

Press Digest: Discursive Devices in the Political News Leads of Three Major Broadsheets in the Philippines

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Abstract:

This study investigated the use of discursive devices in political news leads from three major Philippine broadsheets and determined how it shaped the meaning of news situations as purposive linguistic choices. Employing Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), the research examined the nature, patterns, and variations of devices such as evaluative language, intensification, references to emotion, elite individuals, role labels, agency, nominalization, orthographic techniques, type of verb, and voice of verb. The research involved 93 political news leads, with 31 news leads from each major broadsheet to form the corpus. Analysis revealed that news discourse strategically utilizes discursive devices to shape narratives, with frequent references to elite individuals, role labels, and agency, alongside a preference for active voice and transitive verbs, suggesting an action-oriented approach. Evaluative language and references to emotion were less common, potentially reflecting a deliberate effort to maintain objectivity, while intensification and quantification, nominalization, and orthographic techniques played a moderate role in shaping the news leads. Together with the workbook as the study's output, these results serve as inputs for innovations in journalism education, particularly in fostering critical news literacy among younger audiences. These offers perspectives on the use of discursive devices in political news reporting, where careful and appropriate use of language is key to shaping narratives and engaging readers in an ever-evolving media landscape.

Keywords— *critical discourse analysis, discursive devices, political news leads, journalism*

I. INTRODUCTION

News serves the purpose of reporting current events to the public. It plays a fundamental role in shaping societies and governing nations. Political news is a significant aspect of the media landscape in the Philippines. News in this sphere typically covers events, government policies, and politicians' personal and professional lives. This type of reporting enables Filipino citizens to keep informed about substantial issues and decisions that affect government institutions and policymaking. However, as status quo, news reports also influence the public's perception of politicians by strategically framing identities, practices, and actions, which affects the governance under which the people are put under.

The three news publications, including The Philippine Star, Philippine Daily Inquirer, and

Manila Bulletin, are the top three broadsheets in the Philippines that use investigative approaches to news, focused on in-depth coverage and a serious tone in articles and editorials published in both offline and online formats. Each of these broadsheets has its own style in presenting news through writing, with the same purpose of informing the general public, which may affect the society.

Reflected in the articles in these broadsheets, it consistently shows that there are numerous political issues in the Philippines. Writers remark on the fact that contemporary politics in the Philippines consists defects in the political system such as questionable political decisions, political dynasties, nepotism, massive graft, and corruption in the government. In this regard, language is used to highlight different points of view, implying that different linguistic tools are used to express different perspectives on the

same issue. In the creation of political news reports, discursive devices are employed by writers as linguistic tools to influence the impact of news events and issues on their readers.

The study strongly highlighted the importance of political news and the power of language to influence public opinion and perception of government institutions, politicians, and policy-making processes, used by the mass media and consumed by the general public on a daily basis. Only a minimal amount of research has been done, specifically dedicated to analyzing discursive devices in political news leads of the major broadsheets in the Philippines, as more research are focused on other areas such as headlines and national news, generally.

A. Language and Discourse of Political News.

Language acts as a potent instrument for constructing narratives, influencing public opinion, and mobilizing support for particular ideologies or goals. In political news, language is not only descriptive; it is also intrinsically persuasive, with words chosen specifically to arouse feelings, influence viewpoints, and mold impressions. Politicians and the media utilize it as a potent instrument to dominate public opinion by influencing stories, managing discourse, and influencing people's thoughts. By examining linguistic patterns, identifying recurrent themes, analyzing how language constructs reality, and revealing the underlying power dynamics at work, discourse analysis in political news aims to show how language is used to legitimize some points of view, marginalize others, and uphold prevailing power structures in society.

B. Exploring Discursive Devices

Writers use discursive devices as a common linguistic tool that are employed to control a particular language context used in news. These devices include, evaluative language, intensification and quantification, reference to emotion, reference to elite people, reference to role labels, reference to agency, nominalization, orthographic techniques, type and voice of verb.

Evaluative language represents linguistic expressions that convey ideas, whether positive or negative, significant or insignificant [1]. Intensification evaluates quality and process, while quantification is the semantic evaluation of the quantify, volume and extent of physical entity [2]. Overuse of emotive language in journalism

contributes to the spread of misinformation, causing distrust in news media [3], while the concept of elitism can encompass a range of attributes, including high status, expertise, authority, celebrity, and fame, and can apply to both individuals and entities [1]. Certain titles for role labels or status indicating objectives are frequent in newspaper [4]. On the other hand, studying agency helps fill gaps and improves how current frameworks analyze politics and policy during transitions by using discursive methods [5]. Nominalization can be noun-based in the lexical level [6], while orthographic techniques such as quotes enhances the validity and reliability of journal articles as it provides primary evidence [7]. Moreover, verbs are words that express actions, occurrences, or states of being [8]. Lastly, verb voice indicates whether the subject is receiving the action (passive voice) or performing it (active voice) [9].

C. Creating Learning Materials for News Writing

On the enactment of Republic Act 7079, also known as the Campus Journalism Act of 1991, emphasizing the incorporation of journalism, English or communication arts subjects into elementary and secondary curricula, the study recognized the importance of educational materials that align with the legislation's goals. The study has given special focus to creating learning materials centered to changing needs of journalism education in the Philippines, contributing to the larger goal of cultivating a more independent and locally driven journalistic landscape.

Developing writing proficiency can be hard due to lack of basic writing skills, thus suggesting the need for crafting learning materials for news writing. Worksheets are printed learning materials that encompasses several series of activities, assignments and study guides that can be designed online and electronically [10]. Worksheets are mentioned to be effective in improving the overall performance of students in news writing. Including worksheets for students in the curriculum not only encourages participation and self-directed learning while enabling students to apply theoretical ideas in practical journalistic settings, strengthening their news reporting abilities, but also improve students' knowledge of the learning process and the caliber of learning results [11]. Worksheets for students specifically designed for mastery learning can enhance and improve the process of learning and the

occurrence of educational interaction between lecturer and students.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study focused on examining the discursive devices used in political news leads across three major broadsheets in the Philippines. The primary aim was to describe and analyze the discursive strategies employed in the reportage of political news, with particular focus on language features such as the use of active and passive voice, as well as the incorporation of evaluative language. By delving into these language elements, the study sought to shed light on how they function within the context of political news reporting.

One intention of the study, as its main contribution to the field, was to craft a workbook as a learning material that would help journalism students in understanding and applying discursive devices in news writing effectively. This is crucial at this day and age wherein media literacy is key in navigating the media and its platforms.

III. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research method to analyze the discursive devices used in political news leads across three major Philippine broadsheets. By utilizing critical discourse analysis, the research sought to describe, interpret, and understand how language shapes political discourse within the Philippine context.

D. Materials Analyzed

The main sources of data are political news leads presented in The Philippine Star, Philippine Daily Inquirer, and Manila Bulletin from March 1 to 31, 2024, which was the period of critical observation. The texts analyzed in this study consisted of news leads published on a website during the specified period. Using Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) framework, the research investigated 93 political news leads. By focusing on news items prominently featured in the national news sections and related to politics, this study provided a detailed examination of the media's role in constructing political discourse in the Philippines. As code identifiers, "PDI" was used for the Philippine Daily Inquirer, "PS" for Philippine Star, and "MB" for Manila Bulletin. For example, the code "MB-1" means that the text is the first news lead analyzed from Manila Bulletin, "PS-2" means the text is the second article analyzed from the Philippine Star, and so on.

E. Research Procedure

This study employed a descriptive qualitative research method to analyze the discursive devices used in political news reporting by three major Philippine broadsheets: The Philippine Star, Philippine Daily Inquirer, and Manila Bulletin. Utilizing a three-dimensional framework for Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), the research systematically examined how language in news media constructs social reality and influences public perception of political events.

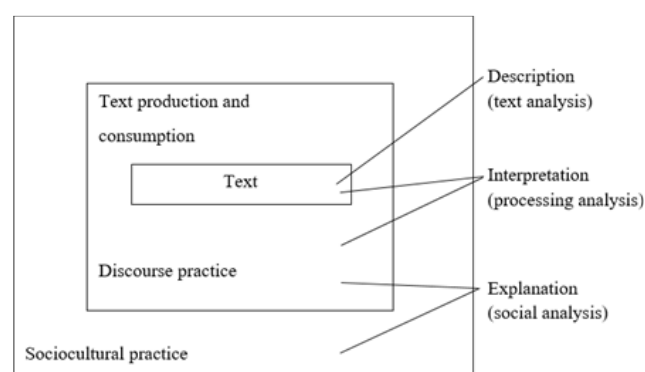


Figure 1. Fairclough's three-dimensional framework on CDA (1995)

The analysis was grounded in the three core dimensions of CDA: textual analysis, discursive practice analysis, and socio-cultural analysis [12]. Textual analysis served as the primary approach, focusing on linguistic choices within political news leads. This involved examining specific linguistic features such as word choices and sentence structures to understand how they emphasize certain aspects of political reporting. Discursive practice analysis complemented this by highlighting the role of framing and attribution in shaping reader perception, demonstrating how language constructs particular perspectives. Socio-cultural analysis explored the broader implications of language use, connecting discourse to societal structures, power relations, and ideological frameworks, and examining how media language intersects with politics to reinforce institutional authority.

The study adopted an interpretive research approach to emphasize the creation of meaning in news reports. It critically examined the embedded language in political discourse, identifying various discursive devices such as evaluative language, intensification, quantification, emotional references, agency, and nominalization. Fairclough's analytical model description, interpretation, and explanation guided the systematic exploration of these devices

and their relationship to the Philippine socio-political context.

Two scales were introduced to measure the presence and extent of various discursive devices across the analyzed news leads.

Scale 1 categorized the usage of devices such as evaluative language, intensification and quantification, reference to emotion, reference to elite people, reference to role labels, reference to agency, and voice of verb. The categories range from “Highly Utilized” (25-31), “Frequently Utilized” (17-24), “Moderately Utilized” (9-16), “Rarely Utilized” (1-8), or “Not Utilized” (0). This scale specifically measured the number of political news leads where each discursive device is present, allowing for clear identification of dominant discursive devices.

Scale 2 assessed the extent of devices like nominalization, orthographic techniques, and type of verb, providing a broader perspective on their frequency across the news leads. The usage is categorized by frequency: “Extensive Extent” for presence in all leads (92-115 occurrences), “High Extent” (69-91 occurrences), “Moderate Extent” (46-68 occurrences), “Limited Extent” (23-45 occurrences), “Minimal Extent” (1-22 occurrences), and “Not Used” (0 occurrences). This scale measured the total frequency of each discursive device across all news leads, offering insights into how extensively each device is used overall.

The systematic approach ensured that findings are based on observable patterns rather than subjective interpretations, revealing that certain discursive devices are prevalent in political reporting, which can significantly shape public discourse.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study yielded significant findings on the purposive use of discursive devices in political news leads.

F. Discursive Devices Employed in the Political News Leads

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1) Use of Evaluative Language: Evaluative language was only used as a discursive device in a limited number of political news leads, with a total of 14 instances across the three major broadsheets. Hence, it is worth noting that can be interpreted that journalists are careful in expressing subjective evaluations as they are aware of the power of language in shaping the meaning of news, which in turn affects the society that it is situated in.

Here is a political news lead that utilized evaluative language:

President Marcos’ latest overseas trip allowed him to revisit his favorite spots in the country where he took some rest after a **grueling** yet **successful** campaign for the presidency in 2022 (TPS-8).

As highlighted in the political news lead, the adjectives **grueling** and **successful** are used to evaluate the campaign of President Marcos for the presidency in 2022. The use of the conjunction ‘yet’ connected the two evaluative adjectives, highlighting that the campaign was both extremely demanding and ultimately rewarding. The writer’s contrast emphasized the idea that despite the tough nature of the campaign, it was successful in the end. In fact, the use of the word **successful** may not have been necessary since his role label, “President,” has been mentioned at the beginning of the lead. Moreover, the writer used the word **grueling** to evaluate the campaign to account for his rest during his visit to Australia, which was the main focus of the news report.

2) Use of Intensification and Quantification: A total of 40 out of 93 political news leads employed intensification and quantification, which may be considered an adequate usage. The results indicated that the broadsheets were more likely to focus on utilizing word-based descriptions of intensification and quantification devices rather than a direct numerical reference to shape political contexts in their news leads.

Here is a political news lead that utilized intensification and quantification:

The House of Representatives passed on **third** and final reading on Wednesday a bill revoking the franchise granted to Swara Sug Media Corp. which operates under the business name Sonshine Media Network International (SMNI), the broadcasting network of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ Church, led by preacher Apollo Quiboloy (PDI-21).

The bill's legislative process was emphasized using the word third as a numerical reference to the process. The adjective is employed as a quantifier to specify the exact phase in the reading process in which the House of Representatives has enacted the measure of terminating Swara Sug Media Corporation's franchise. This indicated that the bill has already undergone the first and second phases of reading of the legislative process. Moreover, the adjective emphasized the critical significance of the phase in the legislative process, as it was a direct specification that the phase was in its last stage, which determined whether the bill would be approved or rejected.

3) *Use of Reference to Emotion*: References to emotion were rarely utilized in political news leads across the three major broadsheets, with only one occurrence. This reflected that the broadsheets tend to have a neutral approach, which reflects a commitment to objective journalism that is factual, neutral, and highly appropriate for reporting news.

Here is the political news lead that utilized reference to emotion:

Senator Jinggoy Estrada on Thursday finds “**disappointing**” and “utterly unacceptable” the claims of a former Palace official linking his father, former president Joseph Ejercito Estrada, to the alleged deal involving the removal of BRP Sierra Madre from Ayungin Shoal (PDI-28).

The word *disappointing* served as a reference to emotion that underscores Senator Jinggoy Estrada's feelings of frustration and indignation regarding the allegations against his father. As noted, the political news was typically categorized as hard news, which led to the expectation that references to emotion were rarely utilized. Instead, the focus remained on delivering factual information rather than engaging emotionally.

4) *Use of Reference to Elite People*: A total of 81 political news leads employed references to elite people, indicating a high level of utilization for this discursive device. This result emphasized that referencing elite people in political news leads was a common practice for news writers in the broadsheets. This is because the discursive device shapes political discourse as well as public perception as it underscored the power dynamics and influence within the political situations that they are used in.

Here is a political news lead that utilized reference to elite people:

Speaking before Australia's parliament, President **Marcos** has once again declared to an international audience that the Philippines will never give up an inch of its territory to any foreign power (MB-1).

President Marcos was mentioned as an elite person in this lead. In connection to this lead, mentioning him emphasized a strong stance from the Philippines' top leadership, reinforcing his authority and alignment with national sovereignty issues. Mentioning a well-known individual like President Marcos and addressing an issue on an international stage brings wider attention and can influence foreign governments' perspectives and policies. In this way, using Marcos' statement enhances the message's impact both domestically and globally, framing it as a firm national policy rather than a routine diplomatic statement.

5) *Use of Reference to Role Labels*: Based on the analysis, reference to role labels was present in 84 political news leads and was thus highly utilized. It revealed various role labels were used to identify the title or position of the involved individuals.

Here is a political news lead that utilized reference to role labels:

Vice President Sara Duterte on Tuesday showed up at a rally in Liwasang Bonifacio in support of embattled Kingdom of Jesus Christ (KJC) “**leader**” Apollo Quiboloy (PDI-13).

First, Sara Duterte was referred to as the Vice President of the Philippines, emphasizing that she is the second highest official, pointing out her influence on politics. Second, the term leader described Apollo Quiboloy as a prominent authority within the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, clarifying his religious influence. Labeling Duterte as Vice President highlighted her authority and the gravity of her actions, while labeling Quiboloy a leader emphasized his significance in the religious community, shaping perceptions of his authority. This style of writing encourages readers to consider the importance of each activity and affects how they interpret the actions and words of individual participants. By framing the story in this way, the author invites a deeper examination of the motivations and consequences behind each person's actions.

6) *Use of Reference to Agency*: A total of 55 political news leads utilized references to agency, indicating that it was frequently utilized and that writers highlight how institutions and individuals interact to shape policy and public concerns.

Here is a political news lead that utilized reference to role labels:

President Marcos has moved Senior Deputy Executive Secretary (ES) Hubert Guevara from the “**Office of the President (OP)**” to the **Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC)** as one of its commissioners (MB-2).

The first agency employed is the Office of the President (OP), which represents the highest level of executive in the Philippines, pointing out the President’s influence in the national government. Mentioning the OP emphasized the direct control of President Marcos over key appointments and strategic decisions within the government. On the other hand, by highlighting the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) in the lead, it draws attention to the importance of effective regulation in maintaining economic stability and public confidence in financial systems. The writer intentionally mentioned the Office of the President (OP) and the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) to highlight the significance of the appointment and the shifting roles within the government.

G. Description of Discursive Devices in Three Major Broadsheets

1) *Description of the Use of Nominalization*: Nominalization was employed in the political news leads a total of 199 times, which represented a moderate extent of usage. These results emphasize the significant use of nominalized words as appropriate and direct terms that fit in their respective news situations. By employing nominalization in political news leads, journalists can present information more concisely while preserving the core message of the news.

Here is the political news lead that utilized nominalization:

The Czech Republic is ready to supply the Philippines with the latest **defense** technology and **equipment** to support its ongoing military **modernization** program, Prime Minister Petr Fiala told President Marcos (TPS- 16).

With the emphasis placed on them, the nominalized words defense, equipment, and modernization were featured in this political news lead. Defense was formed by excluding the last letter of the verb “defend” and adding the suffix “-se,” which refers to the act or process of protecting a country or its interests from attack or harm. In addition, the nominalized word equipment was derived from the verb “equip” and added with the suffix “-ment,” which refers to the necessary items or tools used for a particular purpose. Lastly, the nominalized word modernization was formed from the verb modernize by excluding the last letter and adding the suffix “-ation, which refers to the process of bringing something up to date or making it more contemporary. By using this nominalization, the writer was able to convey complex ideas in a concise and informative manner.

2) *Description of the Use of Alias and Quoted Words and Phrases as Orthographic Techniques*: The total usage frequency of alias and quoted words or phrases found in the three major broadsheets amounted to 37 instances, which implied that they focused on establishing familiarity and connectivity in political reporting.

Here is a political news lead that utilized aliases:

House Deputy Majority Leader and Mandaluyong City lone district Rep. Neptali “**Boyet**” Gonzales II said President Ferdinand “**Bongbong**” Marcos Jr. has been gathering support from the country’s allies amid its continuing dispute with China in the West Philippine Sea (WPS) (MB-10).

The aliases “Bongbong” and “Boyet” were quoted to emphasize the informal and familiar nature of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and Representative Neptali Gonzales II, respectively. The use of aliases for these individuals highlighted their significance in shaping public perception, making both figures more relatable and approachable to readers. By using the alias “Bongbong,” the writer underscores Marcos’ personal connection with the public, which fostered a sense of intimacy that humanizes him amid serious political discussions. Similarly, by using “Boyet,” the lead emphasizes Gonzales’ established presence in Philippine politics, which enhanced the reader engagement by framing him as a familiar figure rather than just a politician.

Here is a political news lead that utilized a quoted phrase:

Today, that peace, that stability, and our continued success, have come under threat President Marcos told Australians that Filipinos were again “**on the front line**” as they were during World War II when their countries fought on the same side against a common enemy to defend regional peace and stability (PDI-1).

In President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.’s address to Australians, the quoted phrase “on the front line” was intentionally used to evoke a historical parallel between the current geopolitical landscape and the shared experiences of the Philippines and Australia during World War II. By emphasizing this phrase, the writer underscored Marcos’ assertion that Filipinos were once again positioned at a critical juncture in safeguarding regional peace and stability, particularly amid rising tensions in the Indo-Pacific region, including China’s actions in the South China Sea. The quotation served to highlight the Philippines’ active role in addressing these challenges, thereby enhancing the impact of the message for readers by framing it within a context of historical resilience and ongoing commitment to collective security.

3) *Description of the Use of Types of Verbs in Philippine Broadsheets:* A total of 361 words have been identified and classified into four types of verbs: transitive, intransitive, linking, and phrasal. This indicated that news leads have a high extent of usage of verbs and are action-oriented. There was an overwhelming dominance of transitive verbs over other types of verbs employed within political news leads which suggests that political news leads are action-driven since transitive verbs are action words that focus on modifying direct objects.

Here is a political news lead that utilized transitive verbs:

Five senators are now **trying** to block the contempt ruling issued by the Senate women and gender equality committee against controversial preacher Apollo Quiboloy, with some arguing that he should not **face** arrest for **snubbing** Senate hearings due to his right to due process (TPS-7).

Apollo Quiboloy’s contempt ruling issued by the Senate was characterized by the verbs trying, block, issued, face, and snubbing. The word trying modified the phrase “to block the contempt order.” This verb described the direct object, which comes after it was stated. In the same phrase, the word block was

identified as a transitive verb. This is because it was an action word that emphasized the contempt order that was issued by the Senate. Although some transitive verbs follow another transitive verb, they can still be classified as transitive verbs if there are direct objects following them. By closely integrating the two verbs, the writer effectively conveyed the attempt to stop a verdict while emphasizing the pressure around Quiboloy’s position. On the other hand, issues is also a transitive verb. It described the Senate as a direct object. The word face is an action word that was also classified as a transitive verb, which means to confront or deal with a specific situation. This modified the word arrest, which was followed by another transitive verb, snubbing. This verb described Quiboloy not attending his Senate hearings.

Here is a political news lead that utilized an intransitive verb:

A Senate panel on Tuesday, March 5, cited in contempt and requested the arrest of Kingdom of Jesus Christ (KOJC) leader Pastor Apollo Quiboloy for his refusal to **testify** before the investigation on the human trafficking, sexual abuses, and forced labor allegations hurled against him (MB-5).

The word testify was employed to describe the action that led Apollo Quiboloy to be cited in contempt and be requested for arrest as demanded by the Senate. The verb testify, which means to provide testimony as a witness in a court of law, was employed in the news lead and classified as an intransitive verb. As an intransitive verb, testify represented actions that are completely independent and do not operate upon a specific object. In the context of this news lead, it was employed by the writer to describe Quiboloy’s act of refusal to appear in court hearings before allegations started to be hurled against him, leading the Senate to come up with legal measures to cite him in contempt and request his arrest. The writer employed the intransitive verb to emphasize Quiboloy’s noncooperative action, linking the legal consequences of his actions.

Here is a political news lead that utilized a linking verb:

Senator Robinhood Padila on Thursday denied that he is defending alleged sex offender and Kingdom of Jesus Christ founder Apollo C. Quiboloy (PDI-14).

As exhibited, the linking verb is linked Senator Robinhood Padilla directly to his denial over Apollo C. Quiboloy. This gave a clear indication that Padilla was reacting immediately to the claims rather than sitting back and allowing them to be made. In using is, the writer draws out urgency and relevance so that a reader would then realize that his stance was a present declaration that he was not supporting Quiboloy, a man embroiled in multiple legal accusations.

Here is a political news lead that utilized phrasal verbs:

The lawmaker brother of Vice President Sara Duterte on Wednesday took a swipe at critics who have called her out for her silence on the increased Chinese hostilities in the West Philippine Sea, arguing that the vice president should not condemn the recent assaults on Filipino vessels to avoid provoking China (TPS-30).

There were two phrasal verbs present to emphasize the political tension surrounding Vice President Sara Duterte's silence on the Chinese hostilities in the West Philippine Sea. First, Vice President Sara Duterte's lawmaker brother took a swipe at critics, which means that he expressed direct criticism towards the critics of his sister as a defensive remark. This was later supported by his argument that her silence was a strategic move to avoid provoking China. Second, the phrasal verb called out means that the aforementioned critics have publicly confronted the vice president over her lack of response regarding the national issue as a high-ranking official. The phrasal verb called out highlighted the criticism, while the phrasal verb took a swipe at highlighted the defense in this continuing debate over how the Philippines should handle China's actions.

4) *Description of the Use of Voice of Verb:* The dominant grammatical structure was active voice because out of 93 political news leads from the three broadsheets, 86 were written in this voice, which means that it was highly utilized. Passive voice, on the other hand, was only employed in seven of the political news leads, suggesting that it was rarely utilized. This apparent difference in the use of the grammatical structures implies that active voice, where the subject performs the action, was heavily preferred by writers, likely because it provided clarity, immediacy, and direct attribution of actions,

which are crucial in delivering news reports that are expected to be concise, factual, and impactful to capture and maintain the readers' attention. While it is incontestable that the three broadsheets favor active voice, passive voice was still employed by writers as it serves strategic purposes; for example, it shifts away the focus from the agent when performing an action in order to emphasize the action or its recipient.

Here is a political news lead that utilized active voice:

Some lawmakers have questioned Vice President Sara Duterte's motives for gracing the "prayer rally" organized for controversial preacher Apollo Quiboloy on Tuesday night, with one senator saying that Duterte's defense of the wanted sex trafficker stands in contrast with her duties as education secretary (TPS-13).

"Some lawmakers" are the subjects performing the action of "have questioned," and "one senator" is the subject performing the action of "saying." In the sentence, it was clearly stated that the lawmakers and senator were the ones that have questioned and are speaking, so the actions are initiated by these actors. The writer employed the active voice not only to be concise and direct but also to assign clear responsibility for the actions. It was the lawmakers who were raising concerns about Vice President Sara Duterte's motives, and it was the senator who was voicing an opinion about her defense of Quiboloy. In this lead, active voice has been used, and there was no ambiguity whatsoever as to who was doing what; the spotlight remained on the political actors.

Here is a political news lead that utilized passive voice:

The contempt citation and arrest order against Pastor Apollo Quiboloy is already in effect as of Friday, March 15, as far as Surigao del Sur 2nd district Rep. Johnny Pimentel is concerned (MB-15).

The political news lead above was written in passive voice, the emphasis was on the action as well as its current status and was shifted away from who enacted the action. With the line "already in effect," the writer focused attention on the most newsworthy detail—the status of the contempt citation and arrest order rather than the subject enforcing it. By not specifying who put the order into effect, the writer remained more neutral, simply presenting the fact that it "is already in effect."

Since the actor was not the focal point and was thus not mentioned, readers are compelled to focus directly on the legal actions against Pastor Apollo Quiboloy. Furthermore, by mentioning Rep. Johnny Pimentel, the lead contextualized the information, indicating a political acknowledgment, which added a layer of credibility to the news report.

PROPOSED LEARNING MATERIAL TO MAXIMIZE THE USE OF DISCURSIVE DEVICES IN WRITING NEWS LEADS

Aside from the generation of relevant information through the three components of critical discourse analysis, the study also offered a workbook as a learning material that can equip students and aspiring journalists with the skills to master discursive devices for crafting compelling news leads. “Press Matters: A Workbook on Discursive Devices Used in News Writing” is a workbook that fosters an awareness of the constructive and functional nature of language features within news discourse, enabling impactful leads that capture a story’s essence and engage readers. By bridging the gap between theory and practice, this resource develops sustainable practices in journalism education. Its accessible approach ensures that anyone with an interest in journalism can use it as a stepping stone toward progress in news writing.

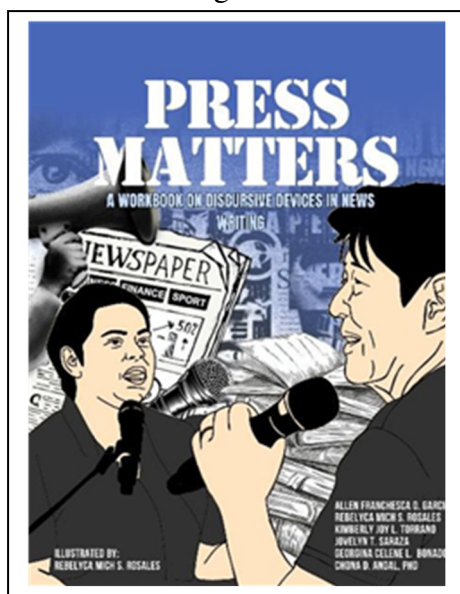


Figure 2. Front Cover of “Press Matters: A Workbook on Discursive Devices in News Writing”

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