

An analysis of two American news editorials written on the current (2009) military situation in Afghanistan

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This paper was submitted for the module on Functional Grammar. It analyzes two editorials written about the situation in Afghanistan and Obama's policies at that time (2009). Both editorials lived up to their paper's reputation. The analysis showed the San Francisco Chronicle's editorial remained critical except for the very end and gave fewer suggestions to the president than the New York Times article which was more positive and gave the president concrete recommendations to follow.

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1. Introduction

The course is entitled “Functional Grammar” which sounds like a way to use grammar functionally. However, this methodology actually looks at language from a much broader perspective than just grammar via nouns, adjectives, verbs and so on. It is a systematic way to analyze how language works or functions in communication. So this process is also known by a more comprehensive name, Systemic Functional Linguistics.

The value of studying Systemic Functional Linguistics is that it is useful in many other fields to help one understand and analyze texts; some of those fields include understanding relationships between language and culture, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, translation, language teaching, language acquisition and even forensic linguistics.

This paper does not summarize the materials learned in the notes and reading but goes straight to the analysis and demonstrates knowledge of the materials by their use in this paper. Therefore space could be devoted to the analyses and the comparison.

2. Background for the texts

Both texts are editorials written in famous American newspapers. The first one comes from the San Francisco Chronicle and was published on September 22, 2009 and is about 350 words long. The Chronicle does not have a reputation as a top level newspaper. It does not have a big foreign presence but gets much of its news from the wire services. Its editorial policy has been on the liberal side usually supporting Democratic Party candidates.

The New York Times is well known and respected throughout the world with an international presence. Its editorial policies are generally liberal. Comparing these two newspapers, the New York Times would

be considered much more sophisticated than the San Francisco Chronicle. The editorial from the New York Times was published on March 28, 2009 and is about 500 words long.

3. Analytical Framework

The analytical framework followed (Chart A) is adapted from B.P. So (2005) and P. Dickson (2009) with some of the definitions also coming from White (2001).

Chart A

Contextual analysis	
1. Genre	Name of the genre and subtypes.
2. Context of the situation	
a. Field	What is the subject matter and institutional context?
b. Tenor	What are the social roles and relationships between speakers, listeners; attitudinal positions?
c. Mode	By which means does communication occur and is there possibility of feedback?
3. Institutional practices	In what institution is this kind of text typically produced? What constraints and obligations does this kind of text put on writers and readers?
4. Socio-cultural context	What are the socio-cultural factors that make this text appear the way it is?
Linguistic analysis	
1. Linguistic features	Lexico-grammatical features for realizing the 3 metafunctions of language below:
a. Experiential meanings	The identification of Participants, Process, and Circumstances that provide the constituents of external reality.
b. Interpersonal meanings	Identification of Mood Block, Modality and evaluative terms to show how speakers interact with others and adopt attitudes, positions and social roles; how they attempt to position others.
c. Textual meanings	Identification of the Theme to show how speakers organize and interconnect experiential and interpersonal meanings to create coherent and cohesive texts
2. Intertextuality	Is there anything drawn from other texts? Is the information attributed to the sources and how?

4. Analysis of the San Francisco Chronicle editorial

4.1 Contextual Analysis

4.1.1 Genre

This text is an editorial and seeks to present a position which is representative of the newspaper. No one signed the editorial so we can assume it was written by one of the newspaper's editors.

4.1.2 Context of the situation

4.1.2.1 Field

The field concerns an editorial published in the San Francisco Chronicle about the current escalating war in Afghanistan.

4.1.2.2 Tenor

The editor is addressing all readers on behalf of the newspaper. He/she is giving opinions about the current deteriorating situation in Afghanistan and what decisions President Obama must make soon to possibly resolve the situation. Readers of an editorial might discuss it with others and even write a letter to the editor of the newspaper.

4.1.2.3 Mode

Written discourse in a well know daily newspaper.

4.1.3 Institutional practice

Newspaper editorials are by nature opinions normally held by the newspaper's editorial staff which are often written to spark discussions sometimes resulting in letters to the editor. Editorial writing should be clear, concise and accurate to back up the opinions put forth, and the writing style should be somewhat formal.

4.1.4 Socio-cultural context

At time this editorial was written (September 22, 2009), America and its allies had been in a war in Afghanistan for more than eight years. This editorial was written in response to the difficult situation at the time and especially concerns a leaked military analysis which said the war was “bleak but salvageable.” This period was a time when President Obama needed to establish a concrete plan to deal with the war and make it clear to everyone.

4.2 Linguistic analysis

4.2.1 Linguistic features

(See chart A for the explanation for these)

4.2.1.1 Experiential meanings

(See chart A for the explanation for these)

4.2.1.1.1 Process types

When looking at the process types found in the Chronicle editorial listed in chart 1 below, by far the most common process type found was the material process which includes doings and happenings. Almost 60% of the processes occurring were material. The second largest group of processes was verbals representing about 24% of the processes. Verbals describe a way of communicating. The smallest process was attributive relationals making up almost 17% of the processes. Attributive relationals are used to describe the attributes or qualities of the participant.

Chart 1

material	verbal	attributive	totals
25	10	7	42
59.52%	23.81%	16.67%	100.00%

Some examples:

Material: setting, deliver, fought, won, fumbled, going, goes, cut, run, tainted, stuck, choose.

Verbal: says, suggested, sugarcoat (used as a metaphor for the report's way of describing the situation), reported, explains, acknowledged.

Attributive: is, become, are.

4.2.1.1.2 Participant roles

Below is a breakdown the the participant roles:

1. war/conflict/fighting/[war] situation: 5 instances
2. military analysis/the report/report's finding/the general's appraisal: 4 instances
3. the president, the White House: 4 instances
4. General McChrystal/his plan for success: 4 instances
5. More troops/larger forces: 2 instances
6. Afghan President Hamid Karzai: 2 instances
7. Democratic Party base, national polls, the Taliban, vote, military effort, stance: each 1 instance

The editorial's title is about troops for Afghanistan, so it is not surprising that the largest single group of participants concerns the war in Afghanistan. The next largest group has to do with General McChrystal's report about the current status of the war. Next we have four instances each referring to President Obama and General McChrystal. Just from these number we can deduce that both president Obama and General McChrystal are important in this article and by extension to how the war is to be fought. The two instances about more troops indicate this must be part of General McChrystal's plan for success. Finally, mentioning President Hamid Karzai shows he is also an important player in the war.

4.2.1.1.3 Grammatical metaphor/nominalisation

This is an occurrence where a verbal process becomes a participant or “abstract participant” (White 2001 p. 142), that is, where a verbal process becomes a noun. The result is that the participant is not a concrete entity, but a “happening, event, action or state-of-affairs.” (Ibid) Halliday (1994) calls these nominalisations grammatical metaphors because the verbal stands for a noun much like a metaphor stands for something else and not for itself.

The importance of nominalisation in a discussion or debate is that when taking a position the nominalisation is seen as something already decided and not open to debate (Butt 2000 p. 73). This is more easily explained by example by an example from phrase 1 of sentence 2:

A leaked military analysis [abstract/nominalisation], says the situation is bleak...

If you try to argue this sentence, the argument would be about whether or not there was a leaked military analysis.. Based on the Finite *says*, one can only argue whether or not the analysis said the situation was bleak. This is because *a leaked military analysis* is a nominalisation of a verbal process and becomes a given in the sentence. So one can see that in an argument, using nominalisations makes the information in the nominalisation assumed and no longer arguable.

The second example is from sentence 13:

The general's brutal appraisal of the war's failure [abstract/nominalisation] isn't at issue.

Who decided the appraisal was brutal? The writer had done so even though others might not agree, but this nominalisation takes the severity of the appraisal out of the argument.

The third one comes from sentence 17:

The report's findings [abstract/nominalisation] were hinted at almost from the moment McChrystal was sent to Afghanistan.

Because of the nominalisation this sentence makes the report is valid and unarguable.

4.2.1.2 Interpersonal meanings

4.2.1.2.1 Mood Block

We study interpersonal meanings to determine the central elements in an argument on the phrasal level by first determining the Mood Block which consists of three elements, a Subject, a Finite, Polarity, and any other Modality. (White 200 p. 91) The Mood Block is the part that puts the clause into some kind of time space so it can be argued. If a clause lacks a Finite, that is if it is Non-finite, it cannot be argued, and it must be a dependent clause. Polarity means whether or not the clause contains negation. Finally, everything in the clause that is not part of the Mood Block is called the Residue (see below).

Here are two examples from the Chronicle editorial:

The White House is setting the stage for a fateful debate on Afghanistan.

Subject	Finite	Predicate	Compliment
Mood Block		Residue	

The *White House* is the subject and *is* the finite. If we want to argue this clause, the argument would be if the White House *is* or *is not* setting the stage. It would not be whether or not the *setting* is being done. This proves that *is* is the Finite.

The president himself isn't sold on the idea.

Subject	Finite/ polarity	Predicate	Compliment
Mood Block		Residue	

Here the Finite is negated, and thus we have a polarity marker: n't (not). If we want to argue this phrase, then we would argue that the *president* himself *is* or *is not* sold on the idea, not that the president sold the idea.

4.2.1.2.2 Modality

The American Heritage Dictionary says modality comes from the word modal which means relating to

or expressing the mood of a verb. Modality is used to show what position speakers are taking. (Butt 2000 p. 113) Using Modals is a way of turning absolutes into relatives. In an argument, Modals indicate a subjective position. There are different kinds of modals, and they can serve both as Finites or stand alone. Basically Modals can show probability, usuality, typicality, obviousness, obligation and inclination (Butt 2000 p. 113).

There are also Modal adjuncts, or as Butt (2000 p. 115) calls them, Mood Adjuncts and at least one of these is found in both of the editorials. These are basically adverbs that adjunct to the Finite to add to the Modal meaning (see below for examples). To sum up, Modals are ways that the speaker or writer expresses his/her opinion on a more relative scale using a verbal form rather than a lexical form.

The Chronicle editorial only uses a few Modals, three with *will* and one with *has to* and one Modal Adjunct. The first example is clause 1 from sentence 6.

The president	now	has to	deliver.
Subject	Mood adjunct	Modal/ Finite	Predicate
Mood Block			Residue

This would be considered a Modal of obligation, because in this sentence the Modal is very strong, almost imperative, expressing the urgency for the president to take a new course in Afghanistan. As a note of explanation, the Modal *has to* is retained instead of just *has*, because if the Modal is replaced with *must*, one should then drop the *to* for the sentence to make sense. That is it would be incorrect to say, “The President now must to deliver.”

Next is the analysis of the use of *will* from sentence 12, clause 2 and includes an example of a Modal Adjunct:

the conflict	“will	likely	result	in failure.”
Subject	Modal / Finite	Modal Adjunct	Predicate	Compliment

Mood Block	Residue
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This Modal is about probability or likelihood as indicated by the Modal adjunct *likely*. In this sentence *will* is used to show the opinion of the General's report. *Will* by itself is very strong, almost inevitable, and the Adjunct *likely* is added to soften the inevitability.

Another example contains the Modal *will* and a Modal Adjunct.

(19) (C1) Karzai *probably will* be confirmed as president.

This is another example of a Modal expressing probability with the *will* preceded by the Modal Adjunct, *probably*, which softens the meaning somewhat.

4.2.1.2.3 Evaluative terms

The next subsection of our linguistic analysis has to do terms of evaluation or as Thompson calls the process: *appraisal*. (Thompson 2004 p. 75) This refers to the lexical terms the writer or speaker uses to indicate whether something is good or bad which is different than Modals which do the same thing but in a grammatical way. These are words that have a value judgment and show the writer's position.

Looking at the chart below, one immediately sees there are many more negative terms than positive terms. The proportion is about 3 negatives to two positives. The distribution of these will be analyzed in the comparison at the end of this paper.

Chart 2

Positive	Negative
salvageable	fateful
won	leaked
appealing	bleak
rewin	inconclusive
counterinsurgency	war
expert	fought
protecting	fumbled
fresh	nightmare
success	sugarcoat
approved	corrupt
disrupt	ineffective
successful	worse
clearly	all wrong
improve	attacks
	conflict
	brutal
	failures
	obstacles
	tainted
	ebbing
	costly
	unbending
	problems
Total: 14	Total: 23

4.2.1.3 Textual meanings

When we look at textual meanings we are looking at coherency and cohesiveness. That is, do the parts of the text fit together in an understandable cohesive progression. To study this progression one can analyzed the Theme in each phrase.

4.2.1.3.1 The Theme

When studying Themes one can learn how the speaker arranges the different groups and clauses in a clause (Thompson 2004 p. 3) We call these Themes the textual meanings of the clause. Most of the

time the Theme corresponds with the Subject, and when this is the case, we call this an unmarked Theme. However, sometimes a clause begins with a circumstance or even a process because the writer wants to emphasize something other than the subject of the clause for example when a clause starts with a prepositional phrase. Because these instances are not the subject of the clause, we call them marked Themes. One can look at the cohesiveness of a text by plotting the progression of Themes from clause to clause (Butt 2000 p. 142). It should be noted that everything in a phrase that is not the Theme is called the Rheme. Below are two examples of Theme analysis, one unmarked and the other marked. The unmarked Theme is taken from sentence 19 while the marked Theme is taken from sentence 20.

Karzai	probably	will	be confirmed	as president
Subject	Modal	Finite	Predicate	Compliment
Unmarked Theme	Rheme			

In Washington, Obama's Democratic Party base and national polls show ebbing support for a costly war

Circumstance	Subject	Finite /predicate	Compliment	Adjunct
Marked Theme	Rheme			

In summary, almost all the Themes in the Chronicle editorial are Unmarked. This indicates that the writing style of the author is somewhat simple. Further, the Theme progression is logical and does not pose any difficulties in understanding the text.

4.2.2 Intertextuality

The last section we will deal with in our analysis is intertextuality which looks at whether or not text being analyzed is supported by other texts. The Chronicle editorial was written primarily in response to General Stanley McChrystal's leaked classified report about the military situation in Afghanistan. The report is extremely critical, and the editorial takes a similar tact. Even though the report was still

classified at the time, because the writer of the editorial is writing for a major American newspaper, it can be assumed he had access to at least some of the report if not all of it.

One important note is, when a leaked report is mentioned in a news story, there is often a feeling that the information might not be credible. Now the report is public which gives the editorial more credibility. General McChrystal's report can be downloaded from the Washington Post's website (McChrystal 2009).

5. Analysis of the New Your Times editorial

5.1 Contextual Analysis

5.1.1 Genre

Same as above.

5.1.2 Context of the situation

5.1.2.1 Field

The field concerns an editorial published in the New York Times about President Obama's new asserted leadership in the war in Afghanistan.

5.1.2.2 Tenor

The editor is giving opinions about the new interest President Obama is showing for the war in Afghanistan (See 4.1.2.2 above).

5.1.2.3 Mode

Same as above.

5.1.3 Institutional practice

The same as above

5.1.4 Socio-cultural context

This editorial was written on March 28, 2009, a day after President Obama had released his new plan for fighting the war in Afghanistan. Some proposals in the plan involve sending 4000 more US troops to Afghanistan and providing 1.5 billion a year for the construction of roads, schools and hospitals. This new plan was generally welcomed by the American people and their allies.

5.2 Linguistic analysis

5.2.1 Linguistic features

5.2.1.1 Experiential meanings

5.2.1.1.1 Process types

Material, verbals and attributive relationals were explained above. Mentals refer to mental and physical processes, and existentials refer to something's existence. Locational relationals are ways of locating something. See examples below.

Chart 3

material	mental	attributive	verbal	existential	locational	totals
34	7	5	4	2	1	53
64.15%	13.21%	9.43%	7.55%	3.77%	1.89%	100.00%

Some Examples:

Material: placing, missing, created, abandoned, come, defined, to control, dictate, disrupt, dismantle, defeat.

Mental: underestimate, to see, recognizes, hope, knows.

Attributive relational: is, was, are.

Verbal: asserted, repeating, acknowledged.

Existential: was, is.

Locational relational: are.

5.2.1.1.2 Participants roles

1. Obama: at least 10 instances
2. Obama's plan: 2 instances
3. Related to the USA: 2 instances
4. Bush: 2 instances
5. We (writer of the editorial): 2 instances
6. Other leaders: 2 instances
7. Militants: 2 instances
8. The Taliban, Al Queda, extremists: each 1 instance
9. Afghanistan, Pakistan: each 1 instance

This editorial was written the morning after President Obama released a new sweeping plan for fighting the war in Afghanistan. Therefore, his name or references to him make up the lion's share of the participants. Further, there are two references to his plan, and Bush's name is here because Obama inherited the war from his administration. Participants number 6 through 9 are all players in the war. The one interesting participant not found in the Chronicle editorial is the use of *we* to represent the view of the newspaper.

5.2.1.1.3 Grammatical metaphor/nominalisation

Three nominalisations are direct criticisms of former President Bush. Two come from sentence 4.

That is a good first step toward fixing the dangerous situation that former President George W.

Bush created when he abandoned the necessary war in Afghanistan [abstract/ nominalisation] for the ill-conceived war of choice in Iraq [abstract/ nominalisation].

The next one comes from sentence 6.

Instead of Mr. Bush's vague talk of representative democracy in Afghanistan [abstract/ nominalisation], he defined a more specific mission.

These three instances show the position of the writer in regards to former President Bush, because with his nominalisations these three points are now seen to be givens in the writer's mind.

The last example is sentence 23.

His plans to urge so-called moderate Taliban to abandon their hard-line leaders [abstract/ nominalisation] is worth trying.

Nominalisations also help to provide information because they are assumed to be true. In this case the nominalisation tells the readers that one of Obama's plans is to urge the moderates in the Taliban stop following their more radical leaders.

5.2.1.2 Interpersonal meanings

5.2.1.2.1 Mood Block

The Mood Block was already discussed above

5.2.1.2.2 Modality

Will is found in the editorial at least two times, first in sentence 11, c4:

extremists	will	unleash	even more fury.
Subject	Finite/ Modal	Predicate	Compliment
Mood Block		Residue	

This is an instance of probability. The second instance is of obligation and comes from sentence 24:

But that *will* require dealing with one of the most disturbing bits of news of the last week.

There are also two instances of where the author uses the modal *must* to expression obligation:

He *must* persuade the Pakistani intelligence service to stop underwriting the Taliban and the Afghan government to eradicate corruption.

He also *must* persuade NATO to contribute more to the war effort — if not combat troops in Afghanistan, then trainers or development aid.

This editorial also contains a Modal Adjunct. This one is from sentence 14:

It	finally	sets	benchmarks for measuring progress by Kabul and Islamabad.
Subject	Modal Adjunct	Finite	Compliment
Mood Block			Residue

5.2.1.2.3 Evaluative terms

Upon looking at Chart 4 below, it can be seen that the positive and negatives are almost the same in number which gives this editorial a more upbeat tone than the Chronicle editorial. These will be analyzed in detail below.

It should be noted that in both articles even if a term is listed as negative, it might not have been used in a way critical to the US stance. For example, sentence 8 reads:

The United States *removed* the Taliban from power in Afghanistan in 2001 as it sought to *stamp out* the Al Qaeda militants behind the 9/11 attacks. Both remove and stamp out are listed as negative terms, but they have a positive use here at least from the Americans' point of view.

Chart 4

Positive	Negative
new	against
comprehensive	underestimate
succeeding	difficulty
greatly	deadly
encouraging	adversaries
good	missing
fixing	dangerous
necessary	abandoned
rebuild	ill-conceived
popular	war
welcome	disrupt
coherent	dismantle
progress	defeat
solution	stamp out
encourage	militants
help	vague
develop	plot
endorse	shocking
building	extremists
hope	unleash
improve	fury
contribute	threat
development	insurgents
aid	corruption
worth	abandoned
allies	disturbing
	fight
Total: 26	Total: 27

5.2.1.3 Textual meanings

5.2.1.3.1 The Theme

Like the Chronicle editorial, the New York Times editorial contains mostly Unmarked Themes. There is one interesting Marked Theme that could be analyzed. It comes from sentence 18:

Like him,	we	strongly	endorse	a bipartisan Congressional proposal...
Circumstance	Subject	Modal	Finite/predicate	Compliment
Marked Theme	Rheme			

This kind of Theme emphasized the fact that the newspaper's stance is the same as President Obama's is. It uses this Marked Theme to emphasize its association with President Obama at least on this point. The sentence could have been written, "We strongly endorse his bipartisan Congressional proposal..." However, by making "Like him" the Theme, it makes the sense of association much stronger.

5.2.2 Intertextuality

Both editorials were written in response to other texts. The Chronicle editorial was heavily influenced by General McChrystal's report, and the New York Times editorial was written in response to President Obama's new plan for dealing with the war in Afghanistan. I have tried to locate a copy of President Obama's plan but have only been able to locate news articles discussing some of the points it contains. See Alberts (2009) for one of these articles written from a Canadian perspective.

6. Comparison: Similarities and Differences

The question for this assignment reads: "you should consider whether the texts are similar or different in terms of the types of **either** textual, interpersonal or experiential meanings explored in the materials." The editorials contain many similarities and some differences in all three of these meaning types, but I think it would be most interesting to compare the interpersonal meanings. So this comparison will concentrate on Modality and evaluative terms.

First of all when we should look at Chart 2 and Chart 4 which are comparisons of the positive and negative evaluative terms for the Chronicle and Times editorials we find some interesting differences. The Chronicle editorial contains many more negative terms than the Times editorial. The proportions are about three negative for every two positive terms for the Chronicle and they are about one to one for the Times editorial. Just looking at these proportions should give a strong indication of the tone of each of them.

Now each editorial will be evaluated paragraph by paragraph starting with the first paragraph of each editorial to see how the author set the tone for the rest of the text. As mentioned above, the Chronicle editorial starts out with almost all negative evaluatives: *fateful*, *leaked*, *bleak* and the last sentence begins with *but* which serves to throw some doubt into the mix.

On the other hand, in paragraph one of the Times editorial, we find all positive words like *new*, *comprehensive*, and the verb *asserted* and the verbal phrase *matters most*. So we can conclude that the initial tone of the Chronicle article is negative and critical while the initial tone of the Times article is upbeat and positive.

Continuing in second paragraph of the Chronicle article which is an evaluation of the current war situation and what be should be done, we find inconclusive, war, and nightmare. We also find the interesting sentence giving a very negative feeling using verbs: *fought*, *won and fumbled away* describing the war effort. Further, in sentence 6 the president *has to* (Modal already mentioned above) *deliver to rewin the fight*.

In the second paragraph of the Times which informs us that Obama is now focusing on the war, we find *not* reversing the negative *underestimate* to give it a more positive meaning. Continuing we find *greatly encouraging*, *focusing* and the word *missing* referring to what has been missing *from American policy*. In these paragraphs both editorials stick to their original tone and the Times criticizes Bush.

Continuing with the Chronicle article, paragraphs three and four talk about the war situation in Afghanistan painting it in a bad light with terms like *corrupt*, *ineffective*, *worse* and *all wrong*. The writer also uses a Modal and Modal Adjunct *will likely*, mentioned in the analysis above, to describe

failure of the military effort.

In Paragraph three in the Times we find praise of Obama who comes back to *first principles* and criticism of Bush's *vague talk*. To contrast ,the author gives an example of Obama's more specific speech by quoting him using three distinct verbs: *disrupt, dismantle and defeat*.

Now that a general trend has been established, the final paragraphs will be analyzed to determine if that trend continues. In paragraph seven in the Chronicle article, there is a *tainted* election and *ebbing* support for the *costly* war. Finally, the feeling changes in paragraph eight where Obama is credited with not sticking to an *unbending* war plan. A further positive feeling is created with the use of *acknowledged* and *invited*. The editorial ends with the Modal *will* and the verb *need* which serve to show that there is yet much for Obama to do to correct the situation.

In Paragraph seven of the Times editorial Obama is said to *confront* many *challenges*. Further, he is being given a list of responsibilities when the editor writes that he *must* (Modal) persuade (1) Pakistani Intelligence to *stop underwriting* the Taliban, (2) the Afghan government to *eradicate corruption*, and (3) *NATO to contribute* help for the war effort or *trainers* or *aid*.

Paragraph eight begins with a kind of lukewarm statement that Obama's plans are *worth* trying but then ends on a challenging note: that the leader of American intelligence knows *shockingly little* about the Taliban leadership.

Both articles end with the need for Obama to do something. The Chronicle shifts from a mostly critical point of view to giving Obama some credit and then giving him a challenge, while the Times editorial ends by saying Obama does confront challenges and then it gives him a list of what he should do. This editorial

has kind of a dramatic finale stating Obama needs to deal with a big problem that the military intelligence community has just acknowledged.

This all indicates the general tone for each editorial continues until the end when there is a shift, and both editorials end by putting the responsibility on Obama. However, the Times editorial gives more specific examples of those responsibilities.

7. Conclusion

The assignment was to apply the principles of systematic linguistic analysis to a comparison of the style and communicative functionality of two short texts. I have followed an established methodology making a few modifications, to do that analysis and have done a comparison of the similarities and differences of the interpersonal meanings of the two texts. The results of that comparison based on the evaluative terms and Modals contained in the two editorials showed that one text was quite negative and critical lacking many positive recommendations while the other text was much more positive and gave Obama necessary steps to follow.

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Appendix 1

Editorial: More troops needed in Afghanistan?

September 22, 2009

(1) The White House is setting the stage for a fateful debate on Afghanistan. (2) A leaked military analysis says the situation is bleak yet salvageable with more troops. (3) But the president himself isn't sold on the idea.

(4) After eight inconclusive years, Afghanistan - the war that was fought, won and fumbled away - has become a nightmare. (5) The options are neither appealing nor politically safe. (6) The president, who once suggested a new strategy could rein the fight, now has to deliver.

(7) The report by counterinsurgency expert Stanley McChrystal, shown at right, didn't sugarcoat a thing. (8) Washington's ally, President Hamid Karzai, runs a corrupt and ineffective government. (9) The Taliban now control vast parts of the country with additional safe harbors in Pakistan.

(10) What's worse, the U.S.-led NATO force is going at it all wrong, McChrystal reported. (11) The military effort goes into protecting itself from attacks, a stance that's cut it off from the Afghan population. (12) Without more troops following a fresh plan, the conflict "will likely result in failure."

(13) The general's brutal appraisal of the war's failures isn't at issue. (14) But his prescription for success definitely is. (15) He's proposing additional troops beyond the 68,000 Americans already approved with the likely options varying from 10,000 to 45,000 more. (16) The larger force would fan out into Afghan streets and villages to disrupt Taliban rule and improve security.

(17) The report's findings were hinted at almost from the moment McChrystal was sent to Afghanistan this year. (18) But his plan, which mimics the successful troop surge in Iraq, has run into enormous obstacles.

(19) Karzai probably will be confirmed as president after a vote tainted by ballot-box stuffing. (20) In Washington, Obama's Democratic Party base and national polls show ebbing support for a costly war that is producing the highest casualty rates since fighting began in 2001.

(21) To his credit, Obama hasn't stuck with an unbending war plan. (22) He's acknowledged the problems and invited a debate within his administration. (23) But soon he will need to choose a strategy and explain it clearly.

349 words

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Appendix 2

The Remembered War

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(1) With his new comprehensive plan for Afghanistan and Pakistan, President Obama has asserted leadership over the war that matters most to America's security — the one against Al Qaeda and the Taliban.

(2) We do not underestimate the difficulty of succeeding against these deadly adversaries. (3) But it was greatly encouraging simply to see the president actually focusing on this war and placing it in the broader regional framework that has been missing from American policy. (4) That is a good first step toward fixing the dangerous situation that former President George W. Bush created when he abandoned the necessary war in Afghanistan for the ill-conceived war of choice in Iraq.

(5) Mr. Obama has come back to first principles. (6) Instead of Mr. Bush's vague talk of representative democracy in Afghanistan, he defined a more specific mission. (7) "We are not in Afghanistan to control that country or dictate its future," Mr. Obama said, but "to disrupt, dismantle and defeat Al Qaeda in Pakistan and Afghanistan."

(8) The United States removed the Taliban from power in Afghanistan in 2001 as it sought to stamp out the Al Qaeda militants behind the 9/11 attacks. (9) More than seven years later, the Taliban and Al Qaeda are stronger than ever. (10) Militants have crossed the border into Pakistan, where they plot attacks against the United States, its allies and Pakistan.

(11) To rebuild popular support for a mission that once was a global priority, Mr. Obama and other leaders have to keep repeating this message: If Afghanistan falls, if Pakistan falls, extremists will unleash even more fury. (12) That is a threat to us all. (13) Mr. Obama's plan breaks welcome new ground by treating Afghanistan and Pakistan as a single coherent theater of operation. (14) It finally sets benchmarks for measuring progress by Kabul and Islamabad. (15) It seeks to bring other regional players into the discussion, including Iran and Russia.

(16) The new plan also recognizes there is no military-only solution. (17) We are encouraged by Mr. Obama's plans to send hundreds of civilians to help develop new jobs in Afghanistan and an economy not tied to poppy production. (18) Like him, we strongly endorse a bipartisan Congressional proposal to invest \$1.5 billion annually in Pakistan's people with the building of schools, hospitals and roads. (19) America cannot hope to defeat the insurgents if Afghans and Pakistanis don't see their lives improve.

(20) Mr. Obama confronts many challenges. (21) He must persuade the Pakistani intelligence service to stop underwriting the Taliban and the Afghan government to eradicate corruption. (22) He also must persuade NATO to contribute more to the war effort — if not combat troops in Afghanistan, then trainers or development aid.