

## REVIEWS

**Jančaříková, R. (2014) *Victims vs. Killers in the British Press. Naming Strategies in Murder Reports*. Brno: Masaryk University. Faculty of Education. 173 pp.**

The monograph *Victims vs. Killers in the British Press. Naming Strategies in Murder Reports* brings new insights into the study of the language of newspapers with focus on the means of expressing a positive and negative role of the core participants by providing a detailed syntactic, semantic and pragmatic analysis of the noun phrases and their informative and evaluative content. Sharing theoretical and applied concerns, the monograph can be seen as an inspiring and challenging study for both linguists and students of the English language as well as teachers and scholars interested in linguistics.

The book is organized into ten main sections, including three main chapters based on the methodology of the research and the analysis of the corpus material. In the first chapters of her monograph, the author presents the fundamental principles underlying her work – the distinction between text and discourse, the role of context or cognitive processes in meaning interpretation and modern approaches to complex noun phrase structure. What is more, her approach is not only comparative, but also highly evaluative and appraising. Jančaříková's research methodology is carefully planned and selected on the basis of the criteria stated in Chapter 7, which provides a detailed description of the corpus containing forty newspaper reports on ten different murder cases reported in broadsheets and tabloids. Although the author of the monograph agrees with the three-type categorisation of newspapers (broadsheets, tabloids and mid-market papers) as proposed by many newspaper language analysts (Jucker 1992, Tunstall 1996, Richardson 2007), she views her categorisation (broadsheets and tabloids) as sufficient. It would have been interesting to see possible similarities and differences in the structure of noun phrases of these three types of newspapers. On the other hand, Jančaříková's results show that the structure of the noun phrases seems to be influenced by the type of event rather than the type of the newspaper. As another limit of the research can be seen the fact that the articles in the corpus were chosen only on the content criteria, e.g. the type of the event, the type of the report, etc. and the length of the texts was not taken into account.

While analysing newspaper language as discourse, Jančaříková argues that the noun phrase as a linguistic focus of her work is one of the crucial means

of expressing the status of core participants. Moreover, her research findings indicate that the difference between the two types of papers, namely broadsheets and tabloids, consists mainly in evaluations communicated to the reader with tabloids presenting their readers with a ready-made picture of the participants and broadsheets prompting their readers to make a particular picture of them. Even though this has been already suggested in the previous chapters (Chapters 4 and 5), the author perfectly analyses and illustrates the complexity of the noun phrases with carefully chosen examples from the corpus. The key chapter of her work entitled *Analysis* comprises a very detailed examination of the murder cases – child or teenage murders. As suggested by the author, a newspaper report consists of three main segments, i.e. the headline, the lead and the body copy, which are unique but also interrelated. Chapter 9 is therefore subdivided into three main parts dealing with the structural and functional aspects of the newspaper reports under analysis. While considering the premise that language is of social character and has an enormous social potential, Jančaříková views simple and complex noun phrases referring to core participants as the grammatical means influenced by the type of the event rather than the type of newspaper. Her research findings show the main referential and predicational strategies important for expressing the participants' status in newspaper reports.

What I really appreciate about Jančaříková's monograph, apart from the detailed and carefully planned syntactic and semantic analysis of noun phrases in newspaper discourse, is Chapter 7 entitled *The Noun Phrase* where the author critically examines modern approaches (mainly functional) to the complex noun phrase (not only) in the newspaper register ranging from well known authorities in the field (Halliday 1985, Quirk et al. 1985, Biber et al. 1999) to other authors as Ni (2003) or Jucker (1992). Even though I must admit that their approaches are more similar than different, the analysis can be seen as one of the theoretical sources for students in linguistic seminars.

The monograph is completed by a Glossary of Terms, where the author explains all basic concepts and gives definitions of many key terms, and by Appendices, which contain several samples of reports from the corpus. The Index serves for a better orientation within the text of the monograph. Even though the author claims that her study is only a small contribution to the study of representation of people in newspaper discourse, her careful analysis based on quantitative and also qualitative research methods can be seen as a stimulating piece of work which gives an in-depth study of noun phrases used in newspaper discourse.

In the presented book Jančaříková discusses the noun phrase as one of the main grammatical units in newspaper text organization and takes it as a starting point

for other text work and text manipulation. Her approach is highly professional and valuable, since the author relies on numerous theoretical sources, but what is more, she presents the result of her continuative research work in the field of newspaper discourse. The book is an excellent reading for linguists, since it shows how the language in newspapers is used not only to transfer but also to shape social reality.

*Zuzana Kozáčíková*

### References

- Biber, D., Johansson, S., Leech, G., Conrad, S. and Finegan E. (1999) *Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English*. London: Longman.
- Halliday, M. A. K. (1978) *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Jucker, A. H. (1992) *Social Stylistics: Syntactic Variation in British Newspapers*. Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Ni, Y. (2003) 'Noun phrases in media texts. A qualification approach.' In: Aitchison, J. and Lewis, D. A. (eds) *New Media Language*. London: Routledge. 159-168.
- Quirk, R., Greenbaum, S., Leech, G. and Svartvik, J. (1985) *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language*. London and New York: Longman.
- Richardson, J. E. (2007) *Analysing Newspapers. An Approach from Critical Discourse Analysis*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Tunstall, J. (1996) *Newspaper Power: The New National Press in Britain*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.