



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Syntactic Analysis of Environmental Headlines in English Online Newspapers in Vietnam

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Received: Nov 16, 2024	The study of syntactic analysis of newspaper headlines is essential because it reveals how linguistic structures are strategically employed to convey information concisely, capture reader attention, influence interpretation, and shape public discourse, thereby enhancing the understanding of media communication and its impact on society. There is no information on the syntactic analysis of environmental headlines in English online newspapers in Vietnam. The study surveyed 125 environmental headlines in five English online newspapers in Vietnam, focusing on syntactic analysis, including sentence structures, patterns, and finding the design trends of environmental headlines. Environmental headlines are one of the primary elements that guide and influence the public in selecting and receiving information, promoting environmental awareness, and affecting changes in public behavior. Based on Tree Diagram and Syntax theories, the study explored that most environmental headlines were designed as simple sentences, with minimal occurrence of compound, complex sentences, and noun phrases. The survey results showed that the majority of environmental headlines were created using SVO, SVC, and SVOA patterns in simple sentences. Consequently, the study affirmed the grammatical methods of writing environmental headlines for English online newspapers in Vietnam, aiming for concise and easily understandable headlines to directly address environmental issues and attract the public from the initial encounter with the journalistic work.
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INTRODUCTION

Newspaper headlines have been regarded as one of the major research topics that interest many people today. Part of the value of an article's first link technique lies in how the article's title is created. Research indicates that exposure to news media significantly increases public engagement in social discussions (Boulianne & Theocharis, 2020). This suggests that newspapers can effectively set the national agenda by highlighting specific issues in headlines. On the other hand, headlines directly impact the public's selection and access to articles, increasing the interaction between articles on a given topic to the public's interest. Newspaper headlines are phrases or sentences containing essential content in the article's information. Each category has a different heading. The more creative and attractive the headline, the more the public will be attracted and the more frequency and number of people will reach the article.

The syntactic analysis of English newspaper headlines is essential to understanding the language of

communication. Expressed in the form of headlines, press agencies use specific syntactic structures to serve the purpose of grabbing the reader's attention while effectively conveying the main idea in the journalistic work. The syntax of English newspaper headlines is analyzed, and a specific form of language is given to arouse signals in the target readers who are reported and considered the main news items (Hodge, 2018). Through the headings, which include distinct grammatical structures, readers can access the columns thanks to this method of opening communication. Furthermore, the imperative of certain words in how English newspaper headlines are placed helps to convey a sense of urgency, creating an added value to the whole of this information and its image for the reader. Syntactic analysis in newspaper headlines reveals critical insights into how language structures influence reader engagement and perception.

Environmental headlines in newspapers play a crucial role in shaping public perception and understanding of environmental issues. Media framing often influences the representation of ecological risks and events, which can prioritize sensationalism over comprehensive reporting. This can lead to overestimating immediate threats while downplaying chronic issues (Swain, 2022). Since 2022, when emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic, Vietnam has focused more on other news content, including environmental issues. Currently, the environment is of great concern due to natural disasters such as storms, floods, and droughts, which appear more frequently with dense frequency in Vietnam. On the other hand, the Vietnamese government is planning to decide to treat zero emissions, that is, to minimize to the maximum the extent of equipment and production that have a direct impact on the environment, development orientation, and balance of the national ecological environment. Therefore, parsing online environmental discourse in English online newspapers (ENOs) in Vietnam further proves that language is vital in guiding views and attitudes and understanding ecological events (Hajer & Versteeg, 2005).

Objectives

This study aimed to provide insight into how environmental issues are framed and expressed in Vietnam by investigating grammatical structures and syntactic patterns used in environmental journalistic works. Previous studies have emphasized the role of language in shaping environmental narratives (Ingram et al., 2019; Arnold, 2018). This study continued to contribute to this body of knowledge, focusing on English online newspapers in Vietnam.

To achieve the primary goal of parsing environmental headlines in English online newspapers in Vietnam, the study designed research questions towards this goal:

Research question 1: How is the structure and pattern of sentences expressed in the environmental headline in the English online newspaper in Vietnam?

Research question 2: What is the trend of writing environmental headlines in English online newspapers in Vietnam?

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for the study "Syntactic Analysis of Environmental Headlines in English Online Newspapers in Vietnam" is designed to systematically explore the syntactic structures employed in environmental headlines, focusing on their effectiveness in engaging a diverse readership. This framework is anchored in the understanding that headlines serve as critical gateways to information, particularly in environmental issues that demand urgent public attention (Gunter, 2000). The study aims to uncover the linguistic strategies that facilitate effective communication by analyzing the syntactic patterns in these headlines.



Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

At the core of this research is the objective to identify and categorize the syntactic structures utilized in environmental headlines. This involves thoroughly examining sentence types from simple to complex constructions—and the frequency of various syntactic forms. By employing a combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies, the study will quantify the prevalence of specific structures and assess their impact on reader engagement (Reppen & Simpson-Vlach, 2019). The theoretical underpinnings of this analysis draw from generative grammar and discourse analysis, which provide insights into the rules governing sentence formation and the contextual functions of language in media communication (Gee, 2014). This aspect is crucial, as effective communication in environmental journalism hinges on conveying complex issues that resonate with a broad audience (McCombs & Shaw, 2023).

The anticipated outcomes of this research include identifying prevalent syntactic patterns and formulating practical recommendations for journalists. By highlighting effective strategies for headline construction, the study aims to enhance the quality of environmental reporting in Vietnam, ultimately fostering greater public awareness and engagement with pressing environmental challenges. This research contributes to the broader field of applied linguistics and environmental communication, offering valuable insights into how language shapes public discourse and influences perceptions of environmental issues (Fairclough, 2013).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Research of Newspaper Headline

Researchers have long been fascinated by the syntactic patterns in English newspaper headlines, recognizing their role in shaping how news is consumed and interpreted. For instance, Ungerer (2000) delved into the complications of media language, emphasizing the critical need to understand the syntactic structures of newspaper headlines for effective communication. Bucaria (2004) took a slightly different approach, focusing on lexical and syntactic ambiguity in headlines, particularly as a source of humor. This underscored the importance of how carefully constructed syntax can influence the tone and interpretation of a headline.

The global impact of English headline syntax is also evident. Andersen & Hofland (2012) examined the influence of English import words on Norwegian newspapers, highlighting how English syntactic patterns have permeated other linguistic contexts. One of the more unusual aspects of headline writing is explored by Moncomble (2018), who analyzes the “deviant” syntax of headlines. The research highlighted how unconventional syntax serves a pragmatic purpose, attracting the reader’s attention and breaking traditional linguistic norms. This work emphasized the role of syntactic peculiarities in crafting impactful headlines.

Scholars have explored headlines in various contexts, such as Arabic and English press, Filipino university publications, and Soviet/post-Soviet media. These studies consistently noted two primary structural forms: clausal and phrasal headlines. The Subject-Verb-Object (SVO) structure dominated, as Gamboa & Cayabyab (2023) highlighted, but how these structures were used can differ widely depending on the historical or cultural context. Headlines serve multiple roles that provide essential information, capture the reader’s attention, and sometimes deliberately provoke curiosity through ambiguity. The words and phrases chosen for headlines can significantly influence how readers

perceive the news, and this effect has been studied in depth. Moreover, similar headline structures were seen across various periods, but their purposes may shift.

In conclusion, the body of research surrounding the syntax of English newspaper headlines highlights the complexity and importance of understanding these unique textual forms. From ambiguity and humor to the influence of digital media, syntactic analysis plays a crucial role in deciphering how headlines communicate meaning and impact readers across different linguistic and cultural contexts.

Research of Syntactic Analysis

The analysis of syntax plays a vital role in deciphering sentence structures, especially when it comes to the concise, attention-grabbing world of newspaper headlines. In their early work, Kuno & Oettinger (1963) proposed an innovative approach to grammar that aimed to simplify and clarify sentence structure analysis. Their method suggested a tree-like format, making syntactic structures more intuitive and easier to interpret. By emphasizing multiple-path predictive analysis, their work contributed to a deeper theoretical understanding of the mechanics behind English syntax.

Moving into the realm of language textbooks, Laverne (1977) explored the contrasts between English and French sentence structures. The study demonstrated how textbook sentences in French align with their English counterparts, stressing the importance of mastering syntactic differences for effective language learning. This analysis sheds light on the broader “language situation” underlining the need for a comprehensive grasp of sentence structures when learning a second language. A specialized domain of syntax emerges in Hiltunen’s (1984) analysis of legal English. The author noted that while much attention has been paid to vocabulary in legal registers, syntax has often been overlooked. This research underscored the need for a detailed examination of sentence structures specific to legal contexts, contributing to a more nuanced understanding of how legal language operates on a syntactic level.

On the other hand, Gorrell (1998) explored the relationship between syntax and cognitive processing. His study examined how the brain processes and reanalyzes sentence structures in real-time, focusing on the principle of economy in representation. Gorrell’s work highlighted how efficiently humans parse and process syntactic information, offering valuable insights into the cognitive mechanisms behind language comprehension.

In conclusion, research on syntactic analysis across various fields, from theoretical models and language learning to specialized registers like legal English, continues to deepen our understanding of sentence structures and their role in communication. These studies demonstrate that syntax not only shapes the clarity and effectiveness of language but also influences how language is processed and understood. As new insights emerge, syntactic analysis will undoubtedly remain a key area of inquiry for linguists and educators alike.

Research of Transformational Grammar

Transformational grammar is a key approach in studying linguistic theory that has been extensively researched for its capacity to represent human language’s uniqueness and structure accurately. This theory has been the topic of many studies and much controversy. It was first proposed by Noam Chomsky in the 1950s and has been subject to many modifications and refinements by other linguists since then. The goal of Chomsky’s early transformational grammar was to offer a more straightforward and informative grammar that would generate all the sentences of English and only those. However, it was found that no finite-state Markov process could serve as an English grammar, leading to the development of more complex models (Chomsky, 1956).

As transformational grammar continued to evolve, linguists like Langacker et al. (1972) and Jackendoff (1972) began to explore the relationship between syntax and semantics. Jackendoff’s work on semantic interpretation in generative grammar emphasized the importance of studying the

contribution of semantics to syntactic patterns in English. This research was conducted within the framework of an interpretive theory, which sought to provide interpretations for syntactic structures. Peters and Ritchie (1973) played a pivotal role in illustrating the strength of transformational grammars, demonstrating that they can generate recursively enumerable strings. Their work underscored the system's versatility and the potential for high-level complexity, revealing important links between grammatical transformations and the complexity of languages. Additionally, Bornstein (1977) bridged transformational grammar with traditional and structural grammar, using simplified language to make the theory accessible to students. Bornstein aimed to demystify the concept by avoiding technical jargon, making it easier for students to understand and engage with.

Despite the advancements in transformational grammar, some linguists, such as Hudson, argued for alternative approaches. Hudson (1977) combined the required information within a single framework, as opposed to the multiple frameworks employed in transformational grammar, with what he described as a “daughter-dependency theory”. This alternative approach aimed to address some of the limitations of transformational grammar and provide a more comprehensive framework for linguistic analysis. The study of transformational grammar also had implications for language acquisition and learnability.

The study of transformational grammar has been a central focus in linguistics for decades. From its inception by Chomsky to its various applications and refinements by other linguists, transformational grammar has significantly shaped our understanding of language structure and syntax. While alternative approaches have been proposed, the transformational grammar theory remains a fundamental linguistic analysis and research framework.

METHODOLOGY

This study was qualitative research. Qualitative research aims to collect, analyze, and explain content related to description and language rather than numerical data, as in quantitative research (Strijker et al., 2020). This qualitative study was conducted to describe and analyze aspects of syntactic analysis in the structure of headlines about the environment in EONs in Vietnam. Therefore, the research team serves as the primary tool in qualitative research.

Data Collection

The materials in this study were selected from 05 English online newspapers (EONs) in Vietnam from January 2023 to December 2023. The study collected a total of 125 headlines. The author employed purposive sampling to collect suitable headlines, which assisted in obtaining data that complied with the established standards (Campbell et al., 2020). The study filtered and selected survey samples based on the following criteria: (1) Samples belonging to the “Environment” category in the two EONs; (2) The headline of the sample directly relates to the environment in 2023.

The English online newspapers selected for the survey include VnExpress International Newspaper, Vietnamplus+ Newspaper, Dantri Newspaper, Vietnamnews Newspaper, and Nhan Dan Newspaper. These EONs were chosen for the following reasons: (1) These are newspapers with an English online newspaper version; (2) These are newspapers under the management of the Ministry of Information and Communications and the Ministry of Labor, Invalids and Social Affairs, the leading agencies of Vietnam in charge of online information management and press management. This helps the research collect high-quality environmental journalistic works; (3) These newspapers have environmental columns instead of sharing the same column as “News” in other newspapers.

Table 1. Information about selected English online newspapers in the research survey

Source	Link	Press-manage- rial agency	Field
VnExpress International Newspaper	https://e.vnexpress.net/news/news/environment	Vietnam Ministry of Information and Communication	Environment
Vietnamplus + Newspaper	https://en.vietnamplus.vn/environment/	Vietnam Ministry of Information and Communication	Environment
Dantri Newspaper	https://dtinews.dantri.com.vn/environment.htm	Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs	Environment
Vietnamnews Newspaper	https://vietnamnews.vn/environment	Vietnam Ministry of Information and Communication	Environment
Nhan Dan Newspaper	https://en.nhandan.vn/environment/	Communist Party of Vietnam	Environment

Data Analysis

Syntactic analysis has been employed to investigate sentence structures and patterns to aid in data analysis. The study used syntax theory, as known by Morley (2000) and Burton-Roberts (2016), to explore and analyze four types of sentence structures. As a result, the study observed 125 selected environmental headlines on four themes, including Simple sentence - Complex sentence - Compound sentence - Compound-Complex sentence.

The research used the theory of Nelson & Greenbaum (2018) on the syntax of English sentences to represent the 07 categories of sentence syntax, encoded into seven patterns, including:

Pattern 1: Subject + Verb	(SV)
Pattern 2: Subject + Verb + Complement	(SVC)
Pattern 3: Subject + Verb + Object	(SVO)
Pattern 4: Subject + Verb + Adverbial	(SVA)
Pattern 5: Subject + Verb + Object + Complement	(SVOC)
Pattern 6: Subject + Verb + Object + Object	(SVOO)
Pattern 7: Subject + Verb + Object + Adverbial	(SVOA)

After collecting and classifying the sentence structures of selected environmental headlines, the

syntactic analysis of the sentences was conducted based on Bornstein's (1984) Tree Diagram theory to represent "Transformational Grammar". According to this theory, a sentence is a basic unit that represents syntax, illustrated by tree diagrams to demonstrate the hierarchical structure of the sentence based on the relationship between phrases. From there, the syntactic scopes represented in the tree diagrams of phrase structures include (1) Linear ordering of word types in the sentence - (2) Grouping words into independent clusters that represent syntax within each syntactic domain - (3) The hierarchical structure of the analyzed syntactic domains in (2).

RESULTS

This section conducted a specific statistical study on the names of 125 environmental headlines. The author analyzed the sentence structure and syntax of each sentence in five English online newspapers. The results showed that the proportion and number of headlines analyzed are uneven. Specifically, most environmental headlines in English online newspapers in Vietnam were simple sentences, and a few were complex and compound sentences. There was no occurrence of the complex-compound sentence in this survey. Moreover, there were still titles that were noun phrases, which were not grammatically complete enough to form sentences (Figure 2).



Figure 2. The percentages of sentence structures from environmental headlines in selected English online newspapers.

Based on the survey results, the sentence structure and pattern analysis of 125 environmental headlines from selected EONs was conducted to evaluate the most frequently used sentence structures. Additionally, common sentence patterns used for these sentence structures were identified in the study (Figure 3). The results showed that simple sentences were the most commonly used structure for creating environmental headlines ($n=115$). The number of environmental headlines in complex and compound sentences was four ($n=4$) and one sentence ($n=1$), respectively. Thus, the total number of headlines designed correctly with the English sentence structure is 120 because there are 05 headlines designed as noun phrases. Therefore, the distribution ratio of the number of sentence structures on both single, compound and complex sentences ($n=120$) was shown as follows: sentence pattern 1 (SV) (accounting for 0,8%), sentence pattern 2 (SVC) (accounting for 19,2%), sentence pattern 3 (SVO) (accounting for 42,5%), sentence pattern 4 (SVA) (accounting for

10%), sentence pattern 5 (SVOC) (accounting for 5%), sentence pattern 6 (SVOO) (accounting for 1,7%) and sentence pattern 7 (SVOA) (accounting for 20,8%).

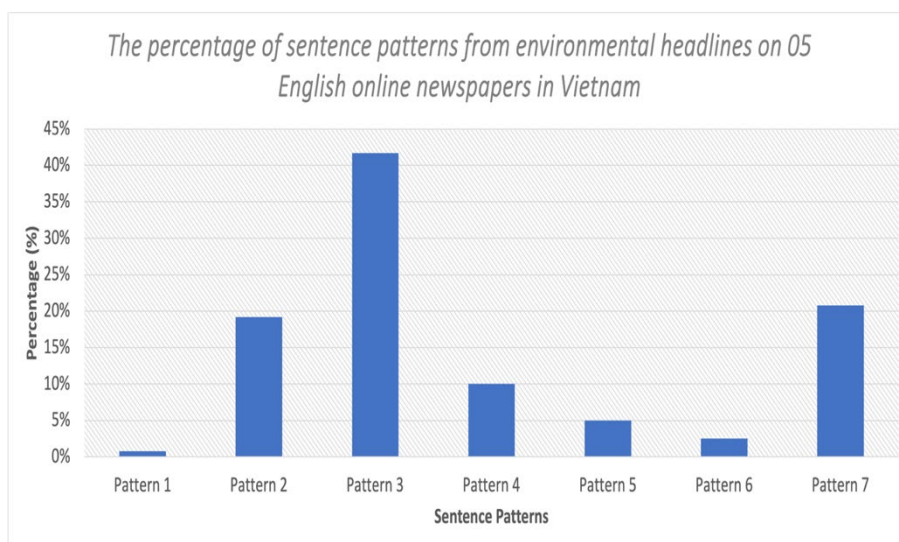


Figure 3. The percentage of sentence patterns from environmental headlines on 05 English online newspapers in Vietnam

According to the analysis, the number of environmental headlines designed according to pattern 3 accounted for more than 40% of the samples collected. This sentence pattern is the most significant when counting sentence patterns in simple and complex sentences. The number of pattern two and pattern 7 is equal in the range of simple sentence headlines. In contrast, pattern one and pattern six account for a small number, with one headline and two headlines, respectively, of which only occur for simple sentences. A complex sentence is mainly designed according to patterns 3 and 7 (Table 2).

Table 2. The data of sentence structures and sentence patterns in surveyed environmental headlines

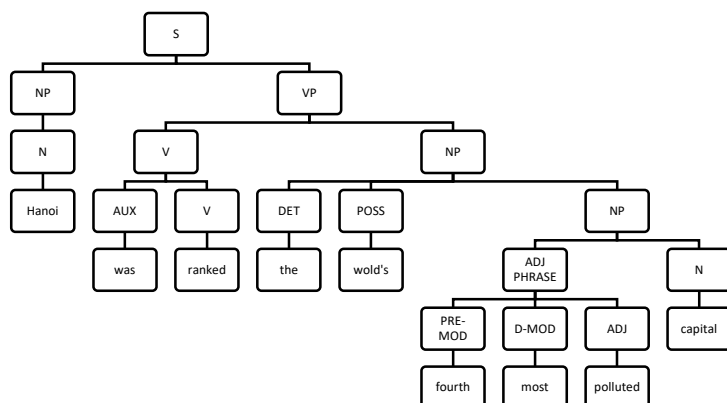
Sentence patterns	Simple sentence		Complex sentence		Compound sentence	
	Headlines	Percentage	Headlines	Percentage	Headlines	Percentage
Pattern 1	1	0,9%	-	-	-	-
Pattern 2	23	20%	-	-	-	-
Pattern 3	48	41,8	2	50%	1	100%
Pattern 4	12	10,4%	-	-	-	-
Pattern 5	6	5,2%	-	-	-	-
Pattern 6	2	1,7%	-	-	-	-
Pattern 7	23	20%	2	50%	-	-
Total	115	100%	4	100%	1	100%

Simple Sentence

According to the statistics in Table 2, 115 samples were sentences (accounting for 92%). The author selected 04 typical samples of simple sentences from the total samples to describe and analyze the syntactic domains.

No. 57: Hanoi was ranked world's fourth most polluted capital

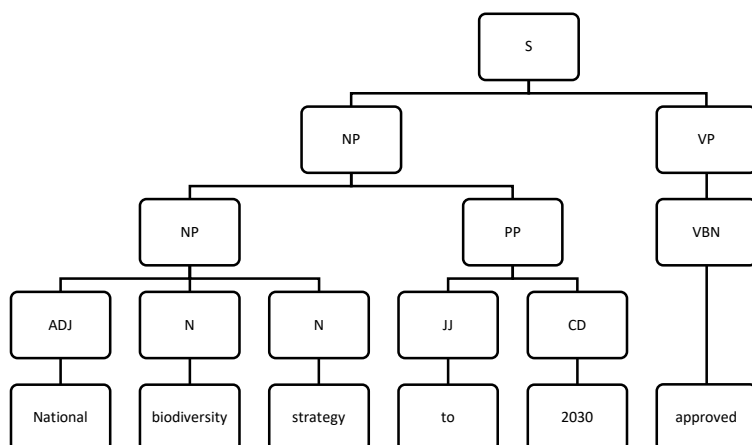
Sentence structure	Simple sentence
Sentence pattern	Subject + Verb + Complement (SVC)

**Figure 4. Tree Diagram of Simple Sentence in Pattern 2 (SVC)**

A simple sentence is a typical sentence structure in English grammar. It consists of an independent clause, which means it can stand alone as a complete sentence (Helmie et al., 2022). Structurally, the sentence follows the SVC pattern with “Hanoi” as the subject, “was ranked” as the verb in the passive voice, and “the world's fourth most polluted capital” as the complement, providing information about the subject’s rank and pollution status. In Bornstein’s Tree Diagram theory, the sentence can be broken down into hierarchical grammatical components. The subject “Hanoi” is a noun phrase, followed by the verb phrase “was ranked”, which consists of an auxiliary verb (AUX) “was” and a main verb (“ranked”). The complement “the world's fourth most polluted capital” is a complex noun phrase containing a determiner (DET) “the”, a possessive determiner (POSS) “world's”, a pre-modifier (PRE-MOD) “fourth”, an adjective phrase (ADJ) “most polluted”, and the head noun “capital”. This hierarchical structure, as outlined in Bornstein’s theory, visually represents how each element of the sentence functions within the overall syntax, showing how the subject and verb are linked to the complement.

No.20: National biodiversity strategy to 2030 approved

Sentence structure	Simple sentence
Sentence pattern	Subject + Verb (SV)

**Figure 5. Tree Diagram of Simple Sentence in Pattern 1 (SV)**

The author examined the Tree diagram of the sentence “National biodiversity strategy to 2030

approved” in Figure 5. The grammatical structure of this sentence can be broken down as follows: “National biodiversity strategy to 2030” is the subject, a complex noun phrase consisting of a head noun “strategy” modified by the adjectives “National” and “biodiversity,” along with the prepositional phrase “to 2030,” which specifies the time frame for the strategy. “Approved” is the main verb in the past participle form, indicating that the action of approval has been completed, though the agent of the action is not explicitly mentioned. Therefore, this sentence follows a condensed structure, with an implied subject performing the action and a noun phrase functioning as the core subject, which is modified by an adverbial prepositional phrase indicating a period.

No.43: Hydropower dams ease above dead storage level after rains

Sentence structure	Simple sentence
Sentence pattern	Subject + Verb + Adverbial (SVA)

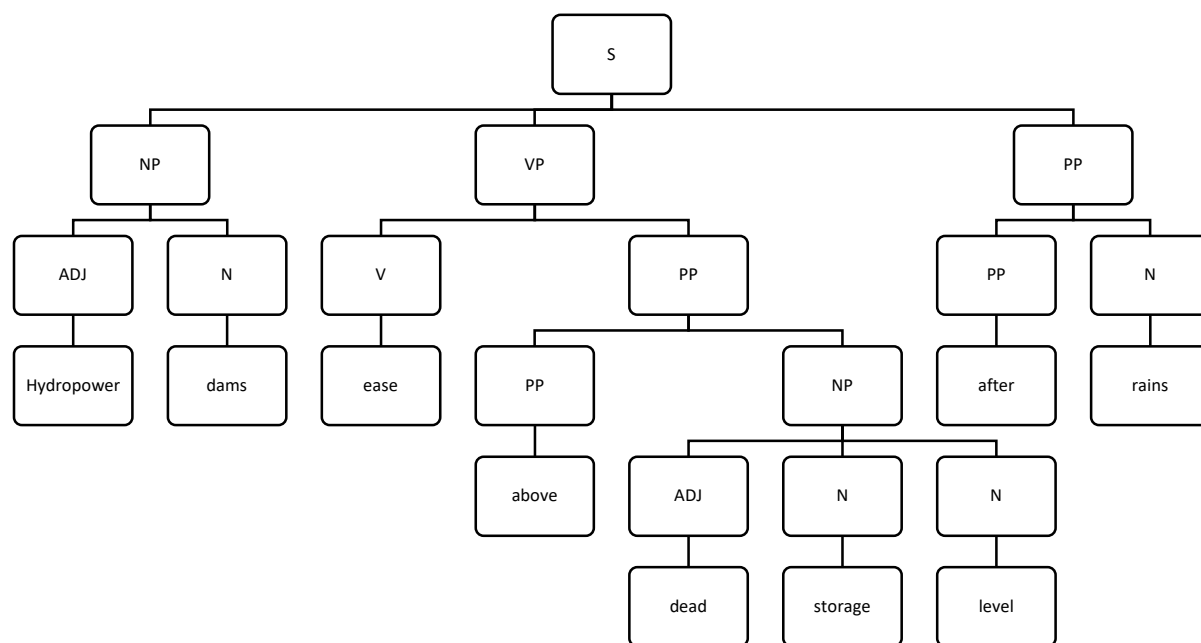


Figure 6. Tree Diagram of Simple Sentence in Pattern 4 (SVA)

The author analyzed the Tree diagram of sentence number 43 with the Subject – Verb - Adverbial (SVA) pattern, as illustrated in Figure 5. This is a simple sentence with one subject, the noun phrase “Hydropower dams”, the main verb “ease,” and the remaining content “above dead storage level” and “after rain” as prepositional phrases complementing the verb. The main verb is a simple tense indicating the action performed by the subject. The prepositional phrase “above dead storage level” provides information about the phenomenon encountered by the hydropower dams. In this phrase, “above” is a preposition, and “dead storage level” is the second noun phrase in the sentence. The prepositional phrase “after rains” provides temporal information about when the phenomenon occurs, constructed by the preposition “after” and the noun denoting the rain events. From the above analysis, this sentence is considered a simple sentence with a complete subject as a noun phrase, a main verb, and prepositional phrases that clarify the phenomenon and its timing.

No.13: Ninh Thuan preserves biodiversity with ecotourism

Sentence structure	Simple sentence
Sentence pattern	Subject + Verb + Object + Complement (SVOC)

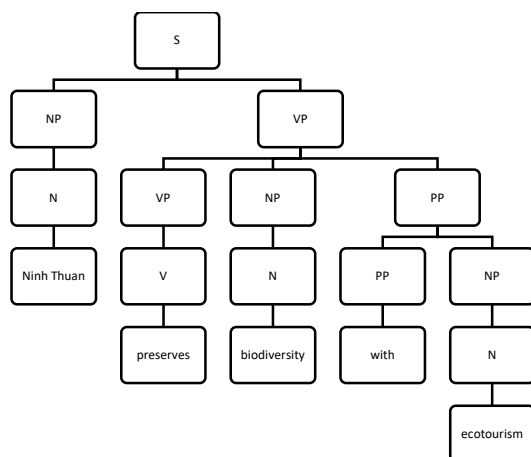


Figure 7. Tree Diagram of Simple Sentence in Pattern 5 (SVOC)

According to Bornstein's Tree Diagram theory (1984), the author conducted the tree diagram of the sentence “Ninh Thuan preserves biodiversity with ecotourism”. The grammatical structure of this sentence is understood as follows: “Ninh Thuan” is the subject, a noun phrase consisting of a proper noun denoting a locality. “Preserves” is a verb in the simple present tense, indicating the subject’s action. The object “biodiversity” is the head noun, representing what the action “preserves” affects. Subsequently, the prepositional phrase “with ecotourism” modifies the verb “preserves” by specifying the means of acting. In this phrase, “with” is a preposition, and “ecotourism” is the head noun, referring to the field of activity related to biodiversity conservation. Therefore, this sentence has a simple structure with an independent clause comprising a subject as a noun phrase, a main verb, an object as a noun, and a prepositional phrase to clarify the conservation method.

Complex Sentence

There were 04 samples marked as complex sentences (accounting for 3,2%). The author selected 01 typical sample of complex sentences from the total samples to describe and analyze the syntactic domains.

No. 26: Hanoi temperature drops to 7 degrees as cold snap intensifies

Sentence structure	Complex sentence
Sentence pattern	Subject + Verb + Object + Adverbial (SVOA)

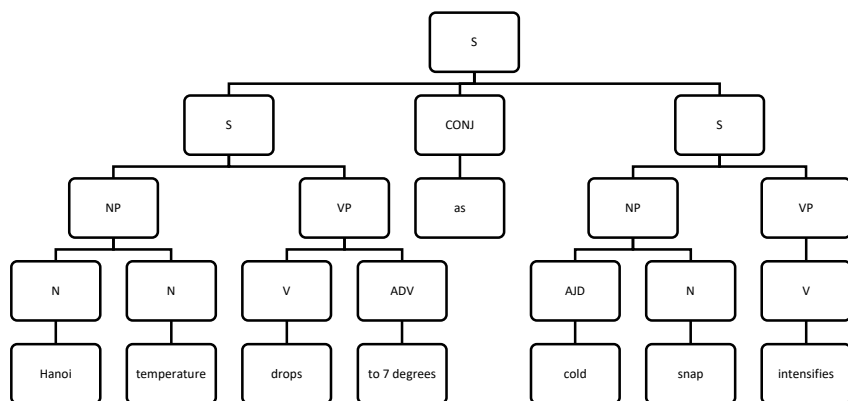


Figure 8. Tree Diagram of Complex Sentence in Pattern 7 (SVOA)

The following sentence structure in English grammar is a complex sentence. A complex sentence consists of an independent and dependent clause connected by a subordinating conjunction to form a complete sentence (Gordon & Lowder, 2012). “Hanoi temperature drops to 7 degrees as cold snap intensifies” is a complex sentence composed of one independent clause and one dependent clause. In the independent clause: “Hanoi temperature” functions as the subject. The word “Hanoi” acts as an adjective, indicating the location, while “temperature” is the head noun. The verb “drops” is in the present simple tense and functions as the main action of the sentence. The phrase “to 7 degrees” serves as an adverbial complement, explaining the degree to which the temperature drops. This forms a complete SVOA (Subject – Verb – Object – Adverbial) pattern, where the adverbial modifies the verb by providing information about the extent of the drop. The dependent clause: “as cold snap intensifies” is introduced by the subordinating conjunction “as” which explains the cause or reason for the temperature drop. In this clause, “cold snap” is the subject, a noun phrase that indicates the phenomenon causing the drop in temperature. The verb “intensifies” is in the present simple tense and functions as the predicate, describing the action of the cold snap becoming stronger. This sentence is analyzed as a complex sentence, where the main clause “Hanoi temperature drops to 7 degrees” provides the primary information, and the subordinate clause “as cold snap intensifies” adds a causal explanation for the temperature change. The tree diagram clearly shows the hierarchical relationship between the primary and dependent clauses, highlighting the use of multiple subjects, verbs, and adverbial elements to convey the extent and cause of the temperature drop in Hanoi.

Compound Sentence

There were 01 sample marked as the compound sentence (accounting for 0,8%). The author selected 01 typical samples of the compound sentence to describe and analyze the syntactic domains.

No. 80: Bee keeping brings income and raises nature protection responsibility

Sentence structure	Compound sentence
Sentence pattern	Subject + Verb + Object (SVO)

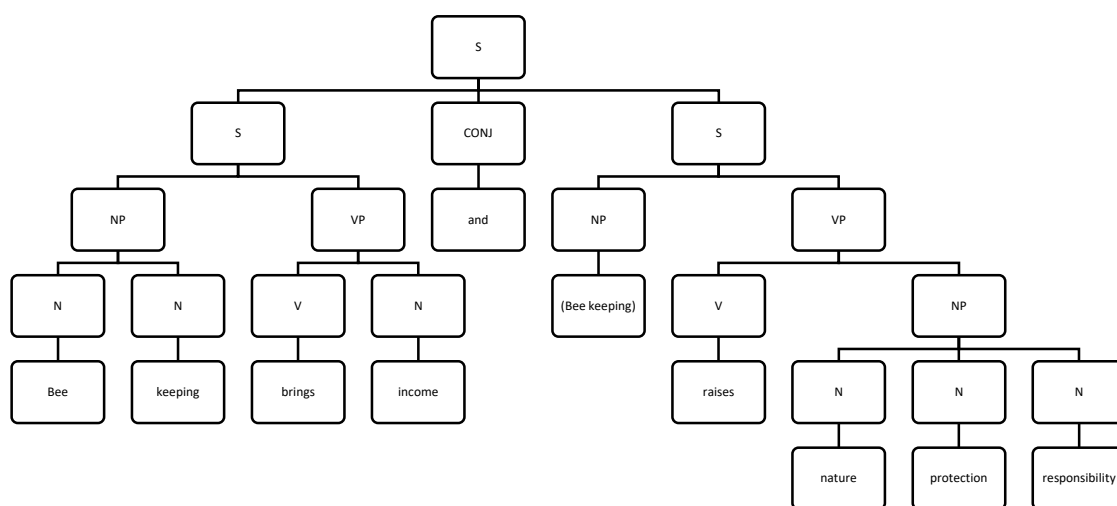


Figure 9. Tree Diagram of Compound Sentence in Pattern 3 (SVO)

Using Bornstein's Tree Diagram theory, the sentence comprises two coordinated clauses with shared subjects, joined by the coordinating conjunction “and”. In the first independent clause: “Bee keeping

brings income,” the subject is “Bee keeping” which is a noun phrase. “Bee” is a noun that functions as an adjective to modify “keeping” the head noun. The verb “brings” is in the present simple tense, indicating an action. The object of the verb is “income,” a noun that acts as the direct object. The Subject – Verb – Object structure in this clause forms a clear SVO pattern. The second independent clause: “(Bee keeping) raises nature protection responsibility” shares the same subject “Bee keeping” which is implied from the first clause and not repeated. The verb “raises” is also in the present simple tense, functioning as the predicate. The object is “nature protection responsibility” a noun phrase where “responsibility” is the head noun, and “nature protection” serves as a compound noun modifier specifying the type of responsibility. This clause also follows an SVO pattern. The two clauses are coordinated by “and” which connects the actions of bringing income and raising responsibility. Both clauses maintain similar structures, with their subjects, verbs, and objects aligned. Thus, the sentence is analyzed as a compound structure composed of two independent clauses with a shared subject, each containing a verb phrase and an object.

DISCUSSION

The syntactic analysis of environmental headlines in English online newspapers in Vietnam reveals the complexity of linguistic structures concerning environmental issues. This analysis is crucial as it highlights the linguistic features employed and reflects the broader socio-political context in which these headlines operate. Firstly, the syntactic structure of the headlines often employs concise and impactful language to capture the readers’s attention. Research indicates that online newspaper headlines frequently utilize simple sentences with SVC, SVO, and SVOA patterns in almost simple sentences at a high frequency to enhance their emotional impact and effectively engage readers. This aligns with findings from studies in other contexts, such as political headlines in American newspapers, which exhibit similar linguistic strategies to maximize public engagement (Hadidi et al., 2022). When complex issues like climate change, pollution, and natural disasters are often discussed in environmental reporting, using a simple structure helps avoid confusion. For example, headlines like “Hanoi temperature drops to 7 degrees” or “El Nino causes drought” immediately inform the reader of the critical subject, action, and consequence without unnecessary complexity. Besides, environmental issues are dynamic, involving processes like pollution, deforestation, or extreme weather. By placing the verb (the action) at the core of the sentence, this pattern highlights what is happening and how it affects the subject.

However, research on syntactic complexity in newspaper headlines across different countries and languages reveals several key findings. The SVO pattern is suitable for conveying straightforward actions but can oversimplify more nuanced environmental issues. Complex issues often require explanations of causes, processes, or consequences, which may not fit neatly into an SVO pattern. For instance, a headline like “Climate change causes coral bleaching” simplifies a multifaceted environmental problem that might need more context or explanation, such as “As ocean temperatures rise, coral reefs face widespread bleaching”. Relying solely on SVO may restrict the depth of information conveyed in headlines.

Moreover, online newspaper editorials from non-native English sources can exhibit higher syntactic complexity, while native English sources may show greater subordination (Indarti, 2018). Online news headlines tend to be longer than their print counterparts, employing simple sentence structures with present simple tense and utilizing short words, stylistic devices, and various lexical features like abbreviations and foreign words (Wannakan, 2022). These findings highlight the importance of addressing syntactic issues in headline writing across different linguistic contexts. Furthermore, the syntactic analysis of these headlines can reveal underlying ideologies and biases present in media discourse. For instance, the choice of words and sentence structures can indicate a newspaper’s editorial stance, subtly guiding the public’s perceptions of environmental issues (Arshad & Khan, 2021). This aspect is critical in a rapidly developing country like Vietnam, where

media representation can significantly influence public opinion and policy-making related to environmental sustainability.

In Vietnamese, English online newspapers often target expatriates, international organizations, or tourists. The syntactical choices in headlines might be tailored to align with Western media conventions or simplify complex environmental topics for non-native speakers. Comparing these structures and patterns with international environmental headlines can highlight unique cultural approaches to discussing environmental issues. These strategies may be particularly pertinent in disseminating environmental information to the foreign public segment. By understanding the impact of different syntactical constructions on reader engagement, media outlets can strategically frame environmental issues to maximize awareness and promote a sense of urgency. For example, headlines emphasizing the immediacy of environmental crises could contribute to heightened public pressure on policymakers to act. This is critical for fostering a more informed and environmentally conscious public.

In summary, a syntactic analysis of environmental headlines in English online newspapers in Vietnam underscores the importance of linguistic features and thematic framing in shaping public discourse on environmental issues. The SVO pattern is widely used in environmental headlines in English-language Vietnamese newspapers because it promotes clarity, action, and brevity, essential for effective headline writing. However, overusing this pattern may limit the headlines' variety, depth, and engagement. To maintain reader interest and accurately reflect the complexity of environmental issues, newspapers should balance SVO with more varied sentence structures that allow for greater nuance and explanation. From this study, researchers can better understand how environmental narratives are constructed and disseminated, ultimately influencing public perception and action. In addition, journalists can do better in creating environmental headlines in English online newspapers of various press agencies based on the survey results of this study. The recommendations in the study come directly from the trend of environmental headlines of 05 prominent newspapers in Vietnam, which are recognized as the newspapers that attract the most significant number of the public. This is also a meaningful lesson for Vietnamese journalists and press agencies on their journey to improve the quality of English online newspapers in the environment.

SUGGESTIONS

To improve the creative quality of environmental headlines in English online newspapers in Vietnam, journalists need to enhance their sentence structure and diversify their sentence patterns. This approach enriches the language used in headlines and ensures that the complexity and urgency of environmental issues are effectively communicated to the audience.

Firstly, it is necessary to diversify the sentence patterns in the title because, according to the current survey, simple sentences and SVO patterns are the most used in English online newspapers in Vietnam. There are many topics related to the environment, including natural ecosystems, animals and plants, soil, water, air environment with pollution issues, adaptation and climate change, school owners, and policies of the Vietnamese government related to the environment, etc. Therefore, it is crucial to diversify sentence structures to fully express the meaning of journalistic works. For instance, compound and complex sentences can help convey relationships between ideas, such as cause and effect or contrast. Additionally, employing rhetorical devices such as questions, exclamations, or even imperative forms can create a sense of urgency and engagement. By diversifying sentence patterns, journalists can craft headlines that inform and provoke thought and encourage readers to delve deeper into the content. For instance, instead of a straightforward "Vietnam Faces Air Pollution" a more engaging version could be "As Vietnam Faces Rising Air Pollution, Experts Warn of Health Risks", which not only informs but also hints at the consequences of the issue. Additionally, using rhetorical questions like "Can Vietnam Reverse the Tide of Climate Change?" can provoke thought and curiosity, inviting readers to seek answers within the article.

Secondly, environmental topics often involve technical jargon that alienates or confuses the general public. While it is essential for journalists to maintain professionalism and accuracy, they must also prioritize accessibility in their language. The primary audience for English online newspapers in Vietnam includes foreigners, many of whom may not be familiar with specific environmental terminology. Therefore, journalists should use familiar and accessible language that resonates with a broader audience. This can be achieved by replacing technical terms with simpler synonyms or providing brief explanations within the headline. For example, instead of using “biodiversity loss”, a headline could say “decline in plant and animal life”. This approach makes the headlines more relatable and ensures that critical information is communicated effectively, fostering a better understanding of environmental issues among the public.

Thirdly, given the increasing complexity of environmental problems in Vietnam and globally, it is crucial for headlines to emphasize the urgency of these issues. The rising pollution rates and alarming environmental indicators necessitate headlines that capture attention and provoke action. Journalists should focus on using strong, impactful verbs that convey urgency and importance. For example, transforming a passive construction like “Pollution Levels Are Rising in Vietnam” into “Vietnam Battles Soaring Pollution Levels” creates a sense of active struggle against a pressing issue, prompting readers to engage with the content. Choosing connotative verbs, such as “combat” instead of “address”, can evoke a stronger emotional response, as seen in the headline “Vietnam Combats Plastic Pollution Crisis”, which implies a serious and ongoing effort. Highlighting the consequences of environmental issues with verbs can also enhance urgency; for instance, “Rising Sea Levels Threaten Coastal Communities in Vietnam” emphasizes the potential impact on people's lives. Furthermore, incorporating urgent calls to action, such as “Act Now: Protect Vietnam’s Endangered Species from Extinction!” can mobilize public interest and engagement. By using dynamic language, journalists can attract public attention and motivate readers to take an interest in the issues being reported. This can lead to increased readership and, ultimately, a more informed public willing to engage with environmental challenges.

Improving the creative quality of environmental headlines in English online newspapers in Vietnam requires a multifaceted approach. By diversifying sentence patterns, avoiding excessive jargon, and emphasizing urgency through strong verbs, journalists can enhance the effectiveness of their headlines. This will enrich the journalistic discourse surrounding environmental issues and foster a more engaged and informed public, ultimately contributing to greater awareness and action regarding environmental challenges in Vietnam and beyond.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, analyzing sentence patterns and structures in environmental headlines from English online newspapers in Vietnam reveals the effective use of concise language and specific grammatical constructs to attract the reader’s attention. Using Bornstein’s (1984) Tree Diagram theory, the study found that most environmental headlines in English online newspapers were constructed using simple sentences, with SVO, SVC, and SVOA patterns accounting for the majority. The advantage of this sentence structure and syntax is that it uses one independent clause, which can stand alone as a complete sentence. This helps make the message and central theme that journalists want to convey in the headlines clear, concise, and easy to understand. Using forward-looking deictic expressions in headlines can create a sense of immediacy and relevance, prompting readers to engage more actively. The headlines sometimes use complex sentences to convey urgent environmental issues clearly and impactfully. The study also pointed out the limitations of the creative trend of environmental headlines in English online newspapers in Vietnam. In particular, headlines that use repetitive simple sentences quickly feel familiar. Therefore, a number of proposals have been made to orient the method of writing headlines for journalists in Vietnam, such as diversifying sentence structures to properly and fully express the meaning of the issue being presented, Limit in-depth scientific terms

about the environment to avoid causing ambiguity and confusion to the public; Emphasizing environmental issues using important verbs to engage the public, impact changes their perceptions and attitudes about the environment and helps them to take positive action. The research contributes to the broader field of linguistics, particularly in syntax and media discourse analysis. It may reveal how language structures are manipulated for persuasive purposes, contributing to the understanding of syntax in applied contexts like journalism.

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