



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

***PATTERNS OF RHETORICAL MOVES AND USE OF HEDGES AND
BOOSTERS IN EDITORIALS OF TWO NEWSPAPERS***

SAHAR ZARZA

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**PATTERNS OF RHETORICAL MOVES AND USE OF HEDGES AND
BOOSTERS IN EDITORIALS OF TWO NEWSPAPERS**

By

SAHAR ZARZA

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, in
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

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Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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May 2016

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An editorial in a newspaper is a popular genre targeting general public as its discourse community. It plays an influential role as it presents the official position of the newspaper on a topic that is considered to be of particular societal importance. To carry the message through effectively to the public, the editors' awareness of the generic prototypical pattern and rhetorical moves employed in editorial writings is essential, yet few studies have been done to investigate the rhetorical structure of editorials and determine their persuasive style. Furthermore, despite the effective functions of hedges and boosters in persuading readers, studies that address them are limited. Based on the belief that each writing genre has its own unique rhetorical conventions and linguistic features to engage its readers, this study aims to compare the generic characteristics and the use of hedges and boosters in the editorials of *The New York Times (NYT)* and *New Straits Times (NST)*. The reason for choosing these two newspapers was that both, the *NYT* and *NST* are among the most circulated, largest and oldest newspapers in the USA and in Malaysia. They similarly have daily editorials that provided sufficient number of data and are not devoted to a particular field like business (e.g., Wall Street). To realize the objectives, a mixed method was adopted in the study to investigate both at the macro and micro levels of the 240 (*NYT*: n=120; *NST*: n=120) randomized editorials which were published in 2013. The qualitative analysis provided an in depth examination of the use of the various rhetorical moves and steps as well as the function and linguistic realizations of hedges and boosters that were present in the two different corpora of editorials. To complement the qualitative analysis, the quantitative analysis sought to compare and contrast the frequency of use of both the rhetorical moves and the use of hedges and boosters in both types of editorials. The findings revealed that American and Malaysian editorials share a similar macro-structure at the move level including four obligatory moves. However, at the step level of all the moves, evidences of significant disparity of the style of writing were apparent. The results revealed higher density of steps that provide information (e.g., *Addressing issue*, *Elaborating issue*, *Explaining*) in the *NST* and higher density of those steps that illustrate the writer's stance (e.g., *Presenting standpoint*, *Evaluating*, *Raising suggestion* and *Expressing prediction*) in the *NYT*. These differences indicate that the *NYT* editorials are mostly independent and evaluative, while the *NST* editorials are more informative. Moreover, at the micro-level the results revealed that both types of newspapers prefer the use of hedges to boosters in editorials. Furthermore, it was revealed that hedges in

the *NYT* editorials were less frequent than their Malaysian counterpart, while boosters in the *NYT* were more frequently used than in the *NST*. This reveals that it is a convention in editorials to be tentative in expressing their view point, while in comparison *NYT* seems to be more bold, and certain in expressing its stance than *NST* that is more tentative. These differences could indicate cultural and contextual preferences in employing one category rather than another. In addition, in the *NYT* hedges and boosters were predominantly found in the third move (Justifying or refuting events) while in the *NST* move three (Justifying or refuting events) was prevalently hedged and boosters were predominantly found in the last move (Articulating position). Moreover, in both the *NYT* and *NST* *Elaborating issue* in move two, *Explaining* in move three and *Raising suggestion* in move four were the steps in which the most hedges and boosters were identified. This distribution could be due to the nature and communicative purpose of each move. To conclude, the study of hedges and boosters in the rhetorical moves of editorials is important as it would have significant pedagogical contribution especially in ESP writing classes.

Abstrak tesis yang dibentangkan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan ijazah Doktor Falsafah.

**PATEN GERAKAN RETORIK DAN PENGGUNAAN PEMANGKAS DAN
PENGALAK DALAM RUANGAN EDITORIAL DUA BUAH SURAT
KHABAR**

Oleh

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Ruangan editorial yang terdapat dalam sesebuah surat khabar merupakan genre popular yang menasaskan orang awam sebagai komuniti wacananya. Bahagian ini memainkan peranan yang berpengaruh kerana ia membawa kedudukan rasmi bagi sesebuah surat khabar mengenai sesuatu topik yang dianggap membawa kepentingan kemasyarakatan tertentu. Dalam menyampaikan mesej secara efektif kepada orang awam, kesedaran editor tentang paten prototipikal generik dan gerakan retorik yang digunakan dalam penulisan editorial adalah penting, namun kurang kajian telah dijalankan bagi meneliti struktur retorik bahagian editorial tersebut dan juga bagi menentukan stail pembujukan tersebut. Di samping itu, walaupun terdapat fungsi pemangkas dan penggalak yang efektif untuk memujuk pembaca, kajian mengenai ini adalah terhad. Berdasarkan kepercayaan yang menyatakan bahawa setiap genre penulisan mempunyai konvensyen retorik uniknya yang tersendiri dan ciri-ciri linguistik bagi melibatkan pembacanya, kajian ini bertujuan untuk membandingkan karakteristik generik dan penggunaan pemangkas dan penggalak yang terdapat dalam bahagian editorial bagi surat khabar, *The New York Times (NYT)* dan *New Straits Times (NST)*. Justifikasi bagi pemilihan kedua-dua surat khabar ialah surat khabar tersebut merupakan akhbar yang paling banyak tersebar, paling besar dan akhbar tertua di USA dan di Malaysia. Di samping itu, akhbar tersebut mempunyai editorial harian yang menyediakan bilangan data yang mencukupi dan amat berdedikasi pada bidang tertentu, seperti perniagaan (contoh, *Wall Street*). Bagi merealisasikan objektif tersebut, kaedah campuran telah diterima pakai dalam kajian ini untuk menyelidiki kedua-dua tahap makro dan mikro bagi 240 editorial yang dipilih secara rawak (NYT: n=120; NST: n=120) yang telah diterbitkan pada tahun 2013. Analisis kualitatif telah menyediakan penelitian yang mendalam terhadap penggunaan pelbagai gerakan retorik serta langkah, di samping fungsi dan realisasi linguistik bagi pemangkas dan penggalak yang wujud dalam dua korpora editorial yang berbeza. Untuk mengkomplementasi analisis kualitatif, analisis kuantitatif akan membandingkan dan mengkontraskan frekuensi penggunaan kedua-dua langkah retorik dan penggunaan pemangkas dan penggalak dalam kedua-dua jenis editorial. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa editorial Amerika dan Malaysia berkongsi makrostruktur yang sama pada tahap gerakan, termasuk empat gerakan obligatori. Walau bagaimanapun, pada tahap langkah semua gerakan, bukti yang memperlihatkan dispariti yang signifikan bagi stail penulisan adalah ketara. Dapatan kajian

menunjukkan densiti langkah yang lebih tinggi yang menyediakan maklumat (mengemukakan isu, memperincikan isu, menjelaskan) dalam NST dan densiti langkah yang lebih tinggi yang menerangkan pendirian (contoh, mempersembahkan sudut pandangan, menilai, mengemukakan cadangan dan ramalan) dalam NYT. Perbezaan tersebut menunjukkan bahawa editorial NYT kebanyakannya adalah independen dan bersifat menilai, manakala editorial NST lebih informatif. Lebih-lebih lagi, pada tahap mikro, keputusan kajian menunjukkan bahawa kedua-dua jenis surat khabar mengutamakan penggunaan pemangkas daripada penggalak dalam ruangan editorial. Kajian ini juga mendapati bahawa pemangkas dalam editorial NYT adalah kurang kerap digunakan berbanding dengan rakan Malaysia mereka, manakala penggalak dalam NYT adalah lebih kerap digunakan berbanding dengan NST. Hal ini menunjukkan bahawa terdapat konvensi dalam editorial yang bersifat tentatif dalam mengemukakan pandangan mereka, manakala, apabila dibandingkan NYT lebih bersifat berani dan yakin dalam mengemukakan pendirian mereka daripada NST yang lebih bersifat tentatif. Perbezaan ini memperlihatkan bahawa keutamaan budaya dan kontekstual dalam menggunakan satu kategori daripada kategori yang lain. Di samping itu, pemangkas dan penggalak dalam NYT adalah lebih banyak didapati dalam gerakan ketiga (peristiwa menjustifikasi dan penyangkalan), manakala dalam gerakan tiga NST (peristiwa menjustifikasi dan penyangkalan) pemangkas dan penggalak adalah prevalen dan lebih banyak dalam gerakan terakhir (kedudukan artikulasi). Kajian ini juga mendapati bahawa dalam kedua-dua NYT dan NST, isu elaborasi dalam gerakan dua, iaitu penerangan dalam gerakan tiga dan cadangan peninggian dalam gerakan empat merupakan langkah yang menyebabkan pemangkas dan penggalak telah dikenal pasti. Distribusi ini mungkin disebabkan oleh sifat dan tujuan komunikatif setiap langkah. Sebagai kesimpulan, kajian pemangkas dan penggalak yang dalam langkah retorik adalah penting kerana ia mempunyai sumbangan pedagogi yang signifikan, terutama dalam kelas penulisan ESP.

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I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on 09 May 2016 to conduct the final examination of Sahar Zarza on her thesis entitled "Patterns of Rhetorical Moves and Use of Hedges and Boosters in Editorials of Two Newspapers" in accordance with the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U.(A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the Doctor of Philosophy.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ESL	English as a Second Language
ESP	English for Specific Purpose
EAP	English for Academic Purpose
L1	First Language
NYT	New York Times
NST	New Straits Times
TT	Tehran Times

advised to follow specific rules, such as those that pertain to the value of news, the sources they should choose the news from, as well as governing features of a variety of news genres (Tuchman, 1978).

In having to inform the public, newspaper discourse is an adequate example of persuasive writing (Connor, 1996). To achieve its objectives, a typical newspaper uses a variety of sub-genres such as news stories, opinions, advertisements and others. Among them, the editorial is one of the genres of opinion discourse and is considered the most powerful and the most discursive among them. Schaffer, McCutcheon and Stofer (1998) label editorials as the ³YRLFH RI WKHTQSHZUM SeDseHdHe DUWLFXODWLRQV RI WKH QHZV SdsHlls.¶ V VWDQFH RU SRVLV

The editorials are considered as the most prestigious journalistic text types written by H[SHULHQFHG VHQLRU MRXUQDOLVWV LQ ZKLFK WKH Q beliefs are competently displayed (Maddalena & Belmonte, 2011). Editorials, known as leaders or leading articles, are a public discourse that communicates with a mass audience and play an obvious role in the determining and shifting of public opinion (van Dijk, 1996). This is due to the fact that editorials have the freedom to express their opinions on current issues which form core arguments in society. This said, it must also EH HPSKDV L]HG WKDW WKH OHDGHU RU HGLWRI DO RI D C a point of view. In the case of many papers, this official voice is aligned to the QHZV SdsHlls.¶ ed policy and leanings.

As such, while the editorial writers may have the freedom to select their stance, it has to be one in harmony with the said established policy and leanings. It means that, editorial opinion is generally institutional, not personal; therefore, editorials are usually unsigned.

Additionally, editorials are realized as a particular type of written argumentation and ³SHUKDSV PRUH WKDQ DQ\ RWKHU W\SH RI ZULWELQJ UHIOH SHUVXOCvlnr,Q1996, p.143). In other words, as editorials convey the official position of a newspaper on a socially crucial and current topic, they are supposed to contain a significant persuasive value (Sheldon, 2009). The goal of manipulation and influencing a wide readership through a plausible stance makes editorials to be categorized among those texts whose primary function is persuasive and argumentative (Van Dijk, 1992) and editorial is ranked among the most persuasive texts within the newspaper discourse. Editorials usually present various points of view and WKH\ ³VHHN to convince the reader of the advisability or likelih RRG RI RQH RI WKHP´ % LEHU p.148).)XUWKHUPRUH &RQRU PDLQWDLQV WKDW ³*RR some of the best examples of persuasive writing in all countries; they set standards for ZULWWHQ SHU,¶X4)VLRQ´

Persuasion is an important aspect of communication on both the personal and public levels, as Littlejohn and Jabusch (1987) put it. Indeed, persuasion is today the keynote of public decision making in our society. It is one of the most important means of creating and affecting choices in both public and private life. It marks media

communication, workplace interaction, and family relations. Persuasion is a natural and unavoidable part of our human condition. (1987, p.2). Perloff (1993) define persuasion as follows:

persuasion is an activity or process in which communicator attempts to induce a change in the belief, attitude, or behavior of another person or group of persons through the transmission of a message in a context in which the persuadee has some degree of free choice. (1993, p.14)

Sometimes argument and persuasion are considered as two distinct categories where in real life situations, however, this distinction is hard to maintain where speakers use a mixture of persuasive devices including use of logic, emotional and ethical appeals to convince audience. This study will use the term argument to refer to process of convincing audience to accept the credibility. Therefore, the terms argument and persuasion are used in this study interchangeably.

Persuasive writing in order to accomplish their persuasive effects need to provide logical lines of reasoning, arguments based on the structure of reality, offering argumentation by example, illustration and model. Also comparisons, facts and statistics, and cause and effect examples fall into this category. These strategies are used in persuasive writing. This study will use the term argument to refer to process of convincing audience to accept the credibility. Therefore, the terms argument and persuasion are used in this study interchangeably.

Hence, to be able to effectively express their ideas, editors should take extreme care in the use of their strategies in convincing their audience. Due to its powerful role in the public sphere, the manner of sequencing the arguments plays a pivotal role in defending opinions containing conflicting viewpoints (Van Dijk, 1992). The manner of sequencing the argument can be seen in the various moves and steps that determine the structure of editorials. The editors use purposeful structuring of their ideas through various moves and steps, and helps to achieve the communicative purpose of persuasion which is the main role of editorial writing. The writers of argumentative texts have to be careful about structure, content and the use of linguistic devices during their process of composing. In an argumentative discourse, the arguments are not just based on proving factual knowledge but the facts are indeed provided to support the subjective views, judgments, evaluations, beliefs and opinions of the writer.

Moreover, arguments have to be constructed by keeping in mind the expectations of audience as the main purpose of such type of discourse is to influence and convince the readers through the use of various linguistic devices. It is thus necessary to approach

explicit identification of participants in the argumentation from a functional, and not just a structural perspective. The concept of metadiscourse provides relevant categories in this regard. An essential notion in argumentative writing (Crismore and Farnsworth, 2004) is the use of metadiscourse markers such as *Evidentials* or *attributions* as metadiscourse markers could be useful to reinforce an use of boosters that show certainty of writer of what is expressed. Besides, hedges are also metadiscourse markers in which *persuasion* is realized. Hedges represent the writer due to his/her integrity and honesty. It seems, thus, that the key to an effectively persuasive text is the artful combination of weakening expressions (i.e. hedges) and strengthening ones (i.e. certainty markers and/or attitudinal markers) with the final intention of producing a discourse that is neither too assertive nor too vague (Dafouz, 2008).

The use of metadiscourse in writing and particularly in editorial writing is based on the view that writing is a social engagement. Its use, particularly the use of hedges and boosters attitudes and commitments toward both the propositional content and the audience of writing. Therefore, an adpt use of these pragmatic linguistic devices is crucial for successful writing of editorials as such linguistic devices help editors to negotiate interactional meanings in a text and to express a view point and engage with readers as members of a particular community (Hyland, 2005a). Therefore, drawing on the afore-going discussion, it can be said that metadiscourse use is considered as an essential element in the editorial genre. Although there are many devices under metadiscourse (e.g., engagement, self-mention, attitude markers) that shape an argument, and may create opposite effects from those of the hedges and boosters in the editorials, this study only focuses on hedges and boosters as means used by editorials in their persuasive writing. Such a specific analysis has implications for the strength of the conclusions reached. It is because the findings highlight the role of commitment of the editor in the expressing of proposition and interaction with the reader. And as interaction is an essential feature in providing an acceptable and persuasive argumentative writing, it is useful to analyze the use of hedges and boosters specifically. Studying specifically these two features provides different categories of their function and linguistic realizations that could be helpful to find out how writers use these elements to persuade their readers.

Studying various genres, however, is more effective if carried out in cross-cultural settings, the importance of which has been highlighted by various researchers (e.g., Bolivar, 1994; Bhatia, 1993, 2004). The writers across cultures argue and position themselves differently when presenting their point of view to achieve their goals. The argumentative strategies among culture hosting a number of ethnic groups practicing different religions, for example, is expected to be more indirect to avoid confrontation

among various races as compared to homogeneous cultures where one religion or one ethnic group is dominant. In fact the approach has been considered as essential one to achieve some depth in the findings. Since writers across cultures argue and position themselves differently when presenting their point of view to achieve their goals, a structural analysis of editorials to expose the argumentative strategies across cultures would be a useful endeavor for English for Specific Purposes (ESP). The current study is concerned with the structural analysis of newspaper editorials from USA and Malaysia.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Although the editorial is an explicit case of persuasive writing and it sets standards for written persuasion for a specific purpose (Ansari and Babai, 2005), expecting the audience to accept the presented ideas very easily is not rational. Therefore, in order to style is very essential. Furthermore, to succeed, writers should be able to generate a reliable textual persona or *ethos* and provide a suitable attitude toward their audience and whatever they claim. Hence, a careful description of and use of lexico-grammatical features such as metadiscourse markers that construct

Additionally, in contrast to the new comers to the journalistic world and genre, expert writers are likely to face fewer problems. It is due to their intertextual knowledge of to produce an understandable and persuasive text. Expert writers are also able to appropriately apply the conventions of the genre to successfully engage the readers and However, Kaplan (1984) believes that it is a fallacy to expect a good non-native writer of English to write texts in English as effectively as in their first language. There is a difference between English persuasive rhetoric and the native culture, and the use of target language varieties. Unawareness of the existence of these differences brings about a specific rhetoric and sequence of thought which may not be in line with what the native reader expects to encounter. This means that there are some institutional, intertextual and cultural constraints which could lead writers to the use of particular patterns of interaction which may not facilitate interpretations as expectations may differ. The conventions and patterns of the genre the writers are writing in, affect different aspects of interaction. For instance, whether the writers decide to establish an equal or hierarchical position to a particular political or social group and government, the writers may involve or isolate themselves from the stance, or to be convivial or indifferent to the issue (Hyland, 2002). Therefore, comparing the style and structure of editorials written by English and non-English writers from different cultures brings about useful understandings of the differences in rhetorical patterning. It familiarizes the readers with the institutional, intertextual and cultural conventions that affect the interaction and interpretations and this would be helpful for both the writers and the readers of editorials especially when information transcends borders. A comparative study on texts from two different cultures creates a balance of knowledge and information by finding out the language similarities and dissimilarities. Cultures apart from British and American, with their own terminologies and practices might be neglected if they are not studied and introduced to others. Thus, there would be a loss

in professional registers in many natured culture (Swales, 2000). This research would like to address this problem and argues that the writing of non-native speakers should be included lessening this knowledge gap in order to maintain a balance in information dissemination. This will enrich our understanding of the use of English in international editorial contexts including those in English-speaking countries. With this in mind, a contrastive study of editorial writing in English between different countries (i.e. USA and Malaysia in this study) is a valuable step towards this aim.

IRWLFHDEO\ WKH HGLWRULDO¶V SHUVXDVLVYHQHV V UHT
consciously to strengthen the relationship between the writer and the reader by the use of interactional devices. Williams (1981) mentioned that argumentatively written texts (e.g. editorials) involve metadiscourse markers, especially the interactional types. Therefore, the writers would need to be sensitive to the use of interactional metadiscourse features such as hedges, boosters, attitude markers, self-mentions and engagement markers. Among these, hedges and boosters are essential interactional metadiscourse features for writers to clarify their epistemic stance and position related to the writer-reader interaction. Furthermore, the writer in skillfully using hedges and boosters, besides determining his/her epistemic stance toward both the content and expected audience, provides the condition for himself/herself to be considered as a qualified member of the discourse community (Hyland, 1998a, 2005a). These features affeFW WKH MXGJPHQW RI UHGDGHUV RI WKH ZULWHU¶V
professionally the writer makes a balance between caution and confidence. For LQVWDQFH D ZULWHU¶V FODLPV LQ D WH[W ZLWKRXW KH
aggressive (Williams, 1981). Therefore, exploring the use of hedges and boosters in the editorial to provide a better insight into how these essential features are used and how they influence the readers, seems essential in the field of linguistic explorations.

In addition, in relation to pedagogy, the relevance of such studies is to aid students who may wish to enter the media profession. Findings from research on editorials as a professional genre is definitely useful for novice readers and general readers. Editorials serve as a powerful agency of a public voice and they are read daily (Ansari & Babai, 2005). Text deconstruction helps novice writers to learn from expert writing and improve their own writing. Usually, most novice writers are not aware of the conventions of different genres, the interactants, and their aims; why the texts should be written in a particular way they are written and how they function. In this regard, %KDWLD S DSWO\ SRLQWV RXW WKDW IJUDPPDWL
EHHQ JLYHQ WKH PRVW LPSRUWDQW SODFH´ LQ WKH WHDI
competence, despite its importance for language learning has always been ignored. Thus, training such student writers to write in the editorial genre would be important. In the same vein, Street (1999) believes in the importance of determining explicit genre instruction, and identifying problems that the structural variety of different genres could cause for students in understanding and writing different types of texts. He mentioned the importance of focusing on genre in pedagogy to assist learners to realize the relationship between schematic structures, linguistic features, and social context and purpose.

Research on discourse abounds; however, currently there is a shift in the focus from analyzing literary and academic discourses to more specific and professional discourses. For instance, the study of law reports (Badger, 2003), company replies to customer inquiries (Van Mulken & Van der Meer, 2005), tax computation letters (Flowerdew & Wan, 2006), corporate earnings calls (Cho & Yoon, 2013), letters of recommendation (Precht, 1998), Advertorial (Zhou, 2012), spam mails (Barron, 2006), and cover letters (Crossley, 2007). Despite these wide ranging discourses that have been under study, editorials which attract a very wide readership have not been given enough attention in applied linguistics studies. The genre is still largely ignored (see Y D Q ' L M N \$ Q V D U L % D E D L L D Q G ³ A B C I G H U V W X G I 2005, p.147). Applied linguistics studies on this neglected genre are scarce and also it appears that there are relatively few serious published researches especially at the micro-level such as on the use of metadiscourse in (English) editorials. Studies have been limited to research such as those by Le (2004) who investigated *evidentials*, *person markers*, and *relational markers* in newspaper editorials, and by Khabazzi (2012) and Kuhl and Mojood (2014) who did an investigation of all interactional metadiscourse markers in magazine and newspaper editorials. So far only Tahririan and Shahzamani (2009) specifically investigated the use of hedges in the editorials. Besides, to the best of W K H U H V H I D O L E K H O U S T Y so far has been conducted to investigate the function of hedges and boosters and their linguistic realizations in various rhetorical moves of the editorials. Finally, a comparative study of the structure of newspaper from two different cultures is scarce. In this study, American and Malaysian editorials are compared in terms of their style and conventions of writing and in hedging and boosting their statements which has not been investigated before. The current study thus aims to fill the gap in research by comparing the structures of editorials and their use of hedges and boosters in two Malaysian and American mainstream newspapers.

1.3 Purposes of the Study

As mentioned above, this study aims to analyze editorials of two mainstream newspapers from two different cultures using the approach of genre analysis. In detail, the current study is guided by the following objectives:

- i) To investigate the rhetorical structure of the editorials of two newspapers sourced from the United States and Malaysia, namely *The New York Times* (*NYT*), and *New Straits Times* (*NST*). The analysis at the macro-level, is to determine the patterning of the generic structure (moves and steps). It also investigates the possible similarities and differences of the schematic structure of the editorials from two different newspapers written in English which can be classified as a professional non-academic/public genre.
- ii) To analyze the communicative functions of different moves and steps and how they persuade readers of the editorials in the *NYT* and *NST* newspapers. In so doing, it elaborates on the linguistic realizations of the identified moves and steps in the editorials to provide insights into the similarities and differences of the rhetorical patterning.
- iii) To examine the frequency of hedges and boosters in the editorials of the *NYT* and *NST* as a key metadiscourse feature.

- iv) To explore the persuasive function and linguistic realization of hedges and boosters in the editorials of the *NYT* and *NST*. These features will throw light on the manner of the persuasive discourse as the editorials attempt to convince their audience of their point of view.
- v) To determine the distribution of hedges and boosters in each rhetorical move and step of the editorials of the *NYT* and *NST*. This will display the distribution of hedges and boosters in the rhetorical moves as strategies taken by the writers of the editorials in text development.

1.4 Research Questions

To achieve the purposes of this comparative study (see Section 1.3), the following research questions were framed:

1. What is the rhetorical structure of editorials in the *NYT* and *NST* in terms of:
 - (a) Frequency of occurrence of moves and steps
 - (b) Communicative function and linguistic realization of moves and steps and their persuasive strategies in the *NYT* and *NST*
2. What are the patterns of hedges and boosters in the editorials of the *NYT* and *NST* in terms of:
 - (a) Frequency of the use of hedges and boosters in the editorials of the *NYT* and *NST*.
 - (b) Functions and linguistic realizations of hedges and boosters and their persuasive strategies in the editorials of the *NYT* and *NST*.
3. How is the distribution of hedges and boosters in the rhetorical moves different or similar in the editorials of the *NYT* and *NST*?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies firstly in filling the gap in the literature review on research on the genre of editorials. Secondly, it is important in adding to the knowledge about the use of the lexico-grammatical elements that accompany the schematic structure of editorials. The current study thus offers an empirical examination both at the macro and micro level of the editorials. The results of this study would help clarify strategies adopted by writers of editorials that reveal relative positioning adopted by the writers in conveying their respective persuasive discourse. The moves of a genre are considered essential units (Dudley-Evans, 1994) that function as building blocks in text construction. Understanding the functions will help to train novice writers on how to effectively produce texts in the editorial genre that contributes significantly to public opinion.

While editorials are not considered as an academic genre which may have more generalizable use, it is a professional genre that deserves attention especially in its utility for ESP (English for Specific Purposes) and ESL (English as a Second Language) classes (Bhatia, 1993). Its pedagogical implication was supported by Connor (1996) who stated that editorial usage of standard linguistic forms makes them a suitable reference for learning persuasive written texts, which is common in academic discourse. Hence, as academic texts are persuasive and argumentative in nature, the HGLWRULDO¶V VWUHQGLQJ RI WKH QSDO metadiscourse markers could provide alternative forms of persuasive strategies for writing in academic contexts. In addition, the strategies of persuasion in editorials could be useful for improving the awareness of conventions in academic persuasive genres like argumentative essays and sections of research articles which may require writers to persuade readers of their propositions.

Moreover, this study provides important information about the use of metadiscourse by newspapers editors and it creates awareness of these elements in persuasive editorial writing, a neglected genre in the literature of metadiscourse investigation. The evidence in terms of hedges and boosters and their existence or non-existence provides input for teaching and learning of the persuasive genre and editorial in particular (ESP).

The study also contributes significantly in familiarizing writers both native and non-native, to the rhetorical and metadiscoursal skills of QHZVSDSHU. Through a WRUV comparison, writers may become aware of social constraints that play a role in how propositions are forwarded. In turn, language students and readers get to be equipped with strategies that contribute to the uncovering of unspoken, or implicit opinion and meaning making that deviate from mere conveyance of the literal meaning of the text.

In short, rhetorical consciousness will help writers to improve their writing as an ongoing process. Consequently, it enhances their professional achievement and empowers them with writing knowledge to express ideational and interpersonal meaning well.

1.6 Theoretical Underpinning

In order to achieve the stated aims, the study would require some theoretical underpinnings to clarify the nature of analysis and to anchor the study on a clear research direction. This section intends to illustrate the major and important theories related to the present investigation such as theory of genre and social constructionist theory.

1.6.1 Theory of Genre

Although there have been many genre-based studies over the last 30 years, the term *genre* VHPV WR EH rñdixfludQwh ãnfusion´ (Bawarshi & Reiff, 2010). The word genre comes from the French (and originally Latin) word for 'kind' as

DEF gory of artistic, musical, or literary composition characterized by a particular V W \ O H IRUP *Merriam-Webster Online Collegiate Dictionary*, 2002, p. 486).

With regard to understanding genre in the last 30 years, there is a shift from the traditional view that is, seen as an exclusively literary term (Cuddon, 1997, p. 285) to its use in non-literary spheres. Several authors (e.g., Ventola, 1997; Todorov, 1991; Kress, 1985) emphasize genre whether literary or linguistic in orientation as a socially-defined concept. Genre is now generally defined as a commonly-recognized, typical ³VRFLDO DFWLRQ¶¶ LQ UHVSRQVH WR ³D UHFXXUHQW VLW (Bargiela-Chiappini & Nickerson, 1999, p. 9). To recognize a genre, there is a need to identify interlocutors and their level of knowledge of how to handle the typical situations associated with a genre in the social community (Yeung, 2007). Therefore, genre gives a description of how societal expectations of texts are related to the language structures (Cope & Kalantzis, 1993).

The term genre is generally utilized in rhetoric, media theory and more recently, in OLQJXLVWLFV WR PDUN D W \ SLFD Concepts of the Realization of W ¶ * HQU of text functions and the way that they perform the target function (Kress, 1993). Kress (1987) believes that permanent occurrence of specific social functions brings about μUHJXODULWLHV¶ LQ WH[WV SOXV JHQHULF FRQYHQWLRQV sub-genre involves a specific set of structural and stylistic characteristics of suppositions about function, tone, subject matter and the audience addressed. These characteristics facilitate the distinguishing of genres from each other (Rutherford, 2013).

According to Swales the notion of genre is a concept that has developed permanently. It refers to:

a class of communicative events that share a recognizable communicative purpose, that exhibit a schematic structure supporting the achievement of that purpose, and which show similarities in form, style, content, structure and intended audience (Swales, 1990, p. 58).

,W LV UHPDUNDEOH WKDW WKH DIRUHPHQWLRQHG FRPP FRUOHODWLRQV EHWZHHQ FRJQLWLYH UKHWHUFLDO DQ ³VXIIILFLHQWO\ FRQYHQWLRQDOLJHG' WR GHPRQVWUDWH ³J UHODWLRQV KLSV EHWZHHQ IXQFWLRQ DQG IRUP' 6ZDOH purpose could be considered as an outstanding criterion that keeps the scope of a genre as narrowly stressed on comparable rhetorical action (Yeung, 2007). In addition to purpose, exemplars of a genre exhibit various patterns of similarity in terms of structure, style, content and intended audience.

1.6.1.1 Genre Analysis

The idea of analyzing genre to study communication is not new. It has been used in different fields to clarify and amend our understanding of various communications. Genre analyzing using rhetorical moves was developed by Swales (1981) to describe the rhetorical organizational patterns of research articles. Its goal is to describe the communicative purposes of a text by categorizing the various discourse units within the text according to their communicative purposes.

Aviles (2007) defines genre analysis as an approach to separate texts based on their goals which will help to determine their structure and construction to achieve their specific objectives. Genre analysis is a common framework for examining the form and function of both oral and written discourse. It also provides the field of language teaching with educational practices (Shokouhi & Amin, 2010). It can be said that genre analysis is the study of how language is used within a particular context. It focuses on such issues as theoretical style and discourse type. Besides, it relates research in sociolinguistics, text linguistics, and discourse analysis to the study of specialist areas of language use. The overall purpose of genre analysis is to recognize the moves and strategies of a genre.

Move analysis has been considered as a common research line in genre studies. Swales

GHILQHV PRYH LQ JHQUH DQDO\VLV DV ³D GLVFRXUV D coherent communicative function in a written or spoken disc RXUVH´ S +H DOVI FODLPV WKDW ³DW RQH H[WUHPH LW FDQ EH UHDOLJHG VHQWHQFHV ,W LV D IXQFWLRQDO *move* Q.R.W, Defining a section of a text that performs a specific communicative function. Each move not only encompasses a specific purpose but also at a higher level which contributes to general FRPPXQLFDWLYH SXUSRVHV RI WKH JHQUH ,Q 6ZDOHV¶ H VWDEOLVK WKH UDWLRQDO IRU the rhetorical structure of ZKLFK LQ WKH GLVFRXUVH DQG LQIOXHQFHV DQG FRQVWUDLQV FRK Moreover, Ding (2007) defines *move* in EAP writing genres DV ³D IXQFWLRQDO XQL text used for some identifiable purpose, and a move is often used to identify the textual regularities in certain genres of writing ´ S He states that the length and size of *moves* are different. They could be made of several paragraphs, one sentence or even one proposition. Nwogu (1991) also indicated that *move* LV D ³WH[W VHJPHQW ZKL vary in size, shaped and constrained by a specific discourse goal. This text segment has D XQLRUP RULHQWDWLRQ DQG WKH FRQWHQW RI WKH GLV

In move analysis, Swales (1990) frequently makes use of subdivisions or multiple elements, within a *move*. 7KHVH HOHPHQWV DVH by Swales (1990) or WR DV µ *strategies*´ by Bhatia (1993). The steps of a move primarily function to achieve the purpose of the *move* to which it belongs (see e.g., Dudley-Evans, 1994; Hopkins & Dudley-Evans, 1988; Crookes, 1986; Swales, 1981, 1990). Some *move* types occur more frequently than others in a genre and they can be described as conventional, whereas other *moves* occurring not as frequently, can be described as optional. Ansary and Babaii (2005, p. VWDWHG WKDW DQ RSWL RQ DQ HOHPHQW LV QRW REOLJHG WR RFFXU´ DQG DQ REOLJDWRU\ HOHPHQW LV

would not be LQWHUSUHWHG DV WKH JHQUH WR ZKLFK WKH WH
KDYH YDULRXV VLJHV EXW JHQHUDO\ FRQWDLQ DW OHDV

Therefore, considering the definition of genre, editorial as a genre of newspaper consists of a series of functional units with specific communicative purposes. Generally, editorials also have a particular structure with some obligatory and optional units, although some may deviate from the norm because of the social and contextual conventions in each society. Using 6ZDOH¶V DSSURDUKLQJ, this study attempts to analyze the editorial texts to determine their generic organizational patterns. Toward this end, the functional units or *moves* and *steps* of editorials and their communicative purposes are also identified. These elements together show how the overall communicative purposes of the editorial genre are fulfilled.

1.7 Definitions of Key Terms and Concepts

Below is the definition of a few key terms and concepts that are used in this study.

Genre: § JHQUH FRPSULVHV D FODVV RI FRPPXQLFDWLYH HY
share some set of communicative purposes. These purposes are recognized by the expert members of the parent discourse community, and thereby constitute the rationale that explains the genre. This rationale shapes the schematic structure of the discourse and influence and constrain choices of content and style. Communicative purpose is both a privileged criterion and one that operates to keep the scope of the genre. In addition to purpose, exemplars of a genre exhibit various patterns of similarity in terms of structure, style, content and intended audience. If all probability expectations are realized, the exemplar will be viewed as inherited and produced by the discourse (Swales, 1990, p.58).

Move: ,W LV WKH IXQFWLRQDO QDQWLQJ QDWXUHO\ WR WHHWH
XVHG WR LGHQWLI\ WKH WH[WXDO UHJODQJ (Dudley-Evans, 1990, p.369).

Step: Each *move* is composed of subdivisions or multiple elements. These elements are UHIIUHQW *steps* DERXW DV *strategies* (Byram & Bhatia (1993). The steps of a *move* primarily function to achieve the purpose of the *move* to which it belongs (see e.g., Dudley-Evans, 1994; Swales, 1990; Hopkins & Dudley-Evans, 1988; Crookes, 1986).

Editorial: (GLWRULDO LV DQ DUWLFOH LQ D QHZVSDSHU WKDW
SXEOLVKHU RQ D WRSLF RU LWHP RI QHZV\ 6LQFODLU
is to convey the HGLWRU¶V YLHZV RQ LPSRUWDQW LVVXH WR
series of verbal strategies for writing an editorial, which provides readers with an article about an issue which is currently in the news. Furthermore, Biber (1988, p.195) states that institutional editorials, which are the official opinions of a newspaper,

generally make no attempt at objectivity: they are overt expressions of opinion intended to persuade readers.

Metadiscourse – reflective expressions used to negotiate interactional meanings in a text, assist the writer (or speaker) to express a viewpoint and engage with readers as members of a particular community (Hyland, 2005a, p.37).

Interactional metadiscourse: Interactional metadiscourse refers to the ways writers interact with readers by intruding and commenting on their messages. Using these features, the writer attempts to explicitly express his or her views and involve readers by responding to the unfolding text. This kind of metadiscourse has different functions. It evaluates, engages, expresses solidarity, predicts the objection of readers and answers to the possible dialogues. It reveals how the writer jointly constructs the text with addressees (Hyland, 2005a).

Hedges: Hedges, according to Hyland (2004) mark the unwillingness of the writer to present propositional information unconditionally and certainly. Hyland (2005b) states that hedges provide a situation for writers to avoid complete commitment to a proposition. Through presenting information as an opinion rather than a fact, they emphasize the subjectivity of a position and therefore, open that position to negotiation.

Boosters – “obviously”, “demonstrate”, which content and solidarity with their readers. Boosters help the writers who have various positions in academic writing narrow this diversity and confront choices by expressing their ideas certainly and confidently (Hyland, 2005a).

1.8 Organization of the Thesis

To achieve the main research objectives, the present thesis is organized in five chapters. Chapter 1 gives the background to the study and describes the nature of the problem. In addition, it explains the underpinning theory and provides justification for carrying out this study.

Chapter 2 is devoted to the literature review that has been carried out in relation to topics and concerns related to this thesis. First, the editorials and their structure as well as their style of writing are examined. Secondly, it reviews the theoretical background of metadiscourse markers as a marker of coherence and discursive construction of audience. Moreover, it deals with key principles of metadiscourse and its different models of classification. Finally, it focuses on previous research done on the genre analysis of rhetorical structure in the editorial genre. It also studies previous research in respect to the relationship between metadiscourse and different causes of variation in use of metadiscourse markers. Overall, this chapter attempts to address the gaps in the

literature. Toward this aim, it evaluates the frameworks applied in previous studies for analyzing both the rhetorical structure and metadiscourse markers.

Chapter 3 focuses on introducing methodologies to attain the desired objectives of this research. It familiarizes the reader with the data, background of the resources from which the data are collected, as well as the process of data collection. Then, it describes the frameworks that have been adopted to this study which are both data-driven and theory-driven. Finally, it expresses the procedure of data analysis to answer each research question.

Chapter 4 is concerned with the findings of the study. It comprises two phases. The first comprises a discussion on the rhetorical structure of editorials, and function and linguistic realization of the rhetorical moves. In the second Phase, it reveals the findings of the linguistic realizations and frequency of hedges and boosters in each rhetorical move.

Chapter 5, sums up the research findings and outlines the contributions of this study to media genre, theory and pedagogy. Besides, it indicates the limitations of the study, and underscores the need for further research in future works.

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