

IDEATIONAL METAFUNCTION ANALYSIS OF PAKISTANI ENGLISH NEWSPAPER EDITORIALS

Pari Abdul Aziz
pariabdulaziz@gmail.com

MPhil Scholar, Department of Applied Linguistics,
Government College University, Faisalabad, Punjab,
Pakistan.

Zaheena Zia
zaheenazia@gmail.com

MPhil Scholar, Department of Applied Linguistics,
Government College University, Faisalabad, Punjab,
Pakistan.

Fatima Zia
fatimazia211@gmail.com

MPhil Scholar, Department of Applied Linguistics,
Government College University, Faisalabad, Punjab,
Pakistan.

Dr. M. Asim Mehmood
masimmehmood@gcuf.edu.pk

Professor, Department of Applied Linguistics, Government
College University, Faisalabad, Punjab, Pakistan.

Abstract

Ideational Metafunction is about the ways in which language represents the world and our experiences in it. This research aims to provide a detailed analysis of how Pakistani English newspaper editorials use ideational meanings to convey their perspectives on various social issues and achieve their communicative goals. Data was taken for the period of June, 2024 from 3 Pakistani English Newspapers that are Dawn Newspaper, The Express Tribune, The News International. The data was analyzed using lens of Systemic Functional Linguistics, paying attention to circumstances and processes. By applying the framework of Ideational Metafunction the analysis revealed various strategies in the use of circumstantial elements to provide context and background, and in the process types to describe the actions, events, or states in a clause. The analysis showed that material process (processes of doing) was frequently used in Pakistani newspapers' editorials, while behavioral process doesn't occur. The analysis also revealed that some circumstantial elements were more prominent in the texts. These included location, manner, accompaniment and cause. This study contributed to the understanding that ideational metafunction helps the reader to understand the intention and the message of the newspaper editorials reflecting how editors convey and construct their realities through the words they choose.

Keywords: *Systemic Functional Grammar, Ideational Metafunction, Pakistani English Newspaper, Editorials*

Corresponding Author: Pari Abdul Aziz (MPhil Scholar, Department of Applied Linguistics, Government College University, Faisalabad, Punjab, Pakistan).
Email: pariabdulaziz@gmail.com

1. Introduction

Examining newspaper editorial offices provides a critical lens through which social values, ideological attitudes, and language techniques are represented and negotiated in the discipline of discourse analysis. In the larger framework of English journalism, Pakistani English daily editorials are a distinct genre that offer a wide variety of language usage that interacts with linguistic, political, and cultural aspects. This study aims to investigate the construction, negotiation, and dissemination of meaning through language by looking at the ideational metafunction in English-language editorial boards of Pakistani newspapers.

According to Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), the ideational metafunction is concerned with how language generates and conveys meanings about the outside world. This research aims to clarify the discursive techniques used by editorialists to influence readers' views and interpretations of social concerns, domestic politics, and international events by examining editorials within this framework.

Pakistani English is a unique variant of English that is shaped by regional linguistic conventions and cultural circumstances. As such, it offers an interesting field for linguistic study. Its usage in newspaper editorials negotiates identity, power dynamics, and sociopolitical beliefs in the Pakistani setting in addition to reflecting the writers' language preferences.

The theoretical underpinnings of the ideational metafunction within SFL and its applicability to discourse analysis in journalism are briefly discussed at the outset of this article. The editorials of English-language newspapers in Pakistan are then contextualised within the larger field of English-language journalism in Pakistan, emphasizing their influence on discourse and public opinion. This research attempts to advance our knowledge of the construction and communication of ideational meanings in the discourse of English-language Pakistani newspapers by conducting a methodical examination of a subset of editorials. The goal of this research is to improve our knowledge of language usage in journalistic situations by providing information about the rhetorical methods used to inform, influence, and convince readers through an analysis of the linguistic resources employed by editors.

This study looks at the ideational metafunction in Pakistani English newspaper editorials in an effort to close the gap between linguistic analysis and socio-political discourse. The goal is to present a unique viewpoint on how language, philosophy, and journalism interact in modern-day Pakistan.

1.1. Research Questions

- How do Pakistani English newspaper editorials use experiential meanings to convey their perspectives on various social issues?
- What types of processes (material, mental, verbal, relational, existential, behavioral) are most commonly used in the editorials of Pakistani English newspapers?
- How are different circumstances (location, manner, role, extent, matter, accompaniment, and cause) represented in Newspaper editorials?

1.2. Research Objectives

- To explain a clause level analysis of the data using the Systemic Functional Linguistics framework for a comprehensive understanding of the ideational metafunction in editorial writing.
- To identify the types of processes (material, mental, verbal, relational, existential, behavioral) present in Pakistani English newspaper editorials.
- To examine the representation of different circumstances (location, manner, role, extent, matter, accompaniment, and cause) in these editorials.

2. Review of Literature

In their study, Ghani et al. (2022) look at editorials on the COVID-19 epidemic from English media in the UK and Pakistan. The theoretical foundation is the systemic functional linguistic model (LSF) developed by Halliday. Newspaper editorials from renowned newspapers in Pakistan and the UK are utilised as study materials, and the transitivity analysis of the ideational metafunction is examined using the SFL model. The findings indicate that in journalistic editorials, the process with the highest transitivity is the material process. Authors have illustrated the disastrous circumstances in Pakistan and the UK as a result of the COVID-19 epidemic through the use of the material process. Additionally, the study shows how the authors of the two newspapers differ in how they create their ideologies and societal meanings in words.

Abubakar and Lamido, 2023. The goal of this paper is to apply a discourse analysis model to a theoretical framework for the study of transitivity. It employs the systemic

functional grammar of M.A.K. Halliday as a framework for examining language use in media. This article's goal is to examine the learning link between participants in The Guardian newspaper's editorial section and verbs. The article came to the conclusion that the ideational metafunction aids the reader in comprehending the purpose and point of view of the newspaper column.

Qasim et al., 2018 The purpose of this study was to elucidate the ideologies seen in the editorials of regional English newspapers on Pakistan's 2018 general election outcomes. The Express Tribune, The Nation, Dawn, and Pakistan Today provided the sample editorials used in this study's ideological analysis. Utilising systemic-functional linguistics (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014), specifically focusing on system assessment and transitivity, he investigated the ways in which language choices were employed in editorials to create, present, and legitimise specific ideologies.

According to Noel (2020), the constraints imposed by time and place on the use of certain languages mean that newspaper reporting differs greatly from other forms of language usage. The data, which is shown in graphs or columns, requires a small amount of space. Short, dramatic headlines, long paragraphs, and several succinct sentences must be used to address and maintain the demands of key interests (Marques & Mont'Alverne, 2021; Osisanwo, 2021). The maintenance of public attention can have varying effects on grammar and word usage.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

This research adopts qualitative design to analyze circumstantial elements and processes in newspaper editorials of Pakistani English Newspapers. Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics is employed as a methodological approach for examining how editors use ideational meanings for expressing their experiences of the world.

3.2. Data collection

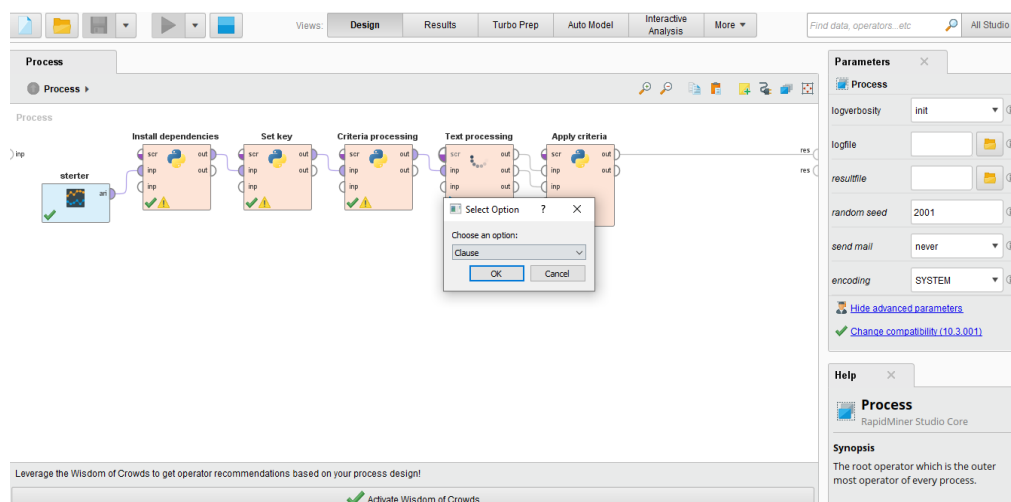
Data was collected from 3 Pakistani English Newspapers that are Dawn Newspaper, The Express Tribune, The News International. 2 Editorials from each newspaper is taken. These editorials cut across different aspects including society, weather, terrorism, dispute, migration, and health. These editorials are of the period of June 2024. Care is taken to ensure that these editorials reflect the ideational communicative strategies.

3.3. Data Analysis

Data is analyzed using framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics focusing on Ideational Metafunction specifically process and circumstance. This analysis consists of elements like processes (material, mental, verbal, relational, existential, behavioral) and circumstances (location, manner, role, extent, matter, accompaniment, and cause). Data is divided into clauses because Halliday's Metafunctions are based on clause level analysis. Data is tagged using a flow app on Rapidminer and then it is edited manually to remove system errors.

4. Results and Discussion

The purpose of this research was to provide a detailed analysis of how Pakistani English newspaper editorials use ideational meanings to convey their perspectives on various social issues and achieve their communicative goals. Analysis is done on the basis of Process and Circumstance using lens of Systemic Functional Linguistics. As stated earlier in the methodology section, data is taken from 6 Newspaper editorials. Separate text files were created for each editorial and then the text is divided into clauses using flow app on Rapid miner which allows us to divide and analyze text in clauses, sentences and paragraphs. Data is then tagged using this flow app but due to some system errors, it is edited and tagged manually.



First of all, data is analyzed on the basis of processes to reveal how writers in Pakistani Newspaper editorials describe the actions, events, or states in a clause for

conveying their message and to explore what types of processes are predominantly used in these editorials.

4.1. Material Processes

Material processes express actions and events, typically involving physical action or activity. These processes are most frequently used in the analyzed editorials. The dominance of material processes indicates that the editorials focus on concrete actions and events. For instance, "Express Tribune 1" contains 38 material processes out of its 56 clauses, highlighting a strong emphasis on actions. Similarly, "Dawn 1" includes 24 material processes out of 32 clauses, showing the trend that these editorials focus on discussing physical events and actions over other types of processes.

1. The government must hit the ground running with a nationwide strategy comprising enhancement of facilities at hospitals, mobile health units and cooling stations in low-income localities and along congested routes.
2. While the Indus Hospital recorded eight.
3. And develop a robust transport system to stem the deluge of vehicles.
4. On 14th June 2023, a boat carrying over 750 migrants sank in open seas off Greece,
5. Creating a toxic environment that undermines unity and progress.

4.2. Mental Processes

Mental processes express activities such as thinking, perceiving, and feeling. In the analysis of this data, mental processes are used sparingly with a total of only 10 instances in all editorials. This limited presence suggests that the editorials focus less on internal thoughts and perceptions and more on external events and states. "News International 1" and "News International 2" each have the highest frequency of mental processes, with 4 instances of mental process in each, while "Dawn 1" and "Express Tribune 1" include just one instance of mental process in each. Some of the examples are given below

1. Many believe that prosecuting Roy for a speech she made 14 years ago is a desperate move. (cognition)
2. Hopefully indicating that the ruling elite now realises that the war on terror cannot be won on the battlefield alone (cognition)
3. And then think about resolving the Kashmir issue. (cognition)
4. Perhaps, Pakistan too has been looking for signs of that (perception)
5. Apathetic and myopic, they have learnt nothing from Karachi's human toll in 2015, (cognition)

4.3. Verbal Processes

Verbal processes, which deal with communication or speech, are the least frequent among the types analyzed, with only 11 occurrences. This usage in small amount indicates that the editorials do not focus heavily on reported speech or dialogue. "Express Tribune 1" stands out with 5 verbal processes, the highest among all the samples, suggesting some degree of emphasis on communication in this particular editorial. Both "Dawn 1" and "News International 1" have two verbal processes each, further underscoring the overall limited attention given to verbal interactions. Some of the examples are given below

1. And Faisal Edhi says that "the majority are from poor areas where there is extended load-shedding".
2. Experts assert that foliage is the only way out of global warming.
3. Where she had said that Kashmir "has never been an integral part of India".
4. Their families said the boys made the journey in pursuit of a better livelihood to provide for their families.
5. Congress has also asked the ruling party why it is so scared of elections in the disputed region.

4.4. Relational Processes

Relational processes describe states of being or relationships between entities. These processes have a significant presence in the editorials, with a total of 68 instances. This indicates that the editorials place emphasis on discussing states, attributes, and relationships. "Dawn 2" have 13 relational processes, highlighting its focus on states and relationships. "News International 1" has the highest count with 20 relational processes, suggesting extensive discussions on attributes and relations within this editorial. Some of the examples are given below

1. Do the rulers have what it takes to protect citizens from sizzling temperatures? (identifying)
2. Lessons and actions are overdue. (attributive)
3. It is unlikely that their interaction would have been an entirely pleasant one. (attributive)
4. It seems worthwhile to mention here that Pakistan is 'half' of the world's polio problem (identifying)
5. Besides religious minorities, Pakistani refugees are typically categorised as economic migrants, (identifying)

6. The constant news of Pakistani nationals losing their lives in the Mediterranean signals that efforts to curb trafficking alone are insufficient(identifying)

4.5. Behavioral Processes

Behavioral processes describe physiological and psychological behavior. They are entirely absent in the analyzed editorials. This absence suggests that the editorials do not emphasize describing behaviors.

4.6. Existential Processes

Existential processes, which express existence or the presence of an entity, are rarely used in the editorials, with only 8 instances. This indicates less focus on statements of existence or presence. "News International 1" has the highest count of existential processes with 7 instances, showing a relative focus on existential statements in this particular editorial. The only other occurrence is in "Express Tribune 1," which has one existential process. Some of the examples are given below

1. There were hopes that after the BJP failed to secure a simple majority in the recent elections,
2. There have been arbitrary arrests of journalists,
3. Despite Modi's latest announcement, there is scepticism.
4. Addressing these underlying causes of migration is essential for stemming the tide of illegal migration.
5. There are tensions over the constitutional autonomy of the disputed region.

Summary of Process Types in Pakistani Newspaper Editorials is given in the table below

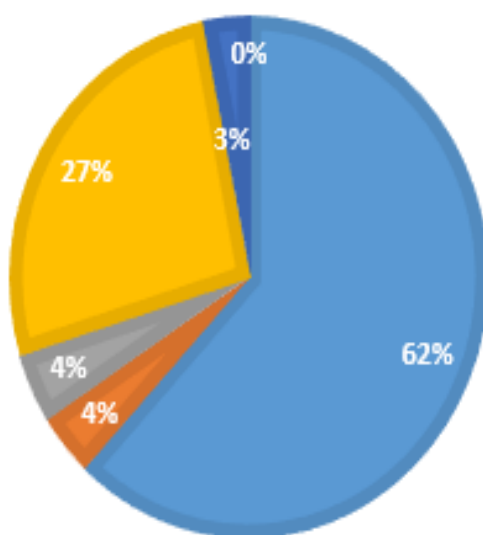
Newspaper		Types of Process					
Editorials	No. of clauses	Material	Mental	Verbal	Relational	Behavioral	Existential
Dawn 1	32	24	1	2	5	0	0
Dawn 2	29	16	0	0	13	0	0
Express Tribune 1	56	38	1	5	11	0	1

Express Tribune 2	31	24	0	0	7	0	0
News Internation al 1	62	27	4	4	20	0	7
News Internation al 2	45	29	4		12	0	0
	255	158	10	11	68	0	8

This analysis reveals that Pakistani English Newspaper editorials frequently use material processes, emphasizing on actions and events. Relational processes also hold a significant place, reflecting a focus on states and relationships. Mental and verbal processes are less frequent, indicating that the editorials focus on external events and states over internal thoughts or communication. The complete absence of behavioral processes suggests no emphasis on describing behaviors, while the rare use of existential processes shows less focus on statements of existence or presence.

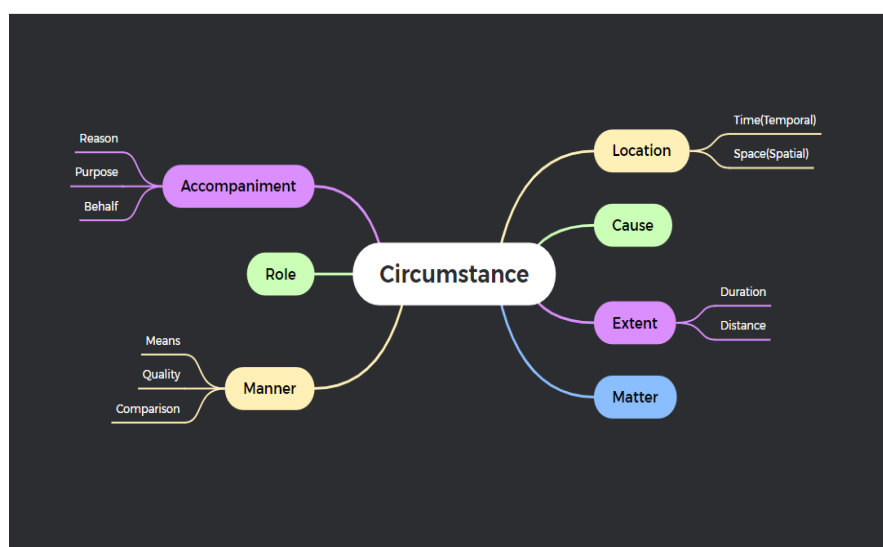
PROCESSES

■ Material ■ Mental ■ Verbal ■ Relational ■ Existential ■ Behavioral



5. Analysis of Circumstances in Editorials

Thus, data is analyzed on the basis of circumstance to reveal how writers use circumstances in their editorials to provide context and background and build narrative of accountability, justification, and persuasiveness.



5.1. Location

Location refers to where and when actions or events take place, and it is the most frequently used circumstance in the editorials, with a total of 89 instances. This high number indicates that the editorials provide readers with a clear idea of where events are happening. For example, "Express Tribune 1" mentions location 26 times, the highest among all the editorials, showing a detailed emphasis on the setting. Similarly, "Dawn 1" mentions location 14 times, highlighting the importance of situating events in specific places. Some of the examples are given below

Temporal	Spatial
1. Since 2021 2. Of 2022 3. In the aftermath of the Greek tragedy 4. On 14th June 2023 5. In four days	1. In open seas off Greece 2. In major cities nationwide 3. Off Italy 4. Onto the lower decks of boats 5. At an event in New Delhi

5.2. Manner

Manner explains how actions or events occur. It appears 11 times in total, suggesting a moderate focus on describing how things happen. "News International 1" and "Dawn 2" each have 2 instances of manner, indicating some attention to the way actions are carried out. This helps provide additional context and detail about the events being described. Some of the examples are given below

1. Unfortunately
2. About their future
3. In a meaningful manner

5.3. Extent

Extent describes the duration or frequency of events, and it is the least mentioned circumstance, with only 4 instances across all editorials. This indicates that the editorials generally do not focus much on how long or how often actions and events take place. "Express Tribune 1" and "Dawn 1" each have one instance of extent, providing less information about the duration or frequency of the events discussed. Some of the examples are given below

1. From sizzling temperatures
2. By at least 4°C
3. At an alarming pace

5.4. Cause

Cause explains why actions or events occur, including the reasons behind them. This circumstance appears 16 times, making it relatively common in the editorials. The frequent mention of cause suggests that the editorials often explore the reasons behind actions and events. For instance, "Dawn 2" and "Express Tribune 1" each mention cause four times, indicating complete exploration of the motivations behind the actions and events covered. Some of the examples are given below

1. Behind Pakistan's persistent failure
2. By ongoing wars
3. Due to their political or religious connections

5.5. Matter

Matter specifies what the action or event is about. There are 5 instances of matter, showing that this circumstance is occasionally included. "News International 1" and

"News International 2" have instances of matter, highlighting a focus on the topics and subjects of the actions and events. Some of the examples are given below

1. About resolving the Kashmir issue
2. About these things
3. Regarding the launch of a new counter-terrorism campaign

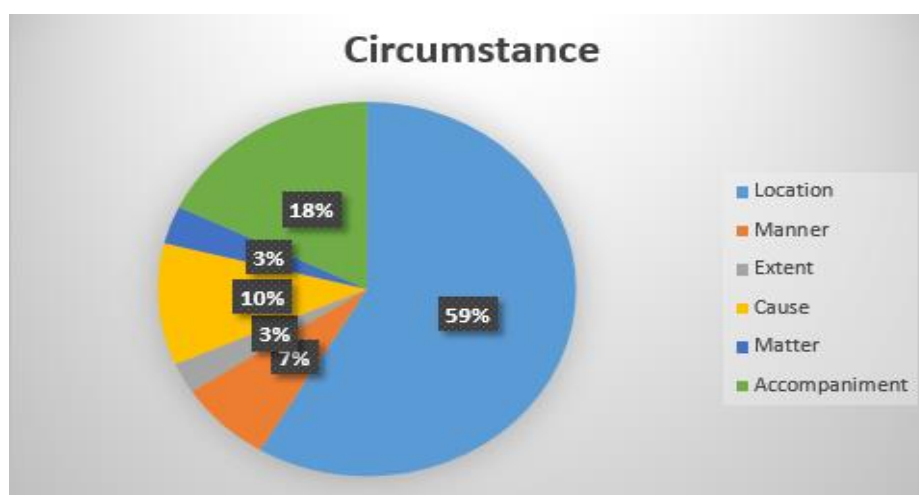
5.6. Accompaniment

Accompaniment describes who or what is with someone during an action or event. This circumstance appears 27 times, making it fairly common in the editorials. "Express Tribune 1" and "Express Tribune 2" each have multiple instances of accompaniment (8 and 6, respectively), showing an interest in who is involved alongside the main subjects of the actions and events. "Dawn 2" has 5 number of instances, indicating a similar focus. Some of the examples are given below

1. With a nationwide strategy
2. Including Pakistani immigrants (accompaniment)
3. With industries

Newspaper		Types of Circumstances					
Editorials	No. of clause s	Locatio n	Manne r	Exten t	Caus e	Matte r	Accompanime nt
Dawn 1	32	14	1	1	1	0	2
Dawn 2	29	9	2	0	4	0	5
Express Tribune 1	56	26	2	2	4	0	8
Express Tribune 2	31	10	3	1	2	0	6
News Internation al 1	62	16	0	0	5	2	3
News Internation al 2	45	14	3	0	0	1	3
	255	89	11	4	16	3	27

This analysis reveals that editorials place a strong emphasis on where actions and events occur (location), providing clear context and background. There is also considerable attention to the reasons behind actions (cause) and the people or entities involved (accompaniment). While the manner of actions is discussed to a moderate extent, the duration and frequency of actions (extent) are rarely mentioned. This suggests that the editorials prioritize explaining where actions happen, why they occur, and who is involved over how and how long actions take place.



6. Conclusion

The study has demonstrated how newspaper editors use ideational meanings to convey their messages effectively. The analysis has focused on the choice of circumstances, and processes. These strategies reflect their attitude towards the world and their efforts to influence the readers. Results of process analysis reveal that writers of all editorials have used material processes to express about weather, terrorism, dispute, migration, and health. In addition, the high proportion of material process in these editorials indicate that their text is unambiguous and objective. Using material verbs, writers of Pakistani editorials try to portray the picture of the society.

Furthermore, circumstantial analysis reveals that writers have used circumstances of location, manner, time, condition, purpose, and cause. The present study can help understand the process and circumstance to examine various types of texts by analyzing them with the ideational metafunctional model of SFL. Further, the future researchers may investigate the experiential, interpersonal and textual metafunction of editorial and other

media discourse. The linguistic analysis of Pakistani English Newspaper editorials also has pedagogic relevance for students, educators, researchers, and applied linguists.

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