CONCISENESS, AN OUTSIDER'S PERSPECTIVE AND A SMOOTH INTONATION CONTOUR: A COMPARISON OF APPPOSITIONS IN PRESS RELEASES AND NEWS STORIES BASED UPON THEM¹

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Abstract

It is the desk editor's task to revise the press releases presented to the newspaper in order to get news stories that are fit to print. What does that mean: Revise? This question is answered by a corpus study of appositions in press releases and the news stories that are based on them. The analysis is carried out in two directions. In the 'forward' analysis, the question is how appositions in source texts are dealt with by desk editors. In the 'backward' analysis, the origins are traced in the news stories. It is shown that appositions are revised quite often. From the revision data we may infer a number of motives for editorial interventions. Newspaper editors are more inclined than writers of press releases to favor concise sentences with a smooth, uninterrupted intonation contour and with a neutral outsider's perspective.

Keywords: Appositions; Style; Genre; Press releases; Press reports; Editing; Linguistic complexity; Perspective.

1. Introduction

One of the following fragments is the translated version of a clip from a news story that appeared in a Dutch newspaper; the other one is the corresponding passage from the press release that was the source for the news story. The reader is invited to compare the fragments and guess which fragment is the newspaper revision and which one the original press release fragment.

- A Maarten Henderson (55), CFO of Royal Dutch KPN NV, has decided to pursue his career outside KPN and intends to leave the company before the end of 2004.
- B The financial manager of KPN, Maarten Henderson (55), intends to leave the telecompany before the end of this year. He has decided himself to pursue his career outside KPN.

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Yes, you were right indeed: A is from a press release, and B from a news story based on it. Apparently readers have intuitions on this subject. While A gives the impression of an internal announcement by the company, B has the look and feel of a report about the same event. And it is the main claim of the following contribution that this difference is brought about – at least partly – by the difference between what is presented as *head* and what is presented as *apposition*. The A text starts with a full name, which signals that the name is its theme, the point of departure of the interpretation of the sentence (Halliday 2004). The writer must have felt that only including this name would be risky so he anticipated a reader's reaction like: "Who is Maarten Henderson and why do I have to read about him?", and decided to give the answer in the apposition. This therapeutic, 'memory refreshing' type of apposition is certainly apt for readers with specific knowledge about this subject, such as co-employees of the company KPN.

The B text has a descriptive theme: It is about a manager of a (well-known) company. That is relevant information for the general reader, who is probably interested in managerial changes in the board of big companies in view of the stock market. It is only after this prophylactic presentation of descriptive information that the desk editor considers it relevant to give the name of the departing CEO, in the form of an apposition, signaling additional information, that is relevant because the message is about a personnel mutation.

This example shows that the distribution of information over different parts of a complex noun phrase seems to be partly determined by the text genre. The present study presents an analysis of transformations of press releases into press reports. The analysis is limited to transformations related to appositions. We expect that such a case study may contribute to our understanding of the relation between text genres and stylistic choices in general, and of the complexities of the press release genre in particular. The study is carried out in both a 'forward' and a 'backward' direction: We will not only investigate what happens later on with the appositions present in the press releases (forward) but also where appositions present in news stories have come from (backward). In this introductory section, some features of press releases (1.1) and of appositions (1.2) are discussed.

1.1. *Press releases*

Most of the news stories the reader finds in his daily newspaper are not created by journalists themselves. Instead, these stories are based on prior texts. These prior texts may have been specifically written for a newspaper by freelancers and local correspondents (I call these 'copy texts'). Or they may have been issued by an organization for the press in general (henceforth 'press release'). Both texts are sent to the newspaper and it is the task of the desk editor to decide whether to accept the text or not, and if the answer is positive, what revisions are needed.

In order to derive more specific expectations about these revisions it is perhaps useful to model the distinctive roles of the writer of the press release and the desk editor respectively. For expository reasons we need simple, sketchy characteristics, which ignore the subtleties and complexities of the minds, goals and acts of the real composition and revision processes. For empirical work on editorial practice see Van Hout & Jacobs (this volume).

There are always more messages competing for inclusion in a newspaper than space (Bell 1991). Therefore this is a buyer's market, which gives the desk editor a comfortable position. He will select those messages that maintain an optimal balance between product quality and process efficiency. In other words, the resulting news story has to be maximally relevant and acceptable for the newspaper's readers. This means that the news story must in the first place conform to a comprehensibility norm: The reader can use the text to build up a full text representation without having to rely on other sources. Besides satisfying the comprehensibility norm, the text has to satisfy norms such as interesting content, concise style and objective presentation. This last norm implies that the text does not explicitly give one-sided opinions but a seemingly detached, impartial viewpoint on the issues. What the consequences of this occupational ethos are for the structure and style of the text, is an object of empirical research

On the other side of the balance of the desk editor are efficiency considerations: He wants to spend as little time and effort as possible in transforming the copy text into an acceptable news story. Bell claims that desk editors prefer easy editing operations, like shortening sentences by attaching the last words of the original sentence to the first ones and deleting the intervening material (Bell 1984). It remains to be seen whether Dutch desk editors operate in the same way.

Now let us look at the writer of a press release. He will try to maintain a balance as well, namely between writing a text satisfying the needs of the organization or company he works for and satisfying the needs of the desk editor. In view of the organization's needs he will present the content of his message as maximally relevant for the general public, for example by touching as many topics as possible. Hence he will tend to compose a longer text with more information than he knows the news story can comprise. He hopes that at least some parts will be selected for publication, but does not know which parts. In view of the desk editor's product needs he will choose a neutral, non-promotional style. However, in view of the desk editor's process needs (efficiency in revising) he will try to present material that may be considered as promotional in syntactic contexts which are difficult to revise, for example by presenting them in a quote. The organization issuing the press release can never be sure in advance that the information will be published, or which part of the press release will be used. Secondly, the press release is an instrument in the public relation policy of the organization. So we may expect that the picture presented by the organization itself is a little bit rosier than reality. This leads us to the expectation that press releases will adopt the perspective of the company and focus on the positive characteristics of the company in general and of its management in particular.

The previous remarks give an a priori plausibility to Jacobs's preformulation idea. Jacobs (Jacobs 1999a, 1999b; Sleurs and Jacobs 2005) demonstrated that several text features of press releases (such as self reference with a third person, for example) are to be considered as attempts of the press release writer to adapt the text to the norms of news stories, and thereby maximize the chance to get his message in the newspaper.

1.2. Appositions

An apposition has the following three defining characteristics:

- I A phrase (XP) is juxtaposed to another phrase with which it forms one part of

- speech
- II The head of the appositional phrase has (roughly) the same referent as the head of the other phrase
 - III There is no lexical means like a preposition or a conjunction that connects the apposition to its head

An example of an apposition is *Beatrix* in:

- (1) The Queen of the Netherlands, *Beatrix*, was signaled in London shopping with her daughter-in-law.

Let us suppose that a reader of (1) stumbles on *The Queen of the Netherlands* wondering who is that Queen nowadays? His question is answered straight away by the apposition, *Beatrix*. *Beatrix* in (1) is an example of what Quirk et al (1993: 1300ff) call a *full, strict* and *nonrestrictive* apposition.

The apposition is called *full*, because the apposition *Beatrix* can interchange with its head *The Queen of the Netherlands* (2). And - the second criterion - the apposition can be deleted in both orders: See (1)a and (2)a:

- (2) *Beatrix, the Queen of the Netherlands*, was signaled ...
- (1)a The Queen of the Netherlands was signaled ...
- (2)a *Beatrix* was signaled ...

A so-called *partial* apposition cannot be interchanged with its head NP. An example is (3), where *Queen* lacks a determiner, which changes the interpretation from 'woman of Royal status' to the political function 'head of state':

- (3) *Beatrix, Queen of the Netherlands*, was signaled ...

This type of apposition cannot be exchanged with its head:

- (3)a **Queen of the Netherlands, Beatrix*, was signaled

Both full and partial appositions were incorporated in the present study.

Beatrix is called a *strict* apposition in (1), because the head and apposition are members of the same word class, in this case, nouns. The opposite of a strict apposition is a weak one. In weak appositions the head and apposition belong to different word classes, as is the case in (4) and (5):

- (4) *Beatrix, still active as a queen*, was signaled ...
- (5) *Beatrix* was criticized during the courtship years of her son, but she is more popular now, *ten years later*.

Most cases of weak appositions were included in the corpus (Meijer 1987), such as appositions with a clause as their head, as in (6), numbers, indicating years of age, as in (7) and names of political parties that the referent of the head represents, as in (8):

- (6) Beatrix is more popular now than ever before, *an astonishing accomplishment*.
- (7) Beatrix (67) was signaled
- (8) W. de Wit (*PvdA*)

Only one type of weak appositions was not included: The apposition with a verbal constituent, like *crowned in 1981* in (9):

- (9) Beatrix, *crowned in 1981*, was signaled ...

The motive behind this decision was that it is very difficult to demarcate this type of adjunctive participle constructions (Jansen & Lentz 2002) from reduced relative clauses.

The last syntactical opposition between appositions to be discussed here is that between *restrictive* and *non-restrictive* ones. All examples mentioned above are of the non-restrictive type, which have one extra defining characteristic besides the three mentioned in the beginning of this section: The apposition is set apart from its head by a distinct intonational contour, which is signaled by a comma in written text. Non-restrictive appositions are attached to their head in the same way as non-restrictive relative clauses; its content gives extra information that is not essential for the interpretation of the embedding clause (see McCawley (1995) for a discussion of the similarities).

If the apposition and its head are one intonational unit, it is called a restrictive or close apposition. An example is (10), where the apposition *Beatrix* has a restrictive relation with its head *Queen*:

- (10) Queen *Beatrix* is signaled ...

It is debatable whether restrictive appositions are a syntactic category (Meijer 1989; Keizer 2005) and how they are to be demarcated from other 'N-N'-combinations (Löbel 1993). Restrictive appositions were also incorporated in the corpus, with the exception of one subcategory of the noun-proper noun combinations that Keizer (2005: 459) distinguishes, namely *mevrouw* 'Missus' and *dhr* (from *de heer* 'Mr'), which are better analyzed as terms of address, where the term of address has an adjunctive relation to the following name.

In other words, the present investigation uses a rather inclusive operationalization of appositions. The same may be said of the punctuation marks between the apposition and its head. It could be a comma, like in most of the aforementioned examples, but it could also be parentheses (()), a colon (:), a semicolon (;), a slash (–) and even a full stop (.). The differences between these punctuation marks will not be explored in this paper.

Apart from their formal characteristics, appositions have functional characteristics, which can be analyzed within the framework of text grammar, for example the rhetorical structure theory (Mann, Matthiesen and Thompspon (1992)). What kind of rhetorical relation does the content of the apposition have with its embedding text?

It is rather evident that appositions are not suitable for the expression of the main functions of a text (like, for example, the arguments in a persuasive text). Their

function is supportive: They help the reader to understand the referents in the text. In the terminology of rhetorical structure theory, appositions have a background or elaboration relation with the expression of the embedding clause. What both functions have in common is that they explain and elucidate text by giving extra information about the referents in the text. Sometimes this information makes it easier for the reader to select the right referent from the universe of discourse. Most of the time, however, the apposition contains information that makes it easier for the readers to evaluate the relevance of the referent.

A more elaborate functional categorization of appositions is found in Quirk et al. (1993). I decided to select the following criteria for the categorization in my corpus:

- 1 Appellations, where a name is preceded by functional information (as in (1)). The assumption behind this order seems to be that readers have first processed some characteristic information about a person or a thing, and then ask themselves the question what this person or thing is called?
 - 2 Designations, where the name is followed by functional information (as in (2)). The assumption behind this order is that readers have processed a name, which is not or only vaguely familiar to them. They wonder who that person is.
 - 3 Reformulations, where the apposition is used to rephrase the head. We saw an example in (5), although this type of apposition contains an abbreviation in most examples in the corpus (for example, see (12)).
 - 4 Attributions, where information in the apposition functions like a predicate to the head, as in
- (11) The queen of the Netherlands, *perhaps the richest Dutch woman*, was signaled ...

In this paper I will concentrate on the appellation and designation functions.

2. Corpora

Three text corpora were used for the analysis:

Corpus 1. A corpus of reports of council meetings of villages in the neighborhood of the city of Leiden (henceforth source texts (S)), written by local correspondents in those villages and intended as copy for the regional newspaper *Leidsch Dagblad* ‘Newspaper of Leiden’) and the edited news stories (N) based on them in this newspaper (Van der Plas 1988). As the aim of the stories is to keep the citizens well informed about the political behavior of their representatives, the intent of the texts is informational and their accounts in the regional newspaper (the only one in the region) are politically neutral. The corpus of copy texts is used in this investigation as a control corpus for the press releases.

Corpus 2. A corpus of press releases of the University Hospital of the University of Utrecht, and the stories based on them in the regional newspaper *Utrechts Nieuwsblad* 'Newspaper of Utrecht'. On the one hand, the aim of these press releases is informational, as the hospital is a governmental organization without commercial intent. On the other hand, service organizations such as university hospitals feel a constant pressure to show how valuable they are for society, which is the reason for distinct persuasive undertones in these texts.

Corpus 3. The corpus of commercial press releases and the corresponding news stories based on them in national newspapers, presented by Pander Maat (this volume). This is the commercial corpus. In the tables, corpus 2 and 3 are taken together as 'press releases'.

Not included in the corpus were appositions in titles, appositions embedded in text fragments of source texts that were deleted altogether, or those in larger fragments of news stories that were added.

Table 1. Corpora, number of source texts, and number of appositions in the source texts and the news stories

Corpus	Source Texts	Appositions source texts	Appositions news stories
1	13	73	68
2	29	74	59
3	50	100	111
Total	92	247	238

3. Research questions

What happens with appositions during the editing process? The answer to this question is interesting for several reasons. In the first place we would like to know what desk editors do with information that is explicitly presented as additions that are perhaps helpful, but nonetheless marginal as far as their contribution to the content of the message is concerned. Do they delete those appositions in their constant effort to make their news stories shorter? Do they leave them intact? Or do they save the informational content in another way?

Similar questions can be asked with regard to appositions in news stories: What is the origin of the material in those appositions? Is it derived from the source text or from elsewhere? And in case of the first possibility: Was it derived from an apposition or from another kind of phrase?

In addition to these general questions, there are some specific questions about the relevance of the preformulation assumptions described in 1.1, which can be answered by comparing the results for the copy text corpus (corpus 1 in the previous section) with those of the press releases (corpora 2 and 3). The relation between copy from correspondents and resultant news stories is relatively straightforward when compared with the relation between press releases and the resulting news stories. Chief editors of the newspaper select local correspondents primarily on the basis of their knowledge of local themes and political relations. Local correspondents run the risk of overestimating the general reader's knowledge of the current situation in the community

they are writing about, and also overestimating the relevance of their message for the general public. They do not feel the urge to exaggerate the interestingness of their copy because they are aware of the fact that their copy is requested. The desk editor will reduce their copy to make the length of the news story match the amount of time he expects his readers to invest in the topic. We further expect him to add extra information about the local situation whenever he feels the general reader needs it for his understanding. However, he will be hesitant to intervene too much in the texts of his correspondents, because he has a continuing relation with them, and is dependent on their willingness to send in copy.

What are the consequences for the editing of appositions? Firstly, we expect that most of them are deleted for reasons of conciseness, as they contain background content that is not newsworthy itself. Secondly, we expect that some appositions, especially in the copy corpus are maintained and even inserted to help the reader. Thirdly, we expect the appositions with a promotional content in the press release corpus to be deleted or revised in order to make the text perspective that of an objective outsider.

4. Relations between appositional material in the source texts and the news articles

In this section I will give an overview of the possible relations between (the content of) appositions in the source text and in the news stories (4.1). After that I will discuss the relation between the edited appositions and the appositions left intact (4.2). Finally I will pay attention to the distinctive types of editing operations (4.3).

4.1. *Four kinds of relations*

As mentioned above, the appositions in our corpora are analyzed forward and backward, namely what happens to the appositions in the source texts and what is the origin of appositions in the news stories? Figure 1 visualizes the analysis. The forward transformations applied to appositions are given line arrows, while the sources of news story appositions are represented by dotted arrows. There are also some appositions that remain the same in the source text and the news story. They are represented by the ‘bold’ arrow in the center.

Figure 1

Figure 1. An overview of the rewriting operations involving appositions

- = destinations of appositions in source texts (arrows A, B, C, D, E)
- = sources of appositions in news stories (arrows P, Q, B, R, S)
- = untouched appositions (B)

We will now discuss the various transformations in more detail. Four kinds of relations between the appositions in both texts may be distinguished.

- 1 Appositions are left *untouched* (see the B-arrow in Figure 1). The apposition will reappear as an apposition in the news story; the content can be identical (for example (12)), or adapted (13).

(12)

Source text	News Story
Het tweejaarlijkse wereldcongres van de International Menopause Society (<i>IMS</i>) (corpus 2, text 19)	Het tweejaarlijkse wereldcongres van de International Menopause Society (<i>IMS</i>)
The biennial world congress of the Menopause Society (<i>IMS</i>)	The biennial world congress of the Menopause Society (<i>IMS</i>)

(13)

... de gemeenschappelijke regeling, <i>een samen-werkingsverband van enkele Bollenstreekgemeenten die de werkplaats ondersteunen</i> (corpus 1, text 3)	... de gemeenschappelijke regeling, <i>een samenwerkingsverband van enkele bollenstreekgemeenten</i>
... the common scheme, <i>a collaboration of some municipalities that support the workplace</i>	... the common scheme, <i>a collaboration between several unions of some bulb-growing communities</i>

In this paper, ‘internal’ adaptations of the appositions as in (13) will be ignored, with the exception of cases where promotional language was involved (see section 5).

- 2 Appositional material goes elsewhere (arrow A) or comes from *elsewhere* (arrow S). When we are looking forward, from the source text towards the news story, we don’t see the apposition in the source text nor its content return in the news story. An example is:

(14)

Het Academisch Ziekenhuis Utrecht (<i>AZU</i>) (2, 14)	Het Academisch Ziekenhuis Utrecht
The University Hospital Utrecht (<i>AZU</i>)	The University Hospital Utrecht

When we are looking back from the news stories to the source text, we find appositions referring to content in the news stories that is not found in the source text, so we must assume that the author has based his apposition on information in other sources. A simple example is (15) where the clarification stems from world knowledge:

(15)

Seropositieven (2, 14)	seropositieven (<i>mensen die wel drager zijn van het Aids-virus maar de ziekte nog niet hebben</i>)
Seropositives	Seropositives (<i>people who are carriers of the AIDS</i>)

	<i>virus, but have not contracted the disease until now)</i>
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- 3 The apposition turns into, or comes from *another type of modifier*. In the first option, symbolized by the arrow C, the content of the apposition in the source text remains subordinated to its head in some kind of attributive relation, but the type of relation is altered: An example of this category is (16) where the apposition in the source text becomes a prepositional phrase. The reverse operation appears in (17), in which the attributive prepositional phrase 'van openbaar onderwijs' reappears as a restrictive apposition in the news story

(16)

Tijdens de vergadering van de commissie zorg, volksgezondheid, emancipatie en economische zaken bleek ... (1, 13)	Tijdens de vergadering van de commissie voor zorg, volksgezondheid, emancipatie en economische zaken bleek ...
During the meeting of the Committee Care, Public Health and Economic Affairs, it turned out	During the meeting of the Committee for Care, Public Health and Economic Affairs it turned out

(17)

De uitslag van de aan het begin van deze maand gehouden enquête werd gisteravond door mevrouw ((naam)), afgevaardigde van de vereniging van openbaar onderwijs, meegedeeld (...) (1, 8)	Dit blijkt uit een onlangs in Oosterhout gehouden enquête van de vereniging openbaar onderwijs (...)
The result of the inquiry held in the beginning of this month was reported by Ms ((name)), delegate of the Association of Public Education	This is the outcome of an inquiry held recently in Oosterhout of the Association Public Education

When we start with the news story and look back upon the copy text, the material of the apposition remains in a subordinated attributive position, but it is another type of relation. This type is symbolized by the arrow Q, and may again be exemplified by (17).

- 4 The appositional content is related to *another type of phrase* in the corresponding text. Again, we can look forward by relating the apposition in the source text to that other type of phrase in the news story. The only logical possibility is that this other phrase has a higher syntactic status, such as an independent NP or a clause (see arrow E). For example, see (18) where the content of the apposition in S reappears as an independent clause in N:

(18)

In Nederland lijden ongeveer 100.000 mensen aan epilepsie (<i>1 op de 150</i>). (2,16)	In Nederland lijden ongeveer 100.000 mensen aan epilepsie. <i>Dat is één op de 150 landgenoten.</i>
In the Netherlands about 100,000 people suffer from epilepsy (<i>1 in 150</i>).	In the Netherlands about 100,000 people suffer from epilepsy. <i>That is one in 150</i>

	<i>compatriots.</i>
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A somewhat different example is the restrictive apposition *wethouder X* in (19), where the editor has deleted the head of the construction *voorzitter*, thereby promoting *wethouder* to the position of independent NP.

(19)

Voorzitter <i>wethouder Drs. B. Joon</i> (1, 8)	Wethouder B. Joon
Chair <i>alderman Drs. B. Joon</i>	Alderman B. Joon

When our point of departure is the news story text, we can investigate in which type of phrase in the source text the content of an apposition in the news story is found. Syntactically speaking, the content is reduced, stacked as it were in the apposition. The type of operation is symbolized by arrow R.

(20)

In augustus 1996 wordt het medisch team van het kinderhartcentrum Utrecht verder versterkt door de komst van de Britse kindercardioloog Dr. ((name)) als hoofd van de afdeling kindercardiologie van het WKZ. <i>Dr. ((name)) is nu nog werkzaam in het Children's Hospital te Birmingham.</i>	Hoofd van de afdeling kindercardiologie en opvolger van professor ((name)) wordt per augustus de Britse kindercardioloog Dr. ((name)) (37), <i>nu nog werkzaam in het kinderziekenhuis in Birmingham.</i>
In August 1996 the medical team of the Centre of Paediatric Cardiology will be strengthened by the arrival of the British paediatric cardiologist Dr. ((name)) as head of the Department of Paediatric Cardiology in the WKZ (name of the hospital FJ). <i>Dr. ((name)) is active in the Children's Hospital in Birmingham</i>	Head of the Department of Paediatric Cardiology and successor of professor ((name)) will be the British paediatric cardiologist Dr. ((name)) (37), <i>who is still employed by the Paediatric Hospital in Birmingham.</i>

4.2. Appositions left intact

How often are appositions in the source text left as they are (Arrow B)? Table 2 gives the answer.

Table 2. Frequency of untouched and edited appositions

	Untouched appositions	Edited appositions	Total
Copy	53 (73%)	20 (27%)	73
Press releases	66 (38%)	108 (62 %)	174
Total	119 (48%)	128 (52%)	247

What Table 2 demonstrates in the first place is that the apposition is a rather volatile type of construction. When we compare the proportions in the two corpora, we see that editors intervene more frequently in press releases. The difference is statistically significant (χ^2 (df 3) = 24.8, $p < .000$). A plausible explanation is that the rather close relation between editors and local correspondents makes the former more hesitant to intervene in their source texts than is the case with press releases, which are composed by unknown writers and sent to other newspapers as well.

Not all types of appositions are edited equally frequently. Especially the type of relationship between the apposition and its head seems to be a factor.

Table 3. Frequency of remaining and altered restrictive and non-restrictive appositions

	Untouched appositions	Edited appositions	Total
Non-restrictive app	71 (38%)	116 (62%)	187
Restrictive app	48 (80%)	12 (20%)	60

Table 3 demonstrates that restrictive appositions are less probable candidates for editing than non-restrictive appositions (χ^2 (df 3) = 32.1, $p < .001$). A possible explanation for this proportion is the difference in ease of revision. Restrictive appositions are more tightly connected to their heads, their presence is more obligatory than in the case of non-restrictive appositions, which are separated from their head by punctuation marks and are more optional in character. So the effect of editing a restrictive apposition has more far-reaching consequences for the remainder of the sentence and editors will be more hesitant to revise them.

Finally, we will look backward: What is the proportion of untouched appositions (that is to say, appositions in the news stories that were taken over from the source text) against the total of appositions in the news stories? Table 4 gives the answer.

Table 4. Untouched and edited appositions in the news stories

	Untouched appositions	Edited appositions	Total
Copy	53 (78%)	15 (22%)	68
Press releases	66 (41%)	104 (59%)	170
Total	119 (50%)	119 (50%)	238

The column totals of Table 4 show that half of the appositions in news stories originated from appositions in the source texts. Editing is significantly more frequent for the press release corpus (χ^2 (df 3) = 26.3, $p < .001$), for which the same tentative explanation applies as in the case of looking forward.

4.3. Editing the appositions

4.3.1. Destinations of appositions

First we will look forward: If the desk editor decides to revise an apposition in the source text, what will happen to it? Does he delete (arrow A) or rewrite it (arrows C, D and E)? Table 5 gives the answer:

Table 5. Appositions in the source text which are deleted or rewritten

	Deleted	Rewritten	Total
Copy	5 (25%)	15 (75%)	20
Press releases	43 (40%)	65 (60%)	108
Total	48 (38%)	80 (62%)	128

The two subcorpora do not differ from each other (χ^2 (df 3) = 1.6; $p > .05$), but the column totals of Table 5 show that rewriting is twice as frequent as deleting. This indicates that Bell's claim (Bell 1984) that desk editors prefer easy editing operations (see 1.1) may be valid for his variety of editing (which was adapting written news messages for oral presentation), but not for the varieties of editing we are studying here.

Now we leave the deletions aside and turn our attention to the way the apposition in the source texts is rewritten. As the apposition is a kind of a modifier of the head, there are three logical possibilities: The editor can turn the apposition into another type of modifier (arrow C), into the head of the phrase (arrow D) or into a totally different kind of segment, for example a clause (arrow E).

Table 6. Types of phrases in the news articles related to the appositions in the source texts

	Other modifier	Independent NP	Other phrase	Total
Copy	9 (60%)	2 (13%)	4 (27%)	15
Press releases	12 (19%)	27 (42%)	26 (39%)	65
Total	21 (26%)	29 (36%)	30 (38%)	80

The two corpora in Table 6 differ in an intriguing way: The revisions in the copy corpus are, relatively speaking, more on the local level of the modifier, while the revisions in the press release corpus are on the higher syntactic level of independent phrases and clauses (χ^2 (df 3) = 10.9, $p = .001$). The most plausible explanation is that the editors prefer to make only slight local revisions in the copy of their colleagues, while they have no such reservations for press releases.

The column totals of Table 6 demonstrate that three quarters of the source text appositions are rewritten into constituents with a higher syntactic status than attributive modifiers. This is surprising, because this operation can be considered as the opposite of deletion: instead of disappearing, the syntactical status of the material is promoted (see also 5.2). In other words, desk editors are inclined to choose between two opposing strategies: Delete or promote!

4.3.2. *Origins of news story appositions*

The counterpart of the problem where the appositions of source texts end up in news stories, is the question what the origin in source texts is of appositions in news stories.

Table 7 shows the numbers of appositions with content from the source texts (arrow S) and those from others (arrows P, Q, and R).

Table 7. Appositions added from source texts and from other sources

	Borrowed from other sources	Rewritten from other phrases	Total
Copy	5 (33%)	10 (67%)	15
Press releases	38 (37%)	66 (63%)	104
Total	43 (36%)	76 (64%)	119

As there is no statistically significant difference between the two corpora, only the column totals of Table 7 merit a remark. Editors inserting an apposition borrow significantly more content from other fragments of the input text than from material based on other sources (χ^2 (df 1) = 35.7, $p < .001$). In other words, editors seem to use the source texts efficiently.

The next question is: When a desk editor decides to use fragments of the source text to compose an apposition, which kind of phrase or clause does he use? Table 8 gives the answer.

Table 8. Sources of appositions in news stories

	Head of NP	Other modifier	Other phrase/clause	Total
Copy	6 (60%)	4 (40%)	0	10
Press releases	18 (27%)	44 (67%)	4 (6%)	66
Total	24 (32%)	48 (63%)	4 (5%)	76

As the differences between the two corpora are not significant because of the infrequency of this type of revision in the copy texts, we will only discuss the column totals. The syntactic domain of the majority of the revisions seems to be very limited: The editor has a clear preference to seek the content of a new apposition in the realm of modifiers of another type. We only rarely see the editor stacking the content of a clause into an apposition, therefore compressing the text (see also 5.2). One of the rare examples is (21), a follow-up message about a patient with an artificial heart, where we see the editor comprise the gist of a complex independent clause into one, rather short apposition:

(21)

De Heartmate is een kunsthart dat bestaat uit een platte pomp, die in de buikholte wordt geïmplant en wordt aangesloten op het hart en de grote lichaamsslagader. (2, 20)	Zij was de eerste patiënt in Nederland bij wie de Heartmate, <i>een platte pomp die in de buik wordt bevestigd</i> , werd ingebracht.
The Heartmate is an artificial heart that consists of a flat pump, which is implanted in the abdomen cavity and connected to the heart and the large body	She was the first patient in the Netherlands with whom the Heartmate, <i>a flat pump that is placed in the abdomen</i> , was implanted

artery	
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The reason why there are so many independent NP's that become an apposition is different. This turns out to be a side effect of the fact that editors rather frequently insert an elucidating NP before them, which becomes the head of the construction. An illustrative case is (22), where the writer of the press release starts with the abbreviated company name, which means that the perspective of the fragment is definitely that of an insider, and has a subtle promotional undertone. The editor must have considered that the acronym HP offers too little support for his readers and tried to remedy this by inserting the full company name, thereby giving the acronym the position of a non-restrictive apposition and making the perspective neutral:

(22)

HP breidt zijn Planet Partners programma voor retourzending en recycling van inkjet-print cartridges voor consumenten uit. (3, 1)	Hewlet Packard (<i>HP</i>) (...) heeft zijn recyclingprogramma voor lege inkjetpatronen uitgebreid
HP is expanding its Planet Partners program for returning and recycling the inkjet-cartridges for consumers.	Hewlet Packard (<i>HP</i>) (...) has expanded its recycling program for empty inkjet cartridges.

Most of the time the former head of the NP becomes an apposition of the restrictive apposition, as in:

(23)

Unilever Nederland heeft het voornemen (...) (3, 30)	Levensmiddelenbedrijf <i>Unilever</i> gaat zijn werkmaatschappijen in Nederland samenvoegen.
Unilever Nederland has the intention (...)	Food company <i>Unilever</i> will merge its subsidiaries

Again, the insertion of the new descriptive head 'Food company' before the name has the stylistic effect that the insider's perspective ('We, from Unilever rapport ...') is abandoned in favor of a more neutral outsider's perspective ('The newspaper reports about Unilever ...').

The results so far are summarized in Figure 2, which is identical to Figure 1, but with numbers indicating the frequencies of the operations.

Figure 2

Figure 2. The frequencies of the operations involving appositions.

- = destinations of appositions in source texts (arrows A, B, C, D, E)
- = sources of appositions in news stories (arrows P, Q, B, R, S)
- = untouched appositions (B)

5. Motives for intervention

In this section I will try to make sense of the results in the previous section by relating them to the most probable motives for intervention: Conciseness (shortening versus addition of information) (5.1), compressing versus extending the phrasing of the text (5.2), optimizing the smoothness of the intonation contour of the sentence (5.3), and adopting a more neutral perspective (5.4).

5.1. Achieving conciseness: Shortening versus adding information

Which is more frequent? That desk editors delete an apposition in order to shorten the text (see (14)) or that they add supporting information in order to help the reader understand the referents better (see (15))? In Table 9 the extent of deletions and additions is compared with the number of untouched appositions:

Table 9. Comparison of the proportion of untouched and deleted/inserted appositions

	Untouched	Deleted	Inserted	Total
Copy	53 (84%)	5 (8%)	5 (8%)	63
Press release	66 (49%)	43 (29%)	38 (22%)	147
Total	119 (57%)	48 (23%)	43 (20%)	210

There is a significant difference in the proportion of interventions (deletions and additions taken together) against non-interventions: The texts of local correspondents are left untouched relatively more (χ^2 (df 1) = 27.6, $p < .001$).

The column totals of Table 9 demonstrate that the proportions of additions and deletions are equal. The most probable interpretation of this fact is that - as far as appositions are concerned - the two main motives of editors are of equal importance: To shorten the text and to add helpful information about the referents. This interpretation is corroborated by an informal assessment of the motives of the interventions that was based on what I considered the most probable motive for each intervention (so only one motive per intervention was scored). The most frequent motive for the deletions was shortening (52 of the 118 cases (44%); for the insertions, it was adding relevant information (63 of the 102 cases (62%)).

The motive for the additions is to enhance comprehension, as we have seen in example (22). Or compare (24), in which the desk editor simply inserts an apposition, with information he has distilled from the byline of the press release:

(24)

(Byline) Uden, 27 augustus 2004 Beter Bed Holding NV. heeft over het eerste halfjaar van 2004 een nettowinst van (...) gerealiseerd, (...) (3, 32)	Beter Bed, <i>de Udense beddenverkoper</i> , zag zowel de omzet als de winst over het eerste halfjaar toenemen, (...)
(Byline) Uden, 27 August 2004 Beter Bed Holding NV has realized a net profit of (...) in the first half of 2004.	Beter Bed, <i>the bed seller from Uden</i> , saw an increase in both turnover and profit in the first half of 2004

5.2. Compressing information in one complex phrase versus extending it over several phrases

Which is more frequent: Compressing the information taken from independent phrases and clauses into an apposition or extending appositional information to several phrases? The answer is to be found in table 10. The first row presents the forward revisions of source text appositions. It distinguishes between cases in which the appositional information remains on the same level (i.e. modifiers) and cases in which it reappears on a higher level (i.e. the head of the NP or another constituent). The second row concerns the backward analysis for this issue: It reports the constituent levels from where the apposition material of the news story originates.

Table 10. Relations of appositions to phrases on the same levels or higher levels

	Same level	Higher level	Total
Apposition in source text becomes segment on	21 (26%)	59 (74%)	80
Apposition in news story was in the source text a constituent on ...	48 (63%)	28 (37%)	76
Total	69 (44%)	87 (56%)	156

The column totals of Table 10 indicate that transforming an apposition in the source text into a higher phrase is done more frequently than the reverse operation of using the material of a higher phrase in the source text and reducing it to an apposition in the news story (χ^2 (df 3) = 21.5, $p < .001$). In other words, as far as editing of this type is concerned, more material is promoted than reduced.

This result may seem to be in conflict with that of the previous section, where we found that deletions (and their motive of shortening) are important for the editing process. The segments resulting from promotion are longer than the appositions in the source text. Therefore promoting material has the effect of expansion, the opposite of shortening, see for example (25):

(25)

Met deze insteekkaart krijgen laptop gebruikers mobiele toegang tot het internet of het bedrijfsnetwerk bij snelheden tot 384 kbps, <i>ruim zes keer sneller dan het bestaande GPRS netwerk.</i> (3, 6)	<i>De mobiele toegang tot internet of het bedrijfsnetwerk via UMTS werkt ruim zes keer sneller dan het bestaande GPRS-netwerk</i>
With this plug-in card laptop users have mobile access to the Internet or the Intranet at a speed of up to 384kbps, <i>((which is)) more than 6 times as fast as the current GPRS network.</i>	<i>The mobile access to Internet or Intranet through UMTS is more than six times as fast as the current GPRS network.</i>

However, a closer look at example (25) reveals that there is an explanation for this result. Editors prefer a concatenation of several simple constituents to one long and

internally complex one. This applies to sentences in texts, but also to phrases in the sentence. In other words, editors seem to prefer “flat” structures to “layered” ones. An example is (26) where we see how the editor deletes the rather abstract and ‘empty’ head NP *verzenders* (mail sending companies), thereby promoting the apposition with its more specific content to an independent NP:

(26)

Op dit moment kunnen 135.000 consumenten van 13 verzenders (<i>bijvoorbeeld KPN, Unive, Casema en VGZ</i>) digitale post ontvangen via ((internetadres)).	TPG Post regelt de afhandeling van rekeningen voor onder meer <i>KPN, Unive, Casema en VGZ</i>
At present 135,000 consumers of 13 mail-sending companies (<i>for example KPN, Unive, Casema and VGZ</i>) can receive digital mail through ((Internet address))	TPG Post organizes the transaction of invoices for <i>among others KPN, Unive, Casema and VGZ</i>

5.3. Smooth intonation contours

There is a commonness in the effects of the deletion of appositions (5.1), their promotion to independent phrases (5.2) and the transformation of non-restrictive appositions to restrictive ones (example 27): They all eliminate ‘comma intonations’. Such intonations involve a break in the intonation contour of the sentence, where a hanging high tone is followed by an abrupt fall towards a low tone that is characteristic of the start a new intonation contour. This type of intonation break has a hanging topic meaning, signaling: ‘The previous segment will continue’. Eliminating these breaks leads to a ‘smoother’ intonation contour for of the embedding sentence. An example is (27):

(27)

Het te bouwen Bavo opleidingscentrum, <i>synopsis</i> , zou gerealiseerd moeten worden in het (...)	... de vestiging van het opleidingscentrum voor verpleegkundigen ‘ <i>Synopsis</i> ’ in het (...)
The Bavo instruction centre to be built, <i>synopsis</i> , should be realized in the (...)	... the establishment of the training centre for nurses ‘ <i>Synopsis</i> ’ in the ...

This uninterrupted contour seems to be preferred by desk editors. In 45 of the 118 cases where an apposition in the source text is revised, the resulting embedding sentence has a smoother intonation pattern, against only 4 cases where the intonation becomes less smooth (χ^2 (df 1) = 43.3, $p < .001$). The significant rise in the proportion of restrictive appositions in the news stories, documented in Table 11 (χ^2 (df 3) = 8.1; $p = .004$), is in line with this trend.

Table 11. Proportions of non-restrictive and restrictive appositions

	Non-restrictive	Restrictive	Total
Source text	187 (76%)	60 (24%)	247

News Story	152 (64%)	86 (36%)	238
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5.4. Achieving an outsider's perspective

As discussed in section 1, we might derive from the preformulation idea the speculative expectation that writers of press releases will try to insert content that is favorable for the company they are working for. On the other hand, editors of independent newspapers will try to filter those fragments in order to maintain the perspective of neutral coverage, which the readers expect. In this section the relevance of this possible motive is assessed, first directly by discussing the deletion and insertion of appositions with promotional material (5.4.1), and after that indirectly by analyzing the cases where the head NP and the apposition in the source text are interchanged in the news text (5.4.2).

5.4.1. Do editors filter out appositions with promotional content?

Is there any evidence that appositions in source texts with a promotional content are edited more readily than non-promotional appositions? For the purposes of this analysis, 'promotional content' was defined as every attribution to a referent of a positively evaluated characteristic that is not immediately related to the topic of the message. Table 12 provides the answer to our question.

Table 12. Edited and untouched appositions with or without promotional content in the source texts

	Untouched	Edited	Total
With promotional content	1	9	10
Without promotional content	118	119	237

The row totals in Table 12 show that appositions with promotional content are a marginal category in general. Their infrequency suggests that copywriters do not use the apposition as their favorite means for promotional content. Furthermore, we see that desk editors revise the majority of the promotional appositions. Therefore it is interesting to note that the only promotional apposition left intact was found in the copy corpus:

(28)

De leiding van het project heeft de heer G. Slats, <i>een Noordwijk-kenner bij uitstek</i> , bereid gevonden ... (1, 2)	De leiding van het project heeft de heer G. Slats, <i>een Noordwijk-kenner bij uitstek</i> , bereid gevonden ... (1, 2)
The management of the project have found Mr. G. Slat, <i>an authority on Noordwijk</i> , to be willing ...	The management of the project has found Mr. G. Slat, <i>an authority on Noordwijk</i> , to be willing ...

All other appositions with promotional content of Table 12 are deleted (see (29) for an example), which is evidence of the role of the desk editor as ‘weeder’ of promotional material sketched in 1.1.

(29)

Voor MR-onderzoek, <i>een bijzonder veilige en hooginformatieve onderzoekstechniek</i> , bestaan enorme wachtlijsten (2, 6)	Voor MR-onderzoek bestaan volgens het AZU lange wachtlijsten
For MR-examination, <i>a particularly safe and highly informative research technique</i> , there are huge waiting lists.	For MR-examinations there are long waiting lists, according to the AZU.

Now it is time to turn to the backward-looking perspective by taking the appositions with promotional content in the news stories as a point of departure and asking ourselves where they came from. It turns out that there are seven insertions of appositions with promotional material, all of them from the press release corpora. As this result seems to contradict the idea that desk editors want a neutral perspective, we will discuss a few relevant examples. Example (30) is the only one from corpus 2:

(30)

Dit project is uitgevoerd door het Academisch ziekenhuis (AZU) in samenwerking met het Instituut voor Epilepsiebestrijding “Meer en Bosch-De Cruquishoeve” te Heemstede. (2, 16)	Het AZU, <i>het enige centrum in Nederland waar epileptici worden geopereerd</i> , heeft de afgelopen drie jaar met het Instituut voor Epilepsiebestrijding “Meer en Bosch-De Cruquishoeve” in Heemstede een speciaal project uitgevoerd.
This project has been carried out by the University Hospital (AZU) in cooperation with the Institute for Curing Epilepsy “Meer en Bosch-De Cruquishoeve” in Heemstede	The AZU, <i>the only center in the Netherlands where epileptics are operated</i> , has carried out a special project during the last three years, together with the Institute for Curing Epilepsy “Meer en Bosch-De Cruquishoeve” in Heemstede

It is easy to understand why the content of the apposition could be considered promotional: The information that the AZU is the only institute in the Netherlands that can or may do the operations is clearly a favorable attribution. However, there is an alternative motive: The information helps the reader to understand why the AZU was granted the project in the first place. And perhaps there is even a second alternative, namely that the information has a reassuring function: “Epileptics are in good hands at the AZU”. Example (31) is of another type:

(31)

HP breidt zijn Planet Partners programma voor retourzending en recycling van inkjet-printcartridges voor consumenten uit. (3,1)	Hewlett-Packard (HP), <i>’s werelds grootste leverancier van printers</i> , heeft zijn recyclingprogramma voor lege inkjetpatronen uitgebreid
HP is expanding its Planet Partners	Hewlett-Packard (HP), <i>the world’s largest</i>

program for returning and recycling inkjet-cartridges for consumers.	<i>supplier of printers</i> , has expanded its recycling program for empty inkjet cartridges.
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At first sight the apposition in (31) is a clear example of free publicity for HP, as there is no connection between the size of the company and its recycling program. On closer scrutiny, we have to take into consideration that (31) is the first sentence in the news story. Apparently, the desk editor has anticipated a reader asking himself, 'why do I have to read this?' And he has inserted some information about the company that enhances the relevance for readers: Because a market leader initiates a recycling program, it is of interest for the entire branch.

Of the remaining appositions, three are interesting cases because they may be retraced from one clause in the source text:

(32)

Source	News story A	News story B	News story C
BASF is wereldwijd één van de toonaangevende ondernemingen in de chemische industrie (3,21)	BASF, 's werelds grootste chemieconcern, heeft (...)	Het Duitse Basf, <i>het grootste chemieconcern ter wereld</i> , heeft (...)	Basf, <i>de aanvoerder van de Europese chemie</i> , profiteerde (...)
BASF is worldwide one of the trendsetting companies in the chemical industry	BASF, <i>the world's largest chemical company</i> , has, (...)	The German Basf, <i>the largest chemical company in the world</i> , has (...)	Basf, <i>the leader of the European chemistry</i> , profited (...)

In the news story texts (a) and (b) the desk editor has made the claim more factual (from 'one of the trendsetting' to 'largest', which is controllable according to objective standards). A side effect of this intervention is that the description of the company has become more promotional than in the source text, which is apparently considered an acceptable risk. In news story (c) the desk editor made two interventions with a contrastive effect. On the one hand, he reduced the 'set of competitors' from 'the world' to 'Europe', thereby making the text less promotional. On the other hand, he selected the word *aanvoerder* 'leader', which has a connotation of power and virility, thereby strengthening the promotional effect.

This discussion of the individual interventions raises some doubts about the claim that adding promotional material is the main reason for the interventions. I would rather suggest that this is a side effect of another motive: Desk editors want to help their readers to understand the referents in the message, in the hope that readers are able to make a better assessment of the relevance of the message for themselves. In this respect appositions are a suitable location for implicit argumentation, as the example (33), taken from a fragment in a news story about *Vodafone*, has no counterpart in the source text:

(33)

Vodafone, <i>de tweede speler op markt voor mobiele telefonie in Nederland</i> , volgt hiermee marktleider KPN. (3, 14)
Vodafone, <i>the second player on the market for mobile telephony in the Netherlands</i> , follows market leader KPN in this.

‘The second player on the market for mobile telephony in the Netherlands’ offers exactly the right information to understand the logic in the reasoning: Companies that are in second position have no alternative than going along with the strategic decisions of the market leader.

Comparing the number of deletions and insertions of promotional material is problematic because of the small numbers: Nine promotional appositions are deleted against five inserted. There seems to be an inclination (not significant) towards more deletions, certainly if one realizes that some of the cases where promotional material was inserted could be explained by other motives. There are too few appositions with promotional content in order to assess whether the filtering of promotional material is really an important motive for editing. In any case, the motives of comprehensibility and relevance seem to have priority over the motive of objectivity.

5.4.2. Indirect evidence for neutral perspective as a motivation: Exchanges of head and apposition

As was made clear in the introduction, one of the criteria for appositions in traditional grammar is that head and apposition may change places. This also happens in our corpora, but until now these cases were not treated as revisions in their own right. In fact they were registered twice in the datafile: Once as cases where the apposition in the source text is promoted to the head of the news story construction, and once as cases where the source of the apposition in the news story was a head of the constituent in the source text. Now it is time to treat them in more unified way, by comparing the constructions.

(34) features what may be seen as a change from the designation type of apposition towards an appellative type:

(34)

Maarten Henderson (55), <i>CFO van Koninklijke KPN NV</i> , heeft besloten zijn carrière buiten KPN voort te zetten en is van plan voor eind 2004 het bedrijf te verlaten (3, 3)	De financieel bestuurder van KPN, <i>Maarten Henderson (55)</i> , is van plan het telecombedrijf voor eind van dit jaar te verlaten.
Maarten Henderson (55), <i>CFO of Royal KPN</i> , has decided to continue his career outside KPN and plans to leave the company before the end of 2004	The financial manager has the intention to leave the telecom company before the end of this year

What is the explanation for this operation? I suggest that the desk editor changes the text perspective from an insider's to an outsider's perspective. The structure of the total NP and apposition in the source text makes sense in the perspective of the company KPN itself: KPN employees first read the name *Maarten Henderson*. After reading the name, they realize that it refers to their boss, or they do not recognize him, and in that case it is helpful that they are given the information in the apposition. By contrast, the structure of the total NP and apposition in the news story follows from the perspective of the general public, who have no idea who Henderson is, but they know something about KPN and generally know that big companies have a chief financial officer. In

most news stories it will suffice to say that the CFO has done this or that, because the public is not interested in the name of this person, except in cases like (33), in which a person has the intention to resign.

If this explanation of the exchange is correct, we may expect that the change from the designation type to the appellation type of apposition occurs more frequently than the reverse, that is to say, from the appellation type to the designation type. See Table 13 for a test of this hypothesis, taking the three corpora together.

Table 13. Proportion of two types of exchanges of head and apposition

From designation to appellation	From appellation to designation	Total
15	1	16

Table 13 shows that the change from an insider's perspective towards the outsider's perspective occurs significantly more frequently than the reverse operation (χ^2 (df 3) = 11.3; $p = .001$).

An additional advantage of the appellation type of apposition is that it can occur as a restrictive apposition, which makes the intonation contour smoother, as example (35) makes clear.

(35)

Maarten Henderson (55), <i>CFO van Koninklijke KPN NV</i> , heeft besloten zijn carrière buiten KPN voort te zetten (3, 3)	Nu het vertrouwen in KPN is hersteld en (...) denken, vertrekt de CFO <i>Maarten Henderson</i> (55) aan het einde van dit jaar bij het Nederlandse telecombedrijf.
Maarten Henderson (55), <i>CFO of Royal KPN</i> , has decided to continue his career outside KPN	Now that the trust in KPN has been restored and (...) think, the CFO <i>Maarten Henderson</i> (55) will leave the company at the end of the year.

The desk editors seem to regard this possibility positively, as 11 of the 14 newly created appositions of the appellation type in the news stories are restrictive appositions with a non-restrictive counterpart in the source text. In doing this, the desk editors realize the beneficial effect of a more neutral outsider's perspective. This same re-perspectivising effect is accomplished by a different kind of operation in fragment (23): An independent head becomes a restrictive apposition.

6. Conclusions

In this last section most attention is given to the relation between the desk editor's operations and their most probable motives. But a few caveats apply here. Firstly, this investigation is about just one, and rather marginal type of construction, the apposition. Comparable investigations about, for example, direct objects are absent to my knowledge, therefore we do not know whether the deletion rates of appositions are normal for every type of phrase. Furthermore, I used three corpora which were rather divergent in terms of age, format and type. Besides that, the results of two corpora with

press releases differed on several points, which were not discussed here. And finally, the corpora were not too large, so that the results are based on small numbers.

Nevertheless, the results provide a certain insight into what is going on in the editing process. They are listed here:

- Desk editors edit roughly 50% of the appositions in source texts, which makes it a vulnerable segment.
- Deleting (shortening) and inserting new material (supplying extra information) are in a kind of balance. This might be an underestimation of the importance of the motive of shortening for editing in general, because desk editors prefer to delete larger fragments such as entire paragraphs, instead of smaller ones, such as appositions.
- Desk editors work efficiently: When creating new appositions, they predominantly use other fragments of the source text, not extra-textual sources.
- Editors prefer to spread the information from complex NPs in the source text over several phrases in the news story.
- Desk editors tend to create sentences with smoother intonation contours than the original sentences.
- The insertion of new appositions and new head NP's for appositions has two effects: Besides the obvious effect of supplying extra information, there is a secondary effect that the perspective changes from an inside disclosure of company achievements into an outsider's description of company activities.

Also a comment about the method used is in order. The comparison of the source texts with the news stories was limited to one type of constituent, the apposition. This limitation made it possible to approach the comparison from two perspectives: looking forward, by investigating what editors did with the appositions in the source texts, and looking backward, by investigating where the appositions in news stories came from in the source texts. The combination of these two perspectives provided a fuller insight in how a certain construction is 'used' in editing, and enabled us to discuss the editor's orientations in some detail.

More generally, the results of this study may be summed up as follows: Desk editors carry out two kinds of fine-tuning with regard to input copy (and press release copy in particular). First, they try to improve the processability of the input text in a general way, for instance by simplifying syntactic structures and replacing non-restrictive by restrictive appositions. These operations are general in that they do not presuppose specific assumptions about the target groups and may leave the text information virtually the same. The second range of activities is more ambitious in this respect: It involves re-perspectivising the text in order to adapt it to the prior knowledge and information needs of the lay reader. These kinds of operations include providing background information, but also adopting an outsider's perspective on the entities introduced in the text. Interestingly, simplifying and re-perspectivising operations go hand in hand.

Other work on press releases so far tends to focus on its functional and strategic aspects, relating text features to issues such as their multiple authorship, their multiple audiences and the purposes organizations hope to achieve through them in terms of enhancing positive perceptions. In contrast, this study does not address the wider strategic concerns behind press releases, but concentrates on the elementary quality of the press release text as text: To what degree is the text deemed suitable for effectively informing the general public? This is an issue of some importance, given the commonly recognized aim of press release writers to produce text that can easily be re-used by journalists. The study points to a number of stylistic mismatches between the press release style and the stylistic needs of the general audience. In other words, while other studies indicate that press releases are meant to do more than 'just' provide information, this study shows that effectively informing a general audience, according to journalistic standards, is a complex task by itself. This provides a deeper understanding of the functional complexities of the press release genre.

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