NEWS & PRESS VOCABULARY
Vocabulaire journalistique anglais

Mieux comprendre la presse anglo-saxonne
Améliorer son style de rédaction

Émilie Gaillard
ellipses
1. INFLUENCE AND POWER

- A bulwark against protection, defense, safeguard
  The unemployment measures introduced by the government are a bulwark against dire poverty.

- A juggernaut steamroller, a force that crushes everything on its way
  Russia is a sports juggernaut in the Olympic Games.

- Rubber-stamp approved, endorsed, validated
  The National People’s Congress in China is often considered as a rubber-stamp parliament.

- A shock and awe response use of quick overwhelming power
  During the Cold War, sending a man on the Moon was a shock-and-awe response in the space race opposing the US and the USSR.

- Stalwart faithful, reliable, staunch
  George has been a stalwart support since the start of the project.

- A standard-bearer a lead figure setting an example
  The United States has been a standard-bearer of civil liberties in the world for many years.

- A theatrical act of chest-beating boasting, bragging
  The national pageantry they displayed to the world was a theatrical act of chest beating.

- A tone-deaf (support) unnuanced
  The President benefits from a tone-deaf support from conservative voters.

- A towering (figure) prominent, of great influence
  Churchill was the most towering figure of post-WWII.

- A wake word awakening, arousing, incentivizing
  ‘Make America Great Again’ has become a wake word for many hitherto indecisive voters.

- Whitewashing censorship
  Gagging the press was an act of whitewashing from the government.

- Adamantine stubborn, inflexible
  The Prime Minister is an adamantine supporter of the reform.

- At someone’s behest responding someone’s orders, at someone’s command
  Most young interns are at the behest of their managers.
At the helm of  
in charge of  
Patrick is at the helm of the expansive overhaul undergone by the company.

Base-rallying (pol.)  
resonating with the grassroots,  
the foundational members  
The President’s latest policies are a base-rallying blueprint for the next general elections.

Beggar-thy-neighbour (policy)  
everyone for themselves, protectionist  
The new beggar-thy-neighbour trade policies imposed on China will spark many tensions.

Beholden to  
indebted to  
I feel beholden to my mentor for inspiring me during my research.

Bigwigs  
the celebrities, the VIP, the hotshots  
All the bigwigs of the party attended the ceremony.

Browbeaten  
bullied  
The new Mayor was browbeaten into opening new dual carriages around the city.

Buccaneering  
high-risk and adventurous  
He succeeded thanks to his spirit of buccaneering entrepreneur.

Clout  
heft, influence  
The clout of the UN has been on the wane for a few years.

Cronyism  
favouritism, partisanship  
The government was accused of cronyism for granting lots to its allies in the Green Belt.

Crowd-pleasing  
popular  
Her crowd-pleasing policies had her re-elected.

Flagship (brands)  
showpiece, star, centerpiece  
Elon Musk proudly presented his flagship vehicle to the audience.

Glib  
smooth-talking  
He always knows how to offer glib comments to his supporters.

Heft  
weight, power  
The heft of Chinese trade is visible in its ever-growing GDP.

Hubris  
excessive pride and self-confidence  
Their hubris drove them to bet all their money on that horse but it lost the race!

In thrall to  
enslaved to, controlled by  
Children are often in thrall to their parents, which may affect their self-esteem.

Kneecapping  
impairing, crippling, damaging  
His being sent to prison was an act of kneecapping from his opponents.
Might is right  
the powerful may do as they please  
The survival of the fittest is often dubbed the ‘might is right’ principle.

Moguls  
tycoons, magnates, the big cheese  
Rupert Murdoch was the mogul of the Press until his newspaper was shut down in 2011.

On a tight rein  
to be controlled  
The ministers are advised to keep the budget on a tight rein.

Oversight  
supervision, surveillance  
Social networks require an intense oversight so that terrorist or libelous content might not be widely spread.

Prevalent  
widespread, pervasive, ubiquitous  
The emergence of artificial intelligence is prevalent in the technological world.

Sabre-rattling  
display of military force  
Russia’s sabre-rattling parade is meant to infuse fear among other nations.

Salient  
prominent  
The salient feature of this device is its voice-activated search engine.

Space-hogging  
monopolizing space  
The space-hogging SUV made it impossible to park outside the house.

The onus on  
burden, responsibility, duty  
The onus of the intervention in Syria befell the main superpowers involved in the conflict.

The pecking order  
hierarchy  
He did not get the job because he was the victim of the fierce pecking order in the company.

The rule of thumb  
broad principle based on practice rather than theory  
The rule of thumb is to plough this field on a rotational cycle rather than letting it lying fallow.

The tail is wagging the dog  
someone important being controlled by someone less so  
I was told off by my niece for not sorting out waste. This is the tail wagging the dog!

The whip hand  
power, control  
The House of Commons has the whip hand over the House of Lords because they can vote a Bill down.

To be tipping in favour of  
to change the balance so that one side is favoured  
The popular ratings are tipping in favour of the young candidate to the presidential election.

To act in line with  
in conformity with  
CEOs often act in line with the general projected trends on the Stock Exchange.
To act on one's threat  
After he kept repeating to the students to be quiet, the teacher acted on his threat and held them up 15 minutes after the end of class.

To badger  
His mother badgered her son until he cleaned his room.

To bang down the door to  
She was determined to be granted that promotion, so she banged down the door of management to put her case across.

To bankroll  
Countless financial institutions were bailed out and bankrolled by their governments during the 2008 crisis.

To be a badge of pride/honour  
His stint in the army was a badge of honour he wore proudly.

To be a cut above  
He deserved to win, as he was clearly a cut above the other candidates.

To be a masterstroke  
His decision to pump money in was a political masterstroke.

To be booted out  
The Prime Minister was booted out when the government was reshuffled.

To be bound by  
Many countries are bound by international treaties.

To be cock of the walk  
The American President was cock of the walk during the latest G7.

To be culled from  
The culled selection of books offered by the library will help students prepare the exhibition.

To be edged  
I could have won but I was edged by two better competitors.

To be front and centre  
The development of the new space race is now front and centre of all scientific magazines.

To be gulled into doing  
Drivers were gulled into buying diesel vehicles.

To be helmed by  
Brexit is helmed by the European Council along with British MPs.
To be in cahoots with  
_to secretly work with someone, usually on an ill-intended scheme_

_The secret services were in cahoots with the government to avoid any uprising._

To be in lockstep with  
_to be forced to go in the same direction as someone else_

_Social media followers are in lockstep with the latest trends bandied about online._

To be in the slipstream of  
_to follow someone’s example_

_John is in the slipstream of his father: like father, like son!_

To be laid low  
_to be put out of action_

_The military tanks were laid low in the region after the peace treaty was signed._

To be rammed home  
_to be emphasized very strongly_

_The protective recommendations were rammed home for people not to forget them._

To bend nature to our will  
_to force nature in the direction that is the most convenient for us_

_Some scientists bend nature to their will for the sole purpose of research._

To bend to s.o’s will  
_to comply with someone’s intentions_

_After much harassment, they finally bent to their mother’s will and repainted the house._

To bring something to heel  
_to force sb to obey one’s wishes or commands_

_Scientists are currently working on a vaccine in order to bring the disease to heel._

To call the shots  
_to be in the position of being able to make the decisions that will influence a situation_

_It was my father who called the shots when my grandmother passed away and organized the funeral._

To cement one’s control of  
_to secure one’s dominance over_

_The new laws cemented his control of the government._

To chivvy  
_to tell someone repeatedly to do something, to nag, to badger, to harass, to hound_

_My sister chivvied me into applying for the most prestigious universities._

To clobber  
_to defeat heavily_

_The centre-right candidate was clobbered in the latest election._

To close ranks  
_to remain united in the face of danger or criticism_

_The party members closed ranks when their representative was attacked in the press._

To come to a head  
_to reach a crisis_

_The trade talks came to a head when the US refused to sign the international agreement._

To court publicity  
_to curry the favour of or pursue fame_

_The political bigwigs court the Press publicly in order to be depicted favourably._
To do our bidding: to do what one is told
The teacher exploded and told us to do our bidding and nothing more.

To drill into someone: to repeat something to someone many times in order for them to remember
My team associate drilled the pitch into me so I could do nothing but remember what I had to say.

To drip-feed: to introduce something progressively and in small quantities
Medical information is usually drip-fed to patients in order to put their minds at rest.

To drum sth into so: to frequently repeat so that someone remembers
My mother drummed all these sewing tips into me. I am now quite well-versed in how to stitch!

To drum up support: to rally support, to call for encouragement
Their latest online campaign drummed up the support of the younger demographic.

To exert control or force: to exercise force
Dictatorships exert control over their citizens through censorship and sanctions.

To flex one's muscles: to display, show one's power
France showed what it was made of and flexed its muscle at the European Summit.

To gear up (for battle): to prepare for a fight
Students geared up for battle when they were told that their exam results would be downgraded.

To get in step with: to conform to
The military officers immediately got in step with the General's instructions.

To give some muscle: to give some strength to
You should add extra appendices in your thesis to give it some muscle and flesh it out.

To goad one another/to goad sb into: to incite or rouse into
The journalists were goaded into inveighing against the current administration.

To hammer something home: to repeat something so that people remember
The teacher hammered the key statement of his lesson home, which bored his students to tears.

To have a sway over: to have power over
Social influencers have a sway over their followers’ consumption habits.

To have a toehold in: an opportunity to start doing sth small that may lead to bigger and better opportunities in the future
Now that she has a toehold in the company, she needs to promote herself into climbing the professional ladder.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>To have an early edge</strong></th>
<th>to benefit from an advantage right from the start</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The younger contestant had an early edge in the interview as he had travelled in the country where the company was willing to outsource.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>To have free rein</strong></th>
<th>freedom of action or expression</th>
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<tr>
<td>The artist had free rein over his representation of the city centre in his latest work.</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>To have latitude</strong></th>
<th>to enjoy some leeway, some freedom of action or expression</th>
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<tr>
<td>MA students have latitude to write an essay on whatever topic inspires them.</td>
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<th><strong>To have the final say over</strong></th>
<th>to have the final word over something</th>
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<tr>
<td>The head of the company had the final say over the decision to streamline his staff.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>To have the whip hand over</strong></th>
<th>to have the most power</th>
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<tr>
<td>Superpowers have the whip hand over how to govern the world.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>To hector</strong></th>
<th>to talk in a bullying way, to intimidate, to browbeat</th>
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<tr>
<td>The teacher hectored his students until they finally got down to work.</td>
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<th><strong>To helm</strong></th>
<th>to direct, to control</th>
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<td>My uncle helmed the ceremony in quite a delicate manner.</td>
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<th><strong>To hold sway over</strong></th>
<th>to be in control, to wield power</th>
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<tr>
<td>Our social representations hold sway over the way we perceive the world.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>To impinge on</strong></th>
<th>to violate, to trespass on</th>
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<td>These new regulations are impinging on our privacy rights.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>To instigate</strong></th>
<th>to incite sb to do stg/to bring about, to initiate, to set in motion</th>
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<td>The blast instigated the resignation of the entire government.</td>
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<th><strong>To instill fear</strong></th>
<th>to gradually but firmly establish stg in a person's mind, to implant, to ingrain</th>
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<td>Scaremongers instill fear into the most vulnerable audience.</td>
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<th><strong>To jawbone somebody into</strong></th>
<th>to use one's position or authority to pressure sb to do something</th>
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<td>His friends jawboned him into giving up his bid for the Olympic Games.</td>
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<th><strong>To keep in check</strong></th>
<th>to keep under control</th>
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<td>The prisoners were kept in check by the threatening dog of the warden.</td>
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<th><strong>To keep someone on their toes</strong></th>
<th>to cause to remain alert for anything that might happen</th>
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<tr>
<td>The boss kept us on our toes by menacing to dismiss any shirker in the company.</td>
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To keep someone in the driving seat
to keep someone in control
The President, after his reelection, was then kept in the driving seat for another five years.

To keep tabs on
to monitor the activities or developments
Most countries use secret intelligence in order to keep tabs on their citizens’ activities.

To lay down the rules
to officially state the rules
The master of ceremony laid down the rules of the games before the contest took place.

To lay off
to dismiss
Many employees were laid off after the crisis that hit the country.