UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

THE FORMS AND FUNCTIONS OF PASSIVE CONSTRUCTIONS IN

GHANAIAN NEWSPAPER EDITORIALS

BY

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of Humanities and Legal Studies, University of Cape Coast, in partial

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English

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DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research and

that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or

elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature: ………………………..   Date: ……………………

Name: Philomina Akesse

Supervisors' Declaration

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were

supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid

down by the University of Cape Coast.

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ABSTRACT

The present study aimed to explore the relationship between Ghanaian newspaper editorials and the passive voice. Using six hundred (600) editorial articles, three hundred (300) each from the *Ghanaian Times* and the *Daily Graphic*, the study sought to ascertain the register features such as field, mode, participants and how they relate to one another, the communicative purpose and passive constructions employed in the above named newspapers, thereby establishing the link between the context and the passive voice. The study employed Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) as a theoretical framework and the Register perspectives of Halliday (1978) and Biber and Conrad (2009) as an analytical tool. The study indicated that the context of Ghanaian newspaper editorials determines the grammatical choices made to disseminate significant information to the citizenry of Ghana and this links the relationships among participants in conjunction with the situation of the register. The study showed that editors inform citizens about issues through register variables such as field, mode, tenor, setting, production circumstance and communicative purpose. The study also revealed three kinds of passives: *agentive (passives with explicit agentive phrase and passives with implicit agentive phrase), non-agentive (passives without agents) and quasi (passives which resemble agentive passives)*. The findings have implications for SFL, the Register theory, Grammar and the passive voice. Thus, the choice of the passive voice creates a formal environment for the Ghanaian newspaper editorials.

KEY WORDS

Daily Graphic

Editorials

Ghanaian Times

Grammar

Passives

Register

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DEDICATION

To my lovely husband, Mr. Francis Campbell Roy, and children, Betty Juliet

Bozoma Campbell Roy and Bridget Nyima Campbell Roy

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The present study aims to reveal the relationship between the situation of the Ghanaian newspaper editorials and the use of passive voice. It therefore seeks to examine the situational characteristics (register variables); and investigate the use of passive constructions (linguistic choice) by highlighting their forms and frequency as well as throwing more light on how the typical passive forms reflect the communicative purpose of editorials in the Ghanaian context. Over the past decade, scholars have concentrated on linguistic studies of newspaper editorials. This has consequently led to the analysis of various linguistic features in editorials including: distinctive rhetorical features (Ansary & Babaii, 2005; Farrokhi & Nazemi, 2015), modality (Bonyadi, 2011), discourse markers (Al Kohlani, 2010) textual and rhetorical strategies (Bonyadi & Samuel, 2013). These studies have investigated linguistic features in newspaper editorials. To add to the existing literature, the present study aims to examine Ghanaian newspaper editorials from the register perspective, focusing on the situational features of the editorials, the range of passive forms used, and the way in which frequently used passive forms reflect the communicative purpose of editorials in Ghana.

This chapter looks at the background to the study, the statement of the problem, the research questions that guide this research, the delimitation of the work, the significance of the study, the synopsis of the research and the summary of the chapter.

Background to the Study

Newspaper editorials, as a written register, constitute a pivotal conduit of opinions for the citizenry of any country. The editorial section, as an aspect of the media, disseminates opinions which may be of concern to the people of any nation to improve upon governance. The information presented in the editorials raise and arouse citizens' awareness of social issues which enable them (general public) to hold government accountable, curb bribery and corruption, social vices and create a platform for public debates in the country. To achieve this, editors deploy linguistic features such as tense and aspect markers, pronouns and, questions, nominal forms, dependent clauses, prepositional phrases, adjectives, adverbs, lexical classes, modals, and passive constructions, and many more to present invaluable opinions to the nation (Biber, 1995; Biber & Conrad, 2009).

Register can be viewed as the choice of language to serve social purposes in correspondence with the environment and circumstances. As a linguistic concept, its proponent, Halliday, and others like Matthiessen, view it in systemic functional sense as the use of language such that it correlates with the context of situation (Halliday, 1985, 1999; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). The argument that Halliday makes has triggered several similar and extensive (re)definitions of the term. Holmes (2001) (as cited in Lewandowski, 2010: 68), for instance, defines register as 'a variety of language associated with such situational parameters as: addressee, setting, and mode of communication, task or topic.' Biber (1995) defines it as a style or a variety of language which is indomitable by such factors as social occasion, purpose and audience. Eggins and Martin (1997: 234) state that register refers to how "we

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adjust our language to different situations, or to be more precise, to the particular context in which we utter or write a given text." Biber (2004: 22), in another study, redefines register as "varieties of language that are defined by their situational (i.e. non-linguistic) features." For the purpose of the present study, it may be perceived as the use of language in a particular context to achieve a specific social goal.

The various purposes for which we use the English language greatly influence the style that the language takes. Thus, differences in language use occur, depending on the circumstances surrounding the interaction. For instance, writers and speakers make their choice of words according to the formality or informality of the situation. Thus, editorials based on the situation and the purpose for which they are written, make use of particular grammatical features to present their intended information to readers.

Over the years, register has been studied in terms of the relationship between spoken and written language. These studies have viewed written and spoken registers from distinct perspectives. In linguistics, for instance, most of these studies have examined speech and writing separately to identify the linguistic features that make them separate (see, e.g., Borcher, 1927; Besnier, 1988; Polak, 1999; Biber, 2004). Biber (1988:5) construes that 'scholars working within the discipline of linguistics have come up with three general views on the relationship between speech and writing.' That is, firstly, written language is generally, structurally elaborated, complex, formal, and abstract, while spoken language is concrete, context-dependent, and structurally simple. Secondly, there are no significant linguistic differences between speech and writing and, thirdly, speech is more elaborated and complex than writing.

In line with the above, many of the earlier studies on the relationship between spoken and written registers are mostly qualitative; that is, these studies describe the communicative functions of the speeches and writings that are studied. Borcher (1927) followed by DeVito (1967) laid down the basis for further research into the comparative study of speech and writing by investigating register variation. Further studies reveal the structural relationship between spoken and written registers of language (Besnier, 1988), differences between oral and written language (Polak, 1999), and the role of oral language in writing (Dyson, 1983).

According to Biber and Conrad (2009), registers are described for their typical lexical and grammatical characteristics: their *linguistic features*, *situational contexts*, for example, whether they are produced in speech or writing, whether they are interactive, and what their primary communicative purposes are as well as their functions. They explain:

> Registers can be identified and described based on analysis of either complete texts or a collection of text excerpts. This is because the linguistic component of a register analysis requires identification of the pervasive linguistic features in the variety: linguistic characteristics that might occur in any variety but are much more common in the target register (Biber & Conrad, 2009: 6).

Hence, register as a linguistic theory (Halliday, 1978), can be applied to analyze conversations, research articles, newspaper articles, novels, newspaper editorials in terms of their linguistic features, one of which is voice.

Voice is associated with the grammar in English and other languages. It has attracted distinct definitions by several scholars in the humanities. Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech and Svartik (1972: 801, 802) indicate "English voice is a grammatical category which makes it possible to view the action of a sentence in two ways–active and passive–without change in the facts reported": (a) the butler murdered the detective (active) (b) the detective was murdered by the butler. Greenbaum (1991: 52) also states "active and passive have different verb phrases in that the passive has an additional auxiliary: a form of the auxiliary *be* followed by an–*ed* participle." However, Ruzhekova-Rogozherova (2012) contends that these definitions are predominantly formal and not exhaustive and claims that an exhaustive definition should describe active and passive voice as both (but not all) sides of an agent patient relationship; the stronger agent's (subject's) responsibility for the activity, its process management and patient's (object's) involvement in process, the stronger active meaning and passivization opportunities are. In other words, as William, Archibald, Aronoff and Rees-Miller (2001) intimate, when the subject is the agent or doer of the action, the verb is in the active voice, on the other hand, when the subject is the patient or target of the action, the verb is said to be in the passive voice.

In his study, Williams (2000) indicates that although many writers, including academic writers, favour the active voice because it is direct and concise, both voices are relevant and useful, because, according to Moaddab (2014), they are incredibly useful to the study of persuasive and/or emotive writing, and are typical features of newspaper reports. It is the writers' deliberate variation between these sentences that allows them to mould their

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reader to interpret their words in their desired way. Moaddab further postulates that when the writer uses the passive form, such as, *the boy was helped*; his intent could be to implore his audience to immediately sympathize with the boy and the way he has been treated. Hence, writers and speakers use the passive voice under certain circumstances to stress the sufferer of a given action under description.

In this study, the researcher, therefore, aims to conduct an in-depth investigation into the register variables and the use of passive constructions to find out the link between the situation of the Ghanaian newspaper editorials and the passive voice as the selected linguistic feature for the present study. In consonance with the register theory and the qualitative design, the study is not to identify errors in passives used in newspaper editorials; but rather, attempts to highlight the passive forms utilized, precisely the pervasive passive form and how this linguistic feature reflects the communicative purpose of the editorials in Ghana.

Statement of the Problem

Even though some early scholars in linguistics regard the passive simply as a stylistic variant and quite not essential from a production or processing point of view, it has been subject to an array of studies. For instance, Evens and Cornelia (1957) consider the passive as a complicated device that marks one as educated. Johnson-Laird (1968) also observes that the choice of the passive is a stylistic determination made in effectual prose. He, therefore, draws attention to the passive by remarking on its stylistic intent as opposed to its possible processing status. Gunasinghe and Kess (1989: 83) further posit: "the passive voice has been viewed as a stylistic device that

lends itself to evasive uses, making covert appeals to authority and universal consensus."

During the last two and half decades, researchers have made significant discoveries on the passive voice. Evidence of the acquisition and comprehension of the passive constructions by native and non-native speakers of the English language has been examined extensively and well documented (see, e.g., Pinker, Lebeaux, & Frost, 1987; Kirby, 2010). Other studies have concentrated on the teaching of active and passive voice (e.g., Bielak, Pawlak, & Mystkowska-Wiertelak, 2013). There have also been studies on the use of passive constructions and its frequency of occurrence (e.g., Bohner, 2001). Some studies have entailed a cross-linguistic analysis between English passives and the passives of other languages such as Chinese, Czech, Scandinavian languages (Danish, Norwegian, and Swedish) and Arabic (see, e.g., Xiao, McEnery, & Qian, 2006). Most of these studies occurred in non-African settings, with the exception of Owusu-Ansah (1991) who investigated the relation between passives and formality in Ghanaian English. However, the passive voice as a linguistic feature of newspapers has not received much attention in Ghana. Nofal (2011), for example, examined the forms and frequency of passive constructions in the Holy Qur'an as a register. His analysis did not address how the typical passive forms employed in his data relate to the communicative purpose of his register. Meanwhile, the passive voice as characteristic feature of register can be an interesting field of study.

Another problem is that grammatical features are most of the time perceived in a general sense in a second language learning environment as Ghana. In teaching and learning, for instance, grammar as an aspect of English

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is viewed as a general phenomenon at all levels of education by handling grammatical categories such as verbs, nouns, prepositions, and relative clauses, among others, as separate entities. That is, learners are normally taught concepts with samples and asked to cite more examples either in isolation or in sentences to emphasize their comprehension. This approach hinders the contextualization of grammar, and it adversely and enormously affects the learning and usage of communicative skills. Students in the university, sometimes, experience difficulties in grasping grammatical concepts which serve as requisite skills in speaking and writing specifically the English language, both in school and in the community at large. At the basic level and even in some cases at the higher level, learners lack the ability to coordinate grammatical features in a specific field. English, as a language, is expected to be used by human beings in communication for a particular purpose in a specific setting. Hence, in examining passive constructions by analyzing their forms in the context of editorials, an avenue will be created to highlight the use of language in a specific situation. It will additionally underscore the relevance of passives in such context.

Objectives of the Study

Since it has been established earlier that little is known about the study of passives in Ghanaian newspaper editorials as a register, the primary focus of the study is to investigate the relationship between the situation of Ghanaian newspaper editorials and the use of passive constructions; and emphasize the frequently used passive form and how it reflects the communicative purpose of editorials in the Ghanaian setting. The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. Highlight the relationship between the situation of Ghanaian newspaper editorials and the passive voice.

2. Find out the forms of passive constructions used in Ghanaian newspaper editorials.

3. Ascertain the frequency of passive forms employed in Ghanaian newspaper editorials.

4. Highlight the relationship between the pervasive passive construction utilized and the communicative purpose of Ghanaian newspaper editorials.

Research Questions

This research study is guided by the following questions:

1. What is the relationship between the situation of Ghanaian newspaper editorials and the passive voice?

2. What are the forms of passive constructions used in the newspaper editorials of Ghana?

3. What are the frequencies of the passive forms employed in the newspaper editorials of Ghana?

4. What is the relationship between the pervasive passive construction utilized and the communicative purpose of newspaper editorials of Ghana?

Delimitations

In order to direct the focus of the present research, it is necessary to set up the   delimitations of the study.

This study is first and foremost limited to the written register, particularly the newspaper editorials in Ghana from 1st January to 31st December, 2014.This limit is due to the fact that the researcher aims to

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concentrate on a wide range of contemporary issues discussed in the dailies of Ghana.

Secondly, the study is centered on register variables and passive constructions made in the editorials to find out the connection between the passive voice and the situation of Ghanaian newspaper editorials. This choice is informed by the goals set for the research. With this, every aspect of the selected editorials will be considered to find out the register variables as well as passive constructions such as words, phrases, clauses and sentences.

Significance of the Study

The important thing in conducting a research is that the results are expected to be significant to groups in the field of the study. This study employs Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) as a theoretical framework with the Register Theory as an analytical framework to investigate the register features and the forms of passive constructions employed in Ghanaian newspaper editorials. In light of this, the results are expected to, first, contribute to the literature on SFL. This study will affirm that language is construed as a resource for making meaning (Halliday, 1978).

Additionally, it is envisaged that the study contributes to the Register Theory.The Register theory states that the situation of a particular register (text) determines the kinds of linguistic element to use to portray an intended meaning (Eggins, 2004). Therefore, the present study will reveal the specific grammatical features used by editors to present information to their readers.

Finally, this study serves as part of the foundation for further research. Thus, the results are essential to other researchers who desire to embark on

further studies on editorials in general, grammar, and on passive voice in particular.

Thesis Synopsis

This thesis is structured in five chapters. The first chapter (the introduction) gives insights to the background to the study, the statement of the problem, the objectives of the study, the research questions which guide the study, the delimitations of the study, as well as the significance of the study. The second chapter (review of related literature) elaborates the theoretical framework in which this study is situated and concepts related to the topic. It also reviews the empirical studies related to the study. Chapter three discribes the methodology of the study. This includes the research design, the research site, data source, data collection procedure, sample size, sampling technique and method of analysis. To find answers to the research questions underpinning this study, chapter four presents analysis and an in-depth discussion of the data collected. As a way of conclusion, chapter five illustrates the summary of the major findings of the study. It also states the implications of the findings and makes recommendations which serve as a guide to further studies in the field. In a nutshell, it makes an overall conclusion to the thesis.

Chapter Summary

Serving as the basis for the research, this chapter offers a general introduction and a brief background to the study. This provides a gist of researches which have focused on editorials to reveal linguistic features. It has also revealed the current state of register studies and passives by providing a number of definitions to these concepts. The chapter highlights the fact that

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various aspects of passives have attracted much attention of researchers. But, studying passives as a register feature in newspapers has been over looked, especially in Ghana. This has triggered the study of passive construction as a linguistic feature in editorials. The statement of the problem establishes the goals of this study. The synopsis is also set up to serve as a guide to readers of this research. The next chapter looks at the literature that is pertinent to this research topic.

CHAPTER TWO

LITEREATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter constitutes the review of literature relevant to the research topic. It comprises the theoretical framework, the conceptual framework that informs the research topic, studies that have applied Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) to the language of media, studies on newspapers and editorials, studies on the register variants as well as empirical studies on the passive voice. This review becomes crucial because the researcher incorporates pertinent information from the above fields for the present research. The reason for reviewing these studies is to provide the conceptual context in which the results of this study can be understood and interpreted.

Theoretical Review

Systemic Functional Linguistics, typically termed as SFL, serves as the theoretical framework for this study. It was postulated by Halliday in 1978 as functional grammar that dealt in detail with the structural organization of English clauses, phrases and sentences; focusing mostly on the   meanings of language in use in the textual processes of social life, or *the sociosemantics of* text (Eggins, 2004). It is a framework for describing and modelling language in functional rather than formal terms. SFL is applied as both a theory of language and a methodology for analysing texts and their contexts of use. In other words, it describes language use in context. This theory has been adopted in natural language processing in various contexts since the 1960s;

however, it has been most widely used in text generation (see Matthiessen & Batman, 1991; Teich, 1995).

SFL is *functional* because it considers language as a resource for making meaning, and it makes descriptions on the basis of extensive analysis of written and spoken texts (Halliday, 1994); hence, serving functional purposes. This theory is also *systemic* in that it models language as a system of choices (Matthiessen, 1995); thus, language is seen as a set of choice systems that equips the speaker or writer with a variety of ways to express their intended meaning to achieve a particular social goal. According to Whitelaw, Patrick and Herke-Couchman (2006), SFL is conceptualized as a multidimensional semiotic space expressing the organization of language both globally as a meaning making system and locally as sub-systems. Owing to its dual nature, SFL aims to expatiate how individuals use language and how language is structured for its different usages (Eggins, 1994).

By adopting a multifunctional view of language, that is, employing language in its natural sense to perform certain social functions, Halliday (1994) proposes three strands of meaning known as the *three metafunctions of language*. These metafunctions refer to the three separate strands of meaning that contribute to the overall meaning in the text. These functional aspects of language are simultaneously developed and expressed in three kinds of meaning: 'ideational metafunction', 'interpersonal metafunction' and 'textual metafunction' (Eggins

 2004:4). See also Halliday (1985b /1989, 1994).

The ideational metafunction provides the resources for construing our experiences of the world. That is, the *ideational meanings* are related to the

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way language is used to represent our experiences of the physical, the psychological and the social world. These meanings are realized through the 'system of transitivity', which is represented by 'a process' (realized by a verbal group), 'the participants' involved (realized by nominal groups) and their 'circumstances' (usually realized by adverbial groups) (Figueiredo, 2010:122). It involves:

"Experiential meaning which implies the representation and portrayal of experiences in the world.

Logical meaning which indicates the construction of logical relations in the world" (cited in O'Halloran, 2008).

The interpersonal metafunction provides the resources for enacting social roles and relations as meaning (Mathiessen, 1995). That is, the 'interpersonal relation of mood' and 'modality.' Mood is concerned with the exchange of information and of goods and services. Modality, on the other hand, comprises the relationship established between the text's author and her/his representations −what the author commits her/himself to in terms of the truth and the necessity of the text assertions Figueiredo (2010).

The textual metafunction provides the resources for presenting information in text (Mathiessen, 1995). With regards to this phenomenon, according to Figueiredo (2010), the meanings expressed here deal with the manner in which the text is organized in relation to its context and its message; that is, representing information as coherent texts and units in context. The clause is seen as a message that projects textual meanings through the 'system of (Theme/Rheme), which is related to the message's point of departure

(Theme) and its continuity (Rheme) in the clauses' syntactic organization (Figueiredo 2010:122).

The main concern of Systemic Functional Linguistics is the analysis of written and spoken texts. In their pioneering analysis of spoken and written English, Halliday and Hasan (1976: 1) define text by stating that: 'the word *text* is used in linguistics to refer to any passage, spoken or written, of any length, that does form a unified whole.' In describing how a text forms a unified whole, Halliday and Hasan propose the concept of 'texture' (Halliday & Hasan, 1976: 2; Hasan 1985b: Chapter five). They explain the term 'texture' as the property that differentiates text from non-text. It is the phenomenon that binds the clauses of a text together to enhance unity. Halliday and Hasan (1976) suggest that texture includes the interaction of two components: coherence and cohesion. Coherence, on one hand, can be said to be the text's relationship to its extra- textual context (the social and cultural context of its occurrence); cohesion, on the other hand, refers to the way the elements within the text hold it together as a unified whole. The consequences of the interaction of these two dimensions are a piece of language which uses linguistic resources in a meaningful manner within a situational and cultural context.

Halliday and Hasan (1976) view both spoken and written languages as text; some linguistic approaches distinguish between *text* as written language and *discourse* as spoken language. According to Halliday and Hasan (1976), in SFL, *text* is a technical term for any unified piece of language that has the properties of either (untechnically) to *spoken text* or (more technically, following Martin,1992a; Martin & Rose, 2003) to the level of meaning above

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the lexico- grammar, the level concerned with relations of meaning across a text.

SFL is also interested in the fundamental purpose for which language has evolved to serve – to enable us to make meanings with each other. In other words, language users do not interact in order to exchange sounds with each other, or even to exchange words or sentences. Rather, interlocutors interact in order to make meanings: to make sense of the world and of each other. SFL describes the overall purpose of language as a semantic one, and each text which interactants participate in is seen as a record of the meanings that have been made in a particular context (Eggins, 2004). Hence, SFL's interest in explaining how people utilize language in their day-to-day affairs of life and how language is structured according to its distinct forms of usage renders the notion of *context* central to the systemic functional approach.

Following this line of exposition, it is envisaged to elaborate on the concept of context. The term 'context' refers to the environment in which a piece of language occurs, and this assists in the interpretation of language used. From a systemic stand point, the ability to understand a given language depends largely on its environment of use. According to Eggins (2004), *all* texts involve indeterminacies of meanings which require the setting in which texts take place for meaningful interpretations. She argues that readers of texts are to learn how to tell when indeterminacies need to be resolved by reference to extra-textual context or when indeterminacies are an integral feature of the genre and must be read for meaning *within* that genre. But the expectancies on which texts depend to make sense may come not just from within the textual environment but from the extra-textual context. In other words, texts display

continuity not just with elements within their boundaries, but with the contexts within which they take place. SFL contends that the context of situation constitutes the environment of language which is seen as texts − specific texts and their component parts whereas context of culture constitutes the environment of language seen as a system − its lexical items and grammatical categories (Halliday, 1978).

Based on the aforementioned concept resulted the 'context of situation.' This may imply that the circumstances surrounding a given interaction determine the kind of language (genre or text) to be used. In other words, a piece of language used is considered right or wrong, depending on the situation. It involves the subject matter of the text, the type of role that language is employed to play, and the people who are engaged in the conversation (Eggins, 2004: 87). For instance, Eggins posits: 'we do not talk in the same way to an employment interview panel as we do to our best friends, we do not talk in the same way about linguistics as we do about cooking, and we do not write the same way we talk' since these interactions constitute distinct situations (Eggins, 2004: 85-89). However, 'it is much more difficult to formalize the nature of this relationship between language use and aspects' in that 'some aspects of situations seem to have an effect on language use, while others do not' (ibid.). For example, she states that the different social statuses held by the interactants seem to affect language use in a specific situation, but the weather condition of that situation does not affect interactants. Thus, 'some dimensions of a situation appear to have a significant impact on the text that will be realized, while other dimensions of a situation do not' (ibid.).

According to Eggins (2004), the anthropologist Malinowski (1923/46, 1935) was among the first researchers to investigate *context of situation.* Eggins states: 'Malinowski in transcribing the daily life and events of the TrobrkndIslanders found that it was impossible to make sense of literal, or word-for word translations from their language into English' (cited in Eggins, 2004: 88, 89). Thus, Malinowski argues that this indicates the need for the researcher to understand the cultural context in which the language was being used:

> The study of any language, spoken by a people who live under conditions different from our own and possess a different culture, must be carried out in conjunction with the study of their culture and their environment (Malinowski, 1946: 306).

Following Malinowski's work, the linguist Firth (1935, 1950; 1951) expands the notion of context of situation to a more general issue which linguists can predict. Firth claims that a given description of context can conveniently predict what language will be used. His claim has its root from the assumption that learning to use language is very much a process of: learning to say what the other fellow expects us to say under the given circumstances. Firth states: 'once someone speaks to you, you are in a relatively determined context and you are not free just to say what you please' (1935/57: 28). The interest in specifying context has also triggered a number of research works in sociolinguistics and ethnography by researchers in these disciplines including: Hymes (1962/74, 1964/72) and Gumperz (1968, 1971). Additionally, there have been significant contributions made by pioneers of

register theory like Gregory (1967), Ure (1971), Ure and Ellis (1977) to the notion of context of situation (cited in Eggins, 2004).

Alluding to the above concept, Halliday (1978) introduces the theory of *register* – 'to argue for *systematic* correlations between the organization of language itself (the three types of meanings it encodes) and specific contextual features' (Eggins, 2004). Halliday (1978: 10) points out, "the context of situation is a theoretical construct for explaining how a text relates to the social processes within which it is located", and comprises three components: the main social activity taking place, the people involved in it (plus the way they relate to one another), and the roles and functions of the text within this social activity − technically termed by systemicists as 'field', 'tenor' and 'mode.' Halliday (1978, 1985b) postulates that these three aspects which occur in any semantic situation have linguistic consequences. Eggins (2004) briefly defines field as what the language is being used to talk about; mode as the role language is playing in the interaction; tenor as the role relationships between the interactants. These three variables are known as the register variables, and a desire to describe 'each one of these variables at a given time of language use is a register description of a text.'

Register Theory

Register theory is one of the perspectives of SFL and has been utilized as an analytical tool for studying various kinds of texts since its inception in the late 1970s. As it has been stated earlier, it is defined as the use of language in a manner that correlates with the context of situation (Halliday, 1985, 1999; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). It is 'a language variety that is associated with both a particular situation of use and with pervasive linguistic features that

serve important functions within that situation of use' (Biber & Conrad, 2009: 31). In other words, it may be explained as the use of language that shows the relationships which exist among the interactants in a given situation at a given period of time. According to Biber and Conrad (2009: 6), the register perspective as a methodological technique can be applied to describe 'any text excerpt from any variety in that the production of texts involves the use of language.' The register theory comprises three distinct variables: field, mode and tenor (Halliday, 1978). A variable refers to a characteristic or attribute of an individual or an organization that can be measured or observed and that varies among the people or organization being studied (Crewswell, 2002). Halliday (1978) states that the above three variables have direct and significant impact on the kind of language that is produced in a situation at a time of language use.

Field implies the domain of experience created by semiosi. That is, the social activity where language and other semiotic systems are brought in to facilitate the activity (Matthiessen, Teruya, & Lam, 2010). According to Eggins (2004), field is defined as the situational variable that shows the focus of the activity in which interactants are engaged. It can sometimes be glossed as the "topic" of the situation (Eggins, 2004:103). Eggins (2004) contends that Martin's (1984: 23, 1992a: 536) broader definition as the institutional focus or social activity type is more useful to capture the field in situations where language accompanies the action occurring.

According to Eggins, field varies along a dimension of technicality or everyday in its construction of an activity focus. Consequently, a situation which is described as technical is characterized by a significant degree of

assumed knowledge among the interactants about the activity focus, whereas in an everyday (or commonsense) situation, the only assumed knowledge is "common knowledge" (Eggins, 2004: 107). Eggins (2004) explains that the knowledge that constitutes a field can be represented in taxonomies. Field categorizations are constructed with a striking difference between the depth and complexity of a technical taxonomy and that of a commonsense taxonomy. That is, the categorization of the activity focus involves the use of both complex and simply terminologies.   For example, there are a number of linguistic implications to the variation in field.

The most remarkable feature is that in a technical situation we find frequent use of technical terms such as technical nouns and verbs pertinent to the field under discussion. Technicality is not only encoded in the lexis but its texts frequently use abbreviated non-standard syntax as well as the use of visual representation of types particular to the field. Language in an everyday field on the other hand, is more familiar to us: the lexis tends to consist of everyday words. Where a term is used technically, it will usually be signalled as such by being printed in bold or having quotation marks around it. Verbs will tend to be of the identifying (defining) kind, as technical terms are progressively introduced and defined. The grammatical structures will be standard, and acronyms and visual representations will only be used if they are first introduced and explained (Eggins, 2004).

Mode is used to indicate the role played by language and other semiotic systems in context (Matthiessen et al., 2010). It can also mean the role that language plays in the interaction among people (Eggins, 2004). Martin (1984) suggests that the role played by language can be realized as

involving two simultaneous continua which describe two different types of distance in the relation between language and situation: spatial or interpersonal distance and experiential distance. As cited in Eggins (2004: 91), interpersonal distance depicts a continuum that "ranges situations according to the possibilities of immediate feedback between the interactants." For example, in a continuum, where interactants get the opportunity to sit down to have a chat with friends in the situation of language use, there are both visual and aural contacts, and thus receiving immediate feedback.

In another continuum where the situation of writing a book is required, there will be no visual or aural contact between writer and readers, and thus no possibility of immediate feedback, and so the possibilities of delayed feedback are limited. Likewise, in the case of editorials production, there is no visual or aural contact between writer(s) and readers; and so the possibilities of delayed feedback are limited. Experiential distance, on the other hand, illustrates a continuum that "ranges situations according to the distance between language and the social process occurring" (ibid.). For instance, in a continuum where the situation involves playing a game (of cards), language is used to accompany the activity interactants are engaged in. So, the role of language describes the kind of action taking place by making verbal actions to achieve a progressive action (making a bid, talking about whose turn it is, naming the cards to be played, etc.). In another continuum where the situation encompasses writing a piece of fiction and where language is the sole tool in the interaction, there will be no other social process occurring. Thus, the only tool available will be creating language to constitute the social process. In the above situation, language is used to reflect on experience, rather than to

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construct it. These situational dimensions function alongside other linguistic features which are sensitive to mode variation to have an impact on language use: the degree of grammatical complexity, and the lexical density of the language chosen (Eggins, 2004).

According to Eggins (2004), these features can be related to the process of nominalization because they are probably responsible for the most striking differences between spoken and written language. That is, spoken language is concerned with human actors, carrying out action processes, in dynamically linked sequences of clauses, whereas written language is concerned with abstract ideas or reasons, linked by relational processes (verbs of being), in condensed sentences. Nominalization is the process of turning things that are not normally nouns into nouns, with consequences for other parts of sentences. The main parts of clauses that get turned into nouns are verbs (e.g., *admit* becomes *admission)* and conjunctions or logical connectives *(e.g., because* becomes *reason).* Nominalization allows for two main textual advantages: rhetorical organization and increased lexical density.

Through rhetorical organization, one can organize a text not in terms of oneself, but in terms of ideas, reasons, causes among others by doing away with the dynamic and usually real-world sequencing that is associated with speaking such that sequences of actions in which one's features are related as actors. Lexical density comprises the enhancement of packing more lexical content per sentence.

Tenor is concerned with the roles and relationships of the interactants (Matthiessen et al., 2010). According to Eggins (2004), it is defined as the social role relationships played by inrreractants. For instance, roles such as

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student or lecturer, customer or salesperson, friend or friend. In other words, the kind of social role one plays in a situation has an effect on how one uses language; so talking to the greengrocer differs from the way one talks to one's mother.

Alluding to early studies of language variation and role relationship variables such as formality, politeness and reciprocity (e.g. Brown & Gilman, 1960, 1972), Poynton (1985) suggests that tenor can be broken down into three different continua: power, contact, and affective involvement. This implies that the general notion of *role relationships* can be considered as a complex of three simultaneous dimensions:

The power continuum illustrates whether the roles interactants play in a situation of language use are those in which they are of equal or unequal power. Examples of roles of equal power are those of friends; examples of roles of unequal (non-reciprocal) power are those of boss or employee. The contact continuum positions situation of interactants in terms of whether the roles they play are those that bring them into frequent or infrequent contact. For example, contrast the frequent contact between spouses, with the occasional contact with distant acquaintances.

The affective involvement continuum demonstrates that situations can be positioned according to whether the roles interactants are playing are those in which the affective involvement between them is high or low. This dimension refers to the extent to which interactants are emotionally involved or committed in a situation. For example, friends or lovers are obviously affectively involved, whereas work associates are typically not (cited in Eggins: 2009-102).

As cited in Eggins (2004), Halliday (1978) and Poynton (1985) propose that tenor describes the link between language and context. Eggins (2004) contends that aspects of our role occupation in a given situation will have an impact on how we use language. Eggins (2004) elucidates that drawing the contrast between two situation types, the informal and the formal, according to their typical tenor dimensions, an informal situation on one hand, will typically involve interactants who are of equal power, who see each other frequently, and who are affectively involved (e.g. close friends). A formal situation on the other hand, will be one where the power between the interactants is not equal, the contact is infrequent, and the affective involvement is low (e.g. a first-year university student meeting the Vice Chancellor and an editor writing an editorial for readers in a national newspaper).   Thus, the variations between formal and informal situations in terms of tenor involve different vocabulary choices. In informal situations (e.g. chatting with our friends) interlocutors tend to use words that express their attitude *(e.g., this is wow! nonsense, delicious).* Attitudinal lexis can express either a positive or a negative evaluation, and they often refer to these as "purr and snarl" words (ibid, p.101). In a formal situation, on the other hand, interlocutors tend to keep their attitudes to themselves, or to express them in apparently objective language *(e.g., unfortunately, surprising).* Lexis will also differ in terms of its degree of standardization: in informal situations, they frequently use slang and abbreviated forms of words *(choco milo).* In the formal situation they use the complete lexical item *(chocolate milo),* and avoid slang.

Other lexical differences are found in a chat, using formal language where many politeness expressions are frequent *(please, thankyou, you are welcome,* etc.); often absent from informal language. Swearing, while it is common in informal settings, becomes a taboo in most formal situations. One area of considerable interest that differentiates the informal from the formal is that of vocatives (see Poynton, 1984). Vocatives, or terms of address, are the words that people call one another when, for example, they wish to get each other's attention. According to Eggins (2004), the choice of which vocative to use reveals important tenor dimensions. For instance, contrast: *Sir John! Mr Smith! Stephen! Stevo! Dad! Idiot Features!* According to Eggins (2004), as these examples indicate, vocatives are a very potent area for the realization of interpersonal meanings, an area very sensitive to contextual constraints of tenor.

The relationship of the register variables to the three strands of meaning are demonstrated when Halliday (1978) posits: "of all the *uses* we make of language, language is designed to fulfil three main functions: a function for relating experiences, a function for creating interpersonal relationships, and a function for organizing information" (cited in Eggins, 2004:110, 111). Halliday further suggests that these types of meanings can be related both "upwards" (to context) and "downwards" (to lexico-grammar). The upward link (i.e. in context) is that each of the register variables can be associated with one of these types of meanings. Thus, field is expressed through patterns of ideational meaning in a text; mode is expressed through textual meaning, and tenor through interpersonal meaning. The downward link

is that we "see" the types of meanings being realized through the associated lexico-grammatical patterns. Thus, linking all this, Halliday states that:

The field of a text can be associated with the realization of ideational meanings; these ideational meanings are realized through the Transitivity and Clause Complex patterns of the grammar.

The mode of a text can be associated with the realization of textual meanings; these textual meanings are realized through the Theme patterns of the grammar.

The tenor of a text can be associated with the realization of interpersonal meanings; these interpersonal meanings are realized through the Mood patterns of the grammar (Eggins, 2004:109-111).

Biber and Conrad (2009), contributing to the register theory, term the register variables as "situational characteristics" (p. 6). They construe situational characteristics to include the physical context, such as the actual time and place; among many others in the use of language. They further state, for example, the situational characteristics of a face-to-face conversation consist of the fact that there are two or more participants producing language in the spoken mode and interacting directly with one another in a shared place and time. Thus, these situational characteristics differ from that of newspaper articles in that the production of newspaper articles include a single author producing language in the written mode for a large number of readers scattered across different places and times.

Biber and Conrad (2009) further propound that the process of a register analysis involves the following steps. First, it is essential to note the situational characteristics of the register under consideration that distinguish it from other

registers. For instance, in a face-to-face conversation, there is the requirement of "direct interaction between at least two people who are together in the same place at the same time" where "both participants must speak" to prevent the conversation from being a monologue. And the topics as well as the purposes for the discussion should appropriately be based on "events, thoughts, and opinions related to their personal lives or something in the immediate context" (Biber & Conrad, 2009: 7).

Second, the description of the typical (pervasive) linguistic features of the register concerned must be done. This stage "requires consideration of multiple texts from the target register, to discover the linguistic features that are frequent across texts (and not characteristic of only a single text)." Based on this, earlier register analysis has discovered "three linguistic features (among many others) to be more common in conversation than in many other registers: first person pronouns (*I* and *we*), second person pronouns (*you*), and questions" (ibid.).

The third stage of a register analysis involves 'the interpretation of the relationship between situational characteristics and pervasive linguistic features in functional terms' (ibid.). In other words, this step includes identifying the functional forces that help to explain why certain linguistic features tend to be associated with particular situational characteristics.

Biber and Conrad (2009: 36) think that effective register analysis should be 'comparative' since it is virtually impossible to know what is unique about a particular register without comparing it to other registers. Thus, according to Biber and Conrad (2009), Kuiper and Haggo (1984) describe the register characteristics of livestock auctions by comparing it to the more

general registers of oral poetry and conversation. However, a few studies have focused on a single register. Such researches include Ferguson's (1983) description of sports announcer talk, and Bruthiaux's (1996) description of classified ads which rely on their intuitions and previous experience with other registers to identify the distinctive characteristics of their target registers. Therefore, the present study draws ideas from previous experience through related researches to identify the typical passive forms employed in the editorials in the Ghanaian setting.

Biber and Conrad (2009) lay down a general framework for analyzing the situational characteristics of registers. This comprises:

I. **Participants**

A. Addressor(s) (i.e. speaker or author)

1. Single / plural / institutional / unidentified

2. Social characteristics: age, education, profession, etc.

B. Addressees

1. Single / plural / un-enumerated

2. Self / other

C. Are there on-lookers?

II. **Relations among participants**

A. Interactiveness

B. Social roles: relative status or power

C. Personal relationship: e.g., friends, colleagues, strangers

D. Shared knowledge: personal and specialist

III. **Channel**

A. Mode: speech / writing / signing

B. Specific Medium: Permanent: taped / transcribed / printed / handwritten / e-mail / etc.

Transient speech: face-to-face / telephone / radio / TV / etc.

IV. **Production circumstances**: real time / planned / scripted / revised and edited

V. **Setting**

A. Is the time and place of communication shared by participants?

B. Place of communication

1. Private / public

2. Specific setting

C. Time: contemporary, historical time period

VI. **Communicative purposes**

A. General purposes: narrate / report, describe, exposit / inform / explain, persuade, how-to / procedural, entertain, edify, and reveal self

B. Specific purposes: e.g., summarize information from numerous sources, describe methods, present new research findings, teach moral through personal story

C. Factuality: factual, opinion, speculative, imaginative

D. Expression of stance: epistemic, attitudinal, no overt stance

VII. **Topic**

A. General topical "domain": e.g., domestic, daily activities, business / workplace, science, education / academic, government / legal / politics, religion, sports, art / entertainment, etc.

B. Specific topic

C. Social status of person being referred to (Biber & Conrad, 2009:39-40).

Participants

This term refers to persons who produce a given text and the persons to whom the text is addressed. Biber and Conrad (2009) explicate that every text has a producer: the *addressor*. Most spoken registers are produced by readily identifiable individuals. But, the addressor cannot be obvious in written registers. For example, a text book is produced by an author or authors, and any sentence in the book may be written or revised or edited by the author(s). In some cases, the written texts are not attributed to any individual or author. These texts tend to have an *institutional* addressor; that is, they can be attributed to a particular institution, but the actual writer is not indicated. For instance, newspaper editorials present the official point of view of a newspaper, but no author is identified.

Similarly, a catalogue of a university describes officially services and requirements of the university without indentifying the author of the text. There are other occasions where anonymous texts are written with no attribution to an institution, like certain kinds of signs or advertisements. Biber and Conrad (2009) stress that the social traits of the addressors greatly affect the language written in the text. For example, features such as the speaker's age, sex, level of education, occupation, and social status can necessarily determine linguistic variations. They add that communication requires an *addressee*, that is, the intended listener or reader. The addressee may be an individual. Examples are: a face-to-face conversation with a friend, personal letters and e-mail messages.

Contrarily, most of these texts can also be addressed to multiple individuals. For example, a group of adolescent discussing teenage pregnancy;

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everybody, except the speaker, can be the addressee of an utterance. University classroom teaching is addressed to a larger group of listeners. In these cases, the addressees may be very large; there is the possibility to indicate who the addressees are.

There are some registers, however, that have an *un-enumerated set of addressees*. For example, it is not possible to specify (except, in a very general sense) the set of individuals who listen to a radio broadcast or watch a television show. Published written registers provide even clearer examples of registers with an un-enumerated set of addressees. For example, a novel can exist physically for decades or even centuries, and there is no obvious way to identify who the set of readers will be over that time. Finally, Biber and Conrad (2009) state that the situational context for some registers includes a group of *on-lookers*. These are participants who observe but are not the direct addressees of the register. For example, actors in a dramatic play converse, address one another on the stage, but that entire conversational interaction is observed by the audience of on-lookers.

In the same vein, participants in a debate or during courtroom testimony directly address one another, but they are also aware of the audience of on-lookers. In fact, they believe, the role of the on-lookers may be more practically important than the addressee. For example, during a court testimony, a witness directly addresses an examining attorney, but the major purpose of communication is to persuade a group of on-lookers, the jury. In cases like these, there is not a clearcut distinction between addressee and on-looker. These influences must be considered in register analysis for they are

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necessary to reveal prominent facts to the analyst (Biber & Conrad, 2009: 41-42).

Relations among Participants

This term implies how participants relate to one other in an interaction. That is, the extent to which participants interact directly with one another: "interactiveness" (Biber & Conrad, 2009: 41). To Biber and Conrad (2009), conversational registers have all participants present and directly respond to one another. However, it is very tedious to identify the authors of registers like university catalogs in that it is almost impossible to have a dialogue with them.

They also construe that there is intermediate degree of interactiveness in registers. For example, participants in an e-mail exchange direct response with one another, but the response may not be immediate in that the interaction can be spread over days and weeks. A classroom session will normally be interactive, but not equally for all participants; rather, the instructor typically produces most of the language and controls the extents of students' participations. A newspaper article is even less interactive, because the author cannot accessibly address a response easily. However, readers can write a *letter to the editor*, allowing for a limited kind of interaction. They also explain that the "social roles and personal relationships" (p.42) among participants are important. Participants can be socially equal in their interaction, such as two classmates having a conversation. There can also be important social differences among participants like power differences which influence language choices; even in a casual conversation. For instance, talking to one's teacher or boss may involve choice of words distinct from the language used when talking to one's best friend. Participants can also have

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different degrees of shared background knowledge. For example, describing one's immediate past experience to an intimate friend will be different from describing the same experience to a stranger. Speakers can also share *specialist background knowledge*. For example, discussing school experience to one's classmates is done differently from how it is done to parents. Written texts can also differ, depending on specialist *shared knowledge*; for example, an academic research journal has articles addressed to other specialists in the field, while introductory textbooks are addressed to novices in the field (Biber & Conrad, 2009: 42-43).

Channel

This term is the physical conduit or *mode* of a specific register: speech or writing. According to Biber and Conrad (2009), the difference between speech and writing is intertwined with other situational characteristics. For example, registers associated with the spoken mode are almost always directed to a specific addressor, and frequently geared towards particular addressees. On the contrary, they believe that written registers can have an institutional addressor and un-enumerated addressees. Hence, spoken registers are often interactive while written registers are hardly interactive. They postulate that spoken and written registers also differ in their typical production circumstances and even their typical communicative purposes. So, there are distinctions among "specific mediums of communication within speech or writing, such as telephone or radio for speech, and hand-writing, electronic (e.g., e-mail), and printed for writing" (p.43). These specific means of language expressions can impact the linguistic forms that speakers employ (Biber & Conrad, 2009).

Production Circumstances

This term connotes the conditions that determine the construction of a piece of register whether spoken or written. Biber and Conrad (2009) posit that the mode of a register has a direct impact on its production. So, in a normal conversation, the speaker is expected to produce language at the same time as he mulls over what to say. That is, the speaker usually does not have enough time to carefully plan what to say next; because if he pauses for a long time to think, his conversational partner may begin to talk, or the conversation may end unsuccessfully.

If he unintentionally says something, he must completely start over again and a speaker cannot edit or erase language once it has been spoken; even though in some cases, the producer can edit to some extent, as in the case of a taped radio interview, the editing is restricted to removing unwanted language; but not to change what had been said completely. Hence, a written register is different from the spoken one in its production. Thus, the writer has at his disposal ample time to cogitate, plan and write what is expected; he can delete something written unintended; he can revise or edit or delete or add language until he produces language that carries the exact intended meaning. Thus, the finished piece is totally different from what the author initially intended. According to them, the reader, therefore, cannot indicate the amount of revision the author has done to the original text. Similarly, the reader (addressee) has different circumstances for comprehension in the spoken versus written mode. For example, in speech, a listener has no choice but to hear and understand language at the same time that the speaker produces it; there is no chance to control the speed or sequence of information, though one

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may tell the speaker to slow down. However, a reader has complete control over the text. The reader can carefully read one word at a time, or she can quickly skim a text. She can even jump around in a written text, for example reading the conclusion before the introduction (Biber & Conrad, 2009).

Setting

According to Biber and Conrad (2009), the setting refers to the physical context of the communication – the "time" and "place" (p.44). Thus, it is important to note whether the time and place are *shared*. They posit that in many cases, the participants share the physical context of spoken registers and can directly refer to it. For example, they can refer to words like *yesterday* or *here*.   This situation-dependent reference cannot be applied to most written registers, because the participants do not share the same time or place. However, some written texts portray the assumption that the reader knows something about the time (and sometimes place) of production. For example, newspaper stories may mention a day of the week (e.g. *Monday* or even *yesterday*), showing that the paper is meant to be read the day it was produced. Personal e-mail messages and text messages generally assume even greater knowledge of the time and place of production. They elaborate that there are some general traits of the setting that are also important. These include the 'place of communication' which may be either private such as conversation and personal letters or public like classroom teaching and textbooks. Both private and public communication can occur in almost any particular setting; for example, it is possible to have both a private workplace conversation with a friend as well as a public workplace conversation with a customer. They believe written texts may have a specific setting by being published as part of

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a larger document, such as a chapter within a book. Furthermore, they state that the 'time of the communication' can be relatively contemporary or a historical time period (Biber & Conrad, 2009: 44).

Communicative Purpose

Communicative purpose can imply the rationale for which a piece of language is produced or used. According to Biber and Conrad (2009: 44) this concept refers to the "why" of communication: the communicative purpose. They construe that the description of communicative purpose in a register is done on several different levels. This involves the identification of the "general purposes" of a register, such as narrating or reporting past events, describing some state of affairs, explaining or interpreting information, arguing or persuading, providing procedural information about how to perform certain activities, entertaining the addressee, and revealing personal feelings or attitudes.

They further explain that numerous registers have multiple communicative purposes. For example, textbooks usually combine descriptive and explanatory purposes. Textbooks in engineering disciplines also include procedural information, while textbooks in the humanities often include persuasive discussion and some narratives. They add that switching purposes in the middle of a communicative event is allowed. For example, one may have a conversation with a friend, discussing political candidates and describing specific policies that a candidate endorses as well as trying to persuade the friend that a particular candidate is the most qualified.

Shifting from one purpose to another encompasses the description of the current state of affairs and portrays one's own attitudes, trying to convince

the listener about the correctness of one's point of view. Additionally, Biber and Conrad (2009) admit that switching purposes, as in telling a story about the last time that one went to vote, and how long one waited in a queue, as well as how someone else in the queue behaved is possible and easy. Moreover, this switch in purpose is considered as a shift in sub-register; from one kind of conversation to another. Thus, the shift becomes important when it is overtly marked in the text because it allows the analyst to identify distinct "specific purposes" that distinguish between very specific sub-registers. For instance, a typical scientific research article comprises distinct sections that are explicitly labelled *Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion*.

These sections can be viewed as sub-registers, which are unique in their communicative purposes. The introductions describe the current state of knowledge in the field concerned, and may include some narration of past events or some explanation of concepts or previous research findings. The methods section states a procedural communicative purpose, describing how the study is conducted. The results section is usually descriptive, stating what is found in the study, while the discussion section is usually more interpretive, explanatory, and persuasive in nature. They stress that all these article sections have the same physical context: the same author, same readers, and same production circumstances. But there are important linguistic differences across article sections, associated with the shifts in communicative purpose. They highlight that *factuality* equally relates to communicative purpose; that is: 'Does the addressor intend to convey factual information, fiction, fantasy, personal opinion or speculation' (Biber & Conrad, 2009: 44). These are similar, since speakers often mix fact and fantasy.

They further explain that it may be argued that no personal account can be truly "factual." This parameter is important for distinguishing among the primary intents of registers, such as a novel (fiction) versus a biography (factual), or an editorial (opinion) versus a newspaper article (factual). Additionally, they state there is the parameter of *stance* in communicative purpose. This parameter includes expressions both of *personal attitudes* and of *epistemic stance* (i.e., the extent to which information is certain or generalized, or explanations of the source of the information). For example:

> Within a newspaper there are different types of articles associated with different expressions of stance. A typical report of a news event has little or no overt expression of stance; it simply states what happens. It may still convey a certain ideology, but overt markers of stance are generally limited to statements of the source, such as *according to analysts. . .*' (Biber & Conrad, 2009: 46).

According to Biber and Conrad (2009), reports from a scientific study are more concerned with expressing epistemic stance, especially how sure an information is or generalized (e.g., it is *possible that*... or the findings *suggest*... or *in general*...,); all these are linguistic markers of epistemic stance. Science reporting in a newspaper portrays the concern in the scientific community about the extent to which claims are verifiable or can be generalized (Biber & Conrad, 2009).

Topic

Topic can be referred to as the issue that a piece of text discusses. Biber and Conrad (2009) believe that there are differences among topics. These include very "general topical domains" (p.46), such as science, religion,

politics, and sports and specific topics like a denomination; belief systems within a religion. They elaborate that topic is the situational factor that necessarily influences vocabulary choice; the words that are used in a text are to, a large extent, determined by the topic of the text. This is relevant at the level of general topical domains (e.g., science writing versus business news) and very specific topical domains (e.g., research writing on biogenetics).

In general, Biber and Conrad (2009) believe, though, topical differences are not influential for determining grammatical differences; rather, the pervasive grammatical characteristics for register are mostly determined by the physical situational context and the communicative purposes. There are some grammatical differences that might at first seem to be related to topic. For example, passive verbs are much more common in science and engineering textbooks than in humanities textbooks. However, these differences are influenced mostly by the differing communicative purposes of these disciplines rather than simply by differences in topics (Biber & Conrad, 2009).

The Relationship between Halliday's (1978) and Biber and Conrad's (2009) Perspectives of Register Variables

A closer observation of the two perspectives reveals that Biber and Conrad's (2009) version of the contextual variables is a revised and comprehensive form of Halliday's (1978). Based on the description of the register variables (field, mode and tenor) (Halliday, 1978) and the situational characteristics (participants, relations amongparticipants, channel, production circumstance, setting, communicative purpose and topic) (Biber & Conrad, 2009), it can be deduced that the field in the register model proposed by

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Halliday (1978) encompasses Biber and Conrad's (2009) topic and communicative purpose. The field is the same as topic. The purpose for which language is used determines the topic which connotes the field to discuss – the social activity that language is employed to talk about or enhance. Similarly, mode is in relation with setting, production circumstances, and channel. The mode can also be termed as channel.

The setting of interlocutors in many cases may prescribe the mode/channel which consequently determines the condition of language production, depending upon the feedback required. Thus, participants who find themselves in the same environment may use the spoken mode to convey information to one another while those in a distant surrounding may employ either the written mode (e-mail or letters) or spoken mode (phone calls) to put their intended information across, depending on the required feedback in which case participants stick to the production conditions (e.g., time to edit language or not). Tenor correlates with participants and relations among participants. The relations among interactants indicate their specific roles in interactions involving language use. For example, intimate friends will interact with equal powers; and a boss and a subordinate will interact with unequal powers. The relation influences the choice of words in the interaction. In unequal power relations, politeness and formality influence the language use. Here, eligible address terms are employed appropriately to ensure respect in the interaction.

To be able to accurately find answers to the research questions formulated at the beginning of this study, I integrate the perspectives of both Halliday (1978) and Biber and Conrad (2009) to analyze the editorials in

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Ghana. This combination is done because the comparison of the two perspectives does not reveal significant distinction. I will, therefore, use the Register Theory proposed by Halliday (1978) and Biber and Conrad (2009) supported by the qualitative design to highlight the relationship between Ghanaian newspaper editorials and the passive voice. I will also use the two prespectives of the Register Theory with the qualitative paradigm to ascertain the forms of passive voice and the link between the frequently used passive form as well as the communicative purpose of the editorials. I will additionally use the quantitative method to hihglihgt the frequencies and percentages of the passive forms.

It is, therefore, hoped that this integrative approach in addition to the research designs will assist the researcher to account for the contextual variables, the frequency of the forms of the passive voice as a linguistic feature used and the relation between this grammatical feature and the communicative purpose of the editorials.

Application of Systemic Functional Linguistics to the Present Study

The present study is situated in the Systemic Functional Linguistics and applies Halliday (1978) and Biber and Conrad's (2009) notion of the register theory – the use of language according to the situation, as an analytical framework to study contextual values and passive constructions in the newspaper editorials of Ghana. Register provides resources for using language such that it correlates with the context. In the light of this, writers (editors) of editorials select specific linguistic elements according to the context which enable them to arouse the interest of their readers and persuade them in the course of presenting a social phenomenon. Hence, in order to underscore the

language of editorials, this study identifies the specific situational characteristics and passive voice to establish the correlation between the situation and the passive voice used as well as the particular communicative purpose that accompanies language usage in editorials.

Conceptual Framework

This section examines English voice, the differences between the active and passive voices as well as key concepts related to the passive voice of English.

The differences between passive and active voice cannot be overemphasized as far as newspaper editorials are involved, because they facilitate transmission of editor's intended meaning to the target audience. In fact, defining active constructions is sina-qua-non to determining passive constructions.

The English Voice

Voice is one of the grammatical categories that exist in most languages. In the English language, for instance, there are two major categories of voice: active and passive (Eastwood, 1994). The voice becomes active when the subject of the action comes before the verb, as in *The boys ate the meal.* On the contrary, the voice becomes passive when the object of the sentence appears before the verb, as in *The meal was eaten by the boys.*

According to Eckersley and Eckersley (1960: 219-224), "If the person or thing denoted by the subject of a sentence is the receiver or sufferer of the action, then that form of the verb is the passive voice", e.g. *the ball was kicked by the boy*. In other words, laying emphasis on the object of the action makes the verb of the sentence a passive one. Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech and Svartvik

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(1985) construe that in all passive clause types, the agentive *by*-phrase, which incorporates a noun phrase equivalent to the subject of the corresponding active clause, has the structural status of an optional adverbial. Even when the agentive *by*-phrase is absent, however, there is an implication of its presence at the level of semantics. In this sense, the agentive *by*-phrase acts as complementation of the passive verb. On the other hand, "If the person or thing denoted by the subject of a sentence is the doer of the action, then that form of the verb is the active voice" (Eckersley & Eckersley, 1960: 219-224).

Voice is also viewed as a linguistic category that defines the relationship "between the participants and the event indicated in the verb" (Nida, 1964: 200). In their study of grammar, Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech and Svartivick (1972: 801) posit: "English voice is a grammatical category which makes it possible to view the action of a sentence in two ways, without change in the facts reported":

The man broke the glass (active).

The glass was broken by the man (passive).

To underscore the sufferer or undergoer (patient) of the action of an utterance and its affectedness in a given context requires the application of the passive clause. Hence, Baker (1992:102) defines the notion of passivization as 'a grammatical category that indicates the relationship between a verb and its subject.' This results in the subject serving as the affected entity, and the agent may or may not be specified, stressing on the receiver of an action to have the impression of objectivity. She also declares that the passive is used in most languages when the agent is downplayed. She expounds further that in an active clause, the subject is the agent responsible for performing the action,

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whereas in a passive clause, the subject is an affected entity, and the agent may or may not be specified (ibid.):

He sold the car (active).

The car was sold (by him) (passive).

Bakir (1994) contends that passivization in English language is a syntactic category, which defines the relationship between the verb (the process) and the participants in that process involving both the agent (that initiates the process) and the patient (the goal). Thus, the subject of the passive sentences is the affected participant, and the agent may or may not be specified. In the same vein, the process of passivization is to bring the affected participant into the beginning of the clause. Going by these definitions, the active voice is seen as the unmarked member of the pair. Both voices (active and passive) emanate from their role of subject-referent in clauses which express an action, and to Huddleston (1984: 438); 'active voice gives emphasis to the actor, or active participant in the unmarked version, while passive voice is the patient, or passive participant in the marked version.'

Additionally, Dixon (1992) refers to the passive voice as an alternative realization of the relation between a transitive verb and its objects which consist of an intransitive construction with a subject, a form of *be*, and a participial form of the verb: *The man was beaten.* Dixon stresses that the passive sentence is not a compulsory transformation of an active sentence. Moreover, Senn and Skinner (1992) are of the view that only transitive verbs can be used in the passive voice. The direct object of the active verb becomes the subject of the passive verb when an active verb is changed to passive one:

The police apprehend the thief.

The thief is apprehended by the police.

Parrot (2000) also observes that teaching materials often concentrate on the form of standard passive construction and practice activities which usually include mechanical transformation of active constructions into passive forms. He believes that students may conclude that passive constructions are deviant and optional versions of active constructions.

The Distinctions between Active and Passive Clause

Leech, Deuchar and Hoogenraad (1982) indicate that the active voice can be distinguished from the passive voice in the following manner: (a) the object of an active sentence is the corresponding passive subject, (b) in a passive sentence, a form of *be* appears before the main verb, (c) in the active form, the tense is shown by the main verb (present: write, past: wrote). But in the passive form, the tense is shown by the form *be,* present*: am, is, are,* past*: was,* and *were,* (d) the main verb of a passive sentence is in the past participle form.

The Passive Voice and its Classification

Quirk et al. (1972) and Wang (2010) opine that the active-passive relation involves two grammatical *levels*: the verb phrase and the clause. They postulate that in the verb phrase, the difference between the two voice categories is that the passive takes a form of the auxiliary (*be*) in addition to the past participle (*–Ved*) of the main verb. At the clause level, the passive voice involves rearrangement of two clause elements and one addition.

Studies have shown that the categorization of the passive voice has been done in several ways (Wang, 2010). Wang posits that there are three

markers in passive voice, *be*, *-ed and by*, which have their meaning and significance respectively. He further states that a typical passive can be classified into two categories: *passive with agent and passive without agent or, agentive passive and non-agentive passive.* That is, in the agentive passive the agent does not appear but will be implicit in the context.

In summing up the discussion of the passive scale in the *A Grammar of Contemporary English* (1972), Quirk et al. establish the following sub classifications:

1. Agentive passives

Agentive passive involves *with expressed agent* and *without expressed agent*. Sentence (a) and (b) below have a direct passive-active relation:

a. *Insanitary conditions largely cause cholera.*

b. *Cholera is largely caused by insanitary conditions* NATIONAL SANITATION DAY SUCCESSFUL BUT... ("Daily Graphic", 2014).

Sentence (b) which is in the passive voice is an example *with expressed agent (by insanitary conditions)*. Below is an example of passive *without expressed agent*: *The chief executives were captured on television...* NATIONAL DAY SUCCESSFUL BUT... ("Daily Graphic", 2014)

2. Quasi-passives

These passives represent a *mixed* class whose members have both verbal and adjectival properties:

(c) *... the law was passed in 2012...* DVLA AND FRAUSTRATED VEHICLE OWNERS ("Ghanaian Times", 2014)

(d) *We are alarmed that the DVLA had gone…*DVLA AND FRAUSTRATED VEHICLE OWNERS ("Ghanaian Times", 2014)

Sentences (c) and (d) have active analogues:

(e) *(Parliament) passed the law in 2012*.

(f) (*DVLA) alarmed us.*

(g) *The reviewed law.*

Sentence (g) has adjectival and verbal attributes:

*(*h*) The old law that has been reviewed.*

3. Non-agentive passives or intensive active complement constructions

With these passives there is no active transformation or possibility of adding agent, in that they do not contain performers or doers of the action:

(i) *The modern world becomes more highly industrialized and mechanized.*

According to Quirket al., (1972), sentence (i) has no active transform or possibility of agent addition, since no "performer" is conceived of. However, the participles have adjectival values: compare *industrialized-industrial* and *mechanized-mechanical*. Besides a number of such "resulting" verbs ending in *–ize* (*organize*, *Americanized,* etc.) (as cited inWang, 2010*:* 946), this class includes "existing" constructions, as in (j) *...the furniture was already purchased in China.*WATCH THESE THINGS, PARLIAMENT ("Daily Graphic Editorials", 2014)*.*

The corresponding active here is: (k) (*The government*) isalready *purchased the furniture in China*. But not: (l) (*The government*) *already purchases furniture in China*. This is because the voice transformation which takes place involves aspectual shift from present to present perfect (i.e. is already purchased in (j) to has already purchased in (l)).

Quirk et al. postulate that although sentences (j) and (l) are not passives in the sense of sentences, they still satisfy the formal passive requirement and, as in the case of (l), they often have an "indirect" voice relationship. They term this class "non-agentive passive or intensive active complement constructions", recognizing that *the book is already bought,* is related both to agentive passive: *the book has already been bought* and to the intensive (active) complement construction.

There is another classification of passive voice carried out by Quirk which is termed Quirk's 'Passive Scale' (see Quirk et al. 1972, 266-231). This subcategory comprises central passive or true passive, semi-passive or mixed passive and pseudo-passive. The central passive or true passive has been sub divided as *with agentive phrase* and *without agentive phrase.* The Pseudo-passive has also been sub divided into *with current copula verbs, e.g. be, feel, look and with resulting copula verbs e.g. get, become, grow.*

Granger (1983) concentrates on the *be + past participle* construction, and classifies it into seven categories, namely, passives, adjectival pseudo-passives, verbal pseudo-passives, mixed be+ Ved combinations, usually passive category, peripheral combinations and stative combinations.
 The examples below illustrate them respectively:

 (k) *That attitude was maintained by the government in the further nine days of debates in the Lords.*

(l) *Perhaps the tick is rather more complicated.*

(m) *She's been rather elusive as far as I'm concerned, so I don't really know her.*

(n) *I am amazed at the price of houses out here*.

(o) *I feel we're all faced with this problem*.

(p) *I'm fairly closely connected with that work*.

(q) *But I have these two houses that are built on to the next doors back garden sort of thing*… (as cited in Wang, 2010: 947)

According to Wang (2010), Granger's classification is more detailed, his groupings more or less overlap with Quirk et al.'s in 1972. According to Wang, the latter four categories are actually the borderline cases and they are very much related to, and sometimes can substitute,   the first category. For instance, Quirk et al.'s central passives are the same as Granger's passives; semi-passives are to some extent equal to mixed be-Ved combinations. Pseudo-passives are divided into adjectival and verbal pseudo-passives in Granger's classification.

For the purpose of this study, the forms of the passive voice will be defined as:

- Agentive passives comprise all passives with overtly expressed agentive phrases and those whose agentive phrases can be retrieved from the context of the interaction. This category also includes passives with both current copula verbs such as *be*, *feel, remain, seem* and *look* and resulting copula verbs like *get*, *become*, *grow* with agents or without agents. According to Quirk et al. (1972), the above copula verbs constitute pseudo passives. However, this study will include passive expressions that involve other copula verbs *as stay* which can form part of the pseudo passives. For instance:

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i. *Every traditional council **is served by the staff** whose emoluments **are charged** on the Consolidated Fund.*

ii. *The celebration of Easter gives hope and inspiration to all that there is a lot we can achieve if we **remain determined** and **focused** on the things we seek to do…*

iii. *…we lost and **got kicked** out of the tournament.*

iv. *Let us **get involved** by using the state apparatus to expose wrongdoings in society, and not to sit on the fence to criticize for the sake of it*

v. *…if the President Mahama, whose leadership was being challenged at the court, had not been very firm and **stayed focused** on governance and security issues.*

The passive clause in example (i) shows agentive passive with explicitly expressed agentive phrase introduced with the passive *by phrase* ("by the staff"). The passive phrase ("are charged") in (i) is also an illustration of an agentive passive construction whose performer can be traced from the context because stating it will be redundant since the doer has already been mentioned as "the staff." They are passives used with the *be* copula verbs. Examples (ii) – (v) show instances of passives with other copula verbs apart from the "be."

- Non-agentive passives consist of the passives which have no performers of the actions being described and lack the possibility of adding agents. For example:

vi. *Honestly, nobody can **be accused** of wishing that the country would fail in its democratic forward match.*

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The passive phrase above shows no agent of the action under discussion and the likelihood of adding a performer is very low because the agent of the action cannot even be recovered from the context.

- Quasi-passives are the passives which are not exactly passives but have passive resemblance. These passives are expressions that can be modified to make them pure passives through recovery by the addition of certain verbal elements. For example:

vii.   *... project **embarked upon** by the government in the 1980s.*

viii.   *…in the year for which **organized labour** threatened to embark on an industrial action.*

ix.   *…the activities of illegal mining **otherwise referred** to as galamsey operators, have polluted the water bodie*s.

In example (vii), the verb phrase "embarked upon" can be modified as "which is embarked upon." The insertion of the relative pronoun "which" and the primary auxiliary "is" changes the quasi-passive clause to a pure one with an agent: *project which is embarked upon by the government in the 1980s*. In the same vein, the quasi-passive phrases"organizedlabour" and "otherwise referred to" in (viii) and (ix) can be modified to pure passives by the insertion of a relative pronouns and the auxiliary be forms.

The Passive Variants in English

Studies have shown that the English passive verb takes the form *be* to be distinct from the active verb and the "be" can be replaced by other verbs

such as get. The section below, therefore, discusses the passive variations in English.

According to Xiao et al. (2006), the English passive is grammatically marked by a copular verb preceded by a past participle. The norm for English passives takes the structure *be + past participle.* However, *be* in the structure can be replaced by other copular verbs such as *get, become, feel, look, seem* and *remain* in that the meaning of passives is prominently expressed by past participles. There are obvious distinctions between the *be* passives; these variants occur in their structural configuration. For instance, the *get* variant requires the auxiliary verb *do* in negotiations and questions. *Be* and *get* passives are usually not interchangeable. For example, get passives only take place in dynamic events (cf. Cheshire, 2005) while *be* passives are not affected by semantic features of dynamicity.

Quirk et al. (1985: 162) note: "[t] he *get* passive provides a convenient manner of avoiding confusion between the normal passive interpretation and that of the *statal passives*" (e.g. *the chair was broken*). This is achieved by the nature of the *get* passive. Additionally, when the passivised verb is preceded by an infinitival complement, only the *be* passive is appropriate (cf. Palmer, 1974:341-370). For example, *they liked to be seen to go to church.* In this context, "be seen" cannot be replaced by "get seen."

The *be* passive is conceptualized as the unmarked form of the passive in English while the *get* passive is considered as the marked form. The *get* passive is also regarded as a problematic construction in English Language (Carter & McCarthy, 1999).

The passive voice is most often used as a strategy to underscore the patient and its affectedness, and this renders the agent less important and normally optional in the right situation; hence, it can be expected that agentless passives are significantly more frequent than those with an agent (Xiao et al., 2006).

According to Biber et al. (1999: 935), agentive passives are referred to as "long passives" and those which leave the agent implicit (agentless passives) as "short passives."The observation is that short passives are more frequent than long passives in both written and spoken English (Xiaoet al., 2006). Xiao et al assert that get passives are more likely than be passives to occur without an agent. They recognize that the agents in get passives are typically impersonal (e.g. got knocked down by a car). That is, when personal agents appear, they are typically informationally dense and thus semantically indispensable (e.g. *the bleeding girl, he got asked out by her*). While agency generally plays a secondary role in passives, the tendency to leave the agent unexpressed in *get* passives occur to further downgrade the agent and highlight the patient and event (Carter & McCarthy, 1999).

Reasons for Using the Passive Voice

Stanley (1975: 25) notes: "historically, the passive voice has been one of the controversial and problematic constructions in the discussion of English structure and modern linguistics has added little to our understanding of the meaning and functions of the passive." While Lackoff (1971: 163) posits that one may ask: "why is it so widespread, when it is apparently so useless?" or even answering "where is it used rather than the active?" Green (1966: 4) suggests it is simply "an optional stylistic embellishment" or "a linguistic

luxury." Evans and Cornelia (1957) consider the passive as a sophisticated device that simply marks one as educated. However, Jespersen (1924), alluding to the above claims, offers the various reasons for using the passive voice as when:

i. The active subject is unknown or cannot be easily stated.

ii. The logical subject is evident (retrievable) from the context.

iii. There are special reasons (delicacy, tact) for not mentioning the active subject.

iv. Passive rather than the active subject attracts greater interest (or focus).

Functions of the Passive Voice

Keenan and Dryer (2006) note that the use of passives emphasises a specific element, in a similar way to other topicalizing constructions like clefting. This implies that in the passive the object in a described event is elevated above other elements in terms of its relative importance; that is, its syntactic prominence is utilised in communicating some form of significance. Furthermore, passives allow the backgrounding of another element: the subject of the active, usually the Agent of the described action. This reduction of focus or importance can be achieved by "relegating it to the status of an oblique NP" (Keenan & Dryer, 2006). This occurs by consigning the agent of the action to a *by-phrase*, as in *thematter was looked into by the police*. Focus can be further depleted by completely deleting the by-phrase, and therefore any explicit mention of the agent is avoided, as in *the matter was looked into*. Keenan and Dryer (2006) highlight the functions of the passive voice as follow:

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Firstly, they state that the passive voice can function alongside other "foregrounding constructions", for example, allowing clefting of a passivized sentence. This means a semantic non-equivalence of the passive and functionally similar constructions. Secondly, they posit that generally the passive can better be integrated into the grammar than topicalizations and dislocations, which "tend to be limited to main clauses." Finally, they state that there is an important similarity between active-voice and passive-voice constructions in terms of noun-phrase positions and Case marking. Thus, the foregrounded NP in a passive (the thematic Patient) appears in the same sentential position and the same Case as the subject in active-voice sentences, as does the NP within the passive by-phrase. They observe that this feature is also true in other languages that differ in terms of word order.

Review of Some Empirical Studies that have Applied Systemic Functional Linguistics to Media

As cited in Gemeh (2017), the media is the fourth estate after the three arms of every government, which are the legislature, the executive, and the judiciary. The media is therefore considered to have a responsibility to provide information on a variety of issues, which include sports, obituaries, politics, and advertisements (Schäffner & Bassnett, 2010). The media is essential in the lives of people all over the world. Many people depend on the media for information concerning individuals and the nation at large. The media has also become a very important source of data in the academic setting. Numerous researchers and analysts culled their data from the media during resseach. The researches are done using various theories, one of which is Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) or Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG). SFL or

SFG has been applied to a number of studies in distinct ways involving the media to explore how language is used in various contexts.

These researches cover the work of Clarence-Fincham (2001) which applied Systemic Functional Grammar as a module to highlight University students' ability to analyse media texts. The module he applied was to assist students to produce their own texts as well as guide them to comprehend the linguistic choices they make. Adopting the principles of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG), the study provided students with tools to assist them to understand the social and constructed nature of discourses, especially those usually found in media texts.The analysis showed that students were fully engaged and demonstrated a high level of motivation when they were asked to produce their own texts. That is, they could produce and analyse their own texts within the time allotted to them. It also indicated that majority of the students developed sufficient metalanguage to explain and analyze the linguistic processes involved in the production of texts. Thus, they could frequently and unambiguously make references to the social nature and purpose of texts.

Ansary and Babaii (2005) applied the SFL to genre analysis and examined distinctive rhetorical features of English newspaper editorials as an important public genre to identify the prototypical pattern of text development for editorials. They indicated in their study that the unmarked English newspaper editorial typically carries a headline and addresses an issue which may or may not require some background information occurring either before or after it – it starts off an argumentation for or against the addressed issue by an initiation statement that is optional, makes the arguments, and finally takes

a position about the issue discussed. They stated that this process may later reoccur. Thus, an argumentation process begins with a series of arguments and ends with the articulation of a position. This process can then be repeated until the planned conclusion is drawn. Their study suggests that the analyses of schematic macro structures of texts has established an invaluable way of looking at texts, but analysts should note the dangers of oversimplifying by assuming blocks of texts to be "mono-functional" and ignoring writers' complex purposes and "private intentions" (p. 36.), (see Bhatia, 1999). Also, they stressed that analysts should be aware of the challenge raised by Crooks (1986) of how to validate text analyses to ensure that they are not simply products of the analysts' intuitions as the practical study of texts.

Pattma (2009) employed SFL as a framework to explore amulet advertisements as examples of persuasive discourse extensively found in Thailand. The study focused on the advertisements of amulets and Buddha images seen prevalently in the printed media – leaflets, newspapers, magazines, and books. This was carried out by analysing context and lexico-grammar strata. Thus, the study aimed at investigating three contextual values – field, tenor, and mode and three lexico-grammatical metafunctions – textual, interpersonal, and experiential. The study discovered ten generic stages constituting the generic structural potential of amulet advertisements – the contextual stratum.

It realized that the persuasive goal of advertising is motivated and highlighted by amulet attribution and production where readers are persuaded by a high expectation of success. The study also revealed in terms of the lexico-grammar stratum that there were three modes of meaning: textually, in

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which the vast majority of Themes was unmarked topical Themes. That is, the advertisements was organized through the textual Theme (conjunctions). This amulet was also constructed by marked Themes which were expressed through Location in time and space, manner of quality, cause of reason. Interpersonally, it was discovered that declarative clauses were considerably selected. His results show that this was highly motivated, because the amulet advertisement was an informative text in nature. Its focus was on providing information of the product attribute, production, and experiences. Thus, the sales message was implicitly found throughout the text. Experientially, it reveals that the amulet advertisement is construed by different text types. The text involves its various participants in different participant roles associated with different process types. In terms of field contextual value, it shows that advertising text is conveyed to a mass audience with an ultimate aim to promote and persuade customers to purchase goods-and-services. The study suggests that the amulet advertisement is largely concerned with actions and events.

Figueiredo (2010) explored from a systemic functional linguistics perspective, the relation among the concepts of *context*, *register*, *genre* and language education with the aim of highlighting the connection of these concepts with two notions that have a direct demeanour on language teaching or learning–the appropriateness of linguistic forms to achieve definite communicative purposes and the relation between text and context. His task comprises the analysis of a reader's letter published by *Newsweek Magazine*. This reveals that people utterly understand a text if they are familiar with its context. That is, as social human beings, all their interactional contexts are

social, and involve people doing things with their lives (field), interacting with others (tenor) and using some communicational conduit and abstraction to do so (mode). Additionally, their social contexts involve people participating in staged, goal-oriented activities (genres). Thus, the register variables of field, tenor and mode represent the attempt of the school of Systemic Functional Linguistics to understand and explain the distinct situational contexts in which people operate and interact. It also shows that genre represents an attempt to examine the context of culture, especially in terms of language teaching or learning.

Moji (2011) investigated the language used in the editorials which serve as the founder for decoding the different functions in which editorials are put to use. The study focused on editorial selected from the *Guardian* newspaper from the month of October to November 2010. Using SFG, the study analyzed the Mood system, the Theme system and the Transitivity system. The study revealed that in terms of mood structure, editorials use assertive language rather than directives and interrogative. This makes the language of editorials certain and straight forward. The results also revealed that declarative sentences used in editorials can make the language of editorials judgmental which is different from the general language of the media. The findings showed that the use of assertive, unmarked themes, verbal process, and marked themes depict how some facts are realized.

Combining Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and SFG, Wiredu (2012) investigated linguistic choices made at the level of the sentence in the editorials of the *Daily Graphic* published in January 2008.The study selected 338 sentences from 22 editorials of the *Daily Graphic*. The study specifically

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focused on the complex sentence (the dependent clause) as used in the selected editorials. The study discovered that writers of the editorials, in the course of persuading readers, neglect readers' understanding and absorption of the message put across. The study also found out that the editors only used declarative sentences and depended on complex sentences which consisted of numerous rankshifted structures.

Viscido (2015) studied the linguistic choices through the Systemic Functional Linguistic theory and analysed articles from daily newspapers (American dailies and British dailies). The study was specifically situated in the particular context of foreign news reporting involving editorials. The focus of the study was on political figures, their thoughts and the feelings including specific structures, such as passive sentences which are determined by simple stylistic preference and the fruit of linguistic choices. The study revealed that even though the focus of information is on political figures, the articles concentrate on the thoughts and the feelings of other individuals involved in the adoption of prohibited issues as well. Moreover, the study suggests that the use of the same language or two varieties of a language, results in similarities between the newspapers, despite their nationality. That is, it is the type of newspaper that marks a divergence in the corpora and points to different linguistic choices.

Ong'onda (2016) applied SFG to study newspaper headlines on terrorism in the *Daily Nation* and the *Standard Newspaper* of Kenya. The study specifically adopted Halliday's theory of transitivity to investigate the representation of Al-Shabaab attacks at Westgate Mall in Nairobi, Kenya. The main objective of the research was to identify and explain how the Al-Shabaab

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are portrayed and represented through language used in the headlines of newspapers by the reporters. The findings of the study showed that Al-Shabaab is identified as the 'Actor' that always performs violent and chaotic acts and causes insecurity and challenges to state authority constituting the material processes. Thus, all the material processes are related to damage, destruction, and semantic field of violence and chaos such as attack, shatters, kill, massacre, claim, break, turn, injure and rears. The findings also showed that material and relational processes, dominate the other processes, which indicates that the whole process of terrorism is concerned with actions and events. The results revealed the linguistic features that contribute to the construction of negative image of the Al-Shabaab. The findings further showed that the grammatical choices in newspaper reports played a role that covertly express the writers' perspectives towards Al-Shabaab, which affect the readers' opinion making process.

Adjei (2017), in her research, employed the theory of SFG to study elaboration, extension and enhancement relations of clause complexes in the editorials of Ghanaian daily newspaper (the *Daily Graphic*). The findings revealed that the clause complexes are of elaboration, extension and enhancement. That is, the results showed that enhancement is highly used followed by elaboration and extension respectively. In the study, it was discovered that the frequent use of extension indicates that the text is mainly organized to give more information. The study also revealed that the use of enhancing clauses suggests that the writer provides the reader with the necessary circumstantial information to be able to understand the sequence of events in the editorials. Finally, the findings showed that some nexuses in the

text have very complex structures that comprise different layers indicating the degree of grammatical depth between clauses in a clause complex. That is, a feature which shows that the text belongs to the written mode. The study suggested a further study on a comprehensive analysis of Theme, Mood, Transitivity, Reference, Coherence, Lexical Density and other complexes such as nominal group complexes.

It is noteworthy that the above studies applied SFL to study the language of media and context. On the contrary, the aspect that differentiates between the aforementioned researches and this present study lies in the fact that some of them (for instance, Pattma, 2009; Figueiredo, 2010) focused on the language use and context of situation, but did not concentrate on the pervasive linguistic feature that makes their registers used unique.

Some Studies on the Language of Newspapers and Editorials

Thomas (n.d.) at the University of North Florida, states that newspapers are published collections generally of brief articles that provide information on present events and interests. According to Gemeh (2017), newspapers are sometimes published daily, weekly, and bi-weekly. He expounds that newspapers can focus on national or international matters or might be targeted strictly to a particular community or locality. Some aspects of newspapers cover sports, entertainment, funeral announcements among others. One of the important features of the newspaper is the editorial page. According to Wiredu (2012), newspaper editorials are pointers to readers who need guidance on how to deal with events or news. Hence, they are referred to as leading articles. He further explains that newspapers are also based on the editorial line of publication and its political ideologies. In addition, he

elucidates that editorials also belong to the category of written discourses that are usually a representation of a dialogue between the writer and the anticipated reader.

Many researchers have conducted studies on newspapers and editorials. A few of such studies have been illustrated below. Yankah (1994) examined the coverage of environmental issues in the Ghanaian media. The study covered environmental news published in two state-owned newspapers (*People's Daily Graphic* and the *Ghanaian Times*). The areas studied include: dates of publication of news on the environment, category of story (spot news, feature, picture-story, press release, and editorial), prominence given, length of stories, and aspect of environment treated. The findings revealed that there was the appearance of a general concern with environmental hazards, but relating their importance to other issues was absent. That is, the awareness of the impact of population growth and soil erosion on the environment was not created. The study discovered that reporters have neither special interest nor special skill in reporting on the environment. The study also found that most of the features were contributed by United Nations (UN) agencies or foreign news agencies.

Kwadzobokor (2000) studied ambiguity of the language of the *Daily Graphic* to determine ambiguous instances. The study found 92 instances of ambiguity that covered the categories of ambiguity of words (lexical ambiguity), word-order (misplaced modifier) ambiguity, pronominal ambiguity and the ambiguity that is caused by careless or defective punctuation. The study revealed that ambiguity can be avoided by the writers through their ability to disambiguate the ambiguous structures identified in the

ambiguity. The study discovered that this can be effective when the editor thinks and makes direct and concise approach towards expressing his thought on an issue. The study concluded that editors should use language purposefully and consciously to communicate their thoughts effectively to enhance clarity of expression.

Westin and Geisler (2001) analysed diachronic change in 20th-century newspaper editorials published between 1900 and 1993 based on the multi-dimensional framework as presented in Biber (1988, 1995). The study aimed at analyzing the 20th-century British newspaper editorials with regard to five dimensions: involved versus informational production, narrative versus non-narrative concerns, the degree of referential elaboration, persuasive or argumentative focus, and abstract versus non-abstract style. The data for the study consisted of newspapers of the *Guardian*, the *Daily Telegraph* and *The Times.* The results showed that through the 20th century, British newspaper editorials became more persuasive and argumentative but less narrative, less abstract, less dependent on referential elaboration, and resulted in more informal language. The findings indicated linguistic and stylistic differences among the three newspapers. That is, the language of the *Guardian* was found to be more involved, less explicit and abstract while the languages of the *Daily Telegraph* and *The Times* were more informal.

Izadi   and   Saghaye-Biria   (2007)   employed   Said's   concept   of Orientalism and van Dijk's concept of the ideological square to analyze three elite American newspaper editorials' coverage of Iran's nuclear programme. Through Critical Discourse Analysis, the study expounded the ideological representation of U.S. policies toward Iran's nuclear programme in the

editorial positions of three elite U.S. newspaper (*The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and *The Wall Street Journal*) editorials from 1984 to 2004. The analysis focused on the argumentative structures used to promote a certain perspective on events, players or agents, and policy recommendations. The findings revealed how the three elite newspaper editorials selectively framed the issues surrounding the Iranian nuclear dispute by employing linguistic, stylistic, and argumentative maneuvers. The study also found out that in the case of Iran's nuclear programme, the issue of trust plays a more central role than the actual existence of evidence for Iran's possession of a clandestine nuclear weapons programme. The study further found out that *The Wall Street Journal* and *The Washington Post* illustrated mostly Orientalist arguments than *The New York Times* did.

Osam (2008) through *Critical* Discourse Analysis, examined "Letters to the Editor" published in the *Ghanaian Chronicle* that focused on Rawlings. The study aimed to examine the images of Rawlings, a former Head of State of Ghana, as represented in "Letters to the Editor" published in the *Ghanaian Chronicle* in 2000. The findings of the analysis showed that the writers of these letters manipulate various discourse structures to portray Rawlings in a negative representation. Schematically, most of the letters follow an argument structure pattern where a view of Rawlings is presented followed by the evidence supporting that view. Thus, the result showed that ex-president Rawlings is presented as an individual with greatly flawed character traits who superintended over a failed political administration.

Oyero (2011) studied how the media cover children's issues, with a view to establish whether the media help to expand or constrain the

understanding of children's rights. The study also examined the extent to which the newspapers reported child abuse. The study compared two newspapers each from Nigeria and Ghana through content analysis. The data for the study comprised all newspapers published in Nigeria and Ghana between 1999 and 2003. The study specifically analysed Nigerian national dailies (*Daily Times* and *The Guardian*) and Ghanaian newspapers (the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide*). The results of the study showed that the extent of coverage given to child rights by *The Guardian, Daily Times,* the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide* newspapers is a clear evidence that inadequate attention has been given to children's issues. The findings also showed that Ghanaian newspapers gave greater attention to child rights than Nigerian newspapers did. It also indicated that government officials were the most quoted of all the sources of categories in Ghana's *Daily Graphic.* This means that the government is commitment to children's well-being. The results further showed that government-owned newspapers (*Daily Times* and *Daily Graphic*) reported more on child rights than the privately owned newspapers (*The Guardian* and *Daily Guide*) did. The study suggested that Nigerian newspapers have to improve on their performance because Ghanaian newspapers do better than Nigerian newspapers in reportage of children's rights. It further added that the newspapers should strive to balance the format for presenting child right issues in order to achieve adequate presentation of the details of child rights.

Nkansah (2012) studied reporting verbs in front pages of the *Daily Graphic* and the *Ghanaian Times*. The study analyzed semantically the reporting verbs that dominated newspaper front pages drawing on Thomson

and Ye's (1991) classification and tense of reporting verbs. The results showed two types of reporting verbs (i.e. the present tense and the past tense). The results also revealed speaker's stance and writer's stance where by the former was used frequently. The findings indicated that in front page stories, writers usually use the past tense.

Tongsibsong (2012) investigated structural organization of broadsheet and tabloid newspaper editorials (*The Washington Post* and *The New York Post*). The study examined common move structures, the similar and different attributes in the move structures, and communicating intentions of the genre. The study revealed that there is one common move structure in the broadsheet newspaper editorials and this consists of four moves. The study discovered two common move structures in the editorials of the tabloid newspaper. The genre analysis revealed six similar features in the editorials of both broadsheet and tabloid newspapers. The study further discovered that the communicating intentions of the English editorials genre mainly is to motivate and persuade readers to consider ideas or to give opinions that oppose or support the information provided in those editorials as well as to express strong opinions in order to stimulate some reaction from readers.

Bonyadi and Samuel (2013) explored the kind of textual and rhetorical strategies that *The New York Times* (English) and *Persian* newspapers employ for propagating their ideologies through a contrastive textual analysis of selected headlines taken from their editorials. This study concentrated on certain features of editorial headlines and their important role in monitoring and directing readers' attention by making the interface between the linguistic analysis of newspaper editorial headlines and teaching of English as a foreign

language as a relevant issue in language teaching. The aim was to investigate how the editorial writers in the two newspapers try to encapsulate the content of the editorials and, hence, direct both the attention and perception of their readers towards their intended meaning through the headlines. The results of the study indicated that headlines in the two papers presented a subjective attitude of the writers (newspapers) towards the topic. The study also identified certain differences between the two sets of headlines in terms of presupposition and rhetorical devices.

Diedong (2013) adopted content analysis approach to investigate how the print media address health issues in Ghana. To determine how the news media empower people with knowledge on health issues in order to achieve greater health, the study analyzed three newspapers – the *Daily Graphic*, the *Ghanaian Times*, and *Public Agenda.* The study examined how health issues are framed and the kinds of solutions offered to address them to empower readers towards attainment of greater health. The study showed that even though Ghanaian newspapers publicize straight news stories that may sometimes be one-sided, they make citizens aware of health issues in Ghana. The results showed that the media can stimulate discussion on problems and challenges of the health situation of the society. That is, if the stories are effectively framed, they can empower and direct people towards greater health. The study, therefore, suggested that newspaper establishments, health agencies and institutions, and schools of communication studies should collaborate and devise strategies on how best to equip journalists with specialized knowledge and skills to enable them write articles on health problems based on their expertise on such issues.

Adika and Klu (2014) investigated the nature of errors involved in the use of the relative clause in modification in Ghanaian newspapers. The study examined   how the three main relative clauses; namely, defining, non-defining and sentential have been used in the *Daily Graphic* and the *Daily Guide*. The results showed five main types of violation in how the relative clause has been used in the selected newspapers. These include: using the relative clause redundantly, ambiguously using relative clauses embedded with passive structures, violating the collocation restrictions of relative pronouns, omitting commas in non-restrictive use of the relative clause, and omitting commas before sentential clauses. The results showed that errors in the use of the relative clauses in the newspapers reflect the poor state of knowledge among some educated users on some aspects of English grammar. The study suggested that the second language users need to master the syntactic and semantic principles governing the use of the modifiers. This is because violation, for instance, in the principles governing the use relative clause will lead to ambiguity and the distortion of information relationships within a clause complex. Also, in a second language context like the linguistic situation of Ghana, the school system, from basic through higher education should stress on the aspect of grammar that deals with modifiers and the complexities involved in relative clause.

Okyere (2014) employed Lakoff and Johnson (1992) Contemporary Theory of Metaphor to investigate the use of metaphor in the Ghanian sports newspapers. The study discovered   all the types of metaphor: conceptual metaphor, conduit metaphor and event structure metaphor, time metaphor and imaginable or idiomatic metaphor. The study also revealed that the metaphor

preforms four functions; these include: decorative, referential, descriptive and idiomatic functions and these functions are present in various headlines. The study revealed instances of other devices such as simile and metonymy used to perform similar functions as metaphor. The study found that the most frequently used metaphor is conceptual metaphor and the least used is time metaphor.

Using the Engagement system of the Appraisal theory, Ntsane (2015) studied the management of interaction between the writer and the readers in newspaper editorials. The study specifically explored how editorial writers involve their readers as participants in the discourse while maintaining their authorial status. The data for the study were selected from the newspaper editorials of Lesotho (*Public Eye* and *Lesotho Times*) and South Africa (*Sunday Times* and *Mail* and *Guardian*). The study employed both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The aims of the study include identifying Engagement resources that are used in newspaper editorials and also how these resources are used. It was also to find the relationship between the choice of editorial genre and the choice of the used resources. The findings showed that contractive resources are somewhat more used than expansive resources. The slight difference suggests that the editorial writers try to maintain a balance between bringing in the readers in a communicative event and maintaining their authority as the writers. The findings also indicated that Engagement resources are used in the same way by different newspapers. It was also revealed that there was no clear difference between newspapers from Lesotho and South Africa.

Sarfo, Amponsah and Addo-Danquah (2015) through Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), studied how some private newspapers loyal to the cause of National Democratic Congress (NDC) and New Patriotic Party (NPP) reported the proceedings of the 2012 Ghana Presidential Election Petition, focusing on biased headlines. The study analyzed data selected from four private newspapers, namely: the *New Statesman*, the *Daily Guide* which are affiliated to the (NPP) and the *Daily Democrat* and the *Herald* which sympathize with the NDC. The results showed that the headlines studied recorded a very high percentage of bias. The study also found out that the reportage of a particular newspaper is influenced by which side of the petition the newspaper supported, and subsequently uses word choice as the main type of bias. The linguistic choices employed include negative words, invectives and loaded words. The results further revealed that the above choice of words (negative words, invectives and loaded words or expressions) were the categories of words used in the newspapers' reportage. The study concluded that in order to form personal opinions about which newspapers are objective or bias in their reportage, readers need to read ahead the headline and compare the headline and the full story of the entire newspaper.

Akugri (2016) adopted Swales (1990) and Bhatia (1993) to explore the move structure and some lexico-grammatical resources in 30 editorial section of newspapers in the Ghanaian media. The study revealed that the editorials are organized in four moves: *providing the editorial heading, presenting background to the issue under discussion, discussing the issue and passing columnist general comment on the issue raised*. The study confirmed that the editorial headline was captured in the form of statements and questions. The

findings showed that choice of words in move 2 and 3 were determined by the subject matter discussed in the editorial section.

Ofori (2016) examined the kinds of Intertextuality used in the representation of insults in pro-New Patriotic Party (NPP) and National Democratic Congress (NDC) newspapers in Ghana through Critical Discourse Analysis. The study applied Intertextuality to reveal what both pro-NPP and pro-NDC papers consider newsworthy (i.e. whose insult or voice is reported and whose is not). The study also adopted Intertextuality to show how the in-group's insults are represented in relation to the out-group and also identify the underlying ideologies in the representation of insults in Ghanaian political discourse. The study showed that the *Daily Guide*, *The New Statesman*, and *The Chronicle* (pro -NPP newspapers) as well as *The Informer, The Palaver*, *The Al-Hajj*, *Enquirer, Radio Gold online* (pro-NDC newspapers) employ direct, strategic and indirect quotations to report insults and voices of the people they consider newsworthy. That is, the findings showed that NPP or NDC papers present themselves in positive terms, and others in negative terms. Thus, the results revealed the manifestation of positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation in the representation of insults in both NPP and NDC papers. Ideologically, the study showed that both NPP and NDC papers adopt strategy to secretly agitate their principles which causes polarization in groups between the outlets.

Gemeh (2017) considered the use of specific Indefinite Noun Phrase as a specificity marker in editorial discourse selected from the *Daily Graphic* and *The Mirror* published in 2016.Using   von Heusinger's (2010) notions of specificity, the analysis focused on the occurrence of definite and indefinite

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noun phrases in the selected editorials, the types of specificity that occur in the editorials as well as the communicative function they play in editorial discourse. The study identified that there are several instances of the occurrence of indefinite noun phrases in sentences in the editorials. The study discovered that definite noun phrases occurred most in the selected editorials than the indefinite noun phrases. Also, the study detected that while referential specificity dominates in the selected editorials, epistemic specificity is less used. The study concluded that whenever a speaker or writer uses a specific indefinite noun phrase, the person has a specific referent in mind.

Through genre analysis, Wornyo and Klu (2017) examined the editorials of the *Daily Graphic* newspaper as texts constructed in English as a Second Language (ESL) setting and the editorials of the *New York Times* of America as texts constructed in Anglo-American English speaking environment. The study aimed to discover the differences and the similarities between the rhetorical strategies used to report the news in the two newspaper editorials. The study also investigated the effect of culture on journalistic style and strategies used to present the news in the two newspaper editorials. The study also examined the micro-genres of the newspaper editorials and how the two newspaper editorials create and frame public opinion. The study found significant differences in the rhetorical strategies used to present information by the *Daily Graphic* and the *New York Times* in the two socio-cultural environments. The results of the analysis of the micro-genres of the two newspapers showed some similarities and differences in the way the two newspapers frame the information that they present to the public. The findings revealed that the editorials of the *Daily Graphic* appeals to state institutions

and individuals involved in the issues discussed but the *New York Times* criticizes and questions state institutions and individuals for their role in the issues discussed. That is, most of the editorials of the *Daily Graphic* perform the social function of exhortation by encouraging and urging individuals, institutions and government to take certain actions while most of the editorials of the *New York Times* perform the social function of questioning the actions of individuals, institutions and government and pointing out what they should have done. Thus, the dominant micro-genre prevalent in the Ghanaian newspaper is media hortatory exposition. On the other hand, majority of the editorials of the *New York Times* fall under media argumentative exposition micro-genre.

Empirical Studies on Register Variations

A number of researches have been carried out on the relationship between spoken and written registers. These studies have approached written and spoken language from different angles. The section below reviews a few of such studies since they relate to the present research.

The earlier research on the register variant was started by the claim made by Aristotle in relation to register variation – "each kind of rhetoric has its own appropriate style" (cited in Chafe & Tannen, 1987: 384). In other words, the style of written text differs from that of spoken text. Thus, as far back as the classical period, Aristotle pointed out that there was a distinction between the two modes in terms of their linguistic manifestations and functions.

Building on the above assertion, Besnier (1988) investigated the structural relationship between spoken and written registers of Nukulaelae

Tuvaluan, a Polynesain language. He studied written and spoken texts separately. He has argued, however, that the structural relationship between spoken and written language must consider "social context" (Besnier, 1988:707) and this must include studying the difference between different kinds of written language and different types of spoken language. This approach is obviously different from others that do not consider context. Here, Besnier applies three cross-linguistic dimensions: attitudinal versus authoritative discourse, informational versus interactional focus and rhetorical manipulation versus structural complexity. His study found out that "spoken and written registers are stylistically interrelated in a complex manner" (Besnier, 1988: 732). This conclusion challenges the assumption that written registers are more detached because they use linguistic choices which include agentless passives and nominalisation while spoken language makes uses of linguistic elements such as first and second person pronouns (e.g., I, We; You), emphatic particles and direct quotations.

Polak (1999) explores the differences between oral and written language by studying the use of subordinate clauses, the length of the noun string, the number of explicit syntactic constituents in the clause, and the frequency of reference by means of pronouns yand deictic particles. He analyses the prose style of the Hebrew Bible which shows that the difference in oral and written texts is rooted in syntactic preferences. He concludes that a text which is more rooted in a scribal context has more complex language in hypotaxis, length of noun string, and several explicit sentence constituents. He states, however, that if a text is closer to spoken language and oral literature, it has simpler syntactic structure, reference and clause length (ibid.). His

conclusion indicates that the style, form and objective of the Bible and newspaper are different in terms of genre.

Biber (1988, 1995; Biber et al, 1998; 1999, 2002), elaborating on register, introduced the Multidimensional Analysis, an approach to linguistic variation that describes textual relations among spoken and written genres, using qualitative and quantitative approaches. The study focused on a wide variety of genres from both speech and writing in order to describe the relationship among them, specifically the linguistic features that speech and writing have in relation to the dimensions. His interest was in what dimensions are shared by the different genres – press reportage, editorials, press reviews, biographies, academic prose, general fiction, science fiction, personal letters, face-to-face conversation, broadcast, spontaneous speeches, planned speeches, telephone conversation etc.

Biber (1988), for instance, compares spoken and written language along the dimensions of linguistic variation by investigating into the Lancaster-Oslo-Bergen Corpus of British English (LOB), the London-Lund Corpus of Spoken English, and the Brown University Corpus of written American English as well as a collection of professional and personal letters. Biber (1988) concludes that the persistent co-occurrence of linguistic features (that is, dimensions of variation) is one major way to differentiate between speech and writing.

> Thus, "a text can be described as nominal or verbal, structurally complex or structurally simple, formal or informal, restricted or elaborated, or involved or detached based on the linguistic features that

characterise it as well as the situation in which the text occurred" (Biber, 1988: 12, 13).

The linguistic features Biber studies include "private verbs, contractions, present tense verbs, word length, conjuncts etc." (cf. Biber, 1988: 13; Biber et al., 1998: 148). The situation that Biber mentions refers to the different roles that the "participants play, their relationships, the setting, the topic, the purpose, social evaluation, relation of participants to the text and the channel" (Biber, 1988: 29; Biber & Conrad, 2009: 39-46). All these define the dimensions of variation in the spoken and written registers. Biber, thus, concludes that speech and writing overlap. In other words, there is no absolute difference between speech and writing with regards to the dimensions; however, there can be some "difference in the form of speech and writing considering the different cognitive constraints on writers and speakers" (Biber, 1988: 160).

This important observation Biber (1988) makes reinforces the conclusion that other studies (such as Tannen, 1982; Perez-Sabater et al., 2008) make about the lack of absolute difference between speech and writing. This indicates the possibility of overriding and blurring the salient linguistic and situational characteristics of the two modes. That is, there can be integration of spoken and written register in either speech or writing. Johansson (1995) supports this argument that there is no single dimension which separates speech and writing for there are text types like prepared lectures, which are close to writing while other types of writing like private letters and electronic mail which are close to speech. In these situations,

therefore, context must be considered to establish the communicative purpose of the spoken or written language.

Furthermore, Biber's (1988) approach to register variation has influenced other researches in the field of language use and style. Biber et al. (2002: 41), for instance, examined register variation in the 'TOEFL 2000 Spoken and Written Academic Language Corpus.' They studied the writing of textbooks, course packs, course management among others, and looked at the speech of study groups, service encounters, class sessions, classroom management, office hours, and in-class groups. They concluded that written registers are informative, dense, in prose style and non narrative. Also, they have elaborated reference, few features of overt persuasion and an impersonal style. On the other hand, spoken registers have features of involvement, situated reference, more overt persuasion, and fewer features of impersonal style.

Like Biber's (1988) study, Biber et al. (2002) employed a Multidimensional Approach (MD) in examining register variation in speech and writing. The study used the quantitative steps of the MD (factor analysis) to analyse the distribution and co-occurrence of linguistic features in texts. Also, they studied register variation by looking at writing and speech in different contexts.

According to Johansson (1995), conversation, particularly face-to-face interaction is the prototypical form of speech. This is because–it has characteristics which we associate particularly with speech: it is spontaneous, interactive, and situation-dependent and multifunctional. Johansson further argues that – "if we can represent face-to-face interaction, we may assume that

we have the main mechanisms needed for the encoding of spoken material"
(Johansson, 1995:149). That is, there are categories of spoken language like
face-to-face conversation, telephone conversation, interview, debate,
commentary, demonstration, public speech etc. (ibid.), but among these
different categories of spoken language, face to-face conversation is the most
ubiquitous; that is, it is the most common naturally occurring form of speech
and spoken language. Therefore, speech can be represented by face-to-face
conversation, its archetypal form.

In Biber's (2004) study, therefore, it can be established that the range
of register variation in conversation represents spoken language or speech
generally. Biberanalysed the British English sub-corpus of the Longman
Spoken and Written English Corpus (LSWE Corpus) which was collected by
asking participants of different social backgrounds to record their
conversations for several days. In all, 164 texts (containing 4 million words)
were studied to identify a range of grammatical features including "word
classes, syntactic constructions, semantic classes and lexico-grammatical
classes" (Biber, 2004: 19).

Biber's (2004) study concluded that there are particular sets of
linguistic features which co-occur frequently in texts. The study added that
these linguistic features occur in positive and negative loadings in a
complementary distribution. That is,–"when a conversation has high frequency
of the positive set of features that same conversation will tend to have low
frequencies of the negative set of features, and vice versa" (Biber, 2004: 21).

Empirical Review on the Passive Voice

The previous section discussed a few studies carried out on the register variants. This section presents studies that have been conducted on the passive constructions. A number of studies have been carried out on the acquisition and comprehension of the English passive construction. These researches include Pinker et al. (1987) who investigate children's acquisition of passive constructions to invalidate the proposal that children are conservative – that is; they only generate passives for those verbs that they have heard passive sentences in the input. They organize experiments in which they expose lchildren of 3-8 years of age to novel verbs in either active or passive voice and test the children's ability to produce each verb in the voice in which they have heard and most essentially in the voice in which they have never heard. The results show that children produce passive participles which they never have heard in parental input. Nevertheless, after receiving tutorials on novel verbs in the active sentences, children easily utter passivised versions of active sentences when describing new events. It is obvious that young children's passives are not exclusively adjectival. In addition, the study generally suggests that a successful consideration of children's acquisition of the passive should take into account the thematic properties that characterize the passive constructions. Thus, there is a set of affectedness constraints that occur in distinct but identifiable forms including English verbal passive, adjectival passive, nominal passive and stranded- preposition passive.

Kirby (2010) investigates the factors that cause the delay in children's acquisition of passive constructions in a particular language. He evaluates the claim that: "difficulties with non-canonical semantics, rather than non-mature

subject-object A-chains, underlie young children's poor performance on the passive" (p.108). He employs 4- and 5-year-old English speaking children and involves them in series of tests on their comprehension of matrix passives and passives embedded under raising-to object (RO: want, need) and object control (OC: ask, tell) verbs. The study indicates that although 4-year-olds fail to grasp the concepts of matrix passives and passives embedded under OC verbs, they correctly interpret passives under RO verbs. The results further suggest a *semantic scaffolding*(Kirby, 2009) account to children's comprehension of the passive that rests on the prototypicality of subjects being agents and objects being patients, and argue against the view that the difficulty with passives results from an inability to form A- chains.

Mack, Jennifer, Meltzer-Asscher, Barbieri and Thompson (2013) examine the neural correlates of processing passive sentences, which differ from other complex sentences in terms of representation (*i.e*., noun phrase (NP)-movement) and processing (*i.e*., the time course of syntactic reanalysis). They allow the target informant (adults) to listen to passive and active sentences and perform a sentence-picture verification task using functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI). The results of the study suggest that in both younger and older adults, comprehension of passive sentences is supported by bilateral IFG and left posterior temporo-occipital regions. They discover that these findings largely relate to previous research on the comprehension of complex sentences, which has linked left IFG activation to syntactic complexity and left posterior temporal activation to verb argument structure integration. Hence, although the linguistic and psycholinguistic

structures differ from passive sentences and other complex structures, they may be largely supported by the same brain regions.

Ambridge, Bidgood, Pine, Rowland and Freudenthal (2015) research into the psychological reality of a semantic constraint on the passive in the adult grammar, which is originally proposed by Pinker et al. (1987) (See also Pinker, 1989). This 'affectedness' constraint is posited to explain the phenomenon that certain verbs appear to resist passivization altogether (e.g., *₵5 was cost by the book). However, the findings of several previous comprehension and production priming studies refuse the existence of this constraint: Passives with experience theme verbs (e.g., see), which score low for affectedness, do not differ from either agent-patient (e.g., kick) or theme-experiencer verbs (e.g., frighten) in their propensity to prime the production of passive sentences, and–relative to actives–do not show any particular decrement in picture-choice tasks. Their study investigates whether these null effects result in part from the paradigms specified are used in these previous studies. These involve (a) a categorical measure of verb semantics (agent-patient/theme-experiencer/experiencer-theme verbs), (b) a 'fast' online task (comprehension or production priming) and (c) a binary outcome variable (passive comprehended/produced or not). In contrast, their study uses (a) a graded measure of verb semantics (semantic ratings from adult native speakers), (b) a 'slow' offline judgment task, as well as a 'fast' online comprehension task and (c) graded outcome variables (grammatical acceptability on a 5-point scale / comprehension reaction time).

The findings of their study suggest that passive syntax is indeed semantically constrained in adults. Across three studies, an independent

measure of the extent to which individual verbs instantiate semantic properties relevant to the constraint (*affectedness*) significantly predicted the relative acceptability of passive sentences to a greater extent than active sentences. This pattern of findings suggests that any successful model of adults' linguistic knowledge, of whatever theoretical persuasion, will have to incorporate–in some form or other–this probabilistic semantic constraint.

Da̧browska and Street (2006: 604), in their study of passives, challenge a widely held assumption in linguistics: "that all normal speakers master the basic constructions of their language" and argue that proficiency with a particular structure depends on individual speakers' linguistic experience. They base their argument on an experimental study testing speakers' ability to interpret passive sentences. They realize some native speakers' difficulty in interpreting implausible passives (and, to some extent, implausible active sentences), which indicates that they may be relying more on semantic and pragmatic knowledge than on syntactic cues in language processing. Their experiment further reveals considerable differences in the level of ultimate attainment among native speakers which appear to be dependent on education.

They suggest that the splendid performance by the less educated non-native group is apparent that this effect is not solely attributable to differences in the sheer number of passive sentences in speakers' experience, in that it is very unlikely that this group encountered more passives than the corresponding native group. Thus, it appears the ability to process implausible non-canonical sentences also depends to some extent on metalinguistic skills, which may be achieved through explicit instruction in the second language.

Acquisition and comprehension of passives aside, there are numerous studies on passive constructions. Bohner (2001) examines the use of passive voice and other distancing text features as an expression of perceived responsibility of the victim. He aims to test in the realm of sexual violence the hypothesis: "that the passive voice is used to put the actor in the background and the acted-upon person in the focus of discourse" (p.515). He organizes the target informants to watch a silent video segment depicting a rape whose circumstances, depending on condition, can or cannot be easily interpreted in terms of rape myths; after which they write down what they see, judge the responsibility of assailant and victim, and complete a rape-myth acceptance scale. The results of the study indicate that participants use the passive voice more frequently to describe the rape itself vs. other actions they have watched. The research also shows that the circumstances of rape are easily interpretable in terms of rape myths, and the use of the passive voice correlates positively with rape-myth acceptance and perceives responsibility of the victim, and negatively perceives responsibility of the assailant.

Porter (2005) examines 34 nurses' patient progress notes from computer-based in-patient records culled from a local regional medical centre. The study focuses on the extensive use of the passive voice as a defining characteristic of medical discourse and analyses nurses' notes on the basis of the frequency and function of passive voice usage. The study indicates that of the enormous transitive verb phrases used with human agents in the nurses' notes, the passive voice appears most frequently. The passive verbs refer to actions performed by the nurse writing the note, patients' actions, and actions performed by other hospital personnel. The use of the passive voice seems to

serve the rhetorical function of deferring attention away from the agent, the nurse, and towards the patient or the materials being used to treat the patient, much as it is used in scientific writing. The study reveals that the passive voice is sometimes used inconsistently, and its use varies from nurse to nurse, even within the same unit.

Xiao et al. (2006) investigate features and genre variations of passive constructions from a contrastive perspective on the basis of corpus data. To provide for systematic account of passive constructions in two languages (English and Chinese), they reveal that passive constructions in both languages express a basic passive meaning as well as a range of differences in terms of overall frequencies, syntactic features and functions, semantic properties, and distributions across genres. The conclusion from this research is that the above differences are closely related to the origins and functions of passive constructions in English and Chinese. The study also shows that comparable monolingual corpora provide a useful tool for contrastive linguistics.

Plecháčková (2007) conducts a research on the system of the passive voice in English and in Czech to shed more light particularly on the differences in the passive voice in the two languages. He seeks to verify the assumption that: "since there are differences between the passive in English and Czech from the linguistic point of view, then ,there should be some differences in dealing with the passive in the translations from one language into another" (p.6). He adopts the original works of fiction and their translations of the passive in two English: *The Lord of the Rings*: *The Fellowship of the Ring, Catch 22 and two Czech: Válka s mloky,*

Osudydobréhovojáka Švejkazasvětovéválky. By examining the passive voice in the original works and their translations, the results reveal that the frequency of the passive in both English originals is higher than in their Czech translations and conversely, the frequency of the passive in the Czech originals is lower than in their English translations, which is in agreement with the claim that: 'the passive voice is utilized more frequently in English than in Czech' (ibid.).

Laanemets (2009) examines the use of passive voice in written and spoken Danish, Norwegian and Swedish (the three Scandinavian languages) by investigating the commonalities and differences among the three languages in terms of their lexicon, syntax and pronunciation. The analysis indicates that generally the use of the passive voice is considerably higher in written language than in spoken language. The study shows on the basis of a genre-specific examination that the use of the passive voice highly depends on genre (see Biber et al., 1999). The findings indicate that morphological passives are most frequently used than periphrastic passives in all the three languages. Also, the passive is most frequent in terms of overt agent phrase and the nature of the subject.

Nofal (2011) examines the structures and types of passive constructions in the Holy Qur'an. Through linguistic analysis, he identifies the forms, structures as well as the relevant transformations employed to express the meaning of passives in the Holy Qur'an as a register. He finds that voice, as a grammatical category, generally exists in Arabic and specifically in the Holy Qur'an. The findings obviously manifest that active sentences are more frequently used than passive constructions in the Holy Qur'an. In addition, the

Holy Qur'an has agentless passives occurring more frequently than the agentive passives. The results further show that the less number of agentive passive construction explicitly serves absolute purposes declared by the Almighty Allah.

Naseeb (2011), employing the descriptive-contrastive-interpretive approach, studies the use of passive constructions in English and Arabic to find out which of the two languages uses the passive voice more frequently. The researcher selects a sample from a study corpus which consists of two types of sub-corpora: parallel and comparable. The parallel sub-corpus consists of three original scientific texts in English together with three Arabic translations of these texts. The comparable sub-corpus also comprises the three translated Arabic texts together with three original Arabic texts. Both the translated and original Arabic texts were scientific texts, written in Modern Standard Arabic. The study investigates scientific texts because such texts make more use of passive constructions than others. Moreover, all the nine texts in the study corpus roughly belong to the same period of time and text type. The results show that English scientific texts use more passive constructions in their sentences as compared to their translated Arabic texts. The study also reveals that there are many options available to the English-Arabic translator for translating passive verbs in English.

There have also been a few studies which have concentrated on the teaching of active and passives. Bielak et al. (2013) adopt a functionally-oriented linguistic theory (cognitive grammar (CG) to study the characterization of the semantics of the English active and passive voice. The research focuses on the grammatical instruction covering the form and

meaning/use of the English voices based on CG with those of teaching based on standard pedagogical grammar rules. He engages his participants in pre-test and post-test preceded by a background questionnaire. The results point to relatively high effectiveness of both instructional options in fostering the use of the target structures in both more controlled and more spontaneous performance, with traditional instruction being more successful than that based on CG with respect to the latter. These results indicate that overt agentive phrases are more frequently used in connection with periphrastic passive constructions than with the morphological passive; there are dominant use of inanimate subjects in connection with morphological passives on the one hand, and dominant uses of animate subjects in connection with periphrastic passives on the other hand.

Purnama (2014) studies the challenges which Indonesian students encounter regarding the use of English passive voice. He employs three theories: English Grammar, Error Analysis, and Language Teaching. The theory of English Grammar is used to ascertain and understand the structure of English passive voice. Error Analysis is used to analyze the students' errors based on the Linguistic Category Taxonomy, particularly, for the English passive voice, and Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis is used to find out the similarity and the difference between English and Indonesian passive voice. Language teaching theory is used to highlight the teaching and learning process and the important things that have to be prepared prior to the process. He aims to find out the differences and the similarities of the two languages by undertaking a comparative study. Based on the theory of English and Indonesian grammar particularly on the passive voice, the findings show that

there are some similarities and differences between English and Indonesian passive voice. The similarities are: (1) both need transitive verb in active sentence to be able to change into passive form, (2) in both English and Indonesian passive sentences, the object in the active sentence becomes the subject in passive sentence and the subject becomes the part of *by phrase* or *oleh*, and (3) in both English and Indonesian passive voice, the *by phrase* or *oleh* can be absent if it is not essential to the meaning of the sentence. The differences between English and Indonesian passive voice are: (1) the formula of the English passive voice is different from the Indonesian passive voice. The English passive voice uses the past participle verbs consisting of regular and irregular verbs, while the Indonesian passive verbs contain affixes (di-/ter) or without any prefix if the subject is pronoun substitute, and there are no regular or irregular verbs. The English passive verbs deal with tenses; on the other hand, in Bahasa Indonesia there are no tenses because the time reference does not determine the verb forms in the sentence to express the time signal; (2) the steps in making English and Indonesian passive voice are also different.

Additionally, Nourdad and Aghayi (2014) conduct a comparative study on the effect of form and focus on forms on learning passive voice in different tenses. They employ adult EFL learners of intermediate level to take part in a quasi-experimental study. They group the participants into two and give them a pre-test; one group receives focus on form instruction on passive voices in different tenses and the ones in the second group experience focus on forms teaching techniques. The results of the post test revealed a marked difference between two groups with focus on form group outperforming focus on forms

group in learning passive voice of different tenses. The findings confirm that the focus on form is more successful than the focus on forms teaching in teaching passive voice of simple, continuous, perfect, and perfect continuous in past, present, and future.

Finally, Femmer, Kučera and Vetrò (2014) seek to find out whether the use of passive voice in requirements influence other activities in Software Engineering (SE). They focus on domain modelling by designing an experiment, in which they ask students to draw a domain model from a given set of requirements written in active or passive voice. By comparing the completeness of the resulting domain model and counting the number of missing actors, domain objects and their associations with respect to a specified solution, they realize that while there is no distinction in the number of missing actors and objects, participants which receive passive sentences miss almost twice the associations. The findings indicate that the commonly discussed danger of missing actors does not show to be substantial; but there is a statistically significant gap in the understanding of how concepts are related in a sentence in passive voice. The study also shows that passive sentences complicate understanding how certain domain concepts are interconnected.

Relationship between the Present Study and the Previous Studies

Several researchers have adopted the Systemic Functional Linguistics as a framework to study various aspects of language use. The register variant has also been studied by many scholars. Also, a number of studies have been carried out on the English passive voice from different perspectives. Hence, the findings of the studies enumerated above are relevant to the present study because passive voice is constructed in both spoken and written registers and

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can be studied as a register category embodied in Systemic Functional Linguistics.

It is important to stress that most of the above-mentioned studies on the passive voice consider different aspects of passives in non-African geographical settings (except Owusu-Ansah, 1991) but none of them focuses on the pervasiveness of passives as a linguistic feature of newspaper editorials in Ghana. In order to fill this gap in the literature, the researcher, thus, aims to ascertain the use of passive voice in the Ghanaian context. This is to contribute to the previous knowledge on the use of Systemic Functional Linguistics in grammar and particularly on the use of passive constructions. The focus of this study is the published editorials in Ghanaian newspapers. The researcher concentrates on the contextual variables and the passive constructions used in the selected newspaper editorials. This is to bring to light the register variables, forms and functions of passive constructions used in editorials. In a nutshell, the study is to highlight the link between the situation of the Ghanaian newspaper editorials and the passive voice as the linguistic choice of this study. The study is also to reveal the connection between the pervasive passive form and the communicative purpose of editorials.

Chapter Summary

This chapter reviewed existing literature related to the present study. It has reviewed theories and concepts used in the study as well as some previous studies on the topic. The chapter highlighted SFL as its theoretical framework and explained the Register Theory. It also examined studies on SFL, register, newspapers, editorials and the passive voice to stress the current state of knowledge on the research topic.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

Introduction

The previous chapter reviewed related literature to the present study. It specifically examined the theoretical framework, conceptual framework, and some empirical studies. This chapter describes the methodology employed in the present study. The methodological approach adopted and procedures for analysing the text (editorials) are explained. The methodology thus involves the description of the research designs, research site, sampling technique and sample size, data source and data collection procedure, method of data analysis, and summary.

Research Design

This study employs the qualitative design supported by the quantitative paradigm. Qualitative research, as a descriptive tool and an investigative process, progressively makes sense of a social phenomenon by contrasting, comparing, replicating, cataloguing and classifying the object of study (Miles & Huberman, 1984). That is, researchers who undertake qualitative study, according to Locke. Spirduso and Silverman (1987), investigate to comprehend a particular social situation, event, role, group, or interaction. This design is appropriate for the present study since it is used to identify and describe the language use in the editorials of Ghana and stress the kind of relation that takes place between the editors and the target readers.

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According to Biber (1988), one can describe texts as nominal or verbal, structurally complex or structurally simple, formal or informal, restricted or elaborated, or involved or detached based on the linguistic features that characterise them and the situation in which the texts occur. Thus, the qualitative method is applied to describe the language of the Ghanaian editorials. The editorials, as a social event, make use of specific linguistic features that make them unique from other texts. The situation of a particular text restricts the use of linguistic features. According to Biber, situation refers to the different roles that the "participants play, their relationships, the setting, the topic, the purpose, social evaluation, relation of participants to the text and the channel" (Biber, 1988:29; 160; Biber & Conrad, 2009: 39-46). Hence, the qualitative design is suitable for the present study since it assists in the description of passive constructions utilized in the text and ascertains the communicative purpose for which passive constructions are employed in the dailies. It also helps to find out the kind of interaction that occurs between the editors of the editorials and its readers.

The study also employs the quantitative approach; it consists of statistics, frequencies and percentages. According to Biber and Conrad (2009), it is appropriate to consider register features quantitatively because an analyst can only claim legitimately that a feature is more frequent in a register by noting the occurrence of the feature in the target register. Therefore, the quantitative design assists the researcher to find out the distribution of passive constructions used in the editorials: the frequencies and percentages of the forms of passive constructions.

Setting

The print media in Ghana is the setting for this research. Vivian (2007:76) posits: "the newspaper industry is large to the extent that it dwarfs other news media by almost every measure in the United States of America." Similarly, the newspaper is a major medium for disseminating information in Ghana (Hasty, 2005). According to Blay-Amihere and Alabi (1996), the media has been an important aspect of the Ghanaian community since the advent of colonialism. They emphasize that this tradition can be traced back to April, 1882 when the newspaper was introduced by the colonial government. During this time, the newspaper was the main source of information for the colonial government.

For some time, there were only government newspapers. The first newspaper in Ghana was the 'Royal Gold Coast Gazette' which was established in 1822 by the first Governor of the Gold Coast, Sir Charles MacCarthy (Blay-Amihere & Alabi, 1996: 59). This newspaper was used by the colonial government to provide information for the colonial officers, the civil servants and the European merchants whom the government worked with. It was also used as a propaganda tool to avert the fight for independence by the Ghanaian educated elites.

Before independence, the newspaper was the major medium used by the educated elites to fight for independence. The first private newspaper, which was also the first Ghanaian owned newspaper, was the *Accra Herald*, a newspaper edited by Charles Bannerman in 1857 (Press Reference, Ghana). Because of the African/Ghanaian orientation of the *Accra Herald*, other private Ghanaian-owned newspapers joined in the anti-colonial struggle.

Among these newspapers were the *Western Echo, Gold Coast News, Gold Coast Express, Gold Coast Independent, Gold Coast Chronicle, Gold Coast People and Accra Evening News* etc. (ibid.). One of the most enthusiastic and radical newspapers that fought against imperialism was the *Accra Evening News*. In 1948, Kwame Nkrumah founded the 'Accra Evening News', which he edited himself. Kwame Nkrumah used his newspaper as the mouthpiece of the Convention People's Party (CPP) to attack the colonial government and demand – 'self government now!' (Blay-Amihere & Alabi, 1996: 59).

The promulgation of the 1992 constitution, however, changed the media scenery in Ghana. Ansu-Kyeremeh and Gadzekpo (1996: 1) believe that "with the resurgence of press pluralism following the lifting of the Newspaper Licensing Law in 1992, and with the promulgation of the Fourth Republican Constitution guaranteeing press freedom, the media landscape has changed dramatically." Therefore, newspapers in Ghana now have the liberty to operate. For example, (as cited in Yeboah, 2014: 56) Anagnost (1997) has the view that the social platforms such as the announcements, advertisements and editorials in the media are "set in motion through the range of narratives attempting to situate the country locally, nationally and internationally." Thus, the "news media not only produce a set of strategic texts for imaging the nation but also structure a set of strategic everyday practices that organize relationships among state officials, journalists and the diverse groups that make up the audiences of news" (Yeboah, 2014: 56). Presently, the major source of information for majority of Ghanaians is the media: print and electronic.

Many people in Ghana rely on the media for local and international information including public notices, advertisements and opinions. Ghana possesses both state-owned and private newspapers. These include daily newspapers like the *Daily Graphic* and the *Ghanaian Times* (state-owned) which claim to be ideologically and politically neutral. They deal with national and international news, politics, religion, society, education among others. They also have a feature column, a sports section, an editorial section, an advertisement section, a classified section etcetera.

Apart from the state-owned newspapers, there are other registered private newspapers. These include the *Ghanaian Chronicle,* the *New Crusading Guide,* the *Free Press,* the *Statesman,* the *Searchlight,* the *Daily Guide,* the *Ghana Palava,* the *Heritage,* the *Dispatch,* the *Independent* etc. They all deal with national issues and politics. Others are business oriented; examples are*:* the *Business* and *Financial Times,* the *Business Guide.* There are also sports paperslike the *Graphic Sport* and *90 Minutes.* There is alsothe *Junior Graphic,* an entertainment newspaper for younger people. According to Hasty (2005), in 2010, the National Media Commission licensed 107 newspapers in Ghana.   These include: *Gospel Crusader,* the *Business Standard,* the *Evening Eye,* the *Extra Time, Suhum Focus, Spotlite,* the *Gong Beater, Graphic Advertiser, Bestmost Entertainment,* the *Volta Icon, Creatice Inspirer, Final Whistle,* the *Globe, Christian Observer,* the *First Fruit,* the *Ghanaian Justice, Church Bell Newspaper,* the *Mandate, NPP News, Ebusua News* etc.

Most of the aforementioned newspapers have remained the source of public information since independence in Ghana. Thus, Ghanaians rely on the

newspapers which portray and show opinions that relatively reflect the real issues in the society. The opinions expressed in the newspapers cover political, social and economic affairs in the country. In other words, the newspapers avoid the process of merely informing the citizenry about the political, social and economic activities in the country (Hasty, 2005).

Sampling Procedure

The data were collected from Sam Jonah library (the main library of the University of Cape Coast). That is, the editorial articles were gathered through unstructured means (Cresswell, 1999) from the periodical section of the main library of the University of Cape Coast. With the aid of the introductory letter from the head of the department of English and a copy of the researcher's student identity card, the newspaper articles were released for photocopies to be made. The researcher collected the total number of data required in two days because some attendants in the library willingly assisted in the process. The purposive sampling approach was used in the collection of the data in that it is in consonance with the rationale for the research, which is to describe the situation of the editorials and the choice of passive expressions to talk about social and contemporary issues in the country rather than generalizing (Dawson, 2002). In all, 600 editorial articles were collected from the *Daily Graphic* and the *Ghanaian Times* from 1st January to 31st December, 2014. The editorials are published in the newspapers daily excluding weekends (Sundays) and public holidays such as Easter, Christmas and other occasions for public   celebrations in the country (e.g., 6th   March). Approximately, there are three hundred and sixty-five (365) days and fifty-two (52) complete weeks in a year. For this reason, according to the 2014 calendar,

there were fifty-two Sundays and thirteen public holidays making sixty-five (65) holidays in 2014.

Data Source and Data Collection Procedure

The data used for the present study were obtained from the editorial section of the two Ghanaian newspapers: *Ghanaian Times* and the *Daily Graphic*. The newspapers were obtained from the University of Cape Coast's Sam Jonah library. The researcher looked through the newspapers to see the days on which the editorials are published in the two dailies. The editorials are published from Monday to Saturday. The choice of the *Ghanaian Times* and the *Daily Graphic* was informed by the fact that both dailies are state-owned, renowned and readily available. The researcher made photocopies of the required editorials for the analysis.

 Data Prrocessing and Analysis

The investigator adopts the Register Theory as an analytical tool to examine the use of passive constructions and the situation of the editorials in functional terms. As a way of finding suitable answers to the research questions posed at the beginning of this dissertation, the register perspective was employed along with the qualitative method, which is supported by the quantitative design to analyze the chosen data for the study. The analytical tool and the designs will provide assistance to thoroughly investigate the specific situational features, frequent passive forms as well as the particular communicative purpose of the editorials in the Ghanaian context.

The data analysis was in line with answering the four research questions guiding the study. To answer research question one, the first stage was concerned with reading the data several times to identify the situational

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characteristics. The second step was to identify and establish the relationship between the situation of Ghanaian newspaper editorials and the passive voice. This was done through the description of the situational features of the selected editorials and the passive costructions. To answer research question two, the types of passive constructions made in the data were identified and described. The third research question was to find the frequencies and percentages of the kinds of passive constructions identified in research question two. To achieve this, the data collected were analyzed using simple percentages and frequency distribution. This enabled the researcher to find out the pervasive passive form employed in the selected editorials. The last research question was to establish the link between the pervasive passive form and the communicative purpose of the editorials of Ghana. The common passive form identified in research question three assisted in setting up the relationship between the communicative purpose of Ghanaian editorials and the frequent form of passive voice utilized.

Data Coding

The data collected were coded for analysis. According to Punch (2003), coding refers to the process of assigning tags, names or labeling pieces of data collected for analysis. According to Punch, the pieces may be individual words, or small or large portions of data. Coding of the data became necessary because it aids in easy identification. I coded the data according to the dates on which they were published. For instance, the editorials published on 1st January to 31st December, 2014 in the *Daily Graphic* were coded as DG1, DG2, DG3… DG300. Also, the editorials published in the *Gahanaian*

Times on 1ˢᵗ January to 31st December, 2014 were coded GT1, GT2 GT3…
GT300.

Reliability and Validity of the Study

To achieve inter-rater reliability of a resaerch, one needs to have a prolong engagement with the text and seek assistance from colleaques in the field of study. According to Krippendorf (1980), one can ensure reliability through peer debriefing, persistent observation, and prolong engagement with the text. The analyzed editorials were given to a senior research assistant who has used SFL to study various texts and a senior who has also applied SFL to complete his Master of Philosophy degree in English language. The results of the senior research assistant revealed 85% and that of the Master of Philosophy degree graduate in English language showed 81% agreement with the analysis conducted by the researcher.

Chapter Summary

The chapter discussed the methodological and analytical measures used in the study. The qualitative method supported by the quantitative technique employed in the research have been discussed. The procedures for collecting and analyzing the data were also discussed in this chapter. The data were obtained from the periodical section of Sam Jonah library of the University of Cape Coast. The next chapter is concerned with the results and detailed discussion of data.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULSTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

The preceding chapters provided information on theoretical, conceptual and methodological aspects underpinning this research. This chapter presents the analysis and discussion of the register variables and passive constructions used in Ghanaian newspaper editorials. The chapter provides answers to research question one by describing the situational characteristics and setting up the link between the linguistic choice and the situation of the data used for this study. It also answers research questions two and three, focusing mainly on passive constructions such as phrases, clauses and sentences to institute its forms and frequency of occurrence. To answer research question four, the chapter looks at the communicative purpose of the editorials and the manner in which this is reflected in the frequently used passive forms. The chapter then summarizes the issues raised in the discussion as a conclusion.

The first research question seeks to ascertain the link between the linguistic choice and the situation of Ghanaian newspaper editorials: What is the relationship between the linguistic choice and the situation of the Ghanaian newspaper editorials? To answer this question, it is pertinent to first highlight the register variables of the data. The analysis of Ghanaian newspaper editorials, therefore, demonstrates the following situational characteristics:

1. Field or Topic

2. Mode or Channel

3. Tenor or Participants and Relations among Participants

4. Production Circumstances

5. Setting

6. Communicative Purpose

Field or Topic

The field or topic of register (here, newspaper editorials) normally construes the social activity of the nation being addressed by enlightening the people on what is occurring in the country. Thus, language is used to describe general and specific concerns of the state. A register analysis of the data discloses that the topics discuss current issues which are very important to the nation. These phenomena that are discussed in the editorials mostly have direct impact on the citizens. They adversely affect the lives of the citizenry in many cases. The section below categorises the issues discussed under general and specific fields. It also identifies general topics and describes the specific issues that are discussed with them in the editorials. The general issues are as follow:

Power generation, fuel and water supply; economy; demonstrations and strike actions; condition of service; employment; governance; developmental projects; transportation; education; trade and industry; politics; football, sports and boxing; institutions; health; the media and communication; public celebrations and festive occasions; sanitation; diseases; disasters; violence; peace; social vices; bribery and corruption; human rights; death announcements; cooperation; immigration; forestry; disciplinary actions. The aforementioned fields are further broken down to specific issues as follow:

Under power generation, fuel and water supply, the way through which power is produced, supplied and the problems encountered by citizens in its supply are addressed. The editorials talk about particular concerns as the discovery of oil in commercial quantities, the creation of energy and petroleum ministry, ensuring security in the oil and gas sector (i.e. its location in residential areas), the need to conserve energy, the energy crisis, increase in tariffs, hikes in petroleum prices, fuel subsidy and fuel shortages in the country.

The economy of Ghana is described in the editorials. Under this, the editorials reveal the current state of the economy to the general public, portraying the kind of economic hardships the people are experiencing. Some of these issues represent the government's decision to remedy the economy. Examples include seeking financial assistance from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), seizing Ghana's turn to the IMF for financial help, collection of taxes as a source of revenue to resolve the economic problems, measures to solve the economic problems of the nation, and reduction in the wage bill. Other topics cover areas like: the economic challenges of the nation, high cost of living, the free fall of the local currency: the cedi, the effect of the payment of judgement debts on the economy, improvement of the economic situation of the people of Ghana, building the nation on optimism, rising inflation rates, mid-year review of the 2014 budget and financial statements, the current economic state of Ghana, expectation of the national economic forum, high dependence on foreign products and its effects on the economy, the debate on the economic partnership agreement between the European Union (EU) and the Economic Communities of West African States

(ECOWAS), changing the structure of the Ghanaian economy, the provision of basic necessities of life and the high cost of living becoming unbearable for Ghanaians.

High cost of living in Ghana leads to numerous strike actions and demonstrations that are discussed as general topical domains (Biber & Conrad, 2009) in the editorials.   The discussion on strikes and demonstrations indicates that sometimes the strikes follow the demonstrations. However, when the government addresses the concerns for the demonstrations, the strikes are sometimes suspended. It also describes calling off strikes by workers. Based on the above description, the specific topics found in the data include strike actions and demonstrations declared and undertaken by certain workers in the country for better conditions of service or claiming due arrears from the government. These include the demonstrations and strikes undertaken by Polytechnic Teachers' Association of Ghana (POTAG); the National Association of Graduate Teachers (NAGRAT); the Coalition of Concerned Teachers' Association of Ghana (CCTG); the Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT); Organized Labour, and Trades Unions Conference; Ghana Medical and Dental Council; The Ghana Coalition of Farmers and all Public Sector Workers.

To reveal the benefits of the working class, certain conditions of service are also highlighted in the data. This indicates certain policies to improve upon the welfare of workers. Attitudes exhibited by workers or employers to abuse the condition of service are also explored. The topics underscored in the data include increase in minimum wage, the introduction of the three-tier pension scheme, pension benefits, the implementation of the

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Single Spine Pay Policy, increase in cocoa prices, accumulation of annual leaves, the controversy over the required age for retirement at the health sector.

The editorials also explain issues concerning employment in the country. These revolve around topics which expose the unemployment rate and steps taken by the government to solve this problem. The topics identified in the editorials involve: high rate of unemployment in the country, creation of small scale and medium enterprises, creation of jobs for university graduates and empowering the youth through financial assistance.

The editorials describe how Ghana is governed. Here, they discuss issues connected to strategies adopted by a particular government and the attitudes of people in the course of governance. In governance, specific issues elaborated in the data include: Ghana's preparedness to meet the Millennium Challenge Account, the policy of women's participation in governance, the expectations of Ghanaians, the citizen's expectation of the representative members of parliament, the United States Embassy's disrespectful attitudes towards the President of Ghana, government's policies for the country, the commendation of the President as the ECOWAS President, the implementation of national identity system, taking of the presidential oath in the absence of the President by the speaker of parliament, misapplication of public funds by some district assemblies, holding government accountable for its stewardship, the duties of a citizen, and the state of the nation in the regime of the current president.

The editorials describe major developments being carried out in the country, including challenges encountered by the contractors. The data also

reveals projects embarked on to improve upon existing infrastructure. The description includes the following particular topics: delay in street naming, road construction, maintenance of the country's roads, construction of interchanges, protest against demolition exercises, the fast expansion of Ho, boosting domestic airlines, expansion of airport infrastructure in Tamale, denial of funds to the Audit Service for projects, the development of airport in the Ashanti Region, projects to prevent filth and floods in Accra, spilling of water from the Weija to prevent floods at Weija, getting rid of slums in Accra, rehabilitation of the Tema Motor Way and supporting estate developers.

In the course of the editorials' description of transportation in the country, issues concerning the present state of roads, what is expected of vehicle operators, the risks involved in travelling, what pertains in railways and airports are brought to light. The specific topics discussed hinge on: the state of roads, road safety, bus stops used as lorry stations, registration of vehicles, enforcing the law on seat belt by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority (DVLA), road carnages, banning the use of motor bikes in the country, revamping the railway system, absence of light in Accra-Nsawam night train, the involvement of the private sector in the running of the national airlines in Ghana and facilitating the movement of goods and services through the rail.

Concerning education, the editorials talk about meeting the needs of students in schools by the government and philanthropies. For example, the implementation of the Social Security and National Insurance Trust (SSNIT) Loan Scheme, the implementation of a fee free senior high school, the rationalization of teachers, provision of sanitary pads to poor senior high

school students and the philanthropic support by the Progressive People's Party's (PPP) presidential candidate to education are all sub-topics depicting endeavours to meet the needs of students. It also talks about teachers' attitudes towards work   and the performance of students. For instance, this discussion consists of topics on teacher absenteeism, the fallen academic standard of Central Region and the poor academic performance in examinations by candidates. The discussion includes some activities undertaken by certain citizens which negatively affect the smooth running of schools in the nation. These involve the use of school buildings as chapels and encroachment of school lands, charging unapproved fees in senior high schools and examination malpractices. The editorials enlighten the compatriots on policies embarked on by the government and some individuals to improve upon education in the country. Such policies include the discussion on: paying adequate attention to the development of education in the country, the use of Ghanaian language as a medium of instruction in basic schools, the introduction of new educational reforms to link up education and industry, the advent of private universities to improve upon education, fixing the funding gap in education through the Ghana education trust fund, adoption of barter system in Ghanaian schools, the need to enlighten students and make them knowledgeable about ministers in the country and the rehabilitation of libraries to promote learning in Ghana. The editorials furthermore disclose the government's inability to provide the needs of education in the country. These encompass the discussion on: scrapping of trainee's allowances, inadequate feeding grants to senior high students in schools, increase in feeding fees, delay in the release of subsidy for the maintenance of schools, inadequate

funding of special schools, inadequate funds for the school feeding programme of basic schools and lack of funds for the payment of capitation grants for basic schools.

All the activities of trades and industries in the country are explained in the editorials. Some of the discussions centre on transactions including production, importation, exportation and promotion of goods and services in the nation. For instance, topics on the selling of expired goods and illegal fuel, exports and imports, promotion of local goods, the provision and importation of poultry products in the country, enforcing law on retail trades illustrate transaction of goods and services. It also discusses some of the industries serving as a source of revenue to the nation such as the cocoa industry, saving and preserving the timber industry, promotion of tourism in Ghana, security measures taken in certain industries (e.g., the security agencies' effort to make Ghana's water bodies safe) and honouring farmers and fishermen in Ghana. It divulges what is transpiring in specific industries like illegal fishing and mining practices including nefarious activities of foreigners in the small scale mining sector and the intention of "Ashante's Obuase" to downsize its mining company. The editorials further reveal the effect of trade fairs and exhibition on the country, integrating foreigners in the retail sector as well as the investigation into the supply of cocoa beans to a local processing company.

The role of politics is captured in the data for this study. Under this topic, particular topics which are described consist of: the electoral commission and electoral reforms, criticizing the President for the economic challenges in the country, swearing-in of new ministers and their deputies,

elections of presidential candidates within particular parties, the practice of multi-party democracy system in Ghana, cleaning the voters' register, voter registration exercise, voter register exhibition exercises, the organization of congresses or conferences within a particular party,   general elections, complaints about the President's frequent travels,   the request for the Representation of the People's Amendment Bill (ROPAB) and the subsequent implementation of the Representation of the People's Amendment Law (ROPAL), the election petition of the New Patriotic Party (NPP), and high incidence of rejected ballots .

In terms of football, the senior national team (the Black Stars) and its activities in the country and beyond are described to the people of Ghana. Sometimes the description entails special activities of some local teams. A few activities concerning sports and boxing are revealed.   Particular issues raised in football comprises: Brazil 2014 World Cup, the Black Stars' journey to Brazil, the perception about the supporters to be flown to Brazil 2014, the commencement of the Brazil 2014 World Cup, Ghana versus Germany and its outcome, the prediction of the outcome of the match between Ghana and Portugal, Ghana versus Portugal and its results, Ghana versus United States of America and its aftermath, the entire performance of the Black Stars in the tournament in Brazil, the Black Stars' need of Ghanaian's support, encouragement of the Black Stars by the President of Ghana, the demand of the appearance fee by the Black Stars, the effect of Ghana football on the citizens, the smash of the Black Stars from the Brazil 2014 World Cup, the termination of the head coach's contract as the Black Stars' coach, the arrival of the Black Stars from Brazil 2014 tournament and the sponsorship of the

local football league by a local financial institution (First Capital Plus Bank). In sports the sub-topics talked about are: promotion of soccer and sports through qualified soccer masseurs, Martha Bissah's winning of an Olympic Gold Medal in the Youth Olympic sports. In boxing, the only issue discussed is the Osu Traditional Council's stance against the re-scheduled bout between Brimah Kamoko (alias Bukom Banku) and Ayitey Powers.

The data talks about specific institutions and the exact things happening in such institutions with their impact on the nation, whether positive and negative. The study discloses specific issues concerning chieftaincy such as: supporting the work of chiefs in Ghana by presenting vehicles to them, chieftaincy disputes in Ghana, enstoolment of queen mothers, the celebration of Otumfuo's15th Anniversary and banishing orders issued by the Domaa traditional authority. Other topics talk about the exact things occurring in particular institutions; for instance, the collection of tolls at the University of Ghana, the reinstatement of the former Chief Executive Officer of the Kole-Bu Teaching Hospital, blood transfusion at Kole-Bu Teaching Hospital and the reduction in the feeding of in-patients at the Cape Coast Teaching Hospital. The data also describes religious practices and their effect on the nation. Examples include: religious fanaticism and its effects on the nation, dealing with unscrupulous pastors, the effect of false prophets in Christianity on the nation. The description also involves measures taken to ensure security in certain institutions. Examples are: ensuring the licensing of orphanages in the country and strengthening the police service.

In health, a few issues are raised with direct connection to the health conditions of the people. These include topics as: promotion of strong and

healthy society, promotion of traditional heath in Ghana, delivering of quality health to all citizens in the country, the construction of 15 Polyclinics in Central and Greater Accra Regions of Ghana, the reversion to 'the cash and carry system' in place of the National Health Insurance Scheme, frequent shortages of medicines in the health sector and the need of more health personnel in the three Northern Region.

The data also discusses the media and communication in the country. With regards to media, the concerns described cover the following topics: journalists' concern about the debate on genetically modified organism foods, the functions of journalists, attacks on media personnel, Ghana's migration from analogue to digital terrestrial broadcasting system, the empowerment of journalists in Ghana to disseminate information freely, the functions of the media, sustaining media freedom in the national development, the arrest of journalists, press conference with the President, inadequate payment for the members of the National Media Commission, review of programmes on the radio and television, the honouring of some journalists by the Journalists Association of Ghana, the inauguration of maters' programme in journalism and the unprofessional attitudes of some media personnel in the media house. In communication, the following sub-topics were described: crimes associated with the social media platforms, making prank or hoax calls to emergency lines in Ghana and statistics about mobile phone subscribers in Ghana.

The editorials unveil the public celebrations and festive occasions undertaken in the country, most of which constitute public holidays. Some of the public celebrations concern only Ghana or Africa. Also, others are jointly

celebrated with counterpart citizens across the world. The sub-topics (specific) discovered in the data include public celebration embarked on only in Ghana: the Independence Day, the Republic Day, the Founders Day and Farmers Day. Those that are celebrated in Africa include the African Union Day. The following topics portray the celebration carried out in the world: the International Youth Day, the International Day of the Girl Child, the World Health Day, the World Day Celebration against Child Labour, Valentine's Day, Mothers Day, May Day, the United Nations Peacekeepers Day, World Environmental Day and the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. A number of festive occasions are also described in the data. This involves specific topics as: New Year celebration, Eid-ul- Fitr (Ramadan), Easter, Christmas and Eid-ul- Adhiya which are religious in nature.

The analysis of the data reveals that in terms of sanitation, the editorials describe the human activities that contribute to insanitary conditions in the state and its repercussions on the nation. It also describes measures undertaken by the government to avert the insanitary situation of the nation. This description entails particular topics as: lack of waste management facilities in many Ghanaian homes, filth and mountains of garbage in Accra, refuse dumps and choked drains causing filth in the country, filth and insanitary conditions in Accra, and the effect of filthy environment on the people of Ghana. Those that constitute preventive measures include the following topics: avoiding opening defecation, the close down of restaurant and chop bar operators in unhygienic places, deterring people from littering the environment, plastic waste management, the introduction of monthly clean-up exercise, the implementation of monthly clean- up exercise; refuse,

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plastic and solid waste management, maintenance of clean environment and personal hygiene through hand washing with soap.

Some of the above insanitary conditions cause diseases in the country. In terms of diseases, the analysis indicates that the editorials create awareness of the existence and the outbreak of new diseases in the world, Africa and in Ghana specifically. They also inform the citizenry about the manner of acquiring the diseases and preventive measures to adopt to avoid infections. These diseases include Ebola, Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) or Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), Hepatitis B, malaria and cholera.

The selected editorials explore various kinds of disasters, both natural and artificial, which sometimes occur as a result of insanitary conditions in Ghana. The natural and manmade disasters discussed in the data are manifested in the following topics: floods due to heavy downpour, filth and choked gutters; fire outbreaks; and drought. They also describe some predictions made about impending natural disasters. For example: the prophecy about imminent natural disaster in Ghana. The description also entails some assistance offered to some victims who have suffered in the disaster. For instance, the topic below illustrates this point: the provision of humanitarian relief to disaster victims.

The data also discloses violent cases in Ghana and in some cases outside Ghana. This discussion consists of the following topics: student's riot at Bolgatanga senior high school, misunderstanding between management and board of Korle-Bu Teaching Hospital, land disputes and its effects on the development of the nation, conflict in New Patriotic Party (NPP), conflict between the youth groups of the New Patriotic Party and the National

Democratic Congress (NDC) and ethnic clashes in the Northern Region, controversy in the power sector and political turmoil in Burkinafaso.

After revealing the violent situation of the nation, any peaceful endeavour to settle the matter is highlighted in subsequent discussion in the editorials. The endeavours cover specific topics like restoring peace in the New Patriotic Party, the settlement of the conflict between Abudus and Adanis at Dagbon traditional area, prevention of ethnic based rivalry in the country and the resolving the dispute between Ghana and Cote D'Ivoire through arbitration.

The citizens are also informed about social vices which include criminal activities and deviant behaviours of some people in the country and in other African countries. These discussions are captured in topics as: high rate of teenage pregnancy in Central Region, the intention of legalising prostitution in Ghana, the rate of crimes, reviewing the law on criminal prosecution, the high rate of murders in the country, the arrest of cocaine dealers, robbery attacks and terrorist attacks in Nigeria (abduction of the Nigerian school girls).

Also, the data explores bribery and corrupt incidents in the country. This description entails the discovery of briberies and corruptions in certain institutions of the nation and measures established by the government to curtail such activities. The topics below were identified in the data: the discovery of bribery by the police service, the discovery of payment to 'ghost' service personnel in the National Service Scheme, embezzlement of funds in the National Service Scheme, the discovery of corruption at the port, the unwillingness of citizens to report corrupt cases in the society, the arrest of cable stealers by the police, thievery / plundering of public resources by some

state officials, corruption in Savanna Accelerated Development Authority (SADA), the establishment of financial administrative courts across the country to check corruption, and the adoption of the national plan against corruption.

Activities that portray issues of human rights are elaborated in the editorials. This indicates in some cases what some individuals are entitled to and the abuse of the fundamental human rights of certain people. The register analysis reveals the following topics: respect and appreciation for the elderly in society, granting equal justice to all calibre of people, the provision of disability friendly buildings in Ghana, prevention of noise made by churches, abolition of female genital mutilation, breach of the fundamental human rights of people by retaining them in remand, non-payment of compensation to the sole survivor of the infamous deadly voyage, abuse of funds for the disabled in Ghana and violation of the laws of the country.

The data further describes the death of some prominent media men. This announces the death and reveals how important such persons are to the society and the nation at large. It also sheds light on the nation's condolence to the bereaved family and the entire people of the nation. The topics below reveal the death announcements of some prominent men who were Ghanaians: tribute to Komla Dumor, the funeral rites of Komla Dumor, tribute to Mr. Paul Victor Obeng, the funeral rites of Mr. Paul Victor Obeng.

The data throws light on how Ghana cooperates with her neighbours and other countries. These topics were recognised as portraying co-operation: Ghana's collaboration with Togo, Ghana's relation with Cote D'Ivoire, Ghana's relation with Kenya, Ghana's relation with China, Ghana's relation

with United States of America, and the hosting of heads of states and government of Economic Communities of West African States by the Chairman, President John Dramani Mahama to discuss issues concerning the sub-region.

In immigration, the editorials discuss certain activities that occur on the Ghana-Togo border. This topic illustrates the point above: security threat along the Ghana-Togo border at Aflao.

Certain issues concerning the Ghanaian forestry are described in the data. This reveals illegal activities of some people in the forest of Ghana. These topics demonstrate the illegal activities that go on in the forestry: encroachment of forest in Ghana and the activities of illegal chain saw operators in the country.

With disciplinary actions, some of the actions which are taken against certain deeds deemed indiscipline are recorded in the data as well as measures to enforce discipline in Ghana. These include topics as: the decision to dismiss the managing director of the Electricity Company of Ghana (ECG), the dismissal of the District Chief Executive of Ahafo-Ano South, the dismissal of the Chief Executive Officer of the Korle-Bu Teaching Hospital, and enforcing discipline in society in the wake of lawlessness on the roads, offices and in the communities.

The linguistic choice of this study is the passive voice. Thus, the register analysis of the data reveals that depending on the situation of the Ghanaian editorials, the editors describe contents adopting the passive voice, specifically using the non-agentive one. That is, the ideas that are referred to in the editorials are conveyed through the use of the agentless passive type.

According to Biber (1988), to fulfil the ideational function of language, linguistic forms are employed in a particular way to convey propositional or referential contents. Thus, in the present study, the data analysis shows that the authors frequently use the agentless passives to present public concerns to the citizenry. This confirms the notion of social evaluation propounded by Biber (1988: 32) which connotes the 'attitudes of the participants, and of the culture at large, to the communicative event and the specific content.' Here, according to Biber, certain linguistic elements are preferred highly to others.

In order to describe scopes without stating the actors of the actions, the authors of the Ghanaian editorials tend to adopt the agentless passives in this situation much more than other kinds of passives. Biber (1988) appends that the agentless passives are used more pervasively when the participants in an interaction do not normally interact. The relationship between the writer of the editorials and the readers is detached where there is no personal involvement. Thus, the choice of the agentless passive over the others assists to enhance the purpose of this register which is to present public opinions to the nation, describing several actions whose actors may not be known. In other words, the editors use appropriate grammatical categories to present ideas logically through their experiences of current issues concerning the nation to the general public. Additionally, the addressors show commitment to the contents revealed in the analysis and express epistemological stance in their presentation by demonstrating how sure they are about the truthfulness of the topics discussed (Biber, 1988).

Mode or Channel

Mode connotes the means through which language is used to achieve a proposed purpose depicting the role of language used in an interaction. Apparently, the conduit of editorials in Ghana is written. They are permanently printed as hard copy documents or kept as soft copy (electronically) for the nation which can serve as records for future references. That is, they are written to be read with no likelihood of immediate feedback and the probability of even delayed feedback is limited. The editorials are written by an institutional author (i.e. the editor) to be read by un-enumerated readers (i.e. the entire citizens of Ghana and other interested foreigners).

The written medium favours the use of specific linguistic structures in its organization and directs the focus of an interaction towards a particular angle. Biber (1988) posits that the textual functions of a discourse marks information structure and cohesion. That is, information structure implies the way in which 'a text is packaged, including the marking of focus, topic–comment constructions, and theme, by features such as clefts, pseudo-clefts, extraposed clauses, and passives; on the other hand, cohesion refers to the way in which the sentences of a text are referentially related for lexical substitution (e.g., 'do' for a verb phrase), and ellipsis' (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). For instance, to maintain the focus of editorials, editors use more passives to enhance formality in their presentation.

In the light of this, the analysis of the editorials discloses numerous uses of passives to enhance focus on the content of the situation. In other words, passives are used in the data for this research to achieve the realization of the structure of the text under question. To Biber (1988), the ideational and

textual functions of a text deal with the clause structure and text-internal structure including interpersonal functions in the interaction. This implies 'the relationship between participants: role relationships, overtly expressed attitudes towards participants, the extent of shared knowledge and the interactional possibilities of the communicative event.' Hence, this portrays the relationship between the addressor and the addressees in the interaction. As it has been established earlier, the use of the passive voice in a communicative event promotes a formal relation among participants that is less interactive because there is no interpersonal contact between the addressors and addresses. To maintain the focus of the situation of Ghanaian editorials, the authors tend to use several passives in their presentation of issues.

In other words, since there is no visual or aural contact between the addressors and the addresses in this interaction, the language, therefore, should be standard with little or no informal features. Although there is a kind of shared knowledge among participants in the interaction of Ghanaian editorials, the writers express attitudes that show formality. For instance, the editorials are produced with a familiar language. Additionally, the situation of the Ghanaian editorials being detached facilitates the writer's ability to use only lexical or syntactic expressions to enhance a distant relationship. For example, the editorials are produced and read at distinct places. Thus, addressors only adopt appropriate lexicons to get their readers engaged and aroused in the detached interaction making the connection among intaractants very abstract.

Tenor, Participants and their Relations

Tenor embodies participants, their roles, and how they relate to one another in an interaction. The register analysis of the data reveals an institutional addressor whose social features like age, education and profession influence his or her choice of words in his or her writing. The addressor writes editorials to others who are un-enumerated in nature. The relations among participants are rarely interactive with less contact, non-reciprocal power influence and low affective involvement (Brown & Gilman 1960, 1972; Poynton, 1985). Sometimes, friends and colleagues of the author as well as strangers share in the reading of the editorials. For instance, an American who has come to Ghana may have the interest to read editorial articles published by Ghanaians.

The use of the passive voice as a tool of language in the description of an issue is an indication of an impersonal interaction, minimising the physical, visual and aural contact between interactants. This consequently renders the situation formal in that the passive is a feature of formal situations. In such situations, participants play social roles that are detached, with relatively less social power and little shared knowledge. According to Biber (1988), participants from distinct cultures may share little specific or cultural knowledge. Therefore, their linguistic choices in a given interaction are devoid of informal expressions. Biber (1988: 33) further notes that 'the linguistic forms in a specific situation vary systematically with the social category of the addressor and formality of the situation.' For example, editors detached themselves from their readers by using the passive voice so as to avoid criticism. As their name suggests, they edit themselves in their role as writers.

Ghanaian newspaper editorials depict a formal situation which addresses un-enumerated participants. These participants live in different places and decide what to do at their own pace when they come into contact with the editorials. The addressors of editorials write at their own pace; and in the same vein, the addressees read at their own rate. Biber (1988: 33) opines that this component of a communicative event in the written mode signifies 'the ability of the communicative participants to interact with the text: the writer can write as slowly and carefully as (s) he wishes; the reader can read as quickly or as slowly as (s)he wishes.' Even though Ghanaian newspapers are written and published in Ghana to be read by Ghanaians, there are situations where the patronisers of the newspaper articles read other articles, leaving the editorials. For example, one may choose to read news report instead of editorials. In some cases too, strangers may share in the reading of the editorials. For instance, a Nigerian in Ghana may read editorials of Ghana due his or her interest.

Production Circumstances

This term implies the conditions that determine the construction of a piece of register, be it spoken or written. The mode of a register influences its production. Thus, the editorials for this study, being written, require the writer to have ample time in the course of its production to think through the topic to discuss, plan and write accurately. By so doing, he or she deletes something that he or she writes unintentionally, revises or edits or even continues to delete and add language until he or she produces the language that carries the exact intended meaning. The analysis of the data indicates that the language used in the editorials is complete with limited errors. For example, the editor

of the Ghanaian times used 'dishearting' (obsolete) instead of disheartening, which is the modern form of the verb to emphasize his view on the rate at which road accidents cause death in Ghana LET'S ADDRESS ROAD SAFETY CONCERNS ('Ghanaian Times', 2014). Here, as a reader, it was very difficult to determine the amount of revision the editor did to the finished editorials. Additionally, the reader has absolute control over the editorials. He or she can carefully read one word at a time, or quickly skim the entire editorials for specific information (Biber & Conrad, 2009). For example, I read the whole editorials to identify the register variables and passive constructions. As a reader, one can even decide to leave certain portions of the editorials unread.

Setting

For the purpose of this study, the two renowned state-owned newspapers, namely the *Daily Graphic* and the *Ghanaian Times* are adopted to highlight the language employed to underscore the concerns of Ghanaians. The editorials of the above newspapers constitute the specific setting of this study. According to Biber and Conrad (2009), the setting of a text refers to the physical context of the communication: the time and place of a text's production. Hence, editorials are published as part of the larger newspaper articles in the above-mentioned newspapers. The register analysis of the data indicates that editorials make reference to specific places of the newspapers where readers can easily locate the editorial section of the articles.

This is done by writing editorials on a particular page. It is necessary to emphasize here that the place in this register is shared at different times among participants: addressors and addressees (Biber & Conrad, 2009). This

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is because the editors write on the same page as the patronisers do read from the same page of the editorial concerned. Thus, the editorials of the *Daily Graphic and* the *Ghanaian Times* are located on pages 7 and 4 respectively of every newspaper article published. The data also makes reference to specific dates, showing the year and days and indicating when the papers are supposed to be read. When reporting on an issue as a consolidation to a previous concern raised, the editorials mention the days of the week and time as 'Monday', 'Tuesday', 'yesterday' or 'last week' to stress on the issue as a reminder to readers. This makes the issues being discussed current in the minds of readers. Below is an example:

Example 1

THE power outage in many parts of the country from **Friday** to **yesterday**, leads one to the inevitable conclusion: we are not out of the woods yet (GT 10).

Example 2

LAST Sunday, November 2, 2014 marked the 'International Day to End impunity for crimes against Journalists' (DG 256).

Example 1 demonstrates how the writer feels about the power situation in Ghana from Friday, 17th January, 2014 and Thursday, 16th January, 2014. The editor reminds the citizens of the situation by referring to the days (Friday and Thursday) on which the energy crisis became worse. In example 2, the author states the week, day and, date that have been instituted to put a stop to journalists' attack in Ghana.

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Communicative Purpose

The communicative purpose explains the cause for producing a specific register. Its description involves the identification of general purposes, combination of several communicative purposes, switching purposes within a communicative event, expression of factuality and stance (Biber & Conrad, 2009). The register analysis of the data illustrates that the general communicative purpose of the editorials is to present social opinions of the nation to the citizenry. This includes the description of the state of affairs of the nation. The editors explain the state of the nation, trying to persuade the people to get the clear picture of the current situation of their country. The opinions are presented in topics on the economy, education, trade and industry, power production and supply, among many others.

The analysis also shows that the data combines certain communicative purposes. The addressor of the editorials describes the condition of the nation as well as persuading citizens to note how importantly they need to contribute to the situation. The following are examples:

Example 3

THE nation will today undertake the maiden nation-wide monthly clean-up exercise meant to address the country's sanitation challenges.

The day, which has been instituted by the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, is to instil the sense of environmental cleanliness in Ghanaians and also as a response to the unhygienic conditions in which the country has been thrown, region by region (GT 253).

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Example 4

THE gruesome murder of Peter Kojo Kenyeso, the District Chief Executive of Nkwanta South last Monday night, brings to the fore the brazen lawlessness and the senseless violence the nation is witnessing and going through, in recent times.

The latest killing is yet another insane attack not on a mere Ghanaian, but a high government official, who represents the President of the Republic in that district.

The death was, and would be one of the many unresolved and mystery murders which defy logic and are, in simple terms, barbaric (GT 258).

Example 5

The signals these killings send are not pleasant. We should all stand up, speak about and condemn them, in no mean terms. Where are the human right activists, lawyers, politicians and civil society groups? We must all speak out now, because no one knows who the next victim would be (GT 258).

Example 6

It is important that the exercise would be sustained to ensure we rid ourselves of the filth which is swallowing us.

We want to have our water bodies clean again, and our major roads, markets, neighbourhoods, homes, schools and hospitals, all free of diseases (GT 253)

Thus, the presentation of opinions is accompanied by other communicative purposes which try to convince the citizenry to make a conscious effort to decide on a matter. Most of the data display other

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communicative purposes apart from the general communicative purpose of editorials. Examples three and four as illustrations under communicative purpose describe some situations of Ghana after which the people are persuaded to give a helping hand to the problem. Thus, examples five and six demonstrate how the writer of the editorials tries to convince the citizens of Ghana in his or her presentation of issues.

The situational analysis further reveals that there are switches within the communicative purpose of the editorials. When the editor is describing one event he/she switches within the description. Below are examples:

Example 7

THE Christmas season is once again, and as usual, activities are beginning to build up towards the celebration of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. Apart from the religious significance of the period, it also marks the commencement of activities to round up the year in preparation for the New Year.

Unfortunately, this cooling-off period, which should ensure a calm and reflective lifestyle, has been the period when regrettable carnages had been recorded on our roads.

The records are available for all to see that Christmas is the season when most accidents are recorded. This is, indeed, an anti- climax and a paradox because the season is meant for the celebration of the 'birth' of a saviour who conquered 'death' and ascended to heaven (DG 291).

Example 8

A statement from CAF said, "The Executive Committee of CAF confirms its commitment to keep the competition on the dates

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indicated, while asking the Royal Moroccan Football Federation to clarify the position of Morocco, not later than November 8, 201

For now the general concensus among Ghanaians is that the country is not ready to accept the offer of hosting the tournament in view of the deadly Ebola desease which is staring us in the face.

The disease has killed thousands of people in our sister West African countries-Guinea, Liberian and Sierra-Leone-and continues to spread (GT 259).

Example 9

GHANAIANS were downhearted when the national team, the Black Stars, were kicked out of the 2014 World Cup in Brazil.

Anyone who spent time in the country saw a nation whose spirit had sunk.

The current economic challenges are also making Ghanaians gradually pessimistic.

Such an attitude, no doubt, creates a national psyche of hopelessness which does not bode well for national good, reconstruction and development (DG 153).

The description of opinions to the nation also involves moving from the general communicative purpose to other related purposes. For example, the illustrations given above (i.e. examples 7-9) start with certain purposes and switch to other purposes within the communicative event. Example seven does not only intend to describe Christmas, but talks about road carnages associated with the festive occasion. It also describes the state of affairs of the ocasion and reports past event during the Christmas season (Biber & Conrad, 2009).

Example eight aims to discuss football but includes the Ebola disease in the description because it has caused hindrance to the progress of football. Example nine describes the impact of the senior team's performance on the entire nation but switches to talk about the economic crisis and development in the nation. The switches that are done in examples 7-9 can be considered as shifts in sub-registers (Biber & Conrad, 2009). For instance, shifting from the discussion of Christmas to road accidents, switching from football to diseases, and shifting from football to economic challenges faced by Ghanaians.

The data moreover indicates instances of factuality and stance. This is shown in the expression of personal opinions and ideologies. The editors express how they view most of the issues discussed. They also declare their sides of the issues. The following are examples:

Example 10

The *Daily Graphic* thinks that if we have challenges in building an egalitarian society, it is about time we bounded better to build a society in which everybody has contribution to make (DG 52).

Example 11

We appeal to both factions in the dispute to bury the hatchet now to save the millions of cedis commited to the peace process (DG 70).

Example 12

... the *Times* thinks that the recommendations, which came with the abrogation, did not go far enough.

In our view, the reason for the abrogation implies the need for close scrutiny of the role of everyone in SADA management, including the Board (GT 28).

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Example13

> … and recommends that our nation considering resorts to the use of prison inmates in food production and in the construction industry (GT 112).

Examples ten-thirteen above show how both the *Daily Graphic* and the *Ghanaian Times* express their ideologies and stance on the issues they describe to the citizens. They overtly indicate their point of view on an issue to the nation. That is, the two dailies express their personal opinions about the issues they describe to the nation. For instance, in example ten, the *Daily Graphic* believes that the development of the nation needs the contribution of every citizen. In example eleven, the *Daily Graphic* views corruption as bad and entreats Ghanaians to speak against it. Example twelve shows that the *Ghanaian Times* thinks that SADA management should have been scrutinized before its abolition. Example thirteen indicates that the *Ghanaian Times* has the same opinion as the Salaga North MP and recommends Ghana to use prisoners to produce food and do construction work.

Passive Constructions Used in Ghanaian Newspaper Editorials

The second research question of this study concerns the forms of passive constructions employed in Ghanaian newspaper editorials: What are the forms of passive constructions used in the newspaper editorials of Ghana? Thus, in this section, the passive constructions used in the data will be discussed by highlighting the kinds of passive voice used in Ghanaian newspaper editorials.

According to Quirk et al. (1972), the passive includes three categories: agentive passives, non-agentive (agentless) passives and quasi-passives.

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The present data of Ghanaian newspaper editorials reveal the use of the three types of passive mentioned above. The analysis shows that the editorials use agentive passives. Quirk et al. (1972) assert that the agentive passive is the one that is used with either expressed agent (performer) or without expressed agent. Thus, the passives employed in the data have performers, either explicitly stated with a *by phrase* or can be retrieved from the context. The analysis indicates the use of both types of agentive passives in the data. The following are examples of both agentive passives with expressed agents and without expressed agents:

Example 14

The day **has been instituted by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)**… (with expressed agentive phrase) (DG 128).

Example 15

Preparations towards the World Cup **were ducked by controversies**, (with   expressed agentive phrase) (DG 145).

Example 16

Unfortunately, the operation turned violent and one soldier **was seized by the fishermen** (with   expressed agentive phrase) (GT 227).

Example 17

…they **were engaged by the Minister of Health** (with   expressed agentive phrase) in 2013, after passing their examinations and **inducted by Ghana Medical and Dental Council (GMDC)** to practise in the country (With expressed agentive phrases) (GT 17).

Example 18

> The New Patriotic Party undertakes its presidential primary today to select a flag bearer for the 2016 presidential election.
>
> Three shortlisted aspirants–Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, Alan Kyeremateng and Francis Addai Nimoh–are battling in today's contest to become the standard bearer of the party. The nationwide exercise, **to be held** (without expressed agentive phrase) in 276 polling centres, is part of efforts towards deepening and consolidating democratic practices within NPP.
>
> It is the belief of the *Daily Graphic* that the contest **will be conducted** (without expressed agentive phrase) in a peaceful atmosphere (DG 241).

Example 19

> Most troubling, however, is the political twist **being given** (without expressed agentive phrase) to some of these exercises which need to **be managed** (without   expressed agentive phrase) so they do not get out of control (GT 21).

The analysis reveals that the editorials make extensive use of non-agentive passives. These passives appeared in the data without performers. In other words, they were used by the editors without agents. These confirm what Quirk et al. (1972) assert that the non-agentive passives lack the possibility of agent addition because they do not contain performers or doers of the actions being described. The utterances were, therefore, made without specific doers of the actions which were described. Below are examples:

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Example 20

Big businesses that cannot halt their operations **are forced** (non-agentive) to purchase generators to run their production lines, but the extra cost of production **is always passed** (non-agentive) on to consumers (DG 114).

Example 21

The government **is currently indebted** (non-agentive) to more than 5,000 caterers nationwide, he disclosed (GT 145).

Example 22

THE media **are widely acknowledged** (non-agentive) to wield enough power for change, and also serve as a catalyst for development (GT 293).

Example 23

Teacher absenteesm **must be tamed** now (non-agentive) (DG 52).

Example 24

Such 'ghost'ought to **be excorcised** from the payroll to reduce government spending on salaries (non-agentive) (DG 100).

The analysis further reveals the use of quasi-passives across the data. These passives are not exactly passives in that they do not have the passive auxiliary (e.g., the current copula verbs such as *be*, *feel*, *look* and the resulting copula verbs like *get*, *become*, *grow* etc.). However, they can be modified or rephrased to become pure passives by recovery in the context of use. Thus, other elements can be added to the given passives to make them complete. This comes in line with Quirk et al.'s (1972) view that quasi passives have adjectival and verbal elements. The quasi passives found in the data have performers (agentive phrase) and no performers (non-agentive phrase) of the

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actions described. Thus, in some cases, the doers of the actions are introduced with the passive *by phrase* to indicate the exact performers of the actions under question. Also, the by phrase is sometimes made optional in that they may not be known or are redundant (Jespersen, 1924 & Quirk et al., 1972). The following are examples:

Example 25

> ... some of the measures **instituted by the BoG** did not go down well with the business sector and that led to some level of uproar being expressed (DG 300).

Example 26

> Indeed such security measures as the automatic identification systems **installed** at the ports to locate and identify all vessels within Ghana's waters, especially those within the territorial area, the traffic management system **deployed by the Ghana Maritime Authority**, as well as the constant monitoring of the coastal waters and the ports by the Navy and the Police, might have contributed immensely to the safety of our ports (GT 140).

Editorials as a register employ various linguistic features which include passives to carry out its intended information, depending on the context. So, the above passive forms are not employed in the editorials arbitrarily; they are used in accordance with the field, mode and tenor which specify the choice of grammatical features of the communicative event. For example, the illustration below discusses a general topic (ballot boxes used for elections) through the written mode to readers at diferrent places in Ghana

(tenor). So, the language should be formal to enhance the relationship among participants.

Example 27

>From the time of the use of opaque ballots boxes, Ghana's electoral system has seen significant changes including the use of trranparent ballot boxes and a biometric voter's roll.

>Notwithstanding these forms of improvements, our elections **are still fraught** with problems (DG 124).

To a large extent, the field of every interaction contributes to the grammatical choices made by the participants in the discourse. In other words, the focus of every social activity determines the linguistic elements applied, including lexical choices to put across an intended message. Eligible   grammatical features are used to accompany the social activity being described by the interactants. According to Martin (1984, 1992a) language is used to accompany the actions of the type of social activity which occurs in an interaction. The passive constructions are thus used to facilitate the social opinions that are discussed in the editorials.

The editorials are written about the lives of Ghanaians. Ghanaians are to be made aware of everything that occurs in the nation. In line with this, common verbs are used to describe the events that take place in the country. These verbs can be realized in two distinct ways one of which results in the passive construction. According to Quirk et al. (1972), the passive is another way of viewing the verb of an action. Thus, the passive voice is used in the editorials to substantiate the assertion made by Martin (1984: 23; 1992a: 536) that in an everyday situation, "common sense" or "common knowledge"

is employed as the only assumed knowledge to enhance a given social activity. Ghanaians are familiar with the two voices of the verb of an action (active and passive); and thus the editors use the passive voice alongside the active voice to present their opinions about issues. This contributes to the uncomplicated recognition of verbs used and also makes the grammar of this register standard.

The choice of the passive forms in the data is also in agreement with the mode of the register. In the production of editorials, the only method available is the use of language. In the case of Ghanaians, the means includes written language to be read. This corroborates Martin's (1984) declaration that when the situation of language use encompasses writing, language is the sole tool in the interaction and there is no other social process that occurs among interactants which requires the adoption of creating language to constitute the social process. Hence, the editorials as a register require just language as a tool for its interlocutors in the interaction with no other social processes that occur like soliciting immediate feedback, aural responses and visual expressions tofacilitate the interaction. According to Martin (1984), in such situations, language is used to reflect on experience, rather than to construct it; and these situational dimensions function along with other linguistic features which are sensitive to the mode variation to have an impact on language use: the degree of grammatical complexity, and the lexical density of the language. To affirm this, the editorials are written to be read mostly by educated adults. Therefore, the editors use the passive voice in their writing to construct language which is sophisticated, including tense markers, to make the register standard to meet

the demands of its patronisers. The forms of passive used in the editorials enhance this fact.

The use of the types of passives in the data further corresponds to the tenor of the register. The responsibility that is assigned to participants in any interaction has an influence on the use of language. For instance, when a participant is made to behave like a child, the choice of lexis of such a participant will depict the character of a child. Likewise, when participants find themselves in informal or formal situations, their choice of language will depend on their roles and relationships. This explanation confirms Matthiessen et al.'s (2010) statement that the roles and relationships of the interactants affect the language of the register in which they occur. That is, the social roles which participants are made to play restrict the language used by them in the interaction. Thus, Eggins (2004) opines, the social role relationships played by inrreactants influence their language use. According to Eggins (2004), an editor writing editorial for readers in a national newspaper constitutes a formal situation. This creates a condition under which the relationship between the interactants is not equal, the contact is infrequent, and the affective involvement low (Poynton, 1985). This, in turn, determines the vocabulary choice where the editor tends to keep his/her attitudes to him/herself, or to express them apparently in an objective language. This also affectslexis in terms of its degree of standardization. That is, the relationship compels the editors to use the complete lexical itemsand and avoids slangs to keep to the tone of the language expected to be used in accordance with the circumstances. Halliday (1978) and Poynton (1985) propose that tenor describes the link between language and context. This contributes to the

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extensive use of the passive forms with the active voice in the editorials. The passive voice is a feature of formal writing; and thus to achieve this, the editorials, as examples of formal register, must be devoid of contracted forms and make use of complete verbal items which include passives.

Example 28

The amount **is expected** to **be used** to invest in the projects focusing on power distribution, with… (DG168).

Frequency of the Passive Forms in Ghanaian Newspaper Editorials

The third research question of this study aims to ascertain the frequency of passive forms used in Ghanaian newspaper editorials. This section reports the results of the analysis of the frequency and percentage of agentive, non-agentive and quasi passives in the editorials.

Table 1 presents the distribution pattern of passive forms found in the data.

Table 1: Distribution of Passives in Ghanaian Newspaper Editorials

Passive Forms	Frequency	Percentage
Agentive passives	621	6.9%
Non-agentive passives	6,205	69.5%
Quasi passives	2,094	23.4%
Total	8,920	100%

On the whole, the total distribution of passive forms that occurred in the data was 8920. The number of agentive passives was 621 which represent 6.9 percent. The total number of non-agentive passives that occurred was 6205 which also represents 69.5 percent. The number of quasi-passives that was found was 2094 representing 23.4 percent. Agentive passives had the lowest occurrence of passive forms as compared with the total number of passives

that occurred in the data. This was followed by quasi-passives which occupied the middle position. As Noful (2011) found out in the Holy Qur'an, agentless passives occur more frequently than the agentive passives; the highest form of passives that occurred was non-agentive. This affirms Biber et al.'s (1999) observation that short passives are more frequent than long passives in both written and spoken English. That is, passives with implicit agents occur many times in English registers, one of which is editorial.

However, this result contradicts other findings of the study of passives including Enninful (2006), Laanemets (2009) and Bielak et al. (2013). Enninful (2006) discovered that Ghanaian pupils frequently utilize the agentive passives than the agentless passives in their writing. Based on this finding, pupils' usage of passives may be determined by their acquaintance with the lexical verbs, and thus may not be able to use the passive voice without the actor of that action. This leads to their numerous uses of agentive passives than the agentless in their writing. Laanemets (2009) found that the use of morphological passives in terms of overt agent phrase is most frequent in written Danish, Norwegian and Swedish (three Scandinavian languages). Also, Bielak et al. (2013) revealed that periphrastic passives with overt agent phrases are more frequently used in English language.

Thus, the present study discovers that there are more non-agentive passives in the data than any other kind of passive construction. This is because the authors of editorials do not present their messages based on their intuitive ideas but present information to citizens according to the context and the communicative purpose of their register. Here, editors mostly describe actions whose actors may not be known. The communicative purpose of a

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given register also restricts the kind of linguistic choice to be made in a particular context. So, editors' choice of words are made in line with the context and the communicative purpose. According to Biber (1988), some linguistic choices are made over others, depending on the context and communicative purpose. Hence, editors frequently use non-agentive passives in their description of opinions to the citzenery of Ghana.

The Relationship between the Pervasive Passive Construction and the Communicative Purpose of Newspaper Editorials of Ghana

The last research question of this study seeks to highlight the link between the frequently passive form employed in the editorials and the communicative purpose of the Ghanaian newspaper editorials. The pervasive passive form utilized in the data is the non-agentive. This is a type of passive which lacks the by-phrase and it is impossible to add agent to it. The reasons for leaving out the actor, according to Jespersen (1924), Quirk et al. (1972) as well as cited in Owusu-Ansah (1991) are that:

(a) It is not necessary who the agent is,

(b) It is important to conceal the agent's identity,

(c) People in general are the agents, and

(d) The agent is not known.

Some of the agentless passives in the data are exemplified below:

Example 29

The report said the consequence of the action was that most of the fishes **were brought** [by the fishermen] to the shore dead and discoloured, with broken flesh and sunken eyes, indications that they were not fresh (DG 125).

Example 30

The Chief Executive Officer of Horseman Shoes, Mr. Tonyi Senaya, is conscious of the challenges but says they **can be overcome** [by the company] (DG 79).

Example 31

We join the president, in consoling the family of the woman who lost her life, and the numerous others whose homes **were flooded** and property **destroyed** [by the rain] (GT 131).

Example 32

… the Energy Commission needs to **be supported** [by the government] to achieve the objectives of the campaign to conserve energy (DG 137).

Example 33

The inauguration date of the Atuabo Plant **has been postponed** [by the government] on previous occasions. Now we **are being told** [by the government] that the project will start full operations in July this year (DG 120).

Example 34

Those who excelled in various quizzes such as ''what do you know'' on *Radio Ghana* and the debates in the schools were people who **were 'addicted'** [by themselves] to news and other social affairs programmes. Interest in newspapers **was demonstrated** [by the people] during big events such as the presentation of the budget to parliament or on radio… (DG 78).

 Example 35

THERE was great excitement when it **was announced** [by Ghanaians] in 2007 that Ghana had discovered oil in commercial quantities. The celebrations became more widespread when it **was said** [by the people] the oil resources also contained gas that **could be exploited** [by the people] for domestic and commercial use (DG 120).

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Example 36

> Today, these industrial plants have become pale shadows of themselves, with some producing at very low capacities, while others have either **been turned** [by the people] into ware houses for imported items or worship centres (GT 85).

Example 37

> The inclusion of qeenmothers in the various houses of chiefs will bring a soft touch to the deliberations of the chiefs so far as women and children's issues **are concerned** (DG 1).

Example 38

> But all **is not lost** yet (DG 169).

The aforementioned examples show a variety of reasons for which the actor of an action is dropped from the sentence or interaction. In 29 through 31 it is redundant, restating the agents since they can be inferred from the immediate contexts of situation. The agents in the brackets constitute the reputed actors of the actions in the above statements. Examples 32 and 33 indicate actions initiated by the government; however, the writer avoids criticizing the government on the public platform since it is sometimes impolite to blame the government openly. Examples 34 to 36 have the general public as the actors; and thus, no particular doer can be cited by the author. In examples 37 and 38, the actors are not known even in the general context. In other words, the doers of those actions cannot be deduced in the interaction and therefore cannot be stated.

The communicative purpose of a text refers to the rationale for its production. Biber and Conrad (2009) construe that the general communicative purpose of newspaper editorials is to present a social opinion with the specific reason of seeking to persuade those who are concerned to accept that opinion

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by expressing an overt stance over the opinion. The opinion may concern all and sundry in the country, from the president to the common citizen. Based on this, editors tend to use more of the agentless passives since this choice is dependent on the writer's perception as to whether it is eligible to mention the doer or leave it unmentioned. This choice is also determined by the writer's ability to recognize the actor, felicity and the fact that the actor can be deduced from the immediate or general context of use.

According to Biber (1988), the primary purpose of the writer (informational, affective), the production circumstances (those circumstances characterized by careful editing possibilities and enabling precision in lexical choice) and integrated textual structure account for the generalized lexical choice of presenting information. That is, naturally, the evolution of discourse purposes corresponds to the production possibilities. Hence, according to Biber (1988:108), as society develops the need for highly informational texts, attention will be on the 'production circumstances that enable precise lexical choice and high informational density.' Additionally, Martin (1992a:503) espouses, 'bringing telos [communicative purpose] into contextual theory in no way implies that the text is interpreted as the realization of the speaker's intentions: genres are social processes, and their purpose is interpreted in social, not psychological terms.' This assertion can be applied to register in that, to Biber and Conrad (2009), genres and registers can be viewed from the same angle.

In achieving the communicative purpose of newspaper editorials in the Ghanaian context, the editors cannot present their own intuitive ideas rather than the opinions of Ghana. This calls for the numerous use of non-agentive

passives since the actors may not be known, in some cases. It is prudent to drop the actor to enhance politeness; people in general represent the agents, and it is unnecessary restating the actor for it is recoverable in the immediate context.

Biber (1988) opines that passives are used to make the patient of the verb prominent. That is, the entity acted upon, which is 'typically a non-animate referent,' is made essential when the passive voice is used and this usually results in 'an abstract concept rather than a concrete referent.' Biber (1988: 228) further expounds that when the agent of a passive construction is absolutely demoted, it results 'in a static, more abstract presentation of information.' Thus, for thematic purposes (Thompson, 1982; Finegan, 1982; Weiner & Labov, 1983; Janda, 1985), agentless passives are employed when the performer 'does not have a salient role in the discourse' (cited in Biber, 1988: ibid.). Depending on the field (topic) presented in the Ghanaian editorials and the communicative purpose, the authors prefer the agentless passive to the other types of passive constructions since the doers of the actions being described have not got important roles to play in the discourse. Also, the distant nature of Ghanaian editorials as a type of written register enhances the numerous usage of agentless passive voice. This substantiates Biber's (1988) view that written registers are more detached because they use devices which include agentless passives.

Chapter Summary

The present study was undertaken with the assumption that Ghanaian newspaper editorials can be viewed as a register with distinct contextual variables and linguistic features. An editor, in the course of presenting the

editorials, employs various register features with appropriate grammatical choices to convey the intended information to the nation. The study, implementing the register theory, investigates the editorials of the *Daily Graphic* and the *Ghanaian Times* to highlight the situational characteristics and the passive voice as a linguistic feature utilized in the data. The study shows that editorials express the opinions of the nation in terms of field/topic through the written medium portraying the relationship that exists between authors and readers. The study also discovered that the three types of passive voice are used with, the non-agentive occurring most frequently. It was also found that the communicative purpose of the editorials influences the choice of its grammatical features such as tense markers and passives.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This final chapter of the present thesis seeks to sum up the most important components of the current research. The chapter, therefore, summarizes the study by highlighting the key findings, implications of the research, as well as recommendations for further studies.

Summary of the Study

The main objective of the present research was to explore Ghanaian newspaper editorials as a register. Using 600 editorial articles published in the *Daily Graphic* and the *Ghanaian Times*, the study concentrated on the register features and passive constructions used to present opinions of the nation to the citizenry of Ghana. Thus, the present study investigated the language of editorials that were published in two state-owned newspapers in the Ghanaian context. Based on this, the study sought to address four main concerns. The first one was to examine the connection between the situation of the Ghanaian newspaper editorials and the passive voice. The second and third issues were to investigate the passive constructions by examining its forms and frequency used in the selected editorials. The last concern was to ascertain the relationship that exists between the pervasive passive form and the communicative purpose of the editorials.

To achieve the aims of the research, the study adopted the register theory of the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). The term 'context of

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situation' simply implies the use of language in correspondence with the circumstances surrounding it. Halliday (1978) construes the 'context of situation' as a theoretical construct for explaining how a text relates to the social processes within which it is located. The register theory was introduced by Halliday to argue for the correlation between the organization of language – the three strands of meanings that langue encodes to users and the specific situation of context. The three strands of meanings are the meta-functions of language, namely ideational, interpersonal, and textual meanings. These meta-functions refer to the inherent role language plays in its organization.

The present study employed qualitative design supported by the quantitative method as methodological techniques for the analysis. The qualitative paradigm was used as a tool to describe and interpret the text (editorials) and expressions in it. The qualitative content analysis was specifically used to analyze and interpret the text. To find answers to the research questions as the focus of the present study, I read the published editorials for three months to identify the register variables as well as the passive constructions used in the data. This was successful with the aid of Halliday (1978) and Biber and Conrad's (2009) perspectives of the register theory. That is, the field, mode, tenor, setting, production circumstances and communicative purpose of the text were highlighted in order to provide an answer to research question one: What is the relationship between the situation of the Ghanaian newspaper editorials and the linguistic choice of the study? The register theory was applied to ascertain the passive forms employed in the editorials as an answer to research question two: What are the forms of passive constructions used in the editorials? Also, to answer research question three

(what are the frequencies of the passive forms used in the editorials of Ghana?), the quantitative design was employed to present statistically the frequencies and percentages of the passive forms used in the data.

Finally, the register theory was also adopted to describe the link between the commonly used passive form and the communicative purpose of the editorials. This answers research question four: What is the relationship between the pervasive passive construction utilized in the editorials and the communicative purpose of newspaper editorials of Ghana?

Key Findings

The present study recorded a number of findings for each of the research questions posed at the beginning of the study. The editorials that were analysed showed that the editors disseminate prominent information to the citizenry of the nation through register variables such as field, mode, tenor, setting, production circumstance and communicative purpose. The editorials use language to describe current general and specific concerns such as education, tourism, and economy which are essential to the nation. These bits of information are presented through suitable conduit like written to be read, establishing formal relationship with the addressor and addressees as in *We are surprised that the minister, who is always passionate about education, did not utter a word...* Also, the choice of a particular grammatical category in the editorials links the relationships among participants in conjunction with the situation of the register. They additionally describe contemporary activities according to the production conditions of the medium and the purpose for which the events are described. To make the editorials effectual and efficient as a register, the above contextual variables come into play. This confirms

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Halliday's (1978) declaration that language is structured to portray three kinds of meanings which are associated through the realization of the register variables.

Additionally, the analysis of the editorials showed that three kinds of passives are used in the data: agentive (passives with explicit agentive phrase and passives with implicit agentive phrase), non-agentive (passives without agents), and quasi passives (passives which resemble agentive passives). These passives were used as non-canonical verbs with the canonical active verbs to present the state's opinions to the people. With respect to the frequency of distribution across the data, it was found that the agentive passives were less. The analysed data also showed that the editorials make extensive use of the agentless passives.

Furthermore, the analyzed data revealed that the non-agentive passives were most frequently used due to the fact that the editorials are written in correspondence with the situation and the communicative purpose. The editorials are written about the activities of the citizens of the nation. These people, in some cases, may not be known by the editors. Therefore, the actions may be described generally to the citizens, leaving the performer unmentioned. It is also necessary to drop the actor to enhance politeness. When the citizens are the doers of an action, it is also worthwhile to leave the actors unmentioned. Sometimes too, the action is more important than the actor; when this occurs, it is essential to stress the action without the actor. The above reasons for dropping the actors of actions being described affirm Jespersen (1924) and Quirk et al.'s (1972) reasons for dropping an actor of an action under question (See page, 133-136).

Conclusions

Below are the conclusions that can be drawn from the findings of the present research. First, the study affirms that editors adopt the resources of a particular language to express public opinions in a register. This accounts for the selection of specific contextual variables and linguistic characteristics that assist to portray the intended opinion of a specific nation. This study thus showed that the editors of the editorials select particular grammatical features such as active and passive voices to present public issues through distinct contextual variables like topic and mode based on the situation in order to persuade the citizenry of Ghana. The study also confirms the linguists' view of texts. Linguists acknowledge that a text is not just any string of linguistic symbols, but as a sequence with a recognizable communicative purpose and reference to a specific discourse community (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, 1985/89; Martin, 1992a; Mann, Matthiesen, & Thompson, 1992; Longacre, 1992). The present study revealed that editorials as a kind of persuasive text choose grammatical items that connect to its communicative purpose to disseminate essential information that may be of concern to Ghanaians.

Implications of the Study

The findings and conclusions have significant implications for Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), Register Theory, Grammar, and most essentially voice–specifically the passive. Firstly, the present study agrees to the stance of SFL (Halliday & Matthiesen, 2004) that language users adopt systematic choices to highlight eligible and intended meanings in an event. According to SFL, the situation of a particular register to a large extent determines the linguistic items to be adopted to portray an intended meaning

in the communicative event. Hence, the use of particular linguistic features creates either a formal or an informal condition for participants. In the light of the above assertion, this research has demonstrated how editors of the editorials in the Ghanaian context employ specific grammatical items to reveal the public opinions to the nation. That is, public concerns are expressed through the written medium with specific linguistic features to the people of Ghana.

Another implication of this study is that the formality of the Ghanaian newspaper editorials calls for the numerous use of the agentless passive. This establishes the relationships among participants and the purpose of this communicative event. This study has revealed that the non-agentive passive is preferred to other linguistic features due to the formal relationship among participants and the purpose of the register. The choice of the passive voice in a register depicts a formal relationship. Editors of Ghanaian newspaper editorials use more agentless passives in their presentation to maitain the formal relationship between them and their readers.

The final implication of this study is the invaluable contribution it makes to the existing literature on editorials and passives. Some researchers have explored editorials (Ansary & Babaii, 2005; Bonyadi, & Samuel, 2013; Viscido, 2015). There have been a number of scholars who have also investigated the use of passive voice in the written medium (Owusu-Ansah, 1991; Bohner, 2001; Porter, 2005; Xiao et al., 2006; Laanemets, 2009; Purnama, 2014). It is worth noting that most of the studies on passives were carried out with various approaches such as linguistics analysis (Nofal, 2011), observation (Bohner, 2001; Daˌbrowska & Street, 2006; Kirby 2010), genre

analysis and contrastive study (Xiao et al., 2006), error analysis (Porter, 2005; Purnama, 2014), the present research employed a Systemic Functional Linguistic approach, precisely the Register Theory, to examine the contextual variables and the use of passive voice in the editorials published in Ghana as a way of contributing to the existing literature.

Suggestions for Further Studies

Owing to time and space constraints, the scope of the present research was concerned with the exploration of the relationship between Ghanaian newspaper editorials and the choice of passive voice as a unique linguistic variable. It is revealed obviously through the analysis that the choice of the passive voice in the editorials of Ghana is done due to the relationship between the addressors and addressees as well as the purpose of that register. A further investigation can be carried out to examine more than one the linguistic features of the editorials of Ghana as a register to highlight the commonly used grammatical categories in this register. This is due the fact that as it stands now, it is very difficult to state the pervasive linguistic variable of Ghanaian newspaper editorials.

Additionally, it was observed that the editors use the passive voice along with the active to interact with the target readers. That is, the concerns of the people being talked about are described in two different ways. Therefore, further research can explore the use of both the active and passive voices to ascertain which of the two voices is frequently used in Ghanaian newspaper editorials.

Finally, further research can include a comparative study on Ghanaian newspaper editorials. According to Biber and Conrad (2009), an effective

register study should involve comparative analysis. Thus, Ghanaian newspaper editorials can be examined with other newspaper registers like news report to find out the distinct pervasive linguistic features in the two registers.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

THE GHANAIAN TIMES

The Ghanaian Times
Ghana's most authoritative newspaper

EDITORIAL

Friday, June 20, 2014

PORT SECURITY SERVICES DESERVE PRAISE

MEMBERS of the shipping industry in Ghana, and indeed West Africa, must be gratified that security agencies of the country are doing all they can to secure Ghana's territorial waters, for safe business.

The Ghana Maritime Authority, the Navy, the Ports and Harbours Authority, as well as the Ghana Police Service must be congratulated, for making our waters safe.

We reported in the *Ghanaian Times* on Thursday that through the collective efforts of these agencies, Ghana's territorial waters have become a no-go area for pirates.

Indeed, the close collaboration of these agencies and their counterparts in the neighbouring countries, led to the rescue of the three vessels which were attacked by pirates, and now docked at the Tema Port.

The vessels *"MT Artetemis'" "Sam Pitiki,"* and *"Marine 711,"* were attacked on different occasions, between June 4 and 11, outside the territorial waters of Ghana.

We are delighted that the security agencies have made our waters safe and also instituted measures to continuously ensure the safety and security of the maritime industry.

We are no doubt aware, that pirates have hijacked, stolen and sometimes killed seafarers and demanded and collected huge sums of money as ransom, from vessel owners in other jurisdictions.

Thankfully, these heinous crimes have not been experienced in our territorial waters yet, due largely to the efficient and professional competence of the security agencies.

Indeed such security measures as the automatic identification systems installed at the ports to locate and identify all vessels within Ghana's waters, especially those within the territorial area, the traffic management system deployed by the Ghana Maritime Authority, as well as the constant monitoring of the coastal waters and the ports by the Navy and the Police, might have contributed immensely to the safety of our ports.

This, no doubt, would inure to the benefit of the shipping industry and the entire business community.

Pirates have caused havoc and continue to perpetrate their nefarious activities in some parts of West Africa. They have engaged in the stealing of tonnes of crude oil, goods and monies from vessels, and created a bad image for the West African coast.

We therefore commend our security services and pat them on the back, for what they have achieved for the country so far, and urge them to continue to do what they know best, to keep our territorial waters safe and tranquil, for the maritime industry.

Minority accuses govt of inflicting economic hardships on Ghanaians

By Yaw Kyei

THE Minority Caucus of Parliament has once again, descended heavily on the government for the economic hardships in the country.

According to them, while the government was crying over the lack of funds in the state's coffers, institutions such as the National Petroleum Authority has been allowed to spend more than US$63,000 a month on a rented office at East Legon.

Speaking at a press conference in Parliament yesterday, the Minority Spokesperson on Finance, Dr. Anthony Akoto Osei, said the hardships in the country was as a result of "the indiscipline, recklessness and impunity in our economic management, as well as the corruption, thievery and ineptitude by the government".

He wondered how the Bui Authority could be allowed to spend money on golf courses when it could not even produce at full capacity, and questioned the government's decision to spend $2.5m to send party faithfuls to the 2014 World Cup in Brazil to sleep in dormitories in the name of going to watch soccer.

He alleged that the government was preparing to issue a US$1billion Eurobond in spite of cautions from the minority that the issuance was likely to worsen the country's debt stock.

"If government is minded not to take our advice, it should at least know that the recent assessment and downgrading of our credit rating is likely to lead investors to demand an additional risk premium to purchase our Eurobond," the Minority Spokesperson on Finance said.

Dr. Anthony Akoto Osei accused the Ghana Revenue Authority and the Ministry of Finance of perpetuating an illegality in the implementation of the Valued Added Tax (VAT) Act.

He explained that the law, as it was now, aside the fact that it sought to impose additional burden on consumers and businesses, was also very diffi-

Dr. Anthony Akoto Osei

cult to implement, hence the need for the government to just withdraw it.

"The VAT Act(Act 870) states: 'subject to paragraph(b) of financial services, excluding financial services rendered for a fee, commission or a similar charge'. So if government wants to implement a list of thirty-two items, the proper thing is for the minister to come back to Parliament with the proper amendments," he said.

On the foreign exchange challenges, Dr. Akoto Osei said that the promise by the Bank of Ghana, to review the measures it put in place to address the foreign exchange problems had failed to produce any meaningful result.

He lamented that the cost of living was rising everyday while workers in the various sectors of the economy were being laid off.

MPs received tractors meant for farmers — Humado

By Yaw Kyei

SOME Members of Parliament (MPs) have snatched for themselves, tractors meant for distribution to farmers across the country.

The tractors were solely meant for farmers but have been distributed to the MPs, with some having as many as five tractors in their possession.

The MPs include Mahama Ayariga, MP for Bawku Central (five tractors), Dr. Alhassan Yakubu, MP for Mion, (one tractor), Hajia Mary Boforo, MP for Savelugu(three tractors), Mustapha Ahmed, MP for Ayawaso East (one tractor), Imusah Fuseini, MP for Tamale Central (one tractor) Alhaji Ibrahim Dey Abubakri-MP for Salaga East (one tractor).

Others include Alban S.K. Bagbin MP for Nadowli Kaleo (one tractor), Moses Asaga, former MP for Nabdam (one tractor), Alidu Iddrisu Zakari, former MP for Walewale(one tractor), Simon Atingban Akunye, MP for Pusiga(one tractor), Alhaji Abukari Sumani, former MP for Tamale North(one tractor), Ekow Panyin Okyerr Eduamoah, former MP for Gomoa (one tractor), and Edem

Asimah, MP for South Dayi(one tractor).

Similarly, some of the MPs used their addresses to secure some of the tractors for family and friends as well as assembly members.

This came to light yesterday when the Minister of Food and Agriculture, Clement Kofi Humado, appeared before the House to answer to a number of questions.

The issue came up in response to a question filed by the MP for Okere, Daniel Kwaku Botwe, who requested the Minister of Food and Agriculture who the beneficiaries of the 932 tractors and accessories imported from India by the ministry were.

Mr. Humado, told the House that the much talked about importation of tractors and accessories by the Ministry of Food and Agriculture from India was part of measures to boost agricultural production through mechanisation.

He said that, Farm Tractor 60 totalled 200 while Mahindra 605Di-tractors were 132. Also, Mahindra 750I Tractors were 100, while the John DeereTractors (5303), and John Deere Tractors (5403model), were 350 and 150 respectively.

Clement Kofi Humado, Minister of Food and Agriculture

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APPENDIX B

THE GHANAIAN TIMES

The Ghanaian Times
Ghana's most authoritative newspaper

EDITORIAL

Friday, November 7, 2014

THESE GRUESOME MURDERS SHOULD STOP NOW!

THE gruesome murder of Peter Kojo Kenyeso, the District Chief Executive of Nkwanta South last Monday night, brings to the fore the brazen lawlessness and the senseless violence the nation is witnessing and going through, in recent times.

The latest killing, is yet another insane attack not on a mere Ghanaian, but a high government official, who represents the President of the Republic in that district.

The death was, and would be one of the many unresolved and mystery murders which defy logic and are, in simple terms, barbaric.

These murders and violent attacks by armed gangs are alien to the Ghanaian culture, yet they appear to be increasing these days.

Apart from the individual Ghanaians, who have lost their lives to these hoodlums, the attacks on high profile politicians, are particularly alarming.

At the last count, about five metropolitan, municipal and district chief executives had been attacked, over the last six months.

The horrendous murder of Kojo Kenyeso, should be condemned by all peace-loving people in the country.

As we join in the condemnation, we advise that his death must be a wake-up call to all Ghanaians, to rise up against impunity and barbaric killings of innocent compatriots.

The government must take up the challenge and put the necessary measures in place to nip these violent and murderous acts in the bud, if not totally eliminate them.

The security of every citizen of this country must be assured and guaranteed by governments, and the citizens saved from the fear which is gradually but stealthily in recent times, creeping into the society.

The Times is not a doomsayer, but wants to state categorically, that fear can bring about the urge for self-defence, reprisal attacks and lawlessness in the country.

The signals these killings send, are not pleasant. We should all stand up, speak about and condemn them, in no mean terms. Where are the human right activists, lawyers, politicians and civil society groups? We must all speak out now, because no one knows who the next victim would be.

Indeed, the fact that there is fear in the air and politicians crying openly that their lives are in danger, should goad the government, security agencies and the entire country on, to move quickly to stop these senseless and malevolent murders.

Ghanaians are known to be peaceful and peace-loving, but since the advent of the democratic era, we have been subjected to very horrendous murders, whose resolutions the security services continue to grapple with.

We must not allow these killings to continue. We must take bold steps now to stop them once and for all. And the time to do it, is now!

THE LIBRARY News

General Legal Council to pay judgement debt

By Castro Zangina-Tong

THE General Legal Council has now accepted to pay the judgement debt it owes Mr. John Yaw Opoku, a former Deputy Registrar of the Ghana School of Law (GSL), who petitioned the Judgement Debts Commission as a last resort to recover the amount due him from the state.

The petitioner resorted to a legal action at an Accra High Court against the Council for wrongfully terminating his appointment.

He is claiming more than GH¢835,000 as outstanding debt, following the failure of the General Legal Council to settle the initial judgment debt of GH¢414,387.25 per a revised entry of judgement filed in 2012.

On February 25, 2011, Mr. Justice E. F. Dzakpasu, who tried the case, awarded Mr. Opoku two years salary from the date his appointment was terminated, and ordered that interest be paid on the amount at the current bank rate from the date of termination till the date the money would be paid to him.

Additionally, GH¢2,000 was also awarded as cost against the Council, but it was never honoured.

However, Mr. Samuel Boakye Yiadom, Second Deputy Judicial Secretary who appeared at the Judgement Debts Commission yesterday in connection with the non-payment of the debt, told the Sole Commissioner, Mr. Justice Yaw Apau, that the Council had taken a decision to negotiate with the petitioner for an amicable settlement.

He said that the amount the petitioner was claiming was far and above the budget of the General Legal Council, and hoped that Mr. Opoku, who is also a lawyer, would be considerate during the negotiation.

The petitioner who was appointed a full-time Deputy Registrar of the Ghana School of Law

• Justice Yaw Apau — Sole Commissioner

in September 6, 2000, had his appointment terminated on November 21, 2003, through a letter signed by the Judicial Secretary, Mr. E.A. Owusu Ansah having worked satisfactorily for more than one year and 10 months.

According to Mr. Opoku, the termination of his appointment was considered "unconstitutional, unlawful, unfair, unreasonable, discriminatory and without just cause," hence his pursuit for justice and fairness at the law court.

Local Gov't Minister quizzed in House

By Yaw Kyei

THE Minister of Local Government and Rural Development, Mr. Julius Debrah, yesterday appeared before Parliament to explain to the law makers, the efforts the government is making to re-source the 46 newly-created districts in the country.

According to the minister, the government had disbursed GH¢1 million each to all the newly created districts as seed money.

He said the amount was given to the districts to procure equipment, and furniture, among other things to enable them to begin operations.

"The ministry also purchased vehicles for the official use of district chief executives of the 46 newly-created districts. The vehicles cost GH¢86,330.46 each" he said and added that administration blocks were being constructed for each of the assemblies.

Mr. Debrah was responding to a question posed by Mustapha Ussif (NPP Yagaba/Kubori) who asked the minister when the GH¢1 million promised the Mamprugu-Moaduri District would be paid.

Later, the MP, in an interaction with the media, expressed dissatisfaction about the minister's answer and said not a pesewa had been paid to any of the newly-created districts.

He said the government should do its part to give the money to the assemblies to enable them to have enough funds to carry out developmental projects.

"We are in the last quarter of the year, but nothing from the District Assemblies Common Fund has been released," he said.

In a related development, Mr. Namoro Sanda Azumah (NDC Chereponi), asked the Local Government Minister, when the Chereponi District Assembly would get a permanent administration block.

The minister said his outfit intends to provide suitable office buildings for assemblies without administrative blocks, and as a result it had commenced the procurement processes for the construction of some office buildings for the 46 district assemblies which were created in 2012.

"Mr. Speaker, efforts are being made to consider other districts which lack permanent administration blocks including the Chereponi District Assembly," he said.

• Mr. Doe Adjaho — Speaker

APPENDIX C

THE GHANAIAN TIMES

The Ghanaian Times
Ghana's most authoritative newspaper

EDITORIAL
Tuesday, June 10, 2014

TACKLING THE PERENNIAL FLOODS IN ACCRA

LAST Friday, President John Mahama, ordered the commencement of work on a $660m drainage project, to solve the perennial floods in Accra.

The directive was occasioned by the long hours of downpour and the consequent flooding in the Accra metropolis which created havoc and inconvenience in various communities, on Thursday.

To give meaning to the order, the President directed the Ministry of Finance to sign an agreement with the American firm, Conti Group, for the commencement of the project, to address the flooding and sanitation challenges facing the metropolis.

The project, will among other things, have the Korle-Lagoon desilted to allow the Odaw river to flow freely and unhindered into the sea.

President Mahama gave the directive when touring parts of the city which were hit hard by the floods, to acquaint himself with the extent of damage to property following the downpour.

In addition to the directive, President Mahama tasked the metropolitan authorities to, as a matter of urgency, embark on campaign to sensitise the people to attitudinal change to solid and liquid waste disposal, especially into drains and gutters.

"It is unacceptable for lives to be lost, people's homes to be flooded and property destroyed, because of rains," the President said, stressing the need for right measures to be adopted to reverse the trend.

We join the President, in consoling the family of the woman who lost her life, and the numerous others whose homes were flooded and property destroyed.

Flooding in Accra has become an annual misery and a ritual circus for officialdom to make pronouncements of remedies; unfortunately nothing concrete and pragmatic has been done, ever since the capital started experiencing the floods in the 1980s.

As a matter of fact, all past presidents, Jerry John Rawlings, through Agyekum Kuffour, to Prof. Atta Mills and currently, John Mahama, have in those trying moments given assurances and proffered solutions to this hydra-headed problem, yet the situation seems to be defying all odds, and still threatening Accra, with melancholy and discomfort to many homes.

This country can boast of technocrats, engineers and environmentalists who can brainstorm and find solutions to the problem, yet they look on hopelessly, while the city is overwhelmed by deluges, year in year out.

It should not take the President to issue directives before people sit up and do the right and expected things. If this happens, then those people in leadership are not up to the task, we dare say.

Inasmuch as we appreciate government's efforts at dealing with the numerous problems confronting the country socio-economically, we hope that it would be able to deal with the floods experienced yearly.

We hope the President's directive will be carried out expeditiously for the project to take off with dispatch. Those to oversee it and monitor progress of work, must be seen to be doing it with the required urgency, vigilance, and diligence.

We also expect residents in the metropolis not to engage in indiscriminate environmental practices and avoid unbridled dumping of waste, as well as building in the waterways, to safeguard their lives and property.

Ghana Navy hunts for missing oil tanker

By Times Reporter

GOVERNMENT has asserted that the oil tanker did not disappear within the country's territorial waters.

Nonetheless, the Ghana Navy has launched a search for the Liberian oil tanker off the coast of Ghana.

Deputy Interior Minister, James Agalga, denied media reports that the South African registered vessel went missing off Ghana's coast.

He therefore, assured members of the shipping industry that their safety in doing business with Ghana was guaranteed.

Ghana's territory, he assured, was "dangerous for pirates" to operate in, adding that "our waters are very safe" for vessels; the "safest" on the West African coast.

He noted that Ghana's navy joined the search party because the country is concerned about the activities of pirates.

He entreated governments to collaborate to eliminate piracy, stressing "Ghana has done its part. We have ensured that our waters are very safe; put in place measures to ensure safety and we expect that other sister countries will follow suit so that together we can fight piracy".

Acting Head of Public Relations of the Ghana Armed Forces, Lt. Col. Aggrey Quarshie, earlier told Joy News that they were working with Nigerian and Togolese authorities to locate the vessel.

Meanwhile, an expert in maritime laws and security, Dr. Kamal Deen Ali, says the Liberia-flagged oil tanker which was hijacked off the coast of Ghana should alert the nation's maritime authorities to increase security in Ghana's territorial waters to stop piracy.

The oil tanker went missing off the coast of Ghana.

Speaking on the Citi Breakfast Show, Mr. Ali said the incident was a threat to Ghana's offshore energy industries and a major indication that the maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea was becoming minimal.

"We need to be worried because this represents another major indication that the maritime security environment in the Gulf of Guinea is becoming minimal and a threat even in regions or coastal areas where originally, we have not had many pirating incidents," Mr Ali said.

Asked whether there were precautionary measures to ensure the safety of oil industries offshore and resources at the coast as a result of the development, Mr. Ali said, "In terms of the precise information, we may never know until in a few days when the vessel is found, then they can interview or interrogate the captain and also look at the details of the incident".

He however, said there was the indication that "the vessel might have been hijacked off the Coast of Togo and Ghana."

Mr. Ali offered three concessionary circles of security; "the change and continuity in Nigeria's insecurity,

James Agalga — Deputy Minister of The Interior

the permissive regional insecurity environment and the issue of security and insecurity," as a means of understanding the incident.

Speaking on the same issue, Head of Marketing and Public Relations at the Ghana Ports and Harbours Authority, Mr. Isaac Asare, expressed the hope that the Ghana Navy and Ghana Maritime Authority will put measures to boost the security of Ghana's territorial waters.

Asked whether his outfit will be able to identify the missing vessel, Mr. Asare said his outfit did not have jurisdiction over those areas, adding that it was the responsibility of the Ghana Maritime Authority and the Ghana Navy to confirm the identity of the vessel.

Human Rights Court adjourns POTAG case

By Times Reporter

AN Accra Human Rights Court has adjourned to June 25, the case brought before it against the Polytechnic Teachers Association of Ghana, (POTAG) by the National Labour Commission (NLC).

This was after POTAG had prayed the court to give it time to study the summons and subsequently file an affidavit in opposition.

It contended that the association was served with the court summons late, hence the plea.

The court consented to the request and adjourned the case to June 25.

The NLC is in court to enforce its ruling in the impasse between the government and POTAG over the scrapping of the research and book allowance.

NLC had ruled that POTAG returns

to work while arbitration proceedings are initiated to address their concerns but POTAG disregarded the ruling, forcing the NLC to go to court.

Meanwhile, the Polytechnic Students Association of Ghana (PSAG) has given the government up to Tuesday June 10, to intervene in the impasse between their lecturers and the NLC or look forward to its next line of action.

Students last week demonstrated in four out of 10 regions in their country to protest against their lecturers' strike.

They have also petitioned President John Dramani Mahama through the regional ministers on the issue.

The students argue that their lecturers' strike is impeding their academic work.

So far, three out of 10 polytechnics in the country have been closed down.

Prof. Naana Jane Opoku-Agyeman — Minister of Education

APPENDIX D

THE DAILY GRAPHIC

Friday, July 25, 2014

Visit www.graphic.com.gh

Daily Graphic
EDITORIAL
Friday, July 25, 2014

Act on Senchi Report now!

IN every sphere of national life, the cry is that the cost of living has become unbearable and the government is being urged, on a daily basis, to address the challenges confronting the economy.

In response to the agitation, the government, in May this year, convened the Senchi Economic Forum to brainstorm on the challenges, with the view to building consensus on the way forward.

After a two-day session at Senchi, near Akosombo, the participants came up with a 22-point communiqué to address the issues, with a pledge to come up with a report in due course.

Unfortunately, Mr P.V. Obeng, a Senior Presidential Advisor who played a key role in the organisation of the forum and the communiqué thereof, passed on after the forum, thereby destabilising the government's action plan.

Whatever the challenges, the report on the Senchi Economic Forum was made public last Wednesday when the Vice-President, Mr Kwesi Bekoe Amissah-Arthur, presented it to President John Dramani Mahama.

Receiving the report, the President said, "Senchi, for a long time in a while, brought us together to deliberate on the challenges of economic management and what we could do together to ensure that our nation continues to create decent and dignified lives for our people."

The Vice-President too expressed the hope that the report would address the economic problems on the domestic front.

The present economic challenges can be addressed if, as a people, we rally the government to fix the structural deficiencies that make it difficult for the country to rely on its resources to develop the economy.

Sometimes it appears the country and its government are overwhelmed by the economic malaise because of the sheer magnitude of the problems crying for attention.

Although the nearly 22 years of democratic governance has not been without hiccups, our neighbours on the continent are astonished by the achievements that Ghana has chalked up.

What have been lacking so far are positive dividends of democratic practice in the area of economic independence.

Majority of our people are still under the clutches of poverty, disease and ignorance, while a small minority exhibit affluence and opulence.

We should be preoccupied by the task of ensuring that our leaders provide the kind of leadership that will take majority of our people from economic hardships.

After all, the essence of governance is to improve the welfare of majority of the people. Indeed, our leaders are aware of that critical charge because it is only by delivering on their mandate that the people will be motivated to renew the mandate for them.

The reality on the ground is that the economic indicators paint quite a gloomy outlook of the goings-on. But all is not lost yet.

It is not an exaggeration to say that sometimes it gets worse before the positive things in society begin to flow.

Ghana, the Black Star of Africa, will bounce back on the path of democratic prosperity pretty soon but that will be achieved through hard work, sacrifices and consensus on the way forward.

The *Daily Graphic* does not discount the political polarisation and the fact that we are practising a multi-party democracy, but as we exercise our fundamental freedom of making a choice at the polls, we ought to keep in mind the national interest.

In all this, however, we urge the President and his men and women to lead the way by motivating everybody to take part in national reconstruction efforts.

The *Daily Graphic* also appeals to those who disagree with the policy choices of the Mahama administration to not stay in the comfort zone of criticism but offer alternatives.

Ghana needs all hands on deck.

The Editor speaks on econimic challenges

Graphic LIVE

Your voice

Will the Senchi Economic Forum Report be the panacea for our economic breakthrough? Our reporter, Zainabu Issah, asks members of the public.

Lizzy Alidu, student
The report will provide solutions if only its recommendations are put into practice.

Quabynah Boadi, cost consultant
The breakthrough will be seen if the recommendations are effectively implemented by the appropriate authorities.

Sallim Suallah, marketer
I do not think the report will have any impact on the economy, since our main problem as a country has to do with corruption.

Jospeh Adobor, police officer
I say it is just another exercise in futility. The time for an economic revolution is now.

The power of words

By Abundant Robert K. Awolugutu

WORDS have power. There is a spirit behind the words we speak. God, who has no beginning and no end, spoke and things happened. The world came into being through his spoken word.

The heart is the organ that gives birth to the words we speak. In other words, words have their roots in our hearts.

Words produce effects that may be good or bad. When you speak delightful words, it can lift up the spirit of the one you have spoken with. Negative words can be depressing on the other hand.

We should never doubt the power of words. We should be mindful of the words we speak because of the impact they can have on those who hear them. In the book of Proverbs, the author underscores the impact of words when he wrote: "The words of the wicked are murderous, but the words of the righteous rescue those who are threatened." (Prov. 12:6). This tells us that our words can build people up or destroy them.

We should use our words to raise people up. We should speak words that instil confidence in people and build them up. Delightful words can strengthen our relationships. Destructive or negative words can produce anger or violence in some situations.

Everybody should be encouraged to speak words that heal. Our words should promote *esprit de corps* and peaceful co-existence. Some nations have fought as a result of the use of wrong words by one of the parties. To promote global peace and security, encouraging words must be spoken, regardless of the circumstances.

The bible admonishes us to take personal responsibility for the words we speak. In Proverbs 18:21, the author wrote; "What you say can preserve life or destroy it; so you must accept the consequences of your words." In other words, we cannot absolve ourselves from the consequences of what we have said.

Paul of Tarsus wants our words to be of benefit to others. In the book of Ephesians 4:29, Paul wrote: "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouth, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen."

As much as possible, avoid unnecessary criticisms and the use of spirit-damping terms when interacting with others. Speak encouraging words to your spouse or children even when things go wrong or contrary to our expectations. Praise and appreciation can change an individual's behaviour in a positive way.

Praise and have encouraging words for anyone who has made a significant achievement. If you are a leader, find ways and means to compliment and encourage your followers for the positive things they do. Celebrate the little successes of your children or spouse or any other person you deal with as a way of eliciting more positive behaviour from them.

We should instil confidence in our children by having them appreciate their own efforts through words of encouragement. We need to extend this to everyone who comes into our world. When we have to deal with difficult problems and challenging situations, saying positive things can help salvage the situation.

In conclusion, words have real power. Be mindful of the words you speak; you can either build up or tear down a person with your words. When we speak delightful words, we may get a positive change of behaviour to oppose to criticisms and constant nagging words.

The writer is Regional Commander, Tamale Central Prison.

> **Words produce effects that may be good or bad.**

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APPENDIX E

THE DAILY GRPAY

Daily Graphic, Monday, July 7, 2014

Visit www.graphic.com.gh

Daily Graphic
EDITORIAL
Monday, July 7, 2014

Let's build nation on optimism

Ghana made a laughing stock of herself

Voice from Afar
By K.B. Asante

Your voice

What do we do to address the present economic challenges in the country? Our reporter, Salomey Appiah, seeks the views of the public.

APPENDIX F

THE DAILY GRPAHY

Visit www.graphic.com.gh

Daily Graphic
EDITORIAL
Wednesday, May 28, 2014

Gas holds key to our energy needs

THERE was great excitement when it was announced in 2007 that Ghana had discovered oil in commercial quantities.

The celebrations became more widespread when it was said the oil resources also contained gas that could be exploited for domestic and commercial use.

The good news also centred on the fact that the government and the Jubilee partners had been able to fast-track the processes for the production of oil and gas.

The processes for the early pour of commercial oil brought about other challenges, such as the lack of gas infrastructure.

Besides the high expectation to become part of the club of oil-producing countries, there was also public expectation of the benefits from oil and gas, especially when oil and gas have changed the fortunes of people in some oil-producing countries.

Managing this expectation has not been easy thus far, since, besides the expectation of huge revenues from oil, the people expect that the

discovery of black gold will lead to the creation of jobs, wealth and prosperity.

In the meantime, friends of Ghana have warned us to be wary of the land mines that some of the oil-producing countries fall into, with the caution that we should try as much as possible to prevent the oil from becoming a curse rather than a blessing.

So far, we cannot say that the journey has not been without challenges. Some citizens have raised concerns over the decision to remove subsidies from petroleum products when we are producing the product locally.

If there is any outcome of the oil and gas project that the people look up to with high expectations, then it is the construction of the Atuabo Gas Processing Plant.

This is so because we have had occasion in this country to form long queues for non-existent liquified petroleum gas (LPG) for use in our homes, factories and by motorists who are running away from the high cost of petrol.

More exciting will be the day when gas from the plant will be fed into the national grid to generate more electricity for the country.

Our expectations are that the present challenges with the generation of electricity will be resolved if the gas is fed onto the national grid.

The erratic power supply situation has been attributed to the low generation of power to feed the national grid.

But the Daily Graphic thinks there is one concern of the people that the government should address to avoid

the situation where the people lose faith in the project.

The inauguration date of the Atuabo Plant has been postponed on previous occasions. Now we are being told that the project will start full operations in July this year.

We appeal to the authorities to keep faith with the people by supplying the gas to them as soon as possible.

We can no longer afford the luxury of postponement of the date for the full operation of the Atuabo Gas Processing Plant. The people need the gas now for domestic use, for the generation of electricity and, more importantly, to stimulate the economy.

The Editor speaks about the gas project.

Graphic LIVE

Your Voice

Will the Atuabo Gas Project end Ghana's power challenges? Our reporter, Salomey Appiah, seeks the views of our readers.

Eric Ayertey, accounts officer
I think the government should rather make efforts at harnessing solar power and other alternatives that can help sustain electricity supply.

Ibrahim Alhassan, agriculturalist
It will help improve power supply only for a short period. The government needs to invest in alternative sources of energy.

Henrietta Sagoe, teacher
It will provide additional megawatts of power, but it is not possible it will end the challenges. We need other sources of power.

Vivian Atizo, beautician
I do not think the gas from Atuabo will make any difference. We need other sources of power generation in the country.

Use of mobile phones at fuel dumps

• How safe are we?

SAFETY is not in the nature of some of us. If it is not a bread and butter issue, it is not something that our sub conscious mind would look out for.

So, I have been wondering lately why even though at almost every fuel pump, there is a conspicuously displayed sign that says that mobile phones should not be used, people continue to defy the order and go ahead and use their mobile phones while their vehicles are being refilled. Is it the "well, it can never happen to me" syndrome that seems to have engrossed us as a people that make us approach safety issues with so much passivity?

A couple of weeks back, someone shared with me one of those widely circulated messages on the Internet. The message warned mobile phone users to desist from using their mobile phones when at fuel stations.

According to the e-mail message, the use of mobile phones while filling up at a petrol dump could be a potential cause of an explosion.

I recall that this was not the first time I was receiving such circulated messages on the Internet. The first one I received about eight years ago cited the case of a young man whose phone ignited at a New York gas station where he had gone to refill his vehicle. The message went on to say that the man received some burns on his face and part of his vehicle was also damaged.

At my former place of work, we used

the message in that circulated e-mail and others on the use of mobile phones as discussion topics at one of our normal weekly departmental safety meetings. A lot of valuable lessons were learnt.

As a conformist, therefore, even before these forwarded messages made their rounds, I had always taken such signs or instructions as are found at sensitive places such as fuel dumps, Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) stations, in an aircraft and the like, very seriously. I do make it a point to conform. When travelling, for example, I ensure my mobile phone devices are turned off at the last gate and even before boarding the aircraft.

It is irritating to see people holding their mobile phones and having conversations sometimes just to tell the person at the other end, "we are now taxing, getting ready to take off", even though the captain would have asked all such devices to be switched off and be ready for takeoff.

Similarly, at petrol and LPG stations, despite the bold instructions which even the most illiterate driver can discern that the sign of a mobile phone with a red slash boldly across it means do not use mobile applications here, people are simply not conforming. Painfully, the recalcitrant ones are found busy making or receiving calls, irrespective. Station

attendants are just as guilty. I have had occasions to remind a couple of flouting their own "Don'ts".

As I dutifully shared last fortnight's circulated e-mail message with some people on my contact list, they also must have forwarded my message to their contacts. One response that came through from one of them was that there was no scientific basis for anyone to claim that mobile phones posed any danger at fuel dumps.

He probably must have been a scientist for he explained that sparks from a mobile phone battery could not ignite petrol or gas vapours from the nozzle of the pump during their discharge into a vehicle or a gas cylinder.

There might not be any scientific basis and there might never have been any instances or incidents in the world to conclude that mobile phone use at a fuel dump sparks off fire. However, does it hurt anyone to desist from using their mobile phones just for 10 minutes or less when their vehicles or gas cylinders are being filled up and at a time they have had their vehicle engines completely switched off?

I believe in the saying that when in doubt, it is always safe to err on the side of caution. The petrol and LPG stations are no doubt doing the right thing by continuing to display warnings of no

Reality zone
With Vicky Wireko

mobile use at their petrol and gas filling stations. They have a duty to protect themselves and their customers. It is only right that they make people feel safer while on their premises.

The fact that my house has never caught fire does not mean that I should not install smoke detectors, fire alarms or fire extinguishers. It does not also mean that I should not take up a fire insurance policy. Taking precautionary measures and having that inner satisfaction that you are safe at a particular place should not be subjected to scientific proof or even second guessing.

Fuel and gas stations should continue to create that awareness for their customers and ensure that people do not flout their instructions as it is an essential commodity in the area of business. Their own attendants also need strict schooling. They forget sometimes too.

• vickywirekoandco yahoo.com