

## Author's stance in editorials: An analysis

Albaytar, Shiella Grajo ✉

Talaonga National High School, Philippines ([shiella.albaytar@deped.gov.ph](mailto:shiella.albaytar@deped.gov.ph))

Fortes, Ana Cristina G.

Sorsogon State University, Philippines ([fortes.ana@sorsu.edu.ph](mailto:fortes.ana@sorsu.edu.ph))

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### **Abstract**

This study employed a descriptive qualitative design using corpus analysis and interviews to analyze the linguistic devices that express the author stance in the editorials of HEIs' publication and examine the challenges faced by the writers in the process. It identified the linguistic devices that express editorial stance through the lens of interactional metadiscourse, analyzed their meaning and function, and explored the challenges encountered by writers. Findings showed that the highly conscious use of self-mentions collective pronouns reflect a strong effort to build a collective identity on behalf of the student body or publication, thereby projecting a firm institutional voice and authority. While student writers face various cognitive and communicative challenges in organizing and translating abstract topics into text, often struggling with word choice and maintaining an objective yet persuasive tone. Thus, HEIs publication and offices contemplate on recalibrating ethical standards and linguistic guidelines in editorials to better represent the voice of student body. Educators may integrate metadiscourse materials and linguistic analysis into classroom instruction to refine students' understanding of linguistic stance markers' meaning and function and address common writing challenges. Lastly, HEIs may institutionalize journalism writing guidelines to standardize editorials for consistency, integrity, professionalism, and accountability.

**Keywords:** editorial stance, linguistic devices, metadiscourse, self-mentions, student journalism

## Author's stance in editorials: An analysis

### 1. Introduction

#### 1.1 Linguistic Device in Expressing Stance

An editorial articulates the position and official stance of a publication's board on a current issue. It is a written piece that gives an opinion meant to persuade an audience on a specific issue. Editorials serve as the official voice, opinion, argument and point of view on a media organization, like a newspaper or magazine, with regard of public interest. Language fundamentally functions as the primary tool for the transmission of ideas, public discourse, and human interaction. One way for human communication to allow subjective expression and convey meaning is through writing. This significant role is influencing and shaping public thought for public engagement (Ruggiero, 2000). These media texts thus play a vital role in publicly shaping meanings and opinions.

Oatley and Djikic (2007) suggest that writing functions by converting internal mental states into a physical, symbolic form. This highlights the relevance of objectifying mental activity into a record through verbalization, projecting the purpose and core function of writing. Expanding on this concept, a "record" is defined as any "object or document that preserves knowledge and data" (Usanga, 2007, as cited in Charman, 1990). The preservation of these materials, whether physical or digital, remains a primary responsibility of the archivist (Szekely, 2017). Ultimately, writings serve as permanent, concrete collections that provide factual references for academic inquiry. Writing, as the basic form of interaction, serves as powerful tool and an effective medium capable of transmitting simple, literal information and complex, artistic expressions. In academic writing, scholars actively establish their stance their asserted position and perspective by making deliberate stylistic and interpersonal choices. Both academic and journalistic communication necessitate a balance of stylistic expression and the projection of authorial stance.

Formally defined, stance represents the specific "attitudes, feelings, judgments, or commitment" expressed by a writer (Biber et al., 1999; Deng & He, 2023). Through the employment of stance markers, writers foster audience connection, convey subjective judgment, and signal their level of conviction (Cazares-Cervantes et al., 2019). Similarly, stance involves expressing one's personal style and using interpersonal methods in writing (Sayah & Hashemi, 2014; Hyland, 2005). In the print media world, editorial writings play a significant role in creating public opinion, shaping social, political and cultural discourse of society. Fundamentally, editorials are more than just point of view likewise, a powerful persuasive communication directing to convince the readers to agree with the writer's viewpoint. The main goal is to influence the views of readers and stimulates critical thinking. An editorial articulates the position and official stance of a publication's board on a current issue. It is a written piece that gives an opinion meant to persuade an audience on a specific issue. Editorials serve as the official voice, opinion, argument and point view of a media organization like a newspaper or magazine with regards of public interest.

Editorial effectivity depends on how skillfully it communicates, shared authorial stance with editorial board on a certain topic. Editorial stance is more than just simple opinion, it certainly reveals the writer's viewpoints, their agreement and disagreement, level of certainty or confidence according to its judgement towards the subject matter. Vu, Guo, and McCombs (2019) explain that editorials are utilized by formal media platforms to advocate for specific public issues, thereby influencing and molding public opinion and political discourse. Similarly, Fairclough (1995), editorial writers must select words carefully to meet their primary goal of reader persuasion. This means that effective editorial writing relies on the author's ability to communicate arguments and their position by deliberately expressing authority, certainty, and a particular attitude through specific linguistic techniques. The main goal of editorial is to persuade; writers present their personal writing techniques carefully through specific choice of words to craft a persuasive effect on it. Authorial stance is how writers' express authority

or distance in their arguments through specific linguistic features (Hyland, 2005). Writers must present their claims cautiously and precisely to gain credibility and acceptance within their academic community (Hyland, 1996).

The latest studies confirm that in order show point of view, stimulate readership engagement and influence public opinion on social issues writers, utilize tool purposively such as modality (e.g., certainty/possibility), evaluative adjectives, and rhetorical figures. (Opara, 2019; Chen & Li, 2021). Metadiscourse is specific linguistic techniques use by the writers to actively cultivates the readers' involvement (Biber et al., 1999). Authors establish their stance through textual strategies, and in journalism, emphasizing trustworthiness through careful stylistic choices is crucial for engaging and influencing readers (Hyland, 2005). Effective writings are engage able, effect and transformative public discourse, which are achieved through a meticulous or carefully selection of language, content structure and persuasive strategies. Those rhetorical choices are writers' ability to employ persuasive strategies for readers' engagement and interaction.

In the field of applied linguistics, stance is understood as a form of social interaction between the writer and the audience. Rather than viewing writing as a neutral or detached activity, contemporary research indicates that authorial voice is essential for effectively projecting intended content (Deng & He, 2023; Hyland, 2005). Interactional metadiscourse theory emphasizes the interpersonal dimension inherent in both academic and journalistic texts. To express authorial stance, Hyland (2005) categorizes linguistic markers into four types: hedges and boosters, which manage certainty, and attitude markers and self-mentions, which reflect the writer's persona. This research underscores the importance of considering right selection of words as strategic way to persuade and influence the readers. This study provides comprehensive and more holistic understanding of rhetorical choices made by editorial writers in building their arguments. It systematically advocates moving beyond textual analysis and aims to rhetorically examine the meaning and function of how these devices persuade readers.

In intercultural rhetoric research, developing a writer's stance through language structure is essential for effectively organizing a text and achieving its intended purpose. Effectively developing a writer's stance and using language structures are vital for organizing a text and achieving its purpose in intercultural writing, with Hyland's (2005) framework serving as a key tool for analyzing authorial stance, though it is seldom used in the study of editorial writing in student journalism (Pho, 2013; Peng, 2019; Smith, 2020; Hyland, 2008). However, in the Philippines context, despite the persuasive purpose of editorials, these linguistic techniques used in contemporary remains an important area for research and needs a detailed examination for it. As Zhang and Liu (2023) assert that because the language used to show authorial stance is greatly affected by cultural and institutional settings, despite the universal intent to persuade, comparative and context-specific research is required. Consequently, this study shifts its focus from a general assessment of editorial impact to a close-up analysis of its linguistic features.

Central to this discussion is the argument by Hyland (2017) that authorial authority is achieved through specific linguistic choices within the Stance and Engagement Framework. These choices establish credibility and building meaningful connections with reader. As the principal rhetorical instruments for managing authorial presence, markers such as hedges, boosters, attitude markers, and self-mentions balance the discursive persona and detached, professional stance (Cazares-Cervantes et al., 2019). These framework collectively emphasize that mastering linguistic devices is significant for student writers to move beyond personal opinion and achieve the level of sophistication in advanced academic writing.

Ultimately, this research focuses on students' communication progress, critical thinking, and media literacy which is essential to HEIs Publication in Sorsogon. The practical output of this study a writing guide for editorial writers generates an evidence-based pedagogical material that resolves the specific linguistic hurdles of student journalists. Furthermore, this fulfills the institutional mandate to produce locally relevant, applied research that enhances student output and promotes communication accountability (Bonyadi & Samuel, 2013). Moreover, the core idea is that promoting advanced and ethical editorial writing (persuasive yet transparent about its ideological stance) serves to advance two critical Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): SDG 4 (Quality Education) by enhancing language skills, and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions) by encouraging informed public

discussion and accountability (UNESCO, 2017; Marko & Kreslins, 2018).

### *1.2 Meaning and Function of Linguistic Device*

Linguistic devices as metadiscourse tools which allow writers to negotiate meaning and mediate discursive interactions (2017). These communicative elements are purposefully employed to achieve rhetorical goals explicitly rather than functioning merely as stylistic ornaments within the context. These are strategically utilized to attain the writer's communicative intent. Within his Metadiscourse Theory, language is framed as “commentary on a text,” synchronizing the author’s goals with the audience's needs. Both categories of internal organization and social engagement function to guarantee coherence and an authoritative stance (Hyland & Jiang, 2018). According to Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), these devices are multidimensional, operating across both social and logical planes. SFL clarifies that this complexity reflects a language system serving not only referential content delivery but social negotiation and thematic development as well. Grounded in the work of Thompson (2023) and the contemporary work of Halliday and Matthiessen, it is highlighted that language is inherently multifunctional. Every discursive choice is a “triadic” act that manages content (ideational), relationship (interpersonal), and structure (textual). Furthermore, the interpretative value of these devices is fluid, shifting based on their position and contribution within the specific paragraph.

Journalism is defined as “the serial presentation of information and conversation about public events, trends and issues distributed through various media with the primary purpose of informing, entertaining and connecting citizens in communities” (Lacy & Rosenstiel, 2015, p. 6). This definition was derived from a review of several foundational works, including the Report from the Commission on the Freedom of the Press (1947), also known as the Hutchins Commission Report, Kovach and Rosenstiel's research (2001, 2007, 2014), and McBride and Rosenstiel (2013). Journalism occupies an important place within the wider field of writing, as it is focused on collecting, verifying, and communicating information about current events, changing trends, and issues that matter to the public (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2021). Because how the public perceives the world is what shapes the community. This align with the views of Periša (2016) argues that human perspective between linguistics, and reality are inseparable and function as unified whole. This highlights the interconnectedness of the world and language for human communication.

Through a diverse set of grammatical and lexical selections, writers can systematize information, calibrate their rhetorical persona, and manage interpersonal dynamics within the text. Meaning construction and social negotiation function as primary features of lexical devices. These devices allow writers to organize information, signal their perspective, and engage with their readers, encompassing a broad spectrum of discursive markers. The meaning of a linguistic device depends on the writer's goals and is often shaped by the surrounding situation, shifting from a literal and objective meaning to a meaningful intended purpose. Understanding how these devices function is essential for analyzing how texts achieve coherence and how authors project authority within specific professional or academic communities. Measuring the quality of journalism is difficult, yet developing reliable and valid methods to do so is crucial for the purpose of studying, improving, and regulating journalistic practices, policies, and education. Editorial articles are form of public discourse which serves as institutional platform use for communication.

### *1.3 Challenges Encountered by Editorial Writers*

Writing is one of the primary skills that student must learn. It is a critical skill which significantly impacts achievement for both academically and professionally. It is the measurement for academic achievement to be able to write effectively; essentially communicate ideas, develop arguments shaping thoughts in developing composition. In the context of Journalism, production of editorial writing is a complicated one. For editorial writers in tertiary level who embed institutional commentary there are relevant challenges in construction persuasive writing to effectively project their voice.

For writers, persuasive and authorial stance construction presents relevant challenges. Specifically, those at university level who embedded institutional commentary. Institutional voice of publication is the function of editorial articles function. It aims to persuade public on current issues by skillfully presenting careful rhetorical balance to be able their arguments to be accepted. Editorial succession relies on the how writers employ various linguistic devices to author's ability to maintain rhetorical balance to project their conviction and authority. Effective editorial writing requires a careful balance between assertiveness and caution to successfully persuade readers while maintaining credibility (Hyland & Jiang 2019).

This balance is achieved through the effective use of stance, which refers "as the expression of speakers on writer's personal feeling, attitudes, judgement or assessment regarding the information they are conveying". (Biber et al., 1999, p. 966). Through the use stance effectively this balance is achieved. The challenge in this type of editorial writing is achieving the right balance in language—specifically, making lexical and grammatical choices that clearly express the institution's official stance without becoming too casual or making claims that lack support. For writers, persuasive and authorial stance construction presents relevant challenges. Specifically, those at university level who embedded institutional commentary.

According to Alghazo (2021), novice and second-language writers often misuse hedges and boosters, which compromises the appropriate tone in academic writing and writers frequently employ linguistic markers such as hedges and boosters either incorrectly or excessively. The tone of academic texts can distort if the writers use the linguistic markers inappropriately. Leading the text to be either overly confident or excessively uncertain. Crafting persuasive editorials on divisive topics demands a heightened awareness of both word choice and sentence structure, as the emotional and political stakes require precision in *what* is said and *how* it is said to maximize influence. According to Richardson (2007), to properly convey tone and perspective, editorial writers must utilize advanced rhetorical techniques—such as imagery, intricate sentence structures, and direct questioning—that go beyond simple structural signposts. To successfully communicate their intended tone and viewpoint, editorial writers need to employ advanced literary and persuasive devices, not just basic organizational tools.

This study is pedagogically significant, as it examines how journalistic conventions shape the rhetorical choices in student editorials. By investigating the actual cognitive and rhetorical hurdles these novice writers encounter, the research moves beyond textual analysis to offer practical teaching strategies that help students elevate their writing from mere opinion to persuasive critique. In addition, it analyzes how these writers are influenced by their linguistic, cultural, and professional contexts. By focusing on these authentic difficulties, the study provides actionable teaching methods to facilitate the development of more powerful and critical writing.

The proposed Stance, Guided Analysis (SGA) serving as a writing guide, can be utilize by student publication offices and journalism programs. This study addresses specific pedagogical needs aims to improve the quality of student journalism on campuses, which offers a practical resource for creating effective, credible, and persuasive editorials. Ultimately, this study is not only for analyzing textual product as well understanding the the cognitive process which provides valuable contributions and ultimately leads to a practical research-based output to address the challenges faced by the editorial writers.

**Objectives** - this study analyzes linguistic devices that express the author's stance in the editorials of HEIs' publication and examine the challenges faced by the writers in the process. Specifically, it focusses on the following objectives: Identify the linguistic devices that express editorial stance in the articles; Examine the meaning and function of the linguistic devices found in the articles; Determine the challenges encountered by writers across writing stages; Propose an editorial guide as the result of the study.

## 2. Methodology

This study intended to rigorously examine the linguistic devices that express authorial stance and to profoundly understand the cognitive challenges encountered by student editorial writers across Higher Education Institutions (HEI) publications in Sorsogon. To address the reseach objectives, a descriptive-qualitative research

design was employed.

**Research Design** - This study utilized a descriptive-qualitative research design and textual analysis. This study is intended to identify the linguistic devices that express the author's stance in editorials and examine the challenges faced by the writers across six (6) selected Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) across the province of Sorsogon. Corpus analysis was employed to analyze the collection of text (the editorial corpus) to methodologically explore the linguistic devices employed in student editorials writing. Specifically, the study examines the authors' stance markers to generate the frequency count and linguistic patterns of stance markers, and the meaning and function of the linguistic devices reflected in editorials. Furthermore, it explores the personal experiences of the writers or the cognitive challenges they face during each writing stage. Automated text analysis was employed through the use of computer-assisted tools, specifically AntConc (Gheyle & Jacobs, 2017). This software systematically identifies the linguistic devices that express authors' stance and linguistic patterns to uncover the meaning and function of linguistic devices used by student writers in local HEIs publications.

Simultaneously, interviews were conducted to determine the challenges they faced during the writing process. Through interviews, the study seeks to understand the experiential context and perceptions of the editorial writers. Furthermore, it explores the personal experiences to understand the cognitive challenges they face during each writing stage. According to Creswell (2018), qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. Moreover, this research method includes small group discussions for investigating behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs; semi-structured interviews to gather informant views, background information, and institutional perspectives on a focused topic; and in-depth interviews to understand an event, condition, or experience from a personal perspective (Hammarberg, Kirkman, & de Lacey, 2016).

**Source of Data** - The primary informants for this study consist of two different sources: a corpus of thirty-one (31) published editorial articles from the official student publications and purposively chosen six (6) writers from selected Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) publication across the province of Sorsogon. These articles collected from these six institutions comprise four (4) HEIPr and two (2) HEIPu schools. From HEIPr1 (11) articles were gathered, five (5) articles from HEIPr2, four (4) from HEIPr3 and three (3) articles from HEIPr4 for a total of 23 published articles from HEI Private schools. On the other hand, a total of 8 published articles from HEI public schools, four (4) articles were collected from HEIPu1 and four (4) articles from HEIPu2. These articles were collected a total of thirty-one (31) articles. The distribution of thirty-one (31) editorial articles, published within the 2022-2026 academic year. Furthermore, some schools had no published articles due to the pandemic. Consequently, the researcher gathered published articles from all readily available editorials to ensure a sufficient amount of data. The data were not equally distributed across the institutions as the researcher had originally intended. These published texts served as the raw material for linguistic analysis.

A total of 31 editorials were analyzed. These articles were collected from the official student publication journalism websites or Facebook pages, verified by the HEIs publication and journalism offices. As linguistic artifacts, the editorial served as textual data for analysis to identify linguistic patterns of stance markers in student editorial writing. To determine the challenges encountered by the writers, the study purposively selected six (6) editorial writers, one from each participating institution, who served as informants through interviews. Interviewed participants were identified as active editorial writers based on recommendations from their respective advisers and their Editors-in-Chief (EICs). These interviews provided the experiential data necessary for interpreting the writers' challenges.

**Research Ethics** - Moore et al. (2017) asserted that maintaining the integrity of data is an obligation of safeguarding privacy in conducting research to prevent injury. In accordance with this principle, the study complies with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10173), which ensures the protection of personal information within both private and public sectors. To adhere to these legal guidelines and protect individuals' personal data and privacy, the researcher secured formal permission. Before data collection commenced, formal letters were sent

to the respective student publication advisors and university administrators to request the use of published editorial articles for academic analysis. To guarantee permission from the participating editorial writers, the researcher confirmed voluntary consent through a consent form, wherein all participants agreed to take part in the study.

**Research instrument** - The study utilizes the two main instruments. First, this study utilized an automated text analysis as the primary research instrument to gather qualitative data from two distinct sources. AntConc was employed as a corpus linguistics software tool to generate frequency counts and determine the most dominant linguistic devices and patterns of stance markers from the collection of published text corpora in student editorial writing. To achieve the first two objectives, these articles serve as the material for data processing via corpus analysis software AntConc (Anthony, 2023), which enables to gather objective identification and extraction of stance markers (Hedges, Boosters, Attitude Markers and Self-Mentions). The interview guide was designed to investigate the meanings and cultural representations embedded in the tourism taglines of Sorsogon. Second, a semi-structured interview guide was designed to explore cognitive challenges faced by the writers during each writing stages embedded in the student editorials across HEI publications in Sorsogon. This instrument was employed to capture their experiential context and cognitive experiences behind student editorial writing. To attain objective 3, interview guide was used to engage directly and elicit information with the writers' challenges to understand the cognitive processes involved in writing process.

**Data Collection** - In this study, the researcher primary data are collected from HEIs publications, sourced from each of the official student publications and journalism websites or Facebook pages. The editorials are validated by their respective HEIs Publication Offices and journalism educators and staff. During the data collection, the researcher secured a copy of the letter and the approval sheet to be signed by all heads of the HEIs' publications to formally conduct the study. After it was signed and approved, the researcher personally visited the institutions' main offices to seek permission to gather and analyze published editorial articles from each of the student publications for textual analysis, and to request selected editorial writers to participate in the interviews. The researcher first visited the journalism offices to ask for a copy of the published editorial articles and to ask the journalism adviser for the interview schedule.

Data acquisition was conducted on Tuesdays and Thursdays following the schedule discussed. The researcher provided a photocopy of the signed letter from the HEIs' publications and the consent form prior to the interviews. After receiving referrals from the journalism officers and the adviser, the researcher proceeded to the designated area to collect the articles and conduct interviews with the editorial writers. The purpose of collecting the published editorial articles and conducting the interviews was to examine the linguistic devices used in editorial writing to persuade the readers and to determine the cognitive challenges faced by student writers during each stage of editorial production. To facilitate open communication, the interviews were conducted in English, Filipino, or the local dialect, based on the participants' preferences, thereby ensuring the informants' comfort. All interviews were audio-recorded with explicit consent from the informants.

**Data Analysis** - To identify the linguistic devices in the student published editorials, the researcher utilized AntConc. The collected editorials were processed using AntConc software to identify frequency counts and linguistic patterns of stance markers present within the 31 published editorial articles. This analysis was done through the lens of interactional metadiscourse: hedges, boosters, attitude markers, self-mention and determine their meaning and function conveyed in the text. To determine the cognitive challenge faced by the writers, the thematic analysis was employed through the Cognitive Process Theory of Writing framework. The interview responses from selected editorial writers were transcribed then analyzed to identify recurring themes and categorizing the writers' experiences into specific themes, regarding the writers' challenges. This was done through examining the key mental stages of planning, translating, reviewing, and monitoring. In-depth interviews were employed to elicit a comprehensive understanding of the cognitive mechanism and capture the experiential context and the cognitive challenges they face during the editorial writing process.

### 3. Results and discussions

This section presents the results and discussions based on the corpus analysis of the editorials and the interviews conducted.

#### 3.1 Meaning and Function of Linguistic Device

##### ***Higher Education Institution (HEI)Pr1***

*Linguistic Device* - Hedges, Attitude Markers, and Self-Mentions (with a notable absence of Boosters)

*Meaning in Context* - Hedges (suggests) Used alongside attitude markers to maintain a balance between directness and a neutral tone; projects cautiousness to allow the writer to maintain an academic dialogue. Boosters (Notably Absent) Notably absent from their articles; reflects an imbalance in metadiscourse markers where the writer omits boosters to avoid aggressive personal force. Attitude Markers (rightly) Used to express an evaluative yet detached claim; reflects a highly objective, formal, and neutral tone that prioritizes institutional alignment and social harmony over personal force. Self-Mentions (we / our) Most dominant markers utilized. Strategic tools to build a collective identity and authoritative certainty to represent the publication

*Function in Editorial* - Allows the writer to avoid making overly confident claims, ensuring they do not perform face-threatening acts and giving the audience space to make their own interpretations. Used strategically to maintain an institutionally safe professional space, reduce the absolute force of arguments, avoid face-threatening acts, and maintain a safe journalistic distance. Signals evaluative claims to project politeness and ensure neutrality, though prioritizing this institutionally safe tone risks rendering the editorial ordinary, uninspiring, and indecisive. Used to hide behind the collaborative authority of the school or project individual identity for institutional persuasion; speaks for the institution but risks losing the human connection and strong conviction.

##### *Sample Extract*

...” (HEIPr1 Editorial 2022, Price Hike)

*“There are few suggestions that can be considered in thinking of ways to respond to the crisis...”*

*(Notably Absent / None identified in the texts, matching the strategic omissions detailed in your discussion).*

*“The House of Representatives Speaker, Martin Romualdez, rightly points out that this law is sadly crucial...” (HEIPr1 Editorial 2024, Breaking Barriers)*

*“Our burdens will be lessened. Having a good public transit system is an indication of good governance and leadership.” (HEIPr1 Editorial 2022, On Road Crisis)*

##### ***Higher Education Institution (HEI)Pr2***

*Linguistic Device* - Hedges (Notably Absent) Boosters (Notably Absent) Attitude Markers (Notably Absent) Self-Mentions (we / our)

*Meaning in Context* - Hedges (Notably Absent) Notably absent; this lack of stylistic variation in metadiscourse implies that writers may not have developed the ability to make neutral claims that acknowledge alternative views. Boosters (Notably Absent) Notably absent; their total omission reveals a lack of the intellectual accountability required to signal certainty and a structural discrepancy in metadiscourse markers. Attitude Markers (Notably Absent) Notably absent; indicates a complete lack of affective attitude or personal judgment to signal the writer's presence and judgment of the content. Self-Mentions (we / our) Frequently used stance markers and the only stance marker present in the HEIPr2 articles; establishes an exclusive prioritization that creates assumed

representativeness.

*Function in Editorial* - Omitted, which shows that the writer prioritizes group solidarity over the nuanced 'rhetorical force' required to signal caution, leading to a style where truth becomes absolute rather than argued. Omitted, demonstrating that the writer is less accustomed to engineering "rhetorical force" through the strategic use of certainty, indicating an immaturity and a developmental stage of persuasive writing. Omitted, resulting in a one-dimensional communicative style that represents the institutional body rather than sharing a nuanced collective identity, which ultimately fails to stimulate persuasion. Used to establish or foster a sense of unity between the publication and the readers; emphasizes shared collaboration, collective authority, and responsibility, but creates a presumptive tone that fails reader engagement and may inadvertently silence individual diverse perspectives

*Sample Extract*

*"We find ourselves in a difficult situation where Philippine educational standards have deteriorated to unprecedented levels." (HEIPr2 Editorial 2022)*

*"And we, the people, swim in the toxic mess they create... Tired of living in a sinking country made worse by the very people we entrust with our lives." (HEIPr2 Editorial 2025)*

**Higher Education Institution (HEI)Pr3**

*Linguistic Device* - Hedges, Attitude Markers, and Self-Mentions (with a notable absence of Boosters)

*Meaning in Context* - Hedges (more likely) Minimal presence indicates a balanced rhetorical force; suggests caution to ensure writing neutrality and express moderation for complexity in claims over simplicity. Boosters (Notably Absent) Notably absent from their articles; this avoidance of boosters detaches the writer from being aggressive. Attitude Markers (Unfortunately) Minimal presence indicates a balanced distribution of markers where the writer signals their values without losing objectivity, avoiding the "flat" profiles of other institutions. Self-Mentions (we / our) Most prominent stance markers used by HEIPr3 editorial writers, though they are used in moderation as a dominant device to represent collective perspective on behalf of the student body.

*Function in Editorial* - Used to balance politeness and acknowledge diverse perspectives, softening arguments for complexity where "their use suggests humility rather than argumentative weakness" and ensuring a sophisticated control over authorial voice. Intended as an intentional and strategic journalistic detachment to lessen the feeling of aggressiveness, maintain a safe journalistic distance, and ensure a professional, objective, and credible tone. Serves to balance politeness and personal emotion or affective attitude to acknowledge the presence of the reader and the complexities of arguments, leading to rhetorical modesty. Used with enough moderation to remain professional yet humble, cultivating a "more developed authorial persona" that aligns personal viewpoints with the editorial board's official stance to demonstrate a strong institutional voice without excessive use.

*Sample Extract*

*"Given that many schools lack air conditioning and proper ventilation to combat the oppressive heat, students are more likely to become disengaged..." (HEIPr3 Editorial 2024, Asynchronous)*

*"Unfortunately, the answer to that, it is not. While wealth may be able to improve certain facets of our lives... it is not a sufficient measure of true happiness." (HEIPr3 Editorial 2022, Wealth)*

*"We are so heavily focused on acquiring wealth that we forget the importance of finding true happiness..." (HEIPr3 Editorial 2022, Wealth)*

*"We are conditioned from a young age to believe that wealth is equivalent to happiness..." (HEIPr3 Editorial 2022, Wealth)*

### ***Higher Education Institution (HEI)Pr4***

*Linguistic Device* - Hedges, Boosters, Attitude Markers, and Self-Mentions (all present)

*Meaning in Context* - Hedge (might) Followed by self-mentions to provide moderation, indicating that the writer is proficient and aware of when to exercise caution to intend ‘academic humility’ and the acceptance of alternative views. Boosters(demonstrates) Used minimally alongside hedges and attitude markers to signal certainty and show conviction; represents a complete employment of stance markers. Attitude Markers (unfortunately / importantly) Explicitly used to incorporate affective judgment while maintaining objectivity, signaling values strategically without bias to illustrate “critical thinking”. Self-Mentions (we / our) Dominant linguistic device; represents the shared voice of the student body for institutional persuasion and implies a “solidarity approach” to construct a collective, authoritative voice rather than mere personal opinion.

*Function in Editorial* - Used to signal “politeness” and balance the “collective voice,” helping to soften arguments and demonstrate a structural flexibility that adheres to complexity. Functions to signal “assertiveness,” create impact, and demonstrate a “conviction”, showing that the writer understands how to be assertive when necessary. Represents critical thinking and professionalism, demonstrating a high level of interpersonal competence where the writer knows when to incorporate personal emotion and affective attitude effectively. Prioritizes collective identity to claim community position and establish a strong “institutional voice,” positioning the writer as a representative of the institution instead of relying on individual detachment.

#### *Sample Extract*

*“If there isn't a nearby trash can, a person might assume it's acceptable to just let the trash be someone else's problem.” (HEIPr4 Editorial 2023, Littering)*

*“It demonstrates that the vast majority of the Louiseans are not only literate but also good in performing arts.” (HEIPr4 Editorial 2023, Orgulyong Vincentiano)*

*“Although the motivations for this action are praiseworthy, it is important to consider the complex effects...” (HEIPr4 Editorial 2024, Jeepney Phaseout)*

*“That is why it is very importantly to have some knowledge, and one should be informed on the ways and/or strategies...” (HEIPr4 Editorial 2024, Mental Health)*

*“We develop students who are dedicated to transforming learning communities into leaders who are inner-directed Vincentian leaders.” (SLMCS)*

*“We develop students who are dedicated to transforming learning communities into leaders who are inner-directed Vincentian leaders.” (HEIPr4 Editorial 2023, Orgulyong Vincentiano)*

*“The fact that we, as students, represent the school when there is a lot of litter on and around the campus is a huge problem.” (HEIPr4 Editorial 2023, Littering)*

### ***Higher Education Institution (HEI)Pu1***

*Linguistic Device* - Hedges, Boosters, Attitude Markers, and Self-Mentions (all present)

*Meaning in Context* - Hedges (seems / likely) Follows self-mentions to provide moderation; indicates that the writer possesses a high degree of “epistemic maturity” and academic maturity through the strategic use of hedges to signal caution and control academic humility. Boosters(definitely) Minimal stance marker; rarely seen in the work of writer, used strategically to avoid overstatement to protect the school's reputation. Attitude Markers(importantly) Minimal stance marker; rarely seen in the work of writer, deployed within its work alongside a diverse range of lexical markers to manage their affective judgment and facilitate reader engagement. Self-Mentions (we / our) Primary stance marker; demonstrates that student writers project authorial presence using

markers like “we” or “our” rather than merely reporting facts, indicating responsibility from a collective authority over personal identity.

*Function in editorial* - Used to demonstrate a nuanced understanding, maintaining neutrality over overstatement to show the complexity of the issue; creates a sense of moderation over absoluteness to maintain institutional reliability and credibility. Managed and balanced alongside attitude markers to suggest professional competence, ensuring the writer delivers facts effectively while avoiding or taking a side to suggest “professional detachment” and avoid risky positions. Serves to allow the writer to express truth confidently and maintain objectivity without bias; helps advocate for the student body while remaining neutral on risky political or social polarizations, functioning as a platform for student empowerment. Transforms personal opinion into a collective “institutional voice,” representing the entire student body; prioritizes a collective perspective to project the voice of the publication as an institutional authority, indicating communal representation over individual ownership.

*Sample Extract*

*“It seems the government was unprepared for the consequences it would bring and was merely focused on enforcing another toothless law.” (HEIPu1 Editorial 2024, SIM Registration)*

*“Economic losses from anomalous flood control projects likely hit up to P119 billion — Recto” (HEIPu1 Editorial 2025, The Flood That Never Drains)*

*“Oh, we definitely know them. It almost feels like the government invented a new form of climate change...” (HEIPu1 Editorial 2025, The Flood That Never Drains)*

*“Most importantly, as our nation progresses, we need the government to pay attention to the victims...” (HEIPu1 Editorial 2024, SIM Registration)*

*“In the midst of this chaos, where public trust is shaken, the only power we can truly rely on is the courage within ourselves...” (HEIPu1 Editorial 2026, System Trust)*

*“We are now left feeling exposed and afraid. It seems as though anything may occur.” (HEIPu1 Editorial 2024, SIM Registration)*

**Higher Education Institution (HEI)Pu2**

*Linguistic Device* - Self-mentions (present) Hedges, Boosters and Attitude Markers (notable Absent)

*Meaning in Context* - Hedges (Notably Absent) Notably absent from the work; the removal of these devices removes “academic modesty”, completely eliminates doubt and neutrality, and moves the text away from safe possibilities. Boosters (clearly) Linguistic device that signals “certainty and commitment”, indicating “confidence and conviction”; emphasizes factual certainty over possibilities, avoiding doubt to demonstrate a confident rhetorical stance. Attitude Markers (Notably Absent) Notably absent from the work; the avoidance of these markers signals the intentional prioritization of factual truth over emotional bias to establish an objective tone. Self-Mentions (we / our) Most frequent stance marker in their work; reveals institutional visibility and serves as tools for taking responsibility and “staking a claim,” thereby establishing authorial credibility, strong institutional force, or authority.

*Function in Editorials* - Serving to eliminate weak, vague, or tentative positioning, this absence reinforces a factual certainty and anchors an authoritative but cold, objective yet confident tone that relies on absolute authority. Reflects confidence and conviction to show commitment and persuasive impact; suggests reliance and projects a persona of absolute authority while eliminating weak and uncertain arguments to foster factual certainty. Functions to maintain an institutional voice and authoritative professionalism and excellence; ensures the writer prioritizes excellence in expressing facts rather than opinion or emotion to show reliability and credibility. Used by the writer to construct a “personal identity” through “self-reference” to not only report facts but perform with excellence and

strong leadership; establishes authorial and institutional visibility to suggest the writer's full accountability.

*Sample Extract*

*“We are well aware of the challenges we faced in gathering news and stories amidst a transition period... With that, this paper serves as a reminder that we are still here, being torchbearers of truth.” (HEIPu2 Main Editorial 2023, The Artificer)*

*“We, campus journalists, must remain committed and reminded that we are journalists first before anything else.” (HEIPu2 Editorial 2025, CatSU Statesman)*

### 3.2 Challenges of Editorial Writers during Pre-Writing

**Theme** - These are the following recurring themes reflected in Challenges of Editorial Writers during Pre-Writing Phase such as Word Choice and Organization, Organization, Word Choice and Coherence, Word Choice, Organization and Linguistic and Mechanical barriers.

**Description** - These themes reflect the pre-writing challenges wherein the writers grapple with lexical burden, macro-structure, mental exhaustion, and mechanical skills. Specifically, language difficulties in selecting precise words, narrowing broad topics into specific ones while maintaining a cohesive structure, transforming verbal ideas into written form, struggling with the misinterpretation, and writing skills.

**Interview Extract**

*(HEIPr 1) “Difficulty with handwriting skills and language barriers.”*

*(HEIPr2) “Careful choice of words and organization”.*

*(HEIPr3) “Struggling with writer's block and organizing sufficient ideas.”*

*(HEIPr4) “Choosing the right words and maintaining a cohesive structure.”*

*(HEIPu1) “Writing specifically to avoid any form of misinterpretation.”*

*(HEIPu2) “Organizing thoughts for large-scope or broad topics.”*

To begin with, challenges such as “Challenge in transforming my ideas, choosing the right words and structure,” “Hard time in organizing thoughts for large-scope topics,” “Writer's block; organizing sufficient ideas,” “language and my handwriting skill,” “I have to be really extra careful; on choice of words and organization,” and “Writing to avoid misinterpretation” reflect the theme of Linguistic: Word Choice, Organization, and Coherence.

### 3.3 Challenges of Editorial Writers during Active Writing Phase

**Themes** - These are the following recurring themes reflected in Challenges of Editorial Writers during Active Writing Phase such as objective and emotional, emotional and Objective, subjective emotions and objective logic, objectivity emotional expression and objective professionalism and objective and Emotional.

**Description** - These themes focus on the writing phase challenges wherein the writer's obstacle with objective, authoritative persona, functional purpose and metacognitive awareness. Specifically, face a significant “affective hurdle in negotiating between their personal voice (emotional/subjective) and their institutional voice(logical/objective). Balancing “strong feelings” into a “logical” and “professional” authorial stance.

**Interview Extract**

*(HEIPr1) “Emotions can lead to bias.”*

(HEIPr2) *"Professionalism is harder than emotion".*

(HEIPr3) *"Sometimes my feelings mess up the writing process".*

(HEIPr4) *"It's harder to express strong feelings logically".*

(HEIPu1) *"Aims to be logical; avoids using emotion as a tool".*

(HEIPu2) *"Maintaining professionalism when emotion is easier to express."*

(VCI) *"Emotions can lead to bias."*

Furthermore, challenges including "It's harder to express strong feelings logically," "Rely too much on emotion rather than factual information," "My feelings mess up the writing process," "Emotions can lead to bias," "Professionalism is harder than emotion," and "Aims to be logical; avoids using emotion as a tool" suggest the theme of Emotional: Balancing Objectivity and Emotional Expression.

### 3.4 Challenges of Editorial Writers during Post- Writing Phase

**Themes** - These are the following recurring themes reflected in Challenges of Editorial Writers during Post-Writing Phase such as Critical Revision, Critical Revision, Critical Revision, Critical Revision, Collaborative Refinement, Collaborative Refinement.

**Description** - These themes capture the post-writing challenges wherein the writers struggle in internal editing, simplifying, and weighing arguments. As well as struggle in incorporating feedback, critiquing content and polishing to ensure their editorial has a professional and authoritative impact.

#### **Interview Extract**

(HEIPr) *"Identifying and removing unnecessary words or phrases.*

(HEIPr2) *"Filtering out irrelevant or wordy information.*

(HEIPr3) *"Repeatedly revising until concepts are simple enough for the audience.*

(HEIPr4) *"Navigating complex topics that require deep reading of opposing views*

(HEIPu1) *"Seeking suggestions from people close to the writer to ensure clarity.*

(HEIPu2) *"Reconciling and incorporating various comments from co-writers.*

Finally, challenges such as "Filtering out irrelevant or wordy information," "Repeatedly revising until concepts are simple enough for the audience," "Navigating complex topics that require deep reading of opposing views," "Identifying and removing unnecessary words or phrases," "Seeking suggestions from people close to the writer to ensure clarity," and "Reconciling and incorporating various comments from co-writers." point directly to the theme Critical Revision and Collaborative Refinement.

### 3.5 Examining Stance -Marking Linguistic Devices in HEI Publications

Editorial writers at HEIPr1 primarily employ hedges, attitude markers, and self-mentions while notably omitting boosters, using collective pronouns like "we" and "our" as strategic tools to project institutional persuasion (Hyland, 2005). Omitting boosters shows respect for the reader's perspective, avoids face-threatening acts, and creates a professional space and formal tone (Binmahboob, 2022; Hyland, 2005). By avoiding boosters and relying on self-mentions, writers signal evaluative yet detached claims to maintain an academic dialogue without making overly confident assertions (Hyland, 1998, 2005; Lorés-Sanz, 2011). However, Monash University (2025) emphasizes that neutrality must be accompanied by original thought, otherwise prioritizing an

institutionally safe tone risks rendering the editorial ordinary and uninspiring. Since traditional media face engagement losses when strict neutrality prevents meaningful editorial positions, HEIPr1 writers risk sacrificing crucial audience engagement by prioritizing institutional harmony over personal force (Jost et al., 2022; Reuters Institute, 2026).

The HEIPr2 editorial writer utilizes self-mentions exclusively while hedges, boosters, and attitude markers are notably absent, establishing a specific use of metadiscourse meant to foster a sense of unity and emphasize shared collaboration, collective authority, and responsibility. However, this total absence of stylistic variation suggests that the writer prioritizes group solidarity over the nuanced rhetorical force required to signal caution or conviction, establishing a one-dimensional communicative style. Because reader engagement fails when a “presumptive” tone is perceived through exclusive self-mention use, this approach yields an institutional voice that lacks the impact of strong conviction and fails to stimulate persuasion. Furthermore, relying heavily on a representative role can be problematic because adopting a critical voice requires navigating power imbalances that may inadvertently silence individual diverse perspectives within that collective. Ultimately, this failure to utilize other markers implies that novice writers have not developed the ability to transition from simple presence to sophisticated persuasion, which results in an absolute view of truth, a lack of epistemic stance, and decreased publication credibility.

Consistent with HEIPr1, HEIPr3 integrates hedges, attitude markers, and self-mentions while omitting boosters, creating what Hyland and Jiang (2016) describe as a sophisticated authorial stance where hedges and attitude markers balance politeness and personal emotion to emphasize complexity in claims over simplicity (Hyland, 2005; Salager-Meyer, 1994). Their avoidance of boosters demonstrates a desire to lessen aggressiveness, maintain a safe journalistic distance, and ensure a professional, objective tone (Hyland, 2005; Martin & White, 2005), which suggests academic humility rather than argumentative weakness (Pérez-Llantada, 2021) and reveals that contemporary writers use self-mentions in moderation to cultivate a more developed authorial persona (Hyland & Jiang, 2018; McGrath, 2016).

HEIPr4 incorporates a full range of stance markers—hedges, boosters, attitude markers, and self-mentions—to navigate the interpersonal complexities of academic and journalistic discourse. In their articles, the dominant use of self-mentions like “we” or “our” serves as a powerful rhetorical strategy to represent the shared voice of the student body, claim community authority, and project collective identity for institutional persuasion (Block & KhosraviNik, 2021; McGrath, 2016; Mur-Dueñas, 2021; Walková, 2019). To be academically sound and successful, these versatile writers showcase rhetorical sophistication by balancing their strong institutional role with a comprehensive use of stance that effectively manages the professional connection between writer and reader (Hyland, 2005, 2019). Furthermore, they establish high-level rhetorical agility and professional neutrality by strategically using hedges to signal politeness and academic humility, alongside boosters to signal assertiveness and conviction (Lancaster, 2016; Salichah et al., 2021). Ultimately, their excellent utilization of attitude markers highlights critical thinking and projects a polished professionalism, demonstrating that a balanced employment of these devices creates a sophisticated and balanced editorial tone (Wu & Paltridge, 2021; Xie, 2020).

HEIPu1 deploys a comprehensive set of stance markers dominated by self-mentions like “we” or “our” to project authorial presence and establish the publication’s voice as an institutional authority (Block & KhosraviNik, 2021; Mur-Dueñas, 2021). These results reflect broader trends in Philippine higher education where state university students strategically utilize these markers to navigate their institutional positions and assert ownership over personal claims (Conda, 2024; Hyland, 2005). Furthermore, HEIPu1’s frequent use of hedges over boosters indicates academic maturity and reliability, controlling academic humility to maintain neutrality over overstatement when addressing complex issues (Cotos et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2022; Salichah et al., 2021). Similar to HEIPr4, the HEIPu1 editorial writer demonstrates mature rhetorical competence, utilizing the collective pronoun “we” to signal responsibility from a collective authority over personal identity (Walková, 2019). Ultimately, by deploying a diverse range of lexical devices, these mature writers manage affective judgment, express truth confidently, and maintain professional objectivity without bias, effectively avoiding the absolute

claims typical of novice writers (Hyland, 2019; Lancaster, 2016; Mellado, 2021; Wahl-Jorgensen, 2020).

Lastly, HEIPu2 adopts boosters and self-mentions while notably omitting hedges and attitude markers, displaying an abundant presence of self-references that serve as tools for taking responsibility, staking a claim, and establishing strong institutional visibility and authority (Hyland, 2001). The frequent deployment of boosters signals a confident rhetorical stance of certainty and commitment, effectively emphasizing factual conviction over possibilities to eliminate doubt and project absolute authority (Hyland, 2005; Masi, 2021). By completely avoiding attitude markers and hedges, the writer eliminates academic modesty or emotion to project a detached, authoritative professionalism and excellence (Hu & Chen, 2023; Hyland & Jiang, 2021).

These findings imply that the HEIPu2 editorial writer operates as a high-level strategic communicator whose corporate academic style establishes authorial credibility, ensuring they do not merely report facts but perform with leadership (Hyland, 2001). Ultimately, this promotional combination of heavy self-mentions and boosters highlights the writer's full accountability and persuasive commitment, prioritizing factual certainty to showcase institutional reliability and credibility (Hyland, 2005).

### 3.6 *Interpreting the Challenges Encountered by Writers Across Writing Stages*

The following results are based on the interviews conducted with editorial writers. Table 6, 7 and 8 presents the challenges encountered by the writers in editorials. Editorial writing serves as tools to express and shape community's perspective and valuing journalistic integrity. The primary objective of editorials is to offer an evaluative lens on social trends which serves as the soul of a publication, aiming to influence public sentiment and foster public discourse (van Teijlingen et al., 2022). This analysis examines the cognitive challenges by encountered by campus journalist across the six academic institutions of Sorsogon, drawing insights from discussions with editorial writers, as well as linguistic and cognitive challenges present in the production of editorial process.

### 3.7 *Challenges of Editorial Writers during Pre-Writing*

Linguistic: Word Selection, Organization and Coherence. Challenges such as “challenge in transforming my ideas, choosing the right words and structure,” “hard time in organizing thoughts for large-scope topics,” “writer's block; organizing sufficient ideas,” “language and my handwriting skill,” “careful choice of words and organization,” and “writing to avoid misinterpretation” reflect structural integrity or linguistic competence challenges encountered by editorial writers.

(HEIPr3) Jacel stated, “Challenge in transforming my ideas,” which highlights the lexical barriers in word selection struggle in translating stage during the writing process. This emphasizes linguistic barriers and the struggle in choosing the right words to transform verbal ideas into written form while maintaining a meaningful, cohesive structure. This difficulty implies that editorial writers face obstacles specifically in selecting precise vocabulary, expressing concepts, and arranging thoughts to maintain a logical connection with the audience. A journalist declared,

*“My common challenges in transforming ideas into writing include choosing the right words and structuring ideas so they are easy to understand yet full of substance.”*

On the other hand, (HEIPu2) Armon stated, “Hard time in organizing thoughts for large-scope topics,” which emphasizes the language interference in organization arises during planning stage of the writing process. This highlights a cognitive challenge in macro-level organization and cognitive overload in filtering out irrelevant information and arranging multiple contents into a logical sequence. This obstacle indicates that editorial writer faces struggle specifically in arranging and organizing complex ideas into a coherent, logical flow to effectively convey the intended meaning of the written piece. A journalist asserted,

“I usually had a hard time in organizing my thoughts especially when the topic has a bigger scope than the

usual.” Similarly, (HEIPr4) Sherwin noted, “Writer's block; organizing sufficient ideas,” which illustrates the language gap in organization during transition from the planning stage to drafting writing process. This highlights a challenge in affective/cognitive blockade and a lack of ideational fluency, as well as a lack of motivation, anxiety, or the inability to initiate the writing process to generate, retrieve, or recall enough substantive points to develop a comprehensive argument. This hurdle suggests that editorial writer faces difficulties specifically in organizing incomplete information by structuring written form when there is inadequate data. A journalist articulated:

*“Writer’s block, I always feel as if my ideas are not sufficient/enough and therefore finding it hard to fully organize and start my piece.”*

HEIPr1 Kevin stated, “Language and my handwriting skill,” which demonstrates communication barrier during the transcription stage. This underscores a combination of challenges between linguistic translation obstacles and motor-cognitive interference. This struggle implies that editorial writer faces difficulties specifically in selecting appropriate vocabulary to express ideas, as well as overcoming physical limitations through handwriting. A journalist expressed,

*“Difficulty with my handwriting skills and language.”*

Same to HEIPr3, (HEIPr2) Bernadette relayed, “Careful on choice of words and organization,” which reveals the communicative mismatch during translation and review stages of the writing process. This uncovers the integration of lexical selection and syntactic arrangement, demonstrating that editorial writer encounters difficulties in word choice and organization. Specifically, this indicates that writers face challenges when converting ideas into written form and managing the flow and structure of the information. As one journalist conveyed:

*“I am actually having a hard time in choosing careful words and organizing ideas.”*

In HEIPu1: “Writing to avoid misinterpretation”, which showcases the communicative mismatch during reviewing and editing stages of writing. This unveils the refinement of sentence structure, audience awareness and rhetorical sensitivity, disclosing that editorial writer faces difficulties in converting abstract thoughts into concrete text. Specifically, in adjusting, arranging sentence structures logically and replacing ambiguous words with accurate vocabulary ensuring clarity of decoded message as exactly intended meaning, verifying consistency, accuracy and credibility. A journalist relayed,

*“Writing it in a way that can't be misinterpreted.”*

Multidimensional obstacles determined by the participants correspond to the findings of Al-Khairy (2020), who argues that EFL student journalists encounter the significant cognitive and linguistic hurdles when transforming thoughts into written language discourse. The study supports that editorial writer struggle with the cognitive overload, linguistic translation barriers, and insufficient ideational fluency, which hinder the transition from planning to final editing. The verbatim statements from the journalists reflect the Al-Khairy's claim regarding lexical and syntactic deficits supports the journalists' concerns about transforming abstract ideas into concrete, unambiguous text, emphasizing that a lack of appropriate vocabulary directly impedes the clarity and credibility of the written output.

### *3.8 Challenges of Editorial Writers during Active Writing Phase*

Emotional: Balancing Objectivity and Emotional Expression. “It’s harder to express strong feelings logically”, “Rely too much on emotion rather than factual information”, “Sometimes my feelings mess up the writing process”, “Emotions can lead to bias”, “Professionalism is harder than emotion” and “Aims to be logical; avoids using emotion as a tool”, represent the theme of nuanced professionalism or affective mediation. HEIPr3 remarked, “It's harder to express strong feelings logically,” which illustrates affective interference during the translation stage of the writing process. This exposes cognitive and emotional overload and rhetorical translation, signifying that

editorial writer faces difficulties in managing strong emotions and balancing ideas logically. Specifically, this occurs when converting abstract feelings while balancing rationality to organize internal emotions into concrete, substantive, and objective written arguments while remaining logical and avoiding excessive emotion. Struggle in dominance of emotion and neutrality distorts the writer's ability to structure and organize into a rational framework, thereby complicating the internal feelings with the logical precision of the manuscript. As one journalist pronounced:

*"I find it harder to express strong feelings rather than keeping my tone professional and logical."*

HEIPu2 noted: Rely too much on emotion rather than factual information, "which reveals affective interference the translation and review/editing stages. This unveils a rhetorical and cognitive imbalance, lack of factual evidences and audience awareness, verifying that editorial writer grapples with isolating subjective feelings from objective. Specifically, this arises when personal feelings override objective or factual information. Struggle in excessive emotion hinders the standards of evidence and strength of rhetorical argumentative. A journalist shared:

*"Emotion for me is easy to show. But write about it too much makes your article rely too much on emotion rather than factual information."*

Similarly, HEIPr4 pointed out, "Sometimes my feelings mess up the writing process," which suggests affective and cognitive interference the translation and review/editing phases. This illustrates lack of rhetorical balance, confirming that editorial writers experience difficulties in converting and managing internal or subjective emotions into written text while maintaining an objective and factual tone. Specifically, this occurs when filtering out personal bias to maintain a formal, balanced tone and detaching the text from the presence of excessive emotion. Struggle in striking between the professional and the emotional balance complicates the cognitive flow thereby compromising the logical consistency and neutrality of an argument. As one journalist imparted:

*"Sometimes my feelings get a hold of me during writing, and it messes up the writing process."*

Correspondingly, (HEIPr1) Kevin articulated, "Emotions can lead to bias," which indicates affective interference the translation and review/editing stages. This presents affective interference, implying that editorial writer struggles with maintaining objectivity and factual balance. Specifically, this occurs when converting internal feelings into structured, substantive arguments to filter out personal prejudices and present empirical evidence to maintain a neutral, professional tone that remains credible. Struggle in dealing with emotion overrides rationality, interference of emotion leads to bias, compromise neutrality, unity and intellectual honesty and violates structural integrity, credibility and rhetorical force of the argument. A journalist stressed:

*Yung strong feelings ko po kasi minsan kapag hindi ko nakontrol yung sarili ko dahil sa emosyon ay nagiging bias na ako. ("When I struggle to manage my emotions, my perspective often becomes biased."*

Likewise, (HEIPr2) Bernadette noted, "Professionalism is harder than emotion," which highlights cognitive and affective interference the translation, review, and editing stages. This establishes the challenge of balancing professionalism and emotion, illustrating that an editorial writer struggles to prioritize factual evidence while maintaining a formal tone and suppressing strong personal feelings. Specifically, this involves generating and converting subjective sentiment or emotion into an objective tone to keep the text logical and professional, as well as removing excessive emotion to achieve credible standards. Struggle to stay objective and strip out sentiment undermine the ability to ground conclusion into verifiable arguments to maintain logical, professional balance tone rhetorical credibility. As one journalist remarked,

*"Personally, it is harder to keep the tone professional and logical than emotions."*

In the same way, (HEIPu1) Meshella stated, "Aims to be logical; avoids using emotion as a tool," which exposes uncovers affective and cognitive interference during the translation and review/editing stages. This

uncovers lack of rhetorical balance, signaling that editorial writer struggles to convert emotion into a logical structure. Specifically, in organizing a logical formal and professional tone, eliminating affective language to balance rhetorical devices and sustain credibility. Obstacle in suppressing emotions into logic perturb the ability to reason clearly and creates bias and weakens the logical force and credibility of argument. A journalist proclaimed:

*“I really aim to be logical and objective because while emotions help in persuasion, I do not desire to use it as a tool to persuade”*

The difficulty of handling emotional interference during the translation phase is supported by Wahl-Jorgensen (2020), who argues that keeping emotions under control is an objective requirement of modern journalism in order to maintain its rhetorical standards. These verbatim statements from the journalists reflect that when they attempt to convert an excessive emotion into a clear argument flow, they encounter an emotional-cognitive conflict. This emotion creates an internal obstacle, where the cognitive load of seeking logical truth impedes the objective flow of their language.

### 3.9 Challenges of Editorial Writers during Post-Writing

**Critical Revision and Collaborative Refinement.** For some journalist challenges such as “Struggling in filtering out irrelevant or wordy information,” “Difficulty in repeatedly revising until concepts are simple enough for the audience,” “Hard time navigating complex topics that require deep reading of opposing views,” “Identifying and removing unnecessary words or phrases,” “Challenges in seeking suggestions from people close to the writer to ensure clarity,” and “Reconciling and incorporating various comments from co-writers.” These capture the entire essence of the internal clarity and external validation. A journalist from (HEIPr2) Jacel expressed, “struggle in filtering out irrelevant or wordy information,” which highlights the critical revision required during the translating and reviewing stage. This emphasizes accuracy and precision, indicating that the editorial writer struggles with finding and tailoring perfect message for general audience to manage readers’ engagement. Specifically, this occurs in during editing when choosing perfect tone and vocabulary to refine the overlying message, which is needed to align the pieces of information perfectly with the intended audience. Failure to filter out wordy information disrupts the writer’s ability to refine the rhetorical flow, thereby compromising the persuasive precision of argument in achieving professional tone. A journalist articulated:

*“I struggle in filtering out irrelevant or wordy information based on different factors, such as sensation ability, hook, and other things.”*

Similarly, (HEIPr4) Sherwin conveyed, “The difficulty of repeatedly revising a text until the concepts are simple enough for the audience,” which illustrates the critical revision during translating and reviewing stage specifically within the reviewing/editing phase of the writing process. This uncovers the comprehension and accessibility of the audience, signaling that the editorial writer struggles in figuring out how to synthesize complex ideas into comprehensible one which anyone can understand while maintaining professionalism. Difficulty in simplifying concepts obstructs the engagement of the readers and hinders the cognitive flow of information, leading not to achieve a comprehensive audience-centric message and weakens the professional standards of publications. As one journalist shared:

*“I find it hard to simplify the words and structure, repeatedly revising a text until the concepts are simple enough for the audience”*

In addition, (HEIPr3) Jacel noted, “The common challenges is navigating complex topics that require deep reading of opposing views,” which manifests the critical revision during translating and reviewing stage. This unveils the cognitive challenge in synthesizing multiple perspective, signifying that the editorial writer struggle in arranging and organizing and balancing viewpoints. Cognitive overload fails to weights opposing opinion and arrange multiple contents into logical force compromising the credibility the professional tone of the argument. As one journalist remarked:

*"The common challenges is navigating complex topics that require deep reading of opposing views and generating ideas by thinking about both sides of the topic, not just the stance I intend to write about."*

Furthermore, (HEIPr1) Kevin noted, "Dilemma in identifying and removing unnecessary words or phrases, "which reveals the critical revision occurs during reviewing/editing phase or the macro-level post-writing/polishing stage. This shows that the refinement of the text mechanically and syntactically, signifying that the editorial writer struggles with analytical dilemma, optimizing complex grammatical structure and of stripping away filler words. Struggles with figuring out how to streamline dense phrasing into a concise structure distorts the exact balance between professionalism and accountability, which ensures authoritative and sophisticated tone. A journalist stressed:

*"I'm having a dilemma in identifying and removing unnecessary words or phrases."*

On the other hand, (HEIPu1) Meshella proclaimed, "Challenges in seeking suggestions from people close to the writer to ensure clarity," which highlights the collaborative refinement during the translating and reviewing stage, specifically within the reviewing/editing phase of the writing process. This establishes the reliance on proximity-based feedback loops, conveying that the editorial writer struggle with assessing their own textual argument, emphasizing reliance on evaluators for external validation purposes. Struggles for an external clarity check obstructs immediate editorial independence and hinders the cognitive flow of information during isolated drafting, leading to objective detachment and institutional alignment a failure in achieving comprehensive collaborative intervention for institutional standardized cohesion compromising academically professional tone and weakening the independent professional standards of publications. A journalist asserted:

*"Challenges in seeking suggestions from people close to the writer to ensure clarity, relying on an immediate, close circle for feedback can create a localized feedback loop" objective detachment and institutional alignment."*

Finally, (HEIPu2) Armon uttered, "Struggle in reconciling and incorporating various comments from co-writers," which highlights the collaborative refinement during the translating and reviewing stage, specifically within the reviewing/editing phase of the writing process. This establishes the reliance on multi-author consensus frameworks, conveying that the editorial writer struggles with synthesizing disparate textual viewpoints, emphasizing reliance on co-writers for collective validation purposes. Struggles for a multi-writer synthesis distort the transformation of individual drafts into authoritative, polished, and institutionally cohesive publications. Failing to effectively incorporate diverse comments transforms an individual text into a non-unified institutional statement, which inhibits the publication from reflecting a standardized, professional, and collective campus stance rather than a single writer's bias. A journalist affirmed:

*"I struggle in Reconciling and incorporating various comments from co-writers and revising my works when considering the comments of my co-writers and when re-reading my own work, I cannot identify the errors since it makes some difference from my original thought."*

These duality of post-writing challenges reflect evidences that journalists' challenges struggle in internal and external barriers, specifically internal editing as well as struggle in incorporating social feedbacks are supported by Geisler's (2016) Socio-cognitive Model of Writing, which asserts that advanced composition is an ongoing negotiation between internal cognitive processing and external social expectations. The internal burdens of critical revision such as filtering wordy data from HEIPr3 writer, simplifying dense concepts from HEIPr4 writer, and managing cognitive overload from opposing views HEIPr2 writer represent the writer's struggle to mentally project and accommodate the needs of a general audience.

Concurrently, the external demands of collaborative refinement seen in proximity feedback loops from HEIPu1 writer and multi-author consensus frameworks HEIPu2 writer align with Storch's (2019) Collaborative

Writing Framework. Storch posits that reconciling peer interventions requires transforming a singular writer's bias into a unified institutional voice. When this synthesis fails, the authoritative and standardized cohesion required of a professional publication is compromised.

#### 4. Conclusions

This paper identifies that student journalists across six participating Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Sorsogon primarily rely on self-mentions to establish authorial stance but struggle with rhetorical balance between being assertive (boosters) and cautious (hedges). And campus journalists across the six Sorsogon institutions faced multi-dimensional challenges in linguistic competence, affective balance, internal clarity, external validation and information processing across planning, translating, and reviewing stages. Based on the findings, it is recommended that HEIs Publications Offices and journalism educators should consider recalibrating ethical standards and linguistic guidelines for student writers understanding on how to use language effectively to persuade and shape public thought to ensure mastery of communicative strategies. Campus Journalism Offices conduct metadiscourse training and targeted workshops on the nuanced use of hedges, boosters, and attitude markers. Additionally, structured, phased writing workshops separating the planning, translating, and reviewing and monitoring stages.

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