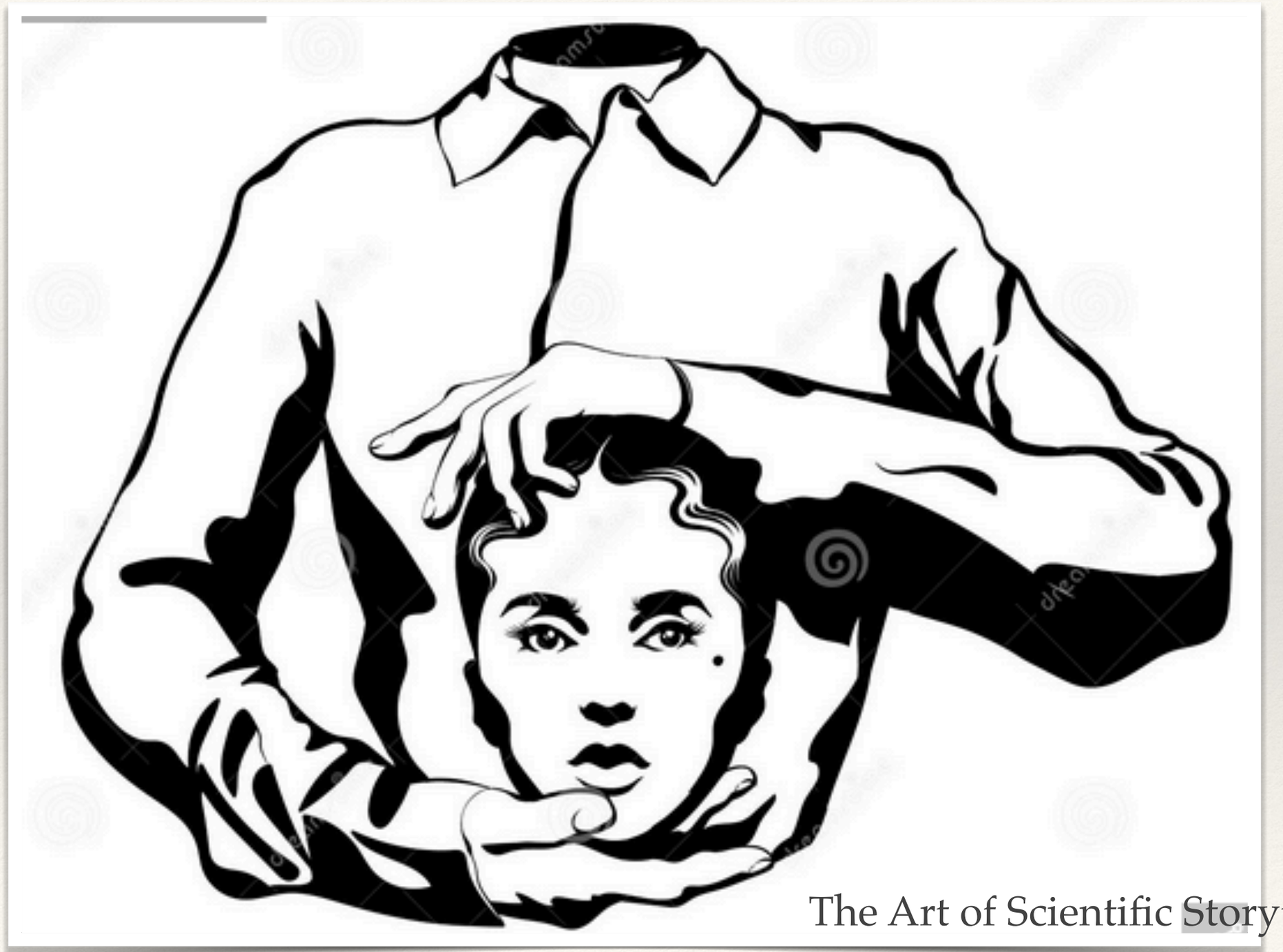
"A Headless Monster is what I call a manuscript in preparation without a Title or an Abstract" Raphael E. Luna



The Art of Scientific Storytelling, p.45

The title

What makes a good title?

The title indicates the topic.

The title suggests the scope of the study or article.

The title should be self-explanatory.

The title should be concise.

The title *must* include key words.

The snappy title :

The Catchy Phrase, The Quotation or The Clever Hook

- ***Here is one approach..***

It's a Frog's Life

This is a play on the common English idiom "It's a dog's life" - the phrase initiated in the 16th century when dogs would guard homes, were fed scraps, slept outside and had short lives. In other words, it meant life wasn't good.

Today dogs are well fed, groomed, pampered, sleep inside and live longer, so it now means a good life. Example; "I had breakfast in bed and lay around the house all day. It's a dog's life."

(www.urbandictionary.com)

The basic *descriptive* title :
nouns, noun phrases and prepositions

- On ecosystem dynamics
- Tree island pattern formation in the Florida Everglades
- Kleptoparasitism and complexity in a multi-trophic web
- Mathematical model for Zika virus dynamics with sexual transmission route

The more complex title :

a call for action, a question or results

- Assessment of rabbit hemorrhagic disease in controlling the population of red fox: A measure to preserve endangered species in Australia

- Impact of Obesity on Heart and Lung Transplantation: Does Pre-Transplant Obesity Affect Outcomes?

- Oral cannabidiol does not produce a signal for abuse liability in frequent marijuana smokers

The more complex title :
project type

- Mental health : a philosophical analysis
- Foreign Aid to Pakistan: A Critical Evaluation
- Core Task Modelling in Cultural Assessment: a Case Study in Nuclear Power Plant Maintenance
- An account of Old English stress
- "Roots" research: A summary of findings

The colon :

With or without the verb + ing?

- Analyzing Genres : Functional Parameters
- From Text to Task: Putting Research on Abstracts to Work
- All Fall Down : Exploring the Deterioration Factors of Bridges
- Fenland Survey : an Essay in Landscape and Persistence
- Employee Surveys in Management : Theories, Tools, and Practical Applications
- English as a Contact Language: Typology and Comparison

The basic descriptive title - nouns, noun phrases and prepositions

The more complex title – a call for action, a question or result, or project type

Title Analysis

which type of title is it?	*what's the word count?*	*which prepositions if any?*	*does it contain verbs?*	*any punctuation ?*

source: Swales, John, 2009. Unit 8: Constructing a Research Paper II, *Academic Writing for Graduate Students: essential tasks and skills / John M. Swales and Christine B. Feak*. The University of Michigan Press, 242-286.

Title analysis

- Australia's new Free Trade Agreements with Japan and South Korea : Potential Economic and Environmental Impacts
- Is Pope Francis Anti-Modern?: Pope Francis on the Environment
- The natural environment and biogeochemical cycles in Sub-Saharan Africa.
- The History of Technological Anxiety and the Future of Economic Growth - Is This Time Different?
- Placating the Sea Goddess: Analysis of a Fisher Ritual in Tamil Nadu, India

Titles of Scientific Letters and Research Papers In Astrophysics: A Comparative Study of Some Linguistic Aspects and Their Relationship with Collaboration Issues

David I. Méndez, M. Ángeles Alcaraz

Abstract

In this study we compare the titles of scientific letters and those of research papers published in the field of astrophysics in order to identify the possible differences and/or similarities between both genres in terms of several linguistic and extra-linguistic variables (length, lexical density, number of prepositions, number of compound groups, number of authors and number of countries mentioned in the paper bylines). We also carry out a cross-genre and cross-journal analysis of the referred six variables. Our main findings may be summarized as follows: (1) When compared to research paper titles, scientific letter titles are usually shorter, they have a lower lexical density, they include a higher number of prepositions per number of words and a lower number of compound groups per number of words, although they have more up to 4-word compound groups, i.e. the simplest ones. As a consequence, scientific letter titles include less information, which is also less condensed, than research paper titles. (2) The predominance of compound adjectives over compound nouns in the titles of both genres highlights the scientificity of astrophysical discourse. (3) In general terms, our data show a positive correlation between title length and the number of countries mentioned in the bylines for both genres. The positive correlation between title length and number of authors is only met in the case of research papers. In light of these findings, it may be concluded that scientific letters are a clear example of a timeliness and more "immediate" science, whereas research papers are connected to a more timeless and "elaborate" science. It may also be concluded that two different collaboration scenarios are intertwining on the basis of three separate geographic and linguistic publication contexts (Mainland Europe, The United Kingdom and The United States of North America).

Keywords

Astrophysics; Titles; scientific letters; Research papers; linguistic questions; authorship, collaboration issues

Title analysis: Linguistics meets Astrophysics

(1) "Towards DIB mapping in galaxies beyond 100 Mpc: A radial profile of the λ5780.5 diffuse interstellar band in AM1353-272 B" **= 28 words** (A&A letters, 2015)

(2) Is Sedna another Triton? **= 4 words** (A&A letters, 2005)

(3) A periodically varying luminous quasar at z = 2 from the pan-starrs1 medium deep survey: A candidate supermassive black hole binary in the gravitational wave-driven regime **= 34 words** (ApJLs, 2015)

(4) Delayed Recombination **= 2 words** (ApJLs, 2000)

(5) Do star formation rates of galaxy clusters depend on mass? Blue/late-type fractions and total star formation rates of 115 galaxy clusters as a function of cluster viral mass **= 30 words** (MNRASLs, 2005)

(6) Weak microlensing **= 2 words** (MNRASLs, 2010)

Méndez and Alcaraz, 2017, p. 131