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## CONTRASTIVE RHETORIC ANALYSIS OF METADISCOURSE MARKERS OF THE PHILIPPINE AND INDONESIAN NEWSPAPER EDITORIALS

by

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### Abstract:

This paper describes a contrastive study of the Philippine and Indonesian newspaper editorials. The aims are (1) to see similarities and differences in their physical size in terms of words and (2) how Filipino and Indonesian editorialists utilized their discourse strategies through metadiscourse markers. To this end, 30 editorials of the Philippine Daily Inquirer and the Jakarta Post were examined through contrastive rhetoric analysis. The metadiscourse device investigation was grounded on Hyland's metadiscourse framework (2005). Regarding the length of the editorials, the data revealed that the Philippine editorials employed more words than the Indonesian ones. The findings also show that both editorialists used more interactional categories, especially sub-category attitude markers, in their writing, although the frequencies of the counts were different. The Philippine editorials contain more metadiscourse markers in all sub-categories than the Indonesian editorials. The findings may indicate that as a genre, newspaper editorials have a generic feature of metadiscourse markers, namely attitude markers. By using attitude markers effectively, editorialists make clear their stance on particular public issues and try to persuade readers to accept the opinion of the newspaper editors. The study shows that newspaper editorials are reader-oriented texts.

**Keywords:** metadiscourse markers, newspaper editorials, genre, contrastive rhetoric

### INTRODUCTION

Metadiscourse markers employed by English newspaper editorialists from different cultural backgrounds can reveal their discourse strategies to persuade readers to accept their opinion on specific issues. Grounded on such assumption, this paper intends to uncover discourse strategies used by Filipino and Indonesian editorialists through the contrastive rhetoric analysis to see similarities and differences between Filipino writers who generally consider English as a second language and Indonesian writers who usually regard English as a foreign language. It is in line with Kaplan's (1960, cited in Faghih & Rahimpour, 2009, p. 94) that "language and writing are

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cultural phenomena, and each language has its cultural conventions." In this study, culture is defined as "the membership in a discourse community that shares a common social space and history, and a common system of standards for perceiving, believing, evaluating, and acting" (Kramsch, 1998, p.127). Thus, this paper aims to discover the rhetoric patterns of Filipino and Indonesian editorialists belonging to a discourse community of professional journalists. To achieve this purpose, the approach of Contrastive Rhetoric (CR) was applied because it emphasizes the relationship between language and culture based on the argument that "different speech communities differ in their ways of organizing ideas in their writing, which in turn reflects their specific cultural thoughts" (Farrokhi & Nazemi, 2015, p. 155).

This study focuses on metadiscourse as an umbrella term for the range of devices writers use to organize their texts explicitly, engage readers, and signal their attitudes to their material and audience (Hyland, 2005, 2010). The term was coined by the structural linguist Zellig S. Harris in 1959. It was intended "to offer a way of understanding language in use, presenting a writer's or speaker's attempts to guide a receiver's perception of a text" (Hyland, 2005, p. 3). The concept has been further developed by writers such as Williams (1981) and Kopple (1985). Currently, metadiscourse covers "a range of discursual features such as hedges, connectives and various forms of text commentary to show how writers and speakers influence their interlocutor's reception of text" (Hyland, 2005, p. 3).

Due to its value in facilitating 'writing as social engagement' (Hyland, 2005, p. ix), metadiscourse has been widely applied to many written texts, mostly in academic and professional texts. In the academic genre, it has been used to examine students' coursework in writing and composition (Williams, 1981; Kopple, 1985); in the analysis of mechanical engineering proposals (Longo, 1994); academic writing (Mauranen, 1993); research articles (Swales, 1990; Hyland, 1998), non-native Ph.D. students' dissertation writing (Bunton, 1999) and university textbooks (Hyland, 1999). Similarly, in professional texts, metadiscourse has been employed in analyzing business letters (Vergaro, 2002); and editorials (Le, 2004). This positive development is based on the belief that "writing product is a social act that takes place in a specific context and specific audience" (Sugiharto, 2007, p. 117)

As a genre, newspaper editorials have become a subject of metadiscourse investigation in contrastive analysis to rhetoric research because they are considered persuasive texts that express the editor's opinion. To mention some, Ansary and Babaii (2009) analyzed 90 editorials

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from three English newspapers written by native speakers of English (*The Washington Times*) and non-native speakers (*The Iran News* and *The Pakistan Today*) in order to see 'the Generic structure Potential' (GSP) of newspaper editorial as a genre. Their findings revealed no significant difference between editorials written by (non-) native editorial writers in terms of the rhetorical elements of the structure. The editorials in Iran, Pakistan, or the USA typically consist of four *obligatory* and two *optional* generic rhetorical elements. Similarly, Shokouhi and Amin (2010) identified generic structures of 90 editorials in six English and Persian newspapers. They found that the editorials of all six newspapers had similar generic structures – consisting of three obligatory and three optional categories – regardless of language or place of publication. Furthermore, Bonyadi and Samuel (2013) analyzed the editorial headlines of *the New York Times* and *Tehran Times*. They discovered that the editorial writers in the two newspapers used the headlines to introduce the main topic of the editorials and "presented the subjective attitudes of the writers using certain rhetorical and textual strategies" (p. 9).

Another contrastive study on newspaper editorials was done by Moradian, Adel, and Tamri (2014), who examined the topics of 102 Persian and English editorials. Their findings suggest that many Persian editorials were multitopicality because they contained more than one topic sentence, while English editorials were organized monotopically. Still, in the same year, Kuhi and Mojood (2014) explored metadiscourse resources in 60 newspaper editorials (written in English and Persian) culled from 10 leading newspapers in America and Iran, based on Hyland's (2005) model of metadiscourse. The results disclosed that the interactional category and attitude markers were the most predominant metadiscourse category and sub-category in the newspaper editorials genre.

In the Philippine context, there have been some interesting studies on newspaper editorials. Among them is the study of Pulido (2011), who identified the generic structure potential of Philippine editorials written in English by applying Ansary and Babaii's (2005) systemic functional framework. Their findings indicate that 1) Philippine English editorials have obligatory (Run-on Headline, Addressing an Issue, Argumentation, and Articulation of a Position) and optional (Providing background information and closure of argumentation) elements. Likewise, Barrios (2013) investigated the organizational framework and features of 30 local editorials in the Philippines, published in *Mindanao Daily Mirror* and *Sunstar Cebu*. The findings show that the English editorials in the Philippine local newspapers follow

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McCarthy's (1999) claim-counterclaim pattern most frequently, followed by Hoey's (1983) problem-solution framework. The study also revealed the use of both formal and informal language, negative images, entailment, and evaluative modifiers to show the non-neutral stance of the editorials.

Some contrastive rhetorical studies in the newspaper genre have also been conducted in Indonesian settings. For example, Kartika (1997) studied the rhetoric of newspaper articles written by Indonesian and English native writers. The result of the study indicated that most articles written by Indonesian writers were argumentative essays. In contrast, most articles produced by English-speaking writers constituted cause and effect expository essays. Similarly, Sukma and Sujatna (2014) investigated interpersonal categories and sub-categories of metadiscourse resources in the 11 opinion articles written in Kompas, a leading Indonesian newspaper, using Dafouz's (2008) classification of interpersonal metadiscourse markers. Their findings reveal that interpersonal metadiscourse categories (hedges, certainty markers, attributors, attitude markers, and commentaries) and sub-categories (epistemic verbs, probability adverbs, deontic verbs, attitudinal adjectives, cognitive verbs, rhetorical questions, inclusive expressions, personalizations, and asides) were used in Indonesian opinion articles. A recent study on metadiscourse in Indonesia was done by Nugroho (2020), who examined opinion and business articles produced by American and Indonesian writers. He discovered similarities between both groups of writers regarding the articles' absence of reminders and announcement markers.

The initial review of the literature shows that the previous research on the metadiscourse of newspaper editorials has focused on the rhetoric structure (Ansary & Babaii, 2009; Shokouhi & Amin, 2010; Pulido, 2011; Barrios, 2013). Another study has focused on metadiscourse markers of editorials in English and Persian (Kuhi & Mojood, 2014). Currently, there is no existing study on metadiscourse markers employed by Indonesian newspaper editorialists. Therefore, this study was conceptualized and done to fill this research gap by providing data on metadiscourse strategies used by Indonesian and Filipino editorialists and how the use of metadiscourse markers is language (genre) and culture-oriented). The study focuses on metadiscourse because it is essential for writers "to organize and shape their arguments, but at the same time reflect their stance towards both the content and readers" (Nugroho, 2020, p. 75). In particular, this study is to answer the following questions:

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1. How many words are Filipino and Indonesian writers employed in writing English newspaper editorials? What are the comparisons of Philippine newspaper editorials to Indonesian newspaper editorials in terms of the number of words?
2. What are prominent metadiscourse markers employed by Filipino and Indonesian newspaper editorial writers?
3. Are there similarities and differences in using metadiscourse markers by Filipino and Indonesian newspaper editorial writers?

### **METHOD**

Following the qualitative research paradigm, this study was designed as a descriptive-analytic study through the lens of Contrastive Rhetoric analysis because it examines and describes differences and similarities in writing across cultures (Connor, 2003). Frequency counts of metadiscourse markers were applied to see the patterns of metadiscourse strategies of the editorialists

#### ***Corpus of the Study***

This study used 30 English newspaper editorials written by Filipinos and Indonesians (15 pieces for each group) as its corpus. The editorials were published in *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, Manila, a leading English newspaper in the Philippines, and *the Jakarta Post*, Jakarta, a leading English newspaper in Indonesia.

The data were collected by retrieving the editorials from the electronic version of the *Philippine Daily Inquirer* (henceforth PDI) and *the Jakarta Post* (henceforth JP) as they appeared on their official websites. PDI editorials were downloaded from <http://www.inquirer.net>, and JP editorials were retrieved from <http://www.thejakartapost.com>. The editorials included in the sample were published on the exact dates from June 2 up to June 22, 2017. (See Appendix A)

#### ***Instrument***

A coding sheet of Hyland's (2005) model of metadiscourse in academic texts was used to identify and analyze metadiscourse resources in the newspaper editorials. In this model, metadiscourse markers fall into two major categories: interactive and interactional. Interactive markers help the readers through the texts. There are five sub-categories of interactive markers: transitions, frame markers, endophoric markers, evidentials, and code-glosses. Interactional

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markers, however, involve the readers in the text. There are five sub-categories of interactional markers: hedges, boosters, attitude markers, self-mentions, and engagement markers. Table 1 shows the summary of this model.

Table 1. Hyland's (2005) Model of Metadiscourse

Category	Functions	Examples
<b>Interactive</b>	Help to guide the reader through the texts	Resources
Transitions	Express relations between main clauses	<i>In addition; but; thus; and</i>
Frame markers	Refer to discourse acts, sequences, or stages	<i>Finally; to conclude; my purpose is</i>
Endophoric markers	Refer to the information in other parts of the text	<i>Noted above; see Fig; in section 2</i>
Evidentials	Refer to information from other texts	<i>According to X; Z states</i>
Code glosses	Elaborate propositional meaning	<i>Namely; e.g., such as; in other words</i>
<b>Interactional</b>	Involve the reader in the text	Resources
Hedges	Withhold commitment and open dialogue	<i>Might; perhaps; possible; about</i>
Boosters	Emphasize certainty or close dialogue	<i>In fact; definitely; it is clear that</i>
Attitude markers	Express the writer's attitude to a proposition	<i>Unfortunately; I agree; surprisingly</i>
Self-mentions	Explicit references to the author(s)	<i>I; we; my; me; our</i>
Engagement markers	Explicitly build a relationship with the reader	<i>Consider; note; that you can see that</i>

This model was chosen as the basis of the coding sheet because "it is a robust, explicit and useful model of metadiscourse" (Kuhi & Mojood, 2014, p. 1050). Besides academic texts, the model has helped analyze metadiscourse strategies in other genres, including editorials.

***Procedure and analysis***

The data for this study were collected through purposeful sampling. Consequently, the newspaper editorials were retrieved from the newspaper websites and purposively selected to

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be included in the corpus of the study. As previously mentioned, the inclusion criteria of the data collection are the exact dates of publications for PDI and JP.

Since metadiscourse markers are usually in the form of words and phrases, the unit of analysis of this study is limited to the word and phrasal levels. To answer research question 1, physical analysis was conducted by counting the number of words in each editorial as appeared on the computer based on the Microsoft Word application. As this analysis phase was completed, the researcher examined metadiscourse markers used by editorialists to answer research question 2. For this purpose, the items considered metadiscourse in the text were identified and categorized according to Hyland's (2005) model of metadiscourse. Since metadiscourse is highly contextual in nature and a particular form can serve either a proportional or metadiscoursal function (Hyland, 2005). He suggested that a context-sensitive analysis of each marker could be done by reading each editorial three times, focusing on possible metadiscourse markers. After analyzing the data, the frequency counts were conducted to see patterns of various metadiscourse categories and compare and contrast the two sets of data.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

***Results***

**The physical size of editorials**

Table 2 below presents the answer to research question 1: 'How many words are employed by Filipino and Indonesian writers in writing English newspaper editorials? What are the comparisons of Philippine newspaper editorials to Indonesian newspaper editorials in terms of the number of words?' As revealed in the data, the number of words in Filipino editorials totaled 9,977, and for the Indonesian editorials, 7,235. The average number of words per Filipino editorial is 663,1, and the average number per Indonesian editorial is 482,3. The mean of the corpus of this study indicates that each editorial contains 5,727 words.

Table 2. Size of the Editorials

	Filipino editorials	Indonesian editorials	Mean
Number of editorials	15	15	15
Total number of words	9,977	7,235	8,606



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Average number of words per editorial	663,1	482,3	5,727
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Difference: 2,742

It is evident in the data that Filipino editorials employed more words than Indonesian editorials, exceeding 2,742 words. This finding suggests that The owner of the newspaper gives philippine editorials more space to express the newspaper's opinion than the Indonesian newspaper editorials. Furthermore, the data may indicate that English as a second language in the Philippines influences the writers to express their thoughts in more words than Indonesian editorialists. The latter regard English as a foreign language.

**Metadiscourse markers of the Philippine and Indonesian editorials**

This section discloses the answer to research question 2: What Filipino and Indonesian newspaper editorial writers employ prominent metadiscourse markers? Are there similarities and differences in using metadiscourse markers by Filipino and Indonesian newspaper editorial writers?

Data in Table 3 present the findings of the use of metadiscourse markers in the corpus of the study. First, the editorialists, regardless of their nationalities, similarly used more interactional markers than interactive ones. The Filipino editorial writers used 337 interactional markers and 241 interactive forms. In contrast, the Indonesian newspaper editorialists utilized 465 interactional devices and 290 interactive features. The differences between the two data sets were shown in the frequencies of occurrences in all sub-categories. The Philippine editorials had more metadiscourse markers than the Indonesian editorials. For example, the Philippine editorials contained 165 counts of attitude markers, while the Indonesian editorials had 154 counts of the same sub-category. There were 105 counts of transition devices in the Philippine data, while in the Indonesian data, only 85 counts. These differences may be attributed to the more words used in the Philippine editorials.

Table 3. Frequency of Metadiscourse Markers Employed by Filipino and Indonesian Editorialists

Categories	Filipino		Indonesian	
	Occurrences	Percentage	Occurrences	Percentage



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Interactive	Transition	<b>105</b>	18.17%	<b>85</b>	18.28%
	Frame markers	<b>21</b>	3.63%	<b>9</b>	1.94%
	Endophoric markers	<b>15</b>	2.60%	<b>4</b>	0.86%
	Evidentials	<b>61</b>	10.55%	<b>42</b>	9.03%
	Code glosses	<b>39</b>	6.75%	<b>35</b>	7.53%
	Sub-total	241		177	
Interactional	Hedges	<b>71</b>	12.28%	<b>65</b>	13.98%
	Boosters	<b>26</b>	4.50%	<b>11</b>	2.37%
	Attitude markers	<b>165</b>	28.55	<b>154</b>	33.12%
	Self-mentions	<b>35</b>	6.06%	<b>28</b>	6.02%
	Engagement markers	<b>40</b>	6.92%	<b>32</b>	6.88%
	Sub-total	337		290	
	Total	<b>578</b>	100%	<b>465</b>	100%

Second, the frequencies of metadiscourse markers from the most to the least indicate the hierarchy of metadiscourse strategies in the newspaper editorials because both editorialists have a similar hierarchy. The top-down metadiscourse hierarchy of the Filipino editorial writers is attitude markers, transitions, hedges, evidentials, engagement markers, code glosses, self-mentions, boosters, frame markers, and endophoric markers. The hierarchy of the Indonesian editorialists is attitude markers, transition, hedges, evidentials, code glosses, engagement markers, self-mentions, boosters, frame markers, and endophoric markers.

Table 3 clearly shows that the attitude markers, transition, and hedges were the most frequent in the Philippine and Indonesian editorials, followed by hedges and evidentials. The attitude markers were 28.55% of 578 in the Philippine newspaper editorials and 33.12% of 465 counts in the Indonesian newspaper editorials. The occurrences of transition devices in the Philippine set of editorials were 18.17% and 18.28 % in the Indonesian editorials. The hedges were 12.28% in the Philippine editorials and 13.98% in the Indonesian editorials. In contrast, both sets of editorials utilized very few endophoric markers, at 2.60% in the Philippines and 0.86% in Indonesian.

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### ***Discussion***

The findings of this study indicate the significant presence of the interactional markers in the English newspaper editorials, either written by Filipinos or Indonesians. The dominant use of the interactional resources by the two sets of editorials may suggest that the editorial writers tried to persuade the readers to accept their stance on specific public issues by involving them in their texts through the frequent employment of attitude markers. This finding supports the evidence in the previous study by Kuhi and Mojood (2014). They found that the English and Persian newspaper editorials used interactional category and attitude markers as the predominant metadiscourse category and sub-category. A similar result was also reported by Sukma and Sujatna (2014), who examined metadiscourse resources of Indonesian opinion articles and concluded that attitude markers were most frequently present in the texts. These findings validate the claim that a specific genre employs particular linguistic features. In this context, the newspaper genre, especially newspaper editorial 'sub-genre,' also has a typical language use. It is also reasonable that attitude markers were the most prominent metadiscourse markers because the nature of newspaper editorials is to convey the newspaper's opinion on particular public concerns. Thus, the editorialists express their attitude to or stance on the texts' propositions through the metadiscourse markers. In contrast, the endophoric markers were the least in the editorials because newspaper editorials have limited space in the newspapers, and there is not much reference to other parts of the text.

The following are the descriptions of interactive and interactional metadiscourse markers employed in the editorials.

#### Transition

- a) Meanwhile, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology researchers whose 2016 climate change study Trump had referenced in his speech denounced his use of the research figures as "misleading. (PDI, 6/6/2017)
- b) Therefore the fatwa on interaction on social media should have been issued much earlier. (JP, 6/7/2017)

#### Frame markers

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- a) In sum, Filipinos—and citizens of other countries adversely affected by China's expansive claims to the South China Sea—can rejoice in the tribunal's sweeping judgment (PDI, 6/12/2017).
- b) After all, that is the primary goal of homecoming (JP, 6/21/2017).

## Endophoric markers

- a) But for all that, things are far from critical, according to the Department of Education. (PDI, 6/8/2017)
- b) Such demands make sense as many workers have been employed for more than 12 years. (6/17/2017)

## Evidentials

- a) The BSP said the circular responded to the increasing frequency and sophistication of cyberattacks involving fund transfers (PDI, 6/14/2017).
- b) The problem is that geothermal exploration costs are, according to analysts, much higher than oil, gas, and coal (JP, 6/5/2017).

## Code glosses

- a) In other words, there is natural resistance against Trump's constricted notion of the US role in world affairs (PDI, 6/2/2017).
- b) The fatwa cites Quranic verses that warn against lying and cursing, for instance, which Muslims learned about as children (JP, 6/7/2017).

## Hedges

- a) But if not addressed in time, those "hiccups" may constitute a dark cloud over the horizon. (PDI, 6/17/2017)
- b) More than just allegedly stealing taxpayers' money, Boediono may have put their health in peril. (JP, 6/13/2017)

## Boosters

- a) To be sure, this role of the court is clearly defined in Art. VII, Section 18. (6/16/2017)

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- b) This definitely causes a headache for the government to make sure that the exodus is less troublesome. (JP, 6/21/2017)

## Attitude markers

- a) It's no exaggeration to say that the state of Metro Manila traffic is a major factor in the conduct of a resident's daily life. (PDI,6/22/2017)
- b) It's no wonder that since independence, such an aspiration has remained alive. (JP, 6/6/2017)

## Self-mentions

- a) We understand the military's choice of a deadline (6/12/2017).
- b) With foreign influences heavily impacting us, we may have become lost in finding our own identity. (JP, 6/2/2017)

## Engagement markers

- a) Imagine the impact an external cyberattack on a major bank will have not only on its customers but on the entire industry as well. (6/14/2017)
- b) we are reminded to keep our homes as secure as possible. (JP, 6/14/2017)

**CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

This paper presents the research on newspaper genre, especially metadiscourse markers employed by Filipino and Indonesian editorials in English newspapers and the length of their writing. The study was done through a contrastive rhetoric analysis to see the similarities and differences in rhetoric strategies of the two groups of writers from different nationalities. The study was anchored on the model of metadiscourse markers proposed by Hyland (2005).

Through descriptive analyses, it was discovered that Philippine editorialists used more words in their writings than their Indonesian counterparts. More importantly, the editorials by the Filipino and Indonesian writers employed more interactional metadiscourse markers than interactive metadiscourse devices. It is also noticeable that the most dominant metadiscourse

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markers were in the attitude markers and transitions sub-categories group. The study indicates that the editorials were reader-oriented because they involved the readers in the texts.

The significant presence of metadiscourse markers in newspaper editorials can corroborate the claim that metadiscourse markers can be helpful in communicative competence because they help writers convey their communicative intent effectively and assist readers in constructing the message's meaning appropriately. This study affirmed this view, which shows that metadiscourse markers were also present in the English editorials written by Filipino and Indonesian writers. Consequently, for teaching practices, this paper recommends that metadiscourse markers need to be introduced to students, especially those who take the Paragraph Writing subject.

This study also emphasizes that contrastive rhetoric analysis is valuable to examine the written texts of the same genre but produced by people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. It is to see a possible generic convention of a particular genre and the interference of first in their second language rhetoric. This study discovered that the editorialists from different nationalities employed similar prominent metadiscourse markers in their writing. The findings may indicate that there is indeed a generic feature of newspaper editorials as a genre in terms of its metadiscourse resources.

Finally, most existing studies on the metadiscourse of newspaper editorials focus on English newspapers. Thus, in the Indonesian context, further research can be carried out to explore metadiscourse markers in Indonesian newspapers written by Indonesian writers from different provinces.

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## Appendix A: Titles and Date of Publication of the Editorials

No	Date	PDI Titles	JP Titles
1	6/2/2017	An American embarrassment	Weird Indonesians
2	6/5/2017	Vital piece of tax reform	Finding geothermal exploration
3	6/6/2017	Reckless and irresponsible	Aspiring for an Islamic state
4	6/7/2017	The facts against China	Netizens' fatwa
5	6/8/2017	Learning	Taxpayers: no worries
6	6/9/2017	Aguirre's apologies	Diabolical plastic
7	6/12/2017	Independence means defense of WPS	KPK in DPR's crosshairs
8	6/13/2017	To get Marawi back on its feet	Rubbing salt in the wound
9	6/14/2017	Invest in bank security	Uncontrolled firearms
10	6/16/2017	The facts on martial law	Five days a week
11	6/17/2017	Hiccups	Troubled Jakarta
12	6/19/2017	Faith, time – and Dr. Rizal	Logistics reform, just do it
13	6/20/2017	Corpus Delicti	More controllable food prices
14	6/21/2017	Unexpected policy shift	Safety first
15	6/22/2017	Traffic – weary	Financial supervisors' tasks