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# 7 Exploring the Potential of Live Text for ELT

Valentin Werner

## 7.1 Introduction

Several recent surveys have indicated that audience numbers and viewing times of traditional broadcast media, such as TV and radio are decreasing, especially when it comes to live reporting (Ofcom, 2022; Statista, 2021a, 2021b). By contrast, media consumption at large is growing, mainly due to the rise of digital media and web-based alternatives to traditional live broadcasting. One media artifact that squarely falls into this category is live text, which has emerged in the late 1990s. Live text (LT)<sup>1</sup> qualifies as a genuine born-digital text (BDT) type (see Becker *et al.*, this volume) as it exploits the affordances of digital media. More specifically, it epitomizes major trends both as regards changes in the technical and communicative infrastructure in general (see e.g. Kergel & Heidekamp-Kergel, 2020) as well as in digital journalism in particular. LT has been defined as a ‘single blog post on a specific topic to which time-stamped content is progressively added for a finite period’ (Thurman & Walters, 2013: 83). In general, it has been described as an immediate form of journalism well-suited for the coverage of (pre-scheduled) events with limited duration, such as sports matches, political events (elections, presidential debates, inauguration ceremonies, etc.), natural disasters or terrorist attacks (Thurman & Walters, 2013; see also Michael & Werner, 2021, in press).

Previous descriptions have labeled LT as a hybrid in multiple respects: first, stylistically, as it mashes different journalistic styles, for instance fact-based reporting, evaluative commenting and glossing (Werner, 2016); second, structurally, as it combines textual and visual elements (see Section 7.2), and third, textually and linguistically, as the content is regularly updated and the discourse emerges as the events reported upon unfold. Thus, LT has been called a dynamic ‘text-in-motion’ (Hauser, 2008: 5), ‘text-in-process’ (Chovanec, 2018: 511) or ‘open news discourse’ (Thorsen & Jackson, 2018), delineating LT from static textual practices available in traditional reporting. LT is further characterized by interactivity, as audience contributions may be embedded into the discourse, as

well as by its ability to connect digital and physical spaces (Ng, 2013). LT therefore provides a dynamic, interactive and multimodal environment that has been claimed to also be functionally hybrid as it instantiates infotainment (Baym, 2008; McEnnis, 2016).

While scholarly engagement with LT has been wide in media and communication studies (see e.g. Thurman & Walters, 2013; also, Matheson & Wahl-Jorgensen, 2020), there are also a few studies that have tackled linguistic and multimodal aspects, for instance of sports-related (e.g. Chovanec, 2018; Werner, 2016, 2019) and political LT (e.g. Michael & Werner, 2021, in press; Tereskiewicz, 2014). Such studies have considered the language of the main commentary, have analyzed the usage of formulaic language and stance expressions, and have dealt with the issue of spoken-written hybridity of LT as a BDT.

Within the context of ELT, however, LT has been ignored to date.<sup>2</sup> A prospective point of departure are several contributions on the use of blogging in ELT in general (e.g. Chen, 2019; Elola & Oskoz, 2009; Ishihara & Takamya, 2019; Raith, 2010). However, these are restricted to the issue of the development of sociocultural competence through telecollaboration with blogs. Another type of blogging, that of educational ‘microblogging’ with the help of tweets, features in other publications (e.g. Lomicka & Lord, 2011; Reinhardt, 2019).<sup>3</sup> As the focus is restricted to social media usage, unfortunately, LT is not considered.

In view of the arguably understudied and to date underused nature of LT as a genuine BDT for purposes of ELT, the present contribution aims to develop multiple perspectives on LT. These comprise a media/communication studies perspective that considers LT as a multimodal artifact and an applied media linguistics perspective that explicitly takes into account discourse properties and thus serves to illustrate structural features of LT as a BDT. The aforementioned perspectives will serve as a base to inform the vantage point of ELT that explores LT as a BDT with potential classroom relevance.

More specifically, the following questions will be addressed:

- How does LT relate to more traditional forms of reporting?
- What characterizes LT as a BDT due to recent technological advances and increasing media ‘prosumption’ (Beer & Burrows, 2013)?
- What are the potential affordances of LT for ELT?

The remainder of the present chapter is structured as follows: Sections 7.2 to 7.4 contextualize LT as a BDT and provide information on its communicative situation, core linguistic aspects as well as on selected multimodal properties. Section 7.5 addresses the core concern of implications for ELT, highlighting opportunities and challenges when it comes to classroom usage of LT, and offers a lesson outline. Section 7.6 is dedicated to implications for further research before a concluding overall summary is presented in Section 7.7.

## 7.2 The Communicative Situation

To provide some background information on the genesis of LT as a BDT and to facilitate the ensuing analysis, it is helpful to offer a basic overview of the production and consumption circumstances of LT, followed by the presentation of one example of a concrete LT instantiation.

As a rule, LT appears on the websites of news outlets (such as <https://www.theguardian.com/tone/minutebyminute> or <https://www.mirror.co.uk/live/>) and is produced with commercial content management platforms by freelance journalists or (increasingly) regular editors. The editors usually are in front of a TV screen rather than present at the events on which they report and the discourse may be single- or, more likely, multiple-authored, with editors sometimes taking on specific roles, for example one editor being responsible for play-by-play commentary, another one for color commentary in sports LT (Werner, 2016, 2019) or editors from different departments commenting on their areas of specialization (domestic politics, economy, etc.) in political LT. The consumption of LT typically is quick and cursory, often happens individually on mobile devices, and sometimes as a second-screen by-medium besides the primary televisual mediation of an event (Bitkom, 2018). Note that LT may not only be followed while an event actually is in progress but can also be accessed at a later point in time when it is made available on a website.

Figure 7.1 shows an example of LT from the British news outlet *The Guardian*, illustrating LT reporting on a major political TV event (the first 2020 US presidential debate).

Figure 7.1 exemplifies what could be considered a traditional layout based on a squared ordered page with black on white/grey print. At the same time, it illustrates the modularity of LT. For instance, zone 1 contains the heading of the LT and several clickable links that lead to the respective ‘key moment’ posts in the main commentary. Zone 2 lists the names of the commentators, provides an X/Twitter ID, social media links and a vertical timeline with key moments in reverse chronological order (again linked to the relevant sections in the main commentary). Zone 3 contains the main commentary in reverse order. The individual posts in this zone are time-stamped and may feature links, photorealistic and abstract imagery, as well as multimodal elements (in the example shown an embedded video clip).<sup>4</sup> Note that the main commentary contains material from different producers, including other media sources, official channels (e.g. from political parties and organizations) as well as from private people, with X/Twitter being the channel of choice for such input.

While the textual commentary represents the core part of any LT, it is evident that LT consists of a range of additional structural features permitted by the digital medium and is characterized by multimodality and modularity, uniting different carriers of information within one large semiotic unit. Overall, LT can therefore be described as a spatiotemporal

The screenshot shows the Guardian website's live text interface for the first 2020 presidential debate. The page is structured as follows:

- Zone 1:** The main article header, including the title "First 2020 presidential debate as it happened: Trump tries to steamroll Biden in chaotic clash" and several sub-headlines such as "Trump refuses to condemn white supremacists" and "Biden: It's hard to get any word in with this clown".
- Zone 2:** A sidebar on the left titled "Key events so far..." listing a chronological list of events from the debate, such as "Debate summary", "Proud Boys celebrate Trump's 'stand back and stand by' comment", and "First question to Trump is on the supreme court".
- Zone 3:** The main content area, which includes a video player showing the debate, a "10 of 10" indicator, and a series of text updates providing real-time commentary and news, such as "Trump family members, including Ivanka Trump, and Jill Biden have now taken their seats in the Samson Pavilion" and "Biden has arrived at the Samson Pavilion in Cleveland, Ohio".

Figure 7.1 Screenshot of LT from *The Guardian* (Belam *et al.*, 2020) with different navigational and content zones highlighted

interactive medium involving linear and nonlinear data (Bateman *et al.*, 2017; Werner, 2019): LT is *spatial* as it is represented on a two-dimensional space on a webpage but also *temporal/dynamic* as its content is updated regularly. It is *unscripted*, as the unfolding of events cannot be fully planned, and also *interactive*, as the digital format facilitates exchange between commentators and audience. While the posts appear in a *linear* (reverse chronological) fashion, *nonlinearity* refers to the fact that posts may link to other sources, articles, videos, Tweets, etc.

### 7.3 Linguistic Aspects

As the main commentary is the core part of LT, and as it contains textual material that will in all likelihood be the focus of any

language-educational engagement, selected linguistic aspects of LT commentary as a particular instantiation of BDTs (see also Kersten, this volume) are described subsequently.

It has been observed that the lexicon of LT is largely determined by the respective LT type: not surprisingly, football LT features football discourse, for instance, where formulaic language, specialized vocabulary and expressions relating to spatial and temporal location for the creation of a mental image of the football pitch are pervasive (Werner, 2016, 2019). Likewise, political LT represents political discourse and is characterized by specialized vocabulary (e.g. *rally*, *nominee*, *campaign*, etc.) and a high incidence of reporting verbs (*say*, *claim*, *state*, etc.) (Michael & Werner, 2021).

A further aspect discussed from a linguistic perspective is whether LT can be viewed as an example of stylistic lag and emulated speech. This means that it relies on communicative and linguistic conventions of established live media formats that rely on the spoken mode (TV and radio reporting), adapted to the (written) digital medium (Hauser, 2008). Corpus data of sports LT (Werner, 2016) are suggestive of a restricted use of pertinent features, such as expressive punctuation and capitalization and indication of vowel lengthening (see examples 1 and 2), interjections (example 3) or the presence of informalisms (examples 4 and 5) and even fewer of the elements of emulated speech have been found to occur in political LT (example 6; Michael & Werner, 2021, 2023).

- (1) **WEST BROM HAVE A SHOT!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**
- (2) **Ooooh!** Ireland, in the centre circle, passes to the right and starts running
- (3) **Wowee.** The celebrations behind Mignolet's goal are inevitably wild.
- (4) Bournemouth payers are hugging **and stuff**
- (5) More like **snowin'** Hargreaves, **amirite?**
- (6) **Hi from Miami, team!** I will be on the lookout for anything that could give Biden or Trump an edge in all-important Florida

It has also been noted that LT embodies discourse with a significant commentator presence. This implies that the main commentary features strongly personalized commentator voices using exophoric reference and expressions of stance (examples 7 to 9).

- (7) I'd like to see **that** again.
- (8) Alonso is booked for fouling the keeper Adrian. **That's** a bit harsh I **think**.
- (9) **I think** Trump's championing a heroic view of American history resonates with a lot of conservatives.

Finally, as already indicated above, LT discourse can be categorized as a stylistic hybrid that mixes commentary, evaluation and – particularly in sports LT – statistical background information (see examples 10 to 12).

- (10) Moving on to Coronavirus, Biden says Trump has no plan – and 200,000 people have died. He says, correctly, that in the early days of the virus, Trump had praised China and President Xi’s response to the virus.
- (11) Kenny’s long ball downfield is hit and hope and Klavan soon snuffs that out. That’s all Everton have mustered in truth and that’s not good enough really. It’s been totally one-way traffic.
- (12) A gentle reminder that this fixture has seen a record 21 red cards issued across the 50 Premier League meetings, with 14 for Everton and seven for Liverpool.

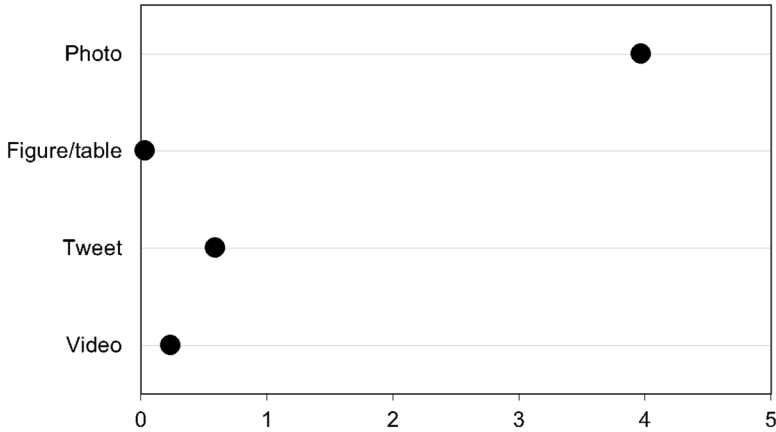
#### 7.4 Beyond Text: Live Text as a Multimodal Artifact

It was already mentioned above that LT as a BDT exploits the affordances of the digital medium and represents a truly multimodal artifact. Therefore, it is sensible to briefly inspect the role of paratextual material (i.e. items used in addition to the text of the main commentary) that may determine the style and content of LT. Such a perspective is motivated by observations on general patterns in the current mediascape, which include a central role of images in present-day digital representations (Caple, 2017), the increased availability of statistics (Clarke, 2017), as well as audience participation as a growing mass media trend (Chovanec, 2018; McEnnis, 2016).

Figure 7.2 shows that images indeed play an important part as, especially, photorealistic images commonly occur in LT. Tweets, which can be seen as indicative of the interactive properties of LT and the opportunity for direct audience involvement, and audiovisual material appear to be less pervasive, while abstract imagery (e.g. figures and tables with statistical information) also occurs occasionally. Thus, LT obviously seems to follow parts of the broader media trends described and relies on various textual and additional elements to convey an overall message.

Previous research (see, e.g. Werner, 2019) has also found that LT implements certain strategies to foster audience participation and community building only possible in the digital medium, establishing ‘light communities’ (that is, temporary communities converging around a shared interest or event; see Blommaert & Varis, 2015: 127) through ‘mediated quasi-interaction’ (Chovanec, 2010: 234). For LT, this includes invitations for mail-ins and Tweets and selectively<sup>5</sup> including and addressing them in the main commentary (see examples 13 to 16) as well as relation to insider/collective knowledge (examples 15 and 16).

- (13) Thoughts? Predictions? Hopes? Fears? Send them my way.
- (14) ‘Thoughts? I think United need to make a statement tonight. It’s all for City to lose,’ says Ahmed Aly. ‘Predictions? 3–2 to United. Hopes? I hope it’s not a drab nil-nil draw after all those column inches about “the game of the season.” Fears? Spiders.’



**Figure 7.2** Occurrences of paratextual material in sports LT from *The Guardian*, normalized per 1000 words of commentary (adapted from Werner, 2019)

- (15) ‘Allardyce fiddling with his earpiece is the new Wenger struggling with his coat zip,’ emails Marie. I like it, I like it.
- (16) This, as Tom Jordan points out, is the kind of dirty, tough game Diego Costa would have loved. Chelsea have lacked a bit of mongrel.

Arguably, these strategies foster ‘prosumption’ on part of the audience, who are not restricted to mere passive consumers of media content. The humor created through these apparently informal exchanges furthermore can be viewed within the context of what Siehr (2016) has termed ‘comedy journalism’, where information and entertainment are mashed up.

## 7.5 Implications for ELT

In the following, the focus will shift from description to how LT can inform ELT. From the foregoing sections, it should have become clear that LT can be viewed as an artifact integrating online and offline practices, that it represents a complex artifact necessitating the analysis of linear and non-linear data and that it constitutes a multimodal ensemble relying on text, images and other communicative means. It is characterized by some instances of stylistic lag and its producers exploit multimodal affordances (e.g. the opportunity to integrate content from various sources and other producers),<sup>6</sup> so that it has clearly developed into a BDT format of its own. LT fulfills several functions, as it informs, entertains and serves to build a community. It further breaks the unidirectionality of communication found in traditional broadcast media and thus loosens the hierarchy (producer vs. consumer) in journalism through exploiting the affordances of the digital sphere, creating



multi-layered and multi-authored ('polyvocal') discourse. LT therefore is a prime example of the current trend of media convergence; that is, it illustrates how formerly separate communicative practices are consciously combined to make their points (Bateman *et al.*, 2017).

All of these aspects make LT a potentially relevant and interesting concern in ELT, as it epitomizes many qualities of BDTs. Subsequently, opportunities and challenges when working with LT in the classroom are presented from a broader perspective and ideas for practical application are offered.

### 7.5.1 Opportunities

Above all, LT embodies authentic news discourse in a digital format. In this regard, LT may serve as authentic and complex input for reading comprehension activities, and therefore appears to be squarely in line with central demands of current ELT practice. Using such authentic texts, BDTs included, is a core demand in many curricula, especially at higher proficiency levels (CEFR B1 and beyond). Relevant activities, fostering what has been termed 'online reading comprehension' (Coiro, 2012: 412), involve the analysis of linguistic structures used in such texts, and further include the interpretation of statistics and figures as well as comparisons with similar texts in other media types. Following the scheme for typical educational functions of digital media developed in Lütge and Merse (2021), it is suggested that LT can at least be used for the functions of *information* and *reflection*.

A first specific focus could be raising awareness about the properties of LT as a genuine BDT type. This involves drawing attention (i) to the dynamicity of LT production and its potential open-endedness as a 'text-in-motion', (ii) to the fact that LT establishes multi-layered and multi-authored discourse (how are different voices and parts of the LT combined to achieve an overall effect?), and (iii) to the hybridity of LT in multiple respects, for instance as regards its:

- Style (spoken vs. written/informal vs. formal): when do the commentators use more formal or informal ways of expression?
- Function (information vs. entertainment): when and how do the commentators inform, when and how do they evaluate?
- Extent of audience engagement (consumption vs. production): who can contribute to LT?

All of the aforementioned characteristics clearly delineate LT from traditional journalistic text types and can moreover be viewed as starting points for discussions that problematize the consumer/prosumer role of the audience in present-day media societies. Such activities are squarely in line with the educational function of reflection; that is, digital media as

subject of reflection, critically reconsidering the roles and effects of media on learners and society (Lütge & Merse, 2021).

Another potential focus could be the development of multimodal/digital literacy (see e.g. Bulfin & McGraw, 2015; Jones & Hafner, 2021). This will involve explicit contrastive work in which LT is compared with other, traditional news text types. Relevant activities could aim at comparing dynamic LT reporting with non-dynamic *post-hoc* reporting of an event in a newspaper article or also with dynamic reporting on traditional channels such as TV or radio. Again, linguistic structures in terms of formal/informal language use and stylistic nuances could be a core concern, as could be analyses of what distinguishes LT as a genuinely multimodal artifact from related monomodal texts. Such activities recognize the growing significance of multimodal literacy, which is especially fostered through the increased circulation of digital texts (Mills & Unsworth, 2017), and may eventually be conducive to the development of multiliteracies (Cope & Kalantzis, 2016) as a general competence.

On a different note, addressing the content of individual LTs opens avenues for engagement with current target-culture events. LT as a BDT thus also fulfills the educational function of information, that is, using digital sources to research, collect and evaluate new information and knowledge, or to discover topical issues (Lütge & Merse, 2021). As LT offers linked information, for instance to publications by other media organizations, political parties, sports clubs, etc., and generally represents multi-authored and multi-layered discourse on a topic, there is ample opportunity on part of the learners for individual further research and the reflection of positions, for instance in a political debate. Depending on the topic treated in a specific LT, core areas that commonly feature in language curricula, such as society, politics, economy, environment, or values and norms can be addressed with a view to developing multiple perspectives within the broader framework of intercultural learning.

## 7.5.2 Challenges

In spite of the aforementioned affordances, it will be recognized that there are several potential obstacles for integrating LT into the ELT classroom, and that authentic LT is in all likelihood best suited for advanced learner populations.

As sketched above, LT constitutes an – in several respects – hybrid artifact and a highly complex meaning-making activity. Among other things, to be able to grasp the full meaning of LT, learners need to already have a broad range of vocabulary, potentially including specialized vocabulary. In addition, they need advanced skills when it comes to textual comprehension and interpretation, which also involves the comprehension and interpretation of additional multimodal material, and a certain degree of (inter)cultural knowledge.

There are also a few practical limitations: One is the restricted topic range of LT. Even though it was stated above that LT in principle is used to cover all kinds of current events, due to audience interest most LTs focus on politics and sports. This curbs the range of topics that can be dealt with in the classroom when LT is used as a starting point for intercultural learning (see Section 5.1) and may also impact on learner interest. A second issue is the restricted opportunity to consume LT ‘as it happens’, that is, when the event reported upon is *actually* in progress. This may have to do with time differences (e.g. the US presidential debates will not coincide with hours of instruction in Europe, or a football match will not take place during schooling hours, for instance) and the fact that LT reporting may well extend beyond the time boundaries of one class. The question that arises is whether a post-hoc approach to LT – that is, looking at the completed LT – is considered attractive as the dynamic nature of its textual genesis is discounted. Another potential weakness is that LT at first sight only allows more interpretative rather than productive tasks, even though learner submissions to a LT in progress, for instance in the form of a social media post, would be conceivable in principle.

### 7.5.3 Practical example

While several potential broader avenues for learner engagement with LT were sketched in Section 7.5.1, a specific practical example for how LT can be integrated into ELT classroom practice is offered successively. Given the potential challenges examined in Section 7.5.2, the activities are geared to learners at an upper-intermediate to advanced level. The lesson outline adapts the classical pre-while-post-activity structure and is intended to cover a 90-minute class. Materials used are (i) the complete version of the LT shown in Figure 7.1 (political LT reporting by *The Guardian* on the televised first 2020 US presidential debate between incumbent Donald Trump and contender Joe Biden) and (ii) a traditional monomodal print (or online) news report on the same event. It is assumed that the lesson is embedded into a longer sequence that deals with the issue of parliamentary and presidential democracies in target-language cultures.

*Lead-in/pre-reading:* Before the learners are presented with the actual LT and the news article, to tune into the topic, to raise their expectations and to activate their knowledge, they will be shown a still image that shows the two candidates and the moderator in the TV studio where the debate is recorded (e.g. [https://static.dw.com/image/55099142\\_403.jpg](https://static.dw.com/image/55099142_403.jpg)). Learners are then asked to describe what and who they see on the picture and are asked to speculate on the context, while the instructor takes notes on the learners’ observations (on a whiteboard or screen). It was noted above that specialized vocabulary, particularly items relating to (US) political discourse, is needed to understand the discourse of LT. Therefore,

in a second step, such vocabulary is previewed with the help of an activity where passages from the LT and the news article that contain relevant items (*campaign, incumbent, Democratic candidate, GOP, etc.*) are given to individual learners. They are asked to read the passage, identify any unknown words and to use context clues to determine their meaning. As a fallback option, they may be allowed to use a dictionary. Next, they should post their findings to a Padlet or add (sticky) notes to a (magnetic) whiteboard, which can then be used as a resource for all learners. Finally, the class is divided into two equally sized groups, one focusing on LT, the other one on the traditional news report. The LT group receives a brief informational text that fills them in on LT as a BDT type for journalistic coverage and the special role of the online audience in this media format, while the news report group receives an informational text on the gatekeeper/filter role of traditional journalism.

*While-reading:* The LT group is now presented with the LT (or parts thereof), ideally in its original format on an electronic device. Optionally, learners may view a short video of the live debate as screened on TV along with the associated LT posts to raise awareness that LT is a digital remediation of a mediated (televised) political event. The news report group is given a traditional news report, ideally also in its original (monomodal) format. Learners are asked to go through the texts individually and are provided with a worksheet with several guiding questions pertaining to structural and linguistic aspects of the LT and the news report, respectively. This is intended to make them aware of the specifics of LT (time-stamped posts in reverse order, presence of multimodal elements, potentially active role of the audience, etc.; presence of partly informal tone, evaluative language, etc.) and of traditional news discourse (linear pyramid structure, formality of media language, presence of reporting verbs, typically passive audience, etc.). They are also instructed to complete a list of the debate topics addressed.

*Post-reading:* Subsequently, learners are asked to pair up with someone from the other group and share and compare their findings. This comparison is structured by the guiding questions used during the while-reading phase, with a view to fleshing out the properties and affordances of LT as a recent addition to BDT news media formats. As a follow-up activity (with the whole class or in smaller groups), it is conceivable to assess several larger issues pertaining to the development of multimodal/digital literacy, taking into account current practices of (digital) media production and consumption. Topics could include discussion of (i) whether the gatekeeping function of traditional news media is justified or should be overcome given the present-day realities and affordances of online news practices, (ii) whether audience participation and prosumption (potentially possible in LT, usually not possible in traditional reporting) should be viewed as a welcome development in the mediascape and (iii), on a related note, who the audience is that is actually represented in the LT.

What lies outside of the scope of the lesson outline presented so far, but is conceivable in terms of a productive activity, is to subsequently switch the learners' role to LT producers and provide them with a short televisual excerpt (of a political debate or of a sports match), asking them to write several posts themselves. Such a real-time text production activity places high demands on the learners, of course, but could lead to further reflection on linguistic means necessary to fulfill the different LT functions. A follow-up activity could consist of learners evaluating the LT produced by other learners.

*Homework:* Several options are conceivable for broader engagement with the content of the lesson. Learners could be asked to conduct some further research, for instance on the issue of why the US presidential debates usually only feature two candidates (unlike in many European democracies, for instance), leading them to explorations of differing political cultures and voting systems, or on specific topics featuring in the debate (e.g. healthcare, climate change, racism, immigration policies in the US, etc.). Based on opinions expressed in the debate and by the LT commentators and on the further research conducted, learners can also be asked to produce a text (e.g. an argumentative essay) on a disputed issue.

## 7.6 Implications for Further Research

While LT, as shown in Section 7.5.3, indeed can be exploited for ELT purposes and offers several additional opportunities that could only briefly be described in Section 7.5.1, it is evident that due to the scarcity of language-educational research on this particular BDT type the present contribution has to leave some gaps.

Given the fact the LT is geared toward adults – and in the case of sports LT even an adult specialist audience – it was indicated at several points that LT places high lexical demands on learners. To be in a position to determine the appropriate level of vocabulary knowledge and the required amount of scaffolding, for instance during a pre-reading phase (see Section 7.5.3), it would be helpful to establish specific lexical profiles (cf. Nation, 2013) for LT and LT subtypes.

A second desideratum is an extension of the description and application of LT beyond the examples used in the present contribution, which all stemmed from one (UK-based) media organization, *The Guardian*. Including contrastive views involving media outlets from other target-culture contexts and with other editorial stances and intended audiences will substantially broaden the perspective but may also further complicate the picture for an already complex research object. On a related note, all the examples presented relied on sports and political LT and it may be worthwhile to explore differences between these and other LT subtypes in more detail.

## 7.7 Conclusion

The present contribution aimed to explore the affordances of LT in the context of ELT and identified LT as a genuine BDT text type that is a popular option for online journalistic coverage of live events. It was shown that LT to date has not explicitly been considered in ELT.

An outline of the communicative situation and linguistic and multi-modal aspects of LT illustrated that LT possesses its inherent complexities. It could also be demonstrated that LT offers several opportunities for classroom-based engagement if potential challenges are considered and a basic example lesson outline, which certainly is subject to modifications depending on the LT subtype and individual LT manifestation used, was introduced. The present contribution indicated where engagement with LT is squarely in line with demands of current curricula and how relevant activities possibly connect to the larger issues of digital and multimodal literacy as well as intercultural learning. As LT is a BDT that is in all likelihood here to stay, future engagement on the part of applied linguists and ELT practitioners will be vital to realize its full language-educational potential.

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## Notes

- (1) In the context of media and communication studies, LTs are often alternatively labelled live blogs, which relates them to their sister genre the (we)blog, which originally emerged as informational or discussion-based websites that present dated diary-style text entries (known as posts), regularly in reverse chronological order.
- (2) For an example that discusses the use of sports LT in the German literacy classroom, see Siehr (2016).
- (3) Note that Reinhardt (2019) in his review states that traditional blogging may become a niche practice in the near future and may lose some of its relevance for language education.
- (4) To contrast the LT with a sports LT from the same outlet, you may refer to <https://www.theguardian.com/football/live/2022/jan/02/chelsea-v-liverpool-premier-league-live>, for instance. Sports LT will often additionally present extensive statistical information in zone 2.
- (5) For some examples of Tweets embedded into the main commentary, see the linked LT examples. They simultaneously illustrate the practice of gatekeeping through the LT producers when it comes to audience contributions.
- (6) See the linked LT examples for further examples of sourcing practices in LT.

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