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## Transitivity Patterns in British and Pakistani Election News Reporting: A Comparative Analysis of *the Guardian* and *Dawn*

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### Abstract

This study examines transitivity patterns in British and Pakistani election news reporting through a comparative corpus-based analysis of the *Guardian* and *Dawn*. The study is grounded in Halliday and Matthiessen's (2013) Systemic Functional Linguistics, particularly the transitivity system, which explains how language represents experience through processes, participants, and circumstances. The main purpose of the study is to identify and compare the frequency of six transitivity process types namely material, mental, relational, verbal, behavioural, and existential in selected election news reports from the two newspapers. The corpus consisted of 1388 clauses from *Dawn* and 2297 clauses from the *Guardian*, making a total of 3685 clauses. Each clause was analyzed and classified according to its dominant process type. The findings revealed that material processes were the most frequent in both newspapers, with 731 occurrences in *Dawn* and 1005 occurrences in the *Guardian*. Relational processes ranked second in both corpora, followed by mental and verbal processes, while behavioural and existential processes appeared with the lowest frequencies. The results show that election news reporting in both Pakistani and British contexts is mainly action-oriented, as political events, actors, and electoral developments are largely represented through actions and happenings. However, proportional differences indicate that *Dawn* relied more on material and verbal processes, whereas the *Guardian* used more relational, mental, and existential processes. The study concludes that transitivity analysis is a useful linguistic tool for comparing political news discourse across different media and cultural contexts.

**Keywords:** Transitivity patterns; Systemic Functional Linguistics; Election news reporting; Political discourse; Corpus-based analysis; The *Guardian*; *Dawn*

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## 1. Introduction

Political discourse is one of the most influential domains of language use because it does not communicate political information only. It also constructs public understanding of political actors, events, institutions, and electoral processes. News reporting is particularly significant in election periods for voters rely on news texts to interpret party stand, leadership performance, campaign promises, electoral conflicts as well as institutional developments (Gattermann et al., 2022). The term for language is not neutral in this context. The use of verbs, participants, sentence structures and the use of reporting verbs can highlight certain actors and background others. Hence, the analysis of political news discourse is an important approach to comprehending the role of media language in shaping the political reality. Critical Discourse Analysis and Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) in recent years have also established a strong connection between language and ideology, social positions, and power dynamics in public discourse (Alameda-Hernández & Jiménez-Briones, 2025).

Election news reporting can be analyzed using transitivity analysis, as it often involves political actions, mental attitudes, verbal statements, institutional identities, and public conditions. Newspapers can portray political leaders as active agents, passive recipients, responsible decision-makers, strategic thinkers, or quoted speakers, depending on the type of process they are (Alhumsi & Alsaedi, 2023). For instance, it could be reported that a party "won seats," "claimed victory," "believed in reform," or "was accused of misconduct. The clauses create different combinations of action, actor, responsibility and political meaning. Thus, transitivity analysis contributes to the understanding of the role of grammar in political representation. Political reporting is often found in the form of actions, decisions, events, and outcomes, which means that material processes are often the themes of political material. Alhumsi and Alsaedi, 2023 and Simanjuntak et al., (2024) have conducted studies on political articles and political speeches, respectively, which has shown that the politics is usually reported by means of material processes.

This study analyses how political actors and election events are represented in terms of six process types with respect to transitivity system. It identified 1388 clauses from Dawn, and 2297 clauses from the Guardian, with the quantitative results revealing that material processes dominated both newspapers, with the other process types appearing in different frequencies.

It is important to compare the reporting of Pakistani and British newspapers because they are both published in different political, cultural and journalistic contexts. British election news exists in an environment of long-standing democracy, in which the election process is a central concern, as are statistical evidence, campaign tactics, party rivalry and political debate. Election reporting in Pakistan, however, takes place in a politically charged context where the discourse around elections can include institutional pressure, legal wrangling, party restrictions, military influence, and public uncertainty (Ahmed et al., 2025). Hence, by

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comparing the usage of transitivity patterns by the Guardian and Dawn, the study enables a comparison of the two news outlets in framing the reality of elections as native and non-native English news outlets. It is also found from the recent study of media discourse in Pakistan that the material, verbal, relational and evaluative clauses can be used to create political identity in the political discourse, particularly in the politically charged discourse (Fakhar et al., 2025).

This study focuses on the comparative distribution of transitivity processes in the Guardian and Dawn. The focus is significant because quantitative frequency patterns are a valid criterion for determining the predominant process types in every newspaper (Ahlam, 2025), as well as for estimating the differences in the way they are grammatically represented. Studies conducted by corpus-assisted approach to transitivity have revealed that a systematic clause counting can enhance the discourse analysis approach by minimizing the impressionistic interpretation that can be found in the corpus, as well as by offering measurable evidence for the occurrence of linguistic patterns (Simanjuntak et al., 2024).

The specific objectives of the study are: first, to identify the frequency of material, mental, relational, verbal, behavioural, and existential processes in the selected election news reports; second, to compare the distribution of these process types in British and Pakistani English news reporting; and third, to explain how these quantitative differences contribute to the representation of political actors, electoral events, and media discourse patterns in the two newspapers.

## **2. Literature Review**

Language is a system that creates meaning, and this meaning is accomplished by the use of grammar in a social and communicative way. Grammar is not only seen as formal rules but as a means to which speakers and writers draw on to create experiences, connect, and structure messages. Transitivity is one of the ideational metafunctions of language because it explains how clauses represent reality through processes, participants and circumstances (Schlepppegrell & Oteíza, 2023). In news discourse this is particularly relevant since the newspaper does not merely report things; instead it is grammatically structuring the things and assigning actions, thoughts, states, speech, behaviour and existence to different political actors. Although several studies (Kayani & Anwar, 2022; Anwar, Kayani, & Ramiz, 2024; Kayani, Anwar, Shafi, & Ali, 2023) have applied Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) to analyze transitivity patterns in fiction, there remains a noticeable gap in the literature regarding its application to news reporting.

There are six main process types found in the transitivity system. Material processes are actions and events (doing, winning, losing, approving, attacking, contesting, forming etc.). Mental processes include perception, cognition, emotion, and desire; they encompass beliefs, thinking, expectations, fears, and hopes. Relational processes are used to identify or describe entities by means of being, becoming, having or possessing. Verbal processes are actions of

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saying, reporting, claiming, announcing, or promising. Behavioural processes are physiological or psychological behaviour, whereas existential processes are the expression of the existence or occurrence of phenomena (Benyu, 2025). These categories are still being used in recent studies to investigate the political meaning construction and the ideological positioning of discourse (Alqahtani, 2024; Mohsan et al., 2024).

### **Transitivity in Political Discourse**

Transitivity analysis is a very popular method for analyzing the political discourse since the political discourse largely relies on the representation of action, leadership, responsibility and ideology. Simanjuntak et al. (2024) conducted a study on President Joko Widodo's speeches using the UAM Corpus Tool which revealed that material processes were used more frequently than other types of process. They said that the predominance of material clauses was related with the real work, action, and political performance with the study. Speech is important to the present article because one would also expect to encounter election news about political actors in their actions, in their campaign activities, in their projections of seats won, in their electoral defeats, in their institutional decisions, and in their party strategies.

Likewise, Mohsan et al. (2024) analysed the transitivity system in the oath-taking speech of Maryam Nawaz, and demonstrated that process types reveal the way political orators strategically employ language by bringing desired meanings to their listeners. They found that they had verbal, mental, behavioural, and relational processes, and the dominant process in this political speech was verbal process. Though their investigation was on the topic of speech instead of news reporting, it supports the overall thesis that process types facilitate the identification of the ways in which political discourse constructs authority, commitment, public image and political intention.

Alqahtani (2024) further employed Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in conjunction with Halliday and Matthiessen's (2013) transitivity model in the study of political crisis discourse. The study revealed that the transitivity patterns contribute to the development of discursive relations and the expression of an ideological position in a macro and micro level in the discourse (Alqahtani, 2024). This is crucial in the present paper since the reporting of the election is also a discourse of crisis in many political situations. Elections are a matter of competition, uncertainty, political legitimacy and trust of public. Thus, the type of process newspapers choose to report could have an impact on the readers' perception of political responsibility, institutional power and electoral conflict.

### **Transitivity in News and Media Discourse**

The centrality of media language in how the media interpret social and political issues has led to news discourse being a significant field of study for transitivity. Alhumsi and Alsaedi (2023) did a transitivity analysis of two political articles and they concluded that the most common process type in the two articles is material process. They implemented a mixed-

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methods study which demonstrated that the transitivity analysis can be used to understand the organization of experience in political media discourse based on grammar choice in relation to grammatical process (Alhumsi & Alsaedi, 2023). This would relate to the present paper's focus on frequency distribution as it may help point to the dominant representational style of a newspaper, if there are repeated process patterns.

In an analysis of the CDA and SFL approach to English newspaper headlines on the Ukraine-Russia war, Zakizadeh (2024) claimed that newspapers employ lexical and discursive selection to gain emotional impact and expose subtexts and ideologies. The study revealed that the linguistic pattern of various newspapers differed, reflecting the media's different perspectives on the same conflict, which means that the media can portray political actors in various ways (Zakizadeh, 2024). What is directly relevant to comparative election news analysis is the fact that the Guardian and Dawn can report the same election phenomena - campaigns, party competition, polling, defeat, victory and public opinion - in different grammatical preferences.

Comparative CDA study on Chinese and American media reports on COVID-19 was conducted by Zhang et al. (2022), who suggested that hidden meanings of ideology and psychology can be revealed through media discourse. Though they did not use transitivity choices, it is important as it has shown the usefulness of comparative media discourse analysis in various national contexts (Zhang et al., 2022). In the present study, the comparative approach is followed, but it is limited to Halliday & Matthiessen's (2013) transitivity system in the news reporting of both Pakistani and British media.

Fakhar et al. (2025) studied the phenomenon of Imran Khan's political persona in Pakistani print media using Systemic Functional Linguistics, Critical Discourse Analysis, and Framing Theory in Pakistani media discourse. According to their study, the relationship between the material and relational processes, as well as the material and the evaluative processes, was connected to the building of agency identities and populist identities, respectively, while the clauses related to governance were connected to the construction of governance related meanings (Fakhar et al., 2025). The study is related to this recent work on many grounds which include the professional nature of both the works, depiction of political actors and political media discourse in Pakistan through SFL based linguistic analysis.

### **Corpus-Based Transitivity Analysis**

A corpus-based approach complements the transitivity analysis because it enables the researcher to apply a systematic method to the analysis of the linguistic patterns and not to single instances only (Anwar et al. 2024; Shahid, Anwar & Fatima, 2024). The approach to transitivity analysis in corpus-based studies is to divide the text into clauses, identify the type of process in each clause and then determine the frequency of each process type. This approach offers quantifiable proof in order to detect patterns of discourse. In the field of transitivity analysis, corpus tools have proven to be valuable aids in analyzing political texts,

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as illustrated by Simanjuntak et al. (2024) who used UAM Corpus Tool to help understand the pattern of processes, participants, and circumstances in political texts. The use of clause-level analysis is significant as transitivity is clause level and each clause may be used to represent a different kind of experience. The results indicated that the most common processes were material processes, as in both newspapers, action-based representation is important in election news reporting.

The existing studies are mostly concerned with a single speech, a single context of the national media, or qualitative ideological interpretation. This paper tries to fill the gap and compare two newspapers from a different linguistic and political context. Newspapers offer a rich and diverse source of data for linguistic analysis due to their varied genres, styles, and communicative purposes (Anwar, 2012). For the present study, the Guardian is selected as a British native English news source, whereas Dawn represents a Pakistani non-native English news source. This study provides a quantifiable contribution to the study of political discourse, media representation and comparative election reporting, by paying attention to the process-type frequency.

### **3. Methodology**

#### **Research Design**

A comparative corpus-based research method has been used in the present study to explore the transitivity patterns in British and Pakistani election news reporting. It concentrates on the quantitative aspect of the paper which is based on the corpus-based analysis. The primary aim of the design was to locate, categorise, quantify and compare the existence of the transitivity process in selected election news reports from the two newspapers, namely, the Guardian and Dawn. The comparative design was appropriate, as the study focused on comparing two newspapers with distinct linguistic and political backgrounds, in terms of their grammatical process types, to represent election-related actors, events and actions.

#### **Data Sources**

The newspapers used for the present study were two Internet-based English-language newspapers. The Guardian was chosen as a representative source of British/native English election news reporting and Dawn was chosen as a representative source of Pakistani/non-native English election news reporting. Both newspapers are well-known online news sources that frequently publish political and election-related news. Due to the study's scope, this research was restricted to news reports in English from the web during the 2024 election period. The corpus comprised of 1388 clauses from Dawn and 2297 clauses from the Guardian.

#### **Sampling Technique**

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Purposive sampling technique was used in the study. This technique was suitable as the researchers chose only those news reports that were relevant to the research objectives and directly related to the election coverage to be included. The reports chosen were related to electoral events, political parties, party leaders, campaign processes, party statements, polling processes, electoral symbols, reactions of the public, institutional processes. Reports did not include opinion pieces or non-English text, nor did they include reports not directly related to elections. The use of purposive sampling enabled the selection of a corpus that directly represented the discourse of British and Pakistani election news.

### **Data Analysis Procedure**

The analysis was carried out in several steps. The first step was to identify and pull the two election-related news reports from Dawn and the Guardian, and form two separate corpora. Second, all the texts were cleaned, irrelevant information like advertisement, captions, navigation text was removed and unimportant webpage information was omitted. Thirdly, the texts were segmented into clauses since the clause is the primary unit of transitivity analysis. Fourth, the verbal group of each clause was analyzed and its role in the clause determined. Fifth, each clause was classified according to one of 6 categories of processes: material, mental, relational, verbal, behavioural, and existential. The classification was done according to the significance and the grammatical role of the process in every clause.

The frequencies for all process types were then determined for each individual classification for Dawn and the Guardian. The frequency counts were then compared to see which type of process was dominant in each newspaper and the distribution of the process types in the two corpora. The corpus organization, the concordance checking and the identification of linguistic patterns were implemented with the help of the tool AntConc, while a careful classification of the transitivity processes was conducted using Halliday and Matthiessen's (2013) model. This procedure follows the mixed methodology, which introduces that the data were analyzed with the objective of discovering the transitivity processes, and to calculate their frequencies in the British and Pakistani Election discourse.

## **4. Data Analysis and Results**

### **4.1 Corpus Distribution**

The corpus of the present study consisted of election news reports collected from two online English-language newspapers: Dawn (Pakistan) and the Guardian (United Kingdom). The data were analyzed at clause level because transitivity analysis is mainly concerned with how experience is represented through processes within clauses. The final corpus contained 1388 clauses from Dawn and 2297 clauses from the Guardian.

**Table 1: Corpus Distribution of Election News Reports**

Newspaper	Country	Type of Reporting	Total Clauses
Dawn	Pakistan	Pakistani / non-native English news reporting	1388
The Guardian	United Kingdom	British / native English news reporting	2297
Total			3685

Table 1 shows the total number of clauses analyzed from both newspapers. The corpus contains a total of 3685 clauses, out of which 1388 clauses were taken from Dawn and 2297 clauses were taken from Guardian. The larger number of clauses in Guardian shows that the British election news corpus contained more textual material than the Pakistani corpus. However, both corpora were sufficient for identifying and comparing transitivity patterns in election news reporting. Since the analysis was conducted at clause level, each clause was examined according to its process type. This distribution provides the basis for the quantitative comparison between British and Pakistani election news discourse.

#### 4.2 Overall Frequency of Transitivity Processes

The quantitative results show that all six process types occurred in both newspapers: material, mental, relational, verbal, behavioural, and existential. However, their frequencies were not equal. Material processes appeared as the most frequent process type in both Dawn and the Guardian. Relational, mental, and verbal processes also appeared with noticeable frequency, while behavioural and existential processes occurred less frequently. The following table reports the following frequencies for Pakistani and British news stories:

**Table 2: Frequencies and Percentages of Transitivity Patterns in Pakistani and British News Stories**

Process Type	Dawn Frequency	Dawn %	The Guardian Frequency	The Guardian %
Material	731	52.67%	1005	43.75%
Mental	201	14.48%	379	16.50%
Relational	229	16.50%	557	24.25%
Verbal	197	14.19%	267	11.62%
Behavioural	12	0.86%	28	1.22%
Existential	18	1.30%	61	2.66%
Total	1388	100%	2297	100%

Table 2 shows that material processes are the dominant transitivity pattern in both newspapers. In Dawn, material processes occurred 731 times, making up 52.67% of the Pakistani corpus. In the Guardian, material processes occurred 1005 times, making up 43.75% of the British corpus. This indicates that both newspapers mainly represented election news through actions, events, political activities, and electoral developments. The second most frequent process in Dawn was the relational process, with 229 occurrences (16.50%), followed by mental processes with 201 occurrences (14.48%) and verbal processes with 197 occurrences (14.19%). In the Guardian, relational processes formed the second-largest category with 557 occurrences (24.25%), followed by mental processes with 379 occurrences (16.50%) and verbal processes with 267 occurrences (11.62%). Behavioural and existential processes were the least frequent in both newspapers.

### 4.3 Combined Frequency of Transitivity Processes

To understand the general pattern of the complete corpus, the frequencies from both newspapers were combined. This helped identify which process types were most common across the total dataset of 3685 clauses.

**Table 3: Combined Frequency of Transitivity Processes in the Corpus**

Process Type	Combined Frequency	Percentage of Total Corpus
Material	1736	47.11%
Relational	786	21.33%
Mental	580	15.74%
Verbal	464	12.59%
Existential	79	2.14%
Behavioural	40	1.09%
Total	3685	100%

Table 3 presents the combined transitivity pattern of the complete corpus. The most frequent process type was the material process, with 1736 occurrences, representing 47.11% of the total corpus. This confirms that election news reporting in both newspapers is largely action-oriented. The second most frequent category was the relational process, with 786 occurrences or 21.33%, showing that election news also depends strongly on identification, description, classification, and status-based representation. Mental processes appeared 580 times, making up 15.74% of the total data, while verbal processes occurred 464 times, representing 12.59%. Existential and behavioural processes were much less frequent, with 79 and 40 occurrences respectively. Overall, the complete corpus shows a clear hierarchy: material processes dominate, followed by relational, mental, verbal, existential, and behavioural processes.

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#### 4.4 Material Processes

Material processes appeared as the most dominant category in both newspapers. In Dawn, material processes occurred 731 times, while in the Guardian, they occurred 1005 times.

**Table 4: Material Process Distribution**

Newspaper	Frequency	Percentage
Dawn	731	52.67%
The Guardian	1005	43.75%
Total	1736	47.11% of complete corpus

Table 4 shows that material processes were the most frequent process type in both Pakistani and British election news reports. The percentage of material processes was higher in Dawn at 52.67%, compared with 43.75% in the Guardian. This means that Dawn relied more heavily on action-based clauses in its election reporting. The high frequency of material processes in both newspapers indicates that election news is mainly represented through political actions, campaign events, institutional moves, electoral activities, and outcomes. In Dawn, more than half of the clauses were material, showing a strong focus on events and actions. In the Guardian, material processes were also dominant, but their percentage was lower because relational and mental processes were used more frequently than in Dawn.

#### 4.5 Mental Processes

Mental processes were used to represent perception, thinking, belief, expectation, emotion, and political evaluation. In Dawn, mental processes occurred 201 times, while in the Guardian, it occurred 379 times.

**Table 5: Mental Process Distribution**

Newspaper	Frequency	Percentage
Dawn	201	14.48%
The Guardian	379	16.50%
Total	580	15.74% of complete corpus

Table 5 shows that mental processes were more frequent in the Guardian than in Dawn. In the British corpus, mental processes formed 16.50%, while in the Pakistani corpus they formed 14.48%. The difference is not very large, but it shows that the Guardian gave slightly more space to perception, belief, thought, expectation, and evaluation. Mental processes helped represent how political actors, voters, institutions, and the public were shown as thinking, expecting, believing, or responding mentally to election developments. In both newspapers, mental processes were less frequent than material and relational processes, which shows that

election reporting was more focused on actions and descriptions than inner feelings or cognition.

#### 4.6 Relational Processes

Relational processes were used to describe identity, status, possession, classification, and attributes. In Dawn, relational processes occurred 229 times, while in the Guardian, they occurred 557 times.

**Table 6: Relational Process Distribution**

Newspaper	Frequency	Percentage
Dawn	229	16.50%
The Guardian	557	24.25%
Total	786	21.33% of complete corpus

Table 6 shows a clear difference between the two newspapers in the use of relational processes. The Guardian used relational processes 557 times, making up 24.25% of its corpus. In comparison, Dawn used relational processes 229 times, making up 16.50% of its corpus. This means relational processes were much more prominent in British election news reporting. The higher percentage in the Guardian suggests a stronger focus on identifying, describing, classifying, and explaining political actors, parties, results, electoral conditions, and institutional positions. In Dawn, relational processes were also the second most frequent category, but their use was less dominant than in the Guardian. This shows that both newspapers used relational processes to construct political identities and electoral conditions, but the Guardian used them more extensively.

#### 4.7 Verbal Processes

Verbal processes represented acts of saying, claiming, reporting, announcing, warning, telling, and responding. In Dawn, verbal processes occurred 197 times, while in the Guardian, they occurred 267 times.

**Table 7: Verbal Process Distribution**

Newspaper	Frequency	Percentage
Dawn	197	14.19%
The Guardian	267	11.62%
Total	464	12.59% of complete corpus

Table 7 shows that verbal processes appeared in both newspapers, but their proportional use was higher in Dawn. Although the Guardian had a higher raw frequency of 267, this

represented only 11.62% of its larger corpus. In Dawn, verbal processes occurred 197 times, representing 14.19% of the Pakistani corpus. This indicates that Dawn used a relatively larger share of saying-related clauses. Verbal processes are important in election news because they present political statements, claims, speeches, accusations, party announcements, and reported comments. The results show that both newspapers relied on reported speech, but Dawn gave more space to verbal representation than the Guardian proportionally.

#### 4.8 Behavioural Processes

Behavioural processes were the least frequent process type in both newspapers. In Dawn, behavioural processes occurred 12 times, while in the Guardian, they occurred 28 times.

**Table 8: Behavioural Process Distribution**

Newspaper	Frequency	Percentage
Dawn	12	0.86%
The Guardian	28	1.22%
Total	40	1.09% of complete corpus

Table 8 shows that behavioural processes had the lowest frequency in the complete corpus. In Dawn, behavioural processes accounted for only 0.86%, while in the Guardian, they accounted for 1.22%. The total number of behavioural processes across both newspapers was only 40, or 1.09% of the complete corpus. This indicates that election news reporting in both newspapers rarely focused on physiological or psychological behaviours. Instead, the news reports gave much more attention to actions, states, descriptions, thoughts, and verbal statements. The low occurrence of behavioural processes confirms that this process type played only a minor role in the selected election news discourse.

#### 4.9 Existential Processes

Existential processes were used to indicate the existence or occurrence of electoral situations, political conditions, or public issues. In Dawn, existential processes occurred 18 times, while in the Guardian, they occurred 61 times.

**Table 9: Existential Process Distribution**

Newspaper	Frequency	Percentage
Dawn	18	1.30%
The Guardian	61	2.66%
Total	79	2.14% of complete corpus

Table 9 shows that existential processes were less frequent than material, relational, mental, and verbal processes, but they occurred more often than behavioural processes in the overall corpus. The Guardian used existential processes 61 times, accounting for 2.66% of its corpus, while Dawn used them 18 times, accounting for 1.30% of its corpus. This shows that existential clauses were more common in British election news reporting. Existential processes helped present political issues, electoral conditions, and campaign-related situations as existing realities. However, their overall frequency remained low, indicating that both newspapers preferred more direct process types, such as material, relational, mental, and verbal clauses.

#### 4.10 Comparative Ranking of Process Types

The ranking of process types in both newspapers shows the order of dominance within each corpus.

**Table 10: Ranking of Transitivity Processes in Dawn and the Guardian**

Rank	Dawn	Frequency	The Guardian	Frequency
1	Material	731	Material	1005
2	Relational	229	Relational	557
3	Mental	201	Mental	379
4	Verbal	197	Verbal	267
5	Existential	18	Existential	61
6	Behavioural	12	Behavioural	28

Table 10 shows that both newspapers followed the same general ranking of process types. In both Dawn and the Guardian, material processes ranked first, relational processes ranked second, mental processes ranked third, verbal processes ranked fourth, existential processes ranked fifth, and behavioural processes ranked sixth. This similarity indicates that both newspapers shared a common pattern in election reporting: they mainly represented elections through action, description, cognition, reported speech, existence, and behaviour, in that order. However, the percentage distribution was different. Dawn depended more strongly on material and verbal processes, while the Guardian showed a higher proportion of relational, mental, and existential processes. Therefore, while the ranking pattern was similar, the proportional use of process types differed between the Pakistani and British corpora.

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The results show that material processes were dominant in both newspapers, with 731 occurrences in Dawn and 1005 occurrences in the Guardian. Relational processes were the second most frequent category in both newspapers, but they were much more frequent in the Guardian than in Dawn. Mental processes appeared as the third most frequent category in both corpora, while verbal processes ranked fourth. Behavioral and existential processes appeared with low frequency in both newspapers. Overall, the results show that election news reporting in both Dawn and the Guardian was mainly action-oriented, but the Guardian used a comparatively higher proportion of relational, mental, and existential clauses, whereas Dawn used a comparatively higher proportion of material and verbal clauses.

## 5. Discussion

The present study reveals that the reporting of the election news in Dawn and the Guardian is heavily materialistic. This means that news reports of Pakistani and British elections largely focus on politics in terms of action, event, decision, movement, contest and electoral development. Material processes were mentioned 731 times in Dawn, and 1005 times in the Guardian. This dominance indicates that election news discourse is more action oriented since news reports of elections tend to be in the form of campaign activities, party strategies, political decisions, voting procedures, institutional responses and election results. These findings are consistent with the results of recent studies related to political discourse and material processes. Alhumsa and Alsaedi (2023) and Simanjuntak et al. (2024) obtained similar results in their studies on political discourse with transitivity approach.

This is one of the most significant findings of this study: Dawn was found to be using a higher proportion of material processes compared to the Guardian. In the Guardian, material processes accounted for 43.75% of the corpus, while in Dawn, they accounted for 52.67% of the corpus. This shows that the elections and political action were given more direct representation in the reporting of Pakistani election. This is a trend which could be a characteristic of Pakistan's election scenario, where the media coverage tends to be politically charged with emphasis on political rallies, party conflicts, institutional activities, legal proceedings, and salient political events. Recent research on the political media discourse in Pakistan also reveals that material process plays an important role in the formation of political agency, public identity and the media representation of political actors (Fakhar et al., 2025).

The second most prevalent process type for both newspapers was relational. As one already noted, however, relational processes were much more common in the Guardian than in Dawn. In the Guardian, the relational processes occur 557 times (24.25% of the British corpus) and in the Pakistani corpus, Dawn, the occurrences of the relational processes are 229 (16.50% of the Pakistani corpus). This implies that British election news coverage paid more attention to describing, classifying, identifying and explaining political actors, institutions and election conditions. The relational processes are useful for newspapers in defining political actors,

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situations, and the positioning of electoral realities in the newspaper. This confirms that an analysis of SFL can help to identify the role played by grammar in the development of social and political sense in the media discourse (Alameda-Hernández & Jiménez-Briones, 2025).

The third most common category in both newspapers was mental processes. The Guardian was used more often than Dawn, with a total of 379 mental processes compared to 201 in Dawn. This demonstrates that there are more clauses in the election reporting in British English that refer to thinking, believing, expecting, considering and perceiving. These processes are significant as they involve “conscious” political actors, voters, parties or institutions that assess or act in response to a political situation. In political rhetoric, mental processes can influence readers' interpretation of political intent, public expectation and mental or emotional reaction. The recent research on political speech and media discourse validates the idea that mental processes contribute to uncover the expression of attitudes, perceptions and ideology through grammar (Mohsan et al., 2024; Alqahtani, 2024).

Election reportage is also highly reliant on statements, claims, promises, warnings, announcements, and reported speech, which was why verbal processes were also important in both newspapers. The Guardian had more absolute "verbal" processes, but Dawn had more relative "verbal" processes. This indicates that Dawn's election news coverage was relatively more reliant on reporting from statements and political voices. One important aspect of verbal processes in the context of media discourse is that newspapers can convey claims to the political actors without being directly involved in them. This is particularly applicable in politically charged situations, where the reportage of speech may contain more than one perspective or accusation, or institutional positions and which do not necessarily reflect the stance of the newspaper.

The least frequently found processes in both corpora were behavioural and existential processes. Behavioural processes were only rarely mentioned, indicating that there was not a great deal of emphasis placed on the physiological or psychological behaviour in relation to election news reporting. Existential processes were also restricted, but were used more often by the Guardian than Dawn. This indicates a preference for more explicit representations, particularly material clauses and relational clauses and mental clauses and verbal clauses by both newspapers. In general, the results validate that both newspapers ranked the same process types, but that they had distinct proportions of each type. The Guardian employed more relational, mental and existential structures, whereas Dawn was more action- and speech-oriented. The differences in these are indication of the value of transitivity pattern in comparing the process of building election news discourse in newspapers from different political and cultural backgrounds (Zakizadeh, 2024; Zhang et al., 2022).

## **6. Conclusion**

This study concludes that the most prevalent process type in both newspapers is material process. It demonstrates that election news coverage, both in Pakistan and Britain, is

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primarily action oriented. The political actors, parties, institutions and events were represented broadly by actions, happenings, campaign activities, decision making and outcomes. But Dawn has a higher share of material processes, indicating that the news reporting of elections in Pakistan was more action-driven.

The second most common process type in both newspapers was relational processes, although the number of such processes was significantly higher in the Guardian. This suggests that information about description, classification, identity, status and explanation was reported more in British election news. The third place was taken by mental processes in the newspapers, reflecting the importance of perception, belief, expectation and evaluation in the discourse of elections. The importance of the reported speech, political statement, claim, and announcement, was shown in verbal processes, which ranked fourth. Behavioural and existential processes were observed in very low numbers, and thus not a significant part of the news corpus in the selected election.

The overall conclusion of the study is that the newspapers had a similar ranking of the process types, with less similarity in the proportionate use of the process types. The relationship, mental and existential processes were used more by the Guardian, while material and material processes were more frequent in the writing of Dawn. These differences illustrate the differences in the linguistic construction of election news in a Pakistani media environment and a British media environment. The study confirms that transitivity analysis is a helpful tool in analyzing how newspapers create public realities and political events using grammatical choices and how they represent political actors.

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