

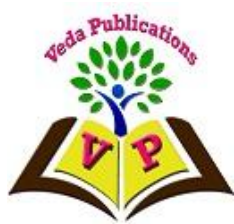
HEADLINES:A CREATIVE TOOL TO ENHANCE THE LANGUAGE SKILLS OF STUDENTS

Dr. Kavita Shastri

(Associate Professor, Dept of English and Media Studies, Vijaya College, Bangalore.)

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ABSTRACT



Printed in large and bold letters, adorning the pages of Newspapers and Magazines, Headlines catch our attention immediately. As we flip through the newspapers in the wee hours of the morning with little time to spare, headlines inform all that is noteworthy and significant in the most precise manner. Busy, tightly packed schedules, leave us little time to read all that the newspapers report, but what keeps us informed and updated are the headlines that pop out everywhere in colours, bright.

It is with this intention that I plan to use Headlines as a creative tool in the under graduate classes. This will not only enhance the English Literature and language skills but will also give them a practical edge of using language in multidimensional ways. This exercise will keep the students abreast with all that is happening across the world. My Paper explores the various ways in which Headlines can be used to make language learning simpler and more effective. A variety of literature and language exercises can be generated using headlines. This would make learning a great experience.

I am putting down a few head lines picked randomly from the Times of India dated 6th February, 2019, from various domains, to experiment with this method of teaching English Literature and English Language. I will number them for convenience sake and to make it comprehensive. The Headlines listed below have been taken for study:

1. **Pope's Historic Outreach**
2. **SC; Hell bent on ruining NRC Process**
3. **Karnataka scraps BBMP's smart parking tender**
4. **Monkey Fever scare affects Malnad Tourism**
5. **Transport Sector hopes for bigger budget slice**
6. **Equal pay: Anganwadi workers call off stir**
7. **Will they, Won't they? Suspense over missing MLA continues**
8. **Patchy start for new channel tariff regime**
9. **What motorists think are the biggest killers on Indian roads**
10. **Colonists brought death, disease and climate change to the Americas**

First and foremost, I would divide the students into groups and then throw it open to the students to deliberate and discuss all the headlines. I made them go through the reports and they learnt to expand all the headlines. The expansion of all the headlines is given below:

1. Pope Francis enters the Zayed Sports City Stadium in Abu Dhabi to celebrate an open-air mass for 1.7 lakh Catholics as a part of his historic trip to the Arabian Peninsula.

This would initiate students to a whole lot of new words, they can be asked to look into the dictionary for words like **Peninsula, Catholic** etc and then asked to use the word "mass"

"Rolling stone gathers no **mass**."

Mass will be held in the St. Peter's Cathedral on Sunday.

Students would be able to learn the usage of the word **mass**.

This would help the students to be aware of the happenings world over and also build an interest to

read further. This exercise will develop a reading habit among students too.

2. The Supreme Court rapped the centre for delaying completion of the National Register of Citizens saying it would "destroy the process".

Exercises related to verbs can be generated – **rapped, delayed, complete, register, destroy, say** etc. Students can also be taught to use words both as a verb as well as a noun e.g. **register, process** etc

Please **register** your name. (as a verb)

I don't find your name in the **register**. (as a noun)

Jaggery is **processed** to form sugar. (as a verb)

Do not destroy the **process**. (as a noun)

Formation of new words like **citizen- citizenship, register- registration, destroy – destruction, supreme – supremacy** etc.

Expansion of abbreviations can also be taken e.g. **SC** – Supreme Court, **NRC** – National register of citizen.

3. The Government has scrapped the smart parking system tender floated by BBMP and ordered the civic body to reissue it, following a directive from the Deputy Chief minister.

Exercises related to Articles can be generated:

The Government, **the** smart parking system, **the** civic body, **a** directive, **the** Deputy Chief Minister so on and so forth.

Orient students to the use of the word **Direct, direction, directive** connect it to **directive** principles of state policy.

Usage of the words: **scrap** as a noun and **scrap** as a verb, **tender** as a noun and **tender** as a verb.

Students can be asked to observe the use of prepositions:

Floated **by**, directive **from**, body **to**.

A few random words can be given and asked to substitute. E.g. use the following words: accepted, issue, chief minister, the town council instead of government, scrapped, reissue, deputy chief minister.

Use plural words and change accordingly e.g. The **Governments** have scrapped the smart parking system **tenders** floated by BBMP and ordered the civic **bodies** to reissue it, following **directives** from the Deputy Chief **ministers**.

4. The picturesque tracts of Western Ghats in Shivamogga and Uttara Kannada districts have suddenly become a no-go zone thanks to the spiralling cases of Kyasanuru Forest disease or Monkey Fever.

Students can be asked to come up with the names of all the districts of Karnataka and also with the names of different mountain ranges.

Adjectives and adverbs can be introduced e.g. **picturesque** and **suddenly** respectively. and can be asked to come up with some more of them. Hyphenated words can be explained e.g. **no-go accident-prone, sugar-free, bad-tempered** etc

There can be a discussion on the cause and effect of this deadly disease

5. The Transport sector is expecting a good deal in the state budget on February 8. The areas which need focus are strengthening the public transport system, Rs 500-Rs 1000 crore direct subsidy for BMTC so that it can slash fares and expand its fleet, aid for timely completion of Namma Metro's Phase II project and preparation of a detailed project report on phase III.

Students can be asked to list down the verbs and convert it to nouns and vice versa:

Expect- expectation, preparation -prepare, expand – expansion, complete- completion

Collective nouns can be introduced **-fleet** many more examples can be given e.g. **bunch of roses, crowd of people, pride of sheep, flock of sheep, posse of policeman, band of singers** etc. Students can be asked to come up with some more examples.

The above given report can be used as a comprehension passage and a few questions can be set too.

- a. **Which sector is referred in the report given above?**
- b. **When was the state budget presented?**
- c. **Which are the areas which need strengthening?**
- d. **Who is expected to receive the subsidy?**
- e. **What does the direct subsidy intend to do?**
- f. **Substitute the word slash with a synonymous word.**

6. About 3000 anganwadi workers from various parts of the state who had been protesting at Freedom Park since Monday called off the stir on Tuesday after getting an assurance from minister for women and child development and differently abled and senior citizens.

Students can be briefed about the usage of the word **"differently abled"** instead of blind, lame, physically handicapped, mentally handicapped, deaf, dumb etc.

A short movie can be shown or a poem can be read in the class to create sensitivity about the needs of the differently abled and the senior citizens.

There can be a debate on the word **freedom** what it means and should it be curtailed or not.

Students can also be told about the role and contribution of anganwadi and similar such organisations.

Phrasal verbs can be introduced here **-put on, put off, call on, calloff** (mentioned in the headline) etc. Exercises can be generated too.

7. The suspense on whether "missing" rebel Congress MLA's would attend the legislature session beginning Wednesday continued, even as the party issued a three-line whip to all its legislators to be "compulsorily" present. All MLA's is requested to kindly remain present in the House daily from February 6 to February 15 without fail and support the party's stand in all matters including the passing of the budget.

The expansion of the Headline **"Will they, won't they?"** Suspense over missing MLA's continues "can be used to discuss question tags – can 'they, can I, may I, am I etc Students can be given some pointers like -Positive sentences negative tags and negative sentences positive tags.

Students often err in the use of capital and small letters. they can be shown when and where capital can be use e.g. capitals for abbreviations **-MLA, capitals for the first letter of a month or day** Wednesday and F in February. H in House but why? This kind of correction and clarification will truly help the students.

Certain terms like **'whip', 'House'** can be explained.

8. The eighth headline can be expanded as follows: The new broadcast tariff regime has got off to a poor start with low migration across DTH and cable

platforms, and initial estimates suggesting an adoption rate of under 10%.

Students can be explained what **migration** means in this context and what migration could mean in another context. The headline reads as patchy start which is substituted with the word poor start in the report. The word regime can also be used in several contexts. The word **platform** also has several meanings and how over time words have new meanings. An example of Platform ¾ in the Harry Potter series can be referred too. Students can be asked to use the word '**regiment**' in different ways as a noun and as a verb.

9. The ninth headline can be used to create an awareness in students on safe driving. It can be expanded as follows:

Nearly one-sixth of drivers feel drunk driving is the main reason for road accidents, according to a recent survey conducted among drivers across 15 states. One-fourth of the respondents also admitted that they had fallen asleep behind the wheel while driving.

A graphical representation is furnished along with the report which can be used. Graph interpretation can be done which will aid students to understand and comprehend information. A few questions can be asked orally too. A short movie on drunken driving can be played.

10. The last headline is on colonialists and can be expanded as:

When they arrived in the Americas centuries ago, European colonialists brought pestilence and death. Their arrival was so devastating, in fact that it may have contributed to a period of global cooling, according to a new study.

The entire article can be read in the class and discussed too. Students can be asked to look for the difficult words in the dictionary. Historical and geographical perspectives to colonialism can be given. A few literary pieces related to the colonial trauma can be read too.

I conducted this experiment in my IV BCA class and made a lot of observations which I would share in my presentation. The use of headlines in the degree classroom helped me in many ways to hone the literary and language skills of the students and

also create an awareness of the day to day happenings in the classroom. It was indeed an innovative method to use newspaper which is so readily available and comes so handy to good use. The options that headlines offer to teach are illimitable and we must all use it in our classrooms to make our teaching more effective. The text is just a pretext to enter the class in and I am sure the newspaper can become the new text in the classroom.