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Writing news at warp speed: the case of Apple TV

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Abstract

This paper is a case study of reproductive newswriting, i.e. writing from sources. We offer a multimethod writing process analysis of a news article announcing the product launch of *Apple TV* on the Belgian market. By combining interview data, keystroke logging data, frame and corpus analysis, we reconstruct the discursive strategies a senior business reporter employs as he writes a news article from a corporate press release. Crucially, our process data highlight how reliance on ready-made source texts prompt news frames which enable reporters to write fast and efficiently while also forcing them to introduce new frames which balance the story, establish authority and maximize news value. Taken together, these analytical dimensions lay bare both the interpretive creativity and the routinization of reproductive newswriting. Methodologically, we make a case for incorporating quantitative data in the qualitative analysis of natural histories of news discourse.

Keywords: news production, reproductive writing, writing process analysis, recontextualization, framing

1. Introduction

Globalization has had a crippling effect on traditional (i.e. professional) news journalism. Strong voices in news scholarship have been arguing that journalism is transforming rapidly and radically. For instance, Mark Deuze claims that journalism “is coming to an end” (2008:4) and illustrates how technological convergence (e.g. online news media, 24hour news cycles) and cultural convergence (e.g. civil journalism, public relations) are blurring the boundaries between traditional forms of news journalism and public communication (see also Erjavec, 2004 and Ungerer, 2004). In practice, these changes are wreaking havoc on advertising revenues, employment figures and labor conditions in newsrooms around the globe.

Print journalism especially is struggling to survive. Pew Research Center’s most recent report on the state of American print journalism opens in grim reaper fashion: “newspapers are far from dead, but the language of the obituary is creeping in” (State of the News Media, 2008). In the UK, Nick Davies, himself an experienced investigative journalist, concluded that print journalism is facing a ‘terminal’ illness in *churnalism*, “forcing the mass of reporters to spend hours recycling second-hand wire copy and PR material without performing the ‘everyday practices’ [interviewing, fact-checking, eye-witnessing] of their trade” (Davies, 2008:59).

It is against this background that the present paper presents a case study of desktop news production. Linking back to Davies’ notion of churnalism, we draw attention to a number of theoretical and methodological aspects in the political economic account of UK print journalism (Lewis et al., 2008) that formed the empirical foundation for Davies’ argument. In an attempt to get closer to the actual process of desktop news production, this paper draws on quantitative and qualitative data collected at the newsdesk of the third author to examine how reproductive newswriting, i.e. writing from sources, takes shape in practice. In line with the rationale outlined in the position paper presented in this special issue, the data presented in this paper illustrate how a linguistics of news production can “re-position [journalistic] agency into news talk and text”.



We begin by linking sourcing practices and genre conventions of business journalism up with relevant research in discourse analysis and journalism studies. We then proceed by outlining an innovative methodological framework designed to capture the discursive complexities of digital newswriting. Our analyses highlight how a routine news story about a high profile product launch is sourced, drafted and filed for publication. In conclusion, we argue that by privileging a process perspective from the vantage point of the news practitioner, productive research avenues are opened up.

2. Sourcing (business) news

Sourcing news – who gets to speak how on what – forces attention to a central issue in journalism: the enactment of social power through authorship and representation. Who, for instance, has or is given the authority to produce versions of knowledge which frame public understanding of financial transactions or natural resources? Who is entitled to comment on news events? What is the journalist's role in the representation of events? Macgilchrist (2009) discerns two central dimensions in news sourcing: responsibility *for* a story, i.e. how stories negotiate facticity, eyewitness authority and category entitlement, and responsibility *within* a story, i.e. how stories allocate authorship to people quoted or otherwise sourced within a text. These two dimensions of journalistic responsibility materialize in a number of discursive practices variably known as 'attribution' and 'averral' (Bednarek, 2006), 'hedging' (Zuck, Zuck, 1985), 'getting to the story' (Peterson, 2001) and 'perspectivation' (Pander Maat, 2007b) and attest to the time-honored values of balance, objectivity and impartiality that traditional journalism uses as quality standards (Cotter 2009). From newsroom ethnographies conducted in the 1970s and 80s (e.g. Tuchman, 1978; Gans, 1979; Gitlin, 1980), we know that journalism organizes around a number of bureaucratic, spatiotemporal, social and discursive routines which guarantee a steady production of news flow. One of these routines is a reliance on official, elite sources (Hall et al., 1978).

Source reliance is of particular interest to business and financial journalism, because, as Doyle (2006:448) writes "the majority of ideas considered newsworthy will be drawn from the routine flow of corporate and economic news releases and through 'cribbing' from other media". Reliance on corporate press releases, a genre noted for its self-promotional content (McLaren, Gurău, 2005; Pander Maat, 2007a), and on financial PR and wire services, where speed of reporting sometimes trumps accuracy (Oberlechner, Hocking, 2004), are part and parcel of financial journalism. Source reliance is increasingly considered emblematic of declining quality standards in print journalism. In this context, Lewis et al. (2008) report that 70% of all articles published in UK print journalism rely wholly or partially on press release and press agency copy. This reliance is attributed to an increased workload, staff cuts and dwindling sales, a claim the authors back up with interview data, employment figures, profit margins and pagination patterns at UK national newspapers. To quantify the influence of public relations and press agency copy in news reporting, Lewis et al. performed keyword-based content analyses of two single-week samples comprising 2,207 newspaper stories and their respective public relations and news agency source materials. This, we argue, is problematic in at least two ways.

First, textual co-location (overlap) need not automatically nor consistently point to churnalism, as will be shown below. There could be a more diffuse discursive process at work than merely the churning of PR materials into newspaper articles. It is widely recognized that journalists routinely draw story ideas by scanning other media (Doyle, 2006); it is also widely acknowledged that journalism tends to draw on a particular style of lexicogrammar (Richardson, 2000; McLaren-Hankin, 2007; Jansen,



2008). It could therefore be argued that when particular issues circulating in (hegemonic) public discourse are deemed newsworthy, it is likely that journalists will cover the issues, irrespective of their access to PR materials. Since this coverage will tend to utilize similar lexis, keyword searches and source transparency are not suitably sophisticated means to capture the difference between a journalist drawing on public discourse circulating in the newsroom, and one drawing on a particular corporate press release.

Second, since content analysis looks for textual patterns across a corpus of texts, it skates over contextually contingent dimensions of news production, thus ignoring the interpretation, creativity and domain knowledge involved in transforming polyphonic source texts into a unified, narrative account of a news event. In other words, without denying the theoretical currency of churnalism, we question its analytical validity because it takes textual patterns at face value, disregarding the intertextual transformations taking place when source texts are reworked into news stories. For instance, given the sometimes complex subject matter of business and finance news, levels of financial literacy among non-specialist audiences is a central newsworthiness criterion. That is why, in addition to coverage of financial markets, business news often covers stories which have a personal finance dimension (e.g. house prices, interest rates, pensions), a political dimension (e.g. the EU and monetary union, the impact of spending on public services) or a lifestyle dimension (e.g. technological innovations) (Doyle, 2006). The case study presented here is an example of the latter; it reports on the launch of a new product by a popular manufacturer of personal computers and bears witness to the genre transformations (recontextualizations) taking place between PR output and news stories, i.e. the selection and de-selection of particular topic categories.

It should be noted that the genre differences between source texts and news stories cannot only be gleaned from differences in the topics covered. Within a certain topic that is deemed newsworthy, source inputs may still be significantly transformed in ways specific to the news genre. It seems at least plausible that news stories adopt other 'angles' into the news event than the PR source texts story do. We will analyze this aspect of genre transformation in terms of the *news frames* (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989; de Vreese, 2005; Van Gorp, 2005) brought to bear on the source information by the reporter.

Summarizing, this paper extends the study of *what* reproductive newswriting is to *how* a senior business reporter transforms a corporate press release into a newspaper article. In what follows, we first introduce the Apple TV case before outlining the methodological framework.

3. The Apple TV case

On March 22, 2007, Flemish quality newspaper *De Standaard* ran a story about the product launch of Apple TV on the Belgian market. Apple TV is a device that streams content from a personal computer to a television set. The case is drawn from a larger ethnographic study of desktop news production and was selected because it represents the final installment in a series of "systematic transformations from genre to genre" in what Norman Fairclough calls a *genre chain* (2003:31). Genre chains materialize in a number of institutionally sanctioned pseudo events and accompanying documents which preformulate (Jacobs, 1999) the news and thus facilitate reproduction. On January 9, 2007, Apple announced the launch of Apple TV at its annual Macworld conference. The company issued a press release the same day. Some two months later, on March 21, 2007, Apple issued a press release announcing the market availability of Apple TV. This release was translated into Dutch by a translation company and was further edited by the PR manager of Apple BeLux (personal communication, TVH) who then emailed



it to news outlets in Belgium and Luxemburg, including the third author of this paper ('the reporter'). Following a brief check with the business desk chief, the story was assigned 60 lines on page 3 of the business section. The reporter later called the PR manager who had sent the email and started writing the news story, at which point the first author started recording the reporter's writing process electronically.

4. Method

4.1. Data collection and analysis

This paper draws on three data sets (Table 1) collected by the first author from the third author during ethnographic fieldwork between October 2006 and March 2007 at the business newsdesk of *De Standaard*. It is further informed by insights from textual analysis and writing process analysis. Firstly, the press release and newspaper article allow for a contrastive analysis between source text and news text, the generalizability of which is supported by a 'background corpus', previously collected and analyzed by the second author (Pandermaat, 2008) and consisting of text pairs of press releases and resulting news articles in the product launch news genre. Secondly, keystroke logging and screen video data reconstruct the writing process action by action. The process data were recorded online using two software applications: Inputlog and Camtasia. Inputlog is a Microsoft Windows based logging tool that records keyboard strokes and mouse movements. The software also generates datafiles for statistical and pause analyses (Leijten, Van Waes, 2006). Camtasia Studio® is an online screen registration tool which records computer screen action (Degenhardt, 2006). Both applications run in the background and do not interfere with normal computer operations. The software recorded the writing process from the moment the reporter started writing until he filed the story for copy-editing. Thirdly, audio-recorded interview data and fieldnotes contextualize story selection, production and self-reflexion. The telephone interview with the PR manager was not recorded. All three data sets are used to analyze, contrast and compare how the story was discursively produced. As such, we offer data-driven and theory-driven perspectives on the natural history of desktop news production.

Data set	Data type	File format
source texts	press release	.rtf
	news article	.rtf
	background corpus	.doc
writing process	Inputlog	.idf
	Camtasia	.avi
participant observation	interview	.wma
	observations	fieldnotes

Table 1. *AppleTV data inventory*

4.2 Data history

In the spirit of ethnographic self-reflexivity and in view of recent methodological debates about secondary analysis in ethnography (van den Berg, 2005; Cicourel, 2007) and the linguistic representation of discourse (Bucholtz, 2007; Slembrouck, 2007; Vigouroux, 2007), the data history of this case study merits disclosure. All three authors presented individual analyses at a March 2008



workshop in Ghent, Belgium. For this occasion, only the source texts were shared (including their English translations) but no other data. The first author presented a writing process analysis of the case, the second author was asked to present a contrastive frame analysis, i.e. to compare frames used in the Apple TV press release and the original Dutch-language Apple TV news article and the third author was asked to reflect on his writing practices. All three presentations had remarkably similar findings; apart from the obvious intertextual relationship between the source text and the news article, our analyses illustrated how the reporter recontextualized the press release by introducing new frames into the news article.

The current paper is the result of an extensive and collaborative process of recontextualization; taking the third author's retrospective interview comments as an analytical point of departure, the first author drafted a preliminary version in an attempt to integrate all three analytical perspectives (i.e. process analysis, contrastive analysis and introspective analysis). Over a period of 6 months, the paper was repeatedly and extensively edited in collaboration with the other two authors. In this process, the second author was given full access to the process and interview data to enable secondary analysis of the data. The third author contributed by 'member-checking' claims made about sourcing and rewriting strategies. The first author also received detailed feedback on a prefinal version of this paper from his supervisor, Geert Jacobs. In hindsight, the practice of data sharing fostered a more critical analytical distance for the first author and thus benefitted the analysis presented below.

5. Analysis

As argued in Section 2 and in line with the theme of the current special issue, the analysis of source-media intertextuality at the content level can identify textual patterns but is ultimately speculative and, more importantly, overlooks the contingency, professional knowledge and creativity that shapes news discourse. As Cotter (2001:417) writes, these factors "significantly influence – and define – news discourse". In other words, we need to look beyond the level of the text (product) and also examine how text production is contextually embedded (process). It is exactly for this reason that intertextuality is seen here not as an exclusively textual phenomenon but as a social practice "through which producers [...] construct meanings, frame activities and pursue outcomes" (Peterson, 2001:239). To this end, we offer an analytical back-and-forth between product and process data to capture the discursive strategies the reporter deploys as he writes and reflects on the story. We start by structurally and stylistically screening the designated source text, i.e. the Apple TV press release which was emailed to the reporter, and the final news text for textual similarities (5.1). Next, we draw on the third author's retrospective interview to induce how the text was transformed ('recontextualized') from a press release to a news article (5.2). These recontextualization strategies are then triangulated with frame analysis of the news article (5.3) and with keystroke logging analysis of the reporter's writing process (5.4).

5.1 Source reliance

The press release (see Appendix A, English translation provided, line numbers refer to the Dutch original) displays genre-bound structural characteristics such as a headline/lead (1-3) as well as the customary company information (59-65), also known as 'boilerplate', contact details (67-81) and a copyright disclaimer (82-85). Stylistically, features such as pseudo-quotes (13) and third person self-reference (4) exemplify what Jacobs (1999) calls *preformulation*: the news style in which press releases



are typically written to facilitate reproduction by journalists. Somewhat atypical in this regard is the ubiquity of second person self-reference (e.g. 'Je muziek' *your music*).

The press release is a marketing text. After the announcement of its availability, the press release is mainly dedicated to describing the new product, first presenting its general user features (what you can do with it; 4-28), then interweaving technical details (29-35; 44-49; 53-58) with price and availability information (38-43; 50-52).

Conversely, the news story (see Appendix B) is structured around a headline (2), lead (3-4), byline (5-7) and body (9-40). The headline emphasizes the availability of the product and the lead summarizes the story by answering the 'what' (*AppleTV*) 'when' (*straks* 'soon') and 'where' (*Belgische winkels* 'Belgian stores') questions. The byline identifies the reporter who authored the news story. No reference to the source text is given. As for the body, the first paragraph provides a general description of the device (9-14). The following paragraphs discuss pricing and availability (16-18), further technical details (20-24), the intended customers (26-28), a product limitation (30-32) and the company strategy that seems to be behind it (34-40).

At first brush, there is clear intertextual overlap between the press release and the news story. For example, the press release headline ('AppleTV available now') is clearly echoed in the story headline ('AppleTV in stores'). Textual similarities like this seem to suggest that the reporter copied directly from the press release. Upon closer inspection however, evidence for direct press release uptake is few and far between. For example, there seem to be no passages that have been lifted verbatim from the source text and copied in the target text. In addition, there are also a number of fragments that cannot be traced back to the press release.

5.2 Genre transformation

The playback of the Camtasia screen video also provides little evidence for direct press release uptake, apart from two actions. First, the reporter copy/pastes the entire press release in his word editor, types the headline and previews the article in a newspaper layout window. Second, he copies a URL from the source text into the story. Save for these two actions, the reporter does not copy any fragments from the press release, even though he has a hard copy on his desk and a soft copy in a computer window. In other words, based on the screen recording, we were not able to find any hard evidence that the reporter copies directly from the press release.

So far, our findings suggest that source reliance is not so much an instance of direct re-use (churnalism) but rather an instance of a genre transformation ('recontextualization'). But what exactly is a genre transformation? To this end, we turn to the retrospective interview and identify two major transformation strategies. The first has to do with sourcing and responsibility, the second with introducing new frames to the source information. In Sections 5.3 and 5.4, we trace these transformations in the frames he introduces in his news text and in his actual writing process.

With regard to sourcing, let us start by considering the following extract, taken from the retrospective interview the first author conducted with the reporter right after he had filed his story (in Dutch, English gloss in italics).

- [1] tvh: ja, 't is heel technisch, he?
 wdp: ja, mijn eerste idee was eigenlijk van iemand van Minoc te bellen, onze
 nieuwe zusterorganisatie die IT bladen uitgeeft en van daar ne redacteur aan het



woord te laten maar die waren allemaal in vergadering dus ik heb hem toch zelf moeten bellen

tvh: yes, it's very technical, isn't it?

wdp: yes, my first idea was actually to call somebody from Minoc, our new sister organization that publishes IT magazines and to give the floor to one of their editors but they were all in a meeting so I ended up having to call him myself

This statement shows that the reporter first tried to get an outside voice to comment on the product but since this contact person was unavailable, he contacted the PR manager ('him'), his obvious second choice. Commenting on this sourcing strategy, the reporter points to the danger of corporate spin:

- [2] tegen nu moet ik die woordvoerder aan het woord laten. Ik zeg niet dat die mens gaat liegen maar alé hij zal er misschien soms euh het beter laten klinken dan het echt is

I now have to give the floor to this spokesperson. I'm not saying that this man is going to lie but you know he may at times ehm make it sound better that it actually is

In addition to pointing to an awareness of corporate bias, this statement also seems to suggest that the reporter is aware that the Apple TV story exemplifies a hybrid news genre (Erjavec, 2004), i.e. a genre that combines editorial content, in this case consumer information, with product advertising. The AppleTV story reports on a pseudo event (a product launch) from the perspective of a single organization (Apple) and source (PR manager). As such, the story could be viewed as unbalanced and partial, a capital sin in journalism. The reporter is aware of this and, as a result, takes steps to water down the promotional content of the story. In his own words:

- [3] ma bon, 't is Apple, dus euh het gaat weer een beetje de referentie worden voor dat soort dingen en daarom alleen al vind ik dat we het moeten geven. Maar dan moet je inderdaad factueel zijn en zeggen wat het ding niet kan doen

(anyway, it's Apple, so ehm it will become sort of the standard for these things and for this reason alone I think we should cover it. But you then indeed have to be factual and say what the thing can't do.)

Crucially, this extract points to the reporter's responsibility for the accuracy of the information presented ('you then indeed have to be factual') as well as his responsibility for the conveyed message ('what the thing can't do'). These dimensions are clearly documented in the news text. The reporter takes responsibility for factual claims and attributes non-factual claims to the PR manager by quoting him, either directly (line 26: 'We see it as a 21st century DVD player') or indirectly (line 15 'Steven Van den Eynde thinks...'). Commenting on these reproductive writing routines, the reporter says:

- [4] "als het er staat en het is iets factueels...een zin met een aantal objectieve cijfers kun je dan bijvoorbeeld wel zo overnemen"



(if it is says so and it is something factual...a sentence with some objective numbers for example you could copy as is)

But apart from concerns with objectivity, extract [3] also sheds light on the *raison d'être* of the story: its newsworthiness (*anyway, it's Apple, so ehmm it will become sort of the standard for these things and for this reason alone I think we should cover it.*) Clearly, the mandate here is: when a leading company launches a new device, this should be reported.

5.3 Frame analysis

How is this news claim realized in the actual news text? This brings us to an analysis of the *frames* the reporter brings to bear on the news event. As has been mentioned, the frame adopted by the source text is relatively clear: the product is approached from a marketing perspective, i.e. as something that is to be bought and used by customers. The news story offers various modifications to the source text frame. Interestingly, this suggests that news texts cannot be characterized by a single frame but rather by a *frame set*. The reporter starts out by emphasizing the importance of the new product, framing it as a possible breakthrough by the reference to the iPhone that was announced at the same media event (line 7-8). This 'historical innovation' frame is further strengthened by statements such as "*we see it as the 21st century's DVD-player*". Although the innovation frame was present to some degree in the source text as well, it is remarkable that it is made more prominent in the news report.

This is a first example of how the reporter brings new frames to the release information. Another point, also mentioned in extract [3], is that he replaces the marketing frame with a more distanced user evaluation frame which also comprises statements about 'what the thing can't do'. For instance, it has no Scart-connection (24) and it cannot be used to stream video directly from the internet to a TV (30-31).

The most radical extension of the frame set comes in the final paragraph, which deals with what the product does for the company, as opposed to what it does for the consumer. Apple's marketing strategy is said to be 'clearly' (line 34) intended to boost online sales; and the 'implicit message' (line 38) is that in order to avoid problems of format incompatibility, people should buy from Apple's online store, iTunes. With regards to sourcing, this paragraph is a remarkable move, since it takes responsibility for non-factual material. There seems to have been a dilemma here: the reporter felt it necessary to raise the company strategy as a topic, but his preferred source on this topic could not be reached, as mentioned in extract [1].

In sum, the reporter applies two major recontextualization strategies. First, he takes responsibility for the 'hard' information, while attributing statements that might be read as promotional to the interviewee (see Pander Maat, Henk 2008 for other examples of this perspectivization strategy). Second, he broadens the narrow marketing frame of the release by emphasizing the historical significance of the device, mentioning limitations and discussing the company strategy behind the product.

5.4 Keystroke logging analysis

So far, we have derived two strategic concerns based on what the reporter said during a retrospective interview, for which we provided textual evidence in the form of frame shifts in the news article. Note that the first two authors had identified these strategies independently of each other during their



original presentations (cf. Section 4.2). We now turn to the keystroke logging data to examine how these concerns impact on the actual writing process. The Camtasia video data and the descriptive statistics (Table 2) suggest a very smooth, linear process with low recursivity. In 36.36 minutes, the reporter writes a 409 word story, typing a total of 491 words and deleting only 82 words in a production time of 18.11 minutes.

AppleTV story	process	product	differential
Total number of characters produced	3054	2455	599
Total number of words produced	491	409	82
Production time (in minutes)	18.11	/	/
Pause time (in minutes)	18.24	/	/
Total duration of writing process (in minutes)	36.36	/	/

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of the AppleTV writing process

In previous research, we have shown that reliance on press releases allows journalists to write quickly and smoothly (Van Hout, Jacobs, 2008; Van Hout, Macgilchrist, in press). By either reproducing or realigning preformulated news discourse, journalists can source material quickly and easily. The primary operation seems to be paraphrasing specialist source information in terms more accessible to a lay audience. While this transformation requires considerable skills, it allows for a relatively smooth production process when performed by an experienced writer. In the rare cases that journalists do not have access to a wide range of news discourses, it can be expected that their production output slows down significantly. For example, writing an editorial about the effects of industry action on the economy is far more painstaking than rewriting a press release denouncing the strike. This points to two observations: first, writing from (preformulated) press releases allows for fast and economical newswriting and highlights highly routinized writing strategies, i.e. managing responsibility for and within news stories. Second, while text generation is cognitively more demanding and therefore slows the reporter down, it is here that the reporter's interpretive agency and creativity comes to bear on the text.

To get closer to the specific instances where the reporter slows down, i.e. when he applies the two transformation strategies we have induced, a fine-grained rating model was designed by the first author in collaboration with Luuk Van Waes (University of Antwerp). Inputlog, the keystroke logging software used here, generates a number of statistical files for analysis. One of these is the so-called general logfile, which lists every recorded keyboard and mouse operation in rows. This file was exported to a spreadsheet and divided into 30 second intervals. All productive keyboard operations (keyboard, space bar, punctuation) were filtered and aggregated. These summary files were then manually coded by the first two authors and the resulting analysis is presented here for the first time. Two variables were coded: writing action and text location (Table 3).

Differences were resolved via personal communication and one parameter was added a posteriori ('9. planning') after which the first author recoded his ratings accordingly. As a reliability measure of interrater agreement, Cohen's Kappa was computed for both variables. The interrater reliability for the variable 'action', as measured by Cohen's Kappa was 0.75. The reliability for the variable 'location' was 0.68.



action	location
1. formulating (new information)	1. headline
2. inserting meta-information (byline, URL)	2. lead
3. editing (paraphrasing source text)	3. body
4. revising (target text)	4. different window
5. copying (from source)	
6. searching (internet)	
7. reading TPSF (no keystrokes, only mouse operations)	
8. formatting (text length vis-à-vis available column inches)	
9. planning	

Table 3. Two-variable coding scheme

Combined with the corresponding pause times, this coding scheme allows us to zoom in on what happens when the reporter generates text instead of paraphrasing press release material, i.e. when he displays creativity by inferring, adding information not in the release or drawing on other discourses such as a telephone conversation. Four such moments are identified, each time corresponding to the transformation strategies of sourcing and reframing: the first three are easy additions while the last one proves more taxing.

First, the MacWorld reference (9-11) works up a newsworthiness value of prominence and resonates with the January 9, 2007 press release announcing the US launch of Apple TV. After he writes the headline, lead and byline, the reporter opens his browser and performs a keyword search in the newspaper's article archive. The "Apple TV" search command yields no results; the "Apple + tv" search command does. The reporter scrolls through the search results, opens two links (a 2006 article about Disney's online movie store and one about Apple's 2006 product line) and goes back to his editing window. Following a 9 second pause (avg. pause length > 2 sec = 5.73 ms), he formulates "American computer company Apple had already announced the launch of Apple TV last January at the MacWorld fair, where the long-awaited iPhone was also introduced." This whole operation searching for online information takes almost 4 minutes, suggesting that writing this sentence proved difficult. However, it seems safe to assume that, as an IT beat writer, the reporter was drawing on his prior knowledge of the industry. During the interview, the reporter mentioned that he had recently written about similar products. This may explain why the addition went so smoothly. The rest of the paragraph is a paraphrase from the press release.

Second, the absence of a Scart connection (24) is added at the 16 minute mark following a 12 second pause (12278 ms) and concludes a technical paragraph about the device's compatibility and connectivity. The interview data reveal that the absence of this connection was confirmed by the PR manager via telephone but it could also be inferred from the technical description provided in the Apple TV press release.

Third, the incapacity to stream video directly from the web to a television (30-31) was also confirmed during the telephone conversation the reporter had with the PR manager and also follows logically from the press release. This may explain why these two 'straightforward' inferences do not significantly slow down the reporter.

Fourth, the process data clearly indicate that the "implicit message" underlying Apple's marketing strategy (34-35, 37-38) is a substantial and novel addition to the article. The reporter spends nearly 12 minutes – a third of his total production time – on this paragraph and handily recontextualizes a fresh quote from his telephone interview to frame his critique, thus pointing to the



strategic role of consumption (vis-à-vis the source texts he has at his disposal) in the reporter's entextualization process.

The first sentence of this paragraph proves difficult to formulate: after two tentative versions which he deletes and a couple of long pauses (50392 ms, 34179 ms), the reporter produces a 16 word (in Dutch) averral: 'Apple is clearly planning on drawing more people to their online music and movie store iTunes via Apple TV.' Figure 1 provides a fragment of the sequential linear output in periods of 15 seconds, illustrating the strategic considerations the reporter makes as he writes. This figure also shows how Inputlog linguistically represents the process data. The intervals are represented in hours:minutes:seconds notational format, the actual output in mouse operations, pause times and keyboard strokes. We argue that the fragmented and staccato nature of the writing process represented below illustrates the creative agency of the reporter as he tries to formulate his critique against the (biased) news frames of the press release.

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[Movement][LeftButton][RIGHT]Apple-is-xdui[BS3]uidelijk-van-plan-om
0:24:15  ·Applo
0:24:30  [BS3]{3245}[Movement][BS2]{2233}via-Apl{3064}[BS]ple-TV·opok
[LEFT3][DEL][RIGHT2]·meer-volk-te-lokken-naare-[BS2]·[DOWN]
0:24:45  [CTRL+LEFT15][CTRL+SHIFT+RIGHT3]
zijn·[CTRL+RIGHT5]iTunes.[ENTER][CTRL+SHIFT+DOWN]
0:25:00  [BS][LEFT]{2354}[LEFT]{6079}[RIGHT]{24024}

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Figure 1. Linear log fragment (15000 ms intervals)

Compare this process to the text in Figure 2, which draws entirely on an attributed fresh quote by the PR manager. In this fragment, 31 words are produced. We attribute the relative linearity of this fragment to the reporter's source reliance, which gives him access to an accurate, sourced product evaluation.

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0:25:30  ·„Alle-content-die-iTunes-kan-afspelen-[BS]·
0:25:45  os[BS2]is-ook-via-Apple-TV-te-bekijken.{8061}
Formaten-die-iTunes-niet-onderstyeui[BS5]teunt,-zal-je-dus-eerst-moeten
0:26:00  ·omzetten-n
0:26:15  aar-een-{5588}formaat-dat-wel-ondersyeund[BS5]teund-wordt{2203}",

```

Figure 2. Linear log fragment (15000 ms intervals)

In other words, the addition of the opening sentence of this paragraph illustrates the authorial creativity and strategic considerations of the reporter, as well as the cognitive strain involved in adding new informationn. At another level of abstraction, all three ways of analyzing the reporter's writing process point to one and the same finding: that the strategic orientations identified in the interview data and supported by textual evidence, are clearly reflected in the writing process and can thus be viewed as a direct result of Wim's interpretive creativity: the writing routines and cultural epistemologies (ways of knowing) that make up his professional competence (Peterson, 2003:186).



6. Implications

Methodologically, this paper speaks to debates about the accuracy and completeness of linguistic representation practices, a contested and controversial methodological issue in current discourse analysis. We claim that by adding a writing process perspective, we can provide a new layer of insight into journalistic discursive practices by reconstructing how journalists actually knock PR copy into shape. Following this line of thought, this paper privileges the practitioner's perspective in two ways: from the outside looking in (keystroke logging) and from the inside out (retrospective interviewing and member checking by the reporter). In an attempt to break free from the "the rather secretive and possessive attitudes of ethnographers toward their informants and fieldwork" (Vigouroux, 2007:61), we open up the research process by giving the reporter a voice in our analyses of his professional routines, by triangulating interview findings with quantitative data and by outlining the history of data analyses presented here.

Theoretically, the case study presented provides has at least three ramifications. First, reproductive writing is a more complex matter than simply churning preformulated news discourses into newspaper articles. It crucially involves the recontextualization of multiple news discourses (a corporate press release, interview notes, news archive material, prior knowledge) into a single narrative, framed as an authoritative, unified account of a news event. Typically, this authority is established by a adopting a position of authorial neutrality (Thomson et al., 2008), i.e. by employing a register that conceals the use of press release material, interview questions or news agency copy (Matheson, 2004) or by displacing responsibility for (evaluative) statements to corporate sources. Essentially, the reporter simply reports news events as if he uncovered them for us. Conversely, the reporter is forced to take responsibility for his critique of the underlying market strategy because he was not able to source it to an outside voice.

Second, "Many [economic journalists] regard cutting through spin and criticizing, where criticism is due, as precisely the essence of their job" (Doyle, 2006:438). Our case strongly supports this argument. On the one hand, the reporter allows the PR manager to speak, that is, he entitles a potentially biased agent to comment on a hybrid news story about a product launch. On the other hand, he distances himself from the PR discourse by weaving a layer of comments around it.

Third, from a writing process point of view, our analysis has shown that paraphrasing factual information from a press release allows for relatively smooth writing, whereas introducing frame shifts that balance the story slows the journalist down. While the first operation can be characterized as reproductive writing and the second as productive writing, our data seem to suggest that even the productive part is firmly linked up with the source text: while using the source material, the journalist is focused on getting round some of the frames offered in it.



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Appendix A

Dutch Press Release

1. Apple TV nu verkrijgbaar
2. Je muziek, podcasts, foto's, films en filmtrailers vanop PC of Mac draadloos op je
3. breedbeeld-tv
4. Brussel, 21 maart 2007 – Apple levert vanaf vandaag Apple TV. Het toestelletje ligt
5. vanaf vandaag in de winkelschappen in de Verenigde Staten en vanaf volgende week ook
6. in Europa. Apple TV is een strak vormgegeven toestel dat je eenvoudig kan aansluiten op
7. een breedbeeld flatscreen televisie. Met Apple TV kan je makkelijk én draadloos genieten
8. van al je muziek, foto's, podcasts, films en filmtrailers vanuit iTunes op je PC of Mac
9. maar nu op je breedbeeld-tv in de woonkamer. De gebruiksvriendelijke interface van
10. Apple TV en de intuïtieve draadloze afstandsbediening Apple Remote maken het
11. mogelijk om vanuit elke hoek van de kamer snel door je hele collectie digitale media te
12. bladeren en deze af te spelen.
13. "Apple TV is de dvd-speler van het internettijdperk: je kunt hiermee snel en
14. gemakkelijk je iTunes-bibliotheek op je pc of Mac weergeven op je breedbeeld-tv", aldus
15. Philip Schiller, senior vice president Worldwide Product Marketing van Apple. "Dit kan
16. via je bestaande WiFi-netwerk, maar ook via de nieuwste en snelste WiFi-standaard:
17. 802.11n."
18. Klanten overal ter wereld kunnen via iTunes en Apple TV eigen films en filmtrailers
19. op hun breedbeeld-tv bekijken, naar hun eigen muziek luisteren via hun
20. home-entertainmentsysteem en hun fotoalbums als diavoorstelling in HD-resolutie
21. bekijken. Daarnaast kan je via de iTunes Store meer dan 100.000 podcasts en
22. videopodcasts gratis downloaden. De iTunes Store is bovendien 's werelds grootste online
23. muziekwinkel met meer dan 4 miljoen nummers van alle mogelijke artiesten, in alle
24. mogelijke genres. In de Verenigde Staten krijgen klanten via de iTunes Store ook keuze
25. uit meer dan 5000 muziekclips en meer dan 400 speelfilms en 350 tv-programma's
26. (waaronder Lost, Prison Break, Heroes, 24, The Office, enz) van vrijwel dvd-kwaliteit.
27. Apple is van plan om dit film- en TV-aanbod in de loop van dit jaar ook buiten de
28. Verenigde Staten aan te bieden.
29. Apple TV beschikt over een harde schijf van 40 GB waarop 50 uur video, 9000
30. muzieknummers, 25.000 foto's of een combinatie daarvan kan worden opgeslagen, en
31. ondersteunt high-definition 720p-uitvoer.* Apple TV is eenvoudig aan te sluiten op een
32. breed scala aan breedbeeld-tv's en home-entertainmentsystemen, en wordt standaard
33. geleverd met een HDMI- en component-videopoort en een analoge en optische
34. audiopoort.
35. Dankzij de snelle draadloze AirPort 802.11**-netwerkvoorziening kan Apple TV
36. automatisch materiaal vanaf een computer synchroniseren of geheel draadloos materiaal
37. rechtstreeks naar de tv streamen vanaf vijf extra computers.***
38. Prijzen en verkrijgbaarheid
39. Apple TV wordt standaard geleverd met de draadloze afstandsbediening Apple
40. Remote en is vanaf deze week in de Verenigde Staten en vanaf volgende week in België
41. verkrijgbaar via de online Apple Store - <http://www.apple.com/belgiumflstore> - en bij
42. geautoriseerde Apple resellers - <http://www.apple.com/benl/buy> - voor een adviesprijs



-
43. van 299 euro inclusief BTW.
 44. Voor Apple TV is iTunes 7.1 of hoger vereist op een Mac met Mac OS X versie
 45. 10.3.9 of hoger of een Windows-pc met Windows XP Home/Professional (SP2).
 46. Bovendien is een draadloos 802.11b/g/n-netwerk via AirPort of AirPort Extreme of
 47. een 10/100 Base-T Ethernet-netwerk vereist. Verbinding met internet is vereist en een
 48. breedbandverbinding wordt aanbevolen. Apple TV vereist een enhanced-definition of
 49. high-definition breedbeeld-tv. iPod-games kunnen niet worden gespeeld via Apple TV.
 50. De iTunes Store is beschikbaar in de VS en diverse andere landen, waaronder België.
 51. tv-programma's en speelfilms zijn alleen verkrijgbaar in de VS; de verkrijgbaarheid van
 52. video's varieert per land.
 53. *Videoweergave is gebaseerd op iTunes-video's met een resolutie van 640 x 480. De
 54. muziekcapaciteit is gebaseerd op 4 minuten per nummer en 128-Kbps AAC-codering. De
 55. fotocapaciteit is gebaseerd op voor Apple TV geschikte foto's die zijn overgezet vanuit
 56. iTunes. De werkelijke capaciteit is afhankelijk van het materiaal dat wordt opgeslagen.
 57. **Compatibel met 802.11b/g/n. Gebaseerd op een IEEE 802.11n-conceptspecificatie.
 58. ***Voor draadloos streamen van video is een 802.11g/n-netwerk vereist.
 59. Apple gaf in de jaren '70 het startschot voor de personal-computerrevolutie met de Apple
 60. II en vond in de jaren '80 de personal computer opnieuw uit met de Macintosh. Apple
 61. wordt algemeen erkend voor zijn innovatieve en bekroonde Mac-desktops en -notebooks,
 62. het Mac OS X-besturingssysteem, het iLife-softwarepakket en zijn professionele
 63. programma's. Apple is bovendien de drijvende kracht achter dedigitale muziekrevolutie
 64. met zijn iPod muziek- en videospelers, en de on line iTunes Store. Daarnaast zal Apple dit
 65. jaar de mobiele telefoonmarkt betreden met de iPhone.
 66. Perscontacten:
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 68. PR Manager Apple Belux
 69. Rechtstreeks telefoonnummer: 02/474-42-57
 70. GSM-nummer: 0475/53-34-29
 71. Consumentenlijn: 02/474-42-11
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 73. En:
 74. Stephanie Schollaert
 75. PR-dienst Apple Belux
 76. Rechtstreeks telefoonnummer: 02/474-43-83
 77. Consumentenlijn: 02/474-42-11
 78. E-mail: prbelgium@euro.apple.com
 79. Surf voor internationale persberichten en foto's in hoge resolutie van alle producten van
 80. Apple, naar www.apple.com/pr De algemene website van Apple Belux vindt u op
 81. www.apple.com/be
 82. © 2007 Apple Inc. Alle rechten voorbehouden. Apple, het Apple logo, Mac, Mac OS,
 83. Macintosh, Apple TV, iTunes, AirPort, Apple Store, AirPort Extreme en iPod zijn
 84. handelsmerken van Apple. Andere bedrijfs- of productnamen kunnen handelsmerken zijn
 85. van hun respectieve eigenaars.
 86. -----
 87. Steven Van den Eynde



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English translation of Dutch Press Release

1. Apple TV now available.
2. Your music, podcasts, photo's, movies and movie trailers from your PC or Mac
3. wireless on your big screen tv.
4. Brussels, 21 March 2007- Starting from today, Apple is shipping Apple TV. From
5. today, the device will be available in stores in the United States and starting from next
6. week in Europe as well. Apple TV is a sharply designed device which you can connect
7. easily to a widescreen flatscreen tv. Apple TV is an easy to use and fun way to wirelessly
8. play all your iTunes music, photo's, movies and movietrailers from your PC or Mac but
9. now on your widescreen TV in the living room. The user friendly interface of Apple TV
10. and the intuitive wireless Apple Remote make it possible to browse through your
11. collection of digital media and play it, from every corner of the room.
12. "Apple TV is like a DVD player for the Internet age: "providing an easy and fun way
13. to play your iTunes library content from your PC or Mac on your widescreen TV," says
14. Philip Schiller, Apple's senior vice president of Worldwide Product Marketing. "You can
15. do this using your existing WiFi network as well as the newest and fastest version of
16. WiFi: 802.11n."
17. Customers around the world can watch their own movies and movie trailers via
18. iTunes and Apple TV on their widescreen tv, listen to their own music via their home
19. entertainment system and watch their photo albums as a slide show in HD resolution.
20. What's more, via the iTunes store you can download more than 100.000 podcasts and
21. video podcasts for free. The iTunes store is the world's largest online music store with
22. more than 4 million tracks of all kinds of possible artists, in all kinds of possible genres.
23. In the United States, customers can choose from more than 5000 music clips, and more
24. than 400 movies and 350 tv shows (such as Lost, Prison Break, Heroes 24, The Office,
25. etc.) in near dvd quality.
26. Apple TV has a 40 GB hard drive to store up to 50 hours of video, 9000 songs, 25000
27. photo's or a combination of each and is capable of delivering high-definition 720p output.
28. Apple TV is easy to connect to a broad range of widescreen TVs and home theatre
29. systems and comes standard with HDMI, component video, analog and optical audio
30. ports. Thanks to high-speed AirPort 802.11 wireless networking, Apple TV can
31. auto-synchronize content from one computer or stream content from up to five additional
32. computers right to your TV without any wires.***
33. Pricing and availability
34. Apple TV is standard delivered with a wireless remote, Apple Remote and will be
35. available in stores in the United States starting from this week and from next week in



-
36. Belgium via the online Apple Store – <http://www.apple.com/belgiumflstore>, and from
 37. Apple Authorized Resellers for a suggested retail price of 299 euro, including VAT.
 38. Apple TV requires iTunes 7.1 or later running on a Mac with Mac OS X version 10.3.9 or
 39. later, or a Windows PC with Windows XP Home/Professional (SP2).
 40. In addition, an 802.11b/g/n wireless network using AirPort, AirPort Extreme or
 41. 10/100 Base-T Ethernet networking is required. Internet access is required and a
 42. broadband connection is recommended. Apple TV requires an enhanced definition or
 43. high-definition widescreen TV. iPod games will not play on Apple TV. The iTunes store
 44. is available in the US and select countries, including Belgium. TV shows and movies are
 45. only available in the US; The availability of videos varies in each country.
 46. *Video playback based on 640x480 iTunes video content. Music capacity based on four
 47. minutes per song and 128-Kbps AAC encoding. Photo capacity based on Apple TV
 48. viewable photos transferred from iTunes. Actual capacity varies by content.
 49. **Compatible with 802.11b/g/n. Based on an IEEE 802.11n draft specification.
 50. ***Wireless video streaming requires an 802.11g/n network.
 51. Apple ignited the personal computer revolution in the 1970s with the Apple II and
 52. reinvented the personal computer in the 1980s with the Macintosh. Today, Apple
 53. continues to lead the industry in innovation with its award-winning computers, OS X
 54. operating system and iLife and professional applications. Apple is also spearheading the
 55. digital media revolution with its iPod portable music and video players and iTunes online
 56. store, and will enter the mobile phone market this year with its revolutionary iPhone.
 57. Press Contacts:
 58. Steven Van den Eynde
 59. PR Manager Apple Belux
 60. Direct Phone number: 02/474-42-57
 61. Mobile Phone: 0475/53-34-29
 62. Consumer contact: 02/474-42-11
 63. E-mail: vandeneynde.s@euro.apple.com
 64. and:
 65. Stephanie Schollaert
 66. PR-dienst Apple Belux
 67. Direct Phone number 02/474-43-83
 68. Consumer contact: 02/474-42-11
 69. E-mail: prbelgium@euro.apple.com
 70. For international press releases and high resolution photo's of Apple's products, visit
 71. www.apple.com/pr. You can find the homepage of Apple Belux on www.apple.com/be.
 72. © 2007 Apple Inc. All rights reserved. Apple, the Apple logo, Mac, Mac OS, Macintosh,
 73. Apple TV, iTunes, AirPort, Apple Store, AirPort Extreme and iPod are trademarks of
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