CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF PRESS RELEASE ANDCONFERENCE IN RESPONSE TO SPECIAL COURT VERDICT: HALLIDAY'S SYSTEMIC FUNCTIONAL LINGUISTICS APPROACH

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Abstract

The current study is aimed at to analyze the elite forces public relations department press release and its representative's press conference in response to special court decision in distinguishing figure of elite department case. The specially constituted court announced its short verdict order on 17 December 2019 and complete decision on 19 December 2019. Former President retired General Pervez was sentenced to death on the charge of high treason under article 6 of the constitution of Pakistan. The public relations department of elite forces reacted to the special court short decision by issuing press release No.PR-206/2019 the same day. The elite forces representative addressed a brief press conference during which he avoided to take questions on 19 December 2019 after the complete decision court order. Systemic functional grammar/linguistic theory of Hallidayhas been employed in this research study for the purpose of analysis. The researchers have focused only the ideational meta-function from SFG. The transitivity and transformational techniques of nominalization and passivization have been used as major analytical instruments in this research study. The findings show that nominalization and passivization in the press release has been used to be objective and impersonal in the criticism. Verbal processes are working as awareness creators among the listeners about the speaker's institution. The discussion reveals that writer/speaker has used transitivity process, nominalization and passivization discursively and he is affecting listeners' ideology telling them that the institution he is representing needs their support in the current specific matter.

Keywords: Critical discourse analysis, systemic functional linguistics/grammar, ideational functional, transitivity, nominalization, passivization

1. Introduction

Systemic functional linguistics modal presented by M.A.K. Halliday discusses about three language meta-functions. According to Halliday (2007: 183),the first meta-function of ideation is thelanguage content function. This function is manifested through transitivity and is used for representing world events, incidents and situations and actions, processes involved and entities. Halliday (1973: 106) states that ideation functionpresents in language text-producers' experience of real world phenomena. Halliday (2007: 184) describes interpersonal meta-function as language participatory function. This function is realized through mood and modality and permits expressions of evaluations and attitudes. Interpersonal meta-function authorizes relation setting expressions between text-consumer and text-producer. Halliday (2007: 184) opines that textual function actualizes ideation and interpersonal meanings. Textual meta-function of language is actualized in structure, cohesion and information. Halliday (1985: 11) presents \concept of 'context of situation' that includes systematic relation between language functional organization and social environment.

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Former President Pervez was sentenced to death on the charge of high treason under article 6 of the constitution of Pakistan. A high treason case was registered against him in December 2013 and he was indicted in March 2014.

 The same year the prosecution tabled complete evidence before specially constituted court headed by Justice Waqar Ahmad Seth (Chief Peshawar High Court) and be composed of two other members Justice Shahid Karim (Lahore High Court) and Justice Nazar Akbar (Sindh High Court). The former president was charged with installing emergency in 2007 and suspending constitution illegally. Court trial against him was lingered on due to litigation on appellate forums and Mr. Pervaiz left Pakistan for medical treatment in 2016 but he promised to return his homeland after his recovery. The specially constituted court announced its short verdict order on 17 December 2019 and complete court decision on 19 December 2019.

Thepublic relations department elite forces of Pakistan reacted to the special court short decision by issuing press release No.PR-206/2019 the same day. The press release expresses pang and agony of forces after this decision about the person who had been ruling very key posts insince1999 to 2007. The forces representative addressed a brief press conference during which he avoided to take questions on 19 December 2019 after the complete decision order. He started his conversation by saying that Pakistani elite forces had expressed its concerns and reservations after special court brief judgment and those concerns and doubts have been proved true after detailed decision of the concerned court. He said in his press briefing that words used in para 66 of detailed judgment in which Justice Waqar Seth had written that accused body was dragged to D-Chowk and given public hanging for three days transgressed religion, culture, humanity and other values. He mentioned past two decades achievements of military in war against terrorism and talked about current internal and external threats. At the end, he expressed his strong pledge to defend the homeland and foil all internal and external threats.

1.1 Objectives of the Study

The currents study has the following objectives:

- Systemic analysis of transitivity, nominalization and passivization in terms of affecting the listeners' ideology
- To analyze the various discursive practices employed by the writer of press release and speaker of press conference in response to special court judgment

1.2Research Questions

1. How does the speaker/writer use the transitivity, nominalization and passivization to affect listeners' ideology?
2. What discursive practices have been utilized by writer of press release and speaker of press conference in response to special court judgment?

1.3 Significance of the Study

The current study will help not only to understand the text structure but also real and hidden ideology and meanings that writer or speakerconveys to the receiver. This analysis will reveal the hidden intentions of the writer or speaker which are difficult to find out for a layman. It is useful in studying the nature of language and how it is used in different context for achieving variant communication goals.

2. Review of the Literature

2.1 Discourse

The term 'discourse' has been defined in various manners. The linguistic perspective was focused to elaborate discourse in the early research of discourse. The main viewpoint was that use of language in the form of a text or speech is discourse. Some linguists considered discourse 'language above clause or sentence. The important is that both aforementioned views see discourse as language use instances. Sometimes, it is equated with the term 'text' as a result it has been dissociated from 'text, by redefining. Fairclough (1992:28) expresses that discourse is exactly more than language use, it is language use (written or spoken) perceived as a kind of social practice. Discourse may not be identified with conventional concept of 'text' (speech or conversation) due to its link with historical, social, cultural and political variables. Discourse has origin in the past and it affects both present and future.

2.2 Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

CDA is an approach whose main object is to examine language use considering its relationship with society. Ndambuki&Janks (2010:71) states that critical discourse analysis is method for exposing crafty means in which language uncovers ideology and power related issues. Van Dijk opines (2001) that CDA is a discourse analytical research kind in which the researchers study the manner inequality, social power abuse and dominance are validated, reproduced and resisted through political and social contextual talk and text.

Rahimi&Sahragard (2007) contend that CDA is a paradigm of academic research that aims at to manipulations of ideology, hegemony and power relations. Wodak (2007) remarks that CDA assists to penetrate and elucidate obvious and opaque relations of power, control, discrimination and dominance. Weiss and Wodak (2003) claim that language use context is very crucial and all-important and considerin CDA three mandatory elements of ideology, power and history. According to Widdowson (2007), critical discourse analysis primarily emphasizes the language use (abuse) for exercising social and political power. It means that CDA studies the social and political norms and values. Hence, this perspective investigates ideational and ideological aspects. In other words, CDA securitizes presumptions, ideologies and ideas struggle for sustaining bias and unequal relations between non-elites and elites.

Various approaches have been launched to conduct CDA research. The approaches introduced by Fairclough, Wodak and Van Dijk have got recognition. Meyer (2001) opines that Foucault's order of discourse and systemic functional linguistic/grammar theory of Halliday provide base forFairclough's approach and socio-cognitive theory has been applied by Wodak and Van Dijk for their approaches. Fairclough (2001) proposes these steps for conducting critical discourse analysis:

- To emphasize on a particular social issue that has semiotic aspect; have deep study of the text; delineate the issue and point out semiotic feature
- To recognize the prominent discourses, styles and genres that constitute semiotic aspect
- To examine the diversity ranges in discourse, styles and genres within this specific aspect
- To find out the resistance against processes of colonization effectuated through dominant discourses, styles and genres

2.3 Systemic Functional Linguistics/Grammar

An Australian linguist, Michael Alexzander Kirkwood Halliday produced systemic functional linguistics/grammar that had its foundations on European language studies. The focus of traditional grammar was language structure and form but the emphasis of SFG are social aspects and systems connected with form and structure. Fairclough's approach to CDA is based on Halliday's SFG. According to Myer (2008), SFG perceives language a meaningful behavior and considers language a meaning making procedure. The reason is that systemic functional grammar renders understanding about how language is constructed socially and embedded culturally and consequently it is useful to implement in critical discourse analysis.

Halliday describes three functions of language which are known meta-functions and these are types of semantic components: the ideational, the interpersonal and the textual functions. The ideational function deals with our understanding and way of expressing perception about the world. The interpersonal function focuses on communication, role taking and perceiving or conveying our judgments, attitudes and feelings. The last but not least textual function discusses about coherence and cohesion mechanisms which play vital role in making text coherent entity.

2.4 Transitivity Process

In the current study, the ideational meta-function has been focused. The ideational meta-function is involved transitivity that includes participants (nouns), circumstances (prepositional phrases) and processes (verbs). The transitivity system consists of the following processes:

Table: 1 Transitivity processes

Type	Concept	Involved Participants	Illustration
Material Processes	Real world physical action	Actor (A) Beneficiary (B) Affected/Goal (G)	**They** (A)presented **him** (B) **a gift** (G)
Relational Processes	Express equivalence, attributes and possession	Token (T) Value (V)	**UOL** (T) is **the most prestigious institution**(V)
Mental Processes	Involve perception, cognition and affection	Experiencer/Senser (Se) Experience/Phenomenon (P)	**She** (Se) heard the **music** (P)
Behavioural Processes	Combination of mental and material processes	Behaver (B) Phenomenon (P)	**The boys** (B) watched **the match** (P)
Existential Processes	Represent existence by empty 'there' at subject place	Existent (E)	There is **little house** (E)
Verbal Processes	Include communication process	Verbiage (V) Sayer (S) Receiver (R)	**He** (S) told **me** (R)**how to play guitar** (V)

2.5 Nominalization

The process in which a verb is transformed into nominal form is called nominalization. It is very useful as a speaker/writer uses this technique for hiding tense of the action and the involved participants. As the following instance elaborates:

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i.   The constable arrested two men, which ignited a protest
ii.   The arresting of two men ignited a protest (Nominalization)

2.6 Passivization

The speaker/writer utilizes passivization technique for leaving out actor or doer of a particular action and for reducing its significance. For instance:

i.   The constable arrested the thief red-handed
ii.   The thief was arrested red-handed (Passivization)

In the aforesaid example (ii) use of passivization assists writer for covering actor or doer of action (constable). Consequently, reader's attention is directed towards thief (affected) by distracting from constable (doer).

2.7. Related Studies

Junling (2010) states that CDA is frequently applied for the analysis of political discourse and public speeches where the speakers try to win favourable responses for the receivers. In his study that was based on CDA theory and systemic functional linguistics, he has analyzed presidential speeches of Obamachiefly from the perspective of modality and transitivity which elaborates language use for power and ideology. Furthermore, one can have clear understanding of public purposes of such speeches.

Abed Al-Haq (2015) carried out a research study that was aimed to identify major linguistics strategies which King Abdullah II used during his public speeches. The researchers chose three speech as data for this research study. The findings explain that he employeddifferent strategies for delivering his messages to the audience. He used creative expressions for showing reality, intertextuality for convincing American listeners and circumlocution for magnifying problems.

Hussein (2016) has completed a study on critical discourse analysis of Arabic political discourse. The study was conducted for exploring the linguistic aspects and intended ideologies in the speech that was delivered by Abdel Fattah El-Sisi (president of Egypt), on the eve of new Suez Canal inauguration on August 06, 2015.The data was analyzed using three dimensional CDA model of Fair Clough.

Hamood (2019) conducted research study on US president Donald Trump discourse related to US Embassy transfer from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem in 2017. The objectives of this study were: to know the political discourse characteristics, to define political discourse meanings, to determine the strategies and methodologies of political discourses and to find out US president official discourse effect on Jerusalem identification. Van Dijk's thematic theory of CDA was employed by the researcher for analyzing the selected discourse. The study findings demonstrated that US president decision was based on individual and contradictory approach considering domestic political situation towards realistic and rational foreign policy.

Jaffar (2019) in his research study explains how transitivity can be utilized for classifying clauses and verbs employing various kinds of processes and its object is to interpret the meaning which is beyond a literary piece. The researchers analyzed 'The Green Zone Rabbit' by Hassan Balasim that was translated by Jonathan Wright in English. They did this analysis using systemic functional linguistics/grammar and transitivity system which was presented by Halliday.
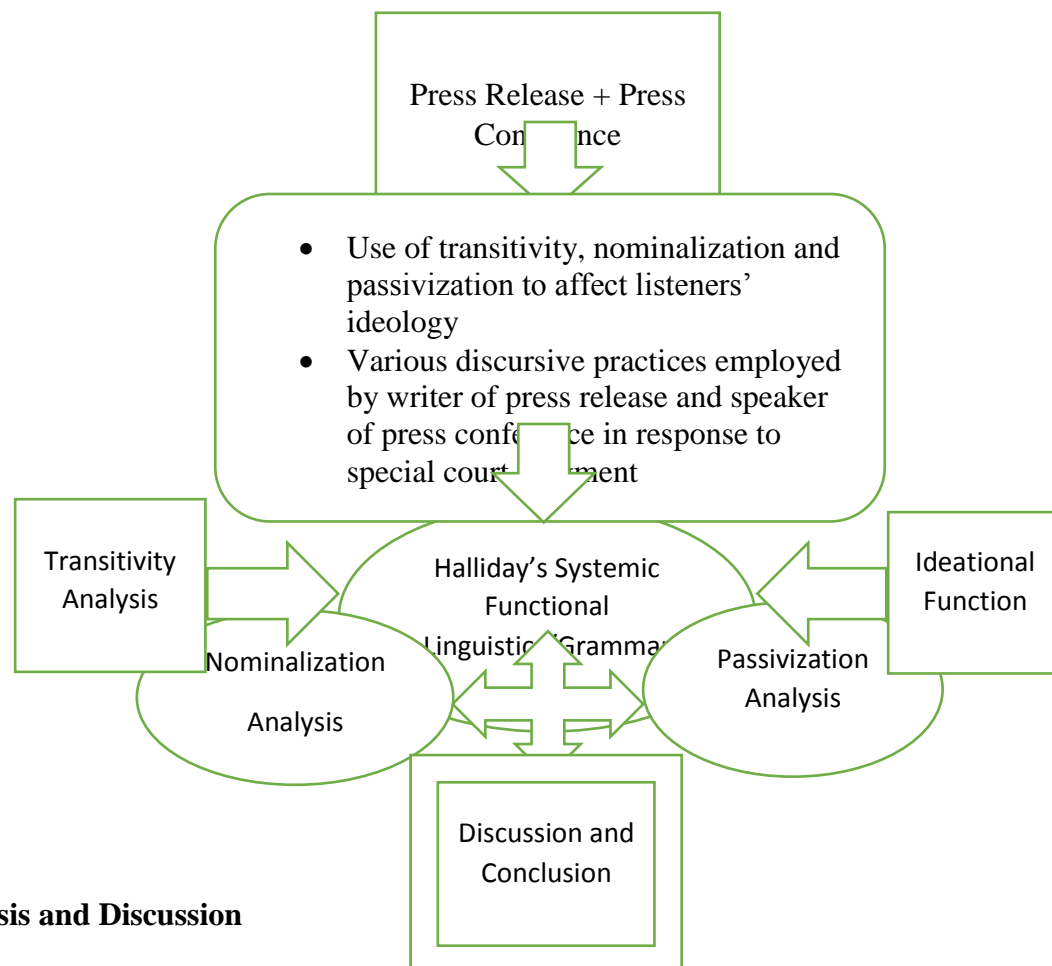
3. Research Method

3.1 Sample and Data Collection

Purposive sample technique has been utilized by the researchers in the current study. The public relations department press release No.PR-206/2019 issued on 17 December 2019 after brief judgment of special court in high treason case against Mr. Pervaiz. The text of the press release for current research has been taken from elite forces website. The complete judgment was announced by three judges' bench of special court on 19 December 2019. The representative of elite forcesresponded this verdict in a press conference in which he had taken no questions from the journalists a few hours later the same day. The press conference was in Urdu language and the researchers translated it into English for this study.

3.2 Data Analysis Method

Systemic functional grammar/linguistic theory of Halliday has been employed in this research study for the purpose of analysis. The researcher has focused only the ideational meta-functionfrom SFG. The transitivity and transformational techniques of nominalization and passivization have been used as major analytical instruments in this research study.

3.3. Steps of Research Methodology

4. Analysis and Discussion

Looking at the text of press release and press conference from the viewpoint of transitivity functions that inform us about circumstantial functions, language and its reflection on processes and participant, it becomes clear that main participant is the writer of the press release and speaker of the press conference. The language and circumstantial situations realize the dominant position of the press release writer and press conference speaker. The detailed analysis of the press release and press conference has been discussed below.

4.1 Press Release and Conference Statistics Analysis

Statistics in table 2 indicate that press release includes 112 words, 4 sentences and 1 paragraph. The writer has used simple colloquial language to reduce distance with the receivers. The press release only discusses single topic. The translated press conference contains 384 words, 21 sentences and only 1 paragraph. General style and common language was used by the speaker

Table: 2 Press Release and Conference Statistics

Items	Press Release	Press Conference
Words	112	384
Sentences	4	21
Paragraphs	1	1

4.2 Transitivity Analysis

Thompson (1996) is of the view that system of transitivity explains the complete clause instead of interpreting verb and object. Halliday describes three components in a clause which are process, participants and circumstances.

4.2.1 Material Process Analysis

Saragih (2010) states that events and activities occur in external world are included in the material processes. Action words are applied either concrete or abstract in material process. The following participants are involved in material process:

    i.   Actor (Who performs action)
    ii.   Affected/Goal (Who is affected)

Table 3: Press Release Transitivity Analysis (Material Process)

No.	Actor	Material Process	Affected/Goal
1	Special court	Received	Rank and file of Pakistan elite department, country, wars,
2	Chairman of elite forces of Pakistan	served, fought	

Table: 4 Press Conference Transitivity Analysis (Material Process)

No.	Actor	Material Process	Affected/Goal
1	We	Demonstrated	It
2	Enemies	Weakening	Us

The afore-given tables 3 and 4 indicate that material process shows action and activity of the writer/speaker. The writer/speaker has used actor words for the special court, Mr.Pervaiz and Pakistani elite department and forces and country have also been mentioned as affected. The judicial system has not been described as affected. The elite forces have been mentioned as actors in the positive activities while court has been described as actor for negative actions.

4.2.2 Relational Process Analysis

The relational processes express equivalence, attributes and possessions. The participants involved in this process are 'token (T)' and 'value (V). Mostly used verbs in relational process are: are, am, is, was, were, become, seem, look, get, sound etc.

Table: 5 Press Release Transitivity Analysis (Relational Process)

No	Token	Relational Process	Value
1	The due legal process	Seems	To have been ignored…

Table: 6 Press Conference Transitivity Analysis (Relational Process)

No.	Token	Relational Process	Value
1	We	Are	Facing hybrid war Aware
2	We	Are	

Tables 5 and 6 present that relational process has been utilized in the press release and press conference of the elite forces representative. He has used positive attributes for the elite forces and negative attributes for judicial system. The elite forces has been described as a dominant institution. It shows that relational process has been employed discursively to affect listeners' ideology.

4.2.3 Mental Process Analysis

The mental process includes cognition, affection, desire and perception. The verbs (like, feel, see, know, think, please, hate) indicate this process. The participants of this process are sensor (Se) and phenomenon (P).

Table: 7 Press Conference Transitivity Analysis (Mental Process)

No	Senser	Mental Process	Phenomenon
1	Elite Department Pakistan	Expect	
2	We	Understand	Possible designs
3	Some people	Want	To provoke us

The elite forces representative's press release has no mental process but he has utilized it in press conference. The examples included in table 7 show that he has employed mental verbs for expressing thoughts, opinion, and feelings of his institution and its members on a specific matter. As a result, the writer/speaker expects change in listeners' attitudes so that they may sympathize with the elite forces in this particular matter.

4.2.4 Verbal Process Analysis

Verbal process is related to that of communication and exchange of information. The commonly used verbs for this process are boast, describe, tell, talk, say, praise etc. and the participants of this process are verbiage (v), sayer (S) and receiver (R).

Table: 8 Press Conference Transitivity Analysis (Verbal Process)

No	Sayer	Verbal Process	Receiver	Verbiage
1	I	Have spoken	You	On the nature and character of war
2	We	Know		How to defend the country
3	Head Administrator	Said		Had covered a long journey and rendered sacrifices

Table 8 explains that sayers in this verbal processes mentioned above arespokesperson himself, elite forces and chief. The verbiages discuss their positive activities and qualities. It shows that speaker has tried to present his institution and its working before listeners making them aware of the effective role played by it in the defense of the country.

4.2.5 Existential Process Analysis
It represents existent commonly by the use of empty 'there' at the subject place of the clause. Something occurs or exists and there must be an existent in this process.
    i.   **Pakistanielite Department** (existent) is an organized institution.
    ii.   **It** (existent) is a family.
The speaker has existential process in the press conference. The examples i and ii indicate that 'Pakistani elite department' and 'it' are existents.

4.2.6 Behavioural Process Analysis
This process refers to a combination of psychological and physical behavior which is expressed through the use of such verbs: coughing, crying, laughing, staring, smiling, breathing etc. Commonly only one participant who is often human being (behaver) is the part of this process. It is distinguished from the material process as it has only one participant. If behavioural process has two participants, it can be taken as material process.
I (behaver) request the nation to have faith in the elite forces (phenomenon).
The use of behavioural processes is less as compared to other processes. The reason is that speaker is talking on the formal occasion and formal forum. The less use of this process indicates professionalism in the members of Pakistani elite forces.

4.3 Analysis of Nominalization
The table 9 shows that nominalization (the decision given by the court) has been employed to give prominence and importance to the action of the special that is instrumental in changing attention of the receiver. Furthermore, he has utilized in the phrases: denial of fundamental rights, undertaking individual specific proceedings and concluding case in haste. Here, the writer appears applying nominalization for neutralization of his criticism. He is criticizing Pakistani jurisdictive system in general and special court in particular but application of nominalization technique has made his tone objective and impersonal.

Table: 9 Analysis of Nominalization

No.	Nominalization Instances
1	The decision given by the court
2	Denial of fundamental rights
3	Undertaking individual specific proceedings
4	Concluding case in haste

4.4 Analysis of Passivization

The table 10 explains that there are three cases of passivization in press release. The action has been described in passive for hiding agency to bring objectivity and making action more prominent.By placing word 'justice' at the start in the example 3 of passivization, the writer intends for drawing readers' attention to justice and deviating receivers' attention from them who are demanding and dispensing it.

Table: 10 Analysis of Passivization

No.	Instances of Passivization
1	Has been received by rank and file
2	To have been ignored
3	Justice will be dispensed

5. Conclusion

The elite forces press release on 17 December and press conference on 19 December have been analyzed on the basis of systemic functional linguistics/grammar propounded by Halliday. The meta-function of transitivity involving six processes, use of nominalization and passivization have been focused in the analysis of press release but the analysis of press conference has been kept limited to transitivity analysis. The findings show that nominalization and passivization in the press release has been used to be objective and impersonal in the criticism. The present study findings with regard to transitivity material process indicate that the elite forces have been mentioned as actors in the positive activities while court has been described as actor for negative actions. Relational processes have been employed discursively to affect listeners' ideology. Mental processes have been employed for affecting listeners' attitudes. Verbal processes are working as awareness creators among the listeners about the speaker's institution. The discussion reveals that writer/speaker has used transitivity process, nominalization and passivization discursively and he is affecting listeners' ideology telling them that the institution he is representing needs their support in the current specific matter.

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