

A GRAMMAR OF NEWSPAPER EDITORIAL LANGUAGE: THE COMPLEX SENTENCE

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Abstract

This study sets out to examine what linguistic choices are made at the level of the sentence in selected English Language editorials in a particular newspaper in Ghana – the Daily Graphic. Data for the study consists of 338 selected sentences from 22 editorials of the Daily Graphic published in January 2008. We have limited ourselves to the complex sentence, and specifically, to the dependent clause as it occurs in these editorials. At the end of the analysis, we identified the following patterns: (a) only declarative sentences were used, (b) there was overwhelming reliance on complex sentences and (c) most of the complex sentences consisted of multiple rankshifted structures.

1. Introduction

A newspaper offers its readers a variety of materials to read. It carries articles of an extremely diverse nature and has thus become an important tool for providing the information we need to understand the world. Through news and sports reports, advertisements and feature articles, the newspaper provides much diverse information that is aimed at addressing the different concerns of its perceived readership (Grossberg et al, 1998).

Another equally important function which a newspaper serves is *correlation*, which involves the explanation and eventual interpretation of the news events and issues in the society. It is this function that the editorial is expected to perform (Burton, 2002). Most print publications feature an editorial page usually written by the editor or publisher. Such a page is meant to present the ideology of the paper. An editorial, accordingly, may be seen as an article in a newspaper expressing the opinion of the newspaper on a topic or news item of public concern (Sinclair, 1995). This point is also expressed eloquently in the statement below:

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An editorial is characterised as a rather subjective and, at the same time, persuasive type of writing. The chief editor or a group of famous columnists, comments, i.e. expresses his/her opinion, on current issues of general importance, gets involved in a certain political or ethical discussion. Events are criticised, praised, or denounced (Buitkiene, 2008: 13).

An editorial has the primary goal of influencing the attitudes, beliefs, or behaviour of the readers (Katajamaki and Koskela, 2006). Through its editorial, a newspaper tries to convince readers that its point of view about a topic is the correct one to accept. In this regard, editorials act as advocates for a newspaper. This is because their purpose is to recommend a particular decision either for or against a defined course of action. Indeed, according to Sebranek and Kemper (1990), editorials build on an argument and try to persuade readers to think the same way as the paper does. In essence, an editorial is meant to:

- a) influence public opinion
- b) promote critical thinking
- c) cause people to take a specific action on an issue

It is, in effect, communication intended to influence. As Jaworski and Galasinski (2002) have put it, the newspapers now interpret the news as well as construct reality from a particular point of view. This has become necessary considering the avalanche of information that the modern reader is faced with. Reader look at the editorial for possible guidance in interpreting the material they are confronted with daily.

The purpose of the editorial, therefore, is to stimulate readers into action. To achieve its goals, the editorial explains or interprets an idea, an event or an action by either praising or criticising it. It is clear, therefore, that the process of persuasion is an important consideration for the editorial writer. Persuasion is a means by which one person can cause another to want to believe, to think or to do something in a suggested way. But, in the words of Gibson and Hanna (1992:354),

Persuasion implies change. The change can be observable as in a decision to purchase, followed by the act of purchasing, something. The change can also be mental, such as a change in attitudes, beliefs, or values.

However, we must stress that there is no coercion in persuasion. As O'Connor (1988) observes, persuasive efforts are made in situations in which two or more points of view about a topic compete for attention. Thus, in persuasion, an opportunity is given the reader to make a choice. But, persuasion involves specific strategies. As a result, using communication to persuade may involve targeted choices of language use – grammatical, lexical, phonological, discursal, etc. According to Sornig (1989), verbal persuasive communication depends more on how the information is linguistically structured than on the truth-value of the communicated information.

Since the editorial is intended to win over the readership to its standpoint, it relies on specific strategies to achieve this persuasive intent. Indeed, some writers have argued that persuasion in editorials involves writing which gives the reader the opportunity or ability to choose or make inferences, and to take decisions based on information and ideas. To achieve this goal, the editorial relies principally on providing large amounts of information as a means of persuading the reader. However, we must add that this information is couched in language that is meant to aid this persuasive goal. Thus, there is a link between language choices in the editorial and its intended function of persuading a targeted audience.

As Larson (1983) puts it, language use is very important in persuasion. For, in the main, the persuader must be attuned to the language preference of the audience. Indeed, in the view of Kress and Hodge (1979), the reality of our world is shaped by language, an instrument of control as well as an instrument of communication. For Bolivar (1994), language is used in editorials to induce change in attitudes toward issues of public concern. And language use implies choices of specific linguistic units to achieve intended goals (Hawes and Thomas, 1995).

Accordingly, this study aims to answer the following questions:

- (a) What types of dependent clauses are prevalent in the editorials under study?
- (b) In what way(s) do these clause types contribute to achieving the intended objectives of the editorials?

By implication, we are limiting our analysis to the linguistic processes which operate at the unit of sentence, as recognized in Systemic-Functional Grammar. This means that we shall not be concerned with processes at the units below the sentence.

Also, we must point out that throughout this study, there has been one important assumption – that there is a link between the patterns of dependent clauses used in the editorials and the intended objective of these editorials. This corroborates the view expressed by Tomasello (1998) that functions are embodied in the structural patterns selected for a communicative activity. He states that “All language structures are symbolic instruments that serve to convey meaning, from the smallest morphemes to the most complex constructions” (Tomasello, 1998: xi). Our view is also supported by Thomas (1996), who observes that any written discourse represents a dialogue between the writer and the potential reader, a dialogue which is firmly controlled by the writer because of the optional linguistic choices he/she consciously makes. It is evident from the discussion that we accept the view that linguistic choices are important in the construction and dissemination of ideas in communication – in this case, editorial communication.

As an extension of this view, this study works on the principle that linguistic choices within each language are tied to the purpose of a particular discourse, and that in expressing particular ideas, users of a language have linguistic alternatives to choose from. As a result, they make conscious, if not necessarily deliberate, choices of specific linguistic patterns – phonetic, phonological, syntactic, semantic, etc. for the simple reason that there are different ways of expressing any particular idea. In other words, there are always alternative linguistic structures available for use. How the language is used and what choices are made are decisions

consciously made according to the type of discourse event and the goal of the communicative event.

We must mention that all the editorials used in the study were selected from the *Daily Graphic*, a widely read and respected daily newspaper in Ghana. In all, 22 editorials were studied for this work. All of them were published in January, 2008.

2. Theoretical Frame of the Study

Because of their social orientation to textual analysis, the approaches adopted in Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) are considered appropriate in this study. The major reasons for selecting these two theories are:

- a) they both view language as functional, and
- b) they consider linguistic choices as socially and, therefore, contextually determined.

In our view, then, these two theories provide a proper basis for systematic analysis of the language of editorials. They offer suitable linguistic methods by which we can analyse these editorial texts.

The theory of CDA explains how language choice in social interaction is determined by discourse functions. The goal of CDA is to discover the power relations within a text, because it sees textual language as a social enterprise with strong ideological undertones. According to Fairclough (2003), for example, a text is a combination of production and interpretation. Therefore, any textual analysis must capture these two processes.

The CDA recognizes three dimensions in any discourse event:

- i) the text,
- ii) the processes of its production and interpretation, and
- iii) the social conditions surrounding these processes.

In analysing any discourse, then, there are three stages which correspond to these dimensions:

- i) the description of the text,
- ii) the interpretation of the text, and
- iii) the explanation of the discourse as a social activity.

The implication is that the analysis of any text should start with an analysis of its structure and the linguistic choices the writer has made. Next, the analysis should involve the study of the process of interpretation by the reader of the text. Finally, the analysis should examine the social factors that have shaped the text.

For our purpose in this work, only the first two of these stages will be studied, i.e. *description* and *interpretation*. The third stage – *explanation* – falls outside our scope. CDA goes beyond the text to offer ideological interpretation of texts. As Van Dijk (1998) sees it, ideological considerations influence the language choices we make in a discourse event. However, our interest in this study of editorials is principally linguistic. We are, therefore, not concerned with this aspect of the theory in our study of editorials.

At the *description* stage of analysis, the formal linguistic properties of the text are examined for the lexical and grammatical patterns in it. It is at this stage of the analysis that Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) becomes an appropriate method of analysis. Like CDA, SFG sees language as a system for social interaction. In the view of Bloor and Bloor (1995), people use language to express meaning. SFG is functional because it analyzes language in use in specific contexts (Martin, 2001).

We consider SFG very appropriate to use in this analysis because, according to the proponents, every structure in language can be interpreted only in relation to its role within the social context, and every linguistic choice serves a purpose in a communicative environment. SFG analysis involves an analysis of the grammatical choices made in the text and what functions these choices are meant to serve. SFG sees texts as expressing three metafunctions:

- i) the *Ideational function* – this deals with how language is used to represent the world;
- ii) the *Interpersonal function* – this concerns how language reflects the attitude of the writer; and
- iii) the *Textual function* – this deals with how words and sentences are organized to make the text.

What this means is that, in this theory, texts are analysed at the clausal level according to these three metafunctions. The ideational metafunction examines the processes in the text to identify the relationships and/or the events between the participants and how this representation influences the world of the audience. In this study, however, we will not be concerned with the ideational function. This is not our goal. The second function – the interpersonal - involves communication between the participants and how they express their attitudes towards one another; other words, the way they relate to other people as they interact. This is, also, not our concern. The textual function is concerned with the actual organization of the text itself – the channel one selects in communication. This function is in line with our goal in this study – to examine what types of dependent clauses are used and how they contribute to the function of editorial communication.

We believe that these two theoretical frames – the CDA and the SFG - are appropriate for our purpose because, as Lagonikos (2005: 55) has put it:

Halliday’s approach to analysing language entails a microanalysis of the choices made in the grammar of language to interpret the meaning of a text and what functions these choices serve for the language user.

3. Sentence Types

As we have already stated, we are examining the dependent clause forms in the editorials along the lines of the Systemic Functional Grammar. This means that we accept the following major theoretical concepts that flow from the SFG view of language as a social semiotic (Halliday, 1978); that is, that we can learn about how language works only if we consider the way it is used in particular social contexts. Thus, for this study, our

assumptions are that:

- (a) language is a behaviour potential, and
- (b) language construes meaning.

The implication is that using language involves making choices from linguistic possibilities in line with the specific task at hand (Teich, 1999). In the words of Halliday (1985: xiii):

Every text unfolds in some context of use; furthermore, it is the uses of language that ... have shaped the system. Language has evolved to satisfy human needs; and the way it is organized is functional with respect to these needs – it is not arbitrary.

What this statement implies is that language choices are made deliberately to reflect the purposes for which the communication is taking place. This idea ties in with our assumption in this work – that grammatical patterns identified in this analysis have been purposive.

4. Functional Types

In analysing the sentences in the selected editorials, the first distinction has been made between functional types and structural types. The results are as follows:

<u>Functional Types</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
a) Declarative	338	100
b) Interrogative	-	-
c) Directive	-	-
d) Exclamative	-	-
TOTAL	338	100

From the results above, it is evident that only declarative sentences are used in these editorials. This is not surprising, given the functions associated with declaratives.

SFG considers the sentence as the smallest grammatical unit which can do things. Sentences, for example, can ask questions, while clauses, groups, etc. cannot. In other words, sentences can make statements, ask questions, give commands or utter exclamations. To each of these sentence functions, there is an expected response or acknowledgement:

- a) a statement merely expects one to listen
- b) a question expects a verbal response
- c) a command expects an action response
- d) an exclamation expects an acknowledgement

Each of these functions has a corresponding sentence pattern:

- a) the declarative form is used to make a statement
- b) the interrogative form is used to ask a question
- c) the directive form is used to issue commands
- d) the exclamative form is used to express attitudinal information.

As we have noted, editorials rely on providing information to persuade readers. Accordingly, the declarative choices made in these editorials appear consistent with their primary goal. Detailed information in the editorials is provided in the form of statements, not in the interrogative or directive forms. As a result, it is only the declarative sentence we find being used in the editorials, since it is this sentence type which aids in the dissemination of information.

In discussing the implications of this preference for the declarative sentence, we may look at the structural pattern of the editorials. Using a modified version of the structure used by Bonyadi (2010), we observe that most of the editorials under study have more or less a structural pattern similar to the following outline (we shall use, as illustration, the editorial titled “JUDGES MUST HEED CJ’S WARNING” published on January 31, 2007):

i. Introduction

This is usually the section which raises the issue discussed in the editorial. It consists of two sub-sections - the *problem statement* and the *orientation*.

a) The problem statement

The success of every democratic government rests on a fair and firm justice system in which the rule of law is respected by both the government and the governed.

This is why one of the cardinal bench marks of an effective justice system declares that nobody is declared guilty until a court of competent jurisdiction has found him/her guilty of the offence.

In these sentences, we are introduced to the problem which has generated editorial interest. This section serves to indicate that there is a problem that needs to be discussed, to be addressed and to be resolved.

b) The orientation

This section provides information that identifies the specific incident(s) which has (have) triggered this problem. In many cases, the editorial consists of a narration of events.

In this context, the admonition by the Chief Justice to judges not to turn themselves into little tigers in the course of the discharge of their duties is appropriate.

Over the years, well-meaning people have complained about the way the judicial system works.

These sentences serve to provide background information for the reader to appreciate the context within which the issue is being discussed. In effect, it is to set the scene for the topic of discussion.

ii. The Body

This section provides the avenue for the editorial to raise its arguments for or against the issue. There are two sub-sections here: *the position* of the editorial on the issue and the *reasons* that have informed this position.

a) The editorial position

The DAILY GRAPHIC does not doubt the fact that the problems we have, as a country, with mob justice are traceable to the ineffective justice system, even though we frown on those evil practices in no uncertain terms.

Though the Constitution states clearly that justice emanates from the people and, therefore, every legal system must promote the security of the individual, most people are afraid to take their cases to the courts.

The reader learns in these sentences what the position of the newspaper is as regards the issue of discussion.

b) The reasons

This is where the paper proffers its arguments for its stand.

The reasons for this state of affairs are not far-fetched. Justice has become expensive, time-consuming and cumbersome.

Sometimes, members of the bench and the bar frustrate litigants with technicalities and unnecessary adjournments of cases.

Moreover, the court setting itself and processes are intimidating.

iii. The Coda

This section contains the concluding arguments in the editorial. The first part of this section sets out suggested solutions to the problem, while the second section deals with the specific actions that can be implemented.

a) Suggested Solutions

At a certain stage in our history, the idea of a panel system was introduced at the tribunal level so that some lay people could determine the guilt or otherwise of their peers.

It is heart-warming, however, that the Chief Justice recognized some challenges in the judicial system when she reminded judges that “people in court are in distress.”

The DAILY GRAPHIC is aware of the efforts of Mrs. Justice Wood to purge and clean the system to make it workable, although we concede that any reform process will come up against obstacles because of entrenched interests, conventions, usages, and traditions in the system.

The above suggestions are put forward in the editorial as answers to the problem highlighted earlier.

b) Suggested Specific Actions

We remind our judiciary to be responsive to the needs of the time, since our desire to establish a just society rests on the effectiveness of the judiciary which will serve as a bulwark against dictatorship, injustice, and corrupt practices by public office holders.

We plead with the Chief Justice to make the judiciary user-friendly, so that people in distress, who want to seek redress at the courts, will have the confidence in the justice delivery system.

We plead with members of the bench to live above reproach, since, as people who determine the fate of their fellow men, they must, like Caesar’s wife, be above suspicion.

These are the specific ways by which the DAILY GRAPHIC believes the problem highlighted in the editorial can be solved.

The point we are driving at is that, in all these structures, the information is presented using the declarative sentence. What this implies for us is that the information intended for the reader is best captured in this form. Even in the Coda, where specific recommendations for action are suggested, the editorial selects the declarative sentence form, rather than the directive form – which is the grammatical form usually associated with action requests.

We can, therefore, conclude that the declarative sentence dominates because it is found suitable for the dissemination of information. It is this sentence type which apparently facilitates the provision of information to the reader who relies on such information to form an opinion about the issue or societal problem the editorial seeks to address.

5. Structural Types

With regard to the structural types of sentence, we have the following trends:

<u>Structural Types</u>	<u>No. of Sentences</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Simple Sentence	30	8.88
Non-Simple Sentence		
- Complex	270	79.88
- Compound-Complex	23	6.80
- Compound	15	4.44
TOTAL	338	100.00

It is clear from these results that non-simple sentences are preferred in the editorials. A possible reason for this preference is that this form enables the writer to include much more information than a simple sentence will allow. In other words, the more non-simple sentences there are, the more information one can include in an editorial. This is because the non-simple sentence enables one to keep piling up ideas in the editorial.

In addition, we note that the complex sentence is the most frequent

sentence type. The figures in the table above indicate that the other two types – the compound and the compound-complex—are insignificant. Accordingly, we shall devote our attention in this study to the complex sentence as it occurs in the editorials.

To begin with, it is accepted that, in a complex sentence, there can be only one independent clause, no matter how many dependent clauses are found in such a sentence. Indeed, in our study, we observe that there are varying numbers of dependent clauses (ranging from one to nine dependent clauses within a single sentence). This could be an indication of the importance attached to the dependent clause. It also implies that the editorial sentences are filled with large amounts of information.

The table below provides the figures:

No. of Dependent Clauses Per Sentence

	Frequency	Percentage
1 Clause in a sentence	150	29.58
2 Clauses in a sentence	168	33.20
3 Clauses in a sentence	112	22.13
4 Clauses in a sentence	43	8.50
5 Clauses in a sentence	17	3.36
6 Clauses in a sentence	8	1.56
7 Clauses in a sentence	6	1.19
9 Clauses in a sentence	2	0.40
TOTAL	506	100.00

It is clear to us that the complex sentences in the editorials differ in the number of dependent clauses they contain. This is an indication that there does not seem to be a limit to the number of dependent clauses that the writers can squeeze into a single sentence—a situation that is not entirely surprising, given that the editorial relies on information to persuade the reader. It is not uncommon, as a result, to read in an editorial, a sentence like the example below:

At this juncture, we can only hope that last Monday's power outage has not already given us a bad press in the international media, since, so far, the generality of Ghanaians have demonstrated the best aspects of the legendary Ghanaian hospitality and conduct to ensure that our august visitors enjoy their stay here.

This sentence is typical of the sentence patterns prevalent in the editorials under study in this work, the denseness of the sentence made possible by piling up dependent clauses.

The choice of complex sentences, also, is significant. Complex sentences involve a hierarchical clause structure in a sentence. Therefore, by implication, using complex sentences indicates a hierarchical organization of information in the sentence – some ideas may be subordinated to some others. What we see in such sentences is that each independent clause may include one or more dependent clauses, each of which may in itself include another subordinate clause. This process of subordination means that the ideas are arranged in order of importance, with the main idea expressed in the independent clause, while the dependent clause expresses a minor idea.

The choice of the complex sentence ensures that, within a sentence, the main idea – expressed in the independent clause - is set apart from the supporting ideas – often expressed in the dependent clause(s). As a result, the reader is able to distinguish the important ideas from the supporting/extra ideas in a sentence.

For example, in the sentence below:

Whenever any disagreements have come up, the Electoral Commission has used dialogue for a consensus, without compromising its mandate as a truly independent body charged with the conduct of elections in Ghana.

we see that the most important idea in the sentence is expressed in the independent clause:

the Electoral Commission has used dialogue for a consensus

while the dependent clauses below provide supporting or additional information about the main idea:

whenever any disagreements have come up without compromising its mandate as a truly independent body charged with the conduct of elections in Ghana

This is what we mean when we say that sentence types selected are meant to aid tight package of information in a sentence.

In addition, the hierarchical relationship implied in this grammatical process of subordination enables the reader to rank the ideas in terms of their relative importance. We will use the following sentence to illustrate this point:

The Secretary-General of the Trades Union Congress meant well when he told participants at the Annual New Year School at Legon that, to help sanitize industrial relations practice in the country, there was the need to insist on the application of the laws and procedures of the National Labour Commission.

The most important idea is expressed in the independent clause:

The Secretary-General of the Trades Union Congress meant well

The next in rank in terms of importance is the idea expressed in the dependent clause:

when he told participants at the Annual New Year School at Legon

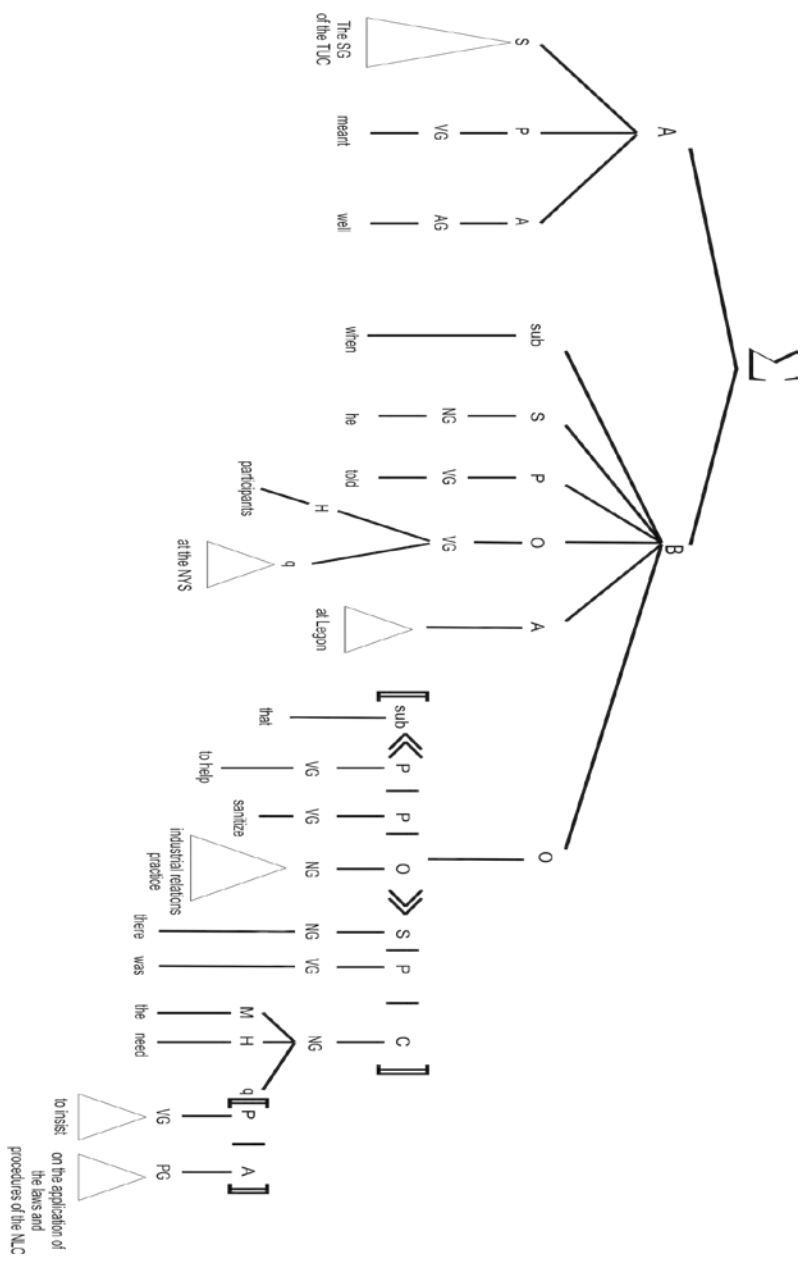
This clause provides information about the time the event stated in the main clause occurred. Ranking next below the above dependent clause, it provides information which is itself dependent on the information in the above cited dependent clause – it informs the reader about what the Secretary-General actually “told the participants at the Annual New Year School at Legon”

that . . . there was the need to insist on the application of the laws and procedures of the National Labour Commission

Finally, the clause below is itself dependent on the clause above since this latter clause tells the reader the purpose for the action suggested this earlier clause:

to help sanitize industrial relations practice in the country

These multiple dependency relationships are illustrated in the following diagram:



Using the letters of the alphabet to indicate this ranking of ideas (from the most important to the least important), the dependent clauses in the sentences will be identified as follows:

Clause A: *The Secretary-General of the Trades Union Congress meant well*

Clause B: *when he told participants at the Annual New Year School at Legon*

Clause C: *that. . .there was the need. . .*

Clause D: *to help sanitize industrial relations practice in the country*

Clause E: *to insist on the application of the laws and procedures of the National Labour Commission*

The important advantage about using structures with such multiple dependencies is that it enables the reader to recognize the degree of importance attached to each piece of information, a necessary procedure if the reader is to appreciate the import of each set of information. We find such a process repeated wherever there are multiple hierarchical dependencies in a sentence. It is manifested in the example below:

It is our hope that fans were also aware that the players they had vilified with extreme bitterness earlier were the same players they hailed as heroes in the all-night parties that hit most streets in the country yesterday.

Using the same alphabetical listing to indicate their relative hierarchical structure, we identify the relevant multiple dependencies as follows:

Clause A: *It is our hope*

Clause B: *that fans were also aware*

Clause C: *that the players . . . were the same players. . .*

Clause D₁: *they had vilified with extreme bitterness earlier*

Clause D₂: *they had hailed as heroes in the all-night parties*

Clause E: *that hit most streets in the country yesterday*

6. Patterns of Subordination

In grammatical studies, it is well-known that coordination and subordination are two principal means by which two structures are joined together. In our study, accordingly, we find examples of coordinated dependent clauses in the complex sentences below:

The DAILY GRAPHIC, while thanking Cadbury for its foresight and praising the company for its goodwill towards the country's

farmers, would plead with the administrators of the fund to disburse the money judiciously so that the target group – the farmers - will benefit from it.

Not only has it increased the producer price for farmers and regularly paid bonuses to farmers during the off-season, it has also sprayed their farms...

In the first example, we have the coordinated dependent clauses:

while thanking Cadbury for its foresight and praising the company for its goodwill towards the country's farmers

In the second sentence, we have the clauses:

Not only has it increased the producer price for farmers and regularly paid bonuses to farmers during the off-season

It must be mentioned, however, that sentences of this nature are rare in the editorials. This means that coordination is not a preferred process for joining clauses in the editorials. (This should not come as a surprise because, as we have pointed out, coordination even among independent clauses is not as popular). Sentence expansion using subordination among the dependent clauses is more common. These clause types are used to expand the information content within the sentence. In the choice of

dependent clauses, we note that there are two patterns of subordination - *adjunction* and *complementation*.

Adjunction involves adding circumstantial information about an event, i.e. time, reason, condition, etc. We find examples of clauses involving the use of adjunction subordination in the sentences below:

If we are not careful, the crisis could set the clock of progress backwards.

Though it is well below the minimum operating level, we are compelled to generate power from the dam.

On the other hand, complementation enables one to add information which seeks to explain, specify, define or identify an element in the sentence. Examples are found in the sentences below:

The other unintended concomitant could be an increase in imports which will, in the end, undermine local production.

We take consolation for the fact that, despite this initial problem of power, the impediment will be removed through a combination factors including the use of coal which could be imported from some African countries as a source of power.

From the examples cited above, we note that non-rankshifted clauses serve as adjuncts. Thus, we have the following clauses which are linked through the adjunction process:

If we are not careful Though it is well below the operating level

while rankshifted clauses serve as complements of certain elements in the complex sentence, examples of which we find below:

which will, in the end, undermine local production

that, despite this initial problem of power, the impediment will be removed through a combination of factors

which could be imported from some African countries as a source of power.

We can, thus, say that most sentences in the editorials are made up of configurations of rankshifted and non-rankshifted clauses.

Accordingly, in the data, we find the following forms of complex sentence:

1. a sentence in which there is one independent clause and only one non-rankshifted dependent clause:

But the legal framework can't guarantee law and order in society if members of the bench are not prepared to dispense justice without fear or favour.

Ever since Tetteh Quarshie brought the crop into the country as an economic commodity, many good things have flowed from it to the well-being of the country and its people.

2. a sentence which is made up of an independent clause and one rankshifted dependent clause:

The package which is in partnership with the COCOBOD will begin with the investment of \$600,000 into the cocoa sector this year.

We believe that every democratically-minded and peace-loving Ghanaian can feel relieved with this assurance.

3. a sentence in which we find an independent clause and more than one non-rankshifted clause only:

Because we are mindful of the huge benefits of the scheme, we have been wary about criticisms and we have exercised restraints whenever we have been compelled to comment on the implementation of the exercise.

Certainly, if we want to become self-sufficient in rice production, it is not beyond us, provided that it is made a principal objective for our farmers.

4. a sentence which is made up of an independent clause and more than one rankshifted clause only:

We therefore commend the President and his government for upholding the rule of law and respect for human rights to the extent that we can boldly say that despite whatever weaknesses or failures of government machinery in delivering on their promises, Ghanaians feel more comfortable and reassured.

Political leaders and their followers should remember that what they *should give to the people is rapid growth in all sectors of the economy.*

5. a sentence in which there is a combination of non-rankshifted and rankshifted clauses:

Having taken the presidential advice very seriously and having raised their game to a higher level yesterday, the Stars must have learnt the additional lesson that the same fans who stirred anger in certain quarters

by their criticism were the same fans who danced with them at the stadium and in the streets in their great and well-deserved victory over Morocco.

The non-rankshifted dependent clauses are:

having taken the presidential advice very seriously

having raised their game to a higher level yesterday

while the rankshifted dependent clauses are listed below:

that the same fans. . . were the same fans who stirred anger in certain quarters by their criticism who danced with them at the stadium and in the streets in their great and well-deserved victory over Morocco.

The table below presents figures for the above patterns of occurrence of the rankshifted and the non-rankshifted dependent types in the complex sentences:

6. Patterns of Subordination in Editorials

Sentence Type	Frequency	Percentage
Sentences with only one non-rankshifted clause	40	12.96
Sentences with only one rankshifted clause	69	22.22
Sentences with more than one non-rankshifted clause only	23	7.41
Sentences with more than one rankshifted clause only	103	33.33
Sentence with both non-rankshifted and rankshifted clauses	74	24.08
TOTAL	308	100.00

Based on these results, we can make the following observations:

- a) most of the complex sentences we find in the editorials have rankshifted clauses
- b) only a small number of non-rankshifted clauses occur in the editorials

There appears to be a conscious effort to create complex sentence forms. The implication of this observation is that the sentence of choice in editorial writing is the complex sentence which has multiple rankshifted dependent clauses. This deduction is supported by the fact that sentences made up of only rankshifted clauses constitute 55.55% of the choices. If we add the fact that there are, also, sentences with both rankshifted and non-rankshifted clauses (24.08%), then we can see that complementation (rather than adjunction) is the dominant subordination pattern.

In addition, since rankshifting enables a writer to pack details of identification, elaboration, definition, description, etc. into a single sentence, we can conclude this section by stating that

- a) the information in the editorials is highly packed,
- b) the information is tightly integrated, and

- c) there is a slant towards information density in this variety of English.

We must bear in mind that editorials rely on information to persuade. Thus, it is believed that the more detailed an editorial’s information content is, the more likely it is to achieve its objective. Thus, the assumption is: the more informative, the better. It seems, then, that the overall goal of language choices in the editorial has been to enable the writer to pack many ideas in each sentence. From the discussion above, this has been achieved, even if it has been done at a cost to comprehensibility and message absorption.

7. Types of Dependent Clause

Another important aspect of dependent clauses that we need to consider is the type of dependent clause that usually occurs in the sentence. In this study, we find that the whole range of dependent clauses can be found in the editorials under study, even though they occur in varying frequencies:

i. Dependent Clause Types

<u>Clause Types</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Relative Clauses	169	33.45
Nominal Clauses	143	28.26
Adverbial Clauses	125	24.71
Non-Finite Clauses	69	13.58
TOTAL	506	100.00

We note that the only clause type that exhibits adjunction subordination is the adverbial clause (24.71%). This means that there is a preponderant

preference for clauses which display complementation subordination (75.29%). This is an indication of the need to achieve information integration and information density, a goal which the other three clauses – relative, nominal, non-finite – are used to achieve in grammar.

Also, from the above figures, it is evident that three main types of clauses are of significant value in the choices that are made in the editorials. These are the relative, the nominal, and the adverbial clause types (which together constitute 86.42%). Thus, the discussion here will concentrate on these clauses. But, before then, we will briefly talk about the non-finite forms as they occur in the data.

ii. The Non-Finite Clause

To begin with, the editorials use two forms of non-finite clauses – the infinitival and the participial:

Types of Non-Finite Clause	Frequency	Percentage
Infinitival Clause	42	60.27
Participial Clause	27	39.73
TOTAL	69	100.00

As regards the infinitival forms, we note that they occur under three structural conditions. First, they may occur as qualifier to the Head within a Nominal Group:

Rice has become a staple for Ghanaians and any attempt *to increase its production locally* should be encouraged.

Since the EC has demonstrated enough capacity to *fulfil this mandate without fear or favour*. . .

In both examples, each infinitival clause is rankshifted within an NG as qualifier to the Head of the Group as follows:

In both examples, the infinitival clauses serve as Complement in their respective matrix clauses.

The use of these infinitival clauses has reinforced our observation that there is a strong preference for strategies that allow for the tight packaging of information in editorials in Ghana. As Chafe (1982) has remarked, the infinitival form is one device which is used if one wants to achieve information integration. This is because it allows for idea-unit expansion, which is similar to the function rankshifted nominal dependent clauses perform. The infinitival clause does at the group level what the nominal clause does at the clausal level. For, as we have seen from the discussion, these infinitival clauses serve as complements to nouns or adjectives and as elements in clauses structure. In all cases, the effect is to expand information in a single sentence.

The other non-finite clause type in the editorials is the participial clause. There are two structural contexts within which it occurs. In the first instance, the participial clause occurs as complement of the preposition in a PG which is itself rankshifted as qualifier in the NG:

We join the President to ask Cadbury to consider the possibility

of venturing into the processing of the beans in Ghana

The DAILY GRAPHIC finds it rather unfortunate . . . in our attempt at

bringing ourselves in tune with best practices in the management of facilities in the country.

The relevant rankshifted participial clauses are found in the structures below:

the possibility of venturing into the processing of the beans in Ghana

our attempt at bringing ourselves in tune with best practices in the management of facilities in the country.

Like the infinitival clause, this use of the participial clause has a defining function. It defines what the writer means by the use of the nouns possibility and attempt.

There is a second occurrence of the participial clause which is different from what we have discussed. Here, the participial clauses function as detached clauses (Thompson, 1983). The following are the only examples found in the data:

Having taken the presidential advice seriously and having raised their game to a higher level yesterday, the Stars must have learnt the additional lesson that. . .

Having done that, they looked for the resources to ensure that everyone worked towards the achievement of the vision.

Looking back on the past 50 years, we can see that . . . we should have attained greater achievement which we would be proud of.

Looking at the euphoria that has gripped Ghanaians . . . we can only hope that we have a sense of appreciation of what independence should mean.

In the end, we can say that all these non-finite clauses are additional devices used to enable the writer pack ideas into a single sentence. They allow us to expand, explain or define the information content in a discourse. Also, their use enables the writer to arrange ideas in a hierarchy. Since there are so many ideas, it is important to organise them in such a manner that the reader can appreciate their relative importance. The non-finite forms contribute to the realization of this goal.

iii. The Relative Clause

As we have pointed out in an earlier table, the relative clause is the most frequently used dependent clause in the editorials. It is the most preferred clausal device for idea-expansion. This is not surprising, if one remembers that the emphasis in this discourse-type is to give the reader as much information as possible as a persuasive technique.

Yet, according to Beaman (1984), there is a basis for this choice of the relative clause. It is a clause usually used for purposes of identification as well as to provide additional information about the noun it modifies. It must be noted, however, that the relative clause is not the only grammatical device for nominal post-modification – there are other structures like appositives, non-finite clauses, PGs, etc. But, for a more specific nominal reference, identification and/or expansion, it is the most preferred option in written discourse (Biber, 1986).

Not surprisingly, therefore, we find in our study that the full range of relative forms is used for the expansion and elaboration of information in the NG. We present this information in the table below:

<u>Relative Clause Types</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
WH – Relative Clause	109	64.87
WHIZ – relative Clause	23	14.19
THAT – Relative Clause	21	12.16
Pied Piping Relative Clause	15	8.78
TOTAL	169	100.00

With regard to the WH-relative clause in the study, we observe that we have the WH - pronouns occurring more frequently at subject position than at object position:

	Frequency	Percentage
Pronoun at Subject Position	87	79.44
Pronoun at Object Position	22	20.56
TOTAL	109	100.00

This means that a relative clause like what we find in the sentences below:

Apart from these, the crop has indirectly produced national edifices which are benefitting every Ghanaian who gets to them.

However, there are many social and critical practices which have conspired against their development

is more prevalent than what we find in the following examples

Also, the countries did not hesitate to borrow technology which they *considered critical towards accomplishing their objectives.*

There is the ordeal of Female Genital Mutilation *which young girls have to undergo.*

The two main types of WHIZ clauses are illustrated in the following examples:

. . .most of the people working in most homes as house-helpers or *domestic assistants* qualify a children. . .

It appears that those *entrusted with the responsibility.* . .do not appreciate the obligation. . .

These reduced relative clause forms are not as many as the WH-relative clauses. But, just like the WH-relative clauses, they are used for expansion

of information about the H in the NG. As a result, they are often used in supplying further information and, therefore, can be said to contribute to the abstract and compactly packed nature of the editorial discourse. They contribute greatly to information integration within a sentence.

The third type of relative structure found in the data is the THAT-relative clause. We have the following examples:

We believe that the Government should establish a system
*that demands high standards in performance from all
public
office holders.*

Socially, the feeling of nationalism *that the tournament has
engendered among our compatriots. . .*

It is clear from the findings that this relative clause type is not commonly used in the editorial. A possible reason one can offer is that it does not appear as formal as the WH-forms. Indeed, even the pied piping relative structures (though fewer in number in the data) appear more formal than the THAT- forms. For example, the pied piping forms below:

*We should have national objectives around which our
compatriots will rally. . .*

*We remind the players to consider the near-capacity
stadium in which they played . . .*

sound more formal than the structures in the following versions of the same sentences:

We should have national objectives *our compatriots will
rally around . . .*

We remind the players to consider the near-capacity stadium
they played in. . .

The obvious conclusion then is that the pied piping clauses are used in abstract and formal texts like editorials.

Before ending this discussion of the relative structures, we must point out the fact that there is no single occurrence of sentence relatives. Usually,

these relative forms function as comment clauses. They do not perform any identification role as all the other relative types do. For this reason, we think they have no place in an informational text as formal as the editorial. Therefore, they are, in our view, properly excluded from the data.

iv. The Nominal Clause

The nominal nature of editorial language is further reinforced by the profuse use of nominal clauses in the editorial texts we studied. From the texts, we identify two main types of nominal clauses. These are (a) nominal THAT-clauses and (b) WH- clauses. The frequency of their respective occurrence in the editorial texts is shown as follows:

Nominal Clauses in Editorials

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
THAT-clauses	115	80.42
WH-clauses	28	19.58
TOTAL	143	100.00

Examples of THAT-clauses are found in the sentences below:

The fact that one does not share the same political agenda with another person does not make him one's enemy.

We have maintained that the problem of energy must be tackled

with all seriousness

WH-clauses are found in the following examples:

We wonder why a machine as vital as the MRI could be installed

without a stabilizer for its protection against power fluctuation

That unfortunate omission is what has caused us this embarrassment

It is clear from the examples above that the preference in this discourse is for THAT-clauses. In the texts, these clauses serve as verbal, nominal, and adjectival complements – distributed as follows:

Types of THAT-clause

	Frequency	Percentage
Verbal Complements	70	60.87
Nominal Complements	27	23.48
Adjectival Complements	18	15.65
TOTAL	115	100.00

To begin with, we observe that clauses which serve as verbal complements dominate in the texts. That is, THAT-clauses occur more frequently after verbs than they do after nouns or adjectives. We have examples of such verbal complement clauses in the following sentences:

Without any fear of contradiction, we can say that cocoa is the backbone of the Ghanaian economy. . .

The DAILY GRAPHIC concedes that some house-helpers. . . have broken the vicious cycle of poverty, disease and squalor

In both cases, the dependent clauses act as object to the verb in the sentence.

It is important to state that using a clause in place of a Nominal Group is a device to expand the information content of the sentence. That is, the verbs which take such clausal complements are transitive and therefore can be followed by a Nominal Group as Object. For example, in the examples below:

The man has admitted *his guilt*

The man has admitted *that he actually stole the fowl*

In the first sentence, the NG- *his guilt* – serves as the object of the verb admitted. But in this sentence we do not know what constitutes *his guilt*. This means that in a sense the information is not quite ‘complete.’ However, if we select the nominal clause – *that he actually stole the fowl* – as the object of the verb, then this information is more complete, more detailed and more specific for the reader. This is precisely what is happening in the editorial texts. The preference for THAT-clauses (rather than NGs) is meant to achieve this goal of feeding the reader with detailed information as a means of persuading him/her.

In addition, we note that there are very few verbs which select the clausal complement and they fall into two subclasses:

a) **Verbs of assertion:** these are verbs which are used to make declarations or statements or propositions:

argue	establish	reveal
concede	indicate	say
convince	maintain	state
demonstrate	remind	tell

b) **Verbs of cognition:** these verbs describe internal mental processes:

believe	note
find out	realize
hope	recall
know	recognize
mean	remember
Mean	think

The verbs listed above all take THAT-clauses which function at object position. The clauses are used instead of an NG. In these cases, as a result, the clauses provide information which is more expansive and explanatory. With regard to THAT-clauses which function as complements in the Nominal Group, we have examples like the following sentences:

The DAILY GRAPHIC does not doubt the fact *that the problems we have, as a country, with mob justice are traceable to the ineffective justice system*

Fortunately, there are indications *that the economic fortunes of the country are better now*

As in the cases earlier cited, the nominal clause expands the information in the noun. Thus, for instance, the clause:

that the problems we have, as a country, with mob justice are traceable to the ineffective justice system

is an answer to the question - what fact does the DAILY GRAPHIC *not doubt?*

Similarly, the clause:

that the economic fortunes of the country are better now
answers the question – *what are the indications?*

In addition, we notice that, in relative terms, there are very few nouns which function this way in the editorials. These nouns may be sub-classified as follows:

a) Nouns which denote the mental frame of the writer

anticipation	hope
assurance	impression
determination	spirit
expectation	stance

b) Nouns which reflect emotional states

belief	feeling
desire	joy
doubt	

c) Nouns which describe

background	news
conclusion	pledge
fact	proposition
indication	suggestion

We will end this discussion of the nominal clause by remarking that, while both relative and these nominal clauses function as qualifiers in their respective NGs, there is a difference in their discourse functions. Information in the relative clause is identificational, but, in these nominal clauses information is elaborative.

From the data, we have Adjectival Groups in which THAT-clauses function as complements to the adjective:

Today, we are fortunate *that we are enjoying economic and political stability*.

It is important *that, as a nation, we take bold critical steps on our energy*.

The following types of adjectives occur in the data:

a) Adjectives which allow extraposition:

clear	important
encouraging	sad
good	true
heart-warming	

b) Adjectives which do not allow extraposition:

aware

fortunate

proud

sure

Just as we pointed out in our discussion of the Noun complements, these adjectival complements provide detailed explanatory information about the adjectives they qualify.

With regard to WH-interrogative clauses which perform the nominal functions of subject, object, complement, etc., we observe that they are all rankshifted as elements within the independent clause:

Socially, the feeling of nationalism that the tournament has engendered among our compatriots surpasses *what our participation in the 2006 World Cup in Germany brought up*.

What is important is that we may agree to disagree.

In the first sentence, for instance, the nominal clause functions as the object of the verb surpasses, while the WH-clause in the second example functions as the subject in the matrix verb is. Thus, instead of NGs, we rather have clauses performing these grammatical roles. There are different types of such clauses in the data. These are clauses which begin with the interrogators *what, why, where, how* and *whether*.

That unfortunate omission is *what has caused us this embarrassment*. . .

This explains *why we are happy to learn that Cadbury International . . . has announced a package*. . .

They set themselves the vision and mission to indicate *where they wanted to be at specific periods*.

The time has come for us to strategize carefully *on how to achieve this noble objective*.

We wonder *whether the cost of flying Paintsil to Nigeria . . . could not have catered for the purchase or repair of the parts . . .*

We shall end this discussion of the nominal clauses by observing that it is evident from the analysis that nominalizing processes dominate in the editorials. As we have seen, they occur in the non-finite clauses – infinitival and participial – as well as in the finite clauses (relatives, nominal- THAT and WH forms). All these dependent clauses have been selected because they have proved to be efficient devices for the expansion, explanation and integration of information within sentences.

We can, therefore, conclude that the language of these editorials is extremely nominal, as a result of the high frequency of nominal grammatical processes we have discussed here. Indeed, there is altogether the impression of a high abstract and informational denseness in this discourse.

v. Adverbial Clauses

These clauses are used as devices for relating circumstantial information in the texts. They provide information about the complex logical relations within a sentence – time, reason, purpose, etc. The distribution of the adverbial clauses in the data is as follows:

<u>Types</u>	Adverbial Clause Types	
	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Clause of Time	38	30.40
Clause of Purpose	27	21.60
Clause of Condition	23	18.40
Clause of Reason	22	17.60
Clause of Concession	09	7.20
Clause of Manner	04	3.20
Clause of Place	02	1.60
TOTAL	125	100.00

It is noted from the table above that the time adverbial clause is the most preferred in the editorials. It is the most common of the adverbial clauses in the texts. More significantly, however, there is a spread in the sub-types of time adverbial clauses. We note that there are clauses which use different time subordinators: *when*, *while*, *since*, *until* and *as*.

We can earn a lot from them and also create employment avenues for the teeming youth, only *when we add value to our primary produce*.

Some of these domestic servants are subjected to all forms of abuse – rape, defilement, long hours of work at home, *while some may provide extra support at such commercial joints as “chop bars” and drinking spots*.

Since the government of President Kufuor came into power in 2001, it has done a lot for the cocoa industry

However, because of the power problem, VALCO has been compelled to send many of the 700 employees home, *until it completes plans to generate its own energy*.

The need for calmness, mutual respect and positive support is even more crucial now *as the competition cruises into the knock-out stage*.

We must state, however, that the above clause sub-types do not occur in the same frequencies, as the table below shows:

Sub-Types of Time Adverbial Clauses

<u>Clause-Types</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>%</u>
Clauses with the subordinator when	17	44.74
Clauses with the subordinator while	10	26.32
Clauses with the subordinator since	05	13.16

Clauses with the subordinator until	03	7.90
Clauses with the subordinator as	03	7.90
TOTAL	38	100.02

As the evidence has shown, the next most frequent adverbial clause in the editorials is the clause of purpose:

We also join the President to ask Cadbury to consider the possibility of venturing into the processing of the beans in Ghana, *so that we can add value to the produce to enhance our development*

They monitored and evaluated all the programmes which had been instituted *in order to see whether everything was moving smoothly.*

There are only two subordinators that signal purposive grammatical relations: *in order to, so that.*

Sub-Types of Purpose Adverbial Clauses

Clauses with the subordinator <i>in order to</i>	17	62.96
Clauses with the subordinator <i>so that</i>	10	37.04
TOTAL	27	100.00

The clauses of condition have the following forms:

But the legal framework cannot guarantee law and order in society *if members of the bench are not prepared to dispense justice without fear or favour.*

The cocoa industry will receive a further boost if Ghanaians will patronize cocoa products such as chocolate on the National Chocolate Day.

Usually, such clauses of condition reflect the view of a person about a possible outcome – a conviction that something will most likely occur if a condition is fulfilled. The examples here all express open conditions which, unlike hypothetical conditions, do not convey one way or the

other whether the condition will be fulfilled or not. Indeed, as regards the hypothetical condition, this is what Quirk and others (1985: 1091) say:

A hypothetical condition, on the other hand, conveys the speaker's belief that the condition will not be fulfilled (for future condition), is not fulfilled (for present condition), or was not fulfilled (for past conditions), and hence the probable or certain falsity of the proposition expressed by the matrix clause.

This conditional stance of the writer (of a hopeful fulfilment) is usual in a persuasive effort. Thus, given that editorials are attempts at persuasion, it is not surprising that these types of conditional clauses – the likely condition - are selected, rather than the hypothetical or the impossible conditional types. This type of conditional clause is a marker of a belief in a specific course of action, provided a condition can be fulfilled.

There are, in addition, clauses of reason which are marked by the subordinators because and since:

In some cultures, because it is the man who pays the dowry, he sometimes tends to think he has absolute control over the woman.

Since we pride ourselves as an agricultural country, there is no earthly reason why we should not be able to feed ourselves.

The distribution of these subordinators is as follows:

Sub-Types of Reason Adverbial Clauses

Clauses with the subordinator since	12	54.55
Clauses with the subordinator because	10	45.45
TOTAL	22	100.00

It is important to remark that there are other adverbial clauses which occur in the editorials - clauses of concession, manner and place. But these types occur in insignificant numbers.

We will end the discussion of dependent clause-types by reiterating that subordination allows for expansion of information. Thus, we can say that editorial language uses this grammatical device as a means to pack as much additional information as possible for the reader. In the process, different types of dependent clauses are used to avoid tedium. For instance, we find, in the sentence below,

Those who have, at all times, found fault with the company's use of energy will talk about the repercussions of the closure and, for once, will realize that, apart from being a Ghanaian company, VALCO plays a vital role in the national economy.

- a) a relative clause which is a defining statement about the H- those:

who have, at all times, found fault with the company's use of energy

- b) a nominal clause as the object of the verb – *realize*, the clause gives the reader information about whatever it is people “will realise”:

that. . . VALCO plays a vital role in the national economy

- c) a participial clause which is actually serving as a comment clause rankshifted within a PG:

apart from *being a Ghanaian company*

It is clear that each dependent clause serves as an avenue for the expansion of important information. In addition, we observe that in the expansion process each dependent clause provides different types of information within the clause – addition, identification, definition, explanation or exemplification. We note, therefore, that the information one dependent clause may give will differ from what is given by another clause. This explains the choice of the different dependent clause types that we find in editorials. It is this process which enables the writer to squeeze, within a single sentence, a lot of information.

Conclusion

It is evident from this analysis that to writers of editorials the desire to influence opinions of readers through the use of information as a ‘weapon’ of persuasion is paramount. This has apparently necessitated the various processes we have just described which enable the pile-up of ideas in a single sentence. However, we need to point out that, in the attempt to include detailed information in a sentence, the reader’s comprehension and absorption of the message is neglected. As Glenn and Gray (2007) have noted, too much detail within a single sentence is likely to hinder a reader’s apprehension of the message. For, most likely, the reader may lose sight of the point of the editorial. We can see evidence of this observation in the sentence below:

It is against this ominous background that we find the assurance by the Electoral Commission that its resolve to ensure clean and incident-free elections will not be impeded by financial constraints very heart-warming.

Indeed, the hierarchical structure of the dependent clauses in the sentence above can be cumbersome and, ultimately, impede comprehension. The difficulty has arisen because (a) the nominal clause below

*that we find the assurance by the Electoral Commission. .
. very
heart-warming*

has been interrupted by two other dependent clauses – a nominal and an infinitival –

that its resolve . . . will not be impeded by financial constraints

and

to ensure clean and incident-free elections

The multiple dependency relations expressed in the rankshifts above have to be resolved first if there is to be any meaningful interpretation of the sentence. Indeed, the clause

to ensure clean and incident-free elections

can make some sense only if it is realised that it is embedded in the subject of the next higher-ranked clause as follows:

that its resolve \llbracket to ensure clean and incident-free elections \rrbracket
will not be impeded by financial constraints

Next, the above combination must be embedded in the following clause
*that we find the assurance by the Electoral Commission. . . very
heart-warming*

This will now produce the following:

that we find the assurance by the Electoral Commission \llbracket ₂*that its
resolve* \llbracket ₃*to ensure clean and incident-free elections* \rrbracket ₃ *will not
be impeded by financial constraints*₂ \rrbracket *very heart-warming*₁ \rrbracket

Lastly, we place the above structure as a rankshifted element in the independent clause:

It is against this ominous background

This will give us the final sentence:

It is against this ominous background \llbracket ₁*that we find
the assurance by the Electoral Commission* \llbracket ₂*that its
resolve* \llbracket ₃*to ensure clean and incident-free elections*
 \llbracket ₃*will not be impeded by financial constraints* \rrbracket ₂ \rrbracket *very
heart-warming*₁ \rrbracket

Given this tortuous process in unravelling these intricate relationships within one sentence, it is a wonder if anybody can be encouraged to read the editorial, much less be persuaded by its message. Not surprisingly, therefore, not many Ghanaian readers of newspapers bother to read the editorial column. For it is clear that as more information is stacked into a sentence, the language becomes increasingly complex, dense and difficult to understand. Expectedly, many readers have found the language of editorials quite heavy-laden and unwieldy.

We can surmise from the discussion of these editorials that there are two principal goals which have guided the linguistic choices made in the texts - expansion of ideas and compression (or compactness) of information. These two basic goals have been achieved through the grammatical processes of complementation and adjunction in the dependent clauses we have analyzed. Complementation involves subordination and rankshifting. Thus, in the study, we observe that there are several instances of complementation, because it allows for not only expansion but also compactness. As a result, the study has revealed that rankshifting occurs quite frequently in the nominal structures. We find rankshifted clauses in the choice of the relative clause, the appositive clause, and the non-finite clause types which all serve as complements to their respective Head-words or as elements at nominal positions within the clause. There are, as a result, a lot of rankshifted structures in the texts, an indication of efforts to elaborate on idea units and, at the same time, compress information in a tight manner. These nominalization processes have made texts extremely nominal in nature.

Adjunction involves only subordination. It is not a rankshifting process. Thus, the relationship is not as tight as it is with rankshifting. This is why Radford (1988) has pointed out that complements are closer to their Head-words than adjuncts are. But, adjunction is a unit-expanding process, so we find it in the selection of the adverbial and conditional clauses in the texts. It is evident, then, that the more complementation processes there are in a sentence, the more compact the information packaging is. But as has been stated, the reader is likely to find the information quite complex, abstract and unwieldy.

We wish to end this study with the observation that there is little doubt that a Ghanaian variety of English is very much part of the expanded community of English users worldwide. Indeed, it is clear from studies of New Englishes that there is ‘a richness of sociological indices within these variations.’ Ghanaian English, as a living language, displays such variations just as well as other varieties of the language do. It is our view that these variety indices in the Ghanaian dialect have not been fully investigated. We hope, therefore, that this work will stimulate enough linguistic interest to explore them and study Ghanaian English in more detail. We agree with Schneider (2003: 233), when he states that the English Language in the world is

...currently growing roots in a great many countries and communities around the world, being appropriated by local speakers and, in that process, it is diversifying and developing new dialects.

Ghanaian English is one of such newly developing dialects, and it is through studies of this nature that it can take its place on the linguistic map of World Englishes.

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