الدور الذى تلعبه لغة عناوين الأخبار في الصحف المصرية في جذب إنتباه القراء

تهدف لغة عناوين الأخبار إلى جذب انتباه القارئ ، ومن هنا يتم انتقاء الألفاظ والتراكيب اللغوية التي تحقق هذا الهدف. وتعد هذه العناوين بمثابة الدافع الذي من شأنه دفع القارئ لقراءة المقالة أو عدم إقباله عليها. وقد وجد أن عناوين الأخبار تكون مشجعة إذا استخدم الكاتب فيها الألفاظ الرنانة أو إذا اشتملت على تحذير أو تورية أو صور جمالية أو إذا كانت تمثل المعلومات التي تحتويها هذه العناوين صدمة معينة نتيجة للتصادم مع العادات و التقاليد أو تعاليم الدين؛ كما وجد أن التنويع بين استخدام العامية والفصحى في هذه العناوين بالإضافة إلى بناء الجمل بشكل معين له عظيم الأثر على القراء، ولقد وضح استطلاع للرأي مدي أهمية الخصائص اللغوية السابقة الذكر في دفع القارئ إلى قراءة تفاصيل الأخبار.

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Appendix III
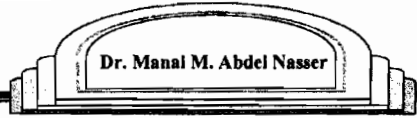

(See Table 2 for the English Gloss)

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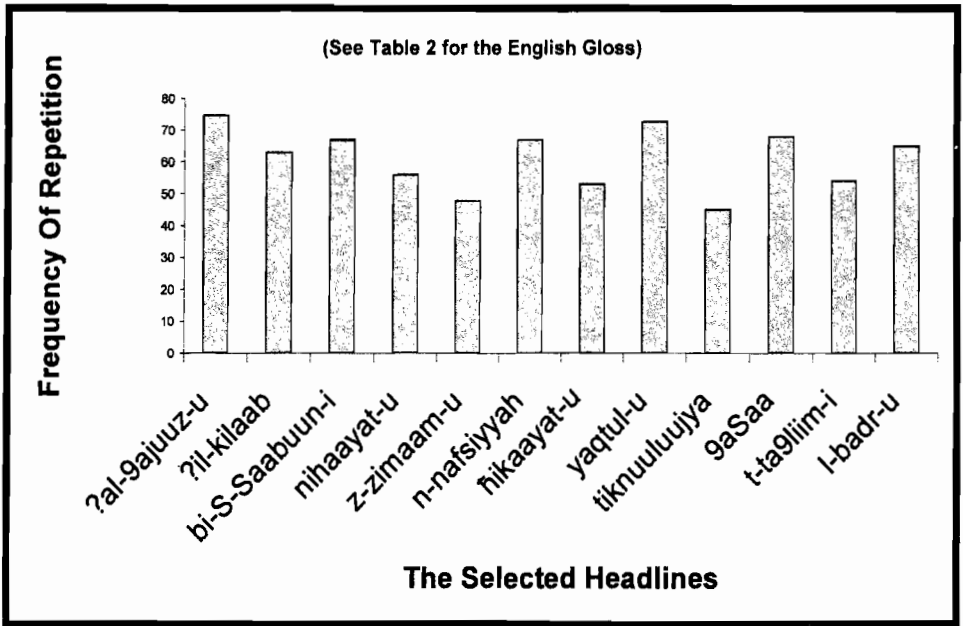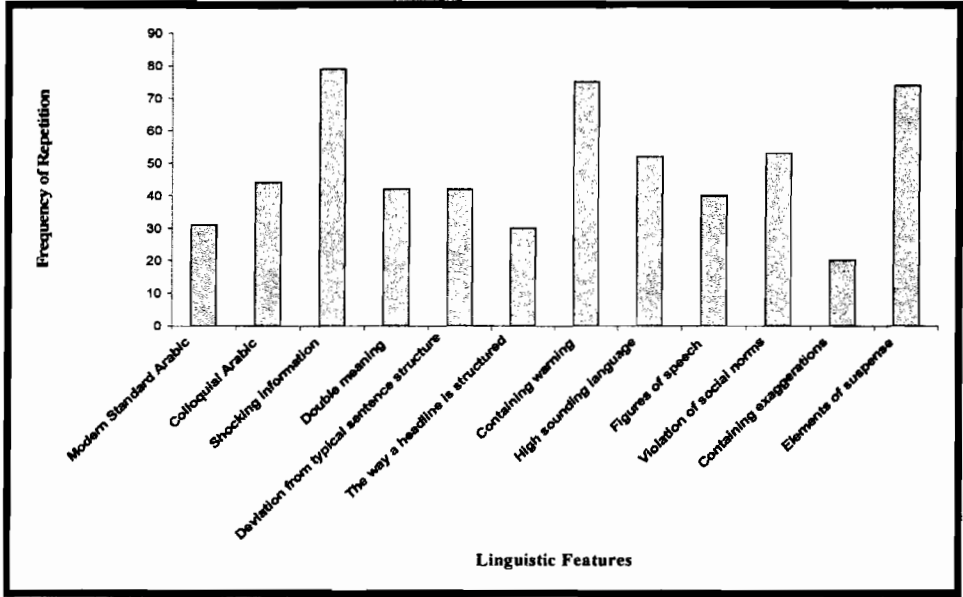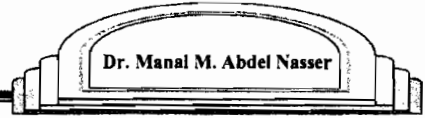
38- Would you like to add more information that you consider important to this topic of research?

....

Thank You For Your Time

29- /tiknuuluujya mawjaat-u r-raadyu li-9ilaaj-i l-?inzilaaq-i l-
guDruufi/: Does this headline motivate you to read the
article?
- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

30- Justify your choice:

....

31- /9aSaa tafaa9uliyyah lil-makfuufiin/: Does this headline
motivate you to read the article?
- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

32- Justify your choice:

....

33- /?al-?istiθmaar-u fi t-ta9liim-i ?ahamm-u 9anaaSir-i t-
tanmiyah/: Does this headline motivate you to read the
article?
- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

34- Justify your choice:

....

35- /fii ?al-laylat-i Z-Zalmaa?-i yuftaqadu l-badr-u/: Does this
headline motivate you to read the article?
- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

36- Justify your choice:

....

37- Mention a newspaper headline that you have read recently
and you still remember:

....

- No
- Don't Know

20- Justify your choice:

....

21-/*qabla ?an yuflita z-zimaam-u/*: Does this headline motivate you to read the article?

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

22- Justify your choice:

....

23-/*?aqSar-u T-Turuq-i lil-?amraaD-i n-nafsiyyah/*: Does this headline motivate you to read the article?

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

24- Justify your choice:

....

25- /*hikaayat-u l-?asad-i wa-θ-θiiraan-i wa-l-?arnab-i l-makkaar-i/*: Does this headline motivate you to read the article?

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

26- Justify your choice:

....

27-/*yaqtul-u zawjata-hu lita?axxuri-haa fii ?al-9awdat-i lil-maskan- i wa-šaabb-un yu-haawil-u qatl-a ?umm-i-hi bi-sabab-i wajbat-i l-9ašaa?-i/* : Does this headline motivate you to read the article?

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

28- Justify your choice:

....

11- Newspaper headlines that contain exaggerations are the most encouraging ones to read.

- Agree
- Disagree
- Not sure

12- Newspaper headlines that contain elements of suspense are the most encouraging ones to read.

- Agree
- Disagree
- Not sure

13- */?al-9ajuuz-u baa?i9at-u l-mawt/* : Does this headline motivate you to read the article?

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

14- Justify your choice:

....

15- */?il-kilaab tigiib il-9ama/* : Does this headline motivate you to read the article?

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

16- Justify your choice:

....

17-*/gasl-u l-wagh-i bi-S-Saabuun-i yigiib il-9ama/:* Does this headline motivate you to read the article?

- Yes
- No
- Don't Know

18- Justify your choice:

....

19-*/nihaayat-u l-garb! ?amriika wa-?uurubba wa-š- šarq-i l-?awsaT/:* Does this headline motivate you to read the article?

- Yes

- Agree
- Disagree
- Not sure

5- I am most attracted to reading newspaper articles if their headlines deviate from the typical sentence structure.

- Agree
- Disagree
- Not sure

6- The way a headline is structured motivates me to read the whole article, even if its topic is of no interest to me.

- Agree
- Disagree
- Not sure

7- Newspaper headlines that contain warnings are the most encouraging ones to read.

- Agree
- Disagree
- Not sure

8- Newspaper headlines that contain high-sounding language are the most encouraging ones to read.

- Agree
- Disagree
- Not sure

9- Newspaper headlines that contain elaborate figures of speech are the most encouraging ones to read.

- Agree
- Disagree
- Not sure

10- Newspaper headlines that violate the social norms are the most encouraging ones to read.

- Agree
- Disagree
- Not sure

Appendix II

Questionnaire

The following questionnaire plays an important role in collecting data for a research paper. Your answers will help the researcher to draw a clear picture of the role played by the language of newspaper headlines in attracting the readers. Please think carefully before you make a choice.

Personal Information:
Name: Faculty:
Grade: Academic Year:
Age: Department:

Check the most suitable answer for you:

1- I am most attracted to reading newspaper articles if their headlines are written in Modern Standard Arabic.
• Agree
• Disagree
• Not sure

2- I am most attracted to reading newspaper articles if their headlines are written in colloquial Arabic.
• Agree
• Disagree
• Not sure

3- I am most attracted to reading newspaper articles if their headlines contain shocking information, i. e. something that contradicts religious beliefs, traditions, or logic.
• Agree
• Disagree
• Not sure

4- I am most attracted to reading newspaper articles if their headlines contain words of double meanings.

Appendices

Appendix I

Symbols used in the phonemic transcription of Arabic forms

A. The consonants of Standard Arabic:

Place		Bilabial	Labiodental	Interdental	Dento-Alveolar		Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Pharyngeal	Glottal
Manner	Voicing				Non-Emphatic	Emphatic					
Stop	Voiceless				t	T		k	q		?
	Voiced	b			d	D					
Fricative	Voiceless		f	θ	s	S	š	x		ħ	h
	Voiced			ð	z	Z		g		9	
Affricate	Voiced						j				
Flap	Voiced				r						
Lateral	Voiced				l						
Nasal	Voiced	m			n						
Glide	Voiced	w					y				

B. The vowels of Standard Arabic:

	Short			Long		
	Front	Central	Back	Front	Central	Back
High	i		u	ii		uu
Mid						
Low		a			aa	

Note: The two tables are adapted from Gadalla (2000).

only summarize the articles that they crown, but they capsulate the thoughts, beliefs, ambitions and even the absurdities of the society in which they appear. In other words, every headline summarizes its article, while a number of headlines summarize the cultural background of a particular society in no time, hence the importance of headlines as communicative linguistic units.

A questionnaire is conducted to see which linguistic feature is the most inviting, as far as the readers are concerned. It is found that the employment of *the element of suspense* (92.5%) is the most influential factor as well as *warnings* (93.75%), either implicitly or explicitly. As far as the type of information presented in the headline is concerned, *shocking information* (98.75%) is found to be the most attractive type of information by seventy-nine out of eighty participants. Moreover, the use of *high-sounding language* (65%) and presenting information that *violates social norms* (66.25%) in a headline are considered also effective by the participants. Other linguistic features are also found influential in attracting the readers' attention to a headline, but in varying degrees: *Colloquial Arabic* (55%), *deviation from typical sentence structure* (52.5%), *words of double meanings* (52.5%), *elaborate figures of speech* (50%), *Modern Standard Arabic* (38.75%), *the way a headline is structured* (37.5%), and *using exaggerations* (25%).

The present study also detects the most attractive reading topics, and, interestingly, finds out that *murder* is the first topic that attracts the readers' attention followed by *social problems* and *scientific discoveries*. To conclude, one wishes to emphasize the uppermost importance of newspaper headlines. They not

is remarkable, especially the words /tiknuuluujya/ 'technology' and /li-9ilaaj-i/ 'treatment'. Then the element of suspense interferes to urge the readers to read the whole article to know more about this technology, and whether it is safe or not. In fact, scientific information finds its way to the readers easily nowadays, even if the readers are not interested in the field. This is simply because serious diseases become common and people feel helpless, lest they should confront these diseases.

4-Conclusion:

Language positively mirrors the society's culture and thoughts. The more a writer cares for the design of his language, the more attractive and communicative it is. The present study investigates the language of newspaper headlines and the role played by these headlines in motivating the readers to read the whole articles or to refrain. It is found that a headline is inviting if it uses high-sounding language, warnings, words of double meanings, elaborate figures of speech, or if it presents shocking information. Also, the use of a given variety of the language and certain sentence types are seen to be effective.

the rabbit is ambiguous and arouses an immediate question: what does the rabbit do to deserve such an attribute? All these questions justify the readers' inclination to read the whole article.

The eleventh attractive headline is /qabla ?an yuflita z-zimaam-u/ 'Before we exceed the limits' (*Al-Ahram*, Friday 15/4/2005: 37). This headline attracts the attention of forty-eight participants (60%). The reason it attracts 60% of the participants is that it stands as a warning against a big problem or an imminent coming danger. Although this headline is written in Modern Standard Arabic and a high sounding language, i.e. /yuflita z-zimaam-u/ 'exceed the limits', it motivates a good number of the participants to read the article to know the implications. In other words, it is a call for attention to take due care because, as it seems, we are on the edge of ruin.

The twelfth attractive headline is /tiknuuluujya mawjaat-u r-raadyu li-9ilaaj-i l-?inzilaaq-i l-*g*uDruufi/ 'The technology of radio waves for the treatment of cartilage slide' (*Al-Ahram*, Friday 13/5/2005: 11). It attracts forty-five participants (56.25%). This headline is of the scientific type which has its own readers. The use of high-sounding language in the headline

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headline is the main inquiry, motivated by the element of suspense, in the minds of our participants. These two high-sounding lexical items give weight to the headline and make the reader wonder how this investment in education would be made and encouraged. Moreover, the present headline arrests the attention of the readers with varying interests, i.e. people from the fields of education, economics and human resources. All those readers are keen to read the article in full in order to see the link, or rather to know where education and investment meet together.

The tenth attractive headline is /ħikaayat-u l-?asad-i wa-θ-θiiraan-i wa-l-?arnab-i l-makkaar-i/ 'The story of the lion, the oxen and the sly rabbit' (*Al-Ahram*, Friday 13/5/2005: 33). It attracts fifty-three participants (66.25%). Those who are attracted to this headline expect to read an interesting narrative and to decode the implied symbolism. They want to know whether the animals in that narrative stand for real characters in society, and, if so, who are those characters? Again, the element of suspense is dominant in this headline as well as the use of an elaborate figure of speech in: /wa-l-?arnab-i l-makkaar-i/ 'the sly rabbit'. It is usually common to read about a sly fox, but not a sly rabbit. The use of the adjective 'sly' with

The eighth attractive headline is /nihaayat-u l-ɣarb! ?amriika wa- ?uurubba wa-š-šarq-i l-?awsaT/ 'The end of the Occident! America, Europe and the Middle East' (*Al-Ahram*, Friday 20/5/2005: 10). This headline attracts the attention of fifty-six participans (70%). Obviously, this headline is of the political type. It is rich in many elements of suspense. It arouses many questions in the participants' minds about when, how and why the Occident will meet its end. They also want to know if the Middle East has a role to play in this story. Some participants want to know what type of end it is, whether political, economic or some other type. Interestingly, this headline recalls the Day of Judgement to the minds of some participants, and they are anxious to read the whole article for details beyond the level of continents and countries. They simply equate the above headline with the end of the world.

The ninth attractive headline is /?al-?istiϴmaar-u fi t-ta9liim-i ?ahamm-u 9anaaSir-i t-tanmiyah/ 'Investment in education is the most important element of development' (*Al-Ahram*, Friday 4/2/2005: 37). This headline attracts the attention of fifty-four participants (67.5%). The inclusion of both /?al-?istiϴmaar-u/ 'Investment' and /t-ta9liim-i/ 'education' in the

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moon is of double meanings, which is the fourth linguistic feature employed in this headline. Then the fifth and the most important one is the element of suspense that encourages the reader to read the article in order to reveal the nature of this 'dark night' and its expected 'moon'.

The seventh attractive headline is /?il-kilaab tigiib il-9ama/ 'Dogs lead to blindness' (*Al-Nabaa Al-Watani,* Sunday 10/4/2005: 16). This headline attracts the attention of sixty-three participants (78.75%). The lexical item /?il-9ama/ 'blindness' acts as a drive in this context. It stimulates a question of how this might happen. The participants who check 'yes' under this headline are mainly motivated by suspense and a desire to know a new piece of information. They believe that there must be a scientific basis behind this headline. They all believe that this headline contains shocking information because dogs are domestic animals and are known for their being loyal guards and friends to man. Dogs are also found in many of our houses. Moreover, some participants believe that this headline acts as a warning. It warns the readers implicitly against keeping or even touching dogs. Furthermore, the above headline is given publicity by the use of colloquial Arabic. In this way, it addresses people of all ages and levels of education.

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whole article and gets full information. Again, the use of the superlative form indicates that the effect of the omitted subject is immediate and prompt. As for the effect of this headline, it is triple. It *warms* the reader against something which is not mentioned openly in the headline, keeps the reader *excited* to know the details, and finally *shocks* the reader that what he/she is eager to know is a means to an undesired end.

The sixth attractive headline is /fii ?al-laylat-i Z-Zalmaa?-i yuftaqadu l-badr-u/ 'In the darkest night, the full moon is missing' (*Al-Ahram*, Tuesday 18/1/2005: 23). This headline attracts sixty-five participants (81.25%). In this headline, a number of linguistic features compete to make it outstanding and attractive. First, comes the use of Modern Standard Arabic which, with the help of its high sounding words like /Z-Zalmaa?-i/ 'the darkest' and /l-badr-u/ 'the full moon', adds elegance and deference to the headline and makes it the focus of every learned reader. Second, the way it is structured, i.e. the use of the passive voice gives it generality and makes it applicable to many situations even on the personal level. Third, the use of an elaborate figure of speech that equates the crucial situation with 'a dark night' and its solution/outlet with the 'full moon'. In this sense, the reference made to the dark night and the full

headline attracts the attention of sixty-seven participants (83.75%). The lexical item /?il-9ama/ 'blindness' is the drive in this headline. It arouses the participants' astonishment and activates the element of suspense. The participants who mark 'yes' are eager to read the article for justification. Moreover, presenting such a shocking piece of information in the colloquial variety motivates all readers, young and old, to read the article. Furthermore, some participants state that they are motivated to read the article to know about a new scientific discovery, or perhaps about a new kind of soap which proves to be harmful, or about the expiration date of the soap substance. [Note that /g/ is used in Cairene lexical items as an alternative of /j/ which is listed in the table of the phonemic symbols].

The fifth attractive headline is /?aqSar-u T-Turuq-i lil-?amraaD-i n-nafsiyyah/ 'The shortest way to mental diseases' (*Al-Ahram*, Friday 15/4/2005: 38). It attracts the same number of participants as the fourth. It attracts sixty-seven participants (83.75%). In this headline, the structure plays an important role in attracting the attention of the readers. The headline begins with the predicate of an omitted subject. This predicate is an open invitation to think of whatever subject the reader imagines to complete the meaning of the headline until he/she reads the

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is motivated by the element of suspense to read the article to see whether they are abnormal or addicts, and to know the reasons of the ingratitude of the son, disloyalty of the husband, and whether the wife is innocent or guilty. Carter and Nash (1990: 68) state that "readers like reading about problems". Accordingly, this type of headlines is very attractive to all readers.

The third attractive headline is /9aSaa tafaa9uliyyah lil-makfuufiin/ 'An Interactive stick for the blind' (*Al-Ahram*, Friday 13/5/2005: 11). It attracts sixty-eight participants (85%). It is of the scientific type. The use of the lexical item /tafaa9uliyyah/ 'interactive' seizes the attention of the readers and motivates them to read the whole article to get a new piece of scientific information. This time they are eager to know the kind of interaction meant in the headline and what power it has got to become a reliable companion to the blind. Again and again, the element of suspense is what activates all these thoughts, because part of man's nature is his inclination to inquiry.

The fourth attractive headline is /ɣasl-u l-wagh-i bi-S-Saabuun-i yigiib il-9ama/ 'Washing face with soap leads to blindness' (*Al-Nabaa Al-Watani*, Sunday 3/4/2005: 16). This

lexical items /baa?i9at-u/ 'seller' and /?al-mawt/ 'death'. They wonder how /?al-mawt/ 'death' which is an abstract noun turns to be a commodity. What does /?al-mawt/ 'death' stand for ? Or rather in what shape is it sold? Moreover, they have many question marks on the devilish personality of /?al-9ajuuz-u/ 'the old lady' and her trading activity. All these questions and perhaps many others, which are not openly stated, would motivate the readers, represented by the participants, to read the article because they are mainly motivated by the element of suspense. They are eager to read the article in order to uncover two mysteries: the identity of the seller and the nature of death.

The second attractive headline is /yaqtul-u zawjata-hu lita?axxuri-haa fii ?al-9awdat-i lil-maskan-i wa-Šaabb-un yu-ḥaawil-u qatl-a ?umm-i-hi bi-sabab-i wajbat-i l-9ašaa?-i/ 'One kills his wife for coming home late and another tries to kill his mother for the supper meal' (*Al-Ahram*, Friday 13/5/2005: 12). This headline attracts seventy-three participants (91.25%). The reason for the attraction of this great number of participants is the inclusion, in this headline, of very shocking information that violates the teachings of religion as well as social norms. This is because homicide in itself is a sin and matricide is the greatest sin. In fact, one doubts the mental hygiene of the two killers, and

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tongue than in any other tongue. The other factor that necessitates that the selected headlines should be taken from Egyptian newspapers is the cultural dimension. It is a matter of general agreement among sociolinguists that the cultural element implied in any headline can only be understood within the social surroundings of that culture. Another privilege is that because the participants are Egyptian Arabs, the choice of the headlines from Egyptian newspapers gives them a good chance to express their views and convey their thoughts and comments freely. Each selected headline is transcribed and followed by a question that measures the degree of the readers' attraction to it. Then the readers' choices have to be justified by writing comments to justify these choices. The next part discusses these headlines one by one and analyzes the data provided in Table (2). (See Appendix I for the phonemic symbols used to transcribe the headlines).

The first attractive headline is /?al-9ajuuz-u baa?i9at-u l-mawt/ 'The old lady who is the seller of death' (*Akhbar Al-Yawm*, 2005). It attracts seventy-five of the participants (93.75%) who check 'yes' as an answer to the question: 'Does this headline motivate you to read the article?' which appears after every selected headline. All of them are attracted to the

seventy-five (93.75%) are attracted to headlines that contain warnings and, in the third place, seventy-four (92.5%) are attracted to headlines that contain elements of suspense. The next two linguistic features in the descending order attempted by the participants are headlines that violate social norms and those that contain high-sounding language. They get the scores of fifty-three (66.25%) and fifty-two (65%), respectively. The next four attractive linguistic features of a headline are the use of colloquial Arabic, words of double meaning, deviation from the typical sentence structure and using elaborate figures of speech. These four features get forty-four (55%), forty-two (52.5%), forty-two (52.5%) and forty (50%), respectively. Only thirty-one (38.75%) participants are attracted to headlines that are written in Modern Standard Arabic, and thirty (37.5%) to the way a headline is structured. And finally, twenty participants only (25%) prefer headlines that contain exaggerations. (See Appendix III for graphic figures).

The second part of the questionnaire presents a group of selected headlines of various topics to satisfy all tastes. These headlines are quoted from three Egyptian newspapers. It is assumed that the participants in the present study are better able to criticize and discuss headlines written in their native

confirms that headlines should not lie to the readers under any circumstances whatsoever. Three participants mention some comments which are really considered important to the present study. One of them believes that the size of the headline and the place where it is located play a vital role in attracting the readers' attention. Another believes in the importance of explanatory pictures in attracting the readers' attention to a headline. The third attacks the way headlines introduce *murder* and *shocking information* of any kind on the grounds that they encourage crime and all kinds of social disorder. The participant also believes that some people are fond of imitating what they read in the newspapers. One concluding remark states that after passing through the experience of the questionnaire, the students will make better use of the time they spend reading newspaper headlines.

3. Discussion and Findings

Data analysis reveals the most attractive features of a headline from the point of view of the reader. The actual responses of the participants rearrange the linguistic features mentioned in the questionnaire according to their interests and preferences. Seventy-nine (98.75%) are attracted to headlines that contain shocking information. As shown in Table (1),

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The second open question invites the participants to add any comments that they consider important and are not mentioned in the questionnaire. Fifty-five do not add anything, while twenty-five do. Two of them expect that the final item of the questionnaire is to be given a headline and be asked to write a relevant article. One expects the opposite, that is to be given the topic and be asked to design a headline after being enlightened on the matter with the experience presented in the questionnaire. Two other participants expect a question about their favourite topics. Six participants comment on the rarity of headlines dealing with science, general knowledge, and serious diseases and their treatment. One recommends the consistency of the language of the headline with the reader's age, interests and level of education. Five participants complain of the absence of headlines that address and care for children and adolescents. They also emphasize the importance of story-telling in attracting the readers, especially if the story is of the social type.

Furthermore, two participants believe that headlines should represent the window that exhibits what is really going on in the society. One discusses the importance of mutual trust and respect between the writer and the reader. Another

As for the last two open questions, the participants co-operate by providing various responses which are summarized in the following lines. The first of these open questions tests their ability to retain or memorize headlines. In response to this question, forty-four participants (55%) out of eighty give no answer, that is each one of them just writes: "I don't remember". The other thirty-six participants respond by mentioning various headlines which can be classified in Table 3 as follows:

Table (3): The Types of Headlines Suggested by the Participants

N0	Types of Headlines	Number of the Students	
		Frequency	%
1	Scientific	5	13.89
2	Murder	11	30.56
3	Economic	1	2.78
4	Intellectual	2	5.55
5	Knowledge	1	2.78
6	Public Issues	3	8.33
7	Political	2	5.55
8	Shocking Information	4	11.11
9	Sport	2	5.55
10	Social Problems	5	13.89
	Total	36	99.99

Table (2)

The Headlines Selected in the Study

NO	Selected Headlines in the Order of their Appearance in the Questionnaire	Number of the Students					
		Yes	%	No	%	Don't know	%
1	/?al-9ajuuz-u/ 'The old lady'	75	93.75	4	5.00	1	1.25
2	/?il-kilaab tigiib il-9ama/ 'Dogs lead to blindness'	63	78.75	11	13.75	6	7.50
3	/gasl-u l-wagh-i bi-S-Saabuun-i/ 'Washing face with soap . . .'	67	83.75	10	12.50	3	3.75
4	/nihaayat-u l-garb/ 'The end of the Occident!'	56	70.00	16	20.00	8	10.00
5	/yuflita z-zimaam-u/ 'Before we exceed the limits'	48	60.00	22	27.50	10	12.50
6	/lil-?amraaD-i n-nafsiyyah/ 'Mental diseases'	67	83.75	11	13.75	2	2.50
7	/ĥikaayat-u l-?asad-i/ 'The story of the lion'	53	66.25	21	26.25	6	7.50
8	/yaqtul-u zawjata-hu/ 'One kills his wife . . .'	73	91.25	4	5.00	3	3.75
9	/tiknuuluujya/ 'Technology'	45	56.25	26	32.50	9	11.25
10	/9aSaa tafaa9uliyyah/ 'An Interactive stick'	68	85.00	7	8.75	5	6.25
11	/fi t-ta9liim-i/ 'Investment in education'	54	67.50	18	22.50	8	10.00
12	/yuftaqadu l-badr-u/ 'The full moon is missing'	65	81.25	14	17.50	1	1.25

participants' attitudes towards a selected number of headlines. The two tables are also represented by two graphic figures in Appendix III.

## Table (1)

Linguistic Features

NO	Linguistic Features	Number of the Students					
		Agree	%	Disagree	%	Not Sure	%
1	Modern Standard Arabic	31	38.75	20	25.00	29	36.25
2	Colloquial Arabic	44	55.00	19	23.75	17	21.25
3	Shocking information	79	98.75	-	-	1	1.25
4	Words of double meanings	42	52.50	11	13.75	27	33.75
5	Deviation from typical sentence structure	42	52.50	12	15.00	26	32.50
6	The way a headline is structured	30	37.50	17	21.25	33	41.25
7	Containing warnings	75	93.75	2	2.50	3	3.75
8	High –sounding language	52	65.00	21	26.25	7	8.75
9	Elaborate figures of speech	40	50.00	31	38.75	9	11.25
10	Violation of social norms	53	66.25	16	20.00	11	13.75
11	Containing exaggerations	20	25.00	39	48.75	21	26.25
12	Containing elements of suspense	74	92.50	2	2.50	4	5.00

reader and be retained in his/her memory or not. As for the last item, it permits that the participant may add any point that might be forgotten and is deemed valuable to the study.

What gives weight to this questionnaire is the importance of headlines as the most widely-read discourse units, as they summarize what is going on in society in no time. According to the way the questionnaire is designed in the above paragraph, it cares for both the sender (journalist) and the receiver (reader). A third element that is important, but is not mentioned openly in this questionnaire, is the social environment, because "headlines . . . are interpreted in terms of their relationship to information in the social context" (Chiluwa, 2007: 63). Moreover, the writer of a headline does his/her best to convey the message to the reader in this very limited discourse unit. In order to succeed in this mission, the writer "requires an understanding of the readers - their state - of - knowledge, their beliefs and expectations and their cognitive styles" (Dor, 2003: 695). The following tables give a clear picture of the participants' responses to the items of the questionnaire. The first table is concerned with the effect of using certain linguistic features/devices on attracting the readers' attention to read a headline. The second is concerned with defining the

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2 . A Questionnaire on the Language of Newspaper Headlines

This part of the paper is devoted to the investigation of the readers' reactions towards newspaper headlines and the definition of the characteristics of the most attractive ones in the readers' viewpoints. This investigation is attempted in the form of a questionnaire (See Appendix II) which is conducted and distributed among the first year students of the Department of English, Faculty of Education, Assiut University (Academic Year: 2008/2009). The sample consists of 80 students who come from different districts of Assiut Governorate, and, in this way, they represent the different social strata in society. Accordingly, the sample is considered representative of the Egyptian society. The questionnaire consists of 38 items. The first twelve items are devoted to determining the characteristics of an attractive and arresting headline in the viewpoints of the readers (See Table 1 for details). The next twenty-four items present twelve examples of headlines related to various fields of life. They are presented to see the comments of the readers (participants) on them and to know the readers' taste and preferences as far as the topic of a headline is concerned (See Table 2 for details). Each one of these selected headlines is followed by a request for justification of the participants' choices. Item 37 in this questionnaire is added to see whether headlines have the power to seize the interest of the
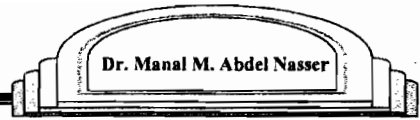
Furthermore, Leech (1966: 154) relates the simplicity of verbal meaning to the morphological simplicity of the verb. Accordingly, very few headlines use verbs that have affixes. In the same line, Bruthiaux (2000) also relates the complexity of social interactions and the need for persuasion to the syntactic complexity of the language.

Another important advice on writing headlines is NOT to use negatives. This is simply because the reader will miss the negative and retain the positive meaning of the utterance which is contrary to fact (Ogilvy, 1989: 139). Writers are also advised to use language figuratively; otherwise their headlines would be dull. Moreover, writers of headlines are advised to use language that promotes communication and avoid language that "pretends to communicate but really doesn't" (Lutz, 1993: 324). This language is called "doublespeak", and is seen as an obstacle that hinders communication among people. It is also considered as an attempt to refrain from responsibility. William Lutz also adds that:

> It is language which makes the bad seem good, the negative appear positive, the unpleasant appear attractive, or at least tolerable. It is language which avoids or shifts responsibility, language which is at variance with its real or its purported meaning. It is language which conceals or prevents thought. Doublespeak is language which does not extend thought but limits it   (Ibid)

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recognition of the degrees of coreness in vocabulary is recommended. Carter and Nash (1990: 64) cite:

> But recognition of coreness in vocabulary can, at least, enable us to begin to identify degrees of expressivity in vocabulary, and to begin to isolate the kinds of non-neutral expressive vocabulary which will be marked for bias or for 'ideological' connotations. It is particularly rewarding to explore such connotations in newspaper reports of new items. After all, newspaper reports should ideally report the facts in as *core* a vocabulary as possible.

As far as lexical choice in a headline is concerned, it is found that the "inclusion of emotional words like 'Darling', 'Love', 'Fear'. 'Proud', 'Friend' and 'Baby'" strengthens a headline (Ogilvy, 1989: 138) i.e. it makes a headline more attractive. Adjectives and adverbs also add colour and strength to a headline and should be chosen with precision. Again, the choice of verbs should be made carefully because they do convey connotations that a writer may or may not need. For example, the use of ver*b know* signifies "possession of the evidence" (Geis, 1982: 25). Overbeck and Pasqua (1983: 89) also add:

> To say "he claimed" is quite different from saying "he pointed out". *Claimed* implies that the writer doubts the statement while *pointed out* suggests that the writer believes it. These verbs should be used only when you intend those connotations.

Another important relation that is reflected in writing headlines is the relationship between vocabulary and ideology, and how far this relationship reflects "the degrees of neutrality or bias which are inscribed in the choice of words which reporters make"(Carter and Nash, 1990: 61). The embodiment of ideas and beliefs is achieved through the use of core words which are basic lexical items that are defined as follows:

> Psycholinguists would probably argue that core words are those which are most perceptually salient; that is, they mark dominant areas of core sensory perception such as size (large/small), weight (heavy/light), colour (red/green) (but not maure or scarlet or fawn). And so on. Sociolinguistically, they might be isolated as the items to which we have most natural and regular recourse in contexts such as talking to foreigners, or to young children.
> (Ibid: 63)

Furthermore, core lexical items are characterized by two important features. The first feature is that they have clear antonyms. For example, the antonym of *good* is *bad*, the antonym of *tall* is *short* and the antonym of *happy* is *sad*. The second is that they are often superordinate lexical items. In this way, the core item 'animal' can stand for any of its subordinate items, like 'cow', for example. In this perspective, the

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Writing headlines also reflects another intimate relation that exists between ideology and the use of metaphors. Contrary to traditional beliefs, using metaphors is not just a feature of literary language. Metaphors are common in all sorts of headlines, even the most scientific and technical ones. Moreover, metaphors embody the main thoughts, knowledge and beliefs of the society that uses them. Fairclough (1992: 194) states that:

> Recent work on metaphor has strongly suggested that . . . metaphors are pervasive in all sorts of language and in all sorts of discourse, even the most unpromising cases, such as scientific and technical discourse. Moreover, metaphors are not just superficial stylistic adornments of discourse. When we signify things through one metaphor rather than another, we are constructing our reality in one way rather than another. Metaphors structure the way we think and the way we act, and our systems of knowledge and belief, in a pervasive and fundamental way.

In this sense, the concept of language as a "rational choice" (Rosendal, 2009: 20) is restricted, as it excludes creativity and "symbolic associations" (Ibid) which are characteristic of language use.

and *are*), that is "they are often omitted from the headline when they are auxiliary or helping verbs" (Ibid: 97). Fourthly, a writer of a headline must avoid using unknown abbreviations. Whereas Greene (1993: 142) permits the use of clipped items and initials, he considers this use to be symbolic. Fifthly, a writer of a headline is also allowed to refer to people by last name, only if they are famous and familiar to the readers. Finally, a headline should avoid using passive verbs. Overbeck and Pasqua (1983: 98) state that:

> There is general agreement that headlines with strong, active-voice verbs do a better job of attracting readers than do headlines with passive verbs. Some newspapers go so far as to forbid any use of passive verbs in headlines, at least on their news and sports pages.

However, the use of passive verbs in headlines may be "ideologically motivated" (Fairclough, 1995: 26). Basically, it is a significant stylistic feature of some journalists to omit the agent, especially when this agent is well-known or unknown. Sometimes the reasons for omitting the agent are very complicated and indirectly signify cultural implications.

However, Gowers (1954: 104-105) encourages writers to stick to the rules of language and presents some tips that contradict the above-mentioned citation. He states that:

> The use of a noun as an adjective should be avoided where the same word is already an adjective with a different meaning. Do not, for instance, say "material allocation" when you mean "allocation of material," but reserve that expression against the time when you may want to make clear that the allocation you are considering is not a spiritual one.

Overbeck and Pasqua (1983) introduce some other interesting tips. Firstly, a headline must agree with the story it summarizes and focus on its "lead angle". They cite:

> If you find yourself writing a headline about something that isn't mentioned until the fifth paragraph of an inverted pyramid news story, that means one of two things: you're off the mark in your choice of material for the headline or the story has a buried lead (that is, the most important news is not in the lead). Normally, the lead of the story and the headline should focus on the same thing.(96)

Secondly, they recommend that a headline should be written in the present tense even when one reports events that occurred in the past. By doing so, writers "try to achieve a sense of timeliness"(Ibid). For a future event, it is common to use either "will" or "to" before the lexical verb. Thirdly, newspaper headlines usually do without the use of the copula verb (like *is*

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. . . newspaper headlines also regularly play with language for purposes of impact or memorability in the process of seeking to summarize the main points of the events which will be narrated. The captions they create also work more directly or more indirectly depending on the degree of interpretive work judged appropriate to the content of the story, to the context and to the attitudes towards content taken by the journalist or editor of the newspaper.

1.1 The Language of Newspaper Headlines

The only rule that is faithfully adopted for writing headlines is that "there are no rules" (Volk, 1989: 146). Headlines do not follow the language rules. They have their own set of rules, and this is exactly what makes them attractive and distinguishes them from other pieces of writing. Zinsser (1989: 432-433) explains this idea of rule-breaking saying:

> . . . Adjectives are used as nouns ("greats", "notables"). Nouns are used as adjectives ("top officials," "health reasons") or extended into adjectives ("insightful"). Nouns are used as verbs ("to host"), or they are chopped off to form verbs ("enthuse", "emote"), or they are padded to form verbs ("beef up", "put teeth into").

Gowers (1954: 103) states that "headlines have become a language of their own, knowing no law . . . ." Journalists, for the sake of effect, break the language rules, invent new words and even assign existing words additional meanings. This is simultaneously done, on their part, while "injecting" their headlines with "news" (Ogilvy, 1989). Moreover, Overbeck and Pasqua (1983: 96) cite four basic functions of headlines as follows:

1. They show the relative importance of stories by their size and placement.
2. They reveal the essence of the story.
3. They attract readers to stories.
4. They enhance page design.

A headline which doesn't reveal the essence of the story or the article it summarizes, as it is mentioned above, is called a 'blind headline' (Ogilvy, 1989: 139) and should be avoided. It is always recommended that a headline must telegraph what the writer wants to say, and it must do so in simple language. It is also recommended not to play games with the reader (Ibid). However, some journalists like to play with language to influence their readers. Carter and Nash (1990: 80) cite:

1.0 Newspaper Headlines

Writing headlines is not an easy job as it necessitates more accuracy in word choice than any other type of writing. A headline should reveal the essence of the article or the story it summarizes. And it should do so in few and carefully-chosen words. Ogilvy (1989: 137) interestingly states that "when you have written your headline, you have spent eighty cents out of your dollar," that is you are done with a great deal of your job. Besides, you are said to have done this job properly if you succeed in arousing people's curiosity.

If one is in the habit of scanning newspaper headlines of a particular society, he/she is certainly acquainted with the ideology of that society. In other words, the "socially and politically dominant set of values and beliefs" (Carter and Nash, 1990: 21) of a certain society is loaded in the language of these important headings which serve as valuable "social documents of a specific time and place" (Motz, 1993: 154). In this sense, newspaper headlines not only reflect the writer's linguistic competence but his/her "cultural competence" (Cook, 1992: 4) as well. Moreover, they play an important role "in the communicative act performed by newspapers" (Dor, 2003: 695) in a certain society.

Moreover, some writers have equated good English with successful communication claiming that the function of good writing is "to assure that the writer is really in communication with the reader, that he is delivering his message unmistakably" (Algeo, 1993: 509). To do this job properly, a writer has to choose his/her words very carefully because these chosen words can influence the attitudes of other people as well as their way of thinking. Dyer (1982: 140) states that "when we choose a word we do more than name an object, person or situation, we also convey feelings about what we are describing". This is simply because words do have feelings. They not only describe things but they communicate feelings, attitudes and ideas as well. Zinsser (1989: 432) believes that a writer will never succeed unless he/she develops "a respect for words and a curiosity about their shades of meaning that is almost obsessive". He also advises writers saying:

> Remember, then, that words are the only tools that
> you will be given. Learn to use them with originality
> and care. Value them for their strength and their
> infinite diversity. And also remember: somebody
> out there is listening.   (435)

399). Moreover, language is so intimately related to human thought that it "mirrors the fears, quirks, and aspirations of the society" (O'Neill, 1989:131) that speaks that language. Accordingly, languages grow and flourish with the development of human need for expression (Langer, 1989: 400).

Another important function of human language is to reflect the changes in man's culture and community. Allen (1993:131) confirms this idea saying: "Our language reflects changes in our culture and our community. One of the easiest ways to notice this is to look at new words and terms". So the vocabulary of a particular language is the record in which all the cultural, social, political, technological and even economic and military developments of a particular society are recorded. This particular function necessitates that language "must be denotative" (Langer, 1989: 399), as it is the primary means of communication and the basic tool for capturing people's attention. Above all, human language is "crucial to the reasoning processes" (Geis, 1982: 23) by which communication in any form, be it written or spoken, between the sender and the receiver achieves its intended goal, i.e. understanding messages.

Abstract

The language of newspaper headlines is carefully
designed to attract the reader's attention by using
various linguistic devices. A headline is the motive
which motivates the reader whether to go ahead or
to refrain. It is found that a headline is inviting if it
uses high-sounding language, warnings, puns,
elaborate figures of speech, or if it presents shocking
information. Also, the use of a given variety of the
language and certain sentence types are seen to be
effective. A questionnaire is conducted to see which
of the above-mentioned linguistic features is more
effective. It is concluded that presenting *shocking
information* in a headline is the most attractive
feature.

0. Introduction

A conscious writer is not indifferent to the richness and the
arresting powers of language which is the greatest and most
important achievement of human mind. It is the medium
through which our feelings and thoughts find expression. The
birth of language is considered the dawn of humanity and the
sharp demarcation between man and animal (Langer, 1989:398-

The Role Played by the Language of Egyptian Newspaper Headlines in Attracting Readers' Attention

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