Strategies for Affiliation in Media Editorials: Persuading and Aligning Readers

Feifei LIU

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of requirements for a
Doctor of Philosophy

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
University of Technology Sydney
July 2017
Certificate of Original Authorship

I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as fully acknowledged within the text.

I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

Signature of Student:

Feifei Liu

Date: July 2017
Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my loving husband, Changxing.
Acknowledgements

The completion of this thesis owes thanks to a large number of people who have been supporting me both personally and academically during my study. I am taking this opportunity to express my deep gratitude to them.

My deepest gratitude goes to my supervisor, Dr Susan Hood, who showed me the ways to do research and more importantly how to think critically. Her encouragement and support have accompanied me through the process of my academic study and research. She always encouraged me to go one more step further in analysing the data and to write one more draft to complete the thesis. She always considered it a pleasure to provide any reading material I needed and to guide me in my reading and thinking. Her instruction, encouragement, guidance, support and patience have been of the greatest value to me. Sue has not only been a great supervisor but, more importantly, a friend and a member of my family. She has always been here whenever I needed help.

I am also profoundly indebted to Professor Jim Martin at the University of Sydney for his help and guidance during my study in Sydney. He has been kind enough to let me sit in his classes in Functional Grammar, Analysing Discourse, and Media Discourse Analysis, where his explanations and instructions helped me to better understand the general fields of systemic-functional linguistics and of media. He has been patient in giving me advice and feedback on my presentations at meetings and conferences. I have benefitted a lot from every meeting and every talk with Jim.

I am also deeply grateful to the other scholars and my colleagues in Sydney. I would like to thank Dr John Knox and Dr Helen Caple for their comprehensive explanations of and instructions on media discourse. My thanks also go to Dr Peter White and Dr Lexie Don for their advice and support in the analysis of my data. It is my honour to thank my colleagues in Sydney, especially those frequently joining the PhD meetings: Dr Sumin Zhao, Dr Jing Hao, Dr Yaegan Doran, Dr Eszter Szenes, Dr Jennifer Blunden, Dr Bandar Alhumaidi A. Almutairi, Dr Min Xie, Dr Xi Wang, Dr Xiaqing Yan, Dr Chen Wang, Dr Ayumi Inako, Lucy Jones, Kunkun Zhang and Muwen Yang. Their research and expertise greatly encouraged me to explore more in my own writing. My special thanks go to Dr Harni Kartika Ningsih who always accompanied me both as my best friend and as my colleague.
I would also like to offer my thanks to my teachers and friends in China. I am greatly indebted to Professor Chenguang Chang at Sun Yat-sen University, Professor Xuanwei Peng at GuangDong University of Foreign Studies, Professor Delu Zhang at Tongji University, Professor Guowen Huang at South China Agricultural University, and Professor Shizhu Liu at Shandong University. It was their lectures and conference presentations that lead me into the field of systemic-functional linguistics and motivated me to pursue this field further as a PhD student.

It is my honour to thank the China Scholarship Council for its four-year sponsorship of my studies at the University of Technology Sydney. It was with its help that I could focus fully on my PhD study.

I would also like to thank my family: my parents, my parents-in-law, and my young sister Ning Liu. Their encouragement and support have given me great strength to do more in the studies.
# Table of Contents

Certificate of Original Authorship ................................................................................ ii
Dedication ....................................................................................................................... iii
Acknowledgements ......................................................................................................... iv
Table of Contents ........................................................................................................... vi
List of Figures ................................................................................................................. ix
List of Tables ................................................................................................................... xii
Abbreviation .................................................................................................................. xiv
Abstract .......................................................................................................................... xv

## Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.0 An emerging object of study ................................................................................. 1
1.1 Media and rhetoric ................................................................................................. 3
1.2 Overview of the research design .......................................................................... 4
1.2.1 Editorial texts .................................................................................................. 4
1.2.2 Research questions ......................................................................................... 6
1.2.3 Linguistic theories ......................................................................................... 7
1.2.4 A discourse semantic perspective ................................................................. 10
1.3 Research significance ......................................................................................... 12
1.4 Organisation of the thesis ................................................................................... 13

## Chapter 2 – Foundations in Literature and Theory

2.0 Introduction .......................................................................................................... 15
2.1 Studies of media discourse ................................................................................ 15
2.2 Linguistic study of newspaper editorials ......................................................... 19
2.2.1 Genres of editorials ...................................................................................... 19
2.2.2 Language of editorials: lexicogrammar features ........................................ 20
2.2.3 Persuasion: evaluative studies of editorials ................................................. 23
2.2.4 The writer-reader relationship .................................................................... 27
2.2.5 Consolidating the current literature on newspaper editorials .................... 28
2.3 Systemic-functional linguistics (SFL) ................................................................. 29
2.3.1 Metafunctions: ideational, interpersonal and textual .................................. 30
2.3.2 Realisation: stratifying language and context ............................................. 31
2.3.3 Instantiation .................................................................................................. 37
2.3.4 Individuation ................................................................................................ 40
2.3.5 Affiliation strategies ...................................................................................... 41
2.3.6 Discourse semantic systems and structures .............................................. 46
2.3.7 Consolidating the theoretical model ............................................................. 54
2.4 Conclusion ........................................................................................................... 54

## Chapter 3 – Research Design

3.0 Introduction .......................................................................................................... 56
3.1 Research methods ............................................................................................... 57
3.2 Research data ....................................................................................................... 59
3.2.1 Selecting newspapers ................................................................................... 59
3.2.2 Identifying editorials .................................................................................... 61
3.3 Building data sets ............................................................................................... 62
3.4 Data analysis ....................................................................................................... 63
3.4.1 APPRAISAL analysis ................................................................................... 63
3.4.2 IDEATION analysis ...................................................................................... 75
3.5 Consolidating the research design ...................................................................... 78
Chapter 4 – Proposing Communities of Readers

4.0 Introduction

4.1 Attitudinal profiles

4.1.1 Kinds of attitude in The Australian

4.1.2 Kinds of attitude in the China Daily

4.1.3 Comparative profiles of attitudinal values

4.2 Profile of affect with ideation

4.2.1 Comparing kinds of affect

4.2.2 Triplets in The Australian

4.2.3 Triplets in the China Daily

4.2.4 Comparative profiles of affect

4.3 Profile of judgement with ideation

4.3.1 Comparing kinds of judgement

4.3.2 Couplings in The Australian

4.3.3 Couplings in the China Daily

4.3.4 Comparative profiles of judgement

4.4 Profile of appreciation with ideation

4.4.1 Comparing kinds of appreciation

4.4.2 Couplings in The Australian

4.4.3 Couplings in the China Daily

4.4.4 Comparative profiles of appreciation

4.5 Communities of values

4.5.1 Process of community construction

4.5.2 Communities in The Australian

4.5.3 Communities in the China Daily

4.5.4 Comparative profiles of communities

4.6 Conclusion

Chapter 5 – Managing Communities of Readers

5.0 Introduction

5.1 Affiliation strategies in The Australian

5.1.1 Closing down positive evaluations of Labor

5.1.2 Conceding and overriding positive evaluations of Labor

5.1.3 Invalidating positive evaluations of Labor

5.1.4 Evaluating Labor with sarcasm

5.1.5 Consolidating affiliation strategies and the construction of communities in The Australian

5.2 Affiliation strategies in the China Daily

5.2.1 Attitudinal harmony

5.2.2 Propagating prosodies across relation of repetition

5.2.3 Propagating prosodies across relation of antonymy

5.2.4 Propagating prosodies across relation of hyponymy

5.2.5 Propagating prosodies across relation of meronymy

5.2.6 Consolidating rhetorical strategies in managing readers in the China Daily

5.3 Managing readers across whole texts – in The Australian and the China Daily

5.3.1 One sample text from The Australian

5.3.2 One sample text from the China Daily

5.3.3 Summary: comparing affiliation strategies in two sample texts
5.4 Conclusion ................................................................. 202

Chapter 6 – Conclusion .................................................. 204

6.0 Introduction .............................................................. 204

6.1 Contributions to understanding persuasion as strategies of affiliation ........ 205
   6.1.1 Synoptic accounts of attitudinal preference and difference ............ 206
   6.1.2 Dynamic accounts of attitudinal preference and difference .......... 210
   6.1.3 Prosodies of evaluative couplings ............................................. 212
   6.1.4 Personae of the editorial writers ................................................. 213
   6.1.5 Consolidating the emergent contrasts of evaluative strategy in The Australian and the China Daily ............................................................ 214

6.2 Contributions to other fields of practice .................................. 216

6.3 Limitations and directions for future study ................................. 217

Appendices ........................................................................ 218

Appendix I: Genre types of editorials in The Australian ....................... 218
Appendix II: Genre types of editorials in the China Daily ....................... 219
Appendix III: Expressions of lexical metaphor in The Australian ............ 220
Appendix IV: Expressions of lexical metaphors in the China Daily .......... 224
Appendix V: Attitude encoded in The Australian .................................... 226
Appendix VI: ATTITUDE encoded in the China Daily ............................. 241
Appendix VII: Gloss of people in editorials from The Australian .......... 251
Appendix VIII: Gloss of technical terms in editorials from The Australian .. 255
Appendix IX: Gloss of people in editorials from the China Daily .......... 257
Appendix X: Gloss of technical terms in editorials from China Daily ........ 258
Appendix XI: Attitudinal encodings in the text of Between a tragedy and a farce in The Australian ................................................................. 259
Appendix XII: Attitudinal encodings in the text of Caribbean co-operation in China Daily ................................................................. 261

References ........................................................................ 262
List of Figures

Figure 2.1: Journalistic keys – attitudinal profile (Martin & White 2005, p. 178) .......... 25
Figure 2.2: Strata and metafunctions of language .......................................................... 32
Figure 2.3: Stratified stratum of social context (Martin 1997, p. 8) ............................ 34
Figure 2.4: Stratification of language and context ......................................................... 34
Figure 2.5: Realisation and stratification .................................................................... 35
Figure 2.6: Language in relation to a stratified model of social context (as register and
genre) (Martin 2010, p. 18) .................................................................................. 36
Figure 2.7: Cline of instantiation (Martin & White 2005, p. 25) ................................. 38
Figure 2.8: Intersection of stratification and instantiation (Halliday 2005, p. 255) ...... 38
Figure 2.9: Realisation in relation to instantiation (all strata instantiated) (Martin 2010,
p. 24) ..................................................................................................................... 39
Figure 2.10: Individuation and affiliation perspectives of individuation cline (Martin
2010, p. 28) ............................................................................................................ 41
Figure 2.11: Levels of affiliation on the individuation cline (Knight 2010a, p. 238) .... 43
Figure 2.12: Layers of Themes and News in discourse (Martin & Rose 2007, p. 199) .. 48
Figure 2.13: Kinds of meaning in relation to kinds of structure (Martin & White 2005,
p. 18) ....................................................................................................................... 51
Figure 3.1: Editorials in The Australian ........................................................................ 61
Figure 3.2: Editorials in China Daily ............................................................................ 62
Figure 3.3: A topological perspective on attitudinal resources (adopted from Martin
2000a, p. 166) ........................................................................................................ 66
Figure 3.4: Network of GRADUATION (adapted from (Hood 2015a)) ...................... 70
Figure 3.5: Analysis framework for ATTITUDE (adapted from Martin & White 2005) .................................................................................................................................. 73
Figure 4.1: Coupling of positive inclination with Trigger in The Australian ............... 92
Figure 4.2: Triplets of positive inclination, Emoter and Trigger in The Australian ........ 92
Figure 4.3: Cluster of Triplets (positive inclination+Emoter+Trigger) in The Australian ......................................................................................................................... 93
Figure 4.4: Affect syndrome in The Australian ............................................................ 94
Figure 4.5: Coupling of positive inclination and Trigger in the China Daily ............... 99
Figure 4.6: Triplets of positive inclination, Emoter and Trigger in the China Daily .... 99
Figure 4.7: Affect syndrome in the China Daily ......................................................... 100
Figure 4.8: Opposite evaluative couplings (capacity) in The Australian .................... 106
Figure 4.9: Judgement-Labor syndrome in The Australian ......................................... 108
Figure 4.10: Judgement-Liberal syndrome in The Australian ..................................... 109
Figure 4.11: Evaluative coupling (capacity) in the China Daily .................................. 113
Figure 4.12: Cluster of evaluative coupling (negative capacity+action on people) in the
China Daily ............................................................................................................... 114
Figure 4.13: Judgement syndrome in the China Daily ................................................ 114
Figure 4.14: Evaluative coupling (reaction) in The Australian .................................. 123
Figure 4.15: Invoked evaluative coupling (judgement) in The Australian .................. 123
Figure 4.16: Combined evaluative coupling (positive reaction-judgement) in The
Australian .............................................................................................................. 124
Figure 4.17: Combined evaluative coupling (negative reaction-judgement) in The
Australian ............................................................................................................ 124
Figure 4.18: Complex evaluative couplings (reaction-judgement) in The Australian ... 125
Figure 4.19: Reaction-Labor syndrome in The Australian ......................................... 127
Figure 5.22: Contrastive prosodies in The Australian ........................................ 127
Figure 4.21: Evaluative coupling (reaction) in the China Daily .......................... 135
Figure 4.22: Cluster of evaluative coupling (reaction) in the China Daily .............. 135
Figure 4.23: Appreciation syndrome in the China Daily ..................................... 137
Figure 4.24: ‘Gillard admirers’ bond in The Australian ..................................... 138
Figure 4.25: Community of ‘Gillard admirers’ in The Australian ....................... 139
Figure 4.26: Community of the Labor Party admirers in The Australian ............ 140
Figure 4.27: Affiliation framework (with reference to Knight 2010a, p. 249) ........... 141
Figure 4.28: General communities in The Australian .......................................... 144
Figure 4.29: General Community of harmonious society in the China Daily........ 145
Figure 5.1: [[POS+LABOR]+NOT+[POS+AUSTRALIA]] in The Australian ............ 151
Figure 5.2: Reinforcing the recast of [POS+LABOR] as [NEG+LABOR] in The Australian ......................................................................................................................... 152
Figure 5.3: [[POS+LABOR]+causes+[NEG+LABOR]] in The Australian .............. 153
Figure 5.4: Reinforcing the shift from [POS+LABOR] to [NEG+LABOR] in The Australian ......................................................................................................................... 154
Figure 5.5: [[POS+LABOR]+causes+[POS+LABOR]] in The Australian ............ 156
Figure 5.6: [POS+LABOR:role] overridden by [NEG+LABOR:performance] in The Australian ......................................................................................................................... 157
Figure 5.7: [POS+Labor:policy] overridden by [neg+Labor:practice] in The Australian ......................................................................................................................... 159
Figure 5.8: [POS+LABOR:in opposition] overridden by [NEG+LABOR:in government] in The Australian ......................................................................................................................... 161
Figure 5.9: [individual+[pos+Labor]] as Trigger of [group+[neg+Labor]] in the China Daily ......................................................................................................................... 164
Figure 5.10: [individual+[POS+LABOR]] overridden by [group+[NEG+LABOR]] in The Australian ......................................................................................................................... 165
Figure 5.11: Invalidating [POS+LABOR:future] by contrasting with [NEG+LABOR:present] in The Australian ......................................................................................................................... 169
Figure 5.12: Sarcasm and [POS+LABOR] in The Australian ............................... 172
Figure 5.13: Explicit contrastive prosodies in The Australian (adapted from Zappavigna et al. 2010, p. 159) ................................................................. 176
Figure 5.14: Implicit contrastive prosodies in The Australian ............................ 177
Figure 5.15: Propagating [POS+SOCIAL RELATIONS] across relation of repetiti
China Daily ............................................................................................................ 181
Figure 5.16: Propagating [POS+SOCIAL RELATIONS] across relations of antonymy in the China Daily ......................................................................................................................... 183
Figure 5.17: Relations of hyponymy (challenge, financial stability and rising housing prices) in the China Daily .......................................................... 185
Figure 5.18: Propagating [NEG+SOCIAL RELATIONS] across relations of hyponymy in the China Daily .......................................................... 185
Figure 5.19: Propagating across relations of meronymy (Chinese economy, exports and consumption) in the China Daily ........................................ 187
Figure 5.20: Propagating [POS+SOCIAL RELATIONS] across relations of meronymy in the China Daily .......................................................... 187
Figure 5.21: Prosody of consistent values in the China Daily ............................. 189
Figure 5.22: Contrastive prosodies of values about the field ‘afflicting/opposition’ in the China Daily ......................................................................................................................... 190
Figure 5.23: Contrastive prosodies of values about the field ‘serving/co-operation’ in the *China Daily* ................................................................. 191
Figure 5.24: Affiliation strategies in *Between a tragedy and a farce* .................. 197
Figure 5.25: Affiliation strategies in *Caribbean co-operation* .......................... 201
List of Tables

Table 3.1: Comparison of characteristics of The Australian and China Daily .................. 60
Table 3.2: Dates for collecting the newspaper editorials .................................................. 62
Table 3.3: Editorial texts as data for the present research ............................................... 63
Table 3.4: Conventions for coding ATTITUDE (Martin & White 2005, p. 71) ............... 73
Table 3.5: Instance of attitudinal encoding (affect) .......................................................... 74
Table 3.6: Examples of attitudinal coding ........................................................................ 75
Table 3.7: Kinds of entities (adopted from (Martin & Rose 2007, p. 114)) ..................... 76
Table 3.8: Taxonomic relationship in discourse (adopted from (Martin 1992a, pp. 294- 309) ................................................................................................................................ 77
Table 4.1: Ratio of inscribed and invoked attitude in The Australian ................................ 81
Table 4.2: Inscribed attitude in The Australian ................................................................. 82
Table 4.3: Ratio of inscribed and invoked attitude in the China Daily ............................. 83
Table 4.4: Inscribed attitude in the China Daily ............................................................... 85
Table 4.5: Subcategories of affect in The Australian ...................................................... 87
Table 4.6: Subcategories of affect in the China Daily ..................................................... 87
Table 4.7: Classification of Emoters of positively inscribed inclination in The Australian .......................................................................................................................... 90
Table 4.8: Classification of non-authorial Emoters of inscribed inclination in the China Daily ......................................................................................................................... 97
Table 4.9: Classification of Trigger of inscribed positive inclination in the China Daily ................................................................................................................................. 98
Table 4.10: Clusters of evaluative triplets in the China Daily ........................................... 100
Table 4.11: Subcategories of judgement in The Australian ........................................... 102
Table 4.12: Subcategories of judgement in the China Daily ........................................... 102
Table 4.13: Classification of the targets of capacity in The Australian ......................... 105
Table 4.14: Positive and negative instances of capacity in The Australian .................... 107
Table 4.15: Cluster of evaluative couplings (capacity) in The Australian ....................... 108
Table 4.16: Classification of the targets of capacity in the China Daily .......................... 110
Table 4.17: Positive and negative instances of capacity in the China Daily .................... 112
Table 4.18: Subcategories of appreciation in The Australian ........................................ 117
Table 4.19: Subcategories of appreciation in the China Daily ....................................... 117
Table 4.20: Classification of the appraised entities of appreciation:reaction (Performance, Policy, etc.) in The Australian ................................................................. 118
Table 4.21: Classification of actors of performance/policy in The Australian ................ 120
Table 4.22: Positive and negative appreciation:reaction of performance/policy in The Australian .......................................................................................................................... 121
Table 4.23: Positive and negative evaluations of actors of performance/policy in The Australian ...................................................................................................................... 122
Table 4.24: Clusters of combined evaluative couplings (reaction-judgement) in The Australian .......................................................................................................................... 126
Table 4.25: Classification of the targets of appreciation:reaction (performance, situation, etc.) in the China Daily ............................................................................................... 129
Table 4.26: Classification of actors of performances in the China Daily ......................... 130
Table 4.27: Positive and negative appreciation:reaction to performance/situation/economy in the China Daily ............................................................................................... 131
Table 4.28: Positive and negative instances of judgement of actors of performance in the China Daily ................................................................. 133
Table 4.29: Clusters of couplings of types of experiential target with polarity of reaction in the China Daily ........................................................................................................................................... 136
Table 4.30: Couplings, bonds and local communities in The Australian ..................... 142
Table 4.31: Clusters of couplings, local communities and general communities in The Australian ........................................................................................................................................... 143
Table 4.32: Couplings, bonds and local communities in the China Daily.................... 144
Table 5.1: Affiliation strategies in text 1 and text 2 ...................................................... 202
**Abbreviation**

| SFL     | Systemic-functional linguistics |
Abstract

This thesis is concerned with the enactment of persuasion of readers in written monologic media discourse. It characterises persuasion as the particular patterns of linguistic choices for constructing and managing communities of shared values between writers and their readers in newspaper editorial texts. The analyses and discussions in this study provide an account of the means through which editorial texts enable their readers to feel with the writers’ evaluative positions.

The general linguistic theory underpinning this thesis is that of systemic-functional linguistics (SFL). Of particular relevance within this theoretical framework is the affiliation aspect of the individuation cline, which presents the evaluative couplings of [ATTITUDE+IDEATION] as the linguistic basis for constructing a community of shared values and for enacting persuasion. The thesis proposes a complementary perspective on the strategies of affiliation by treating the patterns of re-coupling of different evaluative couplings as its strategies. To capture the re-coupling process, the thesis adopts both a synoptic and a dynamic approach to explore the strategies of affiliation: distributional patterns of evaluative couplings (synoptic) and the logogenetic development of these couplings (dynamic).

The affiliation model is applied to the examination of 21 editorial texts from two national broadcast newspapers. Eleven of them are from *The Australian* and 10 are from the *China Daily*. The exploration focuses on the distributional patterns of attitudinal values both in terms of their category and their experiential targets in each data set. It also examines the patterns of re-coupling between evaluative couplings which are mediated by choices from other linguistic systems. Finally, the analysis investigates the effects of these patterns of evaluative couplings and the effects of re-couplings for persuasion between editorial writers and their readers and compares the persuasive rhetoric identified for each data set.

The analyses of coupling and re-coupling suggest that the two newspapers differ from each other in terms of their affiliation strategies. *The Australian* prefers to encode opposite evaluative couplings in each editorial text. The strategy is described as a divisive one, dividing its predominantly Australian readership into opposing communities. The *China Daily*, on the other hand, tends to express consistent evaluative couplings in every editorial text. On this basis, it can be said to function as a solidary strategy, in relation to
its global readership. This tendency attempts to unite a global populace and realises a solidary rhetoric. At a broader level the thesis makes a significant contribution to a linguistic understanding of persuasion in media discourse.