

It's pun too far for serious broadcasts

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WATCHING [BBC Breakfast](#) this morning has left me choking on toast crumbs as I endured yet another delivery of a serious news story riddled with jokey puns in the voiceover to match a (staged?) visual image.

As if the tough economic climate wasn't enough, our correspondent was reporting on how the dreadful [British summer](#) is hitting tourist and, particularly, seaside businesses hard.

He interviewed the owner of a pleasure park - as the two of them took a slow, gentle ride on a carousel. Cue voiceover - 'She's going round in circles'.



Shot of chips bubbling crisply in a deep fat fryer. Cue voiceover - 'hopes for a sizzling summer'.

Shot of fish and chips being dished onto a plate. Cue voiceover - 'businesses will have had their chips'.

No. No. No.

These are firms struggling in the toughest of circumstances and not all may survive. The

pleasure park owner admitted on camera how the business was really struggling. It's a horrible time and a worthwhile serious story - do we really want or need some crass joke made over the top of it?

Not only does it trivialise everything, it smacks of smugness. 'Can you see what we did there?' and 'Ho, ho, aren't we clever' is all I perceive when TV reporters insist on shoving puns into these kinds of stories and only serve as a real distraction from the serious message the report should be giving us.

Don't get me wrong. I adore clever ways with words and silly puns - as many friends and colleagues will tell you. But in the appropriate place. I learnt that very early on in my journalistic career and, to my mind, stories about hard-hit businesses struggling to carry on in adverse circumstances out of their control just isn't one of those places.



I'm not saying it's just the BBC - of course there are thousands of broadcasters out there all probably doing the same thing , it's just that it's the BBC that I watch the most and it's here that I've noticed this practice is becoming more and more the norm.

A light hearted, fun story? Fine - pun away to your heart's content and I'll enjoy the experience. But treat the heavier stuff with the respect it deserves.

Tags: Untagged