MA in Translation Studies

Module 2

Question FG/00/01

Apply the principles of systemic linguistic analysis explored in the course to a comparison of the style and communicative functionality of two short texts or text extracts of your own choice. (Texts typically shouldn't be longer than 500 words). The texts should have a similar subject matter, be drawn from a similar institutional or discourse domain (science, economics, health care provision, tourism, politics, the arts, etc.) or have some other obvious point of similarity. They need, however, to differ significantly in some aspect of their style, structure, approach, tone. You should indicate how the texts are similar and how they are different in terms of their general stylistic properties and their communicative functionality. Your claims should be backed up by means of an analysis of the types of lexical and grammatical features explored in the course. That is to say, you should consider whether the texts are similar or different in terms of the types of textual, interpersonal and experiential (ideational) meanings explored in the materials.

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1. Introduction

Systemics holds that languages involve three types of communicative functionality or meanings:

> "…the three categories… are used as the basis for exploring how meanings are created and understood, because they allow the matching of particular types of functions/meanings with particular types of wordings to an extent that other categorisations generally do not." (Thompson, 1996: 28).

These meanings are: *experiential (ideational)*, by which speakers can portray their surrounding external reality; *interpersonal*, by which speakers interact with each other; and *textual* meanings, which relate experiential and interpersonal meanings with each other and with the situation in which the exchange takes place.

In this essay, I shall indicate the main similarities and differences between the chosen articles by examining and comparing the relevant different elements of these three types of meaning.

2. The texts

For this analysis, I have chosen two newspaper articles published on the websites of two British newspapers on 16th February 2004; the newspapers in question are The Sun and The Guardian (on-line versions). The reports cover a confrontation between Aboriginal youth and the police force in Sydney, Australia. The issue arose as a reaction to the death, some days earlier, of an Aboriginal teenager while he was allegedly being chased by the police. Both articles report the same events and show certain similarities in lexicogrammatical

choices. However, while the Sun report presents an overall more dramatic picture of the happenings, The Guardian brings in an angle that is more concerned with the social aspects of and possible explanations to the disturbance. The Sun also mentions these social aspects but differs from The Guardian in that, in doing so, it reiterates its more dramatic reporting.

3. An experiential analysis: Processes, Participants and Circumstances

In systemics, language represents external reality through happenings and states, entities and the circumstances in which they occur (White, 2000: 4). These are referred to in the corresponding metalanguage as Processes, Participants and Circumstances, respectively, and their analysis and subsequent comparison here shows the differences and similarities in the ways in which the two articles report the events to their readers.

Closely related to experiential meaning is the Field of the text:

"Field… interacts with and varies with experiential meanings (processes, participants and circumstances for representing events and relationships in some reality)." (White, 2000: 21).

The Field of both the articles chosen for this essay is that of news reporting.

I have structured my analysis around the lexical implications of the Processes as I think it is here that the texts can be more suitably compared from an experiential viewpoint. Also, throughout my essay and where necessary, I have indicated the paragraph in which references appear in the texts in appendix 1 as follows: TS = The Sun; TG = The Guardian; p1 = paragraph 1, p2 = paragraph 2, etc.

3.1 Material Processes

I have separated this part of my analysis into lexical areas (injury, death, violence, etc.) that are relevant to the story and more appropriate to revealing the differences and similarities between the two texts.

In general, both articles employ similar material processes. However, they use them in different structures and parts of the clause complexes.

Injury

The material processes used to indicate injury are similar in both articles and are expressed using passive structures. Three examples of this use in The Sun lead to the thematisation of the police force, "Forty officers were injured..." (p1), "Most of the hospitalised police offers suffered…" (p7) "one was knocked out after being hit..." (p7) and places the police as Goals of said Processes. The effect is that of presenting the representatives of authority as the initial victims of the events:

Forty officers	were injured	today	in riots	in a suburb of Sydney…
Goal	Process: material	Circumstance	Circumstance	Circumstance

The same structures and thematisation techniques are employed in the Guardian article, where the police are also presented as Goals and, consequently, victims. However, this happens on only one occasion and it is interesting to note that the actual process of injury has been dampened by the use of an active verb (left) with an attribute (p4) in comparison with the passive structure with the verb *to be* used in The Sun (p1). This combination

intensifies the sense of passive result rather than anonymous action. Indeed, in this example, the Actor is "the nine-hour street battle", which further empties the fact of any human identity:

The nine-hour street battle	left	40 police officers	injured.
Actor	Process: material	Goal	Attribute

The other instances of injury involve the dead Aboriginal boy as Goal. The positioning of Participants as Actors or Goals is relevant in that they are portrayed as either perpetrators (Actor) or victims (Goal) of the events being reported. Both newspapers describe his accident with the rather graphic image of "...was impaled..."[1] (TS, p4; TG, p5). However, The Sun refers to the Goal of this Process as "her son (he)", and the Process forms part of a clause in the Circumstance of location "after he fell from his bicycle and was impaled on a fence", which removes it from the main independent clause, and reduces the importance of his death to the issue being reported:

Her son	Died	on Sunday	after	he	fell	from his bicycle	and	was impaled	on a fence…
				Actor	Process: behavioural	Circumstance		Process: material	Circumstance
Actor	Process: behavioural	Circumstance	Circumstance						

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[1] On occasions, the two articles use the same expressions (in some cases, the clauses are literally copies of each other). This, together with the fact that the event took place in far-away Australia, where the newspapers perhaps have low correspondent resources, suggests that both reports were taken from a news agency, even though only The Guardian acknowledges this fact.

The Guardian uses the more factual "An Aboriginal Boy, Thomas Hickey..." as Goal and sets the Process in an elaborating dependent clause, "who was impaled on a metal fence…", which forms part of the Participant, thus maintaining the significance of the event to the story. Furthermore, by the omission of an Actor, the information is presented in a more factual and rhetorically neutral way:

…an Aboriginal boy, Thomas Hickey,	who	was impaled	on a metal fence after falling…
Actor		Process: material	Circumstance
		elaborating dependent clause	

Intimidation

Both newspapers refer to Goals being chased or pursued. The Sun uses the verb 'chase' on three occasions. On all three, the Actor of the Process is the police and the Goal is the Aboriginal boy who died. The first example "…allegations that police chased an aboriginal teenager…" (TS, p1) is part of a finite projected clause that is framed by "allegations [it was alleged] that…", which reduces the factual nature of the actual clause to an unproved supposition and makes it secondary in importance to the Process associated with the Theme of the clause complex "Forty officers…".

The second use of the verb 'chase' comes as the non-finite head in the verbal group of a Circumstance of location, "…while being chased…" (TS, p4), relating to the Process where the boy "was impaled on a fence". The positioning of the Process in a Circumstance makes

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it less prominent and significant to the events. Furthermore, the Circumstance, and consequently its Process, is part of a projected clause framed by the mental Process "Thomas's mother **claimed**…", which puts the factual nature of the chase in doubt, defending in some way the innocence of the Actor (the police):

Thomas's mother	claimed	her son	died…	while being chased by police.
		Actor	Process: behavioural	Circumstance
Sayer	Process: verbal		Projected clause	

Perhaps a more unbiased way of reporting this could have been by not mentioning Thomas's mother and including an adverb such as *allegedly* to imply the unconfirmed nature of the circumstance involving the police: "Her son died on Sunday after… while allegedly being chased by police."

The third use of the verb 'chase' is in the Process "…chasing the youth" (TS, p5). Here again, it appears in a projected clause, "Police denied [that they were] chasing the youth", and is framed by the mental Process of denial, thus suggesting the possible untruthfulness of the fact and adding to the general doubt being cast over the police's involvement in the boy's death throughout the text.

The Guardian's single reference to Processes of intimidation is comparable to the second reference in The Sun. In a similar way, the Process appears as a verbal group in a Circumstance of location, "while being pursued" (TG, p6). However, it differs from The

Sun's version in that the Circumstance does not tell us when the boy's death occurred but rather when the injury that led to it took place, "had been injured while being pursued…"; this shows the more factual approach of the Guardian report. In a similar way, the Circumstance is part of a projected clause framed by, "His mother, Gail, **said** that…" and the 'chase' is accordingly made less prominent and significant. However, where The Sun frames the projected clause with a verbal Process whose semantic effect is to throw doubts on police involvement ("claimed") (TS, p4), The Guardian uses a verbal Process "said", which upholds its more neutral and factual style of news reporting:

His mother, Gail,	said	that	her 17-year-old son	had been injured	while being pursued by police.
			Actor	Process: material	Circumstance
Actor	Process: verbal		Projected clause		

Violence

Both articles use material Processes entailing a description of violence of one kind or another; this is perhaps to be expected given the story being covered. Indeed, The Sun has seven references to violent material Processes and The Guardian five; of these references, four coincide lexically. However, the way two of them are presented from an experiential point of view offers interesting differences.

The first Process, "pelted" appears in the second paragraph of both texts as the verbal group of the main dependent clause of the complex. The Sun places the Process with the Participants of "rioters" (Actor) and "police" (Goal) whereas The Guardian uses a more factual, informative approach with "Around 100 Aborigines" (Actor) and 200 riot police (Goal).

Another interesting comparison of use is with the Processes "set fire to" (TS, p3) and "burnt out" (TS, p11) and "was set on fire" (TG, p3) and "was burned out" (TG, p3). In the first case, The Sun uses "Attackers" as the Actor Participant and in the second, "They", in reference to the same doer. This implicates the Aborigines involved in the confrontation as active perpetrators of violent acts. The Guardian, however, expresses these events with passive structures and makes mention only of the Goals of the Processes. Once again it is seen to report events in a more neutral, colourless way, whereas The Sun maintains its line of sensationalism.

Abuse of authority

So far, we have seen how The Sun tends to present the police as victims and how The Guardian tends towards a more factual and neutral approach; in this area, these trends seem to uphold. The Processes "treat" (on both occasions) and "manhandle" (TS, p5; TG, p6) appear in both articles as reported speech and, as might be expected, are identical to each other. The Process "harassing" is used in The Guardian (p15) and is part of a projected clause framed by the verbal Process of "accused". This projection indicates the possible non-factual nature of the action, which is in keeping with the non-committal, flat tone of the report in this newspaper:

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He	accused	police	of		harassing	people…
					Process: material	Goal
Sayer	Process: verbal	Target		Verbiage		

3.2 Behavioural Processes

Overall, The Guardian uses four more behavioural Processes in its article than The Sun. However, both articles apply these processes in similar lexical areas.

<u>Death and suffering</u>

The Sun uses the Process "died" in reference to the death of the Aboriginal boy, who is the Behaver in this clause ("her son died…" (p4)). It is framed by the verbal Process "Thomas's mother **claimed**…", which, in keeping with the Sun's playing down of the boy's misfortune, removes protagonism from the Process and places the truthfulness of the event in a certain degree of doubt. This use once again serves to lower the profile of what happened to the boy. However, the Behaver of the second Process ("suffered" (p7)) is "Most of the hospitalised police officers", which is also the Theme of the clause, and the Process is the main verb of the clause complex, which presents what happened to the police as more important and worth telling:

Most of the hospitalised police officers	suffered	broken bones…
Actor	Process: behavioural	Range

In contrast, The Guardian's use of the Process "suffered" (p4) forms part of an elaborating dependent clause "most of whom suffered…" and the relevance of what happened to the Behaver (the police) is lessened and presented as mere additional information. This also highlights the fact that not all the officers were injured seriously:

The nine-hour street battle	left	40 police officers	injured,	most of whom	suffered	broken bones.
					Process: behavioural	Range
Actor	Process: material	Goal	Attribute	Elaborating dependent clause		

The contrast is continued with the Process "died" (p5), the Behaver of which is the boy ("He"). In this newspaper, this Process is presented as the main verb of a clause complex with the boy as its Theme, thus giving the event more relevance than the report in The Sun.

Metaphor

Both The Guardian and The Sun use the Process "had been simmering" (TS, p13; TG, p12) as part of a projected clause framed by the verbal Process "said". The clause complexes in both articles are virtually copies of each other and have the same Behaver ("anger [in the community]"). The Guardian extends the metaphor of heat to refer once again to anger ("boiled over" (p2)) and to civil unrest ("erupted" (p1)). The latter Process appears in an elaborating dependent clause and its ellipted Behaver is "the worst civil unrest in Sydney for a decade". The Behaver of the former ("boiled over") is "anger" and it is set in a Circumstance of location. The position of both Processes in the Rhemes of their

corresponding clause complexes removes them somewhat from any leading role as far as event-reporting is concerned and the personifications used in all the above examples add a more intricate literary style to the text; the greater use of personification in behavioural Processes is to be found in the Guardian article, which is perhaps indicative of The Sun's more direct, sensationalist style of news reporting.

3.3 Mental Processes

It is interesting to note that in the Sun article all occurrences of the mental Processes occur as the main verb of their clause complex, which gives the Processes rhetorical importance and relevance. The Senser of the verb "denied" (p5) is "the police" and the Phenomenon "chasing the boy". The Senser of the first use of "accused" (p12) is "he [assistant commissioner Bob Waites]" and the Phenomenon is "the rioters of stockpiling…". This is perhaps in keeping with what appears to be a general tone by which this newspaper affords protagonism to the 'innocence' of the police and the 'non-innocence' of the other parties involved.

In the Guardian article, the verb "condemned" (p1) appears as the main verb of its clause complex, with "Senior Aboriginal leaders" as the Senser and "the worst civil unrest…" as the Phenomenon. The Senser of "blamed" (p1) is "rioters" and the Phenomenon is "the death of a young black cyclist on police". This Process appears in a Circumstance and its significance is consequently lessened. The process "felt" (p8) is interesting in that it is functioning as an ellipted passive structure in an elaborative dependent clause "...the alienation [that is] felt by some Aboriginal kids." Both the Senser ("some Aboriginal kids")

and the Phenomenon ("the extent of the alienation") are given more force by their marked positions.

Both articles show similarity in the use of the Process "accused" (TS, p12 & p16; TG, p15) (the second occurrence in The Sun), where the verb has the police as the Phenomenon "police of harassment…". Once again, both newspapers report this aspect in almost identical ways.

4. An interpersonal analysis: Mood Blocks, Adjuncts and Residues

Butt *et al* (2001: 86) suggest:

> "One of the most basic interactive distinctions [in language] concerns the kind of commodity being exchanged; that is, the difference between using language to exchange information and using it to exchange goods and services. A second distinction concerns the type of interaction taking place; that is, the difference between demanding and giving. In other words, we can demand information or we can give it and we can demand goods and services or give them."

These are referred to by White (2000: 96) as the basic interpersonal options of statement, question, command and offer. As might be expected of the Field of news reporting, the clauses in the texts under analysis deal mainly with statement and offer information. However, the two articles differ in certain interpersonal aspects.

In general, The Sun uses straightforward declarative structures, where the Mood Block is made up of Subject and Finite and then followed by the Residue, in that order, such as the opening clause:

Forty officers	were	injured	today…
Subject	Finite	Predicator	Adjunct
Mood Block		Residue	

And other clauses used to describe the events of the story, for example (p2):

Rioters	pelted	police	Complement	with petrol bombs and bricks	in a nine-hour street battle.
Subject	Finite + (past)	Predicator	Complement	Adjunct	Adjunct
Mood Block	Residue				

The clauses are Finite and indicate that the events took place in the past except when they form part of direct speech, where the present is also used. This typical declarative structure is altered on seven occasions. Two of these are related to the use of direct speech and are examples of an inverted declarative structure, which turns what is said into the Theme, giving it more prominence than the Sayer (p5):

"It's got to stop, the way they treat our kids,"   Gail Hickey   said.

Complement	Subject	Finite + (past)	Predicator
		Mood Block	
Residue			

And (p11):

"They burnt out … of the riot,"   Assistant Commissioner Bob Waites   said.

Complement	Subject	Finite + (past)	Predicator
		Mood Block	
Residue			

One modal Finite is used (p5):

It   's got to   Stop,   the way they treat our kids,

Subject	Finite (modal: obligation)	Predicator	Subject
		Residue	
Mood Block			

This use occurs in direct speech reporting the statements made by the dead boy's mother. The sense of obligation is limited to an opinion and its modal significance to the events told in the text is consequently lessened.

The other structures involve the use of adjuncts in marked positions:

During the fighting	hundreds of cops in full riot gear		doused	the rioters…
Conjunctive adjunct	Subject	Finite + (past)	Predicator	Complement
	Mood Block		Residue	

In this example (p6), the marked use of the Conjunctive Adjunct comprising the adverbial group of time emphasises when the dousing took place but also places the fact that fighting took place in a highlighting position. This possibly serves to explain or, more importantly, justify the reason why the police doused the rioters, predisposing readers to in some way accept the action of the police when they read further along the clause.

The only Comment Adjunct appearing in the Sun article is part of direct speech (p11):

and	they	in fact	were	throwing	Molotov cocktails
Conjunctive Adjunct	Subject	Comment Adjunct (actuality)	Finite (past)	Predicator	Complement
	Mood Block			Residue	

This use underlines the seriousness of what the rioters were allegedly doing (throwing Molotov cocktails) and helps counterbalance and justify police action.

Like The Sun, The Guardian also uses Finites indicating past tense to report the events that happened (p2):

Around 100 Aborigines		pelted	200 riot police…
Subject	Finite + (past)	Predicator	Complement
Mood Block		Residue	

However, it differs from The Sun in that it has a much wider use of Finites indicating the present tense and, although this sometimes appears in direct speech, it also stands as part of the reporting of the story, for example (p9):

Australia's 400,000 Aborigines and Torres Strait islanders		make up	2% of the country's 20 million population.
Subject	Finite + (pres.)	Pred.	Complement
Mood Block		Residue	

This shows the way in which The Guardian relates the events of the confrontation to the present-day situation of Aborigines in Australian society. Its references to social conditioning factors portray a more balanced and less sensational view of events.

This article also involves similar changes to the typical declarative structure. As with The Sun, these changes appear in relation to reported speech (p6):

"It's got to stop, the way they treat our kids," she added.

Complement	Subject	Finite + (past)	Predicator
	Mood Block		
Residue			

And (p13):

"…young friends on a continual basis," Mr. Munro told Sydney radio station 2UE.

Complement	Subject	Finite + (past)	Pred.	Complement
	Mood Block			
	Residue			

The Guardian also makes use of marked Adjuncts (p1):

Senior Aboriginal leaders today condemned the worst civil unrest…

Subject	Conj. Adjunct	Finite + (past)	Pred.	Complement
Mood Block			Residue	

This marked positioning of the adverbial group of time ("today") serves to include the indication inherent to the adverb itself at the same time as it avoids overmarkedness that would lead readers to focus on when it happened rather than, as is the case, on the Actor. A more marked positioning as Theme ("Today, senior aboriginal leaders..."), for example, would have distracted the reader's attention from the Actor and the Process. The Guardian's choice not to do this shows an intention to maintain a focus on Actors and Processes rather than on Circumstances, which belies more balanced, factual news reporting.

The use of the Comment Adjunct in the following clause (p7):

Patrolling officers	had	merely	passed by	the boy…
Subject	Finite (past)	Comment Adjunct	Predicator	Complement
Mood Block			Residue	

forms part of a projected clause framed by "Police said that…" and underlines the claims for 'innocence' the police make with regard to their involvement in the boy's death by highlighting the already neutral implications of the verb and removing any intimidatory element from any possible interpretation. This can be contrasted to the occurrence in The Sun of the Comment Adjunct "in fact" (p11), and said contrast shows how the police intensify in some way the rioters' actions and neutralise their own. It is also interesting to note that the two newspapers pick up on different sides of this same coin.

As in The Sun, the Guardian report includes only one modal Finite (p17):

"You	could	interview	every Aboriginal kid…"
Subject	Finite (modal: possibility)	Predicator	Complement
Mood Block		Residue	

This forms part of direct speech and alludes to the possibility of confirming the police's abuse of their authority by interviewing their alleged victims.

5. A textual analysis: Themes and Rhemes

Butt *et al* (2001: 134) suggest that textual meaning is used "to organise our experiential and interpersonal meanings into a linear and coherent whole". My analysis of these two texts shows how the Themes and elements of the Rhemes in each article provide cohesion and maintain the overall tone of each report.

As Butt *et al* suggest (ibid: 142):

> "Each paragraph may also be said to have a Theme: the first clause or the first clause complex signals what the paragraph is concerned with, the writer's point of departure for what will come next… Texts also have a point of departure - the first paragraph generally frames the rest of the text and introduces the main thrust of what is to follow."

In this case, it is of interest to compare the opening paragraph and clause of each article:

The Sun:

Forty officers   were injured today in riots in a suburb of Sydney…

Theme	Rheme

The Guardian:

Senior Aboriginal leaders   today condemned the worst civil unrest in Sydney…

Theme	Rheme

In the light of the experiential and interpersonal analyses above, these two opening clause complexes support the suggestion made by Butt *et al*. The Sun could be said to centre its story on the drama of the events and in this first paragraph, that focus is represented by the police; and it could be said that The Guardian focuses more on the social aspect of the story and this is represented in its first clause complex by the senior Aboriginal leaders.

5.1 Topical Themes

Indeed, a more thorough analysis of the topical Themes of the clause complexes in both articles holds up this argument. Themes include:

	The Sun	The Guardian
Drama	• Forty officers (p1) • Rioters (p2) • Attackers (p3) • Thomas's mother (p4) • During the fighting (p6) • Most of the hospitalised police officers (p7) • Four alleged rioters (p8) • Television images (p10)	• Around 100 Aborigines (p2) • Hundreds of police officers in full riot gear (p3) • Redfern railway station (p3) • The nine-hour street battle (p4) • It (the battle) (p5) • He (the dead Aborigine boy) (p5) • His mother, Gail (p6) • Police (p7)
Social	• New South Wales state political leader Premier Bob Carr (p9) • Aboriginal community leader Lyle Munro (p13) • Mr Munro (p16) • Aborigines (p17) • The Block, a grid of run-down houses that is a virtual no-go area for people who do not live there (p17)	• Senior Aboriginal leaders (p1) • Aden Ridgeway, the only Aboriginal politician in the national parliament (p8) • Australia's 400,000 Aborigines and Torres Strait islanders (p9) • They (the Aborigines and Islanders) (p10) • Rates of imprisonment, unemployment, welfare, dependency, domestic violence and alcoholism (p10) • Most Aborigines (p11) • Very few (Aborigines) (p11) • Aboriginal community leader Lyle Munro (p12) • He (Lyle Munro (p15) • The New South Wales leader, Bob Carr (p18)

In both articles there is a tendency for the social aspects of the story to appear towards the end; this is perhaps to hold the general reader's interest at the beginning. However, it is clear that The Sun chooses to maintain a dramatic slant for longer than The Guardian and it should also be noted that the impact of the former's lexicogrammatical choices is more intense than those of the latter's.

5.2 Thematic progression

Eggins (1994: 95) suggests:

"The cohesive resource of reference refers to how the writer/speaker introduces participants and then keeps track of them once they are in the text."

As well as through other linguistic techniques, the cohesion of each article can be seen in how they link together elements of the different Themes and Rhemes as their reports evolve.

The thematic progress in the Sun article involves repetition of Actors and Goals in subsequent Themes and Rhemes, at times respecting their role as Actor or Goal and on some occasions, reversing the roles.

For example, the Actor of the first clause complex ("Forty officers" (p1)) reappears as the Theme in the eighth clause complex ("Most of the hospitalised police officers" (p7)) and the Theme of the second clause complex ("Rioters" (p2)) appears in the Rheme of the seventh ("…doused the rioters…" (p6)) clause complex. This technique is present throughout the entire article and affords the report cohesion at textual meaning level.

A similar effect is achieved in the Guardian article, where Theme and Rheme elements are repeated in the same way. For example, the Theme in the third clause complex ("Hundreds of police officers" (p3)) reappears in the Rheme of the following clause complex ("...40 police officers..." (p4)) and the Theme of the fifteenth clause complex ("Aboriginal community leader Lyle Munro" (p12)) is repeated as the Theme ("He…) of a subsequent clause complex (p15).

It is interesting to note that The Sun tends more towards straightforward repetition of Theme as Theme and Rheme as Rheme, rather than interchanging Theme with Rheme or vice versa, whereas in the Guardian article, cohesion at this level is more thorough in that Themes and Rhemes are also frequently interchanged. On the whole, this makes the reading of the latter more fluent and logically progressive and The Sun's more straightforward reiterations perhaps support its dramatic tone by giving the impression of a series of more stand-alone facts of individual, isolated significance.

6. Lexicogrammatical features

The two articles can also be compared at lexicogrammatical level and interesting differences arise.

When referring to the rioters pelting the police (TS, p2; TG, p2), the police are presented as victims of the events in both cases, but it is interesting to note that The Guardian chooses to point out that there were twice as many police as Aborigines, which in some way could lessen the idea of them being helpless victims and even possibly plays on the common

British social tendency to favour the underdog. The use of the classifier "riot", which conjures up the image of shields, helmets and batons, reiterates this. The Sun uses no classifier and the connotations associated with well-equipped riot police are lost and the concept of 'poor victim' is not challenged in any lexical way. The different effects are in keeping with the different overall tones of both reports.

Also, the lexical choices of "pursue" and "chase" in reference to the circumstances of the Aborigine boy's death (TS, p4; TG, p6) highlight the sensationalism of The Sun; the verb 'chase' is readily associated with spectacular film sequences (police chases, car chases, etc.), whereas "pursue" is more connotationally neutral.

Furthermore, the ellipsis of 'he' in the clause "…her son died on Sunday after he fell from his bicycle and was impaled on a fence…" (TS, p4) is interesting: in the first clause, 'he' is the Actor of "he fell from his bicycle", which portrays the Aboriginal boy as the doer of that Process and that 'doer' is ellipted as Goal of the second clause "was impaled on a fence". This Actor-Goal ellipsis could lead readers to confusion and possibly suggests that the injury was self-inflicted, albeit accidentally, reinforcing the 'innocence' of the police in the boy's death.

Also worth pointing out is the positioning in the Sun article of the clause complex "Police denied chasing the youth" (p5). It follows the report in direct speech of the mother's comments, and the 'colour' and more colloquial nature of her lexicogrammatical choices "It's got to stop, the way they treat our kids… They treat our kids like dogs… they manhandle them" is curtly contrasted with "Police denied chasing the youth", which uses

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more formal, less extravagant lexicogrammatical choices "denied... youth", suggesting calm, collected correctness in comparison with the mother's emotional, uncontrolled outburst.

7. Conclusion

Both articles have the same mode (written text), tenor (newspaper - reader) and field (news reporting) and come under the popular written genre (Eggins, 1994: 26); however, as the above analysis reveals, although there are the obvious similarities between the two reports, there are also significant differences in how they relate events (experiential meaning), how they influence the way in which their readers interpret the events (interpersonal meaning) and how they tie these two types of meaning together (textual meaning).

The Sun focuses on a dramatic, at times *Hollywoodesque* description of events, and tends to dismiss or gloss over the idea of police intimidation or active involvement in the events. With regard to reiteration of Theme and Rheme, its report is less cohesive than that of The Guardian and facts are presented to a certain extent isolated from each other.

The Guardian, on the other hand, can be seen to report what happened under a less colourful, more factual umbrella and gives the possibility of police involvement in the causes behind the confrontation the same significance as the acts of other Participants. Its report ties experiential and interpersonal meanings together by a busier use of the reiteration of Theme and Rheme and comes across as a more cohesive, less head-on report of events.

The differences shown in the texts analysed here also illustrate the distinct differences in the use of language by tabloid and broadsheet newspapers, where the lexicogrammatical choices of the former uphold a more dramatic reporting of the events, and reveal frequent siding with the defence of social institutions widely accepted by their readership (in the text analysed here, the police force) and the placing of blame on marginal, not so accepted, social groups (here, the Aborigines); this is possibly aimed at readership satisfaction rather than information. Broadsheets on the other hand, tend to employ language that neutralises rhetoric and shows greater respect for impartial information, though, as my analysis reveals, this is not always the case.

Appendix 1

The articles

The Sun (439 words)	The Guardian (485 words)
40 cops hurt in Oz riots	**Aboriginal leaders condemn Sydney violence**

1

FORTY officers were injured today in riots in a suburb of Sydney sparked by allegations that police chased an aboriginal teenager to his death.

Senior Aboriginal leaders today condemned the worst civil unrest in Sydney for a decade, which erupted after rioters blamed the death of a young black cyclist on police.

2

Rioters pelted police with petrol bombs and bricks in a nine-hour street battle.

Around 100 Aborigines pelted 200 riot police with Molotov cocktails, stones and bottles as anger boiled over in the inner-city Redfern district.

3

Attackers set fire to a train station at the height of overnight rioting that stretched into this morning in the Redfern area of Sydney, following the death of 17-year-old Aborigine Thomas Hickey.

Hundreds of police officers in full riot gear doused rioters with high-pressure water hoses during the violence. Redfern railway station was set on fire, and a car was burned out.

4

Thomas's mother claimed her son died on Sunday after he fell from his bicycle and was impaled on a fence while being chased by police.

The nine-hour street battle left 40 police officers injured, most of whom suffered broken bones.

5

"It's got to stop, the way they treat our kids," Gail Hickey said. "They treat our kids like dogs ... they manhandle them." Police denied chasing the youth.

It was triggered by the death of an Aboriginal boy, Thomas Hickey, who was impaled on a metal fence after falling from his bicycle on Saturday. He died in hospital on Sunday morning.

6

During the fighting hundreds of cops in full riot gear doused the rioters with high-pressure water hoses.

His mother, Gail, said that her 17-year-old son had been injured while being pursued by police. "It's got to stop, the way they treat our kids," she added. "They treat our kids like dogs ... they manhandle them."

7

Most of the hospitalised police officers suffered broken bones and one was knocked out after being hit by a flying

Police said that patrolling officers had merely passed by the boy, who then sped off, losing control of his bike.

brick.

8

Four alleged rioters were arrested and charged with involvement in the fighting.

Aden Ridgeway, the only Aboriginal politician in the national parliament, said that the riot had been "an extreme example of the extent of the alienation felt by some Aboriginal kids."

9

New South Wales state political leader Premier Bob Carr ordered an investigation into the cause of the riot and said the state coroner would probe Hickey's death and any possible police involvement.

Australia's 400,000 Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders make up 2% of the country's 20 million population.

10

Television images showed young men surrounding a police patrol car and slamming bricks into it from close range.

They remain Australia's most disadvantaged group, with figures showing that, on average, they die 20 years younger than other Australians. Rates of imprisonment, unemployment, welfare dependency, domestic violence and alcoholism are far higher.

11

"They burnt out one vehicle and they in fact were throwing Molotov cocktails both at police and at Redfern railway station during the course of the riot," assistant commissioner Bob Waites said.

Most Aborigines live in remote communities in Australia's outback, with smaller groups often living in squalid accommodation on the fringes of regional towns. Very few live in major cities.

12

He also accused the rioters of stockpiling rubbish bins full of paving stones and beer bottles to throw at police.

Aboriginal community leader Lyle Munro said that anger had been simmering long before Hickey's death.

13

Aboriginal community leader Lyle Munro said anger in the community had been simmering long before Hickey's death.

"These young people are very, very upset about what happened to this young man, and they're very upset about what's happening to their young friends on a continual basis," Mr Munro told Sydney radio station 2UE.

14

"These young people are very, very upset about what happened to this young man, and they're very upset about what's happening to their young friends on a continual basis," he told a local

"It was a preventable death, like most of the deaths of young Aboriginal people today."

radio station.

15

"It was a preventable death, like most of the deaths of young Aboriginal people today."

He accused police of harassing people living in a squalid grid of near-derelict houses known as the Block, which is a virtual no-go area for people who do not live there.

16

Mr Munro accused police of harassment of people living in a squalid grid of near-derelict houses known as "The Block."

"This is an everyday occurrence - the harassment and intimidation of our young people," he said.

17

Aborigines make up 400,000 of Australia's 20 million people. The Block, a grid of run-down houses that is a virtual no-go area for people who do not live there, is notorious for heroin dealers trading openly in a park next to the railway tracks.

"You could interview every Aboriginal kid down there that comes from the Block, that comes from this area in Redfern in particular, and the majority will tell you to your face ... that they've all been bashed by the police."

18

The New South Wales leader, Bob Carr, ordered an investigation into the cause of the riot, saying that the state coroner would analyse the boy's death and any possible police involvement.

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