every smartphone user and social media freak. The youth population fall within the age bracket that is exposed to Instablog. Research proves that the rate of young people who read newspapers decreases remarkably as they spend more time on social media and blogs (Seyidov and Ozoran, 2020). However, newspapers are also accessible and remain a source of information for people particularly those that fall within the adult age bracket.

One of the reasons for the decline of print media is that most print media cannot renew the information or news immediately. This is because print media spends a lot of time on processes, like typesetting, editing, correction and then printing, and the final step, publishing. For example, when there is big news, people who work in a magazine or newspaper office go through the aforementioned processes.

News headlines give readers an inkling of the information passed across on a particular page of a newspaper or a news blog. They have certain features and lead expressions that introduce readers to the news. Readers usually rate the content of a story by the power of its headlines. Blom and Hansen (2015) opine that the ability of a news headline to captivate the audience is

actually what makes the headline and the news profitable. Therefore, journalists spend time preparing news headlines as they determine if the content of the news will be read. Usually, these headlines written in bold are captivating and designed to create suspense enough to make readers delve into the news in full. Insta blogs and Newspaper headlines have different features that attract the public. The purpose of both news outlets also differ remarkably as much as there are similarities in purpose. Social media news outlets have certain characteristics that govern their expression as a result of features and extra icons that are included in their usage. The objectives of news headlines on the Insta blog can therefore differ from the objectives of news headlines on *The Punch* newspaper and this can make the language of the Insta blog differ from the language of Punch news headlines.

With the additional features on Instagram which include likes, comments, and share icons, Insta blog news headlines are tailored to drive the public uniquely and sponsor their contribution to the news. This is different from newspaper headlines where the public are not contributors and do not have an opportunity to express their feelings or emotions towards the news update. Blog news headlines are not only geared at information broadcast but also pay attention to how much the readers are entertained to elicit positive responses from them. This inspires the use of headlines that are audience-oriented. The newspaper headlines on the other hand are not interested in comments and likes and so the focus is not so much on the immediate response of the general public. Usually, newspaper headlines have certain ideologies that guide their construction which are more often than not, political. The headlines in Newspapers as well as online news outlets span political, religious, social and cultural issues. Headlines on crime, sports, terrorism and human rights violations among others are also a large part of newspaper and Insta blog headlines. What is most common in both news outlets is that the headlines are written in language that intends to draw readers to read, and the newspaper journalists, want to be able to sell their papers. On the other hand, the blogger on the Insta blog employs the use of click baits that increase followership, comments and likes which in turn has great monetary value for bloggers. This is because social media platforms provide bloggers the opportunity to earn from a huge number of followers, and the number of responses (likes or comments) to a post.

Against this background, this study explores the headlines of newspaper and blog headlines as a case study to examine the language of headlines in both news outlets. This research also engages in a comparative analysis of these headlines to explore similarities and differences.

Literature Review

One of the primary concerns of scholars is the gradual shift from print media to digital media. With the emergence of the internet, the world has evolved into a digital economy, where businesses and other aspects are digital. The mass media is not left out in this regard as there is a clear digitalization of news streams and broadcasts. Information transits from print and radio broadcasts and now rests digitally on the fingertips of the masses with the popularity of

smartphone usage among the majority of the masses. However, this is a different case in print media as vendors must sell newspapers and other printed forms of information like news magazines to the consumers. This gradual transition also alters the language and presentation of news headlines as flexibility in language and the use of words become visible in blog posts and online journalism. It then examines scholarly views on the mass media and the transition from traditional media outlets (print media) to traditional digital media like televisions and then the emergence of online journalism and blogs with the use of smartphones.

An Overview of News Headlines

Headlines are a summary of a story that introduces the story. They are used to reveal the direction of a story and they appear at the top of newspapers, magazines, articles and other news online websites. They are also used at the beginning of a TV and radio news report. The concept of “News” when discussing news headlines is concerned with information on events in the society that are of interest to the general body of people in the society because it particularly affects their lives (Chiluwa, 2007). Headlines are very short summaries designed to attract attention. Newspapers also have sub-headlines which the *Hamlyn Encyclopedic World Dictionary* define as the first sentence of a news report that contains the ‘newsprint’ and tells the story.

In contrast, the headlines of social media news blogs on the internet do not have these sub-headlines summaries. There are no news points in these social media news blogs. Usually, the headlines are placed on a visual representation of the story. The news that follows is placed underneath the visual representation (which is either pictorial or a video clip) and is usually summarized and straight to the point. The unique addition is that these headlines have accompanying video clips and even cartoon representations in the background that give more details on the story. Sometimes, this is done by displaying a video excerpt from the story narrated.

For Agu, (2010, 168) these headlines “are written either with nominal or verbal ellipsis” as they omit certain words to keep the headlines short and captivating. Olugbenga (2020) further explains the uniqueness of headlines and the fact that they only play a role of attracting and orienting the reader without full detail when he notes thus:

Headlines play important roles in orienting the readers' attention and interpretation of the facts contained in the story or article. The language is elliptical and compressed. This made it difficult for many readers to understand them because they are often incomplete sentences (p. 881).

On the other hand, the headlines of online news blogs and social media news blogs are created to not only attract reader interest but to entertain as well. Sometimes the blogs create cartoon

representation. Other times, the real video clips showing the characters that make up the news are presented in the background of the news headlines. The social media news blog headlines therefore play the dual role of attracting readers and entertainment. The headlines are created to optimise stories and their relevance for readers (Dor, 2003).

Newspaper headlines possess linguistic features like the lexical, structural and stylistic content of them. They are usually foregrounded, compressed and condensed, and carry information about the society where they are circulated. Proving this view, Ayodabo (2013) posits that “all the headlines display similarities in terms of thematic focusing and syntax, and this has a pedagogical implication”. Headlines are usually written in a way and structure that is inspired by political and ideological undertones (Tabe and Fiaze, 2018).

However, unlike newspaper headlines, News blog headlines also allow for abbreviations, and the flexible use of words popular in the internet language. There are comment sessions on news headlines where the audience argues and shares their ideas. Words like lol (laughing out loud), CL (chat list), and fr (for real) are comments written under the news headlines. The use of asterisks in news headlines is also very common to caution the effect of certain offensive or censored words like s*x (sex), kn*ck (knack), k*ll (kill), fo*l (fool), etc. In the headlines of social media news blogs like Instablog for example, the use of neologism (coinages) and peculiar Nigerianism (category shift) are used to express meaning different from the standard English meaning. For example, the word “knack” in English refers to a clever or skilful way of doing something. However, Nigerian English uses knack to refer to sex. While such words are not used in Newspaper and print headlines, they feature predominantly in news blog headlines on the internet.

Headlines are the easiest way to have a cursory glance at the news and what it entails for those who do not have the time to read the full story. Khanjan et al (2013) posit that newspaper headlines are usually written under the supervision of an editor based on the main points of the story, and are considered one of the most daunting parts of journalistic writing. These headlines are mediums through which stories are prioritized in the minds of readers in order of attraction and relevance to their thought process. Ehinemin (2014) observes that the headlines determine if a newspaper will be read or not, therefore it is structured to capture the reader’s interests.

This implies that newspaper headlines are sometimes motivated by the political leanings of a particular journalist. The columns in every newspaper are written by a journalist with a particular political ideology, orientation, or preference and the newspaper is an outlet to express these subtly. Although it is the responsibility of journalists and media persons to present news and report issues objectively and impartially, the subtle ideological undertone or motivation of the person can be seen. However, the reports are documented within the provisions of the ethical requirements of the profession as writing outside of the ethical provisions attracts penalties like court cases among others.

Online Journalism and Blogs in Nigeria

Online journalism is a prevalent reality with the advent of the internet and social media. The digital world and the advancement in technology change the way humans interact and receive information, as the world shrinks even smaller into a global village. The definition, features and scope of online journalism is given by Chukwu (2014) thus:

Online journalism also known as digital journalism is a contemporary form of journalism where editorial content is distributed via the internet as opposed to publishing via printed broadcast. What constitutes "online journalism" is debated by scholars. However, the primary product of journalism which is news and features on current affairs is presented solely or in combination as text, audio, video and some interactive forms, and disseminated through online media platforms. Fewer barriers to entry, lowered distribution costs and diverse computer networking technologies have led to the widespread practice of online journalism.

The distinguishing feature of online journalism from traditional media is the freedom of sharing information to allow free flow of interaction as against the traditional media before this time. Deuze (2003) notes three distinguishing features of online journalism. He notes that the first is interactivity which has to do with the fact that the audience can interact with the news content, contribute, and even adapt news content themselves. The comment section of the news content allows for this possibility. The second is multi-media mediality which is the possibility of news content being shared in different platforms and different forms like animated graphics, audio, videos, etcetera. Contents that are textual alone are referred to as "deficient multimodality". The third unique characteristic of online journalism that makes it exceptional is hypertextuality which entails the ability of news sites "to connect the story to other stories, archives, resources and so forth through hyperlinks" (Deuze 2003). The presence and sharing of links that lead to news content across different sites and platforms represent the core of hypertextuality.

From the above, it is glaring that the beauty and advantage of online journalism allows communication and interaction between people with the fact that opinions and ideas concerning the news are shared. Articles are discussed between people who have never met before. Furthermore, online journalism gives options to readers and audiences to choose the news they want to read and the information they consume. There are also several media for news dissemination like digital photography, audio and videos. Additionally, the ability of digital journalism to provide breaking news in split seconds is an extra advantage as people are kept abreast with the happenings around them as quickly as possible thereby giving people a synopsis of events as they occur.

Blogs and blogging have taken a significant space on the internet, especially on social media. As more people particularly adolescents and youths continue to get addicted to social media, news blogs find a significant niche in these places and have built a significant market and traffic out of them. While social media grows in its ability to influence a large number of people, bloggers continue to create niches and platforms where news can be uploaded with relative digital leads and graphical representations that capture the reader's interest. In providing a definition, Anusiem (2017) considers a blog as "a frequently updated diary or journal that appears in reverse chronology". He further talks about blogospheres as a relatively new concept which he describes thus: it is "the social universe where blogs exist and interact. In a more explicative way, it deals with the media landscape where blogs exist as interactive sources of information" (Anusiem, 2017).

The multifaceted possibilities of social media and the blogging space have led to the creation of different blogs in Nigeria as blogs like Insta blog which is a composite of a blogging platform that is also on social media surfaced. Meanwhile, one of the foremost blog platforms that existed in Nigeria and gained prominence was Linda Ikeji's blog. Drawing the links between blogging and the expansion of social media platforms in this century, Anusiem (2017, p. 83) reiterates that "blogging has rapidly grown from being a novelty in the social media landscape to being a culture in the social communication space". According to Anusiem, quoting Brandon Gaille (2017, p. 84), there exist about 152 million active blogs on the internet, and the number is increasing daily as blogging has become a lucrative business.

News Blogs and Social Media

Social media marks one of the evidence of evolution and social transformation experienced by the human race. It is part of the social innovations that come with the breakthroughs in technology. Abdulateef (2021) define social media as consisting of "computer-based technologies for easy communication, interaction and collaboration". Quoting Hopkins (2017) adds that social media is a "digitally-mediated communication software that enables users to create, share and view content in publicly networked one-to-one, one-to-many, and/or many-to-many communications" (Abdulateef, 2021).

The next generation of the evolution of the internet is the late 1990s to early 2000s with the emergence of interactions and conversations characterized by feedback and multimediality. This could be shared by other users and it is the interaction that includes "social" into "media", to produce social media. Abdulateef (2021) further states that "notable among the social networking sites in vogue today that exhibit the above-described features of the Web 2.0 and more includes: Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, Flickr, Tumblr, Skype, LinkedIn, Telegram, Reddit, My Space, Viber, and many others" (2021, p. 54).

Social media is a very potent form of news dissemination and has become more potent than traditional media. A notable example is the Arab Spring that inspired regime changes in places

like Tunisia, Libya, and Egypt, as social media complemented traditional media. In Nigeria, social media is the catalyst that birthed and sustained the End SARS protest of 2020, a nationwide riot against the political injustice and the failings of the police and security systems of the country. Nigeria also witnessed significant improvements in political participation over the years grateful to the advent of social media.

There are, however, movements to regulate the use of social media because of the abuse of it with a lot of disadvantages as much as advantages. Antisocial and unhealthy actions like cyberbullying, social media addictions, fear of missing out, dissemination and spread of unconfirmed news among others are some of the abuses and disadvantages of social media that have sparked the need for government regulation of social media. For Osuigwe (2018) internet platform companies need to embark on self-regulation and content that protects the privacy and rights of consumers should be put in place.

Further research by O'Keeffe and Clarke-Pearson (2011) shows that many teenagers who are immersed in and addicted to social media suffer depression and plunge deeper into a search for more sites and platforms to seek release, and this in turn plunges them into worse habits like substance abuse and sexual practices that are unhealthy.

The fact that social media aids the proliferation of fake news is another downside that should be examined. Explaining the possible reasons for such, Okoro (2013) notes that:

Potential false news reports are just one of the many possible ramifications of sourcing news from anonymous sources. The news could be factually correct but has flaws like blatant disregard for ethics, lack of objectivity, impartiality, and balance. It could also be a hidden agenda or opinion sugarcoated as fact or a defamatory statement that puts subjects in the story in a bad light. In mainstream media, a process of verification and checks called gate-keeping can weed out any such inaccuracies and biases. Gatekeeping, so it's called, is done by experienced and trained journalists and editors, using tools and skills like knowledge of the law and in-house or commercial stylebooks such as the *Associated Press Stylebook*.

Insta blog as a news platform on social media is not completely free from some of these lapses and abuses, many questions arise on the authenticity of most of the content posted on the platform. The competitive struggle to gain more followers and popularity across social media has made most of these news blogs degenerate into providing information that is anything but true. The goal is to provide enough entertainment and traffic of followers by eye-catching headlines and news content that do not serve any specific purpose of enlightening the public. Instead, they feed the emotional appetite of viewers and followers and create engagement that drives more users and followers. This downside to social media news blogs is a key area that should be examined by regulatory bodies.

News and the Mass Media

According to Nicholas (2000), the mass media refers to those companies and institutions that employ the use of copying techniques to disseminate information to the general public. This definition connotes that activities, decision-making, and information sharing are sponsored by certain institutions that are in charge of the kinds of information shared with the public. Journalists, news reporters and other media professionals are responsible for the information shared in newspapers, television and other media platforms which make it possible for the government to properly regulate news shared. This is however not the case now with the invention of social media. In describing the scope of mass media (which is also referred to as traditional media) Christiana Chukwu notes in clear terms:

Traditional media are those media disseminated via the largest distribution channels, which, therefore, represent what the majority of media consumers are likely to encounter. Large news conglomerates including newspapers and broadcast media, are often referenced by the term. Traditional media are agents of mass communication which is a technology-mediated communication. It involves the simultaneous transfer of messages or information to a diversified audience. Feedback can be delayed here and opinions may not be easily aggregated.

The people who are responsible for the content of information circulated in a society or a country at large, are properly monitored by the government as the “pen is mightier than the sword”. This implies that journalists and writers in newspapers and other platforms are a powerful group in society. As a result of this, regulation of these media platforms is also important.

The Language of Print Media

Print media is one of the oldest and most basic forms of mass communication. It includes newspapers, magazines, and other forms of printed journals. In discussing the language of news reporting and newspapers, Bloor and Bloor (1995) add that “newspapers use transitivity systems in the language of news reporting” (107) and they include verbal, behavioural and mental transitions. The message is organised in a structure that the reader can assimilate properly. There is also a theme and rhyme structure in the language of newspapers. While the theme is the starting point of the speaker’s message at the clause level, the theme is the part of the clause that deals with what is said about the theme.

Bloor and Bloor (1995) further assert that the language of newspapers and print media involves the use of mood. Mood is one of the ways of classifying speech acts or statements, questions and order. Osisanwo (p. 75) notes that “the mood system is concerned with the situation of the subject in the clause structure; whether the speaker has chosen a subject or not; whether a subject is present, whether it is positioned before or within the predicator, whether or not the speaker is one of the participants in the action”.

Another feature of the language of print media is the use of a voice system which is very much related to one of the three major systems of the English clause, ‘transitivity’ and can be subdivided into active and passive. Crystal and Davy explain that “the use of active (transitive verb) indicates that the actor or initiator is the subject of the clause and the choice of passive indicates that the goal or range is”. The choice of active is to focus attention on the actor, the subject and the choice of passive is to focus attention on the goal, the subject. It is used to describe the world of reality where some humans function as actors with goals, making different kinds of acts or things happen. The choice of passive makes news reports sound formal and putting the goal at the beginning of a sentence diverts our attention away from the subject (192-196).

Crystal and Davy, contributing to the headline writing say that the verbal group ‘to’ - non-finite is used to indicate plans and arrangements of the subject (174). For instance: *President Jonathan rejected the ASSU proposal*, and *President Buhari visited North West*. The above headlines are the shortened form of the sentences: President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan is going to reject the ASUU’s proposal and President Muhammadu Buhari is going to visit the North West geopolitical zone. Furthermore, determiners which identify nouns are deleted in the headline writing to ensure a quick attention grabber. For instance, the determiners: “the” and “are” are deleted here: || The Space Station has been hit by a rocket||. It reveals that headlines are not full sentences, but short summaries designed to attract attention. All of these languages are utilized by newspapers. The headlines of newspapers are therefore very valuable linguistically as they play a major role in leading readers to the news stories.

Theoretical Framework

The theories employed for the analysis of this research are the theory of transitivity and the critical discourse analysis theories.

Transitivity

The theory of transitivity propounded by the linguist Michael Halliday derives from his Systemic Functional Grammar. Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) developed in the 20th century. It is based on the idea that “language is seen as a system of meanings, which constructs human experience, names things, constraining them into categories, and construes these categories into taxonomies” (Halliday, 2014). It is a complex semiotic system, governed by simultaneous functions which have various levels, or strata: a lexico grammar stratum, a semantic stratum,

and a phonological stratum (Halliday, 2014). All these systems at every rank are located in their meta-functional context. Halliday distinguishes three meta functions, also known as modes of meaning, which are, according to him, a property of all languages, that are considered to be shaped and organized about these three types of meaning: “the ideational meta function, concerned with the representation of human experience; the interpersonal meta function, concerned with the expression of and the attitudes towards whoever we address, as well as what we are talking about; and finally, the textual meta function, concerned with the construction of the text” (Halliday, 2014). Concerning the ideational metafunction, the author distinguishes two components: the experiential and the logical. The ideational metafunction is a resource which enables us to construe our experience of the world that lies around us and inside us, by configuring it into clauses (Halliday, 2004). In other words, it serves as the expression of our experience of the real world and the experience of our inner world and consciousness.

The transitivity system, or theory of transitivity, according to Halliday, is a system that construes the world of experience into a manageable set of Process Types” (Halliday, 2004). It involves “the set of options whereby the speaker encodes his experience of the processes of the external world” (Halliday, 2004). Therefore, clauses represent actions, events and different processes, and the transitivity system serves to encode how an action is performed, how the speaker or reader encodes in language their mental representations of the world, and how they account for their experience of the world around them. In summary, transitivity is considered to be an important and powerful semantic phenomenon, affecting not only the verb but also its participants and circumstances (Halliday, 2004).

The system of transitivity “specifies the different types of process that are recognized in the language, and the structures by which they are expressed” (Halliday, 2004). The ideational function consists of the following components (Halliday, 1985)

- the process, which is a technical term for the action, for example, hit or run, for the state.
- the participant(s) who are involved in the process. In other terms, who or what is doing what to whom;
- the attributes which are ascribed to participants; and
- the circumstances associated with the process, in terms of time, manner and place.
- The goal towards which the action is directed

The concept of participant, process, and circumstance, all three, are semantic categories which explain how phenomena of the real world are represented as linguistic structures (Halliday, 1985). Participants are directly involved in the process since every experiential type of clause has at least one participant. It is important to note that transitivity is not a property of the event itself, but rather of the language user’s conceptualization of events, which is manifested through language. In other words, a language user may choose how to encode the same event linguistically as transitive, by including an Agent and an Affected, or as intransitive, by including only one participant, performing the role of Agent or Affected (Landa, 2017).

Transitivity, one of the three tenets of Halliday's SFG, represents a reflection of the processes that take place in the world via formal grammatical components. In transitivity, grammar is related to reality (Perez, 2007). It takes into account a paradigmatic conception of language where choices play an essential function. Addressees and addressees do not only compose and decode a spectrum of grammatical constituents but they do so after making choices related to what formal terms they might select to render communication effective. In the same respect, Simpson (1993) said that: transitivity refers generally to how meaning is represented in the clause. It shows how speakers encode in language their mental picture of reality and how they account for their experience of the world around them, because it is concerned with the transmission of ideas, and is part of the ideational function of language. To decode and encode aspects of reality and experience of the world it is essential to answer the questions: who appears in the text? What is happening, and where, when, how... is this happening? The answer to those questions is in the evaluation of transitivity related to concepts of process, participant, and circumstance.

Transitivity processes or ideational functions are made up of six major processes; the material processes, mental processes the verbal processes, the relational processes, the existential and behavioral processes and the circumstantial element.

Conclusion

Communication is elemental to human existence; no human association can cohere without communication. As one cannot but communicate, even the most sublime acts of restraint or withdrawals are loud messages conveying readable meaning to the receiver (Brown & Udomisor, 2015). The media must differentiate itself and continue to be an independent entity that honours its constitutional mandate to hold the government answerable to the people if it is to fulfil its tasks. Only then will the media be able to work effectively. For both the governed and the government, the newspaper is seen as a potent tool. Without a doubt, the government and a few influential members of the community control a substantial portion of the media in Nigeria. Of course, every administration wants to provide its narrative. They accomplish this by starting media outlets like newspapers, television shows, and radio stations. Therefore, some public analysts have praised the government for establishing its media outlets, pointing out that this is a positive development, particularly for third-world nations, and emphasized that the issues government-owned media outlets face include objectivity and credibility. In Nigeria, a state can hardly be without a radio or television station or even a publishing house for newspapers. Given the state of the world today, the digitization of news should be warmly welcomed and embraced since it would enable the private sector to have full access as seen in the government system.

Recommendations

It is glaring from this research that broadcast media and news media have evolved to accommodate digitalization as the world moves even deeper into a digital economy. This implies that the consumption and spread of news have become digital and would be nothing like the era of news consumption in print. While this new method of digital media and news dissemination and consumption is advantageous because of the speed and the opportunity of getting diverse views on particular news, there is a need to preserve the culture of writing words in full. This is necessary to sustain academic and linguistic brilliance on all sides and help students maintain the right linguistic competence that was more prevalent in the age of print media and conventional media.

The purpose of news consumption should also be achieved. That is, the news is also an opportunity for readers to question their political ideologies to know if it is healthy and beneficial for nation-building. The goal of consuming the information in the news should not be stuck in the discursive aspect alone but also translate to holistic growth and development in the political, socio-cultural and ideological shifts in the orientation of the general public. The information from the news headlines is there to reveal the challenges of society when it narrates issues patterning to domestic and societal matters. The news is also a reflection of the nation and its numerous shortcomings and is a clarion call to not just be aware but to also be active in bringing positive change to the nation.

Above all, this research does not boast a holistic study of the linguistic patterns of social media and print media news headlines. Further research should be conducted on areas like syntactic patterns of headlines and other linguistic studies that interrogate the grammar, phonology, semantics and stylistics of the headlines of newspaper and news blog headlines in general. This research is therefore limited in its scope as it points primarily towards a critical discourse analysis of the topic. It encourages more research across the lines that are left untouched in this paper.

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