

MASTER'S THESIS

An analysis of Chinese and English editorials

Tong, Mei Yee

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**AN ANALYSIS OF
CHINESE AND ENGLISH EDITORIALS**

TONG MEI YEE

STUDENT NO. 03402258

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to study the argument structure in terms of its organization and its nature embedded in Chinese and English editorials.

The focus of the investigation is on the editorial, which belongs to the expository of argumentative genre. Editorials exhibit persuasion elements, i.e. the arguments, as the use of argument aims at “influencing the opinions of readers on some controversial issue” (Connor, 1996:143). This study examines the argumentative elements of 4 editorials: two are from a Chinese newspaper (Ming Pao) and two from an English newspaper (South China Morning Post).

I will examine the data by two analytical tools: the notion of generic structure potential suggested by Halliday and Hasan (1989) and the sentential structure from the dialectical perspective adopting Toulmin’s model of argument.

The analysis reveals that there is no great difference in the sequence of organizing the argument structures in these two languages. Contrary to assumptions about cultural differences which state that the position of “purpose” is delayed, such a difference is therefore not obvious from my data. However, the linguistic signals show an internal, semantic, difference between the Chinese and the English editorials. Expressions of value exhibit different quantitative distributions and evaluations of issues are expressed by two different sets of evaluative words. Chinese editorials tend to evaluate issues from a “standard and ethics” perspective which is concerned with social and moral consciousness while English editorials evaluate issues from a “competency” perspective, concerning the ability to handle the issues put forward.

論文摘要

本論文主要探究中英文報章的社評在表達其論元時所採取的策略，會否因其所採用的語言不同而在結構上及性質上展現出文化上的差異？

文中話語的分析主要是以 TOULMIN'S MODEL OF ARGUMENT 及 HASAN'S GENERIC STRUCTURE POTENTIAL 為分析工具，就四篇本地社評（兩篇中文及兩篇英文社評）作出仔細分析及比較，以了解中文及英文社評內的論元結構及類別。經研究及分析後，得出以下結論：中英文社評在論元結構上仍依據一般的社評篇章結構，所採用的語文並不影響社評內的論元結構。就文字運用及語意表達上，中英文社評確有明顯的差異。中文社評在評論事件時，多以社會的道德角度作為出發點；而英文社評則多從能力的角度作為分析和論述事件的依據。

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