

**M. Grazia Busa**  
***Introducing the Language of  
the News: A Student's Guide***

Reading List

**Research**

Practices/Projects

In the Positions through contextualizing brief, I keep my focus on newspaper headlines. I was uncertain about what I would do, and ended up with experimental meaningless animations. On the second week I decided to expand my research into paid newspaper—without knowing yet where it would lead me into. The total of five paid newspapers and three free newspapers was collected on—my favourite date of the year—17<sup>th</sup> May 2022. Started by cataloguing stories in every newspaper, categorizing the titles, and juxtaposing the same articles in different newspaper until the outline of the news of the day is found. In a journal, Grazia Busa (2013) stated that the headline has the important function of grabbing the readers' attention and giving them an idea of the news story's content and tone, so that they can decide whether it is worth reading or not. In this case, the headline on Morning Star newspaper was almost triggering me more than The Daily

Telegraph's. The use of provocative word makes me almost missed the point of the actual news. This makes me questioning, did she really blatantly mention it as a solution for living crisis? Why is this media framing her as a tone deaf representation of the government? I looked for the actual video, there is a reporter interviewed Rachel Maclean about current issues in the UK, but there is no 'poor' word ever mentioned in her speech. The reporter keep asking question that cornered Maclean because she said that people need to work more hours or find a better-paid job to overcome the living crisis where she actually just quick-mentioning some of short term solutions that of course, will not suitable for all people. She also said something about the long term problem solving that the government is currently trying to find by opening the job centre. Of course, a snippet of an opinion can be interpreted in many ways. The question is why they done that?

## Marshall McLuhan

### *Medium is the Message*

#### Reading List

Research

Practices/Projects

In *Medium is the Message*, McLuhan (2008) argued that in the age of new media, we can produce the information. For example, it is where the reader of left-wing ideology newspaper can connect with anyone who also shared the same ideology. He also talked about how medium shapes how the society interact with the message and influenced how people react. Another example is where the interview moved from television to the social media, as in the YouTube video where I found the actual interview video, there is the comment section where people shared their opinions about the talks and how people can connect with the people who shared same perspectives simply by liking the comments that match their principles. Mediums are

extending its capability. What makes the newspaper powerful is its capacity to deliver persistent exposure that alters and reshapes the society. McLuhan also stated that one big gossip column that is unforgiving, unforgetful and from which there is no redemption. We can see in the video where (so called tone-deaf) opinions slipped from the tory minister, have resulted various reactions from other media which in this case, in left-wing newspaper they are talking about where the minister budget money goes instead of the real issue: Living crisis caused by the Russian war. There is no way to change or repositioning what's written or shared on the internet. They will stay there forever.

## Raymond Queneau

### *Exercises in Style*

#### Reading List

Research

Practices/Projects

After cataloguing the articles in each newspaper, I found that those newspapers are actually having a same premise: It is when Russian war ended up causing energy bills cap in the UK is rising, where it affects food prices, causing living crisis, and giving pressure to the government to overcome long term issues. The differences are only where they put their focus on and which lens they use in delivering the news to attract readers they specifically aimed to.

This reminds me of Queneau's *Exercises in Style* (2013) where he retellings same story in ninety nine different styles although the intentions are freed from judgemental perspectives like the newspapers, but I can see the key idea is similar. It also similarly what I was doing on the Iteration project, where I created a hundred collages using materials that (supposed to) illustrated different meanings from the same newspaper headline.

**Maria Konnikova**  
***How Headlines Change***  
***the Way We Think***

Reading List

**Research**

Practices/Projects

Grazia Busa also stated that a news story is always competing for the reader's attention with advertising and other news on the same page and in the paper. To create 'attractive' headlines and catch the reader's attention, a number of linguistic, rhetorical or stylistic devices may be used. They also mentioned that witty headlines are common in British newspapers, as I found the most ludicrous headlines of them all on the Daily Star. They even put the hamster running on a wheel to aggressively illustrate the society who forced by the government to work hard and help themselves facing the living crisis issue. They added bubble text and some political jokes that criticizes the government as if they want to confirm their position in the society—as a pro-labour party. There is an article written by Maria

Konnikova (The New Yorker, 2014) she said that by its choice of phrasing, a headline can influence your mindset as you read so that you later recall details that coincide with what you were expecting. This supported by Entman (1995) that framing refers to "selecting and highlighting some elements of reality and suppressing others, in a way that constructs a story about a social problem, its causes, its moral nature and its possible remedies" (p. 142). They choose different aspect of current events to emphasize so the readers can perceive the intention behind the headlines. This is answered my question about why each newspapers is trying to force their message, because by focusing on a different part they can framing and reconstruct readers with their ideology—or political views.

**Vilem Flusser**  
***Does Writing Have a Future:***  
***Ways of Reading***

Reading List

**Research**

Practices/Projects

To read different perspectives makes me think if the editor aware of the consequences of what they pick as the headlines. Flusser (2011) argued that reading has two methods: according to criteria (knowing what to pick) or unselectively. He also analogize reading as hens. They 'peck' according to the criterion edible-inedible kernels. The contrast of those headlines (the kernels) are waiting to be pecked by the targeted readers (hens). The practice of what the newspaper editors did is similarly to what Flusser stated as '... not everything can be pecked. There are illegible things. But everything can be picked apart so that it can be pecked.' He also said that people

read everything around them and in them interpretively. What I did in this project's process is pecking (reading) all news from various perspectives as what Flusser called reading symptoms, solving puzzles. If critical reading picks out 'edible kernels' out of 'inedible kernels', puzzle-solving reading is pecking some of 'the kernels' and stand before two heaps of kernels in the end with a standard that calibrated on zero point or maybe I can say as the 'truth' since 'the heaps' are not categorized in values and price tags but quantities and numbers. By doing this, I can see the 'missing puzzle' in each news and understand the positionings of each newspaper.

## Neil Postman

### *Amusing Ourselves to Death*

The Flusser's 'hens pecked kernels' analogy is similar to what Neil Postman (2007) once mentioned about how politic, education, cultural, and social issues being seen through the lens of entertainment. Where it took over culture and truth is not concealed but drowned by irrelevancies makes the reader need to pick something suits their own criteria. The flood of news and information also causing we would not know which is really important and one that does not matter. We absorb everything as entertainment. The article of public figure evil texts shared the same portions of the food crisis article. Postman said, this phenomenon could desensitized ourselves from the actual issue and makes us more passive-to argue? To debate? To reposition ourselves? Famous quotes from C. S Lewis said that the most dangerous ideas in a society are not the ones that are being argued, but the ones that are

assumed. This makes me questioning about Postman ideas of the new media. The newspaper, somehow, works like television, they can state anything they want you to believe, there is no room for the reader's immediate participation or debate that can influence other readers so they can repositioning themselves, where in social media-let say YouTube, the 'reader' can argue what is being told by the 'author'- for example, the interview video of the Tory politicians advice on living crisis issue. I used to read the comment section every time I watch YouTube or Tiktok videos about current issues, it is fun to see one's opinion without being influenced by media's subconscious 'propaganda'. To see other people's positionings makes me perceive the world differently. (And there it is, I found the comment section as a new form of entertainment. Well done, Postman.)

Reading List

**Research**

Practices/Projects

## bell hooks

### *Cultural Criticism and Transformation*

I tried to find each newspaper's positioning towards the premise I mentioned earlier, and also other trending stories that happened on this day without checking their political views on a Wikipedia page first. Blue circle is for conservative view, red circle is for left-wing view, and the black circle is either neutral or not forcing their ideological into the news, and I got all most likely correct. From the chart, I can understand why they put different focus towards same story. The news rooted from Russian war until bank inflations causing the living crisis, the interesting part is when they split into two different perspectives, where the conservative will focus into food increasing prices and the left-wing goes with the 'tone deaf' opinion by Rachel Maclean and lash out her job personally. Political issue aside, there are two murder cases by men with different culture background that written in different tones. The tones which I assumed as racial bias became stronger when I compare the image and description of the murders. The image selections for the murderer articles bothered me in a way they put mugshot for the PCSO murderer,

and use a wedding photograph for the Wife killer. The description used for the PCSO murder are his mental issue-as in 'weirdo', 'loner', while the wife killer is his job and nationality-as in 'Greek pilot'. What do they really want to say? Are they trying to build an image of a lovely wealthy family guy-who unbelievably became a murderer? To me, it is like the media is being denial because of the racial bias they had for a long time; where people of colour mostly doing crimes rather than white people. To think about how media use representations, it reminds me of a video essay about cultural criticism and transformation by bell hooks (Media Education Foundation, 1997) in the video she said how important it is to be an enlightened witness since we cannot be free from representations but we can become critically vigilant about the world we live in, about what is being told to us, and how we respond to what is being told. There, I finally found evidence of two biases in the newspaper: political and racial bias. This thought has become my starting point in continuing this project.

## Reading List

Research

Practices/Projects

**Sherrie Levine**  
***The Pictures Generation***

Reading List

Research

**Practices/Projects**

Through the pattern I found in eight 17th May newspapers, I tried to repositioning the previous ideas by creating new contexts. I reproduce the existing newspapers by scanning and re-print them with no manipulation but the contrast and saturation, then I covered the prints with a series of blank cardboard that have holes in different place. Each piece of cardboard generates different intentions that can be interpreted in many ways depends on the experience of the reader. This explores the different ways of reading newspaper through various lenses. The concept of reproducing artwork in order to create new meanings also found in an exhibition in 1977 entitled Pictures by some artists identified as the 'Pictures Generation'. The exhibition

generally questioned the authorship and interpretation of appropriation. There is a work by Sherrie Levine titled After Walker Evans that expresses the same ideas with my project although Houman said that what I have done is not similar to this, but in an article by Dr. Jordana Saggese (Khan Academy, 2014), she examined the key idea of Barthes' Death of Author through Levine's work and I think she articulates clearly what I was trying to say, that artists were suddenly freed from the burden and the expectations of complete originality; what mattered now was how artists could interpret, reconfigure, and reposition already extant works and ideas to create other meanings.



**Roland Barthes**  
***Death of Author***

**Reading List**

Research

Practices/Projects

Somehow, I always have the urge to ask my friend—or explaining to them, what is the meaning behind the work as Barthes (1977) said in the *Death of the Author*, the explanation of a work is always sought in the man or woman who produced it. Although, in this digital era, I do not think the author is dead, they are more alive than before. They can like the artworks or good review on social media and reply to

the critics to make the reader understand their intention in the way they want you to understand. In this project, I tried to remake how the media works: showing fragments and framing content to build context. Without explaining what was my intention in creating the artworks, I can see various feedback and different object reading from the readers to expand my perspectives.

**Justine Kurland**  
***SCUMB Manifesto***

Reading List

Research

**Practices/Projects**

In the previous brief, I was reconfiguring the text and the images into a 'new' newspaper headline to build different context. I found similar project done by Justine Kurland, SCUMB (Society for Cutting Up Men's Books) Manifesto. She is reworking the photography canon by dismembering and reconfiguring images from 150 books by white male photographers and photography canon (The Guardian, 2022). Her collage is

both challenging the patriarchy and raising issues around authorship and respect. There is similarities in method from what I have done on previous iterations; making a hundred collages out of the same newspaper headlines. What I can reflect from that, is how I can build new meanings—even provocative—out of the same images over and over again with the 'help' of the readers' objectivity.

**Judy Willcock**  
***Emotional or Extra-Rational***  
***Response to Objects workshop***

Reading List

Research

**Practices/Projects**

This also relates to what I learned from Emotional or Extra-Rational Response to Objects workshop by Judy Willcock few weeks ago, where an object could build different meaning depends on the reader—even if there is no intention from the author at all. There are three themes in responding to an object where a magic moment happens between the people and the object. The first one is Personal Responses which divided into two subthemes: emotional and physical response. In this theme, people can make a single judgement based on their immediate reaction and stimulation of being engaged with the object. The second

one is Relationship to Previous Experience which influenced by memories, cultural & social, and habituated responses. This explained that those influence will make people feel or think about the object in different ways. The last one is Empathy for Objects which divided into imagination and feeling & meaning, this can make people imagining and reshaping the perception of a certain object. The second theme is a practice that strongly happened both in the newspaper and in this Unit 2 project, where the meaning of news/our project can be interpreted differently by the readers/our friends, without explanation of the author—us.

**Sara Cwynar**  
***Modern Art in Your Life***

Reading List

Research

**Practices/Projects**

A MoMA's commissioned project by Sara Cwynar, in this series of six short videos that communicate her thoughts about the position of all of MoMA's collections in the time of overwhelming medias. Through art historical objects and popular images and inspired by Berger's video series *Ways of Seeing*, she is exploring how values and

social norms are constructed and reinforced. In my project, I was trying to communicate how objectivity works in media that full of framing narrative, full of intentions and biases. I want to explore how we can read different story of the same news through reinforced intentions and political interests.

**bell hooks**  
***Cultural Criticism and Transformation***

In these two parts interview video in 1997 entitled *Cultural Criticism and Transformation*, (Media Education Foundation, 1997) bell hooks explored how representation works in pop culture. Hooks talked about being enlightened witnesses when we watch representations by being critical about what is being told to us and how we respond to what is being told. She mentioned McLuhan in how degrees of literacy determine how ones sees, interprets, and understands the meaning. In this project, one of things that attract me is the articles about the men who murdered women. There are different ways of delivering two cases of murder. The first case is a man with mental disorder who killed a Police community support officer (PCSO) which represented as 'a weirdo', 'a loner', 'odd' and even 'a loner who spent his time watching TV in his bedroom' (Seriously, what is wrong with watching TV in our bedroom???)

day—even the government announced rewards for those who can catch the 'Albanian criminal'. is described as 'A Greek pilot who killed his British wife' although he is already described as a narcissistic psychopath by an expert. It is interesting to me, why media do not use negative adjectives when describing him as they did for the PCSO murderer; instead, they used his nationality and job to represent the man. The fact that they also need 37 days to arrest him and torture an innocent man to confess something he did not do is also terrifying. What is their intention of describing the nationality of the husband and wife? Is there, in another case, something politically happened between Greece and the UK? Moreover, Hooks interrogated constructed narratives in the media where she saw the kind of dilemmas that are involved in the production of certain kinds of representations.

In this project, I was trying to explore how representation intertwined with how people perceive the news. How experience and past memories built different context in the readers'

**Reading List - Extended**

Research

Practices/Projects

While in another case, there is a man who killed his wife and dog (????), and also lying about being a victim of the Albanian burglar for 37

**bell hooks**  
***Cultural Criticism and  
 Transformation***

**Reading List - Extended**

Research

Practices/Projects

mind. By concealing the newspaper and left some of texts and images, I am mimicking how media reinforced the intention to people perception. Some keywords such as 'husband', 'wife', 'fight', 'control', 'fears', 'confronted', 'threat', 'cooking' are used to push the intention of domestic violence in patriarchy perception on the headline that is not talking about domestic violence at all. And keywords such as 'gay', 'stigma', 'lying', 'player', 'bigoted' are shown to frame the headline that is actually supporting the

come out of teenage football player in to a homophobic tone. To see people reaction to this project (some of them laughed at the concealed headline, some of them disgusted, some of them do not really know what it means) makes me wonder how can a collection of juxtaposed texts and images can be perceived differently? Is it based on one's past experience of seeing previous representations? Or are they responded differently because of its words and images selections?

**Sara Cwynar**  
**Modern Art in Your Life**

A thirty seven years old Canadian conceptual film female artist whose works mostly in recontextualizing multi-layered found objects and popular images. She is much influenced by Berger's Ways of Seeing video series and the Pictures Generation in the 1970s which their works known as giving new context into extant images. In her project she is often exploring where people constantly reading and reacting to images and visual strategies infiltrate and reshaping their perceptions of themselves and modern life. She started by making maps of categorized images and objects theme, digitally and physically. The themes are truth, beauty, shopping, and surveillance capitalism.

In Glass Life, a video that came from her thoughts during lockdown, where she obsessed with her personal archives that contain a lot of screen-shoots, relentless stream of photos, self-portraits, and

random political footages, and also her anxieties about being forgotten from the world. The language she used in her video is inspired by politics. She was listening to Biden meaningless speech and political slogan T-shirts. She started to think about how politics shared the same world with online shopping. This relates to how people consume politic news as one of entertainment choices as what Postman mentioned about in Amusing Ourselves to Death. In this book he compared Orwell's 1984 dystopian to Huxley's Brave New World where citizen's rights are exchanged for entertainment. It is not the age when people do not read anymore, but when something important to read is drowned into irrelevancies that everything became nothing but something to entertain ones passive brain. This thought is what she aware of, and become something she thinks worth to bring up about.

Reading List

Research

**Practices/Projects - Extended**

**Sara Cwynar**  
***Modern Art in Your Life***

One of her newest project is *Modern Art in Your Life*, a series of videos that exploring her thoughts about truth and history through art and popular imageries and how it constructed values and social norms. She said that she wants to think about meanings and position of MoMA's art collections in the age of overwhelming stimuli. What she did in most of her project is similar with what Flusser stated as puzzle-solving reading. She absorbed everything, divided and categorized them into themes, and recontextualized the found objects and imageries. After understanding her projects, I think, most of her works are consistently juggling between new media, interpretations, and vernacular culture. And what she is trying to do is to reconfigure the context that bothers her anxiety towards the world into something that makes you constantly think of.

However, I cannot say that what I was doing is very similar to her work physically because it is not, but my idea of this Unit 2 project is loosely similar at the point where I recontextualize found newspaper headlines and exploring how perceptions built subconsciously in people's mind. Juxtaposing accumulation of images and texts to reconfigure the contexts and see the meanings changed. It also shares similar thoughts with Flusser (2011) and Postman (2007) description. If I could wrap it as: How representation bombardment in the media frames people interpretations. The bombardment then desensitized people until they see news only as entertainment. And how can we reconfigure what people read into an artwork to reshape how people see the world?

Reading List

Research

**Practices/Projects - Extended**



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