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PRESUPPOSITION IN GHANAIAN AND BRITISH NEWSPAPER EDITORIALS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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Abstract

The paper explores presupposition and its triggers in Ghanaian and British newspaper editorials. Using a model proposed by Khaleel (2010:529), the researcher analysed thirty (30) editorials from the *Daily Guide* (Ghanaian) and *The Guardian* (British) which were published in 2017. The analysis revealed some similarities and differences in the Ghanaian and British newspaper editorials. It was found that the frequently used trigger of the existential presupposition in both newspapers is the definite noun phrase. Again, it was found that the most used to trigger structural presupposition is the relative clause. The noticeable difference between the two is that in the *Daily Guide*, structural presupposition is the most triggered (45.9%) whilst existential presupposition (69.8%) is the most triggered in *The Guardian*.

Keywords: Presupposition, implied claims, utterance and text

1. Introduction

The concept of presupposition emanated from the German logician, Frege in 1982 (Khaleel 2010). To presuppose something, in ordinary language, "means to assume it" (Saeed 1997:101). In language use, presupposition is the implied claims intrinsic in the import of an utterance or text (Richardson 2007). For Yule (1996:25), presupposition is "something the speaker assumes to be the case prior to making an utterance". Khaleel (2010) acknowledges that the concept of presupposition remains an interesting area of research for scholars of varied disciplines, particularly in philosophy and linguistics, because of its role in meaning. In linguistics, the concept adopts two approaches; the truth value approach and the interactional approach (Saeed 1997:102-06). According to Saeed (1997), the first approach views sentences as "external objects" and are characterized in terms of their "truth relations" and the second, "as the utterances of individuals engaged in a communication act". Leech (1981), for example, equates the first approach to *semantic presupposition* and the second, *pragmatic presupposition*.

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Greenfield and Smith (1976) describe semantic presupposition as a relationship between sentences in which a sentence assumes or presupposes another in the case where the truth of one is necessary for the truth or otherwise of the other. Scholars such as Kempson (1975), Wilson (1975), Gazdar (1979), McCawley (1981) and others, share in this notion. Khaleel (2010) notes that "pragmatic presupposition" as a term was introduced by Stalnaker (1974). Stalnaker (1974) pointed out that presupposition is fundamentally a pragmatic phenomenon or concept, based on the assumptions of participants in an interaction, which he referred to as the "common ground" (see Saeed 1997:109). Alcarza (1999:46) defines pragmatic presupposition as a "proposition that a speaker or writer has taken its truth value for granted in his statement. It consists of previous information about the knowledge, beliefs, ideology and scale of values that the addressee must be acquainted with in order to understand the meaning of an utterance". Hence, Saeed (1997:102) looks at pragmatic presupposition "from the speaker's viewpoint and talk about presupposition as part of the task of packaging an utterance; or adopt the listeners' viewpoint and see presupposition as one of a number of inferences that the listener might make on the basis of what the speaker has just said." Yule (1996:25) adds that "speakers, not sentences, have presuppositions".

Language users tend to the use of presupposition as "a kind of avoidance strategy" (Bonyadi and Samuel 2011:2). This is to say that presupposition frees languages users from mentioning all necessary information to a topic. As cited in Bonyadi and Samuel (2011), Finch (2000: 165) notes that:

> If we had to spell out all the details every time we speak, then communicating would be an extremely lengthy and tedious. Being able to assume a certain amount of knowledge on the part of the listeners makes it possible to take shortcuts. The degree of this shortcutting, however, depends on the context in which communication takes place.

With this, it would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, for journalists to present their reportage without such *avoidance*. Bonyadi and Samuel (2011) acknowledge the manipulative nature of presupposition as greatly utilised in media discourse. This is so because "some propositions is [are] (accepted to be) true, but in fact is [are] not true at all, or at least controversial" (van Dijk, 2000: 10).

Khaleel (2010) examines the use of presupposition in journalistic texts, newspapers to be precise. His study reveals that journalistic texts rely greatly on the use of presuppositions. Yingfang (2007) has also argued, based on his analysis of newspaper advertisements, that presuppositions are used to make up for the short time and space

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and rely on readers to infer the needed details. Bonyadi and Samuel (2011) also did a comparative study of newspaper editorials in both an American and Persian newspaper. Their analysis revealed general differences "in the frequency and extent of employing other linguistic structures for presupposition purposes."

A newspaper editorial is mostly a concise statement, text or an article written by an editor of a newspaper, and embodies the opinion or view of the newspaper on a specific issue. As a unique writing in journalism, "editorials are of argumentative and persuasive [in] nature, that is, their main objective is to influence the readers to accept the editorials' intended interpretation of news events." (Bonyadi and Samuel 2011:3). As presuppositions are not directly stated but are implied assumptions in an utterance (Reah 2002), it is clear they are of importance to editors in achieving their objective of persuading readers to accept the interpretation of issues put across by them and their newspapers.

The present study seeks to espouse the linguistic forms of presupposition in selected editorials from *Daily Guide*, a Ghanaian newspaper, and *The Guardian*, a British newspaper, founded on the idea that these communities may present ways of presupposing. Principally, the study seeks to identify the linguistic mechanisms that give rise to presupposition in the selected editorials from the two newspapers.

2. Methodology

2.1 Data selection

Thirty (30) newspaper editorials were randomly selected from the *Daily Guide*, and *The Guardian* – fifteen (15) from each newspaper. Though the selection of editorials was done randomly, the selection of the said newspapers adopted a non-random purposeful sampling. As stated by their official websites, the two newspapers are among the top newspapers in terms of readership or circulation, commercial success and achievement of critical acclaims for quality in journalism in their respective countries. The *Daily Guide* is regarded as one of the most circulated independent papers in Ghana (Kuehnhenrich 2012) and also ranked among the top five popular newspapers and magazines in the country. *The Guardian* newspaper, formerly (1821-1959) *The Manchester Guardian*, according to the editors of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, is an "influential daily newspaper published in London, generally considered one of the United Kingdom's leading newspapers" (The Guardian 2017). As the current study seeks to examine presupposition in Ghanaian and British newspaper editorials, the researcher found the need to select newspapers that are widely accepted in the selected

communities – consequently, the selection of the aforementioned newspapers. The selected editorials of the *Daily Guide* and *The Guardian*, were retrieved from the newspapers' online platforms at http://dailyguideafrica.com/category/editorial/ and http://www.theguardian.com/profile/editorial respectively, between the months of November and December 2017. In the analysis, Ref. DGE and Ref GNE are used as reference codes for the editorials of the *Daily Guide* and *The Guardian,* respectively. Numbers are attached to the said codes for specificity. Table 1 and 2 below give further details about the data collected and coding of the data.

Table 1: Selected Editorials of the Ghanaian Newspaper, Daily Guide

Reference Code	Editorial Title	Date Published
Ref. DGE 1	Magnanimity Too Much For Comfort: National Communications Authority (NCA)	December 22, 2017
Ref. DGE 2	Vetting of Police Recruits Critical: IGP David Asante-Apeatu	December 16, 2017
Ref. DGE 3	The NDC Should Shut Up	December 13, 2017
Ref. DGE 4	Mahama At His Comical Best: Former President John Mahama	December 12, 2017
Ref. DGE 5	No Longer Tolerable: Matthew Opoku Prempeh – Minister of Education	December 11, 2017
Ref. DGE 6	What A Relief!	December 9, 2017
Ref. DGE 7	A Year Ago Today…	December 8, 2017
Ref. DGE 8	The Wages of Bad Governance: President Akufo-Addo	December 6, 2017
Ref. DGE 9	Giving Free SHS A Bad Name	December 5, 2017
Ref. DGE 10	A Tale of Two Bridges	December 2, 2017
Ref. DGE 11	Our Farmers, Fishermen Our Survival	December 1, 2017
Ref. DGE 12	Losing The Ecosystem: John Peter Amewu	November 30, 2017

Ref. DGE 13	Opposition Politician In The Circus: Asiedu Nketia	November 29, 2017
Ref. DGE 14	Test In Diplomacy: President Akufo-Addo	November 28, 2017
Ref. DGE 15	Unethical, Irresponsible Presentations: Dr. Eric Opoku-Mensah	November, 27, 2017

Table 2: Selected Editorials of the British Newspaper, The Guardian

Reference Code	Editorial Title	Date Published
Ref. GNE 1	The Guardian view on Ryanair's model: a union-friendly company?	December 15, 2017
Ref. GNE 2	The Guardian view on Christmas cards: stamp of approval	December 15, 2017
Ref. GNE 3	The Guardian view on deporting rough sleepers: rights and wrongs	December 14, 2017
Ref. GNE 4	The Guardian view on Myanmar: telling the truth about the Rohingya	December 14, 2017
Ref. GNE 5	The Guardian view on Chris Froome's failed drugs test: transcending limits	December 13, 2017
Ref. GNE 6	The Guardian view on teenage gambling: staking on dopamine	December 17, 2017
Ref. GNE 7	The Guardian view on Hastings pier: in need of support	December 10, 2017
Ref. GNE 8	The Guardian view on the Brexit vote: mutiny wanted	December 12, 2017
Ref. GNE 9	The Guardian view on Putin in Syria: victory and desolation	December 12, 2017

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Ref. GNE 10	The Guardian view on the Tory truce over Brexit: the war goes on	December 11, 2017
Ref. GNE 11	The Guardian view on the ANC's new leader: a fresh start	December 18, 2017
Ref. GNE 12	The Guardian view on the 1%: democracy or oligarchy?	December 17, 2017
Ref. GNE 13	The Guardian view on the Brexit talks: nothing to applaud in Brussels	December 15, 2017
Ref. GNE 14	The Guardian view on Rupert Murdoch: a man out of time	December 14, 2017
Ref. GNE 15	The Guardian view on the Grenfell inquiry: hear the victims' voices	December 10, 2017

2.2 Analytical framework

Based on the types of presuppositions identified by Yule (1996) and Karttunen (n.d.), Khaleel (2010) proposes a model for the analysis of presupposition triggers. In this model Khaleel (2010) categorizes presupposition into three (3) major types (existential, lexical and structural) and identifies fourteen (14) triggers of the three types of presuppositions identified. Khaleel (2010) notes that definite descriptions (definite noun phrases and possessive constructions) give rise to the assumption of the existence of an entity named (that is, existential presupposition). Further, he names the type of assumption that emanates from the use of lexical verbs or items as lexical presupposition. Such lexical items include implicative verbs, factive verbs, change of state verbs, verbs of judging, counter factual verbs, conventional items and iterative verbs. Lastly, Khaleel (2010) considers all kinds of assumptions that arise from the use of linguistic structures (such as cleft constructions, *wh*-questions, adverbial clauses, comparative constructions, counter factual conditionals and non-restrictive clauses) as structural presupposition. Figure 1 below shows the three types of presuppositions and their triggers as per Khaleel (2010).
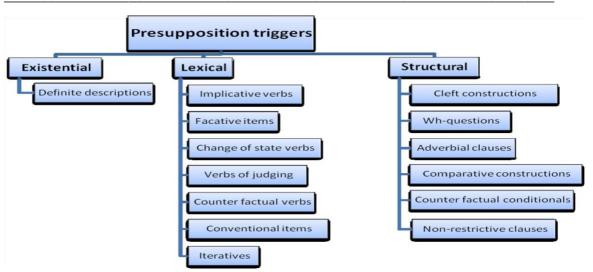
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Figure (1): A model for the analysis of presupposition triggers by Khaleel (2010:529)

Bonyadi and Samuel (2011) also identify four (4) triggers of presupposition which are new to the ones found in Figure 1 above in their analysis of presupposition in American and Persian Newspaper editorials: parenthetical, prepositional, *given* and *even* constructions. For the purpose of analysis, these triggers are categorised, in this study, under structural presupposition as per the model proposed by Khaleel (2010). In his own words, Khaleel (2010:533) states:

> Structural presuppositions form a type when certain sentence conventionally and regularly, presuppose that part of the structure is already assumed to be true. Addressers can use such structures to treat information as presupposed (i.e., assumed to be true), and, hence, to be accepted as true by the addressee

The above quotation buttresses the researcher's categorization of the four (4) presupposition identified by Bonyadi and Samuel under structural presupposition. The present study therefore incorporates the named presupposition triggers by Bonyadi and Samuel (2011) into the model of presuppositional analysis proposed by Khaleel (2010) in the analysis of presupposition in Ghanaian and British newspaper editorials.

3. Analysis

The analysis of the selected editorials revealed varied types of linguistic structures to indicate "potential presupposition" (Yule 1996:27) or different forms of "presupposition triggers" (Saeed 1997:106). As stated in the methodology, the study

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adopted the model of presuppositional analysis put forward by Khaleel (2010) for the analysis. All presuppositions triggers were categorised under the three main types of presupposition espoused by Khaleel (2010) – existential, structural and lexical presupposition. In the analysis, "presupposes" is marked with ">>".

3.1 Existential presupposition

Khaleel (2010) is of the view that presupposition of existence forms the starting point of presupposition. In existential presupposition, speakers normally assume the existence of an entity in an utterance. This is illustrated in Yule's (1996:25) example, "Mary's brother bought three horses". With this, the speaker assumes the existence of someone called Mary and that she has a brother. The analysis revealed that definite noun phrases, possessive constructions and the "one" construction are often used for existential presupposition in the editorials of both newspapers.

3.1.1 Definite noun phrases

The following examples of definite noun phrases trigger the existential presupposition in the DGE.

1) The awesome powers of a police officer in uniform (Ref. DGE 2) >> A police officer in uniform has awesome powers
2) This segment of our world (Ref. DGE 12) >> Our world forms a segment
3) The unruliness of party foot soldiers (Ref. DGE 13) >> Party foot soldiers are unruly

The excerpts below are examples of definite noun phrases from the GNE.

4) The success of the Independent Workers' Union of Great Britain (Ref. GNE 1) >> The Independent Workers' Union of Great Britain has been successful
5) The biggest nights of the sporting calendar (Ref. GNE 5) >> The sporting calendar has some big nights
6) The different roles of state and civil society (Ref. GNE 7) >> State and civil society have different roles

It was observed that noun phrases of the kind above from both the DGE and the GNE are used by the editors to assert the truism of the propositions. The reader is, therefore, persuaded into accepting the presupposed meaning as true. In the examples below, the

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writers are committed to the existence of the entities named, therefore, readers assume their existence.

7) The EC Chairman (Ref. DGE 3)
8) The free SHS (Ref. DGE 5)
9) The KUMACA deaths (Ref. DGE 6)
10) The Home Office case (Ref. GNE 3)
11) The Heritage Lottery Fund (Ref. GNE 7)
12) The Brexit department (Ref. GNE 8)

It must be noted that in the GNE, the use of numerals or numbers in definite noun phrases was observed whereas none of such use occurred in the data of the DGE. In the researcher's view, these were used to assert exactness of the existence of the nouns named. Below are examples of such from the GNE.

13) *127 rough sleepers* from EEA countries were detained… (Ref. GNE 3)
14) *25,000 11-to16-year-olds* are problem gamblers, according to new research. (Ref. GNE 6)

3.1.2 Possessive constructions

As Yule (1996:27) points out, "the possessive construction in English is associated with a presupposition of existence". The following extracts from the selected editorials, exemplify this claim.

The DGE
15) John Mahama's love for dramatizing issues (Ref. DGE 4) >> John Mahama loves dramatizing issues
16) The country's constitution (Ref. DGE 3) >> The country has a constitution

The GNE
17) Gina Miller's landmark case (Ref. GNE 8) >> Gina Miller has a landmark case
18) Russia's definition of "terrorism" (Ref. GNE 9) >> Russia has a definition for "terrorism"

Whereas the use of "our" to show collective possession was found in the data from the DGE, none was found in the GNE. Below are some examples from the DGE.

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19) Our state institutions (Ref. DGE 1) >> We have state institutions
20) Our judicial system (Ref. DGE 3) >> We have a judicial system
21) *Our Ghanaian*, if you like, *African values* (Ref. DGE 15) >> We have Ghanaian or African values

The above examples reveal that the *Daily Guide* editors, and for that matter Ghanaian editors per this paper, identify themselves with the readers in their writings. This may appeal to the senses of their readers and therefore manage to convince or persuade them into accepting their opinions. Interestingly, editors of the GNE are not interested in this.

3.1.3 "One" constructions

The "one" construction is so named because it is a structured string of words preceded by "one". The structure is thus, one + of + a definite description. These were evident in both newspaper editorials as they were used to trigger presupposition of existence.

The DGE
22) One of the dangers of having law enforcement officers involving in such anomalies (Ref. DGE 2) >> There are other dangers of having law enforcement officers involving in such anomalies
23) One of the stories in this edition (Ref. DGE 5) >> There are other stories in this edition

The GNE
24) One of the country's richest men (Ref. GNE 11) >> There are other richest men in the country
25) One of India's most-watched channels. (Ref. GNE 14) >> There are other most-watched channels in India

Editors of the selected newspapers used these constructions to suggest that the entities being described are not the only ones in existence but there are others. They present their views, through these constructions, as not the only truth or existence of the entity named. Consider the alteration of i) below into ii).

i) *One of the dangers of having law enforcement officers involving in such anomalies* is that it makes it difficult for citizens to determine when a policeman is on authorized duty or on a robbery mission. (Ref. DGE 2)

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ii)   *The danger of having law enforcement officers involving in such anomalies* is that it makes it difficult for citizens to determine when a policeman is on authorized duty or on a robbery mission.

The altered excerpt presupposes only one "danger" and this might raise questions in the readers' mind on the truism of the proposition. However, the reader is in a way convinced into believing i).

3.2 Structural presupposition

Yule (1996:28) states that "certain sentence structures have been analyzed as conventionally and regularly presupposing that part of the structure is already assumed to be true". He further adds that "we might say that speakers can use such structures to treat information as presupposed (i.e., assumed to be true) and hence to be accepted as true by the listener". Consider Yule's (1996) example of the *wh*-question, "When did he leave". This presupposes that "He left". Sentence structures that presuppose or assume their parts to be true as identified in the selected editorials include: adverbial clauses, *wh*-constructions, parenthetical constructions, relative clauses, counter-factual constructions, comparative constructions, "even" constructions, it-cleft, prepositional phrase, and "given" constructions.

3.2.1 Adverbial clauses

Afreh (2006:153) defines an adverbial clause as "a subordinate clause which as an entire unit functions as an adverbial modifier of the verb in the independent clause to which it (the adverbial clause) is joined". Adverbial clauses do have some level of freedom of positioning as they are commonly placed at the initial or final position of sentence (Biber et al 1999: 194). Consider Khaleel's (2010:534) example, "She wrote the book when she lived in Boston". The adverbial clause, "when she lived in Boston" presupposes "She lived in Boston". Below are examples of adverbial clauses that trigger presupposition in the selected editorials.

The DGE
26) Raymond Amegashie was busted *after the armed robbery operation he is said to have led* was exposed. (Ref. DGE 2) >> The armed robbery operation he is said to have led was exposed.
27) *Since no individual or group of persons can hold the country's constitution to ransom because of their parochial interests as against the nation's,* the hot air would achieve nothing and Ghana would triumph … (Ref. DGE 3) >> No

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individual or group of persons can hold the country's constitution to ransom because of their parochial interest as against the nation's

The GNE

28) *While the overall number of problem gamblers has fallen in recent years*, new perils are emerging. (Ref. GNE 6) >> The overall number of problem gamblers has fallen in recent years.

29) *When it was first opened in 1872* it was described as the peerless pier. (Ref. GNE 7) >> It was first opened in 1872.

3.2.2 Wh-constructions

The researcher grouped all forms of presuppositions through interrogations, whether direct or indirect, and the Wh-Cleft constructions under this category for the purposes of easy and better analysis. Biber et al (1999) define the wh-cleft as a clause preceded by a wh-word, mostly "what" + a form of the verb "be", a specially focussed element: a noun phrase, an infinitive clause, or a finite nominal clause. Interrogations, in simple terms, are questions. In other words, Wh-questions trigger presuppositions.

The DGE

30) So *what is the beleaguered party talking about?* (Ref. DGE 3) >> The beleaguered party is talking about something.

31) In any case, *why is the NDC deliberately defending Charlotte Osei and leaving the others to their fate even though all were appointed by their government*? (Ref. DGE 3) >> The NDC is deliberately defending Charlotte Osei and leaving the others to their fate even though all were appointed by their government.

32) …the signal was about a determination to recover *what was due the state* come what may… (Ref. DGE 1) >> Something was due the state.

The GNE

33) Why are ministers not asking for him to publish his tax return to show he will pay ₤45m back to the Treasury? (Ref. GNE 12) >> Ministers are not asking him to publish his tax return to show he will pay ₤45m back to the Treasury.

34) …the US and others are increasingly outspoken about *what is happening*. (Ref. GNE 4) >> Something is happening.

35) …the truth about *what is happening in Rakhine state*… (Ref. GNE 4) >> Something is happening in Rakhine state.

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3.2.3 Parenthetical constructions

Presupposition triggered through parenthetical constructions was one of the common structures used in the selected editorials. Walker (1823:99) defines a parenthetical sentence as "a member of a sentence, inserted in the body of a sentence, which member is neither necessary to the sense, nor at all affects the construction". They can be seen as add-on information to the import of a sentence and can be deleted or omitted in the sentence without affecting the entirety of the sentence, grammatically. Below are examples of such presupposition triggers in the selected editorials.

The DGE

36) After showing all signs that he would reverse the project in the unlikely event of his assuming the presidency of Ghana again – *a story about which was carried in the media-* former President John Mahama fearing the repercussions on both his political future and that of his party, has come out to deny he would do such a thing. (Ref. DGE 9) >> It was a story carried in the media that he would reverse the project in the unlikely event of his assuming the presidency.

37) Currently, the system is dealing with a matter which borders [bothers] upon the integrity of our electoral system – *a case brought before it by some petitioners.* (Ref. DGE 3) >> The system is dealing with a case brought before it by some petitioners.

The GNE

38) Lewis Hamilton is a tax exile – as indeed is Chris Froome. (Ref. GNE 5) >> Chris Froome is a tax exile.

39) …the EU has asked the government to state its trade aims, *a reasonable request.* (Ref. GNE 13) >> It is a reasonable request that the EU has asked the government to state its trade aims.

It must be noted that the parenthetical constructions as sentential add-ons are presented as facts by the editors of both newspapers. Readers are left with nothing but accept these 'facts'. Editors (in the selected editorials) in some cases used these constructions to offer their take on what has been said in the main part of the sentences as seen in the GNE examples above and in the DGE below:

40) From cheap TV commercials depicting an ignorant Ga Mashie woman condemning it to more sophisticated ones involving, sadly, persons who want

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to lead this country – *the buffoonery continues*. (Ref. DGE 9) >> The cheap and sophisticated TV commercials condemning it [The Free SHS] are buffooneries.

3.2.4 Relative clauses

Relative clauses were also used as presupposition triggers. The following excerpts exemplify how relative clauses are used as presupposition triggers.

The DGE
41) …Cpl Raymond Amegashie *who made negative headlines not for himself alone but the institution he represents.* (Ref. DGE 2) >> Cpl Raymond Amegashie made negative headlines not for himself alone but the institution he represents.
42) The free SHS *which was operationalized recently* stands tall as an unrivalled social intervention programme… (Ref. DGE 11) >> The free SHS was operationalized recently.

The GNE
43) For Mr O'Leary, *who has never complained about being seen as foul-mouthed bully*, it is a welcome recognition that bulldozing your way through workers' rights to make money doesn't always work. (Ref. GNE 1) >> Mr O'Leary has never complained about being seen as foul-mouthed bully.
44) …the brutal campaign against them *that began in Myanmar's Rakhine state* in August. (Ref. GNE 4) >> The brutal campaign against them began in Myanmar's Rakhine state in August.

3.2.5 Prepositional phrase

The use of prepositional phrases to give rise to presupposition was found in only the DGE. Below are some examples.

The DGE
45) We are on the path of developing our state institutions to be efficient and to operate *without unnecessary interference in their constitutionally determined terms of reference*. (Ref. DGE 1) >> State institutions have constitutionally determined terms of reference that must not be interfered with.
46) …those who do not win awards can nonetheless smile *instead of wearing morose faces*. (Ref. DGE 11) >> Those who do not win awards wear morose faces.

3.2.6 Counter factual conditionals/constructions

Counter factual constructions generally presuppose that the information in them cannot be considered to be true at the time of the utterance. Yule (1996:29) considers them to be "contrary to facts". Consider Yule's (1996) example below.

47) If I had a yacht, …

The information "I had a yacht" which in actual sense can be considered to be a fact is turned as contrary to fact at the time of the utterance with the introduction of the conditional "if". The statement presupposes "I do not have a yacht". Aside the conditional "if", others which were used for the same purpose in the editorials includes, *unless* and *until*. Below are examples from the editorials.

The DGE
48) They can stem the tide of migration *if they stop supporting the rogue governments* and rather assist in the formulation of civilized electoral systems which would reflect the will of the people at the polls. (Ref. DGE 8) >> They are supporting the rogue governments.
49) *…until the all-clear signal is given* to us by the relevant bodies. (Ref. DGE 6) >> The all-clear signal has not been given.
50) *Unless an appropriate legislation is passed to address this challenge…* (Ref. DGE 12) >> An appropriate legislation has not been passed to address this challenge.

The GNE
51) If the deal passes the regulatory hurdles… (Ref. GNE 14) >> The deal has not passed the regulatory hurdles.
52) …until they start to generate returns. (Ref. GNE 7) >> They have not started to generate returns.
53) Parliament cannot play the meaningful role at the end of phase two for which it voted this week *unless it takes back control of the strategy before the next talks start*. (Ref. GNE 13) >> Parliament has not taken back control of the strategy.

Interestingly, the italicized parts of the excerpts below were acknowledged by the researcher to trigger some kind of counter factual presupposition.

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54) For security purposes, *it is better to have* alternative routes to the Northern Regions as in the case of other parts of the country. (Ref. DGE 10) >> Alternative routes to the Northern Regions have not been constructed.

55) *Rather than* attempt to break a strike by cockpit crew over Christmas… (Ref. GNE 1) >> An attempt to break a strike by cockpit crew over Christmas was not made

3.2.7 "Given" constructions

These constructions were limited in number and were found only in the DGE. Below are examples.

The DGE

56) As we compose this commentary, we are unable to tell just how the next district level elections are going to be held *given the bad blood that now exists between the Chairperson and her subordinates especially those perceived to be against her.* (Ref. DGE 3) >> There exists bad blood between the Chairperson and her subordinates especially those perceived to be against her.

57) We cannot take things for granted *given the killer quality of this disease*. (Ref. DGE 6) >> This disease has a killer quality

58) Ghanaians wondered whether their will was going to reflect in their votes *given the below average confidence they had in the electoral system.* (Ref. DGE 7) >> They had a below average confidence in the electoral system

It must be observed that the string of words that follows "given" in each of the examples are expressed as established fact. Hence, editors of the DGE use such constructions to portray the "factiveness" of some statements.

3.2.8 Comparative constructions

Karttunen (n.d.), cited in Levinson (1983), establishes that the use of adjective *-er +* than triggers presupposition.
Just like the "given" constructions, comparative constructions were also in limited numbers but they occurred only in the GNE. Some examples are found below.

The GNE

59) Since the 2008 crisis – despite the squeeze in the public sector, where trade union members are concentrated – the number of working days lost to strikes has been *lower*, each year, *than* in any year between 1900 and 1990. (Ref. GNE

       1) >> The number of working days lost to strikes has been higher in any year between 1900 and 1990.

60) The second phase of the Brexit talks will be even *harder than* the first botched phase. (Ref. GNE 13) >> The first botched phase was hard.

3.2.9 "Even" construction

Editors of the selected newspapers used "even" to trigger presupposition in some constructions.

The DGE

61) It is interesting though that *even after admitting the offence*, the headmaster is said to have showed a proclivity towards an internal management of the issue… (Ref. DGE 5) >> The headmaster shouldn't have showed a proclivity towards an internal management of the issue after admitting the offence.

62) That is how come *even in the face of bedbug infestation* they are quick to point at the free SHS as being the cause. (Ref. DGE 9) >> They are not to point at the free SHS as being the cause of bedbug infestation.

The GNE

63) And *even now, six months later*, 103 families, including 29 with children, are still in emergency accommodation, waiting to be rehoused. (Ref. GNE 15) >> The 103 families are not expected to live in emergency accommodation now.

64) …the rich don't *even pay taxes*. (Ref. GNE 12) >> The rich are expected to pay taxes

3.3 Lexical presupposition

Certain words or lexical items trigger presuppositions. In the selected editorials: factive verbs, iteratives, change of state verbs, non-factive verbs, and conventional items were found to be some of these lexical items.

3.3.1 Factive verbs/phrases

Crystal (1997:147) argues that the term 'factive' is used in the category of verbs which take complement clause, where the addresser assumes the truth of the proposition expressed through the clause. They are therefore called factive because they (the verbs) presuppose the truth or 'the factiveness' of the complement clause. In addition to factive verbs, Yule (1996) proposes adjectives and noun constructions as other triggers.

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The DGE

65) We do not *know* where the magnanimity is originating from… (Ref. DGE 1) >> The magnanimity is originating from somewhere.

66) *It is gratifying* that these young Ghanaian youth have showed such an interest in the Ghana Police Service. (Ref. DGE 2) >> These young Ghanaian youth have showed an interest in the Ghana Police Service

Other verbs and phrases include: *came, showed, It is worrying that…, It is outlandish therefore…, saw, is proving, aware of, It is not surprising…*

The GNE

67) …you *know* that all these same people have been thinking about you too. (Ref. GNE 2) >> All these same people have been thinking about you too.

68) The Guardian *revealed* on Wednesday that questions had been raised by a test carried out in early September… (Ref. GNE 5) >> Questions had been raised by a test carried out in early September

Other verbs and phrases used include: *It is clear…, It is wrong…, …is telling, warned, announced, revealed, It is shocking…, recognised, It is bewildering…*

3.3.2 Iteratives

Iterative is a term that refers to "an event which takes place repeatedly" (Crystal 1997:206). Certain words give rise to such repeated events or action. They are referred to as "iteratives" (Khaleel 2010:523). Some of such words were found in the data but they were limited in number.

The DGE

69) They would turn to their propagandists, to *once more*, politicize the subject. (Ref. DGE 1) >> Their propagandists keep on politicizing the subject

70) Today, we once *again* celebrate our farmers and fishermen. (Ref. DGE 11) >> We keep on celebrating our farmers and fishermen.

Apart from *once more* and *again*, the researcher also identified the use of "no longer" as a *negative iterative*. Although it presupposes repeated events in their use in the DGE, they signal the end of the presupposed repeated event.

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71) This way, elections would *no longer* be moments of apprehension, anguish and despondency. (Ref. DGE 7) >> Elections have been moments of apprehension, anguish and despondency.

The GNE

72) Now it is again at the core of Mr Grieve's case for parliament… (Ref. GNE 8) >> It has been at the core of Mr Grieve's case for parliament before

73) The retaking of Raqqa was not a Russian accomplishment… (Ref. GNE 9) >> Raqqa was taken before

3.3.3 Change of state verbs

According to Saeed (1997:99), change of state verbs possess a kind of switch presupposition that the new state is both described and is presupposed not to have held prior to or before the change. Some examples from the data are provided below.

The GDE

74) Sadly, some elements in the opposition NDC have *commenced* making threatening remarks about how they would behave should the case go a certain direction. (Ref. DGE 3) >> Some of the elements in the opposition NDC used not to make threatening remarks about how they would behave should the case go a certain direction.

The GNE

75) Last week, the charity sector leader Sir Stuart Etherington *started* a campaign for reform that envisages civil society becoming a co-partner with local government, reinvigorating and democratizing communities and local services. (Ref. GNE 7) >> The charity sector leader Sir Stuart Etherington used not to embark on a campaign for reform that envisages civil society becoming a co-partner with local government, reinvigorating and democratizing communities and local services.

3.3.4 Non-factive verbs

Non-factive verbs trigger presuppositions that are assumed not to be true (Yule 1996). Below are some examples from the data.

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The DGE

76) …he unashamedly *claimed [that]* the economy was in the best of shapes… (Ref. DGE 4)

77) *Imagine* students discussing matrons… (Ref. DGE 5)

78) It is interesting though that even after admitting the offence, the headmaster *is said* to have showed a proclivity towards an internal management of the issue… (Ref. DGE 5)

The GNE

79) The test *suggests [that]* he exceeded the permitted levels of the asthma drug salbutamol… (Ref. GNE 5)

80) …opportunists whose doublespeak *claims* that watering down workers' rights will lead to an "overtime boom". (Ref. GNE 12)

81) It is *reported* that he still trying to get the deal blocked. (Ref. GNE 14)

In the above examples, the clausal complements – the string of words after the italic word –can be said not to be necessarily true, if not false, at the time of the utterance.

3.3.5 Conventional Items

Levinson (1983:206) argues that sentential presuppositions can be viewed as part of the conventional meaning of expressions that is tied to lexical items. Palmer (1981:170) confirms this view by stating that presupposition is linked with specific characteristics of certain lexical items. The sentence "I killed the cat" presupposes "The cat was alive". This is so because of the verb "killed" as a trigger. The researcher identified just one use of a conventional item in the selected editorials occurring in the GNE.

82) There is no ethnic *cleansing* and no genocide, it says. (Ref. GNE 4) >> There is no ethnic dirt

4. Discussion

The analysis reveals that editors of the selected editorials entrench implied claims within their stated claims. This is achieved through the concept of presupposition. The entrenchment of claims that are to be implied by readers served as a means of persuasion by the writer and on the reader. As editorials seek to offer opinion on issues in the form of criticism, attack, defence, endorsement, praise, and appeal (Hall 2001), the present study suggests that the presupposed claims in the selected editorials were, generally, deployed as a persuasive strategy by the editors in order to create

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congeniality of the opinions presented. The analysis also reveals that the Ghanaian editor(s) present their take on issues by presenting themselves as part of the situation in the reportage. This is seen in the use of "our" to indicate possession and to trigger presupposition of existence. Editors of both newspapers express their own views as 'facts' – if not as if as facts – on factive propositions. This is exemplified in the use of some parenthetical clauses.

4.1 Discussion of presupposition triggers in DGE

The analysis shows that the editors of the DGE do use some linguistic forms to disseminate their opinion through presuppositions. The tables below present the frequency of the linguistic forms of presupposition used in the DGE.

Table (3): Existential Presupposition in the DGE

EXISTENTIAL PRESUPPOSITION			
EDITORIAL NUMBER (NO.)	DEFINITE NOUN PHRASES	POSSESSIVE CONSTRUCTIONS	'ONE' CONSTRUCTIONS
1	9	1	-
2	6	-	1
3	14	3	-
4	5	1	-
5	6	1	1
6	5	-	-
7	5	2	-
8	6	-	-
9	5	1	-
10	6	-	-
11	3	3	1
12	5	5	1
13	4	-	-
14	1	1	-
15	5	2	-
TOTAL	**85**	**20**	**4**

Total number of existential presuppositions used in the DGE =109

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Table (4): Structural Presupposition in the DGE

				STRUCTURAL PRESUPPOSITION				
EDITORIAL. NO.	AD. CL.	WH-CON.	PA. CON.	PR. PH.	RE. CL.	'GIVEN' CON.	C. FAC. CON.	'EVEN' CON.
1	2	2	1	1	-	-	-	-
2	3	-	-	1	1	-	-	-
3	4	3	3	-	3	1	1	-
4	-	1	-	-	1	-	1	-
5	-	2	1	-	2	-	2	2
6	-	1	-	-	1	1	2	-
7	1	4	4	1	1	1	-	-
8	2	1	2	-	1	-	1	1
9	1	-	3	-	3	-	1	1
10	1	1	2	-	-	-	2	-
11	3	2	1	1	7	-	-	-
12	2	-	-	-	4	-	2	-
13	5	1	1	-	3	-	-	1
14	1	1	-	-	1	-	1	-
15	1	-	-	-	2	-	-	-
TOTAL	**26**	**19**	**18**	**4**	**30**	**3**	**13**	**5**

Total number of structural presuppositions = 118

NB: AD. CL. = ADVERBIAL CLAUSE, WH-CON. = WH-CONSTRUCTION, PA.CON. = PARENTHETICAL CONSTRUCTION, PR. PH. = PREPOSITIONAL PHRASE, RE. CL. = RELATIVE CLAUSE, 'GIVEN' CON. = 'GIVEN' CONSTRUCTION, C. FAC. CON. = COUNTER FACTUAL CONDITIONALS/ CONSTRUCTIONS, 'EVEN' CON. = 'EVEN' CONSTRUCTION

Table (5): Lexical Presupposition in the DGE

LEXICAL PRESUPPOSITION				
EDITORIAL NO.	FACTUAL VERBS/ PHRASES	ITERATIVES	CHANGE OF STATE VERBS	NON-FACTIVE VERBS
1	3	1	-	-
2	1	-	-	-
3	-	-	1	-
4	-	-	-	1
5	1	-	-	2
6	2	-	-	-
7	2	1	-	-
8	2	1	-	-
9	1	-	-	-
10	6	-	-	-
11	-	2	-	-
12	-	-	-	-
13	-	1	-	-
14	1	-	-	-
15	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	**19**	**6**	**1**	**4**

Total number of lexical presuppositions in the DGE = 30

In all, two hundred and fifty-seven (257) instances of presupposition were observed in the editorials of the *Daily Guide* newspaper. Out of this total, structural presupposition is found to account for 45.9%. This is followed by the existential presupposition with 42.4% and the lexical presupposition taking the remaining 11.7%. It is worthy of note that in DGE, the most frequently used structural presupposition trigger is the relative clause, occurring 30 times out of the total of 118. Next to it is the adverbial clause, which occurred 26 times, and the *wh*-constructions which occurred 19 times. It is clear from these numbers that the Ghanaian editor(s), or at least those of the *Daily Guide,* employ the structural presupposition mainly to persuade readers into accepting their views as facts. This is seen in the analysis of relative clause (see Section 3.2.5), the adverbial clause (See Section 3.2.1) and the *wh*-constructions (See Section 3.2.3) which

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are the first, second, and third, respectively, in terms of frequency. Relative clauses modify their antecedents. Therefore, readers are convinced into accepting the claim of the relative clause as a fact about the antecedent. Adverbial clauses serve as modifiers of the main verb in the independent clause or the sentence. Hence, the adverbial clause is intrinsically accepted as a fact of the main proposition, that is, the independent clause. The same can be said about *wh*-constructions. In the case of *wh*-questions, for example, the reader is naturally convinced to accept the proposition put across. Based on this, the study conclude that Ghanaian editors employ structural presupposition mainly as a persuasive device.

4.2 Discussion of presupposition triggers in GNE

The analysis of the GNE also reveals some interesting findings. Below are tables presenting the linguistic forms of presupposition in the GNE.

Table (6): Existential Presupposition in the GNE

EXISTENTIAL PRESUPPOSITION			
EDITORIAL NUMBER (NO.)	NO. OF DEFINITE NOUN PHRASES	NO. OF 'ONE' CONSTRUCTIONS	NO. OF POSSESSIVE CONSTRUCTIONS
1	7	-	4
2	1	-	-
3	12	-	1
4	14	-	3
5	22	2	5
6	6	1	2
7	7	1	3
8	13	-	12
9	21	-	7
10	14	-	9
11	14	3	12
12	12	-	5
13	11	-	5
14	17	1	6
15	26	-	3
TOTAL	**197**	**8**	**77**

Total number of existential presuppositions in the GNE = 282

Table (7): Structural Presupposition in the GNE

STRUCTURAL PRESUPPOSITION							
EDITORIAL NO.	AD. CL.	WH-CON.	PA. CON.	RE. CL.	C. FAC. CON.	COM. CON.	'EVEN' CON.
1	1	2	1	1	2	1	-
2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	-	-	1	-	1	-	2
4	-	2	1	2	-	-	1
5	1	-	3	3	-	-	-
6	2	-	2	-	-	-	-
7	1	4	1	1	1	-	1
8	2	2	-	3	1	-	-
9	-	-	1	5	1	-	-
10	1	1	-	4	-	-	-
11	3	-	-	2	1	-	-
12	1	2	3	1	2	-	1
13	-	-	1	-	3	1	1
14	1	-	-	4	1	-	1
15	1	1	1	2	1	-	2
TOTAL	**15**	**14**	**15**	**28**	**14**	**2**	**9**

Total number of structural presuppositions in the GNE = 97

NB: AD. CL. = ADVERBIAL CLAUSE, WH-CON. = WH-CONSTRUCTION, PA.CON. = PARENTHETICAL CONSTRUCTION, RE. CL. = RELATIVE CLAUSE, C. FAC. CON. = COUNTER FACTUAL CONDITIONALS/ CONSTRUCTIONS, COM. CON. = COMPARATIVE CONSTRUCTION, 'EVEN' CON. = 'EVEN' CONSTRUCTION

Table (8): Lexical Presupposition in the GNE

LEXICAL PRESUPPOSITION					
EDITORIAL NO.	CONVENTIONAL ITEM	NON-FACTIVE VERBS/ PHRASES	FACTUAL VERBS/PHRASES	CHANGE OF STATE VERBS	ITERATIVES
1	-	-	3	-	-
2	-	-	1	-	-
3	-	-	2	-	-
4	1	-	-	-	-
5	-	1	1	-	-
6	-	-	3	-	-
7	-	-	-	1	-

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8	-	-	1	-	1
9	-	-	1	-	1
10	-	2	-	-	-
11	-	-	1	-	-
12	-	1	1	-	-
13	-	-	-	-	-
14	-	2	1	-	-
15	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	**1**	**6**	**15**	**1**	**2**

Total number of lexical presuppositions = 25

A total of four hundred and four (404) instances of presupposition triggers were gathered from the GNE. Out of this total, the existential presupposition took a whopping 69.8%, structural presupposition, 24%, and the lexical presupposition, 6.2%. It is worthy of note that the most frequently used trigger of the existential presupposition in the GNE is the definite noun phrase or definite descriptions, with a total of 191. This is followed by the possessive constructions, and the 'one' constructions with totals of 77 and 8 respectively. The definite noun phrases are used to assert 'factiveness'. Therefore, the editors are committed to the existence of the entities named. The analysis also reveals that they are used to create exactness as we pointed out in Section 3.1.1. The possessive constructions are also used for the same purpose (see Section 3.1.2). The "one" constructions are rather used subtly by the editors to assert their views as facts by acknowledging the existence of other views as shown in Section 3.1.3. The paper therefore posits that British editors or, at least, those of *The Guardian* use the existence of entities, subtly, to assert their claims or opinions as facts or truths to their audience.

5. Conclusion

Considering the pertinent role of newspaper editorials in shaping the opinions of citizens on national issues, the present study set out to ascertain how the concept of presupposition is used in Ghanaian and British newspaper editorials by espousing the linguistic structures that give rise to presupposition. The analysis of editorials from the *Daily Guide* and *The Guardian* revealed some similarities and differences in Ghanaian and British newspaper editorials. The main similarities between the two are in the fact that the frequently used trigger of the existential presupposition is the use of definite noun phrase; the most used to trigger structural presupposition is the relative clause; and for lexical presupposition, factive verbs and phrases were used mostly. Editorials are expected to be argumentative and persuasive. The similarities in the use of the afore triggers in the DGE and GNE can be attributed to the fact that these linguistic forms inevitably posit the truth conditions of what the editors adduce. This invariably makes

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it possible for the editors to manipulate the viewpoints of readers on the subjects they present. The noticeable difference between the two is that in the DGE, the structural presupposition is the most triggered (45.9%) whilst the existential presupposition (69.8%) is the most triggered in the GNE. It can be said that the choice of the editors of the DGE in deploying structural presupposition afforded the editors a strategy in which they avoided clearly stating their views on issues to prevent biases. This subtly persuades their readers into accepting their viewpoints. In the GNE, editors present their views in a more concrete and evident manner. This is seen in the enormous enactment of assumptions through existent entities (69.8% of existential presupposition). With the existential presupposition keenly competing in terms of percentage with the structural presupposition (Existential = 42.4%, Structural = 45.9%) in the DGE and again, carrying the overwhelming percentage, 69.8%, in the GNE, it can be said to be an important vehicle in which editors carry their opinions on issues. This is consistent with the view that existential presupposition forms the starting point of presupposition (Yule 1996; Khaleel 2010). The identified linguistic forms for presuppositions revealed how editors or editorial writers in Ghanaian and British newspapers disseminate their views on issues to their readers – how they manipulate their readers' sense of judgement on issues. While identifying how presupposition manifests in different communities, this study mainly aimed at inciting Ghanaian researchers into examining other genres of the media landscape.

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