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SUBORDINATION ACROSS GHANAIAN AND BRITISH NEWSPAPER EDITORIALS: A REGISTER PERSPECTIVE

George Kodie Frimpong

Abstract

This is a corpus-based empirical study which argues in the light of the register theory that grammatical categories are functional and relate to their situational context of use. Using editorials from Ghanaian and British newspapers, this paper examined the usage dynamics and the functional motivations behind the use of subordinate clauses in the editorial register. Clause subordination in this study is argued to offer the opportunity for idea expansion. Limiting the focus to functional clauses, it was found that though there are enormous patterns of similarity in the distribution of the three functional clause-types across the variable sociocultural contexts studied in line with claims by register theory, some distributional inconsistencies exist in the details of the subtypes of some of the functional clause-types. The results revealed that nominal clauses are consistently preferred across newspapers from the two sociocultural contexts, followed by relative clauses; an observation that led us to conclude that the nominal clause is indispensable to the editorial register because it performs elaboratory functions necessary for editorial communication. The findings of this cross-cultural study generally enhance our understanding of the language of newspaper editorials as well as the sociocultural variations that exist in the newspaper editorial genre.

Keywords: Newspaper editorials; Register; Functional clause-types; Systemic functional linguistics; Context; Nominal clause

1. Introduction

The crux of register theory is that linguistic features perform communicative functions relevant to the situational context of a given register (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004; Eggins, 2004; Biber & Conrad, 2009). The argument is that within

a particular genre, linguistic features perform similar communicative functions even across dialects of the same language (Biber & Conrad, 2009). Empirical research in this area is scanty, though this theoretical argumentation is not without contention, especially cross-culturally. Empirical investigation is therefore necessary to validate the claim that people of varied socio-cultural backgrounds may use language in similar quantitative proportions within similar situational contexts. This study fills this gap. It examines the use of subordinate clause-types in editorials across Ghanaian and British newspapers. The aim is to ascertain the distributional behaviour of the three main subordinate clause-types (nominal, relative and adverbial clauses) and to explore what functional motivation influences their distribution. The study revolves around the following research questions:

- How are subordinate clauses distributed in editorials across the newspapers from the two sociocultural contexts?
- What are the co-textual properties of the dominant clause patterns?
- What functional motivation underlies the distribution of dependent clause patterns in newspaper editorial register?

2. Register: The interface between language and context of situation

Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) define register as ...a functional variety of language (Halliday, 1978) – the patterns of instantiation of the overall system associated with a given type of context (a situation type). These patterns of instantiation show up quantitatively as adjustments in the systemic probabilities of language; a register can be represented as a particular setting of systemic probabilities (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, pp. 27 - 28).

This perspective of the register theory is a systemic functional perspective which emphasizes the situational context, the quantitative representation of linguistic features and the probabilistic instantiation of linguistic features¹. Thus, the linguistic features investigated in register studies are features common to all texts. Their significance, however, is in their quantitative impression. That is, dominance of particular linguistic features and, especially in cross-cultural studies, similarity in the patterns of distribution of linguistic features are deemed functional.

¹ The probabilistic instantiation of linguistic features in register theory is one of the features that distinguish register theory from genre theory whose linguistic features are indexical (Biber & Conrad, 2009).

To systemic functional linguistics (SFL), the situational context is examined through the register variables of field, mode and tenor, where:

- *Field* refers to the domain of language use (Eggins, 2004);
- *Mode* refers to the channel of communication and the effects of the channel on the communication (Martin, 2010, p. 22); and
- *Tenor* refers to the relations between participants in a communicative event reflected through linguistic choices (Eggins, 2004).

But these theoretical positions are not unique to SFL. Elsewhere, Biber and Conrad (2009) make similar arguments. In their framework of register analysis, Biber and Conrad (2009) argue that though register and genre are both functional theories, whereas a genre-based theory focuses on the staging of texts and indexical linguistic features, register-based theory expounds on the probabilistic linguistic features which are functional in quantitative terms. What is noteworthy about their framework is that the situational context is broken down into seven sub-features, which are argued to influence text production in varying degrees.

According to Biber and Conrad's, a register approach should essentially involve a description of the situational features of the register investigated. But this is just the first of a set of three components of their register framework. The other two are a description of the pervasive linguistic features and "a functional analysis" of the correlation between the dominant linguistic features and the situational features of the register (Biber & Conrad, 2009, p. 6).

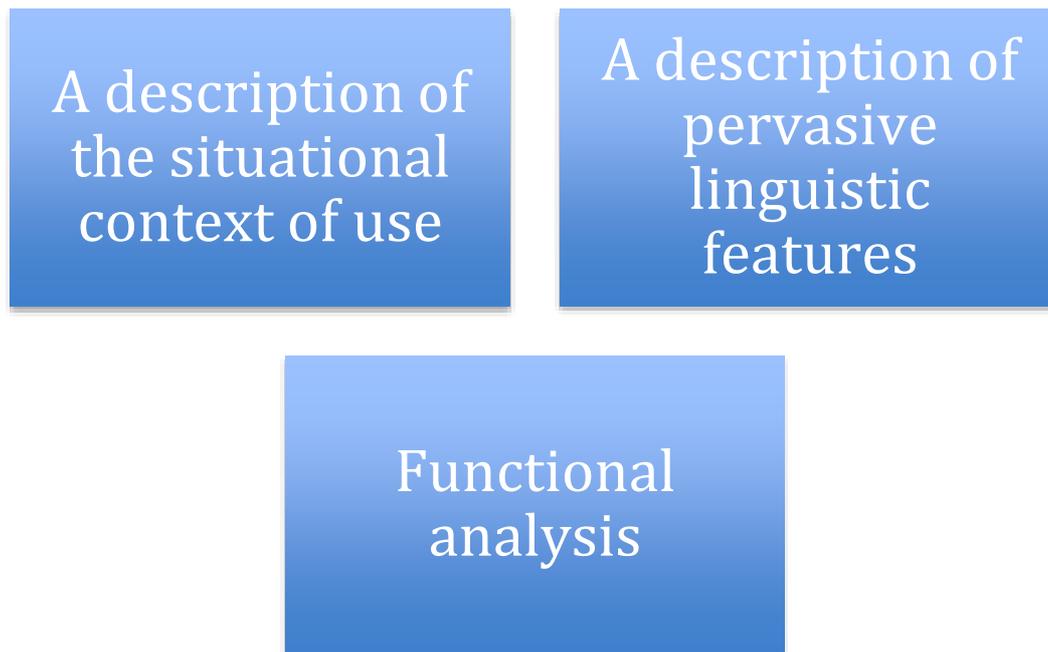


Figure 1: The Components in a register analysis

2.1 The two perspectives of Register

Two perspectives of register that are prominent in the literature are Biber and Conrad's (2009) functional perspective and Hallidayan SFL perspective (Eggins, 2004; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). Whereas register from the Hallidayan perspective is conducted by examining how language use in a particular situation reflects the register variables of *field*, *mode* and *tenor*, Biber and Conrad (2009) analyze the situational background of the variety in question, the linguistic characteristics and the functional relationship between the situational context and the distribution of linguistic features. This plan of engagement is captured in the following:

The description of a register covers three major components: the situational context, the linguistic features, and the functional relationships between the first two components..." (Biber & Conrad, 2009, pg. 6)

The situational context is made up of the following seven sub-features, which, according to Biber and Conrad (2009), relate to varieties of a language in varying degrees:

1. the background of participants of the communication,
2. the relationship between participants,
3. the channel of communication,
4. the setting,
5. the production and comprehension circumstances
6. the communicative purpose, and
7. the topic

The position of this study is to consider the two models of register as complementary. It is argued in this study, that the situational characteristics of Biber and Conrad's model offer a detailed explanation to Halliday's register variables. One observes that the *field* is roughly relatable to the topic, communicative purpose and setting of Biber and Conrad's situational variables. *Mode*, on the other hand, relates to the channel of communication and the production and comprehension circumstances, while, *tenor* corresponds roughly to participants and relations among participants.

To start with, though the topic of a text may be general, it always directs attention to the field of the discourse. A newspaper editorial, for instance, always relates to a particular discipline or human activity and as a result, editorialists' choice of words, in particular, indicates the field of the discourse. For, as Wiredu (2012, p. 77) argues, "...there is a link between language choices in the editorial and its intended function of persuading a targeted audience." Thus, regardless of the topic, an editorial always has one central communicative purpose: that of influencing societal perception and it is this communicative function that practically drives the production of a variety.

In this study, the communicative purpose is considered important since it is one of the features that normally influences grammatical choices (Biber & Conrad, 2009, p. 46). It is generally argued in the literature that newspaper editorials perform the communicative function of persuasion, advocacy, benchmarking and agenda setting (Biber, 1988; Van Dijk, 1989; Wiredu, 2012).

One can again draw a correlation between Biber and Conrad's channel of communication and production and communication circumstances and *mode* of Hallidayan register variables. First of all, a particular channel of communication influences the production and comprehension circumstances. For instance, since the production of a written text involves careful planning and editing, written varieties are generally more linguistically complex. This complexity, correspondingly, requires a careful reading for comprehension. Conversely, the limited time for spoken

communication conditions spoken texts to be relatively linguistically loose. The *mode* in SFL covers roughly the same scope dilated in Biber and Conrad's model.

The *mode* is as relevant to our understanding of newspaper editorials as the communicative function. In fact, it is one of the most important physical situational contexts. In the first place, newspaper editorials, like any other written genre, are composed under situational conditions that make them linguistically complex. Though they are written under the strictest conditions of satisfying their audience and working within the philosophies of the newspaper, there is some time for both planning and editing. The opportunity to plan and edit their texts gives editorialists room enough to make the right linguistic choices in the fulfilment of their mandate of persuading their reading public. There are, equally, some effects of the comprehension circumstance on the composition of editorials. Editorialists are aware of the lack of contact with their audience. This awareness calls for explicitness and elaboration in the use of language. In this regard, it is unsurprising that complex sentences, for example, are noted to be the dominant structural sentence types in newspaper editorials (Wiredu, 2012; Frimpong, 2015).

Finally, it is argued in this work that Biber and Conrad's participants and relations among participants relate perfectly with the tenor of the SFL framework. This is because an investigation of the background of participants of a discourse can explain linguistic choices, which may indicate the power relations between participants of the communication. In newspaper editorials, the addressor is unidentified. Its audience is unspecified – involving people of varying backgrounds. The effect of these on editorials is a tendency for them to be impersonal, especially in the choices of pronominals and other referential features.

It must be noted that Biber and Conrad's (2009) register framework is one of the most developed models in the literature in the sense that it has a more detailed plan about how to conduct a register study. For instance, apart from establishing the three legs of register analysis (c.f. section 2 above), they break down into specific details what constitute the situational context, outlined above. This is not the case with the Hallidayan model whose register framework is developed into the register variables – field, mode and tenor. It seems that because the register variables are dovetailed into the more developed metafunctional theory of SFL, not much effort is done about outlining how to conduct research using their register framework. Thus, though their conceptualization of register (c.f. Halliday & Matthiessen 2004) touches on the core tenets of the theory such as the situational contexts, functional motivation, quantitative instantiation of linguistic features, detailed in Biber and Conrad, they do not delve further into how textual analysis is conducted using their register model. This is how Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) define register:

A register is a functional variety of language (Halliday 1978) – the patterns of instantiation of the overall system associated with a given type of context (a situation type). These patterns of instantiation show up quantitatively as adjustments in the systemic probabilities of language; a register can be represented as a particular setting of systemic probabilities (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 27,28)

And this is why theoretical emphasis in this work is given to Biber and Conrad's model.

2.2 The Newspaper editorial genre

Though earlier works have tended to treat the newspaper editorial as a subset of a monolithic newspaper genre, often referred to as *journalese* (c.f. Crystal & Davy, 1973; Fowler, 1991; Bhatia, 1993), many recent studies have argued for a newspaper editorial genre which is distinct from the other subgenres of the newspaper (Bolivar, 1996; Ansary & Babaii, 2009; Westin & Geisler, 2002; Wiredu 2012; Kuhi & Mojood 2014). Thus, Ansary and Babaii (2009) argue that the newspaper editorial is a unique genre whose qualities can make it an exemplar for both media studies and writing in English as a Second Language (ESL) classroom. Ansary and Babaii (2009) undertook a cross-cultural study of editorials from Pakistani, Iranian, and American newspapers from systemic functional perspectives, with a specific focus on the generic structure potential of those English newspaper editorials. They discovered that newspaper editorials across the three socio-cultural contexts were made up of the same number of obligatory and optional generic rhetorical elements.

Westin and Geisler's (2002) investigation of editorials from British newspapers (focusing on *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Times* and *The Guardian*), for instance, explores the language of editorials from diachronic perspectives, using Biber's (1988) multidimensional model. Though their diachronic corpus revealed some linguistic and stylistic variation between the *Guardian* and the other two newspapers (the *Daily Telegraph* and *The Times*) they found that British newspaper editorials generally became more argumentative during the 20th century. Their additional observation that editorial texts relied less on complex postmodification is something worth investigating.

One of the most recent investigations of the editorial genre (Kuhi & Mojood, 2014) examines the use of metadiscursive features across American and Persian newspaper editorials. They discovered that though cultural differences reflected in some differences in the distribution of some metadiscursive features, generic factors

influenced major similarities in metadiscursive patterns across the two socio-cultural contexts.

One important observation throughout the literature is that though work in the literature explores the editorial from varied linguistic perspectives, none of them has paid particular attention to the clause, even though there is the register argument that one can establish a correlation between these grammatical choices and their situational context (Eggins, 2004; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004; Biber and Conrad, 2009). Wiredu's (2012) exploratory study investigated the complex sentence in newspaper editorials and paid some attention to the clause. However, he focused only on a single Ghanaian newspaper (the *Daily Graphic*). Granted that the clause is "the major unit of grammatical analysis" (Bloor & Bloor, 2004, p. 8) the silence on it creates a major gap that this study seeks to fill.

It is noteworthy that throughout the literature reviewed, the features investigated reveal huge similarities across cultures – evidence that the newspaper editorial is a distinctive genre which does not exhibit major cross-cultural variability. And this is what was meant when Biber and Conrad argued that

Regardless of any dialect differences, speakers using the same register are doing similar communicative tasks; therefore in most basic respects the characteristic language features used in a given situation are similar across speakers from different dialects (Biber and Conrad, 2009, p. 12)

So far, no study has compared Ghanaian newspaper editorials with British editorials; neither has there been any investigation into the functional motivation behind the selection of subordinate clause-types in newspaper editorial genre. And these equally constitute research gaps that motivate this study.

Besides, the English used in Ghana has evolved into its current state since it was first introduced into the Gold Coast by the British colonialists. Investigations like these help gauge how far the Ghanaian variety of English has developed apart from its historical source. Besides, since there is an argument in the literature that strategic use of linguistic features can aid effective use of communication, it is hoped that our study will enable us to gauge some of the useful linguistic features that help editorial writers to achieve the communicative purpose of the newspaper editorial.

3. Methodology

3.1 The Corpus

The corpus for the study is made up of 144 editorial texts culled from 4 English newspapers from Ghanaian and British newspapers. From Ghana, the *Daily Graphic* (DG) and *The Ghanaian Times* (GT) were selected and from Britain, *The Daily Telegraph* (DT) and *The Times* (TT) were chosen. Each of these newspapers was produced during 2012. These four newspapers were chosen because they are similar in some ways. The two Ghanaian newspapers are among the most circulated and popular national daily newspapers in Ghana (Yankson et al., 2010). Besides, because both newspapers are state owned public newspapers, their management is deemed capable of employing competent professionals who can produce quality newspapers. It is in the light of these that Fosu (2016, p. 6) identifies these two newspapers among the “most dominant, credible and influential quality publications in Ghana.” These are some of the qualities that make the two newspapers the most comparable with the two British newspapers, which are among the top-quality broadsheet national British newspapers (Westin & Geisler 2002). Information about the corpus is summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Background information about the corpus

	DG	GT	DT	TT	TOTAL
Number of Texts	36	36	36	36	144
Number of Sentences	700	534	774	1118	3126
Number of words	17666	14004	18027	21925	59022

As can be seen in Table 1, though the same number of editorial texts was selected across the four newspapers, the total number of words varies from one newspaper to another. This is because the editorial texts vary in length (i.e. in terms of the number of words per text) with the GT having the least number of words. To ensure comparability, normalized percentage rates were calculated for the analysis.

3.2 The Analytical framework

This is an empirical study which combines qualitative and quantitative methods in a textual analysis. The decision to combine quantitative and qualitative methods was inspired by Biber (1988) who finds complementary strengths in their joint application in the sense that “[Q]uantitative analysis gives a solid empirical foundation to the findings” while “non-quantitative analyses are required for the interpretation” (Biber, 1988, p. 52).

The 144 editorial texts from the four Ghanaian and British newspapers produced during 2012 were analysed using Biber and Conrad’s (2009, p. 6) register framework. These include:

1. Describing the situational context of the genre
2. Describing the typical linguistic features, and
3. Establishing the functional correlation between the situational context and the dominant linguistic features.

The situational context of newspaper editorials has been described in section 2.2 above. The rest of the work focuses on the last two stages of Biber and Conrad’s (2009) framework outlined above. Since distributional patterns are compared across two sociocultural contexts, a Chi-square test of independence was adopted using the Pearson’s critical value of 0.05.

4. Distribution of clause types

The three functional clause-types attested in the editorial corpus fulfil subject, object and complement functions (Greenbaum & Nelson, 2002, p. 128), post-modifying and adverbial functions (Hopper & Traugott, 2003, p. 177). These functional types of clauses are distributed in the editorial corpus as captured in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Distribution of clause-types

	DG (%)		GT (%)		DT (%)		TT (%)	
Nominal	463	(42.67)	302	(43.39)	480	(45.49)	587	(46.25)
Relative	350	(32.25)	230	(33.04)	317	(30.04)	381	(30.33)

Adverbial	272	(25.06)	160	(22.98)	258	(24.45)	301	(23.71)
	1085	(100)	696	(100)	1055	(100)	1269	(100)

$(\chi^2 = 0.4, p\text{-value} = 0.09)$

The results in Table 2 show a high consistency in the distribution of clause types across the four newspapers. These results indicate, first of all, that the clauses are distributed independent of newspaper type. This observation is confirmed by results of the chi square test ($\chi^2 = 0.4, p\text{-value} = 0.09$). It is observable in this table that nominal clauses are the most preferred clause type across the four newspapers at 42.67%, 43.39%, 45.49% and 46.25% for DG, GT, DT and TT, respectively. Relative clauses are the second most attested clause-types followed by adverbial clauses.

The congruence in distribution among the functional clause-types cannot be taken for granted. In fact, it is basically the first indication that these clauses are functionally relevant to the editorial register. This claim seems supported by the distributional intervals among clause types as evidenced in Figure 2 below. We notice, for example, that each clause type is significantly represented in such a manner that no one particular clause type enjoys an absolute dominance. Additionally, there is a seemingly regulated variation in the distribution of clause patterns across the newspapers (c.f. Figure 2 below).

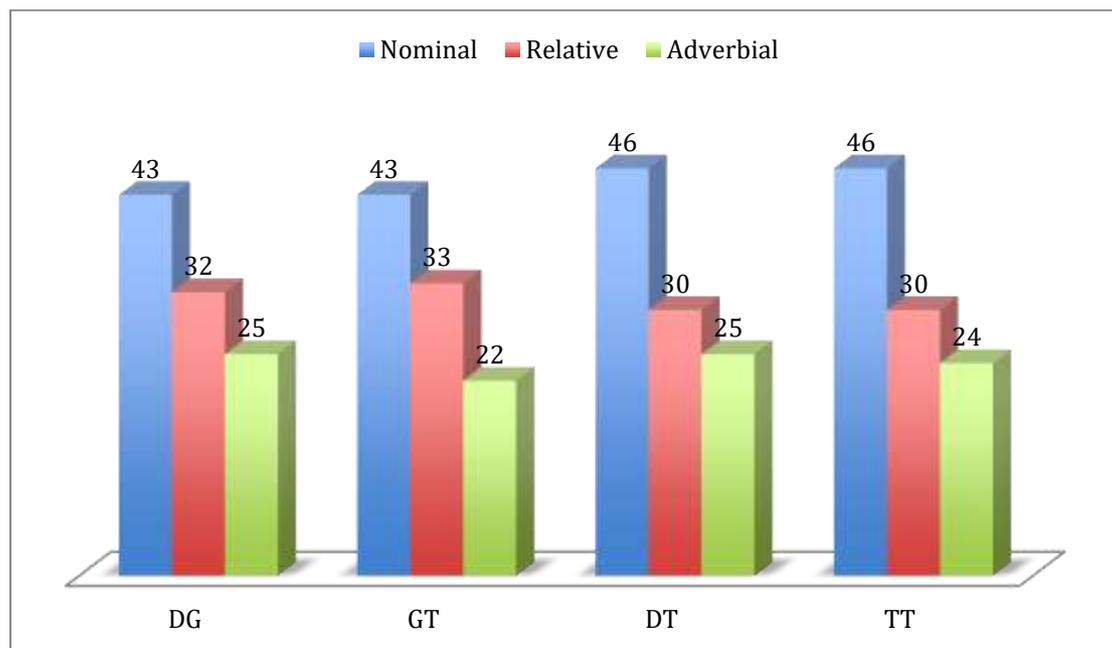


Fig 2: Distribution of Functional Clause Patterns

We can therefore argue, based on this information, that there is something beyond newspaper type which influences the choice of clause patterns in the newspaper editorials. This is the phenomenon we intend to explain using register theory. That is, there is a degree of quantitative consistency in the distribution of linguistic features in newspaper editorials, and the distribution of the clause patterns may be just one area. This observation is consistent with Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) who argue that quantitative consistency is a function of a situational context.

The question is, what communicative functions does each of these clauses perform and how do they contribute to the achievement of the communicative purpose of the newspaper editorial register? Besides, how relevant, one wonders, are the distributional patterns of these clause types to the situational context of newspaper editorials.

In the first place, it must be said that the three clauses captured in Table 1 above are generally used to realize the discourse function of expansion (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004; Downing & Lock, 2006) – a function that is congruent with the discourse function of editorials. That is, in their mandate of influencing public perception and attitudes (Van Dijk, 1989; Bolivar, 1996), adequate information needs to be skilfully packaged into the editorial text for them to be as persuasive as possible.

Structural devices for realizing expansion, therefore, become more functional than stylistic in a variety such as newspaper editorials.

However, each clause-type in turn performs a specific expansive function. And this is what seems to motivate their unique distributional behaviour in the editorials. For instance, the nominal clause is argued to perform functions of elaboration (Wiredu, 2012). This is a situation where an embedded nominal clause is either a clause element (say subject) performing clarification functions as in sentence (1) below or a complement performing a specificatory function within a noun phrase as in sentence (2) below.

1. ***Raising that number will be very tough given the huge amount of investment that other countries are putting into universities in general, and science in particular, especially in Asia.*** <clause text="TT01" snumber="20" cnumber="21">
2. ***There is also an argument that the devolution of decision making in the NHS did not require a structural overhaul, but rather a low-key, managerial approach.*** <clause text="DT05" snumber="08" cnumber="12" >

Similarly, the relative clause performs a specification function of elaboration within a noun phrase. By elaboration, therefore, an idea is clarified, refined, restated or exemplified in a new clause (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014, p. 469). Thus, the italicized relative clauses in sentence (3) below perform elaboration functions of specification.

3. ***That is why...every Ghanaian who has a stake in the future stability and peace of the country must conduct himself/herself in a manner that enhances our credentials as a beacon of hope on a continent where some countries are struggling from the ashes of war.*** <clause text="DG01" snumber="06" cnumber="11, 12, 13" >

Finally, adverbial clause types realize enhancement functions; functions by which circumstantial information such as the location, purpose, time, reason, etc., for an event or activity (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004) may be relayed. Clause enhancement, represented in Table 1 above is the least attested across the four newspapers. In sentence (4) below, for instance, enhancement has been realized through an adverbial clause of concession.

4. ***Although 16 MPs are reported to have lost their seats to some Ministers of State and assemblymen, the primaries were devoid of any nasty incidents.***

<clause text="GT03" snumber="03" cnumber="03" function="concessive adverbial" structure="subordinating">

It is reasonable to argue that the predominant representation of nominal structural patterns in the editorial texts across the two cultural contexts suggests that elaboration is of a paramount necessity in newspaper editorials. It must be noted that relative clause patterns are sub-features of nominalization. They are realized within a nominal phrase within which they give detailed specificational information. And they themselves express elaboration. This implies that there is an attempt in newspaper editorials at not just achieving elaboration with language but also at being specific about information conveyed.

It must be noted, however, that elaboration, specification and enhancement are broader functions, which are instantiated through a variety of sub-functions relative to particular clause-subtypes. And so, the next stage of the study, in line with the register theory, (c.f. Biber & Conrad, 2009, p. 6) investigates the distributional and usage patterns of the dominant clause-types.

5. The Nominal clause

It has been noted that the most prevalent clause throughout the four newspapers is the nominal clause. The following nominal clause patterns are observed in the corpus:

5. *THAT*-clauses functioning as subject of a sentence or as complement within an NP, a VP or an ADJP;
6. *WH*-clauses functioning in subject positions, in subject complement positions or in object positions; and
7. *INFINITIVAL*²-clauses functioning as subjects of sentences or as complements within NPs, and ADJPs.

These patterns above are the structural patterns, which fulfil *nominal*, *verbal* and *adjectival* clause complementation. These three subtypes of the nominal clause are distributed in the corpus as follows:

² By infinitival clauses one implies nonfinite clauses whose verbs are in the infinitive form.

Table 3: Distribution of nominal clause sub-types

	DG (%)		GT (%)		DT (%)		TT (%)	
Nom compl	282	(60.90)	167	(52.29)	217	(45.20)	320	(54.97)
Verbal compl	135	(29.15)	86	(28.47)	191	(39.79)	164	(27.65)
Adj compl	46	(9.93)	49	(15.23)	72	(15)	103	(17.36)
	463	(100)	302	(100)	480	(100)	587	(100)

($\chi^2 = 7.4$, p -value = 0.2)

From this table, it is obvious that the nominal complement subtype is the most preferred nominal clause across the four newspapers. Observably, there is no affinity in the distribution of the nominal clause subtypes between newspapers from the same country. The implication of this pattern of distribution is that, there is no regional/dialectal differentiation in the distribution of the nominal clause subtypes and that any variation observed across the newspaper types is statistically insignificant ($\chi^2 = 7.4$, p -value = 0.2).

Typical nominal complements are instantiated in the sentences below, functioning as complements of noun heads (as italicised in sentence (5)), as subjects (as italicised in sentence (6)) or as subject complements (as italicised in sentence (7)):

8. *There is also an argument that the devolution of decision making in the NHS did not require a structural overhaul, but rather a low-key, managerial approach.* <clause text="DT05" snumber="08" cnumber="12">
9. *To take on the major charities is to begin a battle the Government cannot and should not win.* <clause text="TT12" snumber="14" cnumber="13">
10. *The truth is that the Budget process revealed a serious breakdown in the usually smooth communication between No 10 and No 11 Downing Street.* <clause text="TT12" snumber="10" cnumber="08">

From the corpus, we observe that clauses which perform these functions are mainly *THAT*-clauses, *INFINITIVAL* clauses and *WH*-clauses. *WH*-clauses, however, recorded very low attestations in the corpus across the four newspapers (i.e. 8%, 7%, 7%, and 10% for DG, GT, DT and TT, respectively) as shown in Table 3 below.

Table 4: Structural patterns of nominal clause in the editorial corpus

	DG (%)		GT (%)		DT (%)		TT (%)	
<i>THAT</i> -clauses	282	(61.17)	186	(61.71)	277	(57.82)	304	(52.32)
<i>INFINITIVAL</i>	140	(30.36)	95	(31.35)	169	(35.28)	219	(37.69)
<i>WH</i> -clause	39	(8.45)	22	(7.26)	33	(6.88)	58	(9.98)
	461	(100)	303	(100)	479	(100)	581	(100)

$(\chi^2 = 2.7, p\text{-value} = 0.8)$

The implication of these distributional patterns is that, in terms of their internal structure, the nominal clauses attested in the editorial corpus are predominantly *THAT*-clauses followed by infinitival clauses. The harmony in the usage patterns having *THAT*-clauses as the preferred type across the four newspapers followed by *INFINITIVAL* clauses, is crucial to the register theory. This confirms one of the central claims supported by register theory:

Regardless of any dialect differences, speakers using the same register are doing similar communicative tasks; therefore in most basic respects the characteristic language features used in a given situation are similar across speakers from different dialects (Biber & Conrad, 2009, p. 12).

Equally noteworthy is the observation that nominal clauses used in the four newspapers are predominantly rank shifted as complements within phrases. In this regard, clauses functioning as subject, as italicised in the following example, are very few in the corpus:

11. *To have proposed and brought forward a significant change in the constitution of local government, but then to have failed to pursue the argument with any vigour, will be a critical failure.* <clause text="TT14" snumber="10" cnumber="14">

The distributional patterns captured in Table 5 below were observed in the corpus.

Table 5: Distribution of nominal clauses in subject and complement positions

	DG (%)		GT (%)		DT (%)		TT (%)	
Subject	50	(10.79)	19	(6.29)	38	(7.91)	80	(13.62)
Complement	413	(89.20)	283	(93.70)	442	(92.08)	507	(86.37)
Total	463	(100)	302	(100)	480	(100)	587	(100)

The overwhelming preference for clauses in complement positions is as relevant to register theory as the uniformity in the distributional patterns. Post phrasal clause complementation is, actually, the most preferred pattern across the four newspapers with the frequency attestations of 89%, 94%, 92%, and 86% for DG, GT, DT and TT, respectively. This indicates that in the editorial register, clause elaboration is realised mainly through the strategy of complementation. By complementation, ideas realised by clause structure are rank shifted within phrases. By rank shifting, information is strategically packaged to achieve compactness, a strategy which seems relevant to the communicative function of newspaper editorials (Wiredu, 2012).

One equally observes that complementation after nouns, verbs and adjectives is typically realized by *THAT*- and *INFINITIVAL*-clauses in the corpus. Especially for *THAT*-clauses (the most attested in the corpus), we identified typical examples such as the ones italicized in the following excerpted sentences which instantiate verbal, nominal and adjectival complements.

12. *THAT*-clause as complement within a verb phrase:

This newspaper has argued *that the strategy must be more ambitious for Britain....* <clause text="TT01" snumber="04" cnumber="03">

13. *THAT*-clause as complement within a noun phrase:

Combine that with the aggressive intolerance of the militant secularists, and it is little wonder *that the Church of England frequently feels beleaguered.* <clause text="DT06" snumber="11" cnumber="17">

14. *THAT*-clause as complement within an adjectival phrase:

We are delighted *that in anticipation of a very exciting political season, the government has come up with a code of ethics...* <clause text="DG04" snumber="06" cnumber="12">

In these three sentences above, the ideas conveyed by the verb *argue*, the noun *wonder* and the adjective *delighted* are being expanded with the use of *THAT*-clauses. The effect of the choice of clauses, instead of phrases, is that it gives the editorial writer the opportunity to pack as much information as possible (Wiredu, 2012, p. 117).

We note that a wide range of nouns, verbs and adjectives typically admit *THAT*-clause complements after them. Wiredu (2012, p. 110) categorizes nouns capable of taking *THAT*-complements into the following three sub-types:

15. Cognitive nouns: nouns which portray the mental frame of the writer. Examples from the corpus include: **hope, belief, reflection, reminder, faith,** etc.

a. **...the Government is actively conniving at the creation of such a superstate, in the belief that it is the only way to save Europe's economy...** <clause text="DT17" snumber="09" cnumber="07" function="nominal complement">

16. Emotive nouns: nouns which express emotion. Attested nouns include **doubt, feeling, possibility, surprise, etc.**

a. **We have no doubt that Okada served a section of the travelling public...** <clause text="DG20" snumber="19" cnumber="39" function="nominal complement">

17. Descriptive nouns: attestations of these nouns which give general descriptions about a situation include **hypocrisy, proof, report, suggestion, ground, etc.**

a. **This opinion is what translated into the suggestion that the CPP should not overburden itself with a shot at the**

presidency...<clause text="GT14" snumber="08" cnumber="08" function="nominal complement">

Apart from noun complementation, many of the *THAT*-clauses in the corpus complement certain types of verbs. Our observation is that, the British newspapers exhibited more depth and variety in the verbs used in this manner. The Ghanaian newspapers, on the contrary, were limited in the scope of verbs complemented, though some of the few used were repeated many times. A frequency distribution of type of verbs, which were used with *THAT*-nominal complement in the editorials across the four newspapers, is presented in Table 6 below.

Table 6: Distribution of verbs with *THAT*-complementation across the four newspapers

Newspaper	Frequency	Percentage (%)
DG	54	25
GT	38	18
DT	60	28
TT	62	29
TOTAL	214	100

Though Table 6 does not capture the number of times individual verbs were used with a complement clause, it at least shows that both of the British newspapers had more types of verbs with nominal complementation. In the next four tables, we present a full list of verbs used with *THAT*-clause complements across the four newspapers, beginning with the *Daily Graphic* in Table 7 below.

Table 7: Verbs used with *THAT*-nominal complements in DG

acknowledge	advise	announce	argue	ascertain
assure	believe	bet	communicate	contest
demand	demonstrate	emphasize	encourage	enjoin
ensure	expect	explain	feel	forget
hear	hold	hope	imagine	imply
indicate	pray	insist	know	maintain
mean	learn	plead	point	point out
presume	realize	recall	recognize	record
reiterate	remember	remind	represent	say
see	show	signal	state	suggest
tell	think		wish	wonder

Table 7 presents the 54 verbs that were used with *THAT*-nominal complements in the *Daily Graphic*. Not only is the *Daily Graphic* among the newspapers with the least attestation of these types of transitive verbs. One equally observes from the corpus that just a few of these verbs were used repetitively with *THAT*-complements; a phenomenon that was at the expense of variety. For instance, the verb **believe** alone was used with *THAT*-clause 37 times, the highest attestation across the four newspapers, followed by the verbs **say** and **ensure** which were used 20 times each. This lack of diversity is not unique to the *Daily Graphic*, for *The Ghanaian Times*, which realized the lowest frequency of *THAT*-nominal complementation, was also characterized by frequent repetition of a few verbs listed in Table 8 below. Thus, the trend that is emerging is that the Ghanaian newspapers are relatively more restrictive in the types of verbs complemented by *THAT*-clause. The most preferred verbs for clause complementation in GT, for example, were **ensure**, **say** and **believe** with usage attestations of 20:13:12, respectively.

Table 8: Verbs with THAT-nominal complement in GT

acknowledge	admit	advise	argue	assure
believe	caution	complain	confirm	deceive
demonstrate	emphasize	assure	explain	feel
hear	hope	indicate	inform	insist
mean	note	observe	pretend	promise
prove	reiterate	remind	reveal	say
serve notice	show	state	submit	suggest
think	warn	wish		

The monotony in the choice of verbs perhaps contributed to the observation made by Wiredu that Ghanaian editorials do not inspire much reading enthusiasm (Wiredu, 2012).

The British editorials, conversely, used relatively fewer verb tokens and several types. For example, apart from the verb *say* which was used 20 times in *The Daily Telegraph*, all other verbs used with clause complementation in DT were used less than 10 times. As a result, the DT has a wide range of verbs complemented by *THAT*-clause. These are instances dialectal variation across registers from different geographical regions. It is perhaps an indication that the writers are writing from variable sociocultural backgrounds. That is, whereas the writer of the British editorials is a native speaker of the language and thus may have versatility in the use of his/her language, the Ghanaian writer is a non-native speaker whose use of the second language may be constrained not only by competence in the language but also by cultural factors. This points towards the fact that though the major clause-types (nominal, relative and adverbial clauses) are similarly distributed across the four

newspapers, variation exists between Ghanaian and British editorials in the detail of the linguistic context of use of these clauses. Verbs used with *THAT*-nominal complements in DT are presented in Table 9 below.

Table 9: Verbs with *THAT*-nominal complement in DT

acknowledge	accept	add	admit	agree
announce	argue	ask	assume	attempt
avoid	believe	beware	brief	complain
concede	conclude	confirm	consider	convince
decide	demonstrate	deny	determine	doubt
ensure	explain	fear	feel	find
fear	hope	indicate	imagine	insist
know	maintain	mean	misunderstand	pretend
promise	purpose	realize	reassure	recognize
report	rethink	reveal	say	see
show	signal	stress	suggest	tell
think	understand	warn	work out	worry

Perhaps, this is one of the areas where a claim for dialectal or idiolectal variation may be made; for, *The Times*, like its British counterpart (*The Daily Telegraph*), also exhibits diversity in the types of verb complemented by nominal clause. It also has a long list of transitive verbs (in Table 8 below) which are complemented by *THAT*-clauses.

Table 10: Verbs with *THAT*-nominal complement in TT

accept	announce	argue	ask	agree
attempt	believe	complain	concede	conclude
consider	convince	decide	declare	demonstrate
discern	ensure	entail	establish	escape
estimate	expect	explain	feel	find
follow	hint	hope	imagine	insist
know	mean	note	object	persuade
point out	pretend	proclaim	promise	prove
recall	recognize	record	remember	remind
report	reveal	risk	rule	satisfy
say	seek	show	suggest	swear

symbolize teach tell think understand

warn wonder

These dynamics about the distribution of transitive verbs capable of taking *THAT*-complements in the British editorials obviously show divergence with patterns attested in the Ghanaian editorials. For example, it is observed that the following transitive verbs attested with *THAT*-clause complementation in the British editorials are absent from the Ghanaian editorials: **accept, add, agree, ask, assume, attempt, avoid, announce, brief, concede, convince, decode, demonstrate, deny, determine, doubt, find, etc.**

Wiredu (2012, p. 110) again categorizes the types of transitive verbs capable of taking *THAT*-complements into the following two subtypes:

18. Assertion and communication-related verbs: **say, tell, warn, teach, report, point out, object, etc.** There are observably more of these verbs in the British editorials than in the Ghanaian counterparts:

- a. **It has to be *said* that there is nothing resembling a White House operation in 10 Downing Street.** <clause text="TT12" snumber="26" cnumber="25">

19. Verbs of cognition: **think, rethink, believe, hope, hear, understand, know, etc.** These verbs seem generally preferable in the editorial register for there are many verbs from this category across Ghanaian and British newspapers:

- a. **...the Daily Graphic *believes* that national and constituency officers of NDC will take steps to resolve whatever differences...** <clause text="DG03" snumber="07" cnumber="09">.

From this classification, an important differential pattern is emerging between the Ghanaian and the British editorials. One observes that, whereas the British editorialists exploit verbs across the continuum for elaboration, the Ghanaian editorialists limit their choices to verbs of cognition. And this accounts for the absence of the verbs listed above (**accept, add, agree, ask, assume, attempt, avoid, announce, brief, concede, convince, decode, demonstrate, deny, determine, doubt, find, etc.**) from the Ghanaian editorials. This variation has at least two implications.

It is perhaps another indicator, apart from the one mentioned earlier, that though the texts are all newspaper editorials, the addressers are of essentially different sociolinguistic backgrounds and that the variation detected here is a reflection of

variable competencies and linguistic dexterity between a native speaker and a non-native speaker. However, that these essential linguistic features are distributed similarly across the two sociocultural contexts confirms that language is being used generally to perform the same function.

The second implication is that the cognitive verbs preferable across newspapers from the two contexts are typically epistemic. It is normal to assume that the argumentative nature of newspaper editorials would elicit the general predominance of these types of verbs. However, attestations of these verb-types across newspaper-types raise other issues. The preference for the cognitive epistemic verbs in the *Daily Graphic* and *The Ghanaian Times* at the expense of the assertion and communication-related verbs inclines the Ghanaian editorials towards the supplicatory, less forceful end of the continuum. By placing the clause after these epistemic verbs, the Ghanaian editorialist does not make any commitment to the proposition expressed because he or she is only hoping or believing.

These differential patterns of distribution involving nominal complements across British and Ghanaian editorials are perhaps a reflection of how tenor affects language use within different sociocultural contexts. Perhaps, this also reflects the sensitivity in using language in Ghana. That is, the fear of offending people's sensibilities predisposes the Ghanaian editorialist to epistemic expressions including verbal complementation patterns.

Finally, *THAT*-nominal clauses are observed to similarly complement some adjectives, though their attestation in the corpus is minimal. We identified the adjectives reported in Table 11 in complementation with *THAT*-clauses in the corpus.

Table 11: Adjectives with *THAT*-complement clause across the four newspapers

DG	GT	DT	TT
amazing	appropriate	aware	advisable
appropriate	certain	angry	aware
aware	clear	clear	confident
delighted	heart-warming	concerned	inconvenient
happy	gratifying	confident	inexorable
so high	so ingenious	depressing	likely
hopeful	mindful	so disillusioned	obvious
important	obvious	evident	odd
necessary	positive	fortunate	possible
optimistic	proud	so ingrained	reasonable
refreshing	refreshing	important	reassured
regrettable	so sensitive	instructive	right

surprising	sure	right	striking
unfortunate	surprised	so short	sure
	worried	surprising	surprising
		selling	sure
		unsurprising	unaware
		welcome	unlikely
			vital

Table 12 captures these distributional patterns in percentage terms. Here too, as in the verbal complements, the British editorials exhibit variety in choice of words complemented, perhaps for the same reasons argued above for verbal complementation.

Table 12: Distribution of adjectives with *THAT*-clause complementation

Newspaper	Frequency	Percentage
DG	14	21.2
GT	15	22.7
DT	18	27.3
TT	19	28.8
TOTAL	66	100

We have cited below in sentence 20 an example of structures involving adjectives complemented by *THAT*-nominal clause (the complement clauses have been italicized):

20. It is, therefore, advisable *that it contains experts who have gained their place through their eminence*. <clause text="TT20" snumber="15" cnumber="26">

It must be noted that the adjective post-modified by *THAT*-nominal clauses in sentences (20) is capable of taking an infinitival non-finite clause. And this is not limited to adjectives. In fact, apart from *THAT*-nominal clause-types, *INFINITIVAL* clauses are the most preferred structural patterns of the nominal clause-type with frequency attestations of 30%, 31%, 35% and 37% for DG, GT, DT and TT, respectively (c.f. Table 4 above).

For instance, in sentences (21) and (22), the *INFINITIVAL* clauses **...to protect our infant democracy...** and **...to accept the possibility of this nation going through a similar experience...** complement the noun **duty** in (21) and the adjective **crucial** in (22).

21. *INFINITIVAL*-clause as complement of a noun phrase:

Indeed, each and every Ghanaian has the greatest duty to protect our infant democracy... <clause text="GT01" snumber="05" cnumber="10">

22. *INFINITIVAL*-clause as complement of an adjectival phrase:

It is crucial for us to accept the possibility of this nation going through a similar experience... <clause text="GT01" snumber="12" cnumber="27">

6. The Relative Clause

The relative clause is the second most attested clause pattern in the corpus with frequency attestations of 32%, 33%, 30% and 30% for DG, GT, DT and TT, respectively (c.f. Table 2 above). These results are noteworthy for at least one reason. The near-identical numerical values across the four newspapers are an indication that some motivation other than house style or dialectal orientation influences their grammatical choices in editorial writing. We note that relative clauses used in the editorial corpus are those which have the following features:

23. *Wh*-Relative clauses: Those which are introduced by a *Wh*-interrogative word (such as **who**, **whom**, **whose**, **which** and sometimes **where**, **why** and **when** (Greenbaum, 1996). Example:

This picking of winners is the job not of ministers but of the expert Technology Strategy Board, which Mr Willetts announced yesterday would be setting up a new innovation centre in the area

- of satellite applications. <clause text="TT01" snumber="16" cnumber="15">**
24. *Whiz*-Relative clause: Those which have a *Wh*-interrogator alone deleted or both a *Wh*-interrogator and a form of the 'be' verb deleted together. These are either non-finite participial clauses as in sentence (a), or a finite clause with a zero relativizer as in sentence (b) below:
- a. **By contrast, the preparations for this year's Budget seem to have been ...an exercise in Coalition horse-trading brokered by the so-called Quad of David Cameron, George Osborne, Nick Clegg and Danny Alexander. <clause text="DT09" snumber="04" cnumber="06">**
- b. **To take on the major charities is to begin a battle the Government cannot and should not win. <clause text="TT12" snumber="14" cnumber="15">**
25. *That*-Relative: Those which are introduced by a *THAT*-complementizer as in (c) below:
- c. **...it is only vigilance and the prevention of the snatching of the ballot boxes that ensure the will of the people is upheld in an election. <clause text="DG02" snumber="14" cnumber="15">**
26. *Pied piping* Relative: Those (typically *Wh*-relative clauses) which are fronted by a preposition. Example:
- d. **...because there is no reason why many of the existing school buildings should be in such poor state, considering the fact that a huge chunk of the national budget is allotted to the education sector, out of which adequate provision is made for infrastructural development. <clause text="GT11" snumber="12" cnumber="18">**

These four relative sub-types are used in the corpus in the following frequency patterns:

Table 13: Distribution of relative clause patterns

	DG (%)		GT (%)		DT (%)		TT (%)	
Wh-R	107	(29.88)	116	(49.57)	84	(26.16)	97	(25.19)
Whiz-R	142	(39.66)	84	(35.89)	128	(39.87)	108	(28.05)
That-R	85	(23.74)	22	(9.56)	92	(28.66)	142	(36.88)
Pied Piping	24	(6.85)	12	(5.21)	17	(5.36)	38	(9.87)
	358	(100)	234	(100)	321	(100)	385	(100)

($\chi^2 = 32$, p-value < 0.01)

Table 13 attests to varied distributional patterns. So far, the relative clause subtypes are the only clause patterns whose usage frequency depends on the type of newspaper. The Chi square result ($\chi^2 = 32$, p-value > 0.01) for the distribution of relative clause subtypes across the four newspapers shows that variations in usage frequencies across the newspaper types are statistically significant. That is, whereas *Whiz* relatives are the most preferred patterns for DG and DT at 40% and 40%, respectively – a pattern similar to Wiredu’s (2012) observation, *Wh*-relatives are the most preferred in GT at 50% and *That*-relatives the most preferred in TT at 37%. The only subtype that shows some consistency across the four newspapers is the Pied Piping subtype. These inconsistencies are much pronounced when captured in the graph below.

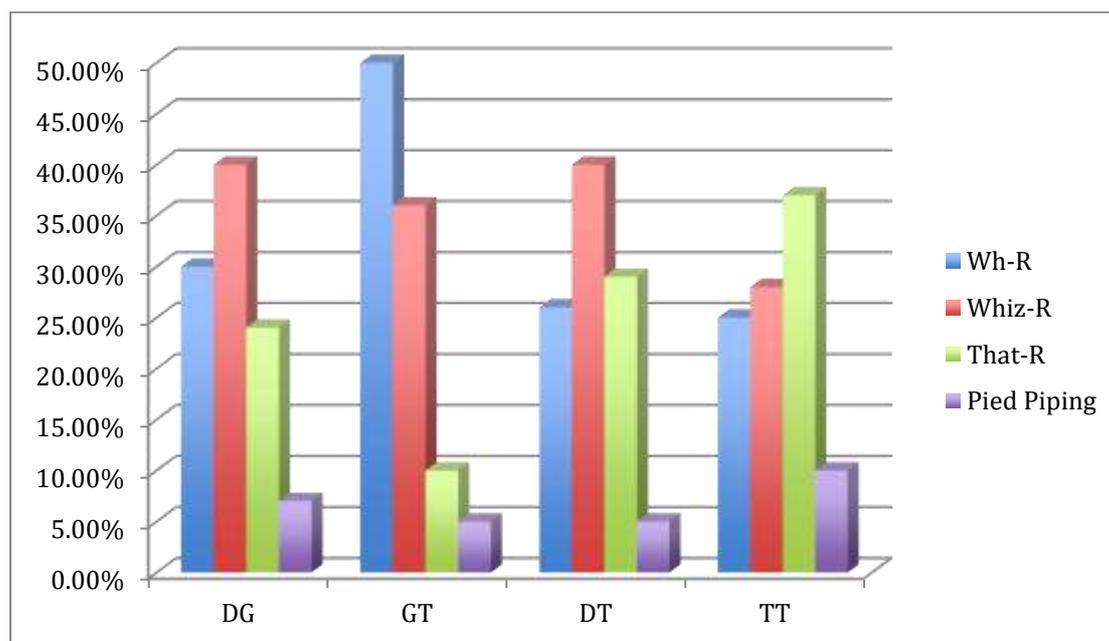


Fig 3: A graphic representation of Relative subtypes

These irregularities captured in figure 3 above do not help for much generalization. That the relative clause exhibits these patterns of distribution is not surprising since relative clauses normally have variable regional usage standards (Hundt, Denison, & Schneider, 2012). Hundt et al. (2012), in fact, observe at least 2 regional norms

- Across British and American English:
“Matters are further complicated by the fact that there is not a single prescriptive tradition that unifies ‘approved’ usage on both sides of the Atlantic: the British tradition targets non-restrictive *that*, whereas American arbiters of ‘proper’ English fight a war against the use of restrictive *which*” (Hundt, Denison, & Schneider, 2012, p. 211).
- Across British and New Zealand English:
“...in BrE and NZE, ‘the two relativizers *which* and *that* may be differentiated in terms of formality . . . rather than restrictiveness’, thus confirming regional differences in the effect that prescriptive traditions may have had” (Hundt, Denison, & Schneider, 2012, p. 212).

Nevertheless, the distribution of the relative clause in our editorial corpus does not suggest regional norms may have had any influence in the sense that there are no regional similarities in the patterns of distribution. The only thing one can claim at this stage of the discussion is that all the relative clause subtypes are represented – perhaps indicating they are of some relevance to the editorial register.

The implication is that, whereas relative clauses, such as the underlined in sentence (27), are dominant in GT, the types such as the italicised in sentence (28) are the most attested in DG, DT and TT.

27. ...The exercise enters its fifth day today, but there are reports of certain problems *which...may affect its eventual success.* <clause text="GT08" snumber="03" cnumber="05">

28. Power is a function of those *who wield it.* <clause text="TT05" snumber="10" cnumber="18">

Moreover, the consistent similarity in the attestation of Pied Piping structures contributes to the nature of newspaper editorial language. Pied piped structures “tend to occur more frequently in formal styles” (Greenbaum, 1996, p. 226). Their minimal usage across the four editorials perhaps indicates that newspaper editorials are not at the most formal end of the formality continuum among written varieties.

A closer look at the individual subtypes of the relative clause presents very insightful revelations. We observe, for example, that *who* and *which* are the dominant relativizers for the realization of *Wh*-Relative clauses across the four newspapers. As captured in Table 14 below, whereas *who* is the dominant relativizer in the British editorials (49% each in DT and TT) the dominant relativizer in the Ghanaian editorials is between *who* (63% for DG) and *which* (58% for GT).

Table 14: Distribution of relativizers

	DG (%)		GT (%)		DT (%)		TT (%)	
Who	65	(62.5)	41	(35.96)	40	(48.78)	47	(49.47)
Whom	0	(0)	1	(0.87)	0	(0)	0	(0)
Whose	5	(4.80)	6	(5.26)	11	(13.41)	7	(7.36)
Which	34	(32.69)	66	(57.89)	31	(37.80)	41	(43.15)

104 (100) 114 (100) 82 (100) 95 (100)

Besides, even though the relative pronouns attested in the editorials perform subjective, objective and possessive functions, they are more attested in subjective positions throughout the four newspapers. A survey of their usage in subject and object positions reveals the results presented in Table 15 below:

Table 15: Distribution of relative pronouns in subject and object positions

	DG (%)		GT (%)		DT (%)		TT (%)	
Subject	86	(88.65)	88	(91.66)	64	(92.75)	69	(87.34)
Object	11	(11.34)	8	(8.33)	5	(7.69)	10	(12.65)
	97	(100)	96	(100)	69	(100)	79	(100)

By implication, the dominant *Wh*-relative clauses in the corpus are the ones in which the noun phrase specified in the relative clause is the subject of the relative clause (Wardhaugh, 1995). For example, in sentence (29), the head of the NP *Mr Kagame* is the subject of the underlined relative clause in the sense that it is *Mr Kagame* ‘who became President’.

29. Its military commander was Mr Kagame, *who became President in 2000.*
 <clause text=“TT34” snumber=“13” cnumber=“04”>

Relative clauses such as the one in sentence (29) above are the ones whose relativizers are inalienable. On the contrary, relative clauses such as the one in sentence (30) below can have their *Wh*- relative pronouns deleted. In these relative clause-types which are the least frequent in the corpus, the NP substituted for is the object of the relative clause.

30. ...there is something beautiful in unity *which we have missed all these years.* <clause text=“DG22” snumber=“13” cnumber=“24”>

Whiz-relative subtypes manifest in three different forms in the corpus. There are those in which only the *Wh*- element is elided (*Wh*-Deleted relatives) as the italicised in sentence (31) below; and there are those which have both the *Wh*-relativizer as well as an aspect of the *be* verb deleted (as described above). Of this second category, we identify two subtypes in the corpus: those whose verbs are in the present participial forms (reduced *-ing* relatives underlined in sentence (31) below) and those whose verbs are in the perfect participial form (reduced *-en* relatives underlined in sentence (33) below).

31. Perhaps, if Mr Huhne is found to be not guilty of a charge *he intends to dispute vigorously*, he will be free to resume his political career. <clause text="TT04" snumber="11" cnumber="14">

32. These interventions will inevitably be couched in terms of ministers vs backbenchers, of a restive party testing its leader's mettle. <clause text="DT04" snumber="08" cnumber="17">

33. We must seek to build on the successes *chalked up in the previous elections*. <clause text="DG02" snumber="17" cnumber="19">

These three subtypes of the *Whiz*- relative clause are distributed in the corpus as presented in Table 16 below:

Table 16: Distribution of Whiz-Relative subtypes

	DG (%)		GT (%)		DT (%)		TT (%)	
Wh-Del	33	(23.23)	23	(27.38)	32	(25)	32	(29.62)
Reduced -ing	51	(35.91)	29	(34.52)	42	(32.81)	31	(28.70)
Reduced -en	58	(40.84)	32	(38.09)	54	(42.18)	45	(41.66)
	142	(100)	84	(100)	128	(100)	108	(100)

Obviously, the reduced *-en* *Whiz*-relative clause is the preferred choice across the four newspapers, followed by the reduced *-ing* subtype or the *Wh*-deleted structure depending on the type of newspaper. These patterns of distribution show that

the perfect participial relative structure is of some functional significance in the newspaper editorial, in the light of the register theory. If newspaper editorials are meant to comment on past events as adduced in the literature (Wiredu, 2012), then it makes sense that the perfect participial, which shows some connection with the past, is preferred.

Unlike *Wh-* and *Whiz* relative clause types, *That*-relative clauses attested in the corpus are more straightforward in the sense that there are no subtypes. A typical example of *That*-relative clause is the one italicised in sentence (34) below.

34. The expensive mistakes *that governments in the 1970s made while attempting to pick corporate winners...* <clause text="TT01" snumber="06" cnumber="04">

That-relatives are distinguishable from *That*-nominal complements in the sense that they have their unique intonational property and internal grammar. For instance, *that* in *That*-relatives is replaceable by *which* or *who*. And so, though it is possible to replace the *that* in the relative clause in sentence (34) above with *which* as in (35) below,

35. The expensive mistakes *which governments in the 1970s made...*

It is not possible to do the same with the *That*-complementizer in the nominal complement in sentence (36) below.

36. There is also an argument *that the devolution of decision making in the NHS did not require a structural overhaul...* <clause text="DT05" snumber="08" cnumber="12">

The discussion on the distribution of relative clause structures in the editorials will be concluded by two general observations. In the first place, the relative clause is the only clause-type whose sub-types are distributed relative to newspaper type. That is, apart from the Pied Piping type, which is the least preferred type across the four newspapers, all the other subtypes are irregularly distributed across the four newspapers. A comparative schema representing the use of the relative clause system in the editorial will appear as follows:

- The *Whiz*-relative is the most preferred type in DG (39.66%), followed by the *Wh*-relative (29.88%). *That*-relatives are equally significantly represented (23.74%) in DG;

- The *Wh*-relative is the most preferred pattern in GT (49.57%), followed by the *Whiz*-relative (35.89%). The *That*-relative is minimally represented in GT (9.56%);
- The *Whiz*-relative is the most preferred type in DT (39.87%), followed by the *That*-relative (28.66%). *Wh*-relative subtypes are equally significantly attested in DT (26.16%);
- The *That*-relative is the most attested type in TT (36.88%), followed by the *Whiz*-relative (28.05%). The *Wh*-relative is equally significantly represented in TT (25.19%).

These variations in distribution are confirmed by the statistical test ($\chi^2 = 32$, $p\text{-value} > 0.01$). This means, in the first place, that relative clause subtypes do not share similar patterns of distribution even across newspapers from the same sociocultural context. As a result of these inconsistencies, it is difficult ascribing function to the individual subtypes of the relative clause. What can be argued, however, is that the relative clause in general is functional in the editorial register in the sense that it is the second most attested clause pattern consistently across the four newspapers.

Relative clauses generally perform elaborative functions, as argued above; they provide specificatory elaboration (Wiredu, 2014) to the noun phrase they post-modify. The implication is that information elaboration is crucial to the newspaper editorial register and so the two most preferred clause patterns in the corpus are the nominal clause and the relative clause which both perform this function. This same function, we argue, is perhaps what has conditioned the nominal clause patterns and the relatives to be prominently used in rank shifted positions.

7. The Adverbial Clause

Adverbial clauses are non-rank shifted hypotactic clauses (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). That is, they do not grammatically depend on a phrase; they depend rather on a main clause to provide circumstantial enhancement about the information expressed in the main clause (Downing & Lock, 2006). Clause circumstantial enhancement is realized in the editorials in the following patterns of instantiation.

Table 17: Distribution of adverbial clause-types

DG (%)	GT (%)	DT (%)	TT (%)
--------	--------	--------	--------

Time	88	(31.88)	45	(28.12)	70	(27.13)	73	(25)
Condition	47	(17.02)	23	(14.37)	41	(14.34)	46	(15.75)
Reason	36	(13.23)	32	(20)	30	(11.62)	34	(11.64)
Purpose	30	(10.86)	16	(10)	20	(7.75)	9	(3.08)
Concession	21	(7.72)	14	(8.75)	21	(8.13)	21	(7.19)
Manner	15	(5.51)	14	(8.75)	34	(13.17)	45	(15.41)
Result	5	(1.83)	0	(0)	3	(1.16)	6	(2.0)
Place	0	(0)	2	(1.25)	2	(0.77)	5	(1.52)
Others	34	(12.5)	14	(8.75)	37	(14.34)	46	(15.75)
	276	(100)	160	(100)	258	(100)	292	(100)

$\chi^2 = 18.3, p\text{-value} = 0.6$

Observably, the most preferred clause patterns for realising circumstantial enhancement across the four newspapers is the *time adverbial* clause. This is followed, depending on the type of newspaper, by any one of the following types: *conditional*, *reason*, *purpose*, *concession*, and *manner adverbial* clause. We observe further that whereas the *manner adverbial* clause is significantly attested in the two British newspapers, it is among the least realized circumstantial clause in the Ghanaian editorials. It is equally noteworthy that *result* and *place adverbials* are the least preferred types across the four newspapers. However, in spite of the irregularities observed, the statistical test of dependence confirms that the distribution of adverbial clause subtypes in the editorials is independent of newspaper type ($\chi^2 = 18.3, p\text{-value} = 0.6$). What this means is that the differences in usage patterns are statistically insignificant. In spite of the principle to explore the pervasive dominant linguistic pattern (i.e. time adverbials) (Biber & Conrad, 2009) we equally pay some attention to the following second dominant subtypes whose choices are newspaper-dependent: conditional, reason and manner clauses since they too have interesting usage dynamics.

The primary motivation for the dominance of time adverbials is a functional one. There is the impression that temporal enhancement is relevant to the persuasive

function of newspaper editorials. This observation is emphasized by the fact that the corpus exhibits a wide range of types of *time adverbial* clause, signalled chiefly by subordinators such as *when, while, before, after, since, as, once, by the time* and by some present participial clauses. Details of distribution of time adverbial clause patterns are presented in Table 18.

Table 18: Distribution of time adverbial clause subtypes

	DG (%)		GT (%)		DT (%)		TT (%)	
when(ever)	35	(39.77)	20	(37.03)	33	(46.47)	32	(45.07)
while	15	(17.04)	19	(35.18)	20	(28.16)	11	(15.49)
since	5	(5.68)	1	(1.85)	5	(7.04)	1	(1.40)
before	4	(4.54)	2	(3.70)	0	(0)	7	(9.85)
after	3	(3.40)	1	(1.85)	0	(0)	2	(2.81)
Until/till	2	(2.27)	1	(1.85)	1	(1.40)	0	(0)
as	15	(17.04)	8	(14.81)	1	(1.40)	7	(9.85)
once	1	(1.13)	0	(0)	2	(2.81)	1	(1.40)
now that	0	(0)	1	(1.85)	0	(0)	2	(2.81)
(for) as long as	0	(0)	0	(0)	1	(1.40)	0	(0)
by the time	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)	1	(1.40)
at the time	1	(1.13)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)
Participial	7	(7.9)	1	(1.85)	8	(11.26)	7	(9.85)
	88	(100)	54	(100)	71	(100)	71	(100)

It is obvious, looking at Table 18 above, that the *time adverbial* clause is the dominant type mainly because temporality is realized across a wide spectrum of the time continuum. However, the most attested *time adverbial* clauses are the *when, while, and as* time adverbials instantiated in sentence (37) – (39) below.

37. **But when the Chancellor gets to his feet on March 21 to make his Budget statement he will not be able to announce a cut in taxes...**<clause text="TT08" snumber="05" cnumber="01">

38. **While saluting the victors of the NDC primaries and commiserating with the losers, we urge the other political parties...to be guided by internal democratic principles...** <clause text="DG03" snumber="18" cnumber="26">

39. **As the Conservatives lick their wounds after Thursday's polls, and Labour counts its gains, the question that will preoccupy all parties is whether the**

outcome represents a fundamental rejection of David Cameron, or a temporary rift. <clause text="DT14" snumber="03" cnumber="01">

It may be argued that these types of *time* adverbials are dominant probably because the enhancement functions relevant for the realization of the communicative purpose of the editorial register are “temporal overlap” with the subordinator *when* and “temporal simultaneity” with the subordinator *while* (Cristofaro, 2003, p. 159). With these functional relations, the times during which events were realized in the editorials are perceived to be either unspecific or fleeting (Cristofaro, 2003).

Apart from *time* adverbials, the other most preferred subtype across three newspapers (DG, DT and TT) is the conditional clause. We observe that the most attested conditional pattern is the *if* type, though there are other minimally attested subtypes: *should*, *had*, *provided* and *unless*.

40. Such practices, if they exist, should not be an incentive for the Government to change the law. <clause text="TT11" snumber="22" cnumber="27">

41. It is for this reason that the decision by the government to come up with code of ethics for members of its communications team must be seen as a positive development on the political landscape, provided the team members will abide by the provisions... <clause text="DG04" snumber="05" cnumber="11">

42. It is crucial for us to accept the possibility of this nation going through a similar experience, unless we work effectively against such political turmoils. <clause text="GT01" snumber="12" cnumber="29">

The *if*-conditional and the other uncommon conditional clause types are represented in the corpus in the distributional patterns captured in Table 19 below.

Table 19: Distribution of conditional clause subtypes

	DG (%)		GT (%)		DT (%)		TT (%)	
If	44	(97.77)	16	(72)	30	(85.71)	45	(86.53)
Unless	0	(0)	5	(22.72)	1	(2.85)	0	(0)
Should	0	(0)	1	(4.54)	0	(0)	5	(9.61)

Had	0	(0)	0	(0)	2	(5.71)	2	(3.84)
Provided	1	(2.22)	0	(0)	1	(2.85)	0	(0)
	45	(100)	22	(100)	35	(100)	52	(100)

These conditional structures are the open type of conditionals, rather than the hypothetical types. This pattern corroborates Wiredu's (2012) observation about the distribution of conditional patterns in his data.

Reason adverbial clauses are another common type across the four newspapers. Their detailed attestations, however, seem to be somehow influenced by regional norms. For example, whereas it is the third most preferred type in DG, it is the second most preferred in GT the fourth in the British editorials. One realizes that the dominant *reason adverbial* clauses are the ones with *because* subordinator as underlined in sentence (43), followed by *since* reason adverbials underlined in sentence (44).

43. It is bold *because...*Mr Salmond has been free to pursue his own ends at his own speed</clause>. <clause text="TT02" snumber="09" cnumber="09">

44. *Since we are constantly being told that this is not allowed under the convention,* how have the French managed to do it? <clause text="DT11" snumber="11" cnumber="19">

The usage patterns of reason adverbial clauses across the four newspapers are presented in Table 20.

Table 20: Distribution of reason adverbials

	DG (%)		GT (%)		DT (%)		TT (%)	
Because	19	(50)	11	(39.28)	18	(62.06)	19	(65.51)
Since	3	(7.89)	11	(39.28)	4	(13.79)	1	(3.44)
So that	4	(10.52)	0	(0)	1	(3.44)	0	(0)

For	2	(5.26)	2	(7.14)	2	(6.89)	2	(6.89)
As	6	(15.78)	3	(10.71)	1	(3.44)	3	(10.34)
So	1	(2.63)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)
So long as	2	(5.26)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)
For + -ing	1	(2.63)	0	(0)	0	(0)	0	(0)
In that	0	(0)	1	(3.57)	1	(3.44)	0	(0)
Given that/how	0	(0)	0	(0)	2	(6.89)	4	(13.79)
	38	(100)	28	(100)	29	(100)	29	(100)

A structural pattern concomitant with *reason* adverbials is observed in the corpus. One observes that Ghanaian editorials have a relatively straightforward argumentative structure, which begins with background information, followed by an introduction of the subject under discussion and a justification for taking a particular position, and ends with an assurance, a solution, or a projection into the future. The reason adverbial clause is observably one of the favoured structures for rendering the justification in the Ghanaian editorials, usually captured explicitly in one of the paragraphs in the middle (body) of the text in any of the patterns below:

- This is the reason why we...
- The Daily Graphic/The Ghanaian Times therefore...
- That is why the Daily Graphic/The Ghanaian Times...
- We therefore, call on the victors...
- This is because....

The British editorials, however, exhibit a more intricate argumentation, which becomes the platform for the adverbial clauses attested in them.

We also note that though *manner* circumstantial clauses are not particularly favoured by the Ghanaian editorials, they are indeed the third most preferred adverbial clauses in the British editorials. Because the *manner* adverbial clause is significantly attested in the British editorials, we present their usage patterns in the British editorials only in Table 21 below.

Table 21: Distribution of manner adverbials across the British newspapers

	DT (%)		TT (%)	
As	27	(65.85)	24	(75)
As if	3	(7.31)	1	(3.12)
As though	1	(2.43)	1	(3.12)
Like	1	(2.43)	0	(0)
In the way	3	(7.31)	0	(0)
Participial	6	(14.63)	6	(18.75)
	41	(100)	32	(100)

We observe from Table 21 that *manner* adverbial clauses such as the one underlined in sentence (45) below are the dominant type in the corpus.

45. When the going gets tough, as it has this past week or so, Mr Cameron needs all the backing he can get from his supporters. <clause text="DT10" snumber="13" cnumber="19">

8. Convergence and/or Divergence

It is important to offer a summary of divergence and/ or convergence in the distribution of the clause patterns. Based on the distributional behaviour of these categories in the editorials, a general comparative schema may be deduced as follows:

- There are patterns which are consistently similarly attested across the four newspapers. These are what may be referred to as *total consistency*.
- There are patterns which are similarly distributed only across newspapers from the same socio-cultural contexts. These may be referred to as *partial consistency*.
- There are patterns which are unique to individual newspapers. These are referred to as *zero consistency*.

Total consistency is considered to be functional. That is, clause patterns, which are similarly distributed across the four newspapers, are the ones which are deemed to be performing a communicative function in a situational context. In this regard, the patterns of distribution of *nominal* clause, relative clause and adverbial clause (see Table 2) are functional for the similarity in their distribution across the four newspapers, confirmed by the statistical measurement ($\chi^2 = 0.4$, p -value = 0.09). This is in line with the claim of the register theory that functional linguistic features are similarly distributed across dialects of the same variety.

The distribution of the *nominal* clause subtypes also exhibit total consistency. The *nominal* complement type is the dominant subtype across the four newspapers followed by verbal complements. This pattern confirms the functionality of the nominal clause in newspaper editorials.

The detailed attestations of *relative* and adverbial clause subtypes, however, instantiate partial consistency and zero consistency. For the *adverbial* subtypes, apart from the *time* clause, which is similarly distributed across all four newspapers, the rest are distributed based on the regional context of production. The statistical test, however, reveals that these variations are negligible.

The distribution of the internal subtypes of relative clauses instantiates zero consistency. Each of the subtypes seems to be influenced by some local house style. The implication may be that the classification of relative clause subtypes adopted in this study is not functionally dependent. Apparently, this model of classification was preferred for ease of identification and for its structure-dependence. One wonders what the traditional classification into restrictive non-restrictive and sentential relative subtypes would present for functional analysis.

9. Conclusion

We have argued in this work that the editorial corpus of this study supports the claim that linguistic features are typically functionally distributed in a particular

register. Our argument has been substantiated by the findings that the primary clause patterns and even some of their subtypes are similarly distributed across editorials from the four newspapers selected from the two sociocultural contexts. We established that nominal and relative clause types are the dominant types because they facilitate the packaging of complex information necessary for persuading readers.

Finally, the study compared patterns of distribution of clause types based on which a schematic pattern was developed. It emerged that there are more convergent patterns of distribution than there are divergent patterns. The overwhelming convergences in the distributional patterns have been used to argue in support of the register theory that linguistic features are functionally distributed in a given register even across regional dialects of a language.

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