



**Sudan University of Science and Technology**  
**College of Graduate Studies**



**Investigating the Characteristics of Newspapers  
Headlines to Pinpoint the Grammatical Features  
Versus  
Conventional Grammar**

تقصي خواص قواعد عناوين الصحف الرئيسية لتحديد سمات اللغة  
بها في مقابل قواعد اللغة المتعارف عليها

**A thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the  
Requirement for M.A in English Language  
(Applied Linguistics)**

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# **Dedication**

I dedicate this work to my parents.

## **Acknowledgement**

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## **Abstract**

This study aims to investigate the grammatical features of newspaper headlines versus conventional grammar, as it also aims to provide readers with grammatical illustration about how tenses are formulated in Newspapers' Headlines, and this will be done through making comparison between the constructions of tenses in headlines versus the conventional ones. The samples used in this study were collected from the daily newspapers of Sudan Vision and Sudan Tribune (electronic version). The researcher used the qualitative comparative method in order to find out answers for the questions of the study. The study found out that the successful circulation of the newspapers depends on attractive and summarized headlines that push passers-by into becoming readers and more further buying the target newspapers itself. These headlines are written in away that differs from the conventional ones, particularly on the level of tenses structures, that cause ambiguity and uncertainty to readers. The study recommends readers to focus on the event of what headline is about, and skip the way that it has been formulated and get the conventional formulation by reading details below the target headline where texts are written in an ordinary language.

## مستخلص الدراسة

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى بحث السمات النحوية لعناوين الصحف مقارنة بالقواعد المتعارف عليها ، كما أنها تهدف إلى مد القراء بتوضيح نحوي عن الكيفية التي تصاغ بها الأفعال في عناوين الصحف و يتم ذلك عبر إجراء مقارنة بين صياغة الأفعال في عناوين الصحف و بين الصياغة المتعارف عليها . جمعت العينة المستخدمة في هذه الدراسة من صحيفتي السودان فيشن والسودان تريبيون الالكترونية . استخدم الباحث المنهج المقارن النوعي من اجل التوصل إلى إجابات لحل أسئلة البحث .

توصلت الدراسة إلى أن التوزيع الناجح للصحف يعتمد علي عناوين جذابة و موجزة تدفع المارة إلى أن يصبحوا قراء بل إلى أكثر من ذلك و هو شراء الصحيفة نفسها . هذه العناوين تكتب بطريقة تختلف عن الطريقة المعتادة خاصة علي مستوى تراكيب السياقات الزمنية للأفعال و هذا يجعلها تشكل غموض و حيرة للقراء .

توصي هذه الدراسة القراء بالتركيز علي الحدث الذي بصده العنوان و تخطي الطريقة التي تمت صياغته بها و الحصول علي الصياغة المعتادة بقراءة التفاصيل أدناه حيث تكتب النصوص باللغة المتعارف عليها .

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# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **Introduction**



# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **Introduction**

### **1.0 Background of the Study**

English language is a global language that is used in several fields.

The high position of English as a language of science and commerce explains and justifies the rush toward learning English language. Newspapers are considered as a rich source for readers to improve their language.

Reading newspaper articles is an excellent way for Sudanese readers to build vocabulary and practice comprehension through using authentic material. It can expose readers to different topic and a variety of language that is rare in spoken English, but newspapers language is odd, particularly on the level of headlines where its structures differ from the conventional form.

Headline is the most interesting part in newspaper writing style, because its grammar and usage are very characteristic and this is the core of the study.

Fairclough(1985:21)states that "headlines have distinctive syntactic properties, which make them grammatically odd.

Readers of newspapers in general pay attention to the contents of the news, and seldom pay attention to tense used in newspapers, they may not be aware about the tenses, newspapers are a special kind of writingshun(1995:60). The headline is a very unique system of "breaking rules" of a classic grammar.

The style of writing headlines is largely geared to saving space and presenting information in striking ways. The spatial constraint in newspaper does not allow editors to put everything into the headlines.

Instead, they have to pick out the salient information from the news stories to be highlighted in the headlines. They will choose appropriate linguistic expressions, sentence structures or rhetorical devices which can best fit the information to be expressed in the headlines. In addition, information which is assumed among the readers or can be inferred from the context is always ellipted from the headlines (Chin & Tsou, 1997).

The abnormal language of headlines is geared to achieve the editing policy such as dealing with the limited space on the top of the page, keeping event fresh and presenting an attractive headline that contributes in newspapers circulation. This study seeks to highlight the headline odd structures in terms of historical present, future tense, and auxiliaries.

### **1.1 Statement of the Problem**

The problem of this study is represented by the odd structures of newspapers headlines in terms of using historic present, future and auxiliaries which yield to make Sudanese readers encounter ambiguity and difficulty in grasping headlines at once. Most of Sudanese readers are restricted to formal education at schools and universities whereby English language is based on formal grammar and structures. Media language particularly newspapers headlines language are not included in schools syllabus. Hence newspapers headlines tenses are considered as a problematic area to Sudanese readers who are frequent and keen readers of the English newspapers. The headlines writers always break many grammatical rules and tend to use non standard structures to produce a successful headline. This becomes problematic to entire Sudanese readers.

## **1.2 Objectives of the Study**

This study aims at:

1. highlighting the headlines odd structures in terms of historic present, future and auxiliaries .
2. Highlighting how tenses work in newspaper headlines.

## **1.3 Questions of the Study**

This study sets out to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent do odd structures of headlines in terms of historic present, future and auxiliaries are different from the convention structures?
2. To what extent do tenses work in newspapers headlines as opposed to conventional ones?

## **1.4 Hypotheses of the Study**

This study sets out to test the following hypotheses:

1. Odd structure of newspaper headlines in terms of historic present, future and auxiliaries are different from the conventional structures.
2. Tenses work differently in newspaper headlines, as opposed to conventional structures.

## **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This study is meant to help students and common readers to overcome difficulties associated with tenses used in headlines through providing grammatical illustration of how tenses work in newspapers headlines, it also helps syllabus designer to address the odd grammatical structures used in the newspaper headlines as opposed to the conventional grammatical structures used in formal English.

### **1.6 Methodology of the Study**

This study is comparative and analytical. Headlines language as a variety will be compared with the conventional grammatical rules represented by the authors of English Grammar In Use Raymond Murphy, 2004 and English Verb Tenses Kent Uchiyama, 2006. Research data were deliberately chosen from Sudan Vision and Sudan Tribune newspapers that are directly bought from bookshops and electronic version.

### **1.7 Limits of the Study**

This study is limited to investigate the characteristics of newspapers headlines to pinpoint the grammatical features versus conventional grammar. Samples are taken from Sudan Vision and Sudan Tribune newspapers. These two daily newspapers are based in the Sudanese Capital city, Khartoum. The samples for this research have covered the period as from November – December, 2016

# **CHAPTER TWO**

## **Literature Review and Previous Studies**

# **CHAPTER TWO Literature Review& Previous Studies**

## **2.0Introduction**

This chapter is divided into two sections, section one isintended to review the literature relevant to the research topic, and section two discusses the studies and scientific papers relevant to the current study.

## **2.1 Section one (Literature Review)**

### **2.1.1 Headlines**

Headline is a unique type of text usually at the top of a newspaper article. The function of headlining is very complex ;as Crystal and Davy maintain (1969) headlines are clear, brief and of possible captivating message to encourage interest in the potential reader. Headlines offer chance to the reader to choose. Readers select what they want or do not want to read and headlines help them with this decision by their ability to catch the reader's attention.

Headlines are the titles that appear over news articles.

Van Dijk(1988:53)believes that a headline express the major topic of the text. It summarizes the whole report.

To Bird and Merwin(1955:177) the headline conveys the highlights in short, easily understood words. Headline writers seek to influence readers. Cotter(2010:26) states that "headlines are short maximally informative and font size or type face s semiotic stand-in for importance. The impact that headlines achieve through linguistics makes them memorable Develotte and Rechniewski(2001:2)

Halliday(1985:372) refers to headlines as "little texts and since they have to convey more through few words due limited space, they have their own grammar. This special language is called ' block language'. It is defined by Mathews(2007:42) as the form of abbreviate structures used in newspaper headlines, in cables, in notices, on labels of products and so on.

Headlines are the most important elements in newspaper since they inform the reader of what the article is about or as Dor(2003:718) explains that headlines are often scanned by most readers without reading the articles.

Headlines perform four basic functions (Mallette, 1990:80 cited in Bedrichova, 2006:14). These functions are:

- a. to summarize the news.
- b. to grade the importance of stories.
- c. to act as clear elements in the design of a page.
- d. to persuade the looker into becoming a reader.

### **2.1.2Block Language**

[Language](#) structures--typical of headlines, [slogans](#), [lists](#), [titles](#), and [text messages](#) (including [tweets](#))--made up only of words that are essential to convey a message. (See Examples and Observations, below.)

The term *block language* was introduced by H. Straumann in *Newspaper Headlines: A Study of Linguistic Method* (1935)

### **How and When to Use Block Language**

Manfred Gorlach( 1999)"In printing, reasons of space and the intention to inform quickly about the relevant facts led to the use of different typefaces (bold, large capitals for emphasis) and a reduction of the full syntax. The phenomenon is found especially in newspaper headlines,

book titles, marginal summaries of chapters and advertisements and lists of contents in 'prospectuses' of books. This curtailment is achieved mainly through omissions (of articles, titles or the copula), and is supported by a special lexis of short words."

### **The Zero Article in Block Language**

(D. Biber et al. 2002)"The zero article is normal with noun phrases in **block language**, that is, abbreviated language used in newspaper headlines, labels, lists, notices (e.g., *entrance*, *way out*), etc. Compare:

- ***fire** kills teenager after **hoax**.* (NEWS) <the headline>
- *A **teenager** dies in a **blaze** at his home after firemen were diverted by a call that turned out to be a **student prank**.* (NEWS) <the news story following the headline>

Notice the headline uses the zero article for *fire*, *teenager*, and *hoax*, which are then mentioned in the news story as *a blaze*, *a teenager*, and *a student prank*."

The language of headlines is something that seems to be as distinct as for example Australian or Scottish English or another language that just uses English vocabulary but sometimes with absolute different meanings, not only the language differs, but also the grammar of headlines breaks many rules. As Bremner points out, even G.K. Chesterton mentioned this problem in one of his works in the 1930s. He wrote: "Headlines is one of the evils produced by that passion for compression and compact information with possess to many ingenious minds in America. Everybody can see how an entirely new system of grammar, syntax and even language has been invented to fit the brevity of headlines. Such



brevity, so far from being the soul of wit, is even the death of meaning and certainly the death of logic" (Chesteron,1980.p194).

The form of headlines differs from the rest of the newspaper reporting language, there are some rules of the headlines that specifically dictate it's shape, content, and structures.

### **2.1.3Ambiguity**

Conway(2002:5) defines ambiguity as "uncertainty among specific alternatives". It exists when a word, phrase or a sentence lend itself to more than interpretation. Hudson(2000:313-14) states that ambiguity differs from vagueness the number of possible meanings is quite open.

### **2.1.4Syntactic Ambiguity**

Syntactic ambiguity arises not from the range of meanings of single words, but from the location of the words in sentences (Conway, 2002:4). Syntactic ambiguity occurs when the part of speech changes from verb to noun or adjective and vice versa.

Example:

Teacher Strikes Idle Kids.

There are two interpretations for this headline. One interpretation is that teachers' strike makes kids idle where strikes is a plural noun and idle is the verb. The other meaning is that teachers beat lazy pupils where strikes is a verb and idle is the adjective that modifies kids.

### 2.1.5 English Grammar

Carter and McCarthy(2006). have stated out that, Grammar is concerned with how sentences and utterances are formed in a typical English sentences, we can see the two most basic principles of grammar, the arrangement of items (syntax) and the structure of items (morphology): *I gave my sister a sweater for her birthday.*

**Arrangement of items (syntax):** The meaning of this sentence is obviously created by words such *as gave, sister, sweater* and *birthday*. But there are other words (*I, my, a, for, her*) which contribute to the meaning ,and, additionally, aspects of the individual words and the way they are arranged which enable us to interpret what the sentence means.

For example, we know it is *I* who gave the *sweater* not *my sister*, because *I* comes before the verb (*gave*). In English, subjects (the doers of actions) come before verbs in statements. We also know the relationship between the indirect object, *my sister*, and the direct object, *a sweater*, (that the *sweater* was given and *my sister* was the recipient )because indirect objects come before direct objects. We also expect *my* to come before *sister*, not after. These aspects of the arrangement of things in sentences is referred to as syntax. Syntax is one of the two basic principles of grammar.

**Structures of items (morphology):** The example sentence also illustrates the other basic principle of grammar. *I* and *my* are two different forms, one with a subject meaning, the other with a possessive meaning , even though they both refer to the same person. *Gave* refers to past time, in contrast to *give(s)*, which refers to present time. *Sweater* is singular; if there were more than one sweater, the form would be *sweaters*. These small items of meaning, such as *I, my*, the past form *gave*, a plural –s ending, are called grammatical morphemes, and come under the heading

of morphology. Morphology is concerned with the structure of word and phrases. It is the second basic principle of grammar.

**Grammar and Variation: the importance of context:** Carter and McCarthy(2006). Have stated out that, language variation takes many different forms. Language can vary in levels of formality; it can vary according to the regional or social groups to which speakers belong; it can vary over time; it can vary according to the uses to which it is put. Certain types of language use are associated with particular forms of activity or register and are marked by distinctive patterns of use, including distinctive patterns of grammar.

For example, Cookery books and instructional manuals use many imperatives; newspaper headlines often deploy highly compressed forms of language; some forms of academic English make particular use of the passive voice ; incomplete sentences are commonly used to highlight key information in advertisements and in radio and television news broadcasts.

White Smoke stated out that the whole system and structure of a language or of languages in general, usually taken as consisting of syntax and morphology (including inflections) and sometimes also phonology and semantics.(Oxford Living Dictionary)

In [linguistics](#), grammar is the set of [structural](#) rules governing the composition of [clauses](#), [phrases](#), and [words](#) in any given [natural language](#). The term refers also to the study of such rules, and this field includes [morphology](#), [syntax](#), and [phonology](#), often complemented by [phonetics](#), [semantics](#), and [pragmatics](#).( From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia).

At its core, the term grammar refers to either the inherent [structure](#) of words and sentences (morphology and syntax respectively) in a language; or to the study and description of this structure, published as grammar rules in books about the language.

Nowadays, there are modern approaches to grammar, which bring it alive and relate it to our real life, outside of outdated grammar books containing endless lists of [grammar rules](#). The older prescriptive grammar approach, used to have students theoretically analyze sentences for correctness in literary and religious texts, as if they were training to become linguists. This was based along the lines of the traditional approach to the instruction of ancient Latin and Greek, which were not even used in speech in the Middle-Ages onwards. The purpose was preserving the formal standard usage of these languages while treating grammar as a theoretically isolated area of study.

This is now supplemented by the descriptive approach that looks at how people actually use grammar in real life conversations and texts using modern living languages. It acknowledges language change and various styles as acceptable, resulting in more than one way of saying things. Pedagogical grammar for language learning purposes teaches only those grammar rules relevant to successful practical communication themes like shopping, looking for a job or opening up a business. For example, the uses of the present perfect ( *I have worked as...*) for indefinite past events or events going from past to present are geared towards speaking about former work experience either during a spoken job interview or in a written letter of job application. Alternatively, perfect modal forms are used for a hypothetical discussion of alternative consequences to past actions ( *could have done*) or the expression of regrets on what *may/should have been*.

Grammar is therefore now seen, not merely as theory, but as an enabling tool for authentic language practice. As some rules still need to be taught formally, a balanced combination of all the approaches is the solution for using grammar effectively. It is not to be understood that grammar is less important today than how it may have been perceived before.

Whereas spoken language or literary dialogue may tolerate numerous grammar mistakes as part of a person or cultural group's individual style, written language of expository articles, business documents and of course academic texts must adhere to conventional grammar and style.(White Smoke Inc.)

#### **2.1.6 Grammar in Headlines**

A special language is used in newspapers can be distinguished and this is the most obvious with the headlines. They are the first and often the only things which many readers are interested in.

A newspaper page has restricted space and headline writers are limited by the layout of the page. Grammar and it's structures can help headline writers a lot and they often have to break many grammatical rules and use non-standard structures to produce a successful headline.

A newspaper headline is a very short summary of a news report. It normally appears in large letters above the report. The grammar of headlines is often non-standard and they can be difficult to read. The main features of the grammar of headlines are the use of a series of nouns and the use of ellipsis (leaving out words which are not necessary). We often leave out articles (*a/an, the*) and verbs (especially the verb *to be*):

Headlines often use the present simple, even where the report refers to a past event. This is done to make the news seem more dramatic and immediate.

### 2.1.7 Historical Present

Kent Uchiyama (2006). Usually, simple present tense means:

a) That the action is a habit or another type of repeated action in the present.

b) That the action is always or usually true.

Murphy.(2004). We use the present simple to talk about things in general. We use it to say that something happens all the time or repeatedly, or that something is true in general. Carter. McCarthy(2006) have stated out that present time is seen either as the moment of speaking or writing, or as 'time around now', or as the more general, permanent time relating to truths and general facts. But it is not the same in newspaper headlines.

Have you noticed the strange fact that news reports are written in past tense and news headlines in present tense? There is of course nothing strange about it. This is how newspapers report an event, and have been reporting it ever since their evolution. The reason is because historic present describes event as fresh as it is happening now, you don't feel that you are reading stale news-news about an event that has occurred a day ago. In chapter four there are some samples were taken from the current daily Newspaper Sudan Vision show how the historic present is dominant in headlines formulation.

### 2.1.8 Future Tenses in Headlines

We use I'll (=I will ) when we decide to do something at the time of speaking as stated by Murphy (2004).

Future is pretty straightforward; it means that the action will happen in the future, in other words, sometime after this moment. Kent Uchiyama.(2006). But in headlines **to** is used instead of **will**.

### 2.1.9 Auxiliary Verbs

With perfect, progressive and passive structures, Auxiliaries verbs are not necessary, they are left out. This makes some headlines appear to be in the past tense, when actually the headlines use past participle not the past simple.

#### 2.1.9.1 Understanding Newspapers Headlines

Kenneth Beare has mentioned that "Take a look at any newspaper or magazine headline and you are likely to find incomplete sentences full of action packed verbs. Headlines live in a linguistic bubble all by themselves because they ignore grammar conventions such as the use of helping verbs and so on. Of course, this means that newspaper headlines can be confusing to students. This is because newspaper headlines are often incomplete."

For example:

*Difficult Times Ahead*

*Under Pressure from Boss*

*Mustang Referral Customer Complaint*

### Lesson Planning

This lesson focuses on helping make sense of the strange forms used in newspaper headlines. You may want to review some of the most common [grammar exceptions found in newspaper headlines](#) before you take this lesson into class.

**Aim:** Understanding newspaper headlines

**Activity:** "Translating" newspaper headlines into more understandable English

**Level:** Intermediate to higher levels

### Outline:

- Find some headlines in old newspapers or on the Internet and cut them out. There should be at least two headlines per student.
- Pass out one of the headlines to each student. Give them a few minutes to think about the meaning of each headline.

- Ask students to read their headlines aloud and give an explanation of what they think the article in question concerns.
- As a class, brainstorm on possible structural meanings behind the "strange" grammar found in headlines (refer to grammar exceptions found in newspaper headlines).
- Ask students to fit the following headlines into the correct categories on the worksheet. You may want to have students pair up to do this.
- Correct the exercise as a class.
- Pass out the headlines you have left to the students. Ask each student to "translate" each headline into "proper" English and give an explanation of what they think the article in question concerns.
- As a homework option, you may want to ask students to find some headlines on their own and repeat this exercise. A further challenge might be to ask students to find headlines, read the articles, and then ask other students to interpret their headlines in small groups.

## **Newspaper Headlines Worksheet**

1. Match these newspaper headlines into with the following categories (some headlines fit two categories)

### **Categories**

[Noun Phrases](#)

Noun Strings

[Simple Tenses](#) instead of Continuous or Perfect

[Auxiliary Verbs](#) Dropped in Passive Form

Articles Dropped

Infinitive to Indicate Future

### **Newspaper Headlines**

Difficult Times Ahead

Forgotten Brother Appears

James Wood to Visit Portland

Landscaping Company Disturbance Regulations

Man Killed in Accident

Mayor to Open Shopping Mall

Mustang Referral Customer Complaint



Overwhelming Response of Voters  
Passerby Sees Woman Jump  
President Declares Celebration  
Professors Protest Pay Cuts  
Tommy the Dog Named Hero  
Under Pressure from Boss  
Unexpected Visit  
Widow Pension Pay Committee

2. Try to "translate" the meaning of each of the headlines

#### 2.1.9.2 **Rules for writing newspaper headlines**

Phil Williams - a writer based in Brighton – mentioned eight rules for writing newspaper headlines, but for the purpose of this study only three rules are mentioned down here:

##### 1. *Use present simple tense for past events*

The present tense is quick and current, and helps emphasise the action happening, rather than its completion.

- Parliament confirms new stray dog policy
- Lion escapes zoo

If we want to demonstrate the result of an action, or that something was completed, we can use perfect tenses, and for changing events, the present continuous may be used. However, these tenses are often shown by using participles alone.

##### 2. *Leave out auxiliary verbs*

With perfect, progressive and passive structures, auxiliary verbs are not necessary. This makes some headlines appear to be in the past tense, when actually the headlines use past participles, or particles, not the past simple. Similarly, changing events are represented by the present participle on its own.

- New policy decided by Parliament (New policy has been decided by Parliament)
- Lion escapes zoo – ten killed (ten people have been killed / were killed)
- Four stranded in sudden flood (four people have been stranded / were stranded)
- Temperatures rising as climate changes (temperatures are rising)

### 3. Use infinitives for future events

- Parliament to decide new policy tomorrow
- President to visit France for further talks

Using the infinitive, a future time is not always necessary to demonstrate the future tense in headlines.

## Various Verb Changes

(Kenneth Beare) There are a number of verb changes made to headlines.

The most common are:

- Simple tenses used instead of continuous or perfect forms. For example:

***Forgotten Brother Appears*** = A forgotten brother has appeared (after a long period of time).

***Professors Protest Pay Cuts*** = Professors are protesting pay cuts (at the university).

- The infinitive form refers to the future. For example:

***Mayor to Open Shopping Mall*** = The mayor is going to open a new shopping mall.

***James Wood to Visit Portland*** = (Famous actor) James Wood is going to visit Portland soon.

- Auxiliary verbs are dropped in the passive form. For example:

***Man Killed in Accident*** = A Man has been killed in an accident.

***Tommy the Dog Named Hero*** = Tommy the Dog has been named a hero (by the mayor).

### **Drop Articles**

Perhaps you have noticed in the examples above that both definite and indefinite articles are also dropped in newspaper headlines (i.e. *Mayor to Choose Candidate*). Here are some more examples:

***President Declares Celebration*** = The president has declared a celebration.

***Passerby Sees Woman Jump*** = A passerby has seen a woman jump (into the river).

## **2.2 Section Two ( previous studies )**

### **2.2.1 Previous study**

This section tackles the previous studies and scientific papers relevant to the research topic.

#### **Paper one**

(Hameed,2008) conducted a study entitled: Tense in News Headlines:One of the main components in news discourse ,is news headlines, which has become an interest of linguistics

(Chin&Tsou,1997),this is because news headlines are considered to have their own characteristics and status in news discourse (Vandijke,1986;Bell,1991).Newspaper headlines are written in a special kind of language with its own vocabulary and grammar .Headlines have a special grammar which differs from that of ordinary sentences (Yoneoka, 2002).

One feature of this grammar is a special tense system. This paper will examine the tense system of English news headlines. What tenses are used and how they are used specially the present simple tense. The aim of the present paper is to explore the ways the present tense is used in newspaper headlines and explain what functions this tense fulfils. It reports the results of a small study undertaken in order to reveal the general tendencies and patterns of some of the more frequent sentence types used as headlines. The canonical use of the present tense to report past actions is noted and explained with reference to standard grammar. The material under investigation has also indicated a tendency to use the present simple tense in headlines made up of complex sentences, where it occurs in subordinate clauses introducing the circumstances for a more important event expressed non-verbally. The reference of the present simple tense to past time is explained in view of its

universal reference within the system of English tenses, its role as an „internal evaluation device "in narrative and the support it lends to the interpersonal function of headlines.

### **Study two**

(Salih,2012) has tackled :Linguistic Features of Newspaper Headlines: The present study aims at investigating the linguistic features of headlines. It is an attempt to shed light on the morphology, semantic and syntax of headlines and to find out the differences between the language of headlines and the ordinary language. Headlines represent the most important part of news since they summarize the whole article or news story and they are the vital element through which the reader decides whether to read or leave the article. Due to pressure on page , the study postulates that the language of headlines deviates much from the ordinary language in terms of vocabulary and structure. There are some typical features in newspaper headlines that aim at getting the attention of readers. These features like the choice of words and grammatical structure are manipulated by headline writers to achieve impact and influence the readers to go on reading the report.

### **Study three**

(BagasTirangga,2014) conducted a study entitled: Lexical and Grammatical Ambiguity of the News Headlines of The Jakarta Post and New York Times: This study is aimed at investigating lexical and grammatical ambiguities that occur in the news headlines of the Jakarta Post and New York Times, and analyzing the possible meaning of those ambiguities headlines. The researcher used descriptive qualitative method to find out the types of ambiguity and the possible meanings that

occur. The data of this research are the news headlines which are taken from two different news provider websites; The Jakarta Post and New York Times were published on March, 2014. The result showed there are 30 ambiguous headlines, in which mostly produced by the Jakarta post (18 headlines) consisting of 11 lexical ambiguities, and 7 grammatical ambiguities. While in New York Times, there are 12 ambiguous headlines consisting of 10 lexical ambiguous and 2 grammatical ambiguities. The Jakarta post produced more grammatically ambiguous headlines compared to New York Times. It may happen since the writer or editor is non native speaker, or even they create more ambiguous headlines in order to get the readers' attention to read the whole article. On the other hands, the occurrences of ambiguous headlines in New York Times are less than the ones in The Jakarta Post, especially in grammatical ambiguity. It showed that the writer or writer of New York Times do not have problems in structuring the sentence. However, in New York Times there are also ambiguities that arise because of the use of technical terms in term of lexical ambiguity that may create confusion among the readers.

# **CHAPTER THREE**

## **Methodology**

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## **Methodology**

### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter reviews the methodology of this study. It contains research Methodology, sample of the study, instrument and procedures for data collection and reliability and validity and data analysis.

### **3.1 The Methodology**

This study is comparative. In order to investigate the headlines' tenses in Newspapers, qualitative approach will be adopted. According to Bouma and Atkinson (1995) the essence of qualitative research is to view events through the perspective of the people who are being studied; the way they think, and their view of the world etc. Qualitative research requires the researcher to empathise with the people being studied. Therefore qualitative research necessarily includes a longitudinal element as the subjects of the study are studied over a period of time and the emphasis is on the process of how things happen and change. Qualitative researchers typically provide detailed description of the settings they investigate (Bogdan and Binklen, 1982).

### **3.2 Sample of the study**

Fifteen headlines tenses of Sudan Vision and Sudan tribune are taken in to this study for investigation and analysis.



### **3.3Instrument and procedures for data collection**

Required data for this study are collected randomly from Sudan Vision and Sudan Tribune. Data concern Sudan Vision are collected through direct tangible paper versions and electronic version . Sudan Tribune is only electronic through the internet.

### **3.4Reliability and Validity**

To establish reliability and validity of a research, Nunan (1992) suggest the following question:

Internal Reliability: Would an independent researcher, on reanalyzing the data come to the same conclusions?

External reliability: Would an independent researcher, on replicating the study, come to the same conclusions?

Internal Validity: Is the research design such that we can confidently claim that the outcomes are a result of the experimental treatment?

External Validity: Is the research design such that we can generalize beyond the subjects under investigation to a wider population?

To ensure the research reliability and validity, university teachers agreed that the results represent the sample analysis and comply with the problem of the study.

### **3.5Data Analysis**

The analysis of Headlines Tenses will be done through making comparison between the headlines tenses odd structures (phenomenon) and ordinary grammar.

# **CHAPTER FOUR**

## **Data Analysis and Discussion of the Result**

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### **4.0 Introduction**

In this chapter the newspapers headlines tenses will be analyzed through making comparison with the conventional tenses in order to find out the differences.

### **4.1 Results related to the first hypothesis**

#### **4.1.1 Historic Present**

We use the present simple to talk about things in general. We use it to say that something happens all the time or repeatedly, or that something is true in general. Murphy (2004). But it is not the same in newspaper headlines where events that happened in the past are written in present form, this keeps headlines fresh, attractive and gives Newspapers' Headlines its language variety. Down here there are samples for historic headlines with details.

#### **4.1.2 Headlines**

##### **President affirms Aila Will Remain Governor of Gezira State**

Details: President Omer Al Bashir has affirmed that the governor of Gezira State Mohammed Tahir Aila will remain in the post of Governor of Gezira State.

Sudan Vision. Vol.14 Issue No 4025

**Law Provides Protection to Complainant: Grievances Chamber Chief.**

Details: Head of the public Grievances Chamber, Ahmed Abu Zaid revealed guarantees and protection provided by the chamber law to complainant.

Sudan Vision.vol.14issueNo38889.

**Ban Names Humanitarian Coordinator in Syria as New Deputy Special Representative for Liberia.**

Details:United Nations Secretary General Ban KI-moon today announced the appointment of Yacoub EL Hillo of Sudan as his Deputy Special Representative in the UN Mission in Liberia.

Sudan Vision vol.14.issueNO3891.

**Ministry of Guidance and Endowments and UNDP sign MOU on Preventing Extremism.**

Details:Ministry of Guidance and Endowments and UNDP signed yesterday a Memorandum of understanding (MOU) to joint efforts in preventing violent extremism.

Sudan Vision vol.14issueNO3884

**Abu Mazin Arrives in Khartoum on Three-DAY Official Visit.**

Details:Palestinian present Mahmoud Abass has arrived Khartoum Tuesday on an official three-day visit.

Sudan Vision vol.14issueNO3903.

### **Sudan Says Hosting More Than 400,000 South Sudanese Refugees.**

Details:

September 21,2016(Khartoum)-Sudan's State Minister of Interior Babiker Digna on Wednesday has said that his country is hosting more than 400,000 South Sudanese refugees.

Sudan Tribune

### **Sudan's FM Arrives in New York for UNGA meeting.**

Details: September 20

,2016 (Khartoum) Sudan's foreign minister Ibrahim Gandour on Tuesday has arrived in New York to participate in the 71<sup>st</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on behalf of the Sudanese president.

Sudan Tribune

### **Sudan Mourns Musical Legend Mohammed Wardi.**

Details: February 19,2012 (Khartoum) tens of thousands of Sudanese citizens including president Omer AL- Bashir attended the burial ceremony of iconic singer Mohammed Wardi who passed away on Saturday night.

Sudan Tribune

### **Sudan Defends Decision to Form University Police Force.**

Details: August 31,2016(Khartoum) Sudan's higher education Minister Sumaya Abu-kashoa, defended on Wednesday a decision to establish a special police department to protect the universities and its campuses.

Sudan Tribune

Table one: This table shows how historic present is used to express past

Headlines Tenses	Conventional Tenses
<b>President <u>affirms</u> Aila Will Remain Governor of Gezira State</b>	President Omer Al Bashir <b><u>has affirmed</u></b> that the governor of Gezira State Mohammed Tahir Aila will remain in the post of Governor of Gezira State.
<b>Law <u>Provides</u> Protection to Complainant: Grievances Chamber Chief</b>	Head of the public Grievances Chamber, Ahmed Abu Zaid revealed guarantees and protection <b><u>provided</u></b> by the chamber law to complainant.
<b>Ban <u>Names</u> Humanitarian Coordinator in Syria as New Deputy Special Representative for Liberia</b>	United Nations Secretary General Ban KI-moon today <b><u>announced</u></b> the appointment of Yacoub EL Hillo of Sudan as his Deputy Special Representative in the UN Mission in Liberia.
<b>Ministry of Guidance and Endowments and UNDP <u>sign</u> MOU on Preventing Extremism</b>	Ministry of Guidance and Endowments and UNDP <b><u>signed yesterday</u></b> a Memorandum of understanding (MOU) to joint efforts in preventing violent extremism.
<b>Abu Mazin <u>Arrives</u> in Khartoum on Three-DAY Official Visit</b>	Palestinian present Mahmoud Abass <b><u>has arrived</u></b> Khartoum Tuesday on an official three-day visit
<b>Sudan <u>Says</u> Hosting More Than 400,000 South Sudanese Refugees</b>	Sudan's State Minister of Interior Babiker Digna on Wednesday <b><u>has said</u></b> that his country is hosting more than 400,000 South Sudanese refugees
<b>Sudan's FM <u>Arrives</u> in New York for UNGA meeting</b>	Sudan's foreign minister Ibrahim Gandour on Tuesday <b><u>has arrived</u></b> in New York to participate in the 71st Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on behalf of the Sudanese president
<b>Sudan <u>Mourns</u> Musical Legend Mohammed Wardi</b>	Tens of thousands of Sudanese citizens including president Omer AL- Bashir <b><u>attended</u></b> the burial ceremony of iconic singer Mohammed Wardi who passed away on Saturday night
<b>Sudan <u>Defends</u> Decision to Form University Police Force</b>	Sudan's higher education Minister Sumaya Abukashoa, <b><u>defended</u></b> on Wednesday a decision to establish a special police department to protect the universities and its campuses

## 4.2 Results related to the second hypothesis

### 4.2.1 Future Tenses in Headlines

**Will** is omitted in Newspapers Headlines as a matter of limited space or presenting headline in striking way, which might cause ambiguity for the reader.

We use I'll (=I will ) when we decide to do something at the time of speaking. Murphy.(2004).

Example:

Oh, I've left the door open. I'll go and shut it.

But headlines tenses use **to** instead of **will** as a matter of keeping space, that's for the limited space on the top of the front page.

### 4.2.2 Headlines

#### **Ghandour to Partake at Fourth Arab-EU Meeting in Cairo**

Khartoum – Foreign Minister, Professor Ibrahim Ghandour will participate at the fourth Arab-European Union meeting at premises of the Arab League in Cairo.

Sudan Vision. Hits: 261

#### **Legislature to Endorse Constitution Amendments by Majority: Official**

Details: Khartoum (SMC)- National Dialogue Coordinative Mechanism, Abboud Jabir expected that the national legislature will endorse the constitutional amendments by more than 95% of the votes.

Sudan Vision . Hits:1724

**Sudan's Central Bank, U.S. treasury and banks to meet in London: official**

Details: December 14,2016 (Khartoum) – Central Bank of Sudan (CBoS), the office of foreign Assets Control (OFAC) of the U.S. Treasury Department and international banks will meet in London.

Sudan Tribune

**Libyan Prime Minister to Visit Sudan Soon.**

Details: September 21,2016(Khartoum) prime minister of the Libyan Government of National Accord (GN

A) Fayz AL- Sarraj will visit Khartoum within the next few days, said foreign minister.

Sudan Tribune

**New Sudanese satellite TV Channel to Start Next Month.**

Details: September 24,2007(Dubai)- A new Sudanese satellite channel will be launched next month from Dubai Media City.

Sudan Tribune

**South Sudan President to Address Legislatures of Transitional Parliament.**

Details: August 11,2016(Juba)- South Sudanese President, Silva Kir, will on Monday next week address a transitional parliament.

Sudan Tribune



**Table two:** This table shows how the word **to** substitutes **will** in future .

<b>Headlines Tenses</b>	<b>Conventional Tenses</b>
<b>Ghandour <u>to</u> Partake at Fourth Arab-EU Meeting in Cairo.</b>	Foreign Minister, Professor Ibrahim Ghandour <b><u>will</u></b> participate at the fourth Arab-European Union meeting.
<b>Legislature <u>to</u> Endorse Constitution Amendments by Majority: Official</b>	National Dialogue Coordinative Mechanism, Abboud Jabir expected that the national legislature <b><u>will</u></b> endorse the constitutional amendments by more than 95% of the votes.
<b>Sudan's Central Bank, U.S. treasury and banks <u>to</u> meet in London: official</b>	Central Bank of Sudan (CBoS), the office of foreign Assets Control (OFAC) of the U.S. Treasury Department and international banks <b><u>will</u></b> meet in London.
<b>Libyan Prime Minister <u>to</u> Visit Sudan Soon</b>	prime minister of the Libyan Government of National Accord (GNA) Fayz AL- Sarraj <b><u>will</u></b> visit Khartoum within the next few days
<b>New Sudanese satellite TV Channel <u>to</u> Start Next Month</b>	A new Sudanese satellite channel <b><u>will</u></b> be launched next month from Dubai Media City
<b>South Sudan President <u>to</u> Address Legislatures of Transitional Parliament</b>	South Sudanese President, Silva Kir, <b><u>will</u></b> on Monday next week address a transitional parliament

#### 4.2.3 Auxiliaries verbs

Auxiliaries verbs are not necessary. This makes some headlines appear to be in the past tense, when actually the headlines use past participles not the past simple.

#### 4.2.4 Headlines

##### **115 Killed in Sudanese Plane Crash, Child only Survivor: Official.**

Details: Khartoum, July 8 – A total of 115 people were killed when a Sudanese airline crashed in eastern Sudan Tuesday after reporting technical problem, leaving a two-year old boy as the soul survivor.

Sudan Tribune

##### **Sudanese Francis Deng named to Un genocide prevention post**

Wednesday 29,2007 (United Nations) – UN Secretary – General Ban Ki-moon has appointed today the former Sudanese diplomat Francis Deng as the new Special Adviser for the Prevention of Genocide and Mass Atrocities, succeeding Juan Mendez.

Sudan Tribune.

##### **Annual meeting of African academies held in Ethiopia**

Thursday 14 November 2013

By Tesfa Alem Tekle November 13,2013 (ADDIS ABABA) – The ninth annual meeting of the African Science Academies (AMASA) was conducted on Wednesday in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa .

Sudan Tribune.

### **SPLA minister killed in plane crash in South Sudan**

Friday 2 May 2008 (Khartoum) – Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) Affairs Minister Dominic Dim Deng and other 19 military officials have been killed as result of a plane crash between Wau and Juba, the Sudan Television reported today.

Sudan Tribune

### **Nine Killed in dog attacks in Lakes State's Rumbek**

Thursday 25 September 2014

September 24,2014 (RUMBEEK) – At least nine people have died in Lakes State's Rumbek Central country after being bitten by stray dogs.

Sudan Tribune

### **30 teachers arrested in Jonglei State over strike**

Friday 2 December 2016

December 01,2016 (JUBA) – 30 teachers have been arrested after they protested over delayed wages in South Sudan's Jonglei State.

Sudan Tribune

### **Al Jazeera English: South Sudan facing food crisis. 30 April 2012**

Sudan Tribune

**Table three:** This table shows how auxiliaries are dropped in headlines

Headlines Tenses	Conventional Tenses
<b>115 <u>Killed</u> in Sudanese Plane Crash, Child only Survivor: Official.</b>	A total of 115 people <b><u>were killed</u></b> when a Sudanese airline crashed in eastern Sudan Tuesday after reporting technical problem, leaving a two-year old boy as the soul survivor.
<b>Sudanese Francis Deng <u>named</u> to UN genocide prevention post</b>	UN Secretary – General Ban Ki-moon <b><u>has appointed</u></b> today the former Sudanese diplomat Francis Deng as the new Special Adviser for the Prevention of Genocide and Mass Atrocities, succeeding Juan Mendez.
<b>Annual meeting of African academies <u>held</u> in Ethiopia</b>	The ninth annual meeting of the African Science Academies (AMASA) <b><u>was conducted</u></b> on Wednesday in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa
<b>SPLA minister <u>killed</u> in plane crash in South Sudan</b>	Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) Affairs Minister Dominic Dim Deng and other 19 military officials <b><u>have been killed</u></b> as result of a plane crash between Wau and Juba, the Sudan Television reported today.
<b>Nine <u>Killed</u> in dog attacks in Lakes State's Rumbek</b>	At least nine people <b><u>have died</u></b> in Lakes State's Rumbek Central country after being bitten by stray dogs.
<b>30 teachers <u>arrested</u> in Jonglei State over strike</b>	30 teachers <b><u>have been arrested</u></b> after they protested over delayed wages in South Sudan's Jonglei State.
<b>Al Jazeera English: South Sudan <u>facing</u> food crisis. 30 April 2012</b>	South Sudan <b><u>is facing</u></b> food crisis

# **CHAPTER FIVE**

## **Conclusion, Recommendations and Suggestions for Further Studies**

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### **Conclusion, Recommendations and Suggestions for Further Studies**

#### **5.0 Introduction**

In this chapter, findings are summarized as a conclusion, recommendations and suggestions for further studies. Recommendations are based on the analysis of the study.

#### **5.1 Conclusion**

The study found out that the headlines are different from the ordinary tenses that readers learn in English Language lessons, hence readers encounter problems. These problems are categorized as:

#### **5.2 Structural Ambiguity**

Grammar rules are breached to fit news headlines target (attraction, excitement, influence and comply with the squeezed limited blank at the top of the paper). Historical present simple is dominant in headlines tenses, even in past events as a matter of keeping events fresh, where such use for structure is not allowed in ordinary language. Auxiliaries are not used in headlines tenses that is because headlines editing policy is geared to present short influential headline suit the limited blank at the top of front page.

In future tense **to** is used instead of **will**, this verity is considered as a news headlines register.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

Researcher recommends that readers should read headlines with details to overcome difficulties associated with abbreviation and tenses.

Readers should not adhere their language study only on school and high education books , they should elaborate their experience into media field to have new verity. Curricula designer should

### **5.4 Suggestions for Further Studies**

1. Investigating the structural and lexical ambiguity in news headlines.
2. Reasons behind news headlines odd tenses.
3. Possibility of including newspaper headlines language variety in schools syllabus

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<https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/grammar>

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## Appendix

**List of Tables:** these tables clear out the odd language of headlines, highlighting the grammatical odd area through comparison between headlines odd tenses and conventional tenses.

**Table one**

Table one: This table shows how historic present is used to express past.

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**Table two**

Table two: This table shows how the word to substitutes will in future .

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**Table three**

Table three: This table shows how auxiliaries are dropped in headlines.

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