PART ONE

NEWSPAPER LANGUAGE
Humans perpetually juggle words, stringing them together in new and inventive ways. Sometimes they do this by chattering to one another, at other times by writing or signing. Yet, increasingly these days, the characteristics of spoken and written language overlap, particularly in newspapers.

This contribution will first, consider some of the changes that have taken place, particularly in British newspapers over the last few centuries. Second, it will assess the role of newspapers today, both in England and elsewhere. Finally, it will point out that as globalization spreads, the same media styles are spreading worldwide.

Daily Newspapers

Newsbooks, the 17th century forerunners of newspapers, were published every few days, whenever the compilers thought they had accumulated sufficient material (Raymond 1993). The first daily newspaper, the *Daily Courant* began publication in 1702. Throughout most of the 18th century, the press was viewed with suspicion, particularly by politicians. Taxes were levied on newspapers, and the publication of parliamentary debates was prohibited. Consequently, any so-called news contained a high percentage of gossip. Oliver Goldsmith in his satirical fictional correspondence *The citizen of the world* (1762/1970) suggested that so-called ‘news’ came ‘from the oracle of some coffee-house, which oracle has himself gathered them the night before from a beau at a gaming-table, who has pillaged his knowledge from a great man’s porter, who had his information from the great man’s gentleman, who has invented the whole story for his own amusement.’

* The topics dealt with in this article are explored more fully in Aitchison (2007), and this article is a summary of sections of that book.
If two dates are given in the references, the first is that of the original work, the second of a more readily accessible reprint.