ORAL AND WRITTEN MEDIA COVERAGE OF MUNDANE NEWS IN HONG KONG - A CASE STUDY OF A FIRE INCIDENT

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Abstract

This study examines newspaper and television news discourse based upon two news stories of a single event - a fire incident. Newspaper and television reports in English are compared and contrast as a means of arriving at the discourse differences between the two media. The study aims at looking into the discourse strategies of the two news stories so as to identify how those linguistic devices are employed by individual media. By careful examination of the texts of the news reports, the study sets out to analyse news discourse through studies of thematic structures, schematic structures, mode of presentation and lexicon used of the stories.

The findings of this study suggests that the coverage of this fire incident by the two media is different in the following ways: the newspaper coverage is found to include more detailed and specific information on the background and contexts, there are more vocabulary items suggesting a dramatic effect on the story used in the press. It is found that the verbal text of television report tends to be simpler than that of newspaper report in terms of the above findings. Nevertheless, television report is complicated by the inclusion of the visual presentation and the range of the 'orality' continuum.
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