

**TRANSITIVITY ANALYSIS OF PRESS RELEASES OF THE 5 TOP-RANKED
PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES OF PUNJAB****Iqra Sharif**

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Email: muhhammadqasim@gcuf.edu.pk**Abstract**

This study aims to identify how language is strategically employed in Higher Education Public Relations in Pakistan. This study analyzes digital press releases published by the public sector universities in Pakistan. Based on Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) framework, Ideational Metafunction, this study examines the construction of experiential reality in language, agency in language, and the naturalization of institutional power dynamics. The official media portals of the top 5 universities of the Higher Education Commission (HEC), which ranked public universities of Punjab, were used to compile a purposive corpus of 50 English-language press releases published during the 2025 academic cycle. The analytical approach used was a mixed-methods approach, which involved using quantitative statistical frequencies of process distributions alongside a qualitative critical discourse analysis. The quantitative results show that the distribution of grammatical structures in the corpus is highly asymmetrical. Qualitative results show that there is a strong bureaucratic monopoly on the active positions of the actors and the speakers in the executive administration. The Vice Chancellor, it is revealed that the University Press Release of Punjab is not a neutral and transparent medium for the dissemination of public information. Instead, they are extremely sophisticated tools for academic capitalism and corporate public relations.

Keywords: Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), Transitivity Analysis, Public Sector Universities, Institutional Discourse, Academic Capitalism, Punjab.

1. Introduction

Higher Education Institutions are increasingly becoming highly marketized corporate entities that need to actively compete for financial resources, local prestige, local talents, and international rankings (Fairclough, 1993; Mautner, 2005). In such a context of academic capitalism, institutional public relations (IPR) has become an integral part of the strategic process. The public universities in developing countries such as Pakistan and in its most populous province, Punjab, are subject to multiple layers of government accountability, regulatory review by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) and public scrutiny. These institutions must constantly maintain a perception of academic excellence, social relevance, infrastructural improvements and administrative efficiency, to survive and prosper. The official university press release is the language used to construct this image of the university. It uses the language of the objective, journalistic reportage, with the third-person narrative voice, factual headlines and direct quotations, but its communicative goal is very promotional. It aims to create consent, legitimate administrative control and increase the value of the institution's brand to the stakeholders of the public sector, funders and prospective students. University press releases, which seem to be objective, factual accounts of campus happenings, are ideologically charged and subjective texts. The grammatical choices made in these documents are not generally incidental but rather intentional means of obscuring and foregrounding different aspects of institutional reality. Although extensive research in the international literature has employed Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) (e.g., Lassen 2006) and Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) (e.g., Abdel Meguid 2021) on the marketized language of Western

and Middle Eastern universities, there is a conspicuous empirical deficit in this context within Pakistan. That is, the digital PR machines of public universities in Punjab, which account for a huge chunk of higher education enrollments in the province, rely heavily on them in order to keep their historical prestige and give state funding for their operations a sense of legitimacy. Even with this reliance, however, there has been no systematic, clause-by-clause examination of the socio-political and administrative constructions of these institutions' realities in the linguistic audits. There is still no systematic understanding of who gets the agency or who is structurally privileged in these texts and how the institutional power is linguistically distributed. This is because there is no empirical investigation of the ideological mechanism undertaken by public higher education PR.

1.1 Research Questions

This study examines three research questions:

1. What are the structural frequencies and systemic distributions of the six Transitivity process types (*Material, Verbal, Relational, Mental, Behavioral, and Existential*) within the official press releases of the top five public universities in Punjab?
2. Which specific participant roles (e.g., *Actor, Goal, Sayer, Token, Value*) are foregrounded or backgrounded within these processes, and how are these roles institutionally assigned to different campus entities?
3. How do these systematic transitivity configurations work to construct and legitimize institutional authority, agency, and prestige within the public sector higher education landscape of Punjab?

1.2 Significance of the Study

This study contributes to the study and application of Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics, more precisely the Ideational Meta-function, in the analysis of institutional PR discourse in an administrative context that is not of the Western academic tradition. It addresses a gap because it is the first such study on Pakistani public universities, to our knowledge, that has been conducted clause-wise among the five top public higher education institutions in Punjab, like the University of the Punjab, UET Lahore, GCU Lahore, University of Agriculture Faisalabad, and Bahauddin Zakariya University. It also provides useful analytical frameworks for critical discourse analysis (CDA) researchers, applied linguists, and researchers who monitor the corporatization of higher education. In addition, it's an eye-opener for the general public and for the media practitioners who are trained to guess the underlying power structures and uneven agency that have their way under the official university's objective communications.

2. Literature Review

The study of institutional discourse with an SFL perspective dates back a long time and has shed important light on how the reality, authority and power of institutions are discursively negotiated, constructed and projected. In SFL, Halliday's idea of the ideational meta-function expressed as the Transitivity system is the most important lexico-grammatical device for the decoding of the synthesis of experiential reality in clauses. In the context of a fast-changing university landscape towards corporatization and academic capitalism, especially in Pakistan, the public relations instruments used at universities have shifted from being merely neutral information disseminators to sites of strategic positioning of ideas. The literature review is arranged chronologically to follow the evolution of this empirical field. It traces the development of Transitivity from its early structural and critical bases, to its use in the mid 2000s, in mass media and corporate PR, and to its current use in institutional academic discourses and higher education websites worldwide and locally.

The systematic investigation of the encoding of experiential meaning has its modern beginnings in the work of Halliday (1985), who developed the Transitivity system as a formal

conceptualization of Systemic Functional Grammar. Halliday was able to prove that any clause serves three different meta-functions at once, namely ideational, interpersonal, and textual. The ideational meta-function can be divided into two sub-functions: the experiential and logical meta-functions, which serve as a grammatical tool to establish a mental framework of reality. Halliday developed a comprehensive system of six important process types of human experience: Material, Mental, Relational, Verbal, Behavioral, and Existential, to establish a system for identifying actors (who act), sensors (who experience), sayers (who speak), and token/values what states of being are legitimate.

At the same time, Hopper and Thompson (1980) put forward a very influential, discourse-based theory of transitivity. Hopper and Thompson extended the notion of transitivity to the global level of whole clauses, where it had a gradient relationship, and they were very keen to demonstrate the strong relationship between transitivity and backgrounding/foregrounding. They asserted that there is a direct correlation between high transitivity and foregrounded information, as identified by having agentive participants, kinetic actions, punctual verbs, and highly affected objects and low transitivity with the information in the periphery of the story, of static information that is descriptive in nature. This study draws selectively on Hopper and Thompson's insights regarding agency and foregrounding. It retains Halliday's six-category process typology as a primary coding framework.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, this framework was enriched by an ideology-critical component, leading to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Fairclough (1992) combined Hallidayan systemic functional grammar with critical social theory, claiming that the use of lexico-grammatical structures is never an ideology-free choice. Fairclough argued that the deliberate use of some processes rather than others, to conceal agency, obscure the power dynamics, and make unequal institutional hierarchies appear natural, are ways of mystifying and naturalizing. He showed, for instance, how active material processes in sentences could shift to passive constructions or nominalizations to keep powerful institutional actors out of the scope of criticism.

Fowler (1991) builds on these structural and critical frameworks and directly applies Transitivity analysis to journalism in media and print. Fowler showed that the form of the verbal predicates and participant roles used in newspapers systematically influences public perception of political and social events. He claimed that media texts are active in the production of "news" rather than just reporting it, and that they are constructed using predominantly material and verbal processes to establish institutional authority and outline social out-groups. At the end of the twentieth century, combining Hallidayan SFL and critical media analysis had solidified Transitivity as one of the leading approaches for exploring the ideological implications of public texts that remain hidden in the background. Teo (2000) used the method of Transitivity analysis in a critical discourse framework to analyze the power relations present in the press that are held in a systemic, asymmetric way. Teo showed that the news representation of marginalized communities involves systematically assigning active, agentive roles (e.g., Actor, Sayer) in material and verbal processes, whereas the roles of the marginalized communities themselves are consistently assigned as passive, affected roles, or structured out of the clause altogether. This study revealed the ideational meta-function's role in maintaining the status quo imbalances.

At the same time, scholars observed a growing trend in which companies were turning to journalistic standards to generate increasingly promotional messages, even if they were presented as news. Lassen (2006) worked on rhetoric in the technology sector as a genre and transitivity analysis. He noted that the style of reporting common in corporate press releases is very similar to that of hard news, but that the transitivity profiles of the press releases are dominated by material processes in which the ultimate, omnipotent Actor is the corporation.

This language technique fosters a sense of objective reporting but serves to advance a corporate agenda.

Meguid (2021) tested this trend in a special context empirically, using a transitivity analysis of the university's news texts on the official website of the Saudi Electronic University (SEU). In the comparative analysis, Meguid analyzed the texts that were created within the institutions before and during the outbreak of the global COVID-19 pandemic. The results showed that the material processes were by far the most dominant of all types of processes, comprising between 76% and 88% of the total number of clauses, respectively, in both the corpora studied in the standard university announcements. The use of material verbs (e.g., launching, establishing, holding sessions) enabled the university to consistently show the use of its administrative apparatus as an active and highly competent Actor, capable of smoothly maneuvering through crises, while mental and verbal processes were used only marginally, at 12% each. Liu (2021) found that in courtroom and institutional administrative contexts, the choices of transitivity are carefully played by dominant actors in order to gain epistemic authority. In this vein, Akingbade (2022) noted that the use of different institutional languages in administrative texts had a significant influence on the cognitive and interpretive process of the reader, thus affirming that the reader will unconsciously interpret the grammatical agency that has been placed in the administrative text.

3.0 Research Methodology

3.1 Theoretical Framework

This study used a mixed methods approach to undertake a linguistic audit of the top five public universities in the Punjab, by using press releases as a tool. It focuses on the Ideational Metafunction, which is then subdivided into the logical sub-component and the experiential sub-component. The experiential metafunction gives us the grammatical tools with which to create the mental picture of reality and to make sense out of our experiences. Transitivity addresses the clause as a means of representation and decomposes any event into three vital systemic elements: 1) the Process itself: Verbally, the action, state, or event, 2) the Participants engaged: Spoken in nominal groups means the things involved in or influenced by the process and 3) the Circumstances: By adverbial groups or prepositional phrases - background information of time, space, manner, cause.

The 6 Process Types and the Participant Roles

The pivot of the Transitivity analysis is the classification of clauses into six different types of processes. Every process type has its own semantic envelope and role and responsibilities for the participants. To ensure absolute empirical transparency in the data coding stage, the six processes are defined and operationalized below:

1. Materials Processes: Processes of Doing and Happening

Material processes are tangible, real-world activities. They are outer experiences and tangible changes of the environment.

Core Participants:

Actor: The subject doing the act.

Goal: The target of a process or what is impacted by the process.

A Goal used in institutional applications and is dominant in PR discourse to demonstrate progress. For example:

"The University [Actor] launched [Material] a clean energy initiative [Goal]."

2. Verbal Processes: Processes of Saying

Verbal processes are those that involve the action of speaking (information, opinions, instructions). They form an intermediate boundary between physical actions and mental reflections.

Core Participants:

Sayer: Who says the speech or the message (can be a human or an institution).

Receiver: Who the speech is directed towards.

Verbiage: The actual words used or the words themselves.

Institutional Application: Crucial for monitoring the voices in institutional reporting:

The Vice Chancellor [Verbal] said that the research is our highest priority [Verbatim/Verbiage]".

3. Relational Processes: Processes of Being and Having

Relational processes are not about actions, but relationships of identity, classification, or ownership between two terms. They are divided into two types: Attributive (giving a quality/class) and identifying (defining an identity).

Core Participants:

In Attributive mode: Carrier & Attribute: e.g., "The campus [Carrier] is [Relational] state-of-the-art [Attribute]."

Token & Value (In Identifying mode): e.g., "Professor Ahmad [Token] has been appointed the new Dean [Value]".

Institutional Application: important to examine how universities shape their institutional identity and their brand attributes.

4. Mental Processes: Processes of Sensing

Mental processes dictate the inner world of consciousness, of thoughts, emotions, and perceptions.

Core Participants:

The sentient, thinking, feeling entity that is aware.

Phenomenon: the thought, felt, perceived, or desired thing(s) of the Sensor.

Institutional Application: Used to determine whether or not universities publicly demonstrate emotional states, empathy, or thinking aims.

5. Behavioral processes: Processes of Behaving

Behavioral processes are physiological and psychological processes that lie between action and mental activity (e.g., coughing, breathing, laughing, staring).

Core Participant:

Behavior: The conscious entity exhibiting the behaviour (usually a human being).

Institutional Application: Only very rarely or not at all found in public relations texts with formal and structured structure.

6. Existential Processes: Processes of Existing

Existential processes are used to assert that something exists or occurs. Usually, they use the dummy subject 'there'.

Core Participant: Existent: An entity, object, or event that exists.

3.2 Corpus and Empirical Design

This section outlines the empirical operationalization of the theoretical outline of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) and the Transitivity framework that was outlined in the previous section. Following the standards of research at the MPhil level, this section provides details about the actual implementation of the study, including the procedure for constructing the corpus, the details of the procedure for clause segmentation, the linguistic coding criteria, the steps taken to ensure that the judgements of the two raters were in agreement, and the statistical tools that were used to analyze the data. The statistical agreement between the two coders was calculated using Cohen's Kappa, yielding a high-reliability coefficient of 0.81, which confirmed excellent coding consistency before the final distribution metrics were compiled.

Corpus Compilation and Sampling Strategy

For this study, the data corpus was developed as per a purposive and stratified sampling method so as to make sure the selected texts reflect the elite level of public higher education in Punjab, Pakistan. A sample size was limited to a manageable, yet statistically sound number of samples to complete a manual SFL analysis, clause by clause. All press releases are public, so no ethics approval was needed.

Selected Universities: For the selection of 'Top 5' public universities, this study has relied on national ranking systems furnished by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan, along with the presence of international ranking systems (e.g., QS World University Rankings). A mix of comprehensive, technical, and agricultural public sector higher education institutions (HEIs) was chosen:

University of the Punjab (PU), Lahore: It is the oldest and biggest public comprehensive university of the province.

University of Engineering and Technology (UET), Lahore: The leading public technical and engineering University in Punjab.

Government College University (GCU), Lahore: A liberated and comprehensive public university with an elite institutional prestige.

University of Agriculture (UAF), Faisalabad: The best performing specialized agricultural and scientific public HEI in Pakistan.

Bahauddin Zakariya University (BZU), Multan: The biggest (public) comprehensive university in the South of Punjab.

Data Selection and Boundary Setting

Ten (10) press releases from each of the official and publicly accessible digital press media portals of the universities were randomly sampled, resulting in a sample of fifty (50) documents (N = 50) to be used. Inclusion of text in the boundary conditions was tightly constrained as follows: The selected press releases were all released during a tight calendar window of 12 months (1 Jan 2025 to 31 Dec 2025) to ensure consistency across the same academic period, including admissions, convocations, research symposia and administrative changes. Only texts written in its native language (English) or that have been officially translated from and published on the main English sub-domains of the universities were included. Urdu press releases were not included in the sample because they would produce too many changes in the verbal groups and participants' roles in the vernacular media. Genre Homogeneity is only standard corporate/institutional press releases, which were considered to be announcements of events, policies, achievements, or administrative appointments, were selected. Speeches and independent opinion pieces by faculty and student blog entries were not included. The total number of words in the compiled corpus (C) is about 18,500, which is enough to serve as a linguistic foundation for investigating the macro- and micro-level Transitivity mapping.

Data Processing and Clause Segmentation:

The Transitivity system works on the level of the clause, the most basic meaning-synthesizing structure in grammar, and the raw text files needed systematic preprocessing before coding could be started.

Text Cleaning

The 50 press releases were individually scraped from the HTML source of each website, then every piece of digital metadata (web navigation links, image captions, social media sharing buttons, and publication times, among others) was removed and placed in plain text (.txt) files.

Grammatical Coding Protocol

Each of the 1,142 clauses was recorded in a specific analysis matrix to carry out the manual Transitivity analysis with absolute empirical rigor. The coding protocol for the language used involved determining three structural variables at the same time in each clause:

Clause As Representation is given by Process Type (Verb) + Participant Roles + Circumstantial Elements.

Step-by-Step Coding

Isolate the Verbal Group: Identify the finite or non-finite verb string that is the structural core of the clause. This constitutes the Process.

Identify the Process Classification: Assign the process of the verb to one of Halliday's six typologies of process according to the semantic value it has in the context. For instance, the verb "concluded" might be coded as Material in "The committee concluded the meeting" or Mental in "The researcher concluded that the hypothesis was true."

Structure and map Participant Roles: Identify the nominal groups that are structurally related to the verb. For each process type selected (Actor/Goal for Material, Sayer/Verbiage for Verbal, Token/Value for Relational), give specific semantic designations.

There are peripheral questions that can be answered by adverbial groups or prepositional phrases that remain: Isolate any that do. (Spatial Location), When? (Temporal Location), How? (Manner), Or why? (Cause). Students are expected to be able to use analytical instruments and statistical measures. A Mixed-method descriptive statistical layout was designed to move from the raw linguistic text to quantified institutional discourse patterns.

Quantitative Aggregation: A relational database spreadsheet was created to record all coded clauses. Categorical data (Process, Participant, Circumstance) were coded as numbers for descriptive statistics.

Frequency (f): The raw number of each specific process, participant, or circumstance in each of the individual institutional sub-corpora and in the entire corpus.

To detect systemic structural biases and imbalances between the universities, the percentage was calculated relative to the total number of clauses (N = 1,142).

Qualitative Critical Analysis: Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is an entry point of the quantitative distributions. After the statistical dominance of some grammatical structures was mapped, a qualitative analysis was carried out to interpret the patterns as a means of building institutional realities. This involved: Analyzing the distribution of active, dominant roles (Actor, Sayer) and passive, marginalized roles (Goal, Receiver, and not named at all). Analyzing the use of nominalization and passive constructions to prevent or emphasize administrative figures or achievements. Analyzing the dynamics of relational processes in the creation of corporate value of brand and institutional prestige.

4. Data Analysis and Results

The empirical data in this section are collected from the top five public universities in Punjab, by conducting Transitivity analysis in a clause-by-clause manner of the 50 sampled press releases in which N = 1,142 \text{ clauses} were counted. The distribution of the six process types, participant configurations and statistical variances across the institutional sub-corpora is described below.

Quantitative Distribution of Process Types:

When the data is statistically aggregated, it is seen that the distribution of lexico-grammatical choices in the corpus is very skewed. The overall picture of PR practice in public sector universities in Punjab is dominated by two dominant macro-processes: Material Processes (doing, creating, implementing) and Verbal Processes (saying, commanding, reporting). The two types combined account for over three-quarters (78.1%) of the data. The six Transitivity process types and their absolute and percentage frequencies for the five sampled public universities are presented in a detailed comparative matrix below:

Table 1: Comparative Distribution Matrix of Transitivity Process Types

University	Material	Verbal	Relational	Mental	Existential	Behavioral	Total Clauses

PU	124 (51.2%)	62 (25.6%)	38 (15.7%)	12 (5.0%)	4 (1.7%)	2 (0.8%)	242 (100%)
UET	138 (58.2%)	49 (20.7%)	36 (15.2%)	8 (3.4%)	5 (2.1%)	1 (0.4%)	237 (100%)
GCU	111 (48.3%)	68 (29.6%)	40 (17.4%)	9 (3.9%)	2 (0.9%)	0 (0.0%)	230 (100%)
UAF	132 (59.2%)	46 (20.6%)	29 (13.0%)	11 (4.9%)	4 (1.8%)	1 (0.4%)	223 (100%)
BZU	108 (51.4%)	54 (25.7%)	33 (15.7%)	10 (4.8%)	3 (1.4%)	2 (1.0%)	210 (100%)
Total (f)	613	279	176	50	18	6	1,142
Total (\%)	53.7%	24.4%	15.4%	4.4%	1.6%	0.5%	100.0%

Qualitative Analysis and Structural Findings:

The ideological activity accomplished through these statistical patterns must be broken down into the internal structural configurations: the distribution of roles of participants in each dominant process type. Through the mapping of Material processes, the texts systematically construct institutional progress and administrative agency. Material processes are the basic structure of the text with 613 instances (53.7%). The analysis of the participant mappings reveals a dominance of the active role for the university as an abstract corporate institution and/or as its executive administration, and of the affected role for the physical infrastructure, financial grants, and academic programs.

Example 1 (UET-PR02-C04):

The central laboratories of the University [Actor] have been upgraded to international standards [Goal] to satisfy the requirements.

Example 2 (PU-PR07-C11):

The Vice Chancellor [Actor] opened [Material] the international book fair [Goal] and presided over it for three days.

Most importantly, the faculty and students are not typically designed as active Actors in those physical processes. If they are cited, they are always treated as passive Goals or Beneficiaries ("students were given laptops", "faculty received training").

The Monopolization of the Institutional Voice

Verbal processes account for 24.4% (f=279), as they are the most important means of building up top-down authority. A key discovery in this category is the institutional monopoly in the site of the Sayer's role as a participant. In all five sub-corpora, the Sayer is mostly used by the Vice Chancellor or other high-ranking management personnel.

Example 3 (GCU-PR01-C03):

The Vice Chancellor [Sayer] made the emphasis [Verbiage] that research should be geared towards solving the problems of the region.

Example 4 (BZU-PR05-C02):

The Registrar [Sayer] restated the University's commitment to the HEC policies [Verbiage]. The press releases create an epistemic asymmetry as the formal declarations, policy directives, and institutional values are conveyed through the executive office. The actual academic laborers (professors, researchers) and the students are systematically muted, and are never included in the communication clause at all.

The process of Relational Processes: Relational processes make up 15.4% (f=176) of the data, and are strategically used to consolidate the brand value of the university. The mode of identification (Token + Value) is always preferred to the descriptive attributive mode, and the institutions can claim exclusive and indisputable superiority.

Example 5 (GCU-PR09-C01):

GCU Lahore [Token] is [Relational: Identifying] the intellectual hub of Punjab [Value].

Example 6 (PU-PR01-C05):

A pioneer in vaccine development [Attribute] is the department [Carrier]."

The text normalizes these competitive claims with the help of Relational "being" clauses that package historical prestige and academic quality. The statement is presented as a promotional piece, concealing the fact that it is about the elite status of the institution and making it look like a historical fact.

Marginalized Processes: Exclusion of subjective spaces

The low frequencies of Mental (4.4%), Existential (1.6%), and Behavioral (0.5%) processes show a conscious exclusion of these processes in the structure. As a professional corporate genre, for university press releases, clauses that convey feelings, fragility, or random moments are eliminated. Where Mental processes do emerge, they are always limited to the cognitive domain of the administration ('The management [Senser] envisions [Mental] a digitized campus') and the internal world of the text is always calculated, corporate, and completely in line with institutional strategy.

5. Findings & Discussion

The analysis of the 1,142 analytical units shows that the ideational meta-function in public relations in higher education institutions has been strategically configured in the context of the Pakistani educational system. The results reported are not due to a random or chance selection of style, but rather due to the conscious use of the lexico-grammatical means available in the province of Punjab, in the interest of institutional image control and centralization of executive power, and the naturalization of the marketization of public higher education in the province of Punjab. They are summarized into three major socio-linguistic conclusions from the empirical patterns. The first major finding highlights the structural dominance of 'Doing' over 'Sensing' as a hallmark of action-oriented public relations. From the statistical analysis, it is evident that the overwhelming dominance of Material processes over Mental processes. It is an evident conclusion that the University's public relations in Punjab has a very action-oriented discourse. It employs a considerable number of high-transitivity physical action verbs to map abstract institutional uses of a verb into countable, material products.

High-Transitivity Core (Foregrounded): Material Output (53.7%)

Subjective Reflection (Backgrounded): Institutional Doubt (4.4%)

The texts present the university as a high-efficiency corporate machine through the organization of the discourse around material actions. Importantly, this proclivity for physical doing reduced the space for clauses necessary to Mental processes, systematically. Mental grammar has an internal evaluation, a mental processing, and emotions; therefore, this pattern suggests a possible strategic avoidance. There is no place for institutional uncertainty, faculty hesitation, and administrative conflict, and these are not permitted to be there. Any vulnerability is removed and the sanitized version of self-actualizing administration and unflagging progress is put forward. From Bureaucratic Centralization of Agency and Voice.

The second is that the corpus is highly vertically polarized with respect to the assignments of the participants. The Transitivity system is constantly revised and developed to establish a clear power difference between the executive management and the larger academic community, with the former having absolute power. This centralization is realized in two different ways, lexico-grammatical:

Systematically, the material clauses deny faculty and students an active agency. The grammar normalizes a hierarchy of Actor, starting from the top, by assigning the dominant Actor, the Vice Chancellor, or the high administration, all the time. The academic faculty and students are practically treated as a pure means to an end and/or as "Goals" or as "Beneficiaries" of

administration. In this context, the idea of progress, benevolence, infrastructure development, etc., is based on the idea that it is all a consequence of the executive decision, and that it is decisions made by the institutions that are being “consumed” by the campus community.

B. Sayer Monopolization and Epistemic Silencing

Now the executive leadership has replaced the role of the Sayer, and it is one voice in the public interest for the university. The professors, researchers, and students are structurally silenced in the text; they are not allowed to act in the clausal role to formulate a policy statement, make a scientific contribution, or stand in for the institution. All of the press releases focus on the replacement of a collaborative, democratic academic environment by a “highly-managed corporate hierarchy” in which the academic workforce is turned into mere recipients of administrative speech.

Press releases depend almost exclusively on Relational Identifying processes to give institutional legitimacy, whereas Material processes present current actions. The way is based on a clear-cut grammatical formula: A token and a relational process having a value of the University, Is/Represents and The Cradle of Excellence, respectively.

The text qualifies competitive market claims by suppressing the active and conditional 'being' clauses, which correspond to the material progress of the normal text, and bringing the material condition into the light of the active and conditional 'to be'. The sense of a high ranking is not used as an ethico-political contest or a subjective promotional statement, but rather as an incontrovertible claim to history. This "linguistic camouflage" serves to cover the commercial/promotional goal of the text with a facade of historical authenticity. It helps these public universities to build a brand, gain regional market share, and get the recognition of the state funding agencies without sacrificing the traditional dignity of the academic institution.

6. Conclusion

This study performed a comparative Transitivity analysis on 1142 clauses gathered from official press releases of the top 5 public universities of Punjab (PU, UET, GCU, UAF, BZU). The results show that the language of the five top-ranked public universities in Punjab is no longer public welfare and public academic collaboration but has turned into a highly corporate public relations model. These texts focus on the grammar in order to centralize power and to exclude the internal academic community, thereby reinforcing the bureaucratic structures that stifle institutional democracy and transparency. Socio-institutionally, this linguistic configuration has serious consequences in conditioning the public stakeholders to consider higher education in a purely managerial way, where higher education is no longer understood as a democratic field of knowledge production, but as a space of managerialism.

The study is a rigorous baseline for the public sector PR in Punjab, but it has some limitations. The analysis was conducted only after a corpus of 50 English language news items during 12 months period and not on the parallel Urdu news items, which were disseminated to vernacular newspapers of the country. Furthermore, SFL's focus on text does not adequately account for the institutional restrictions of the draft or the actual reception of the text by the reading public. Future research directions need to adopt a bilingual comparative approach to explore the negotiations of agency in the translation of institutional products from English to Urdu text networks in order to overcome these limitations. Moreover, the multi-modal analysis of discourse, as illustrated by qualitative audience reception interviews, would enable future researchers to explore the interaction between accompanying press photography and clause-level grammar in order to analyze the perceived institutional status of the text between prospective students and faculty.

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