

The Tendency of Omitting Articles in Live News Ticker: A Comparative Case Study of BBC News Headlines (Analysis of 2025 and 2010 Trends)

This study explores the practice of omitting articles *the*, *an*, and *a* in live news tickers in order to enhance brevity and impact of presented information. In an era marked by rapid information consumption, TV news headlines are crafted to capture viewers' attention swiftly. When articles are removed, headlines become more concise, allowing for a sharper and more immediate delivery of essential information. This research offers an example-based analysis of the practice of omitting articles in headlines, with a specific focus on the BBC News. To anticipate the future trajectory of news headline presentation, this study examines trends in headline construction applied by the BBC News in live news tickers in 2010 and 2025. The findings suggest that while the omission of articles has historically been a feature of headline construction, its prevalence was lower in the past. Overall, this research contributes to the understanding of headline optimisation strategies in broadcast journalism. The insights garnered have implications for media practitioners aiming to balance succinctness with effective communication, ensuring that news remains accessible without compromising on precision or depth. Furthermore, the analysis sheds light on how linguistic economy shapes public perception of news. The study also considers the potential impact of such omissions on non-native speakers and language learners. These findings may influence future approaches to headline writing in multilingual and international broadcasting contexts.

Keywords: article omission, TV news headlines, news ticker, BBC News

Die Tendenz zum Weglassen von Artikeln in Live-Nachrichten-Tickern: Eine vergleichende Fallstudie zu Schlagzeilen der BBC News (Analyse der Trends der Jahre 2025 und 2010)

Diese Studie untersucht die Praxis, die Artikel wie *the*, *an* und *a* in Live-Nachrichtentickern wegzulassen, um die Kürze und Wirkung der präsentierten Informationen zu verbessern. In einer Zeit, die von schnellem Informationskonsum geprägt ist, werden Fernsehschlagzeilen so gestaltet, dass sie die Aufmerksamkeit der Zuschauer schnell fesseln. Durch das Weglassen von Artikeln werden Schlagzeilen prägnanter und ermöglichen eine präzisere und unmittelbare Vermittlung wesentlicher Informationen. Diese Studie bietet eine beispielbasierte Analyse der Praxis des Weglassens von Artikeln in Schlagzeilen, mit besonderem Fokus auf BBC News. Um die zukünftige Entwicklung der Schlagzeilenpräsentation zu antizipieren, untersucht diese Studie Trends in der Schlagzeilenkonstruktion von BBC News in Live-Nachrichtentickern in den Jahren 2010 und 2025. Die Ergebnisse deuten darauf hin, dass das Weglassen von Artikeln zwar historisch ein Merkmal der Schlagzeilenkonstruktion war, seine Verbreitung in der Vergangenheit jedoch geringer war. Insgesamt trägt diese Forschung zum Verständnis von Strategien zur Schlagzeilenoptimierung im Rundfunkjournalismus bei. Die gewonnenen Erkenntnisse haben Auswirkungen auf Medienschaffende, die ein Gleichgewicht zwischen Prägnanz und effektiver Kommunikation anstreben und sicherstellen möchten, dass Nachrichten zugänglich bleiben, ohne Kompromisse bei Präzision oder Tiefe einzugehen. Darüber hinaus beleuchtet

die Analyse, wie sprachliche Ökonomie die öffentliche Wahrnehmung von Nachrichten beeinflusst. Die Studie berücksichtigt auch die möglichen Auswirkungen solcher Auslassungen auf Nicht-Muttersprachler und Sprachlernende. Diese Erkenntnisse könnten zukünftige Ansätze zur Gestaltung von Schlagzeilen im mehrsprachigen und internationalen Rundfunk beeinflussen.

Schlüsselwörter: Artikelauslassung, Schlagzeilen der Fernsehnachrichten, Newsticker, BBC News

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1. Introduction

Journalistic headlines, particularly in broadcast and print media, follow a distinct linguistic register shaped by the need for brevity, clarity, and immediacy. As Allan (2004: 100) points out, a headline serves to frame the ideological perspective through which the content is to be understood. As the role and setting of headlines have shifted over time, so has their structure. The focus is on plain, accessible language that helps the audience grasp the key message quickly (Kolodzy 2006: 196, Ward 2002: 128–129). Headlines constitute a distinct element of news discourse, characterised by a range of stylistic, syntactic, and lexical features that distinguish them from standard written language. Therefore, the lexical properties of headlines often include semantic ambiguity, wordplay, emotive language, and the frequent use of short, impactful words (Reah 1998: 13, Rafferty 2008: 231).

From a syntactic perspective, numerous recurrent patterns can be noted (Reah 1998: 32). These include the use of active voice, the present tense, the omission of grammatical words (such as articles and auxiliaries), and the employment of nominalisations. Headlines also often exhibit class shift and a general tendency toward compressed syntax, which enhances their brevity and impact while simultaneously demanding more interpretative effort from the reader.

One of the most notable features is the systematic omission of function words such as articles (*a, an, the*), auxiliary verbs, and sometimes even prepositions, a practice known as „headlines“. Journalistic standardisation operates at the level of discourse: professionally produced news texts adhere to a relatively rigid framework that dictates the selection and organisation of information, resulting in a recognizable and consistent news style (Cotter 2010: 189–201). This compressed presentation style is not only a space-saving strategy but a practice rooted in the tradition of newswriting. The BBC, like other major broadcasters, keep to set editorial guidelines that encourage concise language, favouring clarity and neutrality while avoiding ambiguity and exaggeration (BBC Editorial Guidelines: 2020). In tickers¹, where these constraints are even more im-

¹ A news ticker is a continuously updated display of brief headlines or news summaries, typically presented in a scrolling format on broadcast and online news platforms.

perative than in print, article omission becomes a standard rather than an exemption. As Crystal (2003: 186–190) notes, the compressed style of headlines often sacrifices grammatical completeness for semantic efficiency, relying on shared pragmatic context to fill in omitted elements. This linguistic norm reflects broader editorial strategies aimed at maximising clarity especially in fast-paced broadcast environments like live news tickers. These linguistic reductions are understood by readers/viewers through contextual inference, highlighting the assumed shared knowledge between news producers and consumers (viewers). Such customs, while effective in native contexts, pose interpretive challenges for language learners and those unfamiliar with the stylistic economy of news discourse. Understanding these norms is essential for evaluating not only the mechanics of article omission but also its broader implications for media literacy and language acquisition.

The aim of this study is to examine diachronic changes in the linguistic form of BBC News ticker headlines by comparing selected examples from 2010 and 2025, with particular attention to processes of linguistic economy and article omission. The analysis adopts an exploratory qualitative perspective and seeks to illustrate emerging tendencies rather than to provide statistically generalisable results.

2. The BBC News Ticker – the background

The roots of the RSS format² date back to the 1990s. Once the Web had proved its undeniable potential and had shifted from its research and academic roots to use by the general public, many organisations and institutions began to explore ways in which they could expand the services they offered. One of the first innovations in that respect was provided by the BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) in a form of a tickertape display „a news ticker“ (an electronic display of news headlines that runs along the bottom of a television or other screen). The ticker has always carried breaking news. „This approach proved very popular. It became clear that many users valued this type of interface and the push approach it provided [...] However the BBC’s approach was proprietary, making use of an internal file format developed by the BBC and their own desktop application. There was a need for an open format which could be used to provide access to news feeds“ (Kelly 2005).

A permanent live news ticker, showing headlines at the bottom of the screen, was introduced by the BBC in 2006. The design of the ticker was slightly altered with the 2007 graphics redesign; it turned red to indicate breaking news. In 2009, another feature was added to allow a viewer „click“ and quick access to a particular video, news

² RSS (Really Simple Syndication) is a web feed format, an XML-based document that allows users and applications to access updates to websites in a standardised, computer-readable format enabling the syndication of web content. An RSS document (called „feed“, „web feed“, or „channel“) includes full or summarised text, and metadata, like publishing date and author’s name. RSS formats are specified using a generic XML file.

or a story. As stated by the BBC editor Steve Herrmann: „We’re making a change soon to the News website front page ,ticker‘ of latest news headlines. We’ve redesigned it to give more prominence to breaking news – as well as to latest headlines and to upcoming scheduled news events. You’ll be able to stop or replay the ticker items and click straight through to video, as well as to stories“ (Herrmann: 2009).

The content of news tickers is composed by a human author, typically a producer or assistant producer, rather than being generated by artificial intelligence. The proof of which was visible on 26 May 2022, when BBC News issued an official apology after the ticker message appeared on the News Channel reading „Manchester United are rubbish“. „Later in the morning, presenter Annita McVeigh apologised to any Manchester United fans who may have been offended. She said the mistake had occurred as a trainee was learning how to operate the ticker and was writing random things“.³ However, a comparison of news ticker content from 2010 and 2025, presented further on, reveals notable differences, highlighting the stylistic and structural changes that have occurred over the course of the decade in the ticker-based news reporting.

3. The Role of News Ticker Language in Language Acquisition

The language used in news tickers, while highly effective in conveying urgent information quickly, represents a genre-specific communicative format that may present certain challenges for second-language learners. For many non-native speakers, particularly students of EFL (English as a Foreign Language), exposure to English-language news content forms part of their informal language learning process. It is important to note that the BBC has developed specially dedicated educational resources aimed at supporting English language instruction. These materials include both written texts and video content, carefully curated to aid learners in practicing accurate pronunciation and improving overall communicative competence. Designed specifically for classroom use, such resources are pedagogically sound, pre-vetted, and tailored to meet the needs of students learning English as a second language (for example, BBC Learning English: for teachers⁴). Their structured format enables educators to integrate authentic language input into the curriculum effectively, thereby fostering linguistic development in a controlled, supportive environment. „The BBC has partnered with British Council in developing some of its websites for teachers. The BBC’s Learning English website, has a section specifically for teachers. This contains a number of downloadable resources including teaching guides for an online soap opera, lesson plans connected to talks and audio news reports, multiple choice quizzes and a radio series on Innovations in teaching which includes a programme on CLIL“.⁵ However, it is also a common practice

³ BBC News. <https://www.bbc.com/news/av/uk-61572267>, date of access: 6.4.2025.

⁴ BBC Learning English: for teachers. https://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/teachingenglish/plans/witn_archive.shtml, date of access: 28.6.2025.

⁵ British Council: BBC. <https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/bbc>, date of access: 28.6.2025.

for educators, particularly at the secondary school level, to encourage students to stay informed about current affairs alongside their language learning. This stems from the fact that oral examinations in English (secondary school leaving examination 'matura') often include topics related to contemporary socio-political and economic issues, such as unemployment, environmental protection, or public health concerns. As a result, teachers frequently incorporate authentic, un-vetted source materials – most notably BBC News broadcasts – into their instruction. These sources are readily accessible and provide students with exposure to real-world language usage, allowing them to engage with up-to-date content that reflects the complexity and nuance of modern English discourse. Therefore, English teachers often assign watching BBC News as homework tasks. Students are required to watch these clips, and summarise them verbally in the classroom later on.

In order to perform this task well, students frequently watch the clips multiple times and often rely on memorizing the ticker headlines (due to their concise form) in whole, treating them as grammatically sound examples of English. However, the stylistic conventions of headline writing, especially the omission of articles and auxiliary verbs, can result in learners adopting incorrect grammatical structures. As Krashen (2004: 3) posits in his Input Hypothesis, learners acquire language best when they are exposed to comprehensible input slightly above their current level ($i+1$). However, the compressed syntax typical of ticker headlines may present interpretative challenges for second-language learners who are not yet familiar with register-specific conventions. Moreover, BBC News, as a globally recognised news outlet, carries a degree of cultural authority that extends beyond the Anglo-sphere. In many non-native English-speaking contexts, it is perceived not only as a reliable source of information but also as a model of „proper“ English. This perception may create difficulties in educational settings, when learners encounter stylistic conventions in ticker discourse that differ from the grammatical norms typically taught in the classroom.

4. Editorial Practices and the Evolution of Journalistic Style

Journalistic writing, particularly headline and ticker composition, has undergone significant transformation in the digital age. Traditional print journalism emphasised clarity and grammatical correctness, often following editorial guides. With the rise of online journalism and the need to capture audience attention within seconds, brevity has become paramount, resulting in headline structures that favour condensed syntax and high information density, features that are particularly relevant to the linguistic patterns analysed in this study.

BBC editorial practices reflect this evolution. While the organisation maintains internal guidelines to ensure clarity and accuracy, it also adapts to the realities of digital consumption. Tickers must be readable across various devices, from smartphones to television screens, which constrains the available space for textual content.

Consequently, articles, auxiliary verbs, and sometimes even subjects are omitted to create space-efficient headlines. This practice, while functional, contributes to a broader trend in journalism where speed and clarity often override linguistic precision.

The recent shift toward algorithmically-improved content has further amplified this tendency. Headlines are now created not only for human readers but also for search engines and social media platforms. As a result, the stylistic norms continue to evolve, revealing a tension between journalistic tradition and digital requirements. This raises important questions for educators, firstly: to what extent should such portrayed forms influence pedagogical norms? And secondly, how can learners be taught to successfully navigate through this constantly evolving linguistic environment?

5. A case study into the omission of articles

Headlines are a vital component of news language, designed to summarise key points of any news item or an article and capture the reader's interest. Due to various constraints, primarily limited space, headlines must be concise and memorable. As a result, certain linguistic elements – most notably articles (such as *a*, *an*, and *the*) and auxiliary verbs (such as *is*, *are*, *has*, and *have*) – are frequently omitted in headline writing. As stated above, this practice serves to enhance brevity and impact, aligning with the spatial and cognitive constraints of headline formats. The omission not only contributes to the compact nature of headlines but also reflects a stylistic convention that prioritises immediacy and reader engagement over full grammatical structure.

BBC News ticker content for selected days in 2025

The study adopts an exploratory, qualitative approach grounded in discourse analysis. The empirical material consists of a small, purposefully selected dataset of BBC News ticker headlines drawn from two distinct periods 2010 and 2025. The observed changes may be grouped into several recurring tendencies, including article omission, increased nominal compression, and syntactic simplification. Given the limited scale of the dataset, the findings should be interpreted as indicative rather than definitive, pointing to possible trends in contemporary media discourse. Presented below is the data collected over a seven day period⁶ on the omission of articles by major TV news provider: BBC News. BBC News was selected due to its high recognisability and widespread usage (particularly as a linguistic tool used during English instruction). The consecutive seven days data collection (11–17 March 2025) insured impartial view into the trend of article omission in news delivery practise applied by BBC News. All the news headlines were copied directly from the researched TV News Channel on the given days.

The data gathered is presented in a table for clarity.

⁶ Longer research was not considered keeping the length of this article in mind.

Date	BBC News ticker content ⁷
11.3.2025	<i>US secretary of State has expressed optimism ahead of Saudi talks. Fires still burning and one missing after tanker collision. Global stocks drop over US economic slowdown concerns. UK Prime Minister says benefit system unfair and indefensible. Philippines ex-leader Duterte arrested on ICC warrant over drug killings.</i>
12.3.2025	<i>Trade war escalates as President Trump's metal tariffs take effect. EU to impose counter tariffs on America worth \$28bn. Canada has announced retaliatory levies on US worth \$20 bn. Rodrigo Duterte arrives in Rotterdam and taken into custody. US set to present 30 day ceasefire offer to Russia. Cargo ship captain arrested over collision is Russian national. Former SNP leader Nicola Sturgeon to step down from Holyrood. Doctors say children under eight should avoid drinking slushies.</i>
13.3.2025	<i>Starmer: NHS England to be abolished to 'cut bureaucracy'. Queen sent letter of support to rape victim Gisele Pelicot. Moscow: sending foreign troops to Ukraine 'unacceptable'. US special envoy Steve Witkoff arrives in Moscow for ceasefire talks.</i>
14.3.2025	<i>Marcus Rashford returns as Thomas Tuchel names first England squad. Official figures show the UK economy contracted by 0.1% in January. Putin sets out conditions for Ukraine ceasefire as US proposal in limbo. Putin supports proposal but 'there are questions that we need to discuss'. Zelensky says Putin's response 'manipulative' and calls for sanctions. Passengers evacuate onto wing of burning American Airlines jet. Every UK McDonald's warned of legal action over staff sex abuse. Syria interim leader signs temporary constitution for five-year transition. Total lunar eclipse 'Blood Moon' visible on Friday in western hemisphere.</i>
15.3.2025	<i>US had productive talks with Putin over Ukraine war, Trump says. US government shutdown averted as Senate passes spending bill. South African ambassador 'no longer welcome' in US, Rubio says. Mark Carney sworn in as first new Canadian prime minister in nine years. Sean 'Diddy' Combs pleads not guilty to updated indictment. SpaceX rocket launches as Butch and Suni prepare return.</i>
16.3.2025	<i>Serbia's largest-ever rally sees 325,000 protest government. UK ministers consider dropping plans to freeze PIP disability benefits. SpaceX rocket docks as astronauts prepare return after nine months. 59 people killed in North Macedonia fire. US launches wave of air strikes on Yemen's Houthis. At least 34 dead as tornadoes tear through southern US.</i>
17.3.2025	<i>Navy divers in Thailand search for missing British tourist Alexandra Clarke. David Lammy calls on President Putin to agree to full ceasefire. Sir Keir Starmer faces pressure from MPs over gvt welfare plans. Court of Appeal approves £3bn loan to Thames Water to avoid collapse.</i>

Tab. 1. News headlines presented in the BBC News ticker for a period of seven consecutive days in 2025

BBC News ticker content for selected days in 2010

For 2010, seven days were selected; however, it was difficult to locate seven consecutive days in the BBC News archives. Given the continuous updates to news content throughout the day, retrieving specific news segments by date alone is often unfeasible. Instead, one must search by referencing a significant event, as only major news stories are likely to be archived in a manner that allows retrieval. Once located, the corresponding news segment will typically include the ticker at the bottom of the screen, allowing for further analysis. Therefore, it proved less problematic to scan for 2010 major events presented by the BBC on YouTube, and find the news headlines entered in the ticker. On the downside, it proved challenging to identify seven major news events occurring consecutively on a daily basis. Therefore, in this part of the research seven

⁷ The news headlines were copied exactly as presented in the BBC News ticker.

random days were selected for analyses into article omission. Although the selection of days was limited to the content available on YouTube, the process remained unbiased, as the author of this paper had no influence over which news segments were archived and accessible for analysis.

The data gathered is presented in a table for clarity.

Date	BBC News ticker content
10.9.2010	<i>The three Pakistani cricketers interviewed under caution last Friday over spot fixing allegations intend to leave the UK today and have given an undertaking through their solicitor to return to assist to the Metropolitan Police inquiry in due course.</i> ⁸
12.4.2010	<i>The Government in talks with the Liberal Democrats. Electoral reform and economic policy will be at the core of any deal. The Liberal democrat leader Nick Clegg says it is for the Conservatives as the largest party to prove they can govern in the national interest.</i> ⁹
7.5.2010	<i>Gordon Brown says he has asked civil servants to provide support to parties involved in discussions on forming a government. The UK has a hung parliament. No party can win an overall majority. The Conservatives are the largest party. Predicted vote share: Con 37 % Lab 30 % Lib Dem 23 % oth 10 %. The Conservative leader David Cameron says 'Labour has lost its mandate to govern' and the 'country wants change'. Gordon Brown has told constituents 'It is my duty to make sure there is strong, stable and principled government. The Liberal Democrat leader Nick Clegg said it had been a 'disappointing night' and warned other parties not to rush into 'makings claims or taking decisions'. Business Secretary Lord Mandelson says the public has not given the Conservatives a clear mandate to govern. Shadow School Secretary Michael Gove says Gordon Brown has been 'comprehensively defeated' and the 'next step is for David Cameron to form a Conservative-Lib government'.</i> ¹⁰
11.5.2010	<i>Queen confirms David Cameron is the new British Prime Minister. The appointment follows Gordon Brown's resignation as Prime Minister. MR Brown said it had been 'a privilege to serve' and wished his successor well. Gordon Brown's resignation brings to close 13 years of Labour party rule. Brown: Harriet Harman is acting Labour party leader. Reuters: Conservatives say have recommendations to take back to party colleagues after talks with Lib Dems. Lib Dems negotiator Danny Alexander 'we have completed our discussions in a good atmosphere'.¹¹ David Cameron says he wants to make a 'comprehensive offer' to the Liberal Democrats to work with him in government, saying there are many policy areas where he could give ground to form an open partnership. Mr Cameron says he wants an all-party inquiry on political reform and highlighted a range of policy areas where he could work with Nick Clegg.</i> ¹²
27.2.2010	<i>A massive 8.8 magnitude quake hits central Chile, north-east of the city of Concepcion, killing at least 47 people, local media say. Constitutional judges in Colombia reject a referendum to allow president Alvaro Uribe to stand for a third term in office. Seaworld Orlando's killer whale show is to reopen on Saturday without staff in the water after a whale kills one of the trainers. US forces are to be allowed to use social networking websites following a review by the defence department. Several Cuban dissidents say they will go on hunger strike in protest at the death of a jailed government opponent. Official figures show the US economy grew at an annualised rate of 5.9 % in the last three months of 2009. The UK economy grew by 0.3 % in the final three months of last year, faster than previously thought, figures show. Greece says budget revenues in January exceeded its targets, rare positive news for a country in the midst of a debt crisis.</i> ¹³

⁸ BBC News: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CCFo73w78i0>, date of access: 30.3.2025.

⁹ BBC News: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3isphacjUkM>, date of access: 30.3.2025.

¹⁰ BBC News: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mM00McS9_U8, date of access: 30.3.2025.

¹¹ BBC News: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fOG6jzcoZM>, date of access: 4.4.2025.

¹² BBC News: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B8dkgjMhesU>, date of access: 4.4.2025.

¹³ BBC News: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4DVLPeTNSOw>, date of access: 4.4.2025.

Date	BBC News ticker content
27.7.2010	<i>BP has announced it made record losses of eleven billion pounds over the past three months, Chief executive Tony Hayward will leave the company in October to be replaced by his American deputy Bob Dudley. The death of seven year old Khyra Ishaq, who was starved by her mother and stepfather in Birmingham in 2008, was 'preventable' and followed a series of missed opportunities to save her, a serious case review has found. The former Chief UN Weapons Inspector Hans Blix has told the Chilcot inquiry that some of the intelligence used by the UK to justify the invasion of Iraq in 2003 was 'poor'. The police officer filmed pushing a man to the grounds shortly before he died during the G20 protests in London last year is to face disciplinary proceedings for gross misconduct. The MOD is investigating the death of a soldier from 36 Engineer Regiment, killed in an explosion in Afghanistan's Helmand province yesterday, as a suspected friendly fire incident. Two Schoolboys found guilty of the attempted rape of an eight-year-old girl have lost a challenge against their convictions at the court of appeal.¹⁴</i>
10.4.2010	<i>Tributes have been paid to the Polish President, Lech Kaczynski, who was killed in a plane crash in western Russia. 97 people, including many senior Polish military and government officials, were also killed in the crash. A week of mourning has been declared in Poland following the president's death.¹⁵</i>

Tab. 2. News headlines presented in the BBC News ticker in 2010

6. The analysis of presented data

The above-presented data concerning article omission in the BBC News ticker in the years 2010 and 2025 reveals a number of noteworthy findings. Firstly, although the analysis was based on a relatively small sample (seven days in 2010 and seven days in 2025), a striking observation is the level of detail found in the 2010 news ticker content compared to that of 2025. While fewer headlines related to different topics may have been presented in 2010, the ones selected tended to be more elaborative in nature, providing greater contextual information within each item. In 2010, the BBC News ticker was frequently utilised to present multiple perspectives on the same news item. This approach made the ticker more descriptive, as it elaborated on the initial information, provided extensive detail, and often supplemented the main narrative with additional context. In some instances, the ticker even included interpretative or commentary-like elements, enhancing the depth of the reporting (for example BBC News ticker from 27.2.2010).

The writing style in presented headlines in the BBC News ticker in 2025 is more concise, factual, and segmented, with each sentence or clause delivering a self-contained unit of information and not being elaborated on. Several other stylistic characteristics can be observed such as article omission. Even though more visible in the news ticker content for 2025, many of the sentences in the news ticker for 2010 omit grammatical elements such as articles (*the, a*) and auxiliary verbs, a common feature in headline and ticker writing to maximise brevity. For instance (BBC News ticker of 11.5.2010), *Queen confirms David Cameron is the new British Prime Minister* avoids

¹⁴ BBC News: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mZK2u8QfKWg>, date of access: 4.4.2025.

¹⁵ BBC News: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XcmRJcxVSLk>, date of access: 4.4.2025.

a more expanded form like *The Queen has confirmed that David Cameron is the new British Prime Minister*. The omission of the articles is much more evident in the BBC News ticker content for 2025. In fact, analysing the data presented above for the year 2025 it is clear that the style of composing information for the headlines has significantly changed in the last decade. The telegraphic style of presenting the news is designed for real-time consumption. It assumes a degree of reader familiarity with the context, allowing for the nearly total omission of the articles (42 news items presented in the news ticker between 11.3.2025 – 17.3.2025, *the* used once, *a* and *an* not used; in the news ticker content in the year 2010, seven days analysed – 40 news items presented, *the* used 50 times, *a* used 25 times and *an* used 7 times).

Overall, the writing in the BBC ticker reflects a form of compressed journalism, shaped by spatial and temporal constraints, while aiming to retain clarity, objectivity, and narrative coherence. The 2010 ticker content in BBC News was more informative, the 2025 ticker content is clearer, but at the price of grammatical integrity. This shift in the grammatical construction of BBC News tickers reflects the broader realities of the digital age we live in now. Modern audiences tend to scroll, swipe, and flick through rather than engage in careful reading, and this in turn prompts a demand for immediate clarity and conciseness. Influenced by social media platforms such as Twitter/X, where language is frequently stripped down to its basic components, viewers have become accustomed to „headline-like“ structures. Moreover, the ticker must visually compete with other on-screen elements – such as video feeds, presenters, and station logos – leaving limited space for extended grammatical accuracy and any other additional information (as displayed in examples of news ticker from 2025). Furthermore, as the BBC reaches a global audience, including many non-native speakers, shorter and simplified phrases – often omitting articles – may be easier to process, particularly for viewers with intermediate levels of English proficiency. This deliberate move towards accessibility, while sacrificing grammatical integrity, serves the purpose of real-time communication in a fast-paced, multimedia environment.

6. Conclusions

As digital media evolves, the news ticker remains a recognizable element of televised and online journalism. However, its role and format are undergoing significant transformation. While traditionally used to deliver concise, real-time updates, especially during breaking news, the ticker is now adapting to a media landscape increasingly dominated by on-demand content and interactive platforms.

The increasing omission of articles in media headlines, particularly in fast-paced formats such as the BBC News ticker, may have implications beyond journalism. As audiences are repeatedly exposed to these compressed structures, especially younger viewers or non-native speakers, there is a risk that abbreviated forms may influence how English is used in informal communication. Over time, this could contribute

to a gradual erosion of grammatical norms in casual writing and speech, as brevity and speed are prioritised over accuracy. In educational contexts, especially among learners of English as a foreign language, this trend may blur the distinction between formal and informal register, leading to confusion regarding standard grammatical usage. Thus, while the omission of articles serves a clear stylistic function in headline construction, its normalisation in public discourse raises questions about long-term linguistic influence.

Building on this concern, it is worth noting that in Polish high schools, it has become increasingly common for English teachers to assign students BBC News Shorts to watch as homework tasks. Students are often required to watch news extracts and present their summaries during the following lesson. In preparation, many students re-watch the news items multiple times, relying heavily on the news ticker to extract and memorise key information. As the ticker is often perceived as authoritative and accurate, students may unknowingly memorise headlines that omit articles or contain non-standard grammatical structures. This can lead to a situation where learners internalise grammatically incorrect forms, assuming them to be normative. Consequently, when students present in class, they may reproduce these headline structures exact, unintentionally reinforcing incorrect usage. Over time, repeated exposure and uncritical memorisation of such language patterns may impede students' acquisition of proper article usage, especially among the less advanced learners. This phenomenon raises questions about the unintended pedagogical consequences of using authentic material, in this case – media as a language learning tool at schools.

The simplification of language – through article omission, elliptical structures, and headline-like phrasing – is likely to continue as space and immediacy remain priorities. Yet, with advancements in artificial intelligence, automation, and personalised content delivery, the ticker may become more dynamic, tailored, and potentially interactive. Viewers may be able to engage with ticker content directly, expanding headlines into full stories on second screens or smart devices. The brief research conducted for the purpose of this article shows the magnitude of article omission in a present date news headlines as to a decade ago.

Despite these changes, the news ticker will likely persist as a symbolic and functional tool for immediacy and brevity in journalism. Its future depends on its ability to balance concise reporting with clarity and informational value in a fast-paced media environment. Another decade may result in news headlines incorporating symbols, pictograms, characters, icons and signs.

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