A Systemic Functional Linguistic Approach to University Course Guides

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ABSTRACT

This article discusses the way the course guide construes content through language. It is one among many genres the university produces as it competes for student intake that provides student revenue. Yet, the course guide is crucial as it explains the university's faculties and programmes to students. It presents the university's portrayal of its central service to students, namely education. This shapes students' perception and decision about their future studies. Hence, the course guide is vital for the university's marketing endeavours. To understand the way the course guide uses language, this article studies 8 course guides from 5 faculties with a sum of 35 undergraduate programmes from UCSI University, Malaysia. Analysis was qualitatively conducted using Systemic Functional Linguistics, focusing on Process Type and Participants for Transitivity (Ideational Metafunction) and Topical Theme for Theme (Textual Metafunction). For Transitivity, the course guide prefers to portray the faculty, programme and students as Participants using Material and Mental Processes. For Theme, the course guide prefers to emphasize the faculty, programme, students and field as topics using Topical Theme. Hence, the course guide construes its discourse through both producer and consumers of tertiary education. This presents a view of UCSI University as striving to serve its students. It shows that the university is dynamic in providing education so that students are prepared for employment. This article also recommends some changes for the course guide to make it more convincing for readers.

Keywords: Systemic functional linguistics, transitivity, theme, course guide, university

INTRODUCTION

Malaysian Prime Minister, Najib Razak, launched an initiative termed 1Malaysia in 2009. 1Malaysia has eight aspirations and one of them is education. 1Malaysia believes that citizens should have an interest to acquire knowledge throughout their lives. This is important for individual development and national development because citizens with little knowledge cannot propel the knowledge-based economy that Malaysia requires. 1Malaysia should motivate

providers of education to mould students who can use and expand knowledge to benefit the country. Here, universities play a role since they train students for employment in industries that bolster the economy. This includes UCSI University. It is a private university centred in Kuala Lumpur that balances business with education because UCSI receives no government aid but UCSI provides many academic programmes. Hence, UCSI's ability to register students and to graduate students is important for its survival. While students are unlikely to leave UCSI after registering, it is a hard task to register students because there is a lot of competition among the private tertiary education institutions in Malaysia, besides public tertiary education institutions. This requires UCSI to market its programmes through various medium to ensure student intake. Among such medium is the course guide.

Students consult the course guide to know more about their programmes. Hence, the course guide is one among many genres that influences their decision to study in UCSI. In this vein, this article studies the way course guides use language to present UCSI's faculties and programmes. They are print media texts that also use colours and images but this article only analyzes language qualitatively through the approach of Systemic Functional Linguistics, studying the Ideational Metafunction through Transitivity and the Textual Metafunction through Theme. This is in line with critical discourse analysis that aims to clarify the opacity in language (Blommaert & Bulcaen,

2000, p. 448) to decipher the way the course guide conveys meaning to readers through language to influence them. Understanding language use provides a way to understand a genre. This means identifying the linguistic choices and justifying the linguistic choices the course guide employs to present UCSI's faculties and programmes. Yet, these choices need not be formulaic because genres, composed of language, are not static (Bhatia, 1993). Change should be proposed to the language in the course guide so that it better embodies UCSI's core concerns of business endorsing the faculties, and education, describing the programmes - as this article does. This research is useful for universities in marketing their programmes, as marketization is now a trend in tertiary education (Fairclough, 1993).

UCSI UNIVERSITY

UCSI's precursor was the Canadian Institute of Computer Studies in 1986 that became Sedaya College in 1989. It expanded to become Sedaya International College in 2001 and University College Sedaya International in 2003. Finally, in 2008, it became UCSI University. This promotion in status matched the increase in the programmes at UCSI's main campus in Kuala Lumpur and branch campuses in Terengganu and Sarawak, as future expansion is designed and executed, notably a new campus in Negeri Sembilan. Today, UCSI hosts 11 faculties, 2 academies and 2 centres that provide tertiary education from A-Level to PhD in diverse fields ranging from arts to sciences. UCSI thrives in

diversity with employees and students of many ethnicities, nationalities and religions.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Fairclough (1993) studied the prospectus and programme material from Lancaster University, and concluded that these genres are hybrid genres because their language is informational and promotional. This showed the trend of marketization of discourse in tertiary education. It refers to universities functioning as if they are businesses that have to gain and retain customers (Fairclough, 1993, p. 143). This is ingrained in UCSI as it is a business for profit that provides tertiary education. Fairclough (1993, p. 137) writes that a diachronic study should be the focus of analysis to enable understanding and changing discourse but this article believes that a synchronic study is also useful to comprehend one discourse from other parts of the globe as tertiary education becomes globalized. Whatever its locus, the analysis should result in improving a genre. Clearly, such analysis serves marketization and this need not be considered negative because an improved course guide will persuade students to study in UCSI, bringing student revenue.

Fairclough's (1993) marketization of discourse in tertiary education inspired Askehave (2007) and Hajibah (2008), who studied student prospectuses. Askehave (2007) and Hajibah (2008) concluded that marketization was a given trend in universities. This means that universities around the globe marketing themselves is normal in tertiary education, as they adopt the logic of capitalism to be profitable by supplying students' demand for tertiary education. Both Askehave (2007) and Hajibah (2008) provided the generic structure for prospectuses but Askehave's (2007) generic structure had 6 compulsory moves while Hajibah's (2008) generic structure had 10 compulsory moves, implying possible cultural features in generic structures. While the generic structure provides a template for writing, it cannot elucidate the way each move uses language to convey its function. Hence, this article does not provide the generic structure for the course guide. Being from UCSI, all course guides also share the same generic structure.

To overcome the generic structure's constraint, Askehave (2007) and Hajibah (2008) did a linguistic analysis. Askehave (2007) used Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), studying Transitivity (Ideational Metafunction) and Mood (Interpersonal Metafunction) for the university and students, while Hajibah (2008) studied the language used to present the universities. Both researchers also studied the non-linguistic aspects of prospectuses, Askehave (2007) for pictures and Hajibah (2008) for emblems, showing that image is also influenced by marketization. Such research showed that the language in the prospectus is informational and promotional. This article does not argue with this claim but it is now crucial to study the choices in language that make it informational and promotional. This adds to research on genres produced by universities, but unlike the prospectus, the course guide is more specific because

it focuses on the faculty and programme and contains little information about other aspects, unlike a prospectus. Besides, this article complements Hajibah's (2008) research on public universities in Malaysia by studying a private university in Malaysia.

METHODOLOGY

UCSI depends on revenue from students for its development. Thus, having facilities, lecturers and programmes is not enough because they have to be marketed so students know about them. Much marketing is done through electronic media but print media remains popular. This includes the course guide. Its pages consist of primary content about the faculties and programmes and two pages of secondary content about the university. All course guides have the same generic structure because they are produced by UCSI.

This article chose the course guide because it is an authorized source about the faculties and programmes, showing UCSI's portrayal of itself. Hence, the course guide construes UCSI's faculties and programmes as *the* choice for students. The course guide is available in campus and student marketing events that exposes it to its external audience of (prospective) students and other parties interested in their education, notably parents. Also, there are no known ethical and legal obstacles to study the course guide.

Thus, this research question is forwarded: How is language used to construe content about faculties and programmes in course guides from UCSI? To answer this research question, a corpus of course guides was produced. Note that only course guides for undergraduate programmes were chosen since these programmes receive the majority of registration that brings the most income

TABLE 1
Contents of Corpus of Course Guides

Faculty	Number of Pages	Number of Programmes	
		Bachelor	Diploma
Applied Sciences (FAS)	12	2	0
Engineering, Architecture and Built Environment-School of Architecture and Built Environment (FOEABE)	12	2	2
Engineering, Architecture and Built Environment-School of Engineering (FOEABE)	24	7	1
Management and Information Technology-School of Information Technology (FOMIT)	12	3	1
Management and Information Technology-School of Management (FOMIT)	20	5	2
Medical Sciences (FMS)	16	2	1
Music, Social Sciences and Design-School of Music and School of Design (FOMSSD)	16	4	0
Music, Social Sciences and Design-School of Social Sciences (FOMSSD)	16	3	0

to USCI, making marketing undergraduate programmes vital for UCSI. The corpus had 8 course guides from 5 faculties to represent the language in course guides. This meant that redundancy was achieved for the corpus, as well as manageability. Its details are condensed in Table 1.

Not the whole corpus was examined; only the sections about the faculties and programmes were chosen because these sections cover almost the entire course guide. These sections were analyzed using Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). Being a theory of language, SFL can be used to analyze language from any genre, from annual report (Thomas, 1997) to election manifesto (Idris, 2009) to textbook (Oteíza & Pinto, 2008), among others. SFL considers language as a resource to make meaning (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). This meaning is the result of choices, not always conscious (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004) that users make. Their choices articulate certain ideas through a language's Ideational, Interpersonal and Textual Metafunctions.

The Ideational Metafunction is divided into Experiential Mode that construes experience in clauses and Logical Mode that construes relations with clauses (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 61). The Interpersonal Metafunction enacts social relations among sender and receiver through clauses (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 61). The Textual Metafunction links the Ideational Metafunction and the Interpersonal Metafunction in clauses and with clauses to enable constructing texts (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 30).

Transitivity from Ideational Metafunction and Theme from Textual Metafunction were chosen because they influenced the representation and organization of content respectively, about the faculties and the programmes. This requires studying the clause because the three metafunctions are integrated in it (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). The Ideational Metafunction, consisting of Mood, was excluded because all the course guide's clauses were declarative clauses. This means that the clause's Subject is Theme (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 163) most of the time, making studying Mood redundant.

To enable the analysis, the corpus was divided into clauses. Then, the clauses had their Transitivity and Theme separately labelled. From here, the frequency of the components of Transitivity and Theme was counted. Any Systemic Functional Linguistic analysis reveals a lot of details about a text. As such, this article presents data most relevant to answer the research question since concern for space disables a complete presentation of data.

DISCUSSION

Transitivity

Transitivity belongs to SFL's Ideational Metafunction. It construes a domain of experience through Process Type, Participant and Circumstance (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). Process Type is realized by a verbal group while Participant is often realized by a nominal group and Circumstance is often realized by an adverbial group or a

prepositional phrase. There are three major Process Types, namely Material, Mental and Relational and three minor Process Types that exist at the border of the three major Process Types, namely Behavioural, Existential and Verbal (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 171). Each Process Type has its respective Participant but Circumstance is shared by all Process Types. Studying Transitivity is more detailed if Participant is included. This is because Participant is directly involved in Process Type but Circumstance just augments the information about Process Type and Participant, making Circumstance indirectly involved in Transitivity (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004).

The choice of Process Type and Participant provides an understanding of the way UCSI represents its faculties and programmes. Tables 2 and 3 tabulate the frequency of Process Type for the faculties and programmes. Material, Mental and Relational Attributive Process Types are common Process Types for the course guide. Such consistency across the corpus indicates that these Process Types are integral to the course guide genre.

The choice of verbal group as Process Type is not always denotative but connotative as the faculty and programme are involved

in positive events, at times with a customer-oriented focus:

> …it **has distinguished** itself…
> (FAS)
> The School of Nursing **offers**…
> (FMS)

Material Process amounts to 44.4% for the faculties and 41.7% for the programmes. It is the most frequent Process Type, showing that the course guide is mostly concerned with some sort of action. Such action is mostly performed by the faculty or programme because they enable students' education. They are given the responsibility of educating students, explaining their function as Actor, as in:

> …**the faculty** provides its scholars…
> (FOEABE)
> **This programme** provides students…
> (FOMIT)

Students are common as Actor because the course guide shows the things they do while studying in UCSI. This shows students being involved in their education instead of being pawns directed by the faculty of programme. Such involvement is related to their academic or personal abilities, for example:

TABLE 2
Process Types for sections about Faculties

Process Type	FAS	FOEABE	FOMIT	FMS	FOMSSD	Corpus
Material	35.3%	43.8%	48.3%	53.8%	38.9%	44.4%
Relational Attributive	52.9%	37.5%	31.0%	30.8%	38.9%	36.1%
Mental	17.6%	6.3%	20.7%	7.8%	22.2%	14.8%
Relational Identifying	-	6.3%	-	7.7%	-	2.8%
Verbal	5.9%	6.3%	-	-	-	1.9%

TABLE 3
Process Types for sections about Programmes

Process Type	FAS	FOEABE	FOMIT	FMS	FOMSSD	Corpus
Material	45.5%	41.5%	47.1%	41.9%	34.3%	41.7%
Mental	18.2%	33.6%	23.1%	25.8%	37.4%	30.3%
Relational Attributive	30.3%	22.1%	24.8%	32.6%	24.2%	24.4%
Relational Identifying	6.1%	2.8%	3.3%	-	2.0%	2.8%
Verbal	-	-	1.7%	-	2.0%	0.8%

> **Students** will work…
> (FOMIT)
> …**students** develop…
> (FOMSSD)

Most clauses have an explicit Actor but some clauses have an implicit Actor by being receptive clauses (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 182). These clauses focus on the Goal because the result of acting is more important than the entity acting:

> **The Faculty of Applied Sciences** was formed in 1999…
> (FAS)
> **The Psychology degree programme** is constructed…
> (FOMSSD)

Mental Process amounts to 14.8% for the faculties and 30.3% for the programmes, using verbal groups of cognition and desideration, as education is considered to be a 'rational' quest. The faculty and programme are positioned as Sensers although they cannot feel, perceive, think or want (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 201). Yet, the course guide endows them with consciousness so that the faculty and programme have a sense of self. This portrays the faculty and programme not as a set of inert criteria but as entities with an interest in students. This makes the faculty and programme focus on students, as if student satisfaction guides their plans. Moreover, Mental Process influences Material Process since it implies the things the faculty and programme do are the result of prior planning, showing their commitment to their duties. For example:

> Its philosophy **envisages**…
> (FOEABE)
> The School also **aims**…
> (FMS)

Note that the programme uses Mental Process more than the faculty. This is probably because teaching and learning happen through the programme, so the programme depends more on Mental Process to explain this, while the faculty just provides the programme. The choice of verbal groups for Mental Process can also show that the faculty and programmes are confident in their abilities in educating students:

The Faculty of Applied Sciences **prides** itself…
(FAS)
The psychology degree programme **seeks** to develop…
(FOMSSD)

Students appear as Senser very frequently. Generalizing them enables the course guide to cover students from varied fields and positioning them as students and not potential students shows that UCSI 'knows' or can predict student's expectations from tertiary education, and UCSI subsequently satisfies these expectations. With students as Senser, the course guide shows students' cognition or perception improving because of studying in UCSI, with help from the faculty or programme:

Students **learn**…
(FOEABE)
…they [students] **have studied**…
(FOMSSD)

Relational Attributive Process amounts to 36.1% for the faculties and 24.4% for the programmes. Its use is inevitable because the course guide describes the faculty and programme. To avoid monotony, the faculty and programme have been made active through Material Process and Mental Process. Relational Attributive Process provides more details about the character and component of the faculty and programme. The faculty or programme is the Carrier while their character or component is the Attribute. This enables the course guide to make claims about studying in UCSI, simultaneously judging the faculty and programme positively. Hence, both information and promotion can be found in Attribute. For example:

UCSI University's Faculty of Management and Information Technology has **the highest academic standards**…
(FOMIT)
…this programme offers **a broad view of logistics**…
(FOMIT)

Students become Carrier if the course guide describes them, either before or after studying in UCSI. This contrast shows that CSI transforms students by providing them abilities required for employment. Yet, students are infrequent as Carrier but frequent as Actor and Senser. Using Material Process and Mental Process, instead of Relational Attributive Process represents students as dynamic, being interested in their education. Clearly, this is UCSI's optimistic portrayal of its students.

Among the Participants, the faculty, programme and students frequently co-construct the experience of studying in UCSI. Yet, the course guide's audience is often students and it acknowledges students through its discourse. Its discourse portrays UCSI as centred on its students, its customers. This is done explicitly if students become the Participant but this is also done implicitly if the faculty and programme are the Participants. Thus, the faculty and programme are presented in terms of their value to students' education or employment, as in:

> The MD curriculum is based on the globally acclaimed…
> (FMS)
> This programme covers recent advances…
> (FOMIT)

To make a comparison, the course guide construes UCSI through non-human Participants but not students, who are human Participants. Bear in mind that the faculty and programme function because of individuals in them. Yet, the faculty and programme are always Participants although it is academics that are at the heart of both the faculty and programme. This possibly lets the course guide to appear objective because non-human Participants are not expected to be biased about the faculty or programme. This also lets UCSI to communicate with one voice, that of solidarity among its constituent entities. Choosing the faculty or programme as the Participant portrays a group identity in which all individuals work in unison to provide the university experience to students.

Other Participants are related to the domain of education and employment. By having Participants about education and employment, the course guide links these domains, making tertiary education a preparation for employment. It posits UCSI training students with abilities the industry requires and this training is to be found at UCSI through its faculties and programmes. Thus, education is positioned not as an end in itself but to produce graduates ready for employment.

Theme

Theme belongs to SFL's Textual Metafunction. It is the clause's point of departure that extends until and includes the first element with an experiential function while everything after it becomes Rheme (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). There are three types of Theme, namely; Topical, Interpersonal and Textual. Topical Theme is either unmarked or marked. The Subject is Theme in unmarked Topical Theme while the Adjunct or the Complement is Theme in marked Topical Theme (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 73). Interpersonal Theme shows the writer's stance towards the clause's information, while Textual Theme connects a clause with other clauses (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 83).

There are 26 Textual Themes for the faculties and 126 Textual Themes for the programmes. This is often conjunction that continues the discourse. There is no Interpersonal Theme for the faculties and programmes. This shows that the course guide tries to be objective by avoiding evaluations about the faculty and programme to make the course guide a source of apparently unbiased information. Yet, this is only true for Theme because Rheme contains evaluations about the faculty and programme. It expands the Theme and contains evaluations about the Theme as it describes the faculty and programme, blending information with promotion. There is no need for Interpersonal Theme as evaluations are available in the Rheme. Hence, the course guide's evaluations are not signalled. Having thematized evaluations

through Interpersonal Theme shows that the course guide is clearly endorsing UCSI. This perhaps reduces reliability since the course guide is merely expected to inform about and not to promote the faculty and programme.

Topical Theme is used abundantly. Tables 4 and 5 tabulate the frequency of the topics as Topical Theme for the faculties and programmes. This provides the topical distribution for the course guide.

There is little use of marked Topical Theme; the faculties using 4 and the programmes using 18, meaning that there is little condition set to understand the clause's information, making it seem direct. This enables most Subjects to be mapped onto Theme through unmarked Topical Theme that indicates the clause's topic to readers. Using unmarked Topical Theme provides a topic that the Rheme expands. This guides reading because a topic in Theme is explained through Rheme. Yet, these topics are not always directly Topical Theme because anaphora enables them to be indirectly Topical Theme. Through anaphora, a topic can transcend clause boundaries, maintaining its position as Theme for more than one clause, so it

provides more information about the faculty or programme, as in:

> **This programme** encompasses... **It** will enable…
> (FOMIT)
> **The Diploma in Nursing** is… **It** prepares…
> (FMS)

Topical Theme about the faculty is the main topic for the faculties (46.5%), while Topical Theme about the programme is the main topic for the programmes (44.5%). This is because the course guide is meant to describe the faculty and programme and satisfy students' expectations about the course guide's content. Yet, there are other topics as Topical Theme. They are related to the main topic and show the way the faculty and programme transfer knowledge to students to make them ready for employment. This makes the faculty and programme relevant to the world beyond UCSI.

This is seen from Topical Theme about students (19.7% for faculties and 21.2% for programmes). Students are used as Topical Theme while the benefits they gain during the programme are Rheme. Here, the course

TABLE 4
Topical Theme for sections about Faculties

Topic	FAS	FOEABE	FOMIT	FMS	FOMSSD	Corpus
Faculty	33.3%	100%	44.4%	36.8%	38.5%	46.5%
Student	16.7%	-	16.7%	31.6%	23.1%	19.7%
Programme	50%	-	5.6%	21.1%	7.7%	16.9%
Teaching	-	-	11.1%	-	15.4%	5.6%
Activities	-	-	-	5.3%	15.4%	4.2%
Others	-	-	22.2%	5.3%	-	7.0%

TABLE 5
Topical Theme for sections about Programmes

Topic	FAS	FOEABE	FOMIT	FMS	FOMSSD	Corpus
Programme	23%	34.2%	61.3%	63.2%	50.9%	44.5%
Student	27%	17.5%	22.6%	10.5%	28.3%	21.2%
Field	50%	20.2%	16.1%	-	13.2%	19.3%
Professional	-	17.5%	-	5.3%	-	7.7%
Department/School	-	5.3%	-	15.8%	3.8%	4.0%
Others	-	5.3%	-	5.3%	3.8%	3.3%

guide is inclusive because students become a part of its discourse. With students as Topical Theme, the perspective shifts to students' experience of the faculties and programmes. This shows a need to make the faculty and programme relevant to students so that they know the benefits of studying in UCSI. For example:

Students learn about…
(FOEABE)
Students gain exposure to...
(FOMSSD)

Topical Theme about teaching and activities are minimal for the faculties. It provides extra information about the faculty and can be considered more promotional than informational because the faculty has to be distinguished from competitors, not through standard academic criteria but through extra-value criteria.

Topical Theme about field is 19.3% of Topical Theme for the programmes. This often starts the sections about a programme because it gives a general picture of an industry before Topical Theme about programme posits the programme as satisfying industry demands, as in:

Biotechnology is… **It** is widely regarded… **Biotechnology** is… **The 3-year programme** was designed…
(FAS)
Interior Architecture explores… **interior spaces** are inhabited… **The programme** embarks…
(FOEABE)

Field as Topical Theme shows that the programme satisfies industry demand, explaining its value to industry. Yet, this Topical Theme is an inanimate description of an industry. Thus, to humanize it, professional as Topical Theme is used as an animate description of an industry. This Topical Theme is only available in FOEABE and FMS since these faculties produce engineers, doctors and nurses, reflecting society's regard for these careers with prestige. FOEABE and FMS can use professional as Topical Theme since their graduates have more specialized occupational options than those from other faculties.

The topical distribution shows a consistency of Topical Theme across the corpus, as shown in Tables 4 and 5. The field of each faculty and programme is not

the same but their description in the course guide refers to the same topics since all course guides want to interest students to study in UCSI. Hence, the genre influences the choice of Topical Theme across the varied fields of study. Yet, the order of Topical Theme is not the same for the faculties and programmes. This is because the course guide's writing is done by many people, each with their own writing styles, alluding to personal or editorial choices in sequencing the topics for the course guide.

Suggestions

Any analysis should not only expose language use but also improve language use as well, as advocated by critical discourse analysis (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000, p. 449). Thus, some changes are proposed for the course guide. Minor language mistakes must be corrected as they portray an unprofessional image of UCSI. For sections about the faculty and programme, using human Participants could humanize the faculty and programme. These sections could include academics or their achievements in teaching and research. It is commendable to include students as Participant but they could be referred to directly, using 'you' instead of 'students' to personalize the course guide, as they are its frequent readers.

For sections about the faculty, Topical Theme about programme should be avoided as there are separate sections about the programme. Instead, sections about the faculty should be about its reputation. It is also advisable to have some Topical Themes about the faculty's non-academic activities as tertiary education is expected to develop students' academic and non-academic abilities. Moreover, it is useful to vary the clause's Mood. Instead of continuous declarative clauses, the course guide could use interrogative clauses and declarative clauses, through the familiar question and answer pair to engage readers, as well as to enable them to skim the course guide for pertinent content. These changes could improve the course guide. Being aware of the course guide's discourse might aid in presenting UCSI favourably. This is useful for academics and professionals as they can use Transitivity and Theme in their teaching and writing to produce more reader-oriented course guides.

Yet, this does not exhaust research for the course guide. Future research could use a larger corpus as well as study other aspects. Of interest are UCSI's opinions about its faculties and programmes that Appraisal (Martin & Rose, 2003) can tease out. Also, a multisemiotic analysis (O'Halloran, 2008) of colours and images with language that provides a deeper understanding of the way meaning is conveyed in the course guide could follow this article. These ideas could be extended to course guides from other tertiary education institutions, public or private, Malaysian or non-Malaysian. Such research undoubtedly serves marketization by helping universities position themselves better in the media. They can increase their income as they interest more students to pursue tertiary education. Such income can then be used to improve services to benefit students.

CONCLUSION

The research question posed was: How is language used to construe content about faculties and programmes in the course guides from UCSI? This was answered through an analysis of Transitivity and Theme from Systemic Functional Linguistics for 8 course guides from 5 faculties, with a total of 35 undergraduate programmes. For Transitivity, the frequency shows that the course guide prefers Material, Mental and Relational Attributive Process Types and the faculty, programme and students as Participants.

Mental Process makes the faculty and programme conscious of their academic ability and responsibility that come to fruition through Material Process, while Relational Attributive Process describes the faculty and the programme. The faculty and programme seem dynamic through the dominance of Material and Mental Processes. This posits UCSI as taking an active interest in providing quality tertiary education. Besides, students are frequent Participants of Material and Mental Processes. This shows that the course guide is aware of their expectations and presents studying in UCSI as beneficial for students.

For Theme, Textual Theme brings cohesion while no Interpersonal Theme is used and the frequency for Topical Theme shows a preference for the faculty, programme, students and field as topics. Such Topical Theme is then explained in the Rheme. The consistent use of these components of Transitivity and Theme across the corpus indicates their generic feature for

the course guide. This complements the generic structure as certain moves might be prone to use certain components of Transitivity and Theme.

The choice of Transitivity and Theme shows that information and promotion about the faculties and the programmes is construed by both producer - UCSI and consumer - students. This confirms the marketization of discourse in the tertiary education (Fairclough, 1993) for the course guide. Its use of language is motivated to market UCSI as serving students explicitly and industry implicitly, as UCSI provides education useful for employment. It also indicates that studying in UCSI gives students the abilities they need to pursue their careers. Student revenue is gained if such claims convince students and they register in UCSI. Moreover, it points to a change in the role of the university as tertiary education is now meant to prepare students for specific employment. Hence, the course guide's discourse cannot be one-sided but includes students to show them that studying in UCSI is beneficial not only on university's own merit but also on the employability of its students. It provides students with the knowledge that can be used to develop Malaysia, in line with 1Malaysia's aspirations.

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