

**COMPARING JOURNALISTIC CULTURES:
CONSTRUCTING THE IDENTITY OF
FRED VAN DER VYVER AS NEWSMAKER**

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Declaration

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained herein is my own, original work, that I am the owner of the copyright thereof and that I have not previously, in its entirety or in part, submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

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ABSTRACT

This study examined how different words and phrases used within the media may portray a certain image of an individual, ultimately impacting the perception that the reader forms of such individual. Specifically, the manner in which Fred van der Vyver was portrayed by both an Afrikaans language newspaper and an English language newspaper in the Fred van der Vyver-Inge Lotz murder case was examined. This was a highly publicized case from March 2005, when Inge Lotz was found murdered, to November 2007, when Fred van der Vyver, who was suspected of killing Inge Lotz, was acquitted.

The aim of the study was to compare two South African journalistic cultures, namely the ones represented by *Cape Times* and *Die Burger*, respectively, in their construction of Fred van der Vyver as newsmaker. The rationale for the study was that newspaper coverage of a murder as well as of the investigation and trial which follow creates a certain perception among its readers, and that this perception is based on the information that readers accumulate by reading various published articles. The hypothesis was that both newspapers treated Fred van der Vyver as a newsmaker, and as a murdered in particular, by making use of various linguistic devices.

The data analyzed were a selection of articles published between March 2005 and November 2007 in the online versions of *Cape Times* and *Die Burger*. A focal point of the study was to show how different aspects of newspaper reporting – specifically headlines and the text itself – construct a particular view or image of the case in general and of Fred van der Vyver in particular.

It was found that neither the *Cape Times* nor *Die Burger* wrote that Fred van der Vyver was the murderer but both suggested it throughout by making use of linguistic devices. Loaded words, for example, were used to describe certain aspects of the case, and these aspects were then associated with Fred van der Vyver. Fred van der Vyver's identity had been presented as that of a murderer within the press by means of linguistic tools and language use. The hypotheses was therefore borne out by the data, as both newspapers had indeed portrayed the identity of Fred van der Vyver as that of a murderer.

What we read in the papers does have an influence on what we perceive to be true, objective or accurate and on how we ultimately form an opinion. In this case, the public automatically accepted Fred van der Vyver's identity as portrayed in the press, namely as that of a murderer, and assumed that he was guilty once he was arrested.

OPSOMMING

In hierdie studie is die manier ondersoek waarop die media verskillende woorde en frases gebruik het om 'n sekere beeld van 'n individu te skep en sodoende die leser se persepsie van sodanige individu te beïnvloed. Spesifiek die manier waarop Fred van der Vyver in die media uitgebeeld is deur beide 'n Afrikaanse en 'n Engelse koerant in hul dekking van die Fred van der Vyver-Inge Lotz moordsaak, is ondersoek. Laasgenoemde was 'n hoogs gepubliseerde saak wat gestrek het vanaf Maart 2005, toe Inge Lotz vermoor aangetref is, tot November 2007, toe Fred van der Vyver, wat van die moord verdink is, vrygespreek is.

Die doel van die studie was om twee Suid-Afrikaanse joernalistieke kulture wat deur onderskeidelik die *Cape Times* en *Die Burger* verteenwoordig word, met mekaar te vergelyk in hul konstruksie van Fred van der Vyver as nuusmaker. Die grondrede vir die studie was dat koerantdekking van 'n moord, sowel as die ondersoek en hofspraak wat volg, 'n sekere persepsie vorm onder lesers en dat hierdie persepsie gebaseer is op inligting wat deur lesers versamel is deur die artikels wat hul gelees het. Die hipotese was dat beide koerante Fred van der Vyver as 'n nuusmaker en as 'n moordenaar hanteer het deur gebruik te maak van sekere taalmeganismes.

Die data wat geanaliseer is, was 'n seleksie artikels wat tussen Maart 2005 en November 2007 gepubliseer is in die aanlyn-weergawes van die *Cape Times* en *Die Burger*. 'n Fokuspunt van die studie was om aan te toon hoe verskillende aspekte van koerantverslaggewing – spesifiek hoofopskrifte en die teks self – 'n sekere beeld of siening van die saak in die algemeen en van Fred van der Vyver in die besonder gekonstrueer het.

Daar is bevind dat nóg die *Cape Times* nóg *Die Burger* geskryf het dat Fred van der Vyver wel die moordenaar was, maar dat beide dit gesuggereer het deur die taalmeganismes wat hul gebruik het. Gelaaide woorde, byvoorbeeld, is gebruik om sekere aspekte van die saak te beskryf en hierdie aspekte is dan met Fred van der Vyver geassosieer. Fred van der Vyver se identiteit is in die media voorgestel as dié van 'n moordenaar as gevolg van taalgebruik en die gebruik van taalmeganismes. Die hipotese is dus bevestig deur die data – beide koerante het wel die identiteit van Fred van der Vyver as dié van 'n moordenaar voorgestel.

Wat ons in koerante lees, het 'n invloed op dit wat ons as waar, objektief of akkuraat beskou en op hoe ons uiteindelik 'n opinie vorm. In hierdie geval het die publiek outomaties Fred van der Vyver se identiteit aanvaar soos voorgestel in die media, naamlik as dié van 'n moordenaar en is daar ook aanvaar dat hy reeds skuldig is toe hy gearresteer is.

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CHAPTER 1:

INTRODUCTION

As individuals we are all influenced, our opinions shaped, reinforced and altered by our exposure to the media.

Sánchez Macarro (2002:13)

1.1 All news reporting is biased

All news is reported from a particular angle, seeing that the institutions of news reporting and the presentation thereof are socially, economically and politically situated (Fowler 1991:10). According to Fowler (1991:10), in news reporting, language is a structuring medium, meaning that anything that is said or written about the world is done from a particular ideological position. The topic of this thesis concerns the manner in which two specific journalistic cultures in South Africa shaped and constructed a certain identity of Fred van der Vyver in the press. This thesis will focus on the analysis of specifically the headlines and, to a lesser extent, the text of one newspaper from each of these journalistic cultures.

Wade (1985:273) states that the media plays an important role as a prime source of information for most of the general public but also mentions that this information would be determined by the individual's point of view. Individuals, depending on their own preferences, are thus in a position to either accept or reject the media message. The role of the media is often that of selector, narrator and interpreter of information; as such, it may not merely be confirming views about certain events or people but may actually have constructed these

views. The public has no alternative, reliable account that could be compared to media reports, as they were not there to see for themselves. It is clear that the media interpret events in a particular way and then report this particular interpretation in the media by making use of certain language (Wade 1985:276).

Kevelson (1977:22) states that people usually choose newspapers that reinforce what they already believe, and that they are generally indifferent to newspapers that oppose their preferred point of view. It is also noted that newspapers court subscribers for economic as well as ideological survival by initiating dialogue in the form of reporting and commenting on selected events that are based on commonly shared assumptions, presuppositions, moral and ethical values and especially a preferred in-group language code (Kevelson 1977:69).

1.2 Types of news reports

According to Bell (1991:12-13), “news” can be defined in terms of genres, that is, the particular kind of media in which one is interested, for example news about current affairs, classified advertising or weather forecasts. The media outlets are the publications, in the case of this thesis, the *Cape Times* and *Die Burger*. Outputs are what the media outlets produce in a specific time period – the time period in this case would be twenty four hours as the newspapers mentioned are daily papers. Media content includes many genres, most of which have a language component, such as news, letters to the editor, advertising and commentary (Bell 1991: 12-13). Genre, according to O’Keeffe (2006:23), is seen by many as linguistic vehicles, i.e., as a means to an end. He mentions that genres are how things get done when

language is used to accomplish them - this practical definition of genres is attractive because it is functional and straightforward (O’Keeffe 2006:23).

According to Bell (1991:13-14), anything other than advertising in a newspaper can be called “editorial”. Editorial content is referred to as written “copy” although it can also be visual with a language component (i.e., cartoons, for example). Editorial copy can be divided into service information, opinion, and news. Service information consists of lists rather than continuous copy: sports results and weather forecasts, for example. Opinion copy includes what are often called “editorials”: usually a statement of the newspaper’s view on an event, appearing on one of the inside pages. Examples include columns that appear regularly, letters to the editor and reviews. News can be divided into four categories namely hard news, feature articles, special topic news (including sports, financial matters and arts) and headlines, subheadings or photo captions. The basic distinction between hard news and features is that hard news is the main part of this trade; this includes reports of accidents, conflicts, crimes, announcements, discoveries or any other event that has attracted the newspaper’s attention since the previous issue. So-called “spot news”, which is a type of hard news, is mostly the once-off events, such as fires and disasters (i.e., unscheduled events that the newspaper learns about). The opposite to hard news is soft news, the most obvious being features which are no longer stories covering immediate events (Bell 1991:13-14).

White (1997:102) mentions that there are two types of hard news reports. The first is labelled an “event story” and the second an “issues report”. An event story describes a newsworthy happening and is usually concerned with situations that are constructed as threatening, i.e., situations that might damage, disrupt or rearrange the social order materially, politically or

normatively. White (1997:104) groups these sources of disruption under aberrant damage, adversative rearrangements of power relations and normative breach, respectively. The latter involves events that may be interpreted as different from the established morality or custom. These events pertain to, among others, obvious crime and corruption, and acts of incompetence or negligence – i.e., events where clear-cut illegality is involved. There is thus a sense of moral breach that underlies the newsworthiness of the reports (White 1997:105).

The event story claims to describe socially disruptive events first hand, i.e., presenting an account of what happened as if the reporter had been present at the time (White 1997:106). White (1997:108) mentions that the presence of content that encodes a sense of intensity or heightened involvement by the author is a recurring feature in the hard news report. This positions the reader to view the events or statements described as either significant, momentous or emotionally charged. It is said that because this intensification is such a common feature of hard news reporting, it acts to mark news reporting as a distinctive variety of language (White 1997:108-109).

1.3 Deciding what is newsworthy

When reading newspapers, we usually assume that the information in the newspaper about events in the world has been covered in a truthful manner. This assumption is realistic only to a certain extent (Fowler 1991:11). For instance, a bus overturning on the N1 is not inherently newsworthy; it only becomes news when selected for inclusion in news reports. Selection therefore immediately gives us a partial view of the world, as many events that occur are not

mentioned. Related to this is that different newspapers report differently, in terms of content and in terms of representation (Fowler 1991:11).

Newspapers are interested in events or people that are newsworthy. Events that are of public interest keep readers interested and ensure good circulation of the paper. Newsmakers, according to Scollon (1998:245), are figures crafted and constructed out of words and characterizations by the journalist. Furthermore, newsmakers (those on whom media discourses report) are distinguished from the other two groups of participants in these discourses, namely newswriters (for example, journalist and editors) and readers of the news (i.e., the audience). Scollon (1998:ix) compares newswriters and newsmakers: Newswriters have identity and little voice whereas newsmakers have voice but very little identity. The newsmaker on which this study focuses is Fred van der Vyver, a person accused of murder. As reports on a murderer would be more newsworthy than reports on an innocent person, it was in the interest of the media to construct the identity of Fred van der Vyver as that of a murderer, regardless of whether he was guilty or innocent.

1.4 Journalistic cultures in South Africa

The South African society, as any other society, provides the framework for the expression and expectations about how the media functions (in other words, what the media should or should not do). These expectations are usually based on values within the society and are articulated by a certain system of government (democracy, for example), resulting in policy formulation. Using democracy as an example – democracy is a system of government and an ideology that

articulates certain fundamental values such as freedom but, as part of the framework, also sets specific expectations for the media, giving rise to media policy (Fourie 2001:164).

The historically different positions of the different newspapers in South Africa can be divided along linguistic and ethnic lines – the relationship between the press and the government has always been strained (Fourie 2001:34). The result of this strained relationship was manifested in the form of constant threats and restrictive regulation, with tension rising and falling in accordance with political developments in the South African history. Five themes are identified that run through the history of the press in South Africa, resulting in the development of the press into different paths; one of these themes focuses on the divisions of the press based on language (Fourie 2001:34).

There are still differences in the way different language newspapers (English and Afrikaans newspapers, for example) portray different groups and events in South Africa, although the political climate in South Africa has changed. A further division of the press into distinct strands is the English press, the Afrikaans press, the black press and the alternative press, each following its own development pattern (Fourie 2001:34; Tomaselli and Tomaselli 1987).

According to Fourie (2001:37), the passive attitude adopted by the Afrikaans press can be ascribed to the Afrikaner's inherent understanding of freedom. The concept of freedom for the Dutch Afrikaner stemmed from the authority of and obedience to the state. The English press's attitude towards freedom was seen as embedded within the individual, with the state functioning as an extension of that freedom in order to serve the interests of the individual and guarantee that freedom of the individual. These differing views caused the English press to

place a higher value on freedom of the individual than the Afrikaans press did. These different adopted approaches continued to influence the press right through the 20th century (Fourie 2001:37).

The development of the Afrikaans press during the first half of the 20th century is intertwined with politics and needs to be understood within the context of a complex socio-cultural history of the Afrikaner (Fourie 2001:42-43). *De Burger* first appeared in 1915, later to become *Die Burger*. The establishment of the paper served as a business enterprise for professionals' capital and gave them the opportunity to air their political views. The *Cape Times* forms part of the Independent Newspapers Group; independent publications are not prescribed as to what can or should be published (Fourie 2001:65).

Newspapers during the Apartheid era were labelled either as supportive of or in opposition to the government. The Afrikaans press was in a privileged position under Apartheid due to close bonds formed between the government and the Afrikaans press during the first half of the 20th century (Fourie 2001:44). Government controlled the flow of information in order to sustain the apartheid system. The English press during the apartheid era was labelled as unpatriotic and rebellious. Most newspapers during this time decided to play it safe and print only news that would not provoke the ire of government (Fourie 2001:44).

1.5 The present study

From the above, it becomes clear that the Afrikaans-language press and the English-language press have distinct histories and cultures in South Africa. The **aim** of this research project is to compare these two South African journalistic cultures in their construction of Fred van der Vyver as newsmaker. Online articles from the *Cape Times*, a Cape Town based English-language newspaper, and *Die Burger*, a Cape Town based Afrikaans-language newspaper, will be analysed, focussing on the similarities and differences in their reporting of the Fred van der Vyver-Inge Lotz murder case: Inge Lotz, a young female student from Stellenbosch, was murdered in her flat in March 2005; her boyfriend, Fred van der Vyver, was arrested for her murder three months later and went to trial. This was a highly publicised case during the more than two year period between the murder of Inge Lotz and the acquittal of Fred van der Vyver – both newspapers during this time constructed a certain identity of Fred van der Vyver and of the case in general.

The question arose as to whether the public is aware of the influence of newspaper articles when forming a perception and an ultimate opinion based on the information fed to them via newspaper articles. Is the public aware of the fact that different language newspapers have different ways in which information is presented and different means of language use, and that these differences essentially form a different idea of the event reported on?

Data analysed in this research project were collected from the online versions the two newspapers, the *Cape Times* and *Die Burger*. A selection of the articles published between March 2005 and November 2007 forms the basis of the research. A focal point in the thesis

was how the different aspects of newspaper reporting – specifically headlines and the text itself - construct a particular view or image of the case in general, and of Fred van der Vyver in particular. Headlines from the two different newspapers were compared to determine how these attracted attention and shaped our perception of Fred van der Vyver and to determine what similarities and differences can be identified between the headlines appearing in the two newspapers. Finally, Fowler (1991), Reah (1998) and Bolinger`s (1981) analytic devices were used to analyse excerpts from articles appearing in the two newspapers.

The **rationale** for the study is that newspaper coverage of a murder and the investigation and trial creates a certain perception among its readers; this perception is based on information that the readers accumulate by reading various articles published in newspapers. Language use plays a fundamental role in how this perception is formed; some papers use descriptive language whereas others give a more formal account of the specific event. Most people are dependent on the information or facts fed through by the media; not everyone has the time or jurisdiction to personally follow up on such a case.

The first **hypothesis** of this study was that both newspapers constructed Fred van der Vyver`s identity as that of a murderer (hence a newsmaker), by making use of various linguistic devices. This study also focussed on the differences in reporting between the English-language and Afrikaans language newspapers, expecting to find many differences in terms of language use when comparing the English-language headlines and phrases to the Afrikaans-language ones. The second hypothesis was that that the English-language newspaper will make use of more formal language and that it will take a less biased perspective in comparison to the more informal language and more biased perspective of the Afrikaans-language newspaper.

The **lay-out** of the thesis is as follows: The concept of ‘newspapers as constructors of ideas’, some technical aspects related to reporting, and the analytic devices employed in this study are discussed in detail in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 provides a general overview of the murder case. In Chapter 4, a selection of headlines and excerpts from newspaper articles on the case is presented and analysed. In Chapter 5, I consider whether the hypotheses of this study was borne out by the results of the data analysis, i.e., whether both the *Cape Times* and *Die Burger* indeed made use of (different) linguistic and textual devices in order to construct the identity of Fred van der Vyver as that of a murderer.

CHAPTER 2:

NEWSPAPERS AS CONSTRUCTORS OF IDEAS

2.1 Introduction

The aim of this study was to compare how language is used by the *Cape Times* and *Die Burger*, respectively, within the media, and how this language use may influence the perception of the reader. The analysis of the language of media text (in other words, what has been written in the press or produced online) may shed some light on questions regarding media output. These questions are concerned with how the world (or events) is represented; how identities are set up for those involved in the story; and how the relationship between the reporter and the audience is portrayed. The assumption is that any part of any text will simultaneously be representing, setting up identities and setting up relations (Fairclough 1995:5).

According to Fairclough (1995:55), language use simultaneously forms part of social identities, social relations and systems of knowledge and belief. These aspects of society and culture relate to identities, relationships and representations, and are shaped by various texts. The assumption is that all three (i.e., identities, relationships and representations) are present and active, although one might appear to be more dominant. Language use can therefore be part of maintaining or of reproducing existing social identities, relations and systems of knowledge and belief. Language use can also help transform them, depending on the social circumstances and how the language is functioning therein (Fairclough 1995:55).

The choice of vocabulary plays an important role when events, actions, the people involved in these, and the time, place and circumstances of the occurrence are represented in language (Fairclough 1995:109). The vocabulary with which one is familiar provides sets of pre-constructed categories. Representation involves deciding how to “place” what is being represented within these sets of categories, for example deciding between the word *murderer* and the word *killer* (Fairclough 1995:109).

The discussion in section 2.2 shows how newspapers act as constructors of ideas by making use of language. Language in the press is not always neutral, as different newspapers represent events and ideas differently. In section 2.3, various views of the different components of news reports that make up a newspaper article are examined. These components include headlines (including their functions and effects), images and graphological/textual features, and analytic devices (specifically Fowler’s analytic devices).

2.2 Newspapers as constructors of ideas

Fowler (1991) examines how language is used in newspapers to form ideas and beliefs. His view is that the content of newspapers does not consist of facts only, but rather of ideas, beliefs, values, theories or ideologies about the world. He shows that language is not neutral but rather a constructive intermediary (Fowler 1991:1). This means that events in the media are by nature a construction; the media in terms of language use portrays these events. The two journalistic cultures under discussion in this thesis adopted an intermediary role in the murder case of Inge Lotz, acting as the medium through which information was circulated to the general public. Events surrounding the Inge Lotz murder trial were regarded as

newsworthy, given the criteria for newsworthiness (such that any murder is newsworthy; a brutal murder of a beautiful talented girl is more newsworthy; and denial of guilt by the primary suspect adds to the newsworthiness). As stated before, news is not simply that which happens – news is that which is regarded as newsworthy and is reported. What is reported is not necessarily representative of that which happened; the former represents what the reporters and editors count as salient, and this selection process (by which it is decided what will be reported and what not) could lead to bias. Events that are selected for reporting have to comply with a complex set of criteria (Fowler 1991:13), to which we return below.

Bell (1991:156) discusses various news values and proposes that the manner in which aspects of the news are presented in a story can enhance the newsworthiness of the story. The value of negativity supposes that negative events make up the basis of “spot news”. That which is negative, involving concepts such as damage, injury and death (or murder, in the case of this study), makes disasters, accidents and crimes newsworthy. The value of recency supposes that the news is mostly that which has just happened. Recency (related to frequency) is how well a story conforms with the news work cycles. A day is the basic news cycle for the daily press, meaning that events that occur within a 24-hour span are more likely to be reported. The murder and the verdict are therefore more newsworthy (because it fits into a 24-hour span) than the police investigation and the trial, which takes place over a number of weeks or months. The value of relevance is concerned with the effect that the event has on the audience’s own lives or the closeness of the event to the audience’s experience. What the article means for the ordinary reader needs to be taken into consideration if relevance is to be achieved (Bell 1991:156-158). Reporting on the Inge Lotz trial could have obtained relevance to Stellenbosch readers or readers with close ties to this town due to the fact that she had been

a young student living close to the Stellenbosch campus; many students as well as parents could have been worried about the fact that she had been murdered in her own home in a seemingly safe environment and that someone she knew well (her boyfriend) had been accused of being her murderer.

Other values proposed by Bell (1991:159) included in the news process are continuity and predictability. The value of continuity supposes that something tends to stay in the news once it is in the news. If a story is run today, it would have a better chance of appearing again but with a different angle; news, in other words, tends to breed news. Also, once a news outlet has a good story, the competitors would also want to run the story. Predictability relates to scheduling: when an event can be pre-scheduled; the journalist is more likely to cover the story than a story that turned up unheralded (Bell 1991:159).

In contrast to the five news values proposed by Bell (1991) – negativity, recency, relevance, continuity and predictability – Fowler (1991) proposed twelve. Fowler (1991) recognizes the accounts of others, such as Stuart Hall (1970), when he notes that the news media selects events for reporting according to a complex set of criteria with regards to newsworthiness – news is that which can be regarded and presented as newsworthy. These criteria, or news values, are to fulfil some kind of gate-keeping role, filtering and restricting news inputs. The more criteria of newsworthiness an event satisfies, the more likely it is to be reported. Negative events usually score high on most criteria and so receive massive (newspaper) coverage. A widely accepted analysis of news values, according to Fowler (1991:13-14), is the following: (A1) frequency, (A2) threshold (including absolute intensity and intensity increase), (A3) unambiguity, (A4) meaningfulness (including cultural proximity and

relevance), (A5) consonance (including predictability and demand), (A6) unexpectedness (including unpredictability and scarcity), (A7) continuity, (A8) composition, (A9) reference to elite nations, (A10) reference to elite people, (A11) reference to persons and (A12) reference to something negative. Each of these news values is briefly discussed below.

(A1), frequency, implies that, because newspapers are generally published once a day, a single event is more likely to be reported than a long process. Threshold (A2) refers to the “size” or “volume” needed for an event to become newsworthy; a car crash involving ten vehicles would receive more attention than one involving two, for example. (A3) to (A5) refers to the readers’ ability to make sense of an event. Unambiguity (A3) is a criterion when an event can be related to cultural stereotypes – proposing that it is not open to more than one interpretation. For instance, as will be shown, newspapers presented the information regarding Inge Lotz and Fred van der Vyver in such a way that the average reader assumed that there is a correlation between Fred van der Vyver and a cold-blooded murderer. Consonance (A5) refers to categories of events, which people either expect to happen (violence, for example) or want to happen (royal or celebrity weddings, for example). Unexpectedness (A6) says that an event is more newsworthy if it happens without warning or if it is unusual – most murders are unexpected, but what was particularly unexpected about the case involving Fred van der Vyver and Inge Lotz was the fact that he (her boyfriend) was arrested for her murder. Continuity (A7) implies that once something is in the news, it will most likely continue to be defined as news for some time to come. Composition (A8) refers to the balance or make-up of a newspaper; an item will be more or less newsworthy depending on what else is available for inclusion. The last four, (A9) to (A12), are culture-bound factors influencing the transition from events to news. The media has a certain obsession with using some people as symbols in

the news. Discussions and explanations of other underlying social and economic factors may be lost in the process; an example here, given by Fowler (1991:16), would be that, in the British Press, the brick-throwing rioter is imaged over and over again but unemployment and the poverty of social services are rarely documented. There is no natural reason why negativity (A12), i.e., disasters should be more newsworthy than triumphs. These values mentioned above should make it evident that the selection criteria for newsworthiness are “socially constructed” (Fowler 1991:14-16).

Fowler (1991) notes that a stereotype is socially constructed; events and individuals are thus sorted into some sort of “pigeonhole” in order to better understand such events or individuals. These “pigeonholes”, or categories, are a creative projection onto the world, and our relationship with newspapers makes a major contribution to this process of construction. Many rely on stereotypes when concerned with the understanding of news events and news values (Fowler 1991:17). A striking event will reinforce the stereotype, and the firmer the stereotype, the more likely it is that the relevant event will become news (Fowler 1991:17).

Representation in the press and other kinds of media and discourse is a constructive practice. Events and ideas are not communicated neutrally, because the transmission occurs through a medium, which has its own structural features. These features have social values of their own, giving a potential perspective on events. The manner in which the medium is used implies options for the editor – the physical and structural characteristics of the medium offer certain choices (i.e., by still photography or language). These choices are made systematically according to circumstances, and become associated with conventional meanings (Fowler 1991:25). Fowler (1991:37) furthermore notes that forms of expression within a language do

not only answer to social and economic circumstances or characteristics of speech but also to the meanings that a culture assigns to itself and its components. The forms of language therefore encode a socially constructed representation of the world. When overhearing radio or television programmes without knowing in advance what they are, we can classify what we hear as a talk on science, a political interview or sports commentary. The form of language is not determined by the content or an individual journalist's voice but rather by lexical and syntactic choices, intonation and pace – this identifies the kind of discourse and its context (Fowler 1991:37).

In the opinion of Caldas-Coulthard (2003:272), the language of the media discourses are one of the most pervasive and widespread discourses that people are exposed to; the production of written and spoken news invades our lives on a daily basis. News is a report or recontextualization of an event, and how a topic is treated in the news depends on the definitions and opinions of the person chosen to comment on the specific event. News is therefore a cultural construct that encodes fixed ideas rather than an objective representation of facts (Caldas-Coulthard 2003:273).

Human communication, according to Fowler (1991:54), is loaded with systems of beliefs and categories. The world is presented according to the needs of the societies within which communication takes place. Values and representations of experience are encoded in the media through language. When Inge Lotz was murdered in her flat (in a manner which can be described as “brutal”), a reaction of disbelief passed through the wider society. Such an act of violence is generally regarded as an injustice to both the family and the victim. A need is created to find and prosecute the guilty party in order for justice to prevail. The beliefs of the

general public were influenced by the way in which the events surrounding the murder and the evidence in court were presented by the newspapers. Society's need of finding a suspect was fulfilled once the newspapers made it known that "evidence" placed Fred van der Vyver on the scene. This revelation ensured that readers stayed interested in the case, and subsequent information circulated to the general public was aimed at maintaining this interest.

Altschull (1984:8) agrees that there is a certain need for information in our contemporary world and that the general public is interested in events happening around them or in other parts of the world. He argues, however, that there is no evidence in support of the claim that this need for information is necessarily a need for accurate information about public affairs (Altschull 1984:8). Newspapers change and adapt information circulated according to the needs of their readers. Yet most people reading newspapers expect facts to have been presented in a meaningful manner and assume that the news is accurate and truthful (Altschull 1984:181).

Many scholars have researched language in the press and the use thereof to express certain ideological views. Altschull (1984) notes that the press has always been a powerful force, because it reaches the masses and because it has been recognized as a tool that can be used to educate people. The press, however, can also be used as a means of propaganda, suggesting the promotion of certain information or allegations to assist or damage a certain cause (Altschull 1984: 9-10). Those believing in the innocence of Fred van der Vyver claimed that the newspapers deliberately portrayed a negative image of him – almost as if he was guilty until proven innocent. This contributed to the widespread public view that he was in fact a murderer.

Journalists are not without power – there are certain facts regarding an event that they have to include in a report, but the tone and type of language used can reflect either a personal or professional stance with regards to the event. Altschull (1984:72) concludes that journalists can only achieve their ends when their goals and that of society coincide. This alignment of the journalists' goals and that of society also occurred in the murder case of Inge Lotz – her family, the general public, the police and certain private investigators made it their mission to convict a suspect, Fred van der Vyver, provided to them by the media. When dealing with newspaper articles, one has to bear in mind that journalists have already reconstructed the texts that we analyse, as noted in Jaworski and Coupland (1999). The analysis of language in use is ultimately a linguistic, cognitive and social affair (Jaworski and Coupland 1999:8).

Language makes classification possible – it cannot be a neutral medium for the transmission and reception of pre-existing knowledge (Jaworski and Coupland 1999:3). Fred van der Vyver, once accused of murder, was classified by many as a murderer or at least as someone capable of committing such a violent crime. Newspapers contribute to classification through their use of language. Richardson (2007) notes that the analysis of particular words in a newspaper text is very useful, as words convey the imprint of society and of value judgements in particular. Content words (i.e., nouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs) have connotative as well as denotative meanings (Richardson 2007:47), which enable a journalist to select a word that does not merely convey information but also a perception.

The words used to communicate the message of a text – whether about an individual or an event – frame the story in direct and unavoidable ways. The way in which people are named in news discourse can have a significant impact on the way in which they are viewed. Every

person has various identities, roles and characteristics that could be used to describe such a person equally accurately, but not all of these concepts or words would have the same meaning (Richardson 2007:48-49). Fred van der Vyver, for instance, was often referred to as *boyfriend* in the press, which qualifies his identity in terms of Inge Lotz, instead of referring to him in his own capacity.

Altschull (1984:143) mentions that a critical aspect of human behaviour is that of naming things. Journalists have to provide names for the people in the events that they report on; this naming involves choice. By choosing one category over another, people are included within a certain category and excluded from other, different categories. One category could be foregrounded over other alternative ones (Richardson 2007:49). These words that journalists use to describe people (and specifically newsmakers) can influence readers to place a person in a certain category; as such, journalists (or newspapers) are constructing certain ideas in the minds of their readership.

2.3 Components of reporting

Newspapers have various technical means at their disposal when reporting on events or when constructing the identity of people involved in newsworthy events. Three components – headlines, images and graphological/textual features, and text itself – are discussed in this section.

2.3.1 Headlines

Scollon notes that there are four elements, according to Bell (1991), in a printed news story, i.e., the headline, the byline, the lead and the story itself. Each of these has a characteristic placement and a characteristic “author”. For instance, the headline and byline (as well as photograph placements) are usually decided upon by a sub-editor, whereas the story and the lead are usually written by the bylined writer, although both may be rewritten by the sub-editor (Scollon 1998:192-193).

Headlines, according to Bell (1991:185-186), are the newspaper’s opportunity to stamp its individuality on a product that would otherwise have been mass-produced. This is the ultimate summary of information, and the headline, unlike the lead, is a stand-alone unit that abstracts the story (Bell 1991:187). The headline is entirely derivable from the story, whereas the lead may carry new information that does not recur in the story (Bell 1991:187).

The lead, according to Bell (1991:176), is the most distinctive feature of news discourse and also the most difficult aspect of news writing for journalists to produce. Leads should have values of newsworthiness and brevity, and should be packed with information and news appeal while at the same time being as short as possible as well as clearly understood. The lead functions as a micro-story (Bell 1991:176), and should be distinctive enough to separate the story from all other stories (Bell 1991:186). This is in contrast tho headlines, which, according to Reah (2002:13), functions to summarize the gist of the story and attract attention to the article. Headlines may cause confusion or have an ambiguous meaning, because journalists have to comply with space restrictions as well as page layout.

Journalists have to bear in mind that newspapers are bought by a wide range of people with different needs. Some people prefer to read the newspaper from front to back, others prefer to read only certain sections, whereas the rest may only skim through the headlines. “Headline reading” is useful, as this provides a general idea or summary of the day’s news. One is able to form such summarized idea of the news because of the content of the headline, the importance of the news (by taking note of the position of the article in the paper and the impact of visual images) and its classification (i.e., the section in which the article was placed (Reah 2002:13-14).

An effective headline should carry information, be short and attention grabbing. Reah (2002:17-18) mentions a list of devices normally used to create headlines, namely ambiguity, intertextuality, phonology, loaded words, omission of grammatical words, the use of noun phrases and class shift. Some of these devices will be discussed briefly. Ambiguity entails the use of word play and a word with more than one meaning in headlines. Take, for example, the headline *Aisle not marry you*; the word *aisle* is a homophone of (i.e., identical in sound to) the phrase *I’ll*, and *aisle* furthermore related to *marry* in the sense that *walking down the aisle* is often used as synonymous to *getting married*. Intertextuality is the use of cultural phrases and sayings, many originating from songs, films or books, in headlines. Richardson (2007) proposes that intertextuality is founded on the notion that texts cannot be viewed or studied in isolation, since texts are not produced or consumed in isolation. All texts exist in relation to other texts and must therefore be understood in this relation (Richardson 2007:100). The headline *Eagle is landed* makes reference to the title of the well-known novel of Jack Higgins’ *The Eagle has landed*. According to Reah (2002:18), the purpose of phonology is to make the reader more aware of sound so that the headline will be more memorable. The headline *Tony’s phoney-war cabinet* makes use of rhyme to create a memorable headline. Loaded words

usually have strong connotations or an emotional characteristic beyond the literal meaning, and as such are highly effective in headlines. Take the word *butchered*, for example. The meaning of the verb *butchered*, according to the Oxford Paperback Dictionary and Thesaurus (Hawker and Waite 2007:117) means “to kill or cut up an animal” – the denotation changes to, “to kill someone brutally” when applied to humans, suggesting extreme and cruel violence. Bolinger (1981:121) states that loaded words can influence memory as well as perception – experiments revealed that certain words created a certain perception with the audience. For example in one experiment, 150 viewers were shown a film of a multiple car crash accident – 50 of the subjects were asked how fast the cars were going when they *smashed* and the other 50 were asked how fast the cars were going when they *hit* (the remaining 50 were controls). The *hit* subjects averaged eight miles per hour for their estimate as opposed to the *smash* subjects which averaged around ten and a half miles per hour. These are examples of loaded words. A second study revealed an increase in the estimated speed for the following words, given in order of the lowest to highest estimated speed: *contacted*, *hit*, *bumped*, *collided*, and *smashed*.

Headlines also perform a visual function; the text is usually larger than the rest of the article, working together with other visual aspects such as pictures (Reah 2002:24). It is easier to persuade the reader to buy the newspaper with an attractive headline, i.e., a visual, ambiguous or shocking text may prove to be more effective.

Headlines are important in the sense that it is the first encounter that the reader makes with the news report. Journalists are able to encapsulate the entire story in the headline by making use of creative language (Reah 2002:32). Newspapers aim to influence the readers in order to

persuade them to read the story. A highly publicized court case, such as the one involving Fred van der Vyver, stretching over a period of more than two years is both an interesting and challenging story from a newspaper's point of view; the newspaper has to maintain interest if they wish to keep running the story – making use of effective and “catchy” headlines helps to keep interest high. *Police arrest boyfriend of slain Matie* (*Cape Times*, 16 June 2005) is an example of a headline that would attract the attention and persuade readers to read the story. Mentioning that Lotz's *boyfriend* had been arrested for her murder, as opposed to merely a *man* or even *friend*, suggests foul play or an ulterior motive for the crime implying that it was calculated murder as opposed to a random act of killing. Also, the word *Matie* is more catching than *woman*, because *Matie* identifies the deceased more specifically than *woman* would.

Content words (such as adjectives, adverbs, nouns and verbs), as their name implies, have content and therefore occur frequently in headlines, whereas grammatical words (such as determiners like *a*, *the*, *this* and *that* and auxiliary verbs such as *have*, *be* and *do*) are usually omitted from headlines, as these do not contribute any content. In this way, factual detail regarding the story is included while still keeping the headline short. However, this can lead to ambiguity, as content words often need grammatical words to establish word class (Reah 2002:19). The headline *Boyfriend 'knew about knife wounds'* (*Cape Times*, 23 February 2007) gives factual detail with regards to the case but is ambiguous: The question arises as to whether he knew about the knife wounds because he was at the scene and involved in murdering Inge Lotz or whether he knew about the wounds because he had been informed that she had been stabbed.

Aitchison, Lewis and Naylor (2002:24-25) note that headlines make use of short words such as *axe* instead of *closure*, *ban* instead of *prohibition*, *wed* for *marry* and *mob* for *crowd*. These authors made an analysis of violent death headlines (over a six month period in four newspapers), especially headlines containing the nouns *murder*, *death* and *killer*. They found that the noun *murder* was more predominant than both *death* and *killer*, mainly because murders are usually more newsworthy than deaths and because more murderers are reported than killers apprehended (Aitchison et al. 2002:24-25). Another finding was that murder headlines showed a clear murder formula as regards the words preceding or following the word *murder*; the sequence in the headline was usually the following: the victim (or place or cause), the word *murder*, a legal or abstract term and the person accused (Aitchison et al. 2002:25-27). The noun immediately preceding *murder* within the sequence usually referred to the victim (in 59% of the headlines analyzed). An example from the *Cape Times* or partial use of such murder headline formula would be *Lotz murder: State says it has ample proof* where the victim's name (Lotz) occurs before the word *murder*.

Headlines are usually a summarized version of an event, giving the reader an idea of what to expect in the rest of the article. Effective headlines attract the attention of the reader by giving just enough information to convince the reader to buy the newspaper and read the story. As stated, headlines draw attention by making use of devices such as ambiguity, intertextuality, phonology, loaded words, omission of grammatical words, the use of noun phrases and class shift (Reah 2002:17-18). Many of the headlines printed between the murder of Inge Lotz and the acquittal of Fred van der Vyver were filled with loaded words to the disadvantage of Fred van der Vyver. Most of these portrayed him as a murderer. Consider one example from the *Cape Times* and one from *Die Burger*, to be discussed later:

Boyfriend grilled about Lotz's murder (*Cape Times*, 19 October 2007)

Inge Lotz: Bloed aan Fred se hamer (*Die Burger*, 16 February 2007)

[Inge Lotz: Blood on Fred's hammer]

The headline, mainly derived from the lead paragraph, is the newspaper's opportunity to stamp its individuality on what is otherwise a mass-produced product (Bell 1991:185). Headlines are often written by news workers other than the journalist who wrote the actual article, because the length of headlines is dictated by the constraints of page layout, and page layout is the work of subeditors, not journalists (Bell 1991:185-186).

Headlines are not just a summary of an event; it forms part of language use within the news that attract the attention of the reader. Common language devices are used such as alliteration, punning and quotes (Bell 1991:189).

Direct quotation serves three main purposes in news reporting. A direct quote qualifies as the newsmaker's own words and is therefore valued as an unquestionable fact. The function of distancing and disowning is used to pardon journalists and news outlets from approving what have been said by the source. A direct quotation is also the only place where the first and second person pronouns occur; indirect quotation converts first and second persons to the third person. The absence of first persons from news stories is in complete contrast to conversational narratives (which are usually told about the speaker). Direct quotation in news stories is the exception, not the rule. Journalists mostly turn what has been said into indirect speech; this puts the journalist in control of the focus of the story when combining information and wordings (Bell 1991:208-209).

Almost everyone appearing in the news is named and labeled. How actors are labeled within the news correlate to news values; news stories characterize their actors in passing, i.e., within the flow of telling the action, no specific time is set aside for working on a description (Bell 1991: 195). Consider the headline from *Die Burger* below:

Oos-Kaapse vriend vas oor Lotz-moord (*Die Burger*, 16 June 2005)

[Eastern Cape friend cornered / in custody over Lotz murder]

This headline conveniently characterizes one actor without specifically setting time aside for detailed descriptions: Fred van der Vyver is referred to, in a brief manner, as a person (originally) from the Eastern Cape and as someone that was close to Inge Lotz (a friend).

2.3.2 Images and graphological/textual features

Discourses in newspaper reporting are supposed to be informative and neutral but Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) seeks to show that these might convey ideological attitudes in the same way as discourses used for propaganda purposes. Anthonissen (2003:299-300) mentions that Kress and van Leeuwen (2001) intend to broaden the approach of CDA with their grammar of visual design by including the structure and use of images. They have paid close attention to trends in public communication, and have observed that there is a notable incursion of the visual into domains formally dominated by language. They draw attention to the fact that images are not necessarily neutral or natural but fall into the realm of ideology, as with any other mode of discourse (Anthonissen 2003:299-300).

Images play an important role in newspapers because of the complex interplay between written text, images and other graphic elements that combine, by means of layout, into visual designs. The relation between image and text can be distinguished in two ways: firstly, the verbal texts may extend the meaning of the image (or vice versa) and therefore add more information; secondly, the verbal text may elaborate on the meaning of the image (or vice versa) thus giving the image a more precise translation (Anthonissen 2003:300).

Kress and van Leeuwen (2001) note that the visual component of a text is an independently organized and structured message, which the above distinction fails to recognize. The visual component is connected to the written component but not always dependent on it – the visual and verbal modes represent two sets of meaning. The approach of Kress and van Leeuwen's to communication originates from a social base. Meanings expressed by writers, for example, are primarily social meanings that arise out of a specific society. Texts are constructed differently through different media, showing social difference as a result of societies not being homogeneous (Anthonissen 2003:301).

Anthonissen (2003:300) finds that Kress and van Leeuwen distinguish between different kinds of relations between the verbal and the visual. Firstly, the written text may be dominant, with the visual highlighting important points. Secondly, the written text may be less important, with the message articulated primarily in the visual mode. Thirdly, the visual and verbal components may duplicate each other by expressing the same meanings. Fourthly, the visual and verbal components may complement and extend each other. Finally, the visual and verbal components may clash and contradict each other (Anthonissen 2003:302).

A graphological analysis of the reporting on the Inge Lotz murder falls outside of the scope of this study. However, some of the relations between the verbal and the visual mentioned above will now be illustrated with examples from such reporting: On the 30th of November 2007, both the *Cape Times* and *Die Burger* ran an article on Fred van der Vyver's acquittal, which took place the previous day. *Die Burger* ran a full front-page story with more than one photograph, whereas only a section of the front page of the *Cape Times* was occupied by the story. Front pages are the first point of address for the readers and this is how the newspapers represent the most significant events of the day (Kress and van Leeuwen 2001:229). *Die Burger* printed a headline over the top of a photograph, which covered the width of the page. The headline read *Wie was dit dan?* ("Who was it then?"), and the photograph gave a close-up image of Fred van der Vyver looking to the sky (see Appendix A). This is an example of the visual and verbal components complementing and extending each other (Kress and van Leeuwen 2001:16): the headline tells the reader that the guilty party was not the one that was assumed all along to be the guilty party and the photograph "says" *as dit dan nie Fred van der Vyver was nie* ("if it then wasn't Fred van der Vyver"). *Die Burger* covered the left hand side of the page with a set of small close-up photos of Fred van der Vyver. On the front page of the *Cape Times*, a very similar "looking towards the sky" picture of Fred van der Vyver appeared at the top left hand side (see Appendix B). This is a certain sequence used by newspapers; we are accustomed to reading from left to right, therefore newspapers place the most important information on the left (Kress and van Leeuwen 2001:225). The headline of the *Cape Times* read *Van der Vyver in tears as not guilty verdict is read out*. Interestingly, the accompanying photograph does not depict Fred van der Vyver as being in tears; to a limited extent, then, this is an example of the visual and the verbal components contradicting each other (Kress and van Leeuwen 2001:16).

2.3.3 Text

Fowler (1991:66) maintains that the structure of a news text embodies values and beliefs, especially under the pressure of social circumstance of communication. Representation of events and concepts is determined by the structure of the type of medium, which means that representation is usually from a specific ideological point of view embedded with certain values and ideology.

Many readers are unaware of the linguistic variety available to communicate meaning in society, believing mostly that one mode of discourse will suffice for any particular situation (Fowler 1991:66). This preferred mode of discourse might be that of a prestige speaker, or the mode chosen by the individual reader. Most people have set ideas about how reliable the press is and prefer to read only certain newspapers, making no effort to learn from other discourses available in society. Restricting one's source of information to only one media source will limit the scope of experience and only confirm one's already formed opinions on or perceptions of an event or situation. The view taken by Fowler (1991:66-67) is that any aspect of linguistic structure can carry ideological significance; whether phonological, syntactic, lexical, semantic, pragmatic or textual.

Halliday, according to Fowler (1991:69) proposes that all language performs an ideational, an interpersonal and a textual function simultaneously. Language expresses content and therefore has a representational/ideational function, enabling a person to express his/her experience (either internally or externally) of the world. A person is able to express his/her reactions, cognitions, perceptions and linguistic acts, such as speaking and understanding, by making use of language. The interpersonal function is concerned with how the speaker is able to intrude

into the speech event. This function ensures that a speaker/writer can express his/her comments, evaluations, attitudes and the relationship set up between such speaker/writer and the listener. The speaker/writer is able to adopt a communicative role of informing, questioning and/or persuading. The textual function is concerned with the creation of text and makes it possible for language to be linked with the situation in which it is used. The speaker or writer can produce a text that the listener or reader can recognize, making discourse possible. These functions provide a scheme for classifying linguistic structures according to their communicative roles.

The linguistic devices for text analysis that will be discussed here are transitivity, nominalization and modality. Transitivity forms part of the ideational function of language and is a crucial linguistic tool with regards to representation. There are more distinctions behind transitivity than the traditional syntactic distinction of transitive versus intransitive verbs. “Transitivity” refers to the way in which a clause is used to analyze the events and situations as being of certain types (Fowler 1991:71). Richardson (2007:54) notes that “transitivity” describes the relationships between participants and the roles that they play in the processes described in reporting, in other words, how actions are represented; the kind of actions that appear in texts, who does them and to whom they are done. Every text that has been produced could have been produced differently, i.e., there are choices in how an event’s participants are represented and in how the event itself is represented (Richardson 2007: 54). For instance, as will be shown later, both the *Cape Times* and *Die Burger* chose to represent the details of the Inge Lotz murder and the trial in such a manner that it created a negative image of Fred van der Vyver. Both newspapers insinuated that he was, but never directly called him a *killer* and a *murderer*. Still, it will be shown, these two newspapers analyzed the

same event differently. Transitivity has the facility to analyze the same event in different ways – a facility that is of course of great interest in newspaper reporting. Transitivity gives options to newspapers – the choice of discourse used by the journalist will in effect indicate ideological significance or a particular point of view (Fowler 1991:71).

Nominalization is a linguistic device that enables one to change predicates, such as verbs and adjectives, into nouns, which in turn are called “derived nominals”. Examples of such derived nominals are *allegation* derived from *allege* and *development* derived from *develop*. This syntactic transformation of a clause has structural consequences, but offers considerable ideological opportunities. Much information goes unexpressed in a derived nominal in comparison to a full clause. Compare for example *allegation* with *X has alleged against Y that Y did A and that Y did B*. The participant (who did what to whom), an indication of time (because there is no verb to be tensed) and an indication of modality (as the writer’s view as the truth or the desirability of the proposition) have been deleted from the nominal form *allegation* (Fowler 1991:79-80). Richardson (2007) states that “nominalization” refers to the transformation of an action (or process) into a noun (i.e., a name or a nominal). A fictional example such as, *a close friend killed Inge Lotz* may be transformed into the nominalization of *the killing of Inge Lotz*. The reason for the use of nominalizations by newspapers is that they are shorter, given that the details of the events may be well known, making the full clause unnecessary. Another reason could be to cover up some aspect of an event, which may be embarrassing or ideologically uncomfortable (Richardson 2007:241).

Modality may be regarded as an attitude or comment ascribable to the text, and it can be either explicit or implicit in the linguistic stance taken by the speaker/writer (Fowler 1991:85). In

other words, modality entails a speaker's attitude towards or opinion about the truth of a proposition expressed by a sentence, i.e., the attitude towards the situation or event described by a sentence (Richardson 2007: 59). There are four types of modality or comment. These can be characterized as relating to

- i. truth, where a speaker/writer indicates or implies a commitment to the truth when commenting on an event that has taken place or when predicting on an event currently taking place. Fowler (1991:86) exemplifies this characteristic with *Without [Nelson Mandela's] blessing, it is unlikely that any black leader in SA can be persuaded to meet the British Foreign Secretary apart from Chief Gatsha Buthelezi;*
- ii. obligation, where a speaker/writer holds the participants responsible to their obligation in performing the actions that they have stipulated, as in *The Campaign against terrorism and its sponsors must be continuous. No single blow will be enough. Terrorist reprisal must be punished in their turn* (Fowler 1991:86);
- iii. permission, where a speaker/writer bestows permission to do something on the participants, as in, for example *Any time in the next ten years you can switch the Plan into, say, a savings scheme* (Fowler 1991:87); and
- iv. desirability, where a speaker/writer indicates approval or disapproval of the state of affairs communicated by the proposition, either implicitly or explicitly. Fowler (1991:87) provides the following example: *Home secretary Douglas Hurd's plan to beat the prison officers' dispute – the mass release of crooks – is barmy.*

2.4 Online news reporting

Many newspapers have a website on which they publish news reports to complement their hard copy editions – this is regarded as the online version of the paper (Ward 2002:9), even though the two versions may differ somewhat. Ward (2002:19) notes that one may have different sources of information when researching a story, including original documents, raw data and press releases. This information is increasingly being digitized and placed online, which brings with it the potential to transform the journalistic research process (Ward 2002:19). Online news reporting is in transition and the importance of online newspapers and online journalism in general is increasing as technology is developing and changing (Salwen, Garrison and Driscoll 2005:41).

Salwen et al. (2005:240-241) refers to Eveland and Dunwoody (2002) when they note that a simple online document is similar to traditional print media because both can convey both text and images, although they differ in their content, layout and structure. Print media are organised in a linear format on separate pages to allow a continuous reading sequence, whereas Web media are formulated in a non-linear format on the “home page” to permit an out of order reading sequence (Salwen et al. 2005:240-241). Furthermore, the space limitation of print media does not exist for online media, which means that, in the online version, headlines can be longer and therefore more descriptive – although this is often not the case, as can be seen in the table in Appendix C – and the text of an article can be more detailed.

2.5 Chapter conclusion

The discourse analyst must be prepared to document the circumstances in which communication takes place when, considering the relevance to the structure of text because the meaning of discourse derives from an interaction between language structure and the context in which it is used. One would therefore, in the case of newspapers, need to find out about the institutional structure of the newspaper industry and the relevant circumstances of the events being reported on (Fowler 1991:90). Content analysis assumes that the obvious content should be meaningful when studied. This means that the content serves as a “common-ground” for the communicator, the audience and the analyst. In other words, the meanings ascribed to the content when assigning it into different categories should correspond to the meanings that was intended by the communicator and/or understood by the audience. The assumption therefore is that when two people read the same paper we should both understand it in the same way and also understand it in the way intended by the producer of the text. This assumption is controversial, however, because it may be valid when referring to the denotative meaning but not when referring to the connotative meaning. One should bear in mind that the specific newspaper, the page on which the article is printed, the size of the text, the quotations, and the references all contribute to how the content is analyzed (Richardson 2007:17).

When relating this to the case of Fred van der Vyver, one finds that the meanings that were ascribed to the content were generally understood and interpreted according to the intentions of the journalists, that is, that the person guilty of murdering Inge Lotz was the one who had been accused of her murder and went to trial. The language used by the journalists may have influenced the perception of many readers. For instance, even the deliberate but seemingly

“innocent” use of the verb *accuse* could have influenced public opinion, in that the denotative meaning of *accuse* is to “claim that someone has done something wrong or illegal” (Oxford Paperback Dictionary and Thesaurus 2007: 9) but the connotative meaning might involve that that person is guilty and that it is just a matter of time before he/she will be convicted.

In Chapter 4, it will be shown how a selection of these devices were employed by the *Cape Times* and *Die Burger* in order to “construct ideas” about Fred van der Vyver. The next chapter provides a summary of the murder case, in order to provide the background against which the data should be interpreted.

CHAPTER 3

BACKGROUND TO THE INGE LOTZ MURDER CASE

The following information has been taken from the *Cape Times* and *Die Burger* (from articles dated between March 2005 and November 2007), and is presented here so that the reader is able to form a picture of the events surrounding the murder of Inge Lotz and the subsequent trial of Fred van der Vyver. During the period March 2005 to November 2007, the Cape Times printed approximately 59 articles in total on the case. All of these articles were hard news articles and most (56) were written by the same journalist, Karen Breytenbach. Only about six of these made the front page; the rest were placed mainly on pages three to six. During the same time period, Die Burger printed approximately 118 articles, all of which were hard news articles. As in the case of the Cape Times, the majority of Die Burger's articles were also written by one journalist, namely Marelize Barnard (she wrote 82 of the 118). Die Burger ran more front page articles on the case than did the Cape Times.

Inge Lotz was murdered in her flat in the Shiraz complex near Welgevonden Estate, Stellenbosch on the 16th of March 2005. Her body was discovered around 22h20 that evening by a friend, after numerous calls had been made to her cell phone during the late afternoon and early evening, without any response. She was found on the couch in the living room with the television still switched on. Police confirmed that she had been hit over the head with a blunt object and that she had multiple stab wounds in her chest and neck. There was no sign of forced entry and all her valuable belongings, such as a cell phone, laptop computer, and her

handbag and wallet, were untouched – leading the police to conclude that the murderer was known to her.

Construction workers were the last witnesses to see her at her flat, at around 13h00. She left her flat later that afternoon to rent a movie at 15h07 – the menu of the movie was still on display when her body was found. The time of death is estimated to have been between 15h00 and 18h00.

In June 2005, three months after the murder of Inge Lotz, her boyfriend, Fred van der Vyver, was arrested on suspicion of the murder. The main reason given for the arrest was that fingerprints found on the DVD cover matched his fingerprints, placing him at the murder scene on the day of the murder. A so-called “ornamental hammer” and a pair of scissors were found in his bakkie in April 2005, which were taken as evidence to be tested for possible traces of blood. Later in the investigation, a blood mark made by a shoe was found on the bathroom floor of Inge Lotz’s flat. Police identified this as being compatible with one of Fred van der Vyver’s running shoes. They claimed that the “unique mark” on the floor matched the design of the sole (due to a factory defect).

Fred van der Vyver had stayed over at Inge Lotz’s flat on Tuesday 15th March (as per their usual Tuesday arrangement) – he normally attended classes in Stellenbosch on Wednesdays. There was tension between the two on Tuesday evening, and they had had a fight on Wednesday morning. This had resulted in her writing two letters to him, which she gave to him after class. In the letters, she apologized for her behaviour and assured him that she would be faithful to him.

Fred van der Vyver bought a bathroom cabinet at Merriman Furnishers the morning of the 16th of March 2005 (the day of the murder) and drove to Pinelands where he worked as a student actuary. Security confirms that he arrived at Old Mutual Park at 11h08 and left the premises again at 18h10. His cell phone registered in the vicinity of his work at 15h29, and colleagues testified that he was at his workstation from 17h15 to 17h50. He then went home to his flat in Pinelands, which he shared with Marius Botha. The latter is his alibi for the rest of the evening.

Fred van der Vyver went to trial in February 2007. The State's case was built on evidence such as the fingerprints found on the DVD cover, the ornamental hammer found in his bakkie and the blood mark on the bathroom floor. The State was interested in why Fred van der Vyver had told Mrs Lotz that her daughter had been murdered when the friend who found the body initially thought it was suicide. The State argued that the security system at Old Mutual Park could have been flawed and that it was possible that he could have left work undetected. They also argued that the content of the letters show that he could have been jealous and that his intention could have been to only visit his girlfriend in order to sort things out between them, a visit which then turned into murder. The State commented on his strange behaviour the day after the murder and questioned why he provided an alibi before he was even a suspect.

The defense held that the police were incompetent and fraudulent from the start of the investigation. They called on international experts to confirm that the fingerprints allegedly lifted from the DVD had instead been lifted from a glass surface, accusing the State of fabricating evidence. The defense questioned why Fred van der Vyver would have handed

over the ornamental weapon if it were indeed the murder weapon. Experts disagreed with the State with regards to the correspondence between the blood mark on the bathroom floor and the sole of Fred van der Vyver's running shoe. The defense regarded the letters given to him on the day of the murder as love letters and as normal between people within a relationship. According to the defense, there was no evidence that he had left his work premises during the day.

Fred van der Vyver's defense applied for a discharge in July 2007, stating that he could not be found guilty on the evidence provided up until that point. The defense argued that there would have been no time to drive to Stellenbosch (35-40 minutes' drive one way) and back, murder Inge Lotz and clean up afterwards and then drive back to Pinelands. The appeal for discharge was denied in August 2007 – the grounds for the denial were that the evidence presented by the prosecution could still lead to a guilty verdict.

Fred van der Vyver was acquitted on the 29th November 2007. The State could not prove beyond reasonable doubt that he had a motive to murder Inge Lotz or that he had been at the murder scene on the 16th of March 2005. The fingerprints lifted from the DVD cover (which the police returned on the 24th of March 2005) had to be disregarded as evidence due to inconsistencies, experts agreed that the ornamental hammer was too small to produce the wounds suffered by Inge Lotz and that the shoe print did not match the sole of that particular shoe. Justice van Zyl criticized the conduct of the investigation as being unprofessional, unreliable and unscientific. Circumstantial evidence was not enough to convict Fred van der Vyver.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

4.1 Introduction

The intention of this research project was to investigate how the *Cape Times* and *Die Burger* portrayed the murder of Inge Lotz and the identity of the accused, Fred van der Vyver, in the media. As stated in Chapter 2, the readers, and indeed the researcher, received only selected information through media sources and should thus be wary of how they use this information when forming an opinion on a person or an event. Habit or the preference of making use of only a specific source may restrict one's scope on events, resulting in a partial or biased take on events. The information that readers receive is written according to certain (journalistic) rules and values, having automatic restrictive consequences. One of the reasons why this research was conducted was to create awareness among readers of the consequences of merely accepting that which had been written to be true or factual, encouraging them to read news reports in a more critical manner and to be more conscious of the devices newspapers employ to construct the identity of a person.

The hypothesis was that both newspapers constructed Fred van der Vyver's identity as that of a murderer, and that various linguistic and textual devices were used to achieve this. The rest of this chapter is structured into a section on the analysis of headlines from both the *Cape Times* and *Die Burger* including reference to similarities and differences in textual discourse between these newspapers (section 4.2) and a section on the analysis of specific phrases taken

from both newspapers to show similarities or differences (section 4.3). It should be noted that the researcher made use of the online version of the news reports. The headlines in these sometimes differed from those in the hard copy version of the newspaper, as indicated in the table in Appendix C. This table contains the online and hard copy version of all the headlines analysed in this study, and indicates the size of the hard copy version of the headline as well as the position of the article in the newspaper.

4.2 Analysis of headlines

News stories usually encapsulate the WHAT, WHO, WHERE, HOW, WHEN and WHY of an event, that is, what happened, who were involved, where it happened, how it happened, when it happened and why it happened. When it happened is not always clearly stated as news is assumed to be recent and why it happened is not always readily known (Aitchison et al 2002:24). With reference to the Inge Lotz case in general, the WHAT, WHO (it happened to), WHERE and HOW it happened are information given to the reader. A time of death had been estimated but the WHEN is not fixed. Fred van der Vyver was acquitted in November 2007 and no new suspects have been arrested since, leaving the question as to WHY Inge Lotz was murdered unanswered.

4.2.1 Headlines from the *Cape Times*

Most of the headlines in the *Cape Times* made use of Inge Lotz's surname. This was an easy way for readers to recognize the case. During the almost two year court case headlines in the *Cape Times* mostly referred to the case as the *Lotz trial*, the *Lotz case* (as in headline (10)) or the *Lotz murder* (see headlines (4) and (9)). The phrase *Lotz murder trial* was used three times

in a headline during coverage of the story; one such occurrence is given in (12). Inge Lotz was mostly referred to as *slain Matie/student* (see headline (1)) and Fred van der Vyver as *Van der Vyver* or *boyfriend* (see amongst others, (4) for an example). This naming convention shapes the perception of the story: constructing a perception of the case in general and a certain perception of both Inge Lotz and Fred van der Vyver. The *Cape Times* used specific words such as *trial*, *case* and *murder* to create a contradicting perception with the average reader - contradicting in terms of inconsistencies, assuming that the murder, the case and the trial were all linked to the suspect and that a guilty verdict was inevitable. Making use of words such as *trial*, meaning that there is a “formal examination in a court of law to decide if someone is guilty of a crime” (Oxford Paperback Dictionary and Thesaurus 2007:975), *case*, meaning that an incident is “being investigated by the police” (Oxford Paperback Dictionary and Thesaurus 2007:131) and *murder*, meaning the “unlawful planned killing of one person by another” (Oxford Paperback Dictionary and Thesaurus 2007:597) suggests that the investigation is on track and that the case is staying in the news because there is a significant case against the suspect. Referring to Inge Lotz as *slain Matie/student* makes reference to the violent manner in which she was killed and to the fact that she was still a student, generating a feeling of an even bigger loss as she had her whole life ahead of her. Making use of Fred van der Vyver’s surname objectifies him to a certain extent, treating him as an object rather than a person and treating him with a certain air of distance. Referring to him as *boyfriend* provides him with an identity that is determined by his relationship with Inge Lotz, implying that he does not have an identity other than the boyfriend of Inge Lotz.

In what follows various headlines will be examined in order to show how they grab attention and attempt to influence the reader’s perception of the case and of Fred van der Vyver.

Headlines (1) to (12) presented and discussed below, illustrate how specific words and phrases were used to create a particular idea of the case and of Fred van der Vyver. Consider headline (1).

1) Police arrest boyfriend of slain Matie (*Cape Times*, 16 June 2005)

Fred van der Vyver is not named at this point; his identity is qualified in terms of his relationship with Inge Lotz. The verb *slay* is a loaded word meaning “to kill in a violent way”, suggesting cruelty (Oxford Paperback Dictionary and Thesaurus 2007: 858), (even more so because Fred van der Vyver had been in a close relationship with Inge Lotz, thus implying abuse of trust). The use of such loaded words (in this case *slain* instead of *killed*) is one of the devices mentioned by Reah (2002:17-18) that are normally used to create effective headlines.

2) Lotz: Alleged murder weapon kept in car (*Cape Times*, 15 February 2007)

The word *alleged*, used in headline (2), is another such loaded word, which means that “something has been claimed or that someone has been accused of something” (Oxford Paperback Dictionary and Thesaurus 2007: 24). In this headline, it is suggested that, if Fred van der Vyver had been ruthless enough to keep the murder weapon in his car, he might as well have been callous and cruel enough to commit the murder. More neutral words would have been *so-called*, *supposed* or *suspected*.

3) Lotz's wounds correspond with 'gift hammer' (*Cape Times*, 14 March 2007)

Similarly, headline (3) makes use of loaded or emotional words such as *wounds* (instead of the more neutral *cuts* or *injuries*) and *gift hammer*. The noun *wound* refers to "an injury caused to the body by means of a cut, blow or bullet" (Oxford Paperback Dictionary and Thesaurus 2007: 1053). Referring to the hammer as *gift hammer* rather than merely *hammer* conveys the message that Inge Lotz had been killed with an object that she had been given to Fred van der Vyver as a present: an object of love had been used in an act of violence and cruelty.

4) Boyfriend grilled about Lotz's murder (*Cape Times*, 19 October 2007)

Returning to calling Fred van der Vyver *boyfriend*: This would also qualify as a loaded word in the way it is used in headline (4). It implies that he had been in a close relationship with her and that she would therefore have been an easy target when he betrayed her trust. Also in headline (4), the verb *grilled*, when used in an informal way, refers to "questioning someone in a relentless or aggressive way" (Oxford Paperback Dictionary and Thesaurus 2007: 406), proposing either that Fred van der Vyver somehow deserved to be questioned in a hostile, unfriendly or unsympathetic way or that his interrogators were out of bounds.

5) 'He was too anxious about her safety' (*Cape Times*, 16 March 2007)

6) Accused 'tried to look sad' at Lotz's funeral (*Cape Times*, 12 April 2007)

7) Lotz boyfriend 'kept letter as a souvenir' (*Cape Times*, 18 April 2007)

Headlines (5) to (7) sketch a negative image of Fred van der Vyver's character and portray him as being guilty of the murder of his girlfriend Inge Lotz. The adjective *anxious*, in headline (5), means "worried, concerned, apprehensive or uneasy" (Oxford Paperback Dictionary and Thesaurus 2007: 36). This headline comments on how Fred van der Vyver acted the day of Inge Lotz's death, supposing that he had been nervous and unsettled even before he was told that she had been murdered. Once the word *too* is placed in front of a word, it suggests that the act had been done in an excessive manner.

Accused, as in headline (6), refers to "someone that has been charged for something or held responsible for something" (Oxford Paperback Dictionary and Thesaurus 2007: 9). Fred van der Vyver is the accused in this case, having been accused of murder, but here he is also accused of role-playing.

The noun *souvenir*, used in headline (7), refers to a memento; some kind of reminder or trophy (Oxford Paperback Dictionary and Thesaurus 2007: 875). It is the opinion of the state that many murderers keep a memento taken from a victim. This headline aims to suggest that this is what Fred van der Vyver has done by keeping the letter and by withholding the information about the letter's existence from the police. The negative perception of Fred van der Vyver is made worse by using a word such as *souvenir* instead of *remembrance* or *keepsake*, meaning "a small item kept in memory of the person who gave it or originally owned it" (Oxford Paperback Dictionary and Thesaurus 2007:504). The reason why *souvenir* sounds worse than *remembrance* or *keepsake* is because it could have a connotation of something enjoyable that one has done, for example a souvenir collected from a holiday. The word *keepsake* or *remembrance* does not necessarily include the enjoyable-factor/implication.

8) Boyfriend 'knew about knife wounds' (*Cape Times*, 23 February 2007)

Headline (8) is ambiguous – ambiguity being another headline creating device mentioned by Reah (2002:17-18) – creating doubt and suspicion as to why Fred van der Vyver had been aware of this, had he known about the knife wounds because he had been involved in Inge Lotz's murder or because he had been informed that she had been stabbed?

9) Bloody mark sheds new light in Lotz murder (*Cape Times*, 8 March 2007)

New light in headline (9) supposes that something of great significance with regards to the case has just been discovered. This headline could have misled many readers, as many may have assumed that the blood mark found on the floor of Inge Lotz's flat corresponded with one of Fred van der Vyver's shoes (which was never proven by the state). *Light* is used here figuratively, as a type of metaphor. It supposes that the murder case is dark and mysterious and that hidden facts have shed some light on the case. Lerman (1985:199-200) states that the simplest device that language provides for avoiding clear and unambiguous meaning is the substitution of a metaphor for literal and explicit reference. It is a form of distancing from personal expression by stating a proposition; specific meaning is obscured, and having said nothing literal, the speaker is free of "personal" responsibility for his words.

10) 'Secret love' probed in Lotz case (*Cape Times*, 20 April 2007)

The adjective *secret* refers to something that is unknown, private or undisclosed suggesting that a third party had been involved and that a possibly motive for the murder could have been

jealousy (Oxford Paperback Dictionary and Thesaurus 2007: 823). Making use of the word *secret* in headline (10) continues the metaphor of puzzle – something that we do not know a lot about and something that is obscure to us.

11) Lotz evidence ‘fits like a puzzle’ (*Cape Times*, 2 October 2007)

A puzzle is designed so that all the pieces fit perfectly into one another; the design does not allow two or more pieces to fit into the same gap. Proposing that the evidence *fits like a puzzle* (see headline (11)) is suggesting that this is the only possible way for the evidence presented to make sense. It also continues the puzzle metaphor of the previous 2 headlines.

12) New evidence halts Lotz murder trial (*Cape Times*, 22 August 2007)

The verb to halt means “to come to a standstill” or “to come to a stop” (Oxford Paperback Dictionary and Thesaurus 2007:417). The word *halts* in headline (12) suggests that this new evidence had been of such significance that the trial had to stop temporarily in order to process this new piece of evidence. This was an exaggeration as this was not the case. *Halt* here is used as a loaded word as it suggests a more than neutral meaning implying that the evidence had been of great significance which was not the case as it was never proved.

4.2.2 Headlines from *Die Burger*

The headlines in *Die Burger* at times took a more familiar approach towards the people involved with the case. As in the case of the *Cape Times*, *Die Burger* also generally used Inge Lotz’s surname to refer to the case: *die Lotz saak* (= the Lotz case). Fred van der Vyver was

sometimes named *Van der Vyver* (see headline (17)), but also sometimes, familiarly, *Fred* (headlines (15), (21) and (22)); *Fred* was used more frequently. Inge Lotz was referred to as either *Lotz* or *Inge Lotz* (see headline (21)).

In what follows, various *Die Burger* headlines will be examined in order to show how they grab attention and attempt to influence the reader's perception of the case and of Fred van der Vyver. In each case, the English translation is given below the Afrikaans headline. Headlines (13) to (22) illustrate how specific words and phrases were used to create a particular idea of the case and of Fred van der Vyver. Consider headline (13):

13) Oos-Kaapse vriend vas oor Lotz-moord (*Die Burger*, 16 June 2005)

[Eastern Cape friend cornered / in custody over Lotz murder]

Die Burger is indirectly commenting on Fred van der Vyver's identity by referring to him as *Oos-Kaapse vriend* ("Eastern Cape friend"). How and where one has been raised contributes towards one's values and norms in life – his behaviour in the past and the opinion of people that knew him whilst growing up will come under the microscope. Proposing that Fred van der Vyver was *vas* ("cornered") suggests that he was trapped or forced into a situation from which it is hard to escape (Oxford Paperback Dictionary and Thesaurus 2007: 197).

In the following two headlines, loaded words appear – Bollinger (1981:72-73) notes that loaded words can be euphemistic or dysphemistic, in other words, these words depict what they designate in a favourable or unfavourable way.

14) Trauma vreet hom (*Die Burger*, 23 February 2007)

[Trauma is eating at him]

Vreet in headline (14) means “eat” and is used when referring to an animal. *Om aan X te vreet* is a common phrase in colloquial Afrikaans; the English equivalent would be “to gnaw on”. This phrase was chosen over a more neutral one such as *pla* (“bothers”); this was done to allude that the effects of the trial and that the emotional shock following a stressful event as such was getting to Fred van der Vyver; most people would find being accused of murder intimidating and experience it as deeply disturbing. This headline could also suggest that Fred van der Vyver had something to hide and that keeping it a secret was traumatizing him, as *vreet aan* is often used with regards to a person’s conscience bothering him/her (Oxford Paperback Dictionary and Thesaurus 2007: 973).

15) Fred trap klei oor Inge brief (*Die Burger*, 24 October 2007)

[Fred trample clay over Inge letter = Fred battles to explain Inge letter]

Fred testified that he himself had been baffled, puzzled and confused as to why Lotz had written what she had in the letters that she had given to him on the day that she had been murdered. *Die Burger* chose the loaded phrase *trap klei* (literally “trample clay”) to report on this in headline (15). A more neutral word would have been *onseker* (“unsure”).

16) Gru-getuienis (*Die Burger*, 21 February 2007)

[Horrific evidence]

The adjective *gru* (“horrific”) in headline (16) describes strong feelings such as fear, deep shock, disgust or dismay (Oxford Paperback Dictionary and Thesaurus 2007: 442). A more neutral word with the same denotative meaning would have been *verskriklike* (“dreadful”).

17) Van der Vyver moet verduidelik (*Die Burger*, 13 August 2007)

[Van der Vyver must explain]

One usually has to *verduidelik* (“explain”) something when it is not understood as was meant or when one has done something wrong. Fred van der Vyver needed to describe and give reasons for his actions and for the events that occurred that day so that others would have a better understanding of what had happened (Oxford Paperback Dictionary and Thesaurus 2007: 323). As such, a more neutral phrase for *verduidelik* in headline (17) would have been *besonderhede gee* (“provide detail”).

18) Bloedspoor (*Die Burger*, 8 March 2007)

[Blood trail]

Spoor (“(foot) print”), a shortening of *voetspoor*, means a line of marks or signs left behind by someone as it moves along, suggesting that the blood mark found on Inge Lotz’s floor connects Fred van der Vyver to the scene as the mark was a match to his running shoe. *Spoor* (“trail”) could also mean a track or scent used to follow someone, indirectly referring to the

police investigating Fred van der Vyver (Oxford Paperback Dictionary and Thesaurus 2007: 969). This is a form of ambiguity and is one of the devices used for headline writing as mentioned by Reah (1998:17); (see headline (18)).

19) Staat hamer op ‘moordwapen’ (*Die Burger*, 2 August 2007)

[State hammers on ‘murder weapon’]

In (19), *Die Burger* exploits ambiguity; it was the intention of the state to emphasize and constantly repeat that the hammer had been the murder weapon so that the idea would stick in the minds of the readers. Here *hamer* is used as a verb, but the *moordwapen* (“murder weapon”) was also believed to be a *hamer* (noun).

Die Burger uses words that could be misleading in the following two headlines. The term *waterdig* (“watertight”) in headline (20) in this context would most likely mean that the case against the accused is not to be called into question (Oxford Paperback Dictionary and Thesaurus 2007: 1031). By using this word instead of one that allows for the possibility that the evidence against Fred van der Vyver was not necessarily fully conclusive, such as *sterk* (“strong”), the reader is led to belief that a guilty verdict is to be expected, and that Fred van der Vyver is necessarily a murderer.

20) Saak teen Lotz verdagte waterdig (*Die Burger*, 20 June 2005)

[Case against Lotz suspect watertight]

21) Inge Lotz: Bloed aan Fred se hamer (*Die Burger*, 16 February 2007)

[Inge Lotz: Blood on Fred’s hammer]

Bloed (“blood”) in headline (21) suggests that blood was found on Fred’s hammer – not traces of blood or possible blood, but blood. Headlines like this one and the previous one propose a sense of certainty with the average reader; it is likely that Fred van der Vyver’s image in the media would worsen when this is implied.

22) Fred weet nie waar hy gehoor het Inge is vermoor (*Die Burger*, 19 October 2007)

[Fred does not know where he heard that Inge had been murdered]

Headline (22) suggests that one would probably remember who had been the bearer of such news, mainly because information as such would change most people’s lives considerably – yet Fred van der Vyver could not remember the source. What should have been written was that *Fred says that he does not know where he heard that Inge had been murdered*. The manner in which it is used in (22) almost makes it sound sarcastic.

4.2.3 Similarities and differences between the headlines of the *Cape Times* and *Die Burger*

Both the *Cape Times* and *Die Burger* covered the story extensively during the more than two-year period. This section will focus on the similarities and differences in reporting with regards to linguistic characteristics of the headlines of the two newspapers. Similarities between the two newspapers will be regarded in terms of the case in general, in terms of how Fred van der Vyver was presented and in terms of how Inge Lotz was presented.

Similarities include that both the *Cape Times* and *Die Burger* made use of Inge Lotz’s surname, in general, when referring to the case – ensuring that it would be easy for readers to recognize the case in the papers. The case was further described by both newspaper as the *Lotz*

murder, the *Lotz case*, the *Lotz trial* or the *Lotz murder trial*. Fred van der Vyver was mostly referred to as *boyfriend*, as the *accused*, as *Fred* or as *Van der Vyver* whereas Inge Lotz was described as (*slain*) *Matie*, *Lotz*, *Inge* or *Inge Lotz*.

The differences in reporting were more obvious in terms of the vocabulary used by the various newspapers respectively. The *Cape Times* used words and phrases such as *bloody mark*, '*gift hammer*', '*secret love*', *ample proof*, *halts*, '*fits like a puzzle*', '*tried to look sad*', *souvenir* and *grilled*. *Die Burger* in turn made use of more descriptive words such as *cornered*, *watertight*, *horrific evidence*, *blood trial*, *trauma*, *at a loss* and '*wanted to look sad*'. The devices used by the *Cape Times* were mostly loaded words (see headlines (2), (3) and (4)), ambiguity (see headline (8)) and metaphor (see headline (9)). *Die Burger* also made use of loaded words (see headlines (14) and (15)). Furthermore, *Die Burger* used word play (see headline (19)) and omission (see headline (22)).

4.3 Analysis of specific phrases in the *Cape Times* and *Die Burger*

A certain image was constructed by each of the journalistic cultures of the *Cape Times* and *Die Burger* respectively with regards to the Inge Lotz murder case in general and of Fred van der Vyver in particular. These phrases take on a very different meaning within the context of a murder being committed and where the boyfriend of the victim is being accused of murder. Many of the phrases make certain suggestions or are ambiguous, leaving room for readers to form a certain opinion based on their interpretation of events and information that was circulated to the public by means of newspapers. It is important to note that neither newspaper ever said straight out that Fred van der Vyver is a murderer. They talk about *murder accused*

or the *young man accused*. What they did do is use loaded words to describe the murder, the murder weapon and aspects of the case. These words were then indirectly associated with Fred van der Vyver, and that is what created the public opinion that he is a brutal, violent killer (without the newspapers ever having to say it overtly).

4.3.1 Phrases used in the *Cape Times*

The *Cape Times* continually referred to Fred van der Vyver as the boyfriend and to Inge Lotz as the girlfriend instead of using their names and/or surnames. This implies an intimate relationship between the two, which makes the murder so much worse because of the intense trust that had been broken. Consider the following phrases.

23) The suspected murder weapons were found a month after the murder in March 2005 in the car of Lotz's boyfriend, Fred van der Vyver. (*Cape Times*, 20 February 2007)

24) The security system at the office park where Fred van der Vyver worked at the time of his girlfriend's murder had serious flaws that made it possible for employees to enter and leave without being detected. Among other problems, four of the 14 entrances were specifically problematic and poor security in general was well known to staff, Louw said. (*Cape Times*, 19 April 2007)

25) Murder accused Fred van der Vyver was seen in Stellenbosch on the afternoon his girlfriend was murdered, according to a former furniture salesman. (*Cape Times*, 11 April 2007)

Phrases (26) to (28) are further examples but here Inge Lotz is also described or referred to as student, (as in 33). This is done in order to create an image of a young, ambitious and carefree

girl instead of a possibly young flirtatious woman. This does not directly contribute to the perception created of Fred van der Vyver but does to a certain extent show what “type of person” he is if it were to come out that he was the murderer of such a young and ambitious girl.

26) Stellenbosch student Inge Lotz met her boyfriend after his lectures on the morning of March 16, 2005, and handed him a letter. Ten hours later, her mutilated body was discovered by a third party in her flat on the outskirts of town. (*Cape Times*, 18 April 2007)

27) A bloody mark on slain student Inge Lotz's bathroom floor matched the shape of the sole of a running shoe of her boyfriend, Fred van der Vyver, the Cape High Court has heard. (*Cape Times*, 8 March 2007)

28) The shape of the wounds inflicted on student Inge Lotz during her murder corresponded with the head and claw of an ornamental hammer/bottle opener that she had given her boyfriend as a Christmas gift, the Cape High Court has heard. (*Cape Times*, 14 March 2007)

The focus in (29) is not only on the relationship or the fact that Inge Lotz had been a student but also on the occupation of Fred van der Vyver. His occupation contributes to him being seen as a newsmaker: A highly paid person with a glamorous occupation murdered his girlfriend, a successful student (as opposed to, for example, some random homeless person). Inge Lotz, in this regard, is pictured as a high profile person murdered in the heat of passion.

29) Traces of what could possibly be blood were found on the ornamental hammer and scissors a young actuarial assistant had in his bakkie a month after the murder of his Stellenbosch master's student girlfriend Inge Lotz. (*Cape Times*, 16 February 2007)

Fred van der Vyver's behaviour was questioned throughout and was described as unusual and odd before and after Inge Lotz's death. Phrases (30) and (31) suppose that his concern had been abnormal, except if he had prior knowledge of what would happen to her. Words such as *anxious* and *panic* have an emotive connotation; these words refer to certain feelings that are experienced. Both of these could have been replaced by a less loaded word, such as *concern*. In (32), it was said that Fred van der Vyver had a sudden concern for his girlfriend's welfare, meaning that this concern had been "unexpected, without warning and something that came out of the blue" (Oxford Paperback Dictionary and Thesaurus 2007: 916). The neutral noun *concern* was used in this case (instead of the loaded word *panic*) but the neutrality of *concern* is lessened when placing an adjective such as *sudden* in front of it, which in colloquial English means that the concern might not be genuine or that the person has false motives.

30) On the night of Inge Lotz's murder, her boyfriend told his flatmate he was too anxious about her safety to wait until someone else had checked up on her and would drive to Stellenbosch himself, the Cape High Court heard on Thursday. (*Cape Times*, 16 March 2007)

31) Mrs Lotz has told the court she found Van der Vyver's panic "strange". (*Cape Times*, 18 October 2007)

32) The state found it "strange and unnatural" that Van der Vyver was suddenly concerned about his girlfriend's well-being, based on her not answering her phone that night and being in poor health, considering that she had a habit of studying at night with her phone on silent mode and that she was in good health. (*Cape Times*, 2 October 2007)

Other loaded words included *bludgeoned*, *slain* and *souvenir*, all occurring in (33), (34) and/or (35); when used within a context of murder, they refer to the manner in which Inge Lotz had been murdered and to the callous nature of the murderer.

33) Lotz was bludgeoned with a blunt object and stabbed repeatedly in the neck and chest. (*Cape Times*, 3 May 2005)

34) The young man accused of bludgeoning his Stellenbosch student girlfriend to death had a hammer in his bakkie a month after her death, a police biological expert has told the Cape High Court. (*Cape Times*, 15 February 2007)

35) Murder accused Fred van der Vyver may have kept a damning letter his slain girlfriend had written to him as an emotional souvenir, a top police psychologist told the Cape High Court on Tuesday. (*Cape Times*, 18 April 2007)

Bludgeon means “to hit someone with a heavy stick” (Oxford Paperback Dictionary and Thesaurus 2007: 92). It is considered extremely cruel to bludgeon someone to death with a blunt object as the person might only lose consciousness after a few strikes. A more neutral term would have been *struck*. A *souvenir* is usually kept as a memento – something special to remind you of someone special or a special event. As stated before, many murderers keep memento’s of their victims as confirmation of their achievement. *Souvenir* is also a loaded word here, as we have mentioned, because it refers to something that someone keeps to remind one of a pleasant memory. By painting such an image, the newspaper is indirectly characterizing the murderer, whom they indirectly identify as Fred van der Vyver, as a brutal, violent killer. This contributes to the negative perception of Fred van der Vyver created by the

newspapers. By creating a link between Fred van der Vyver and other murderers, the newspaper is reinforcing the perception that he is in fact a murderer.

According to (36), it had been the finding of experts, i.e., “specialists or people who have great knowledge or skill in a particular field” (Oxford Paperback Dictionary and Thesaurus 2007: 322), that the fingerprints on the DVD cover belonged to Fred van der Vyver. The word *expert* is more loaded than the word *specialist* as *expert* supposes that one has the necessary skills and experience needed to make a decision whereas *specialist* supposes that one has the necessary knowledge but not necessarily the experience needed. *Firm opinion* in this context would mean a “solid, fixed or decided opinion” (Oxford Paperback Dictionary and Thesaurus 2007:349). The adjective *firm* is of interest here, because either something is one’s opinion or it is not one’s opinion. *Opinion* as used here does not have different degrees but by including *firm*, the *Cape Times* attempts to strengthen the opinion. *Firm opinion* sounds more conclusive, because it suggests that the person holding this particular opinion would not give way under pressure, as opposed to *opinion* in general that could be influenced.

36) An independent fingerprint expert in the Inge Lotz murder trial defended his firm opinion that her boyfriend's fingerprint had been lifted off the cover of a DVD she had rented on the day of her murder. (*Cape Times*, 3 May 2007)

In excerpt (37), it is stated that De Beer is *puzzled*, i.e., “confused” (Oxford Paperback Dictionary and Thesaurus 2007:737), and does not understand why Fred van der Vyver had known about the knife wounds. This strengthens the *Cape Times*’s metaphor of the puzzle –

something that we do not know much about, something that is mysterious to us; this was also created by the headlines.

37) De Beer said he was puzzled that Van der Vyver mentioned ‘knife wounds’. Asked where he had heard about these, Van der Vyver said ‘news travels’. (*Cape Times*, 23 February 2007)

In (38) *solid leads ‘pointing in one direction’* suggests that the nature of the leads is well founded, valid and sound (Oxford Paperback Dictionary and Thesaurus 2007:871), in other words, that the police are investigating proved or provable leads that come to the same conclusion and that these leads are pointing in the direction of the guilty party. This means that when a suspect is identified, in this case Fred van der Vyver, the public will automatically accept that he is guilty, as the newspapers have reported that the police have proof. Even before the suspect has been identified, opinion has already been influenced.

38) While police are investigating solid leads ‘pointing in one direction’ after the murder last week of 21-year old Stellenbosch student Inge Lotz. (*Cape Times*, 23 March 2005)

4.3.2 Phrases used in *Die Burger*

This murder case is described as *mysterious*, i.e., as something that was difficult or impossible to understand or explain (Oxford Paperback Dictionary and Thesaurus 2007:599). The headlines of *Die Burger* does not create a puzzle metaphor but their reporting does. New light has not been shed on the case and no other suspect have been arrested as yet. The Lotz case had been compared to a *thriller* (see 39), as a thriller is usually a novel play or film with an exciting plot, typically involving crime or spying, thus the connection (Oxford Paperback

Dictionary and Thesaurus 2007:953). Richardson notes that a metaphor in a general sense involves perceiving one thing in terms of another (Richardson 2007:66-67). The investigation and the events surrounding it are compared to or perceived as a movie plot that is unfolding, a thriller as such.

39) Dié raaiselmoord bevat al die bestanddele van 'n riller: Nie alleen beweert die speurders dit was 'n passie moord deur iemand ná aan haar nie, maar ook word gruwlike stories ná haar dood deur sommige studente versprei. (*Die Burger*, 2 May 2005)

[The mysterious murder contains all the elements of a thriller. Investigators imply not only that it had been a murder committed out of passion by someone close to her but also that horror stories had been spread by certain students.]

Making reference to Lotz's age and repeatedly referring to her as *Matie* (i.e. student) throughout coverage on the story emphasises what an injustice it was when she was murdered.

40) Die polisie het gister gesê hul saak teen mnr. Fred van der Vyver, die verdagte in die moord op die Matiestudent Inge Lotz (22) is waterdig, ten spyte van 'n alibi verslag en SMS'e van liefde wat sy die dag van haar dood aan hom gestuur het. (*Die Burger*, 20 June 2005)

[The police said that their case against Mr Fred van der Vyver, the suspect in the murder on the Matie student Inge Lotz (22) is watertight, despite an alibi report and SMS's of love that was sent to him on the day of her murder.]

41) Die mees prominente kapwonde aan die kop van die vermoorde Matie, me. Inge Lotz, kon veroorsaak gewees het deur albei kante van die ornamentele hamer van die moordverdagte, mnr. Fred van der Vyver. (*Die Burger*, 15 March 2007)

[The most prominent cut wounds to the head of the murdered Matie, Ms Inge Lotz, could have been caused by both sides of the ornamental hammer of the murder suspect, Mr Fred van der Vyver.]

42) Die “ontrouheid” van me. Inge Lotz blyk die oorsaak te wees van ’n argument tussen dié Matie en mnr. Fred van der Vyver enkele ure voor haar gewelddadige moord. (*Die Burger*, 18 April 2007)

[The “unfaithfulness” of Ms Inge Lotz seems to be the cause of the argument between this Matie and Mr Fred van der Vyver only hours before her violent death.]

Inge Lotz is not just a student or Matie student in (43), but also an achiever – again this does not directly build on the identity of Fred van der Vyver but show on the “quality person” that he would have murdered.

43) 'n Ornamentele hamer, die vermeende moordwapen en jongste leidraad in die raaiselmoord op die jong uitblyker-Matie Inge Lotz (22), was glo 'n Kersgeskenk van haar ouers aan 'n moordverdachte. (*Die Burger*, 4 June 2005)

[An ornamental hammer, the alleged murder weapon and newest clue in the mystery murder on the young achiever-Matie Inge Lotz (22), was apparently a Christmas gift from her parents to the murder suspect.]

Little reference is made to the intimate nature of the relationship between Fred van der Vyver and Inge Lotz; when they are referred to in relational terms they are mostly referred to as *vriend/vriendin*, as in (44). One of the reasons why they are not often referred to in terms of the relationship that they had, could be that “vriende”/“vriendinne” (= “male friends”/“female friends”) do not necessarily have romantic interests as would be the case with *boyfriend* and *girlfriend*. *Vriend/vriendin* could therefore be ambiguous, meaning either

“boyfriend/girlfriend” or “friend”. *Die Burger* cannot use the term *ou* (“chap” or “fellow”) for “boyfriend” even though this term would be unambiguous, because *ou* is too informal to use in the press. *Kêrel* (“boyfriend” or “bloke”) is also less ambiguous than *vriend* – and when used with a possessive pronoun as in (45), it cannot be ambiguous at all. However, *kêrel* is a somewhat outdated form, which might explain why it is not used often by *Die Burger*. *Meisie* as an alternative to *vriendin* is ambiguous, because it can mean a “young female person” or “girlfriend”. *Meisie* would thus not easily qualify for use in headlines; however, as in the case of *kêrel*, this term is unambiguous when used with a possessive pronoun – see (46).

44) Die staat voer aan dat Van der Vyver sy vriendin, die Matie me. Inge Lotz, met die hamer doodgeslaan he (*Die Burger*, 16 March 2007)

[The state alleges that Van der Vyver had bludgeoned his girlfriend, the Matie Ms Inge Lotz, to death with a hammer.]

45) Die staat sê daar is genoegsame bewyse om mnr. Fred van der Vyver, voormalige kêrel van die vermoorde Matie-student me. Inge Lotz, skuldig te bevind. (*Die Burger*, 3 October 2007)

[The state says that there is sufficient evidence for Mr Fred van der Vyver, former boyfriend of the murdered Matie student Ms Inge Lotz, to be found guilty.]

46) Die staat is oortuig dat sy getuienis genoeg is om bo redelike twyfel te bewys mnr. Fred van der Vyver het sy meisie, me. Inge Lotz, in haar woonstel op Stellenbosch vermoor. (*Die Burger*, 29 November 2007)

[The state is convinced that the evidence is enough to prove beyond reasonable doubt that Mr Fred van der Vyver murdered his girlfriend, Ms Inge Lotz in her flat in Stellenbosch.]

Die Burger uses different ways of reference when referring to Fred van der Vyver to explain how the case progresses: he is not even a suspect yet but he already has an alibi in place so that he won't be the person that is suspected or blamed for something.

47) Sedert die aanvang van die gebeure het die beskuldigde – ten spyte van die feit dat hy nie 'n verdagte was nie – 'n alibi gereed gehad en aangebied dat sy selfoonrekords nagegaan kan word. (*Die Burger*, 3 October 2007)

[The accused had an alibi ready since the commencement of the case and offered that his cellphone records could be checked in spite of the fact that he had not being a suspect.]

Another device used for “effect” was loaded words. *Bloedige* (bloody), meaning “covered in blood or involving violence or cruelty” (Oxford Paperback Dictionary and Thesaurus 2007:91), and *hamermoord* (hammer death) referring to the manner in which Inge Lotz had been killed, are loaded words and could create emotional connotations with the readers. They could have only used *moord* (murder), but chose to use the loaded term *bloedige hamermoord* (bloody hammer death).

48) Mnr. Fred van der Vyver, wat tereg staan op 'n aanklag van moord ná die bloedige hamermoord van me. Inge Lotz, 'n Matie, het die dag van haar moord aan sy woonstelmaat gesê hy en Lotz se ma is al van 15:00 op soek na haar. (*Die Burger*, 20 March 2007)

[Mr Fred van der Vyver who is on trial for the charge of murder after the bloody hammer death of Ms Inge Lotz, a Matie, said to his flatmate on the day of her murder that he and her mother had been looking for her since 15:00.]

Another loaded phrase is found in (49): *uit hul stoele laat opstaan* (“caused them to stand up out of their chairs”) is used instead of *geskok* (“shock”) or *belangstelling gewek* (“interest”) –

so *Die Burger* implies shock or sensation, but does not say it in so many words. This is a type of loaded word as the *skok/belangstelling* was so bad that it caused people to stand up out of their chairs supposing that people listened intently and with attention and that they were interested in what was said. It would also suppose that people had been shocked by what they have heard.

49) Getuienis oor die spoor van die moordverdagte, mnr. Fred van der Vyver, se een sportskoen in die “bloedmerk” in me. Inge Lotz se badkamer het gister mense uit hul stoele laat opstaan in die hooggeregshof hier. (*Die Burger*, 8 March 2007)
Testimony with regards to the footprint of the murder suspect, Mr Fred van der Vyver`s, one running shoe in the ‘blood mark’ in Ms Inge Lotz`s bathroom had people standing up out of their chairs in the Cape high Court.

Other words were chosen to be vague and misleading: It was concluded that the palm print on the basin in Inge Lotz’s bathroom was a match to the right hand palm of Fred van der Vyver, no precisely not. If we look closely at what *Die Burger* says: *connect* – in other words that there is a connection between the palm print and Fred van der Vyver’s palm, but they never say straight out that it **is** his palm print proposing that he had pressed against the basin while cleaning up.

50) Een van Bester se eerste take was om ’n palmafdruck te identifiseer. Hy kon dit verbind met die regterpalmafdruck van Van der Vyver. (*Die Burger*, 10 April 2007)
[One of Bester’s tasks was to identify the palmprint. He could connect it to the righthand palmprint of van der Vyver.]

Omission is another device used for misleading: In phrase (51), *Die Burger* says that there is 'n *emosionele vriendskapsdriehoek* (“emotional friendship triangle”) between her and her male friends instead of 'n *moontlike vriendskapsdriehoek* (“a possible friendship triangle”) between her and her male friends, which is misleading.

51) Hulle hoop om uit dié briewe meer te kan leer oor 'n emosionele vriendskapsdriehoek tussen haar en van haar mansvriende. (*Die Burger*, 2 May 2005)

[They hope to learn more from the letters regarding an emotional friendship triangle between her and some of her male friends.]

4.3.3 Similarities and differences between the phrases used by the *Cape Times* and *Die Burger*

There are many similarities between the two journalistic cultures when comparing the aspects that have been covered and the information selected to be reported on over the more than two-year period. Both journalistic cultures made extensive use of loaded words and presented the information in such a manner as if they had been very sure of what the outcome would have been, i.e., that Fred van der Vyver was guilty. Both use the puzzle that needs a solution metaphor. For example, the *Cape Times* is of opinion that the evidence ‘*fits together like a puzzle*’ (11), suggesting that it makes logical sense and that there is no other way for the “pieces” to come together.

Differences between the two journalistic cultures are mostly concerned with the difference in labels used for Fred van der Vyver and Inge Lotz. Both have referred in their reference to Fred van der Vyver and to Inge Lotz to the relationship between the two and that Inge Lotz had

been a student, but the *Cape Times* focus on the relationship (boyfriend/girlfriend) whereas *Die Burger* not only referred to her as student but as *Matie*.

Furthermore, the *Cape Times* suggests that Fred van der Vyver could have been *jealous* of the attention that Inge Lotz got from other males (50) as opposed to *Die Burger* suggesting that their had been some sort of *friendship triangle* (80), the latter implying more than merely “attention”.

Lastly, the *Cape Times* describes the murder as the *Lotz murder* whereas *Die Burger* uses language such as *mystery murder* or “*jealousy*” *murder*. The latter is more descriptive and gives more information about the case in general, implying for example a possible motive for the murder.

CHAPTER 5:

CONCLUSION

The aim of this research project was to compare how two different language newspapers constructed the identity of Fred van der Vyver as murderer. This resulted in the study of how newspapers shape people's opinions of events based on what they have read in the newspaper(s). This project focused specifically on the language use and how the meanings ascribed to certain words help to form a certain perception of Fred van der Vyver as a murderer. Neither the *Cape Times* nor *Die Burger* wrote that he was the murderer, but both suggested it throughout by making use of linguistic devices. Loaded words were used to describe certain aspects of the case such as the manner in which Inge Lotz was murdered and the murder weapon. Both newspapers then indirectly associated these with Fred van der Vyver and what could have created the opinion among readers that he had indeed been guilty of murdering Inge Lotz. This serves as example of how newspapers have the ability to form a certain perception of an individual without explicitly stating that which is implied.

The hypothesis – that both newspapers constructed Fred van der Vyver's identity as that of a murderer by making use of various linguistic devices – was borne out by the data, as both newspapers had indeed constructed the identity of Fred van der Vyver as that of a murderer. Various linguistic devices were used to achieve this. There were differences between the reports of the two journalistic cultures; nevertheless, both created a negative image of Fred van der Vyver in the media.

Journalists usually report on an event by describing what they have heard about the event and by interpreting the information. Their interpretation will inevitably be reflected in their language use and representation of the particular event. The role of the press as that of educator and informer might be lost in the process or replaced by a more biased and selective style of reporting.

This discussion ultimately shows that newspapers are indeed able to construct ideas and portray events or individuals in a certain manner. Readers were informed by the media that the evidence and leads resulting from the investigation all led to the same conclusion, namely that the suspect is guilty and that this conclusion is based on proof. As a result, the public automatically accepted Fred van der Vyver's identity as portrayed in the press (namely as that of a murderer) and assumed that he was guilty once he had been identified as the suspect.

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MR. DIANA MARIE STRUDOM

KAAFSTAD. – Meer as twee jaar na-
dat sy in haar woonstel vermoor is,
is die opspraakwekkende Inge Lotz-
saak steeds onopgelos en is daar nou
net nuwe vrae.

Die saak sal weer ondersoek word,
want die moordenaar van die Maart-ster-
dent is waarskynlik nog op vrye voet.
Die staat word ook deur 'n maonthe-
siviele eis in die gesag gestaar nadat Lotz
se kerel, mnr. Fred van der Vyver, gister
in die hooggeregshof hier onskuldig be-
vind is dat hy haar vermoor het.

Die bloede lyk van Lotz (22), enigste
kind van prof. Jan Lotz van Bloemfont-
ein en mev. Juanita Lotz van Welge-
moed, is op 16 Maart in haar woonstel
in Klein Welgevonden op Stellenbosch
gevind.

Sr. smp. Billy Jones, polisiewoord-
voerder, het gesê daar kan nie in die sta-
dium, kommentaar, gelewer, word oor
hoe die verdere ondersoek sal verloop
en of ander vertagings geïdentifiseer is

en die pen vertoefde hier, die alreus van
vati openbare vervolging bespreek.
Daarna sal 'n besluit geneem word.

Hy het gesê daar sal spesifiek gekyk
word na waar die register die tekortko-
minge van die polisie-ondersoek in sy
uitspraak beklemtoon. Hy wou nie kom-
mentaar lewer oor of daar teen van die
polisiebeamptes opgetree gaan word
nie.

Mnr. Mike Bolhuis, 'n private spesia-
lisondersoeker in ernstige geweldsmis-
daad, het gesê al die bewysstukke in 'n
hoofsaak word bewaar.

Indien die saak verder ondersoek
word, sal elke bewysstuk weer noukeu-
rig deurgegaan word en weer na elke de-
tail gekyk word. "Nie net moet die ou be-
wysstukke weer noukeurig deurgegaan
word nie, maar daar moet op die bewys-
stukke uitgetre word om die saak weer
voor die regter te presenteer. Daar sal
maandlik 'n kundige party betrek word
en maonklik ander polisiebeamptes."

Van der Vyver se swaargewig, resspan
oorweeg tans om siviele eisae teen die
staat in te stel.

Adv. William Booth, sy prokureur,
het gesê daar is komment oor die polisie
se ontrede. "Die respan oorweeg siviele
eisae, maar dit is nog nie finaal nie."

Wat appél betref, het die staat teore-
ties geen magte om teen die onskuldig-
bevinding te appéleer nie, want dit was
'n fetteleke bevinding, het die Wes-
Kaapse adjunktrekter van openbare
vervolging, adv. Paul van der Merwe,
gesê. "Indien die uitspraak op 'n regsbe-
ghisel gebaseer was, was 'n artikel van
in wet ter sprake was, kon daar geappel-
leer word op grond daarvan dat die hof
die wet verkeerd geïnterpreteer het."

Hy het die uitspraak as "n goed gemo-
tiveerde" een beskryf. "Elk laaste as-
pek van die saak is gedek."

Dr. Athie Trollip, ondersoekbeampte,
wou geen kommentaar lewer nie.

Van der Vyver het gesê hy sal Maan-
dag begin werk. Hy het nie oor die aard
van sy werk uitgelei nie.
Booth het bygevoeg dat dit 'n hoogs
emosionele tydperk vir Van der Vyver,
sy familie, asook die verdediging was.
"Die saak het langer as twee jaar ge-
duur en vir my persoonlik was dit ook

sonder enige motief, grusaam vermoor het? Dit is werklik kommerwekkend dat sulke mense vry rondloop!

– Ronel, SMS

belaat met emosies."
Vir die Lotz-familie bring elster se uit-
spraak geen troos nie. Volgens prof. Lou-
Marie Kruger, 'n kliniese sielkundige
van die Universiteit Stellenbosch, wil
enigiemand in 'n rou- en herstelproses
'n storie met 'n begin, 'n middel en 'n
einde kan vertel.

"Dit is seker die eerste trauma ooit om
'n kind op so 'n geweldadige wyse te
verloor. In enige rouproses wil jy 'n sto-
rie kan vertel, en as jou storie nie 'n
einde het nie, is dit baie moeilik om aan
te beweeg."

"As iemand gevang is vir die grudaad,
dan sou dit beslis vir Lotz se ouers mak-
liker gewees het om aan te beweeg."

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“Ek het nie woorde nie.”

– Mev. Juanita Lotz

“Geloof het ons deurge-
dra.” – Familie van die
Van der Vyvers



“Dit moet baie hartseer vir haar ouers wees om hul enigste dogter te verloor. Ek dink die polisie moet weer ondersoek instel om die skuldige vas te trek.” – Mnr. Siyabonga Baleni



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FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2007

ERICKE BIBLIOTIEK
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DINA RODRIGUES BREAKS HER SILENCE

'I never meant for Baby Jordan to be killed'

KARIN MAUGHAN

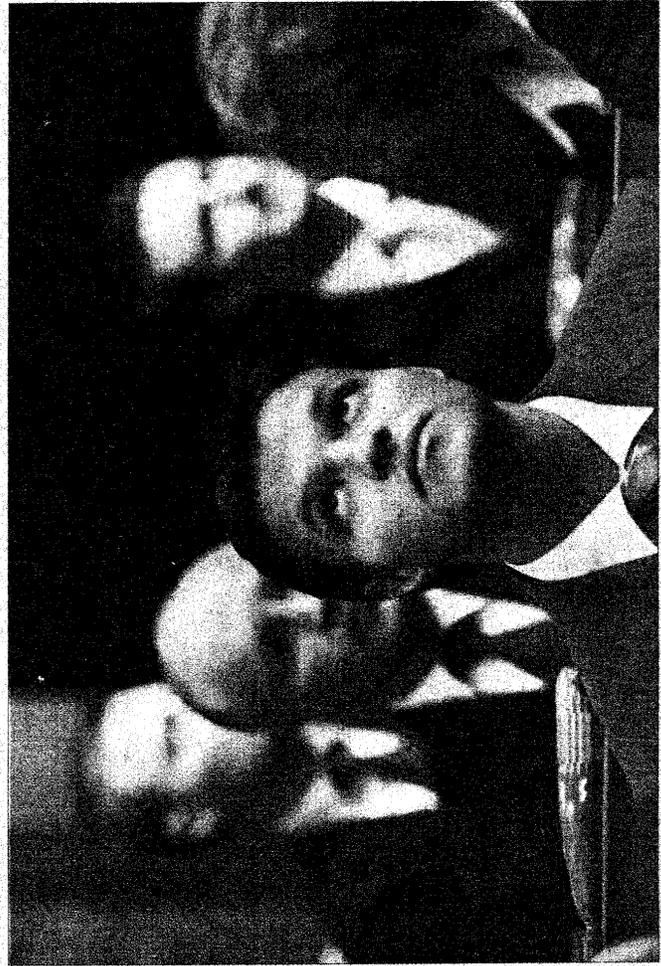
DINA RODRIGUES claims the death of six-month-old Baby Jordan-Leigh Norton was not the cold-blooded contract killing that she was found guilty of, but a tragic accident.

For the first time, the 26-year-old has detailed her involvement in Baby Jordan's death, and expressed her regret over the "mistake" that had led to the child's death.

"I was involved in an abduction that went horribly wrong," she said.

Baby Jordan died after four men broke into the Norton family home.

APPEAL: Dina Rodrigues says murder was an accident.



THANK HEAVENS: Fred van der Vyver, who was charged with the murder of Stellenbosch student Inge Lotz, looks up as the judge declares him not guilty at the Cape Town High Court yesterday. *Picture: GARY VAN WYK*

Van der Vyver in tears as not guilty verdict is read out

KAREN BREYTENBACH

IN a dramatic end to a long, piercing trial, Fred van der Vyver was found not guilty of the murder of Stellenbosch student Inge Lotz, who was stabbed 17 times, with five stab wounds piercing her left lung and three reaching over the wooden railing.

Van der Vyver had a motive to kill and hugged him.

His weeping parents really something one can be congratulated on. I am just very

Appendix C: Table of headlines

Date	Cape Times headlines				<i>Die Burger</i> headlines			
	Online headline	Hard copy headline			Online headline	Hard copy headline		
		Wording	Position in newspaper	Size		Wording	Position in newspaper	Size
16 Jun 2005	Police arrest boyfriend of slain Matie	As online	Front Page	38cm x 15cm	Oos-Kaapse vriend vas oor Lotz-moord [Eastern Cape friend cornered / in custody over Lotz murder]	Lotz-moord: "Dit was jaloesie"	Front Page	24cm x 36cm
20 Jun 2005					Saak teen Lotz verdagte waterdig [Case against Lotz suspect watertight]	[Information not available]	Page 2	[Info. not available]
15 Feb 2007	Lotz: Alleged murder weapon kept in car	Lotz accused kept alleged murder weapon in car	Page 3	10cm x 28 cm				
16 Feb 2007					Inge Lotz: Bloed aan Fred se hamer [Inge Lotz: Blood on Fred's hammer]	As online	Front Page	25 cm x 39 cm
21 Feb 2007					Gru-getuienis [Horrific evidence]	As online	Front Page	24 cm x 34 cm
23 Feb 2007	Boyfriend 'knew about knife wounds'	Boyfriend spoke of knife wounds hours after Lotz died, says investigator	Page 6	24 cm x 21 cm	Trauma vreet hom [Trauma is eating at him]	As online	Front Page	24 cm x 29 cm
8 Mar 2007	Bloody mark sheds new light in Lotz murder	Bloody shoe mark 'boyfriend's'	Page 3	24 cm x 22 cm	Bloedspoor [Blood trail]	As online	Front Page	30cm x 30 cm
14 Mar 2007	Lotz's wounds correspond with 'gift hammer'	Balistic expert says Inge Lotz's wound could have been caused by gift hammer	Page 3	34 cm x 7 cm				
16 Mar 2007	'He was too anxious about her safety'	Flatmate of murder accused recalls night of Lotz's death	Page 4	10 cm x 18 cm				

Table continued ...

Date	Cape Times headlines				<i>Die Burger</i> headlines			
	Online headline	Hard copy headline			Online headline	Hard copy headline		
		Wording	Position in newspaper	Size		Wording	Position in newspaper	Size
12 Apr 2007	Accused 'tried to look sad' at Lotz's funeral	Accused's presence caused tension at Lotz home at time of Inge's funeral	Page 3	35cm x 7cm				
18 Apr 2007	Lotz boyfriend 'kept letter as a souvenir'	Lotz murder accused 'kept letter as a souvenir'	Page 3	10cm x 28cm				
20 Apr 2007	'Secret love' probed in Lotz case	Many young students fell in love with the beautiful Lotz, court told	Page 3	25cm x 10cm				
2 Aug 2007					Staat hamer op 'moordwapen' [State hammers on 'murder weapon']	'G'n Fred-sameswering'	Front Page	31cm x 14cm
13 Aug 2007					Van der Vyver moet verduidelik [Van der Vyver must explain]	As online	Page 5	38cm x 12cm
22 Aug 2007	New evidence halts Lotz murder trial	As online	Page 4	10cm x 8cm				
2 Oct 2007	Lotz evidence 'fits like a puzzle'	As online	Page 3	24cm x 26cm				
19 Oct 2007	Boyfriend grilled about Lotz's murder	Van der Vyver grilled about day girlfriend Lotz was killed	Page 3	19cm x 10cm	Fred weet nie waar hy gehoor het Inge is vermoor [Fred does not know where he heard that Inge had been murdered]	Fred weet nie wie gesê het Inge is vermoor	Page 2	12cm x 22cm
24 Oct 2007					Fred trap klei oor Inge brief [Fred at a loss over Inge letter]	As online	Page 4	17cm x 20cm