

SYNTACTIC EXPRESSIVITY IN CULTURAL REPORTING: INSIGHTS FROM THE AUSTRALIAN MEDIA¹

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Abstract. This article aims to study the use and influence of expressive syntax within a variety of culture-related articles featured in contemporary Australian digital media. Leveraging textual analysis on online articles sourced from prominent Australian newspapers such as *The Sydney Morning Herald*, *Alice Springs News*, *Katherine Times*, and *The New Daily*, the present study provides insights into the frequency and novelty of expressive syntactic elements employed in these publications. Particularly prevalent techniques, such as parenthetical inclusions, interrogative sentences, elliptical, nominative, and parcelled constructions, are thoroughly examined for their expressive potential. The study offers a comprehensive breakdown of these syntactical elements, highlighting key types, delineating their general attributes, and describing the specifics of their implementation in the texts under consideration. It especially highlights the frequent interaction of various expressive syntactic elements within single sentences, proposing that this phenomenon increases the effectiveness of these techniques. Furthermore, the study explores the amplification of expression through the use of specific punctuation marks, including quotation marks, dashes, colons, brackets, semicolons, and ellipses, each undergoing a thorough analysis for potential effect. In summarizing the principal outcomes of the research, the study asserts the significant role of expressive syntactic techniques in crafting engaging and impactful cultural articles in modern Australian media.

Keywords: expressive syntax, Australian media, culture, the English language, syntactic techniques, punctuation marks

A great deal of attention in linguistics these days is paid to the study of the features of expressive syntax. As Y. Vorobyova rightly noted in her article “Expressive Syntax of the English Language: A Systematic Review,” the “study of the expressive function of language relates to the fundamental problems of linguistics

¹ English translation from the Russian text: Korableva E. A. 2023. Ekspressivnyj sintaksis v stat'yah kul'turologicheskoy tematiki v avstralijskikh SMI [Syntactic Expressivity in Cultural Reporting: Insights from the Australian Media]. *Diskurs professional'noj kommunikacii* [Professional Discourse & Communication]. 5(4). P. 27–40. (In Russian). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24833/2687-0126-2023-5-4-27-40>

and allows us to expand theoretical ideas about expressivity as a syntactic category” (Vorobyova 2022: 217). A significant number of papers have been published on this topic, looking deeper into the characteristics of expressive syntactic means and the features of their functioning in various types of texts.

Philologists have always been fascinated with the media’s ability to create effective texts that are capable of grabbing the attention of readers and listeners, informing them, swaying their opinions, evoking in them the emotions the author wishes to evoke, and, in some cases, calling them to responsive actions. And they use the entire arsenal of language tools, including expressive syntax, to accomplish this.

It is generally believed that it is the category of expressiveness that helps attract and retain the reader’s attention, increase the pragmatic potential of a statement, playing a special role in creating a certain emotional effect. At the syntactic level, expressiveness is achieved through the use of various constructions and syntactic figures, a specific rhythm of speech, theme-rheme division, and the creative use of punctuation². Signs of expressive syntax add a layer of emotion to the text, highlight important details, and often imitate colloquial speech with the aim of “involving” the recipient in the discussion and consideration of the information being presented, thus increasing trust in it. This is precisely what the creators of media texts want, and they thus frequently use such techniques. It would be interesting to study the features of the use of expressive syntactic means in media texts of different types and from various sources.

Materials and methods

For this study, we used contemporary media texts on cultural topics, through unselected sampling, from the digital versions of the Australian newspapers *The Sydney Morning Herald*, *The Alice Springs News*, *Katherine Times*, and *The New Daily*. The articles were taken from the “culture” / “celebrity” / “entertainment” sections of these publications and cover such topics as cinema and the film industry (“From *Schindler’s List* to Plane Movie Guy: What Happened to Liam Neeson?”³); ballet (“New Spin on *Swan Lake* Takes Flight”⁴, “Love and Tragedy: Oscar Wilde’s Life Story in a Bold New Ballet”⁵; theatre (“Love Lust Lost”⁶, “Australian Comedy Has a Culture Problem. But

² Korableva E. A. 2008. *Ekspressivnyye sintaksicheskiye sredstva sozdaniya reklamnogo teksta na angliyskom yazyke* [Expressive Syntactic Means for Creating Advertising Texts in English]. Doctoral Dissertation. Tula State Lev Tolstoy Pedagogical University. P. 17. (In Russian)

³ Maddox G. 2023. From *Schindler’s List* to Plane Movie Guy: What Happened to Liam Neeson? *The Sydney Morning Herald*. 23.09.2023. URL: <https://www.smh.com.au/culture/movies/from-schindler-s-list-to-plane-movie-guy-what-happened-to-liam-neeson-20230920-p5e6ai.html> (accessed: 29.10.2023)

⁴ Fuhrmann A., Woodhead C. 2023. New Spin on *Swan Lake* Takes Flight. *The Sydney Morning Herald*. 18.09.2023. URL: <https://www.smh.com.au/culture/live-reviews/this-old-melbourne-picture-house-will-soon-be-gone-until-then-it-s-hosting-an-undersea-odyssey-20230918-p5e5is.html> (accessed: 29.10.2023)

⁵ Bailey N. 2023. Love and Tragedy: Oscar Wilde’s Life Story in a Bold New Ballet. *The Sydney Morning Herald*. 12.09.2023. URL: <https://www.smh.com.au/culture/dance/love-and-tragedy-oscar-wilde-s-life-story-in-a-bold-new-ballet-20230911-p5e3ne.html> (accessed: 29.10.2023)

there are Solutions”⁷, “‘We’ve Learnt His Accent’: Meet the Melbourne Kids Playing Young Elvis”⁸; art (“Gallery Consultation Confusion”⁹, “Picasso Painting Expected to Fetch Millions at Auction”¹⁰); music (“A Fest to Open Wide Your Heart and Soul”¹¹); TV (“Seven Kicks Goals with Ratings, Thanks to Matildas and AFL”¹²; and other related areas.

This significance of this study seems obvious, not only from the point of view of the scope of use of expressive units at the level of syntax, but also from the position of identifying their features in Australian English, which, in our opinion, is given far less attention by Russian linguists than the British and American variants.

Various methods were used in this study, the results of which are presented in this paper, specifically: stylistic and linguistic textual analysis; quantitative analysis; descriptive analytics; and the comparative-contrastive method. In this paper, the authors study the texts of the articles used as the material for this work, identify the expressive syntax used in them, analyse the syntactic units from the point of view of the frequency of use, consider the most commonly occurring units, determine their features, and draw conclusions regarding the role they play in the creation of texts on cultural topics in the Australian media.

Results and Discussions

Our analysis of the material indicates that parenthetical inclusions predominate in the texts we have indicated (in 22% of the sentences in the research material). Parenthetical inclusions, as we know, serve to supplement the information presented, clarify the author’s position, colour a statement with the author’s emotions or attitudes, etc. They can also be used to imitate possible reactions of readers and serve to create a coherent text that best conveys the main idea of the article to recipients.

⁶ Fuhrmann A., Woodhead C. 2023. New Spin on Swan Lake Takes Flight. *The Sydney Morning Herald*. 18.09.2023. URL: <https://www.smh.com.au/culture/live-reviews/this-old-melbourne-picture-house-will-soon-be-gone-until-then-it-s-hosting-an-undersea-odyssey-20230918-p5e5is.html> (accessed: 29.10.2023)

⁷ Story H. 2023. Australian Comedy Has a Culture Problem. But There are Solutions. *The Sydney Morning Herald*. 30.09.2023. URL: <https://www.smh.com.au/culture/comedy/australian-comedy-has-a-culture-problem-but-there-are-solutions-20230926-p5e7nh.html> (accessed: 29.10.2023)

⁸ O'Brien K. 2023. ‘We’ve Learnt His Accent’: Meet the Melbourne Kids Playing Young Elvis. *The Sydney Morning Herald*. 02.10.2023. URL: <https://www.smh.com.au/culture/musicals/we-ve-learnt-his-accent-meet-the-melbourne-kids-playing-young-elvis-20230926-p5e7om.html> (accessed: 29.10.2023)

⁹ Chlanda E. 2023. Gallery Consultation Confusion. *Alice Springs News*. 21.09.2023. URL: <https://alicespringsnews.com.au/2023/09/21/gallery-consultation-confusion/> (accessed: 29.10.2023)

¹⁰ Roberts H. 2023. Picasso Painting Expected to Fetch Millions at Auction. *Katherine Times*. 07.10.2023. URL: <https://www.katherinetimes.com.au/story/8377736/picasso-painting-expected-to-fetch-millions-at-auction/> (accessed: 29.10.2023)

¹¹ Mackay A. G. R. 2021. A Fest to Open Wide Your Heart and Soul. *Alice Springs News*. 05.05.2021. URL: <https://alicespringsnews.com.au/2021/05/05/a-fest-to-open-wide-your-heart-and-soul/> (accessed: 29.10.2023)

¹² Cant A. 2023. Seven Kicks Goals with Ratings, Thanks to Matildas and AFL. *The New Daily*. 09.10.2023. URL: <https://www.thenewdaily.com.au/entertainment/2023/10/09/seven-most-watched-network-matildas> (accessed: 29.10.2023)

The texts studied in this paper contain different types of parenthetical inclusions in terms of the position they occupy in the sentence (at the beginning, middle, or end of an utterance):

- *Additionally, the top five most-watched programs for the year, so far, have all been on Seven*¹³.
- *She ably suggests, too, the animality of the swan*¹⁴.
- *He wasn't, of course*¹⁵.

From the point of view of structure¹⁶, the research material revealed single-word inclusions, word-combination inclusions, and sentence inclusions (parentheses).

- *However, if you listen carefully, you will hear my heart beating*¹⁷.
- *... but any art that was ever created was, at some stage, new*¹⁸.
- *But what's more fascinating than thinking about what he could do with Ballymena's Freedom of the Borough (does it mean an extra garbage collection every week? The right to keep a pet without a licence?) is Neeson's late career specialty*¹⁹.

As we can see from these examples, the insertions are made using various punctuation marks – commas, dashes, and brackets. It should also be noted that there are both short, cliché-encrusted parenthetical inclusions and “occasional,” or connotative, often extended parenthetical inclusions (Ksenzenko 1998: 83).

The second most common expressive syntactic device found in the texts we studies was repetition – “a figure of speech that consists of repeating sounds, words, morphemes, synonyms, or syntactic constructions in conditions of sufficient closeness of the series”²⁰. This expressive syntactic device is used in 6% of the sentences in the research material. The point of repetitions is to highlight important information and focus the reader's attention on it, to fit a large amount of information into a single phrase, sometimes making the text figurative, sometimes bringing it close to colloquial speech. Various types of repetitions can be identified in the research material, most notably lexical repetitions, repetitions of homogenous parts of a sentence, and repetitions of syntactic constructions.

Some examples:

- *But what I do have are a very particular set of skills, skills I have acquired over a very long career. Skills that make me a nightmare for people like you*²¹.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Fuhrmann A., Woodhead C. 2023. New Spin on Swan Lake Takes Flight. *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

¹⁵ Bailey N. 2023. Love and Tragedy: Oscar Wilde's Life Story in a Bold New Ballet. *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

¹⁶ Aleksandrova O. V. 2009. *Problemy ekspressivnogo sintaksisa: Uchebnoe posobie [Problems of Expressive Syntax: A Textbook]*. LIBROKOM. (In Russian)

¹⁷ Mackay A. G. R. 2021. A Fest to Open Wide Your Heart and Soul. *Alice Springs News*.

¹⁸ Bailey N. 2023. Love and Tragedy: Oscar Wilde's Life Story in a Bold New Ballet. *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

¹⁹ Maddox G. 2023. From Schindler's List to Plane Movie Guy: What Happened to Liam Neeson? *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

²⁰ Arnold I. V. 2002. *Stilistika. Sovremenniy angliyskiy yazyk: Uchebnik dlya vuzov [Stylistics. Modern English: A Textbook for Universities]*. Nauka. P. 128. (In Russian)

²¹ Maddox G. 2023. From Schindler's List to Plane Movie Guy: What Happened to Liam Neeson? *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

- *The aptly named 12-year-old Corelli-Tapia started dance classes when he was four and studies tap, ballet, hip hop and contemporary, as well as drama, singing and musical theatre*²².
- *My home is the desert with its wide country, growing tall; and its ancient, ruined castles, the mountains and hills. My country is the desert with its flora and fauna like an ancient Persian rug with its beautiful colours, like a tapestry art. My home is the desert: harsh, hard and unbearable. I am the desert. Some call me the dead heart of Australia. However, if you listen carefully, you will hear my heart beating. Thank you*²³.

The next most common expressive syntactic device in Australian cultural media texts is ellipsis (found in 4.2% of sentences). Elliptical constructions are predictive constructions, “in the speech realization of which the predicativity is completely or partially implicit and/or there are no explicitly expressed units in its composition that are necessary for the realization on the obligatory valence of the units that are present”²⁴. The purpose of ellipses is to make a statement brief and concise, to focus attention on important information, and to imitate real communication with the recipient. Various types of elliptical sentences were found in the material used in this research. Thus, from the point of view of the method of explication, they can be divided into syntagmatically completing a sentence, where the missing word is explicated from the surrounding context (1), and paradigmatically completing a sentence, where the explication of the word or words is possible only on the basis of other similar constructions found in language, but not registered directly in the contextual environment of the elliptical sentence (2) (Barkhudarov 1966: 180):

- 1) *This, perhaps, tells you everything you need to know about the kind of man Wilde was – canny, self-interested, so sure of his genius that he thought himself untouchable. He wasn't, of course*²⁵.
- 2) *Absolutely*²⁶.

From the point of view of missing elements, several different types of elliptical sentences can be identified in the research material: elliptical constructions with a missing subject (1), predicate (2), part of the predicate (3), subject and predicate (4), and subject and part of the predicate (5):

- 1) *Have a say on what's going to be built*²⁷.
- 2) *Big applause from the audience but, sorry, wrong question*²⁸.

²² O'Brien K. 2023. 'We've Learnt His Accent': Meet the Melbourne Kids Playing Young Elvis. *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

²³ Mackay A. G. R. 2021. A Fest to Open Wide Your Heart and Soul. *Alice Springs News*.

²⁴ Koretnikova L. I. 1999. *Ellipticheskiye konstruktii i ih vzaimodejstviye s tekstom: na materiale raznih funktsional'nykh stilej russkogo i anglijskogo jazikov* [Elliptical Constructions and their Interaction with Text: Based on the Material of Different Functional Styles of the Russian and English Languages]. Doctoral Dissertation. Saratov, Russia. (In Russian).

²⁵ Bailey N. 2023. Love and Tragedy: Oscar Wilde's Life Story in a Bold New Ballet. *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

²⁶ Chlanda E. 2023. Gallery Consultation Confusion. *Alice Springs News*.

²⁷ Bailey N. 2023. Love and Tragedy: Oscar Wilde's Life Story in a Bold New Ballet. *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

²⁸ Chlanda E. 2023. Gallery Consultation Confusion. *Alice Springs News*.

- 3) *He wasn't, of course*²⁹.
- 4) *In town*³⁰.
- 5) *Coming soon to a plane near you*³¹.

Having touched upon the subject of elliptical constructions, we cannot ignore nominative sentences, which many researchers believe is a separate group, and which appeared in 1.2% of the sentences in the media texts used for this study. As we know, nominative sentences include one-member sentences where the main member is a noun, a substantivized part of speech³² or a quantitative-nominal combination³³. Nominative constructions bring an additional layer of emotionality to a text, allow the author to express what he or she wants to express in a concise form, and make statements short, vivid, and close to colloquial speech. In terms of structure, the research material contained both common and uncommon nominative sentences:

- *A world of gothic melancholy – but subdued*³⁴.
- *Movies that are perfect for watching on long-haul flights*³⁵.
- *Employment*³⁶.

Expressive devices that occupy an important place in the research material include fronting – “a violation of the usual arrangement (order) of the constituent words and phrases of a sentence, where the ‘rearranged’ element is highlighted and thus attracts attention (acquires a special psychological or stylistic connotation)”³⁷.

The most common cases in the texts we examined involved placing the subordinate clause in the initial position, which is a means of emphasis, “since in a complex sentence the normal order of parts is to have the main clause first”³⁸:

*Because hiring him guarantees a movie will get made, he has been travelling the world shooting them between more ambitious projects by better-known filmmakers*³⁹.

Other types of fronting were found in the cultural texts of Australian media outlets, most notably the promotion of the adverbial modifier and predicative:

- *Also on the bill are Orlando Corelli-Tapia and Luca Dahan*⁴⁰.
- *For a while now, he has dominated an under-appreciated genre: the plane movie*⁴¹.
- *At 71, he is still ruggedly handsome*⁴².

²⁹ Bailey N. 2023. Love and Tragedy: Oscar Wilde's Life Story in a Bold New Ballet. *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

³⁰ Chlanda E. 2023. Gallery Consultation Confusion. *Alice Springs News*.

³¹ Maddox G. 2023. From Schindler's List to Plane Movie Guy: What Happened to Liam Neeson? *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

³² Valgina N. S., Rozental D.E., Fomina M.I. 2002. *Sovremennyy russkiy yazik: Uchebnik [Modern Russian Language: A Textbook]*. Logos. P. 444. (In Russian)

³³ Akhmanova O. S. 2004. *Slovar' lingvisticheskikh terminov [Dictionary of Linguistic Terms]*. Editorial URSS. (In Russian). P. 270.

³⁴ Fuhrmann A., Woodhead C. 2023. New Spin on Swan Lake Takes Flight. *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

³⁵ Maddox G. 2023. From Schindler's List to Plane Movie Guy: What Happened to Liam Neeson? *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

³⁶ Chlanda E. 2023. Gallery Consultation Confusion. *Alice Springs News*.

³⁷ Akhmanova O. S. 2004. *Slovar' lingvisticheskikh terminov [Dictionary of Linguistic Terms]*. Editorial URSS. (In Russian). P. 176.

³⁸ Arnold I. V. 2002. *Stilistika. Sovremenniy angliyskiy yazyk: Uchebnik dlya vuzov [Stylistics. Modern English: A Textbook for Universities]*. Nauka. P. 222. (In Russian)

³⁹ Maddox G. 2023. From Schindler's List to Plane Movie Guy: What Happened to Liam Neeson? *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

⁴⁰ O'Brien K. 2023. 'We've Learnt His Accent': Meet the Melbourne Kids Playing Young Elvis. *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

⁴¹ Maddox G. 2023. From Schindler's List to Plane Movie Guy: What Happened to Liam Neeson? *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

⁴² Ibid.

Inverted word order can be seen in 4% of the sentences we studied, making it one of the most used means of expressiveness in the research material. Obviously, the main purpose of fronting is to highlight significant data, draw attention to pertinent facts, and increase the emotional colouring of the statement.

Interrogative sentences are used in 3% of cases and are an important means of expressive syntax, which makes a certain contribution to the creation of a persuasive text. The purpose of questions is to create the impression of dialogue with the reader, evoke a certain reaction, force the reader to think about what has been proposed or search for an answer in the text, which is another way the author captures the attention of the recipient. In most cases, questions in the material used for this research do not serve a primary function. Rather, they serve secondary functions: they are not aimed at finding information, “but at transmitting information, at conveying a direct message about something” (Vostrikova, Molchanova 2021:128), as we can see in the following sentences:

- *Is this not the final design? According to the official time line, construction will start in April or May next year and “gallery construction complete March 2027”. But this is a “forecast project schedule subject to change”⁴³.*
- *From Schindler’s List to plane movie guy: What happened to Liam Neeson?⁴⁴*
- *Is this a happy ending? Never mind, because the attractions of this revival, restrained as it is, are undeniable⁴⁵.*

There are, however, exceptions where interrogative sentences are used specifically to obtain concrete information, for example, in dialogue units that are published fragments of interviews:

FROM THE AUDIENCE: The present cultural precinct, 40 years old and the result of community pressure to have it built, Desert Mob, the Namatjira collection – what will be happening to them? (Applause.)

BRAY: Working in partnership with the gallery, encouraging visits to art groups in regional centres out bush. Not working in isolation. “It’s not about taking away any art and putting it into the gallery.” It’s another place for Desert Mob to help. “Why can’t we have one Desert Mob at Araluen and one over there. In town.” Desert Mob can be better and bigger.

FROM THE AUDIENCE: What conversation is there between Araluen and the gallery?

BRAY: Sharing expert art staff, exchanging programs, joint up-skilling people. “Both ways. Absolutely”⁴⁶.

⁴³ Chlanda E. 2023. Gallery Consultation Confusion. *Alice Springs News*.

⁴⁴ Maddox G. 2023. From Schindler’s List to Plane Movie Guy: What Happened to Liam Neeson?

⁴⁵ Fuhrmann A., Woodhead C. 2023. New Spin on Swan Lake Takes Flight. *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

⁴⁶ Chlanda E. 2023. Gallery Consultation Confusion. *Alice Springs News*.

Parcelling is also seen as one of the most effective means of expressive syntax. Parcelled constructions are relatively rare in the research material (in just 1.5% of cases), but they are a key element in the creation of media texts – they make the statement brief, emotionally charged, point the reader to the most important information, and imitate colloquial speech. Our analysis allows us to conclude that narrative, complete, and extended sentences predominate as the main element of parcelled constructions in the Australian media texts in our sample. For example:

*We have all gathered to farewell beautiful country. To thank the ancestors for the awesome spiritual weekend, and to embrace happiness*⁴⁷.

In terms of the syntactic status of isolated members (parcels), the most common parcel-adverbial clauses (1) and parcel-amplification (2) in the research material are:

- 1) *“Why can’t we have one Desert Mob at Araluen and one over there. In town”*⁴⁸.
- 2) *“Inside this building we get to have what we want. Let’s make our own businesses. Art studios. A bit of culture. A place for ceremonies. People from overseas can see what we’ve got. A showcase of our culture, in beautiful Alice Springs”*⁴⁹.

The second example proves the well-known fact about the frequent joint use of various expressive syntactic means. In the above fragment, parcelling is combined with nominative and elliptical constructions, repetitions, and fronting. This kind of interaction is believed to have a special effect that allows the author to create an emotional, attention-grabbing, trustworthy, and convincing media text.

It should be noted that punctuation marks are also a part of expressive syntax and play a special role in the organization of the text. Our analysis of the research material reveals that quotation marks (in 8% of sentences), dashes (6%), colons (6%), and brackets (5%) predominate in the expressive function.

Dashes, brackets and commas are most often used for parenthetical inclusions, as we mentioned above.

Quotation marks are used to denote quotations, or to convey the notion that the words are phrases contained within them are being used in a figurative or humorous sense:

- *Love Lust Lost has a double claim to the “immersive theatre” label*⁵⁰.
- *The work was owned by art patron and collector Emily Fisher Landau and it depicts Picasso’s “golden muse” Marie-Therese Walter, a woman who formed the subject of many of Picasso’s portraits and who was known to have had an affair with the painter*⁵¹.

⁴⁷ Mackay A. G. R. 2021. A Fest to Open Wide Your Heart and Soul. *Alice Springs News*.

⁴⁸ Chlanda E. 2023. Gallery Consultation Confusion. *Alice Springs News*.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Fuhrmann A., Woodhead C. 2023. New Spin on Swan Lake Takes Flight. *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

⁵¹ Roberts H. 2023. Picasso Painting Expected to Fetch Millions at Auction. *Katherine Times*.

- *Sera Bray, senior director of the project, addressing a poorly advertised “public” meeting of about 60 people on Tuesday, mentioned Lhere Artepe about half a dozen times when people in the audience raised issues of inadequate consultation with Aboriginal people*⁵².

Colons allow us to include explanations and additional information in a sentence, highlighting parts that the author believes to be most pertinent:

- *Those unable to afford five star priced meals need not worry: Mall market style food vans will be “encouraged” to operate on the grounds*⁵³.
- *There can be no doubt about the enduring glamour of Swan Lake, which is not just a ballet but a whole type of entertainment: a fairytale distraction, guiltless indulgence and an affirmation of the essentially romantic spirit of the art form*⁵⁴.
- *Playing the King of Rock’n’roll at any age seems a big call, but it’s pure joy for tween Daniel Lim, one of four Melbourne actors to play the up-and-coming superstar in Elvis: A Musical Revolution*⁵⁵.

It is important to note that semicolons (1.5% of sentences) and points of ellipsis (1.5%) also appear in the texts under consideration.

In terms of its function, the semicolon is halfway between a full stop, which is used to separate sentences, and a comma, which is used to separate parts of a single statement. The idea is that semicolons are used as the boundary between components of complex sentences, emphasizing both the relative independence of these parts and the close connection with the rest of the sentence. Further, the semicolon allows the author to create a lengthy sentence with lots of punctuation marks more structured and understandable for the reader. Some examples:

- *Boxall’s suggestions for bookers, beyond helping acts to get home safe, is to find a venue that is as accessible as possible; pay comedians in food instead of drinks; and to circulate people’s pronouns ahead of time, which indicates that the space is safe for queer people*⁵⁶.
- *Teaching that task fell to Jenny Kent and Charmian Gradwell; the latter also coached Austin Butler for his role as Elvis in Baz Luhrmann’s film last year*⁵⁷.
- *This eastern-most camping area was dusty, treeless, and furthest from the stages and festival stall; however, it boasted more Red-Tailed Black Cockatoo action than I’ve ever seen in my life, and stunning views of the ranges on all sides*⁵⁸.

⁵² Chlanda E. 2023. Gallery Consultation Confusion. *Alice Springs News*.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Fuhrmann A., Woodhead C. 2023. New Spin on Swan Lake Takes Flight. *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

⁵⁵ O’Brien K. 2023. ‘We’ve Learnt His Accent’: Meet the Melbourne Kids Playing Young Elvis. *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

⁵⁶ Story H. 2023. Australian Comedy Has a Culture Problem. But There are Solutions.

⁵⁷ O’Brien K. 2023. ‘We’ve Learnt His Accent’: Meet the Melbourne Kids Playing Young Elvis.

⁵⁸ Mackay A. G. R. 2021. A Fest to Open Wide Your Heart and Soul. *Alice Springs News*.

Points of ellipsis are separating marks (like a full stop, question mark, exclamation point, comma, semicolon, dash), that is, it is used to “divide the text into semantically and grammatically significant parts” (Ksenzenko 1998: 66). What is more, points of ellipsis are considered “horizontal” punctuation marks that separate parts of a sentence and give them more “weight”⁵⁹. Points of ellipsis are typically used to create emotional pauses, draw the recipient’s attention to certain words and phrases, determine the pace at which the message is read, and, in texts of interviews, indicate real pauses in speech. Some examples from the research material:

- *“Unfortunately, we can’t share the image ... as it is an architectural drawing not for public distribution”*⁶⁰.
- *“Once I got into Joseph my entire life changed and I got to meet so many amazing people... You keep getting energy from the audience”*⁶¹.
- *Working on initial scoping reports, initial strategies, gross regional product, visitation, can the gallery attract people to stay longer. Crunching data. Economic boost ... and so on without any lucid detail*⁶².

It should be noted that the texts we have studied include both “traditional” methods of punctuation and modern symbols, in particular the “/” (forward slash) sign, which is classified as a “non-letter symbol.” In Russian, the forward slash is generally believed to perform a function in scientific and business writing “close to that of the conjunctions ‘and’ and ‘or’, as a sign of alternate concepts, or to designate a single complex concept”⁶³. Similar functions are observed in the research material:

- *His character will invariably care deeply about his family, even if his wife has married someone else/is divorcing him and his children are busy with their own lives/being abducted*⁶⁴.
- *Sacred sites issues in relation to the gallery’s Untyeyetwelye / Anzac Hill location were in the hands of the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority (AAPA) – also mentioned by Ms Bray several times*⁶⁵.
- *As an ambient synth / electronic music fan, I was particularly enjoyed Slumberland’s live looping of the electric guitar, adding distortion to an increasingly complex, shoe-gazey melody*⁶⁶.

⁵⁹ Aleksandrova O. V. 2009. *Problemy ekspressivnogo sintaksisa: Uchebnoe posobie [Problems of Expressive Syntax: A Text-book]*. LIBROKOM. P. 115. (In Russian)

⁶⁰ Chlanda E. 2023. Gallery Consultation Confusion.

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Conclusion

Our analysis of the research material allows us to make the following general conclusions. Expressive syntactical devices play an important role in the organization of Australian media texts on cultural topics. The most common are parenthetical inclusions, repetitions, interrogative sentences, and elliptical, nominative and parcelled constructions. Various types of these expressive syntactical devices were identified in the texts we studied, and their main functions were described: in most cases, they allow the author to highlight certain information; colour statements with certain emotions, using effective and often laconic language that resembles a real dialogue with the reader; help the author express his or her thoughts in the best way possible; attract and hold the attention of the recipient; evoke their trust; and get a specific reaction.

Punctuation marks bring an additional layer to the texts. They amplify the expressive syntactical devices used, influence the speed at which the reader consumes the text, highlight individual components of the statement, and imitate colloquial speech.

Thus, expressiveness at the syntactic level is realized through a variety of means that make an important contribution to the creation of interesting, convincing and emotional texts on cultural topics in the Australian media.

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The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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