

A Comparative Analysis of Institutional Identities in a Corpus of English and Persian News Interviews¹

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Abstract

Institutional identity as a concept in CDA is a field of study that deals with the identities that individuals in institutions obtain, one that merits deep research attention. News interviews as institutional instances can be analyzed based on the impersonal structures because interviewees see themselves as part of the institution and they may not take responsibility when they encounter problematic topics. In this study, Benwell and Stokoe's (2006) concepts of institutional identities and impersonal structures (i.e., existential processes, nominalizations, passivizations, and relational processes) and Halliday's (2004) transitivity system were used. Results indicated that relational processes and nominalizations have the highest and the lowest frequencies in English news interviews and in Persian news interviews; relational processes and existential processes have the highest and lowest frequencies, respectively.

Keywords: Institutional Identity; Impersonal Structures; Nominalizations; Passivizations; Relational Processes; Existential Processes

1. Introduction

Institutional identities are emerging qualities of interactions. Institutions are constructions that place power connections within them. As a matter of fact, institutional identities are the undertakings of these available connections. News interviews are examples of institutions that are allied to power and are frequently identified to work for the issues of the powerful groups (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006). Institutions have characteristics that make them distinct from other kinds of ordinary

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talks. The ways in which the institutions force the interviewee to answer are affected by the questions that are being asked. In problematic topics, the interviewee may refuse to answer such questions by resorting to impersonal structures (existential processes, nominalizations, passivizations, and relational processes; van Dijk, 1988).

Existential processes, as the first variable, illustrate what is found and what is in existence (Lam, Matthiessen, & Teruya, 2010). The second variable, nominalization, can be defined as “a process by which nonnominal structural elements are made to function as nominal elements” (Ravelli, Taverniers, & Vandenberg, 2003, p. 65). Furthermore, the use of agentless passivization, as the third variable, mystifies the doer and puts more emphasis on the receiver. Finally, relational processes, as the fourth variable, are “the transitivity of being, having and being at” (Lam et al., 2010, p. 178).

Numerous theoretical studies on the concept of institutional identity as an area of interest in CDA have been carried out. Generally, a number of empirical studies on the frequencies of impersonal structures as manifestations of institutional identities have been carried out; however, the present study was an attempt to shed some light from a different perspective. That is, research contains some empirical studies on the concepts of institutional identities and impersonal structures (existential processes, nominalizations, passivizations, and relational processes) in different institutional settings. In addition, the existing studies have rarely compared or contrasted institutional identities across different languages. In other words, there is an increasing need for investigation into different institutional settings like newspapers and across different languages for better understanding and possibly improving the theory.

Some studies have been carried out on the concept of institutional identity. Nevertheless, the present study addressed institutional identity as revealed by impersonal structures across the English and Persian languages. Furthermore, nominalization, as an element of impersonal structures, could be a fruitful concept for scrutiny. Also, in pedagogic contexts, foreign language learners can learn to make their writing impersonal and shift the attention to the action itself, rather than the doer, hence avoiding the responsibility of the actions and improving the quality of their writing.

Within the theoretical frameworks of Benwell and Stokoe (2006) and Halliday and Matthiessen (2004), the objectives of the present study included (1) analyzing the frequencies of impersonal structures (existential processes, nominalizations, passivizations, and relational processes) in English and Persian news interviews as instances of institutions that imbed power connections within them and making the interviewees resort to impersonal structures while encountering

problematics topics, (2) seeing whether the English and Persian politicians use impersonal structures in impersonalizing their responses identically or differently, and (3) analyzing nominalized structures and their congruent equivalences as acts of making the speech and writing impersonalized.

The significance of the present study may be magnified by a closer examination of impersonal structures in news interviews as instances of institutions and the relatively peculiar comparisons and contrasts of English and Persian. In other words, by understanding the ways of making responses impersonalized like interviewees do, English language learners become acquainted with these concepts and can cautiously use them as natives do. Furthermore, reading critically, which is the essence of reading efficiently, aids learners to find the hidden ideologies that the writer tries to convey by using impersonal structures and nominalizations. One element of this category makes learners use nominal structures, rather than nonnominal structures in their writing. Therefore, English language learners become more skillful and critical by utilizing these structures.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Institutions

According to van Dijk (1998), institutions or organizations have a social togetherness with ideologies. Ideologies create group conditions and institutions arrange social practices and actions. Institutions may cooperate shared goals, allocate supplies and other circumstances and impediments, or enforce leaders. Mass media is an institution. It is perceived as organizing and producing facts, knowledge, and entertainment. On the other hand, it comprises the most complicated institution for the public utterances and confrontation of ideologies. It may, therefore, be surmised as a representation of ideologies. In this process, the media plays a core role. The procedures, actors, incidents, and institutions in news-making are prejudiced toward the creation of a restricted set of governing, noble, and elite ideologies, norms, and beliefs.

Conditions of ideological regulations are massively due to mass media or to the groups and institutions—like those participating in politics that have superior access to media. Although there may be conflicts, negotiations, arguments, and diverse ideas, they should be located within the bounds of acceptable ideological variations (van Dijk, 1998).

Mayr (2008) believes that institutions are shaped by discourse and they, in turn, have the ability to generate and force discourse. In this way, they have a significant restraint over the determination of our typical experiences of the world

and the way we categorize the world. They, therefore, have power to promote distinct kinds of identities to adjust their own motives.

Institutions are in quest of validating their own concerns and entities through discourse and altering or recontextualizing social procedures. In addition, institutions have a crucial role in constructing reality and naturalizing ideologies that are in accordance with their own interests. This view of discourse, as establishing social reality, does not inevitably lead to the view that discourse is all there, but it assumes that discourse has an influential role in defining reality, building criterion of perceiving that people appeal to in social implementations (Mayr, 2008).

2.2. Institutional Identities

Incipient attributes of talk-in-interaction are institutinality or institutional identities. They are frameworks that insert power connections within them. As a matter of fact, institutional identity is an undertaking of these available connections. Institutions affiliate with physical instructions or organizational surroundings like hospitals, schools, or law courts. Institutions obey the concerns of influential groups, (e.g., the government and the media) and they are innately allied to power (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006).

Heritage and Greatbatch (1989) remark that the institutional feature of interaction is included in its form, most remarkably in its turn-taking systems that deviate significantly from the way in which turn-taking is achieved in ordinary conversation. In other words, institutional talk that comprises binary pairs (i.e., representative and client) gives the representative the priority to ask questions. Here, we can also distinguish ordinary talk from institutional talk, characterizing ordinary talk with the unpredictable turn patterns and speaking turns. On the other hand, from the commencement of institutional talk, these issues are arranged differently, that is, they are precisely and straightforwardly prearranged.

Another peculiarity of institutional talk can be found in the implements used by participants that show a specific affiliation with the institution. For instance, making use of impersonal structures that make the interaction factual, objective, and impersonal (Clayman & Heritage, 2004). These impersonal structures delineate power and role connections through “manipulations of agency at the grammatical level” (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006, p. 111).

According to Benwell and Stokoe (2006), identity alignment in institutional settings and scientific texts depends on neutral facts, attempting for objectivity by applying passives, existential processes, and nominalizations. Other examples of identity alignment include setting specific vocabularies and jargons that are used in distinct institutions.

2.3. News Interviews

According to Clayman and Heritage (2004), news interviews are not similar to ordinary conversations from multiple points of views. Interviews are predetermined for the advantage of overhearing audiences; communication is nearly formal and impersonal and ought to be finished within a settled time limit. The news interview seems to contain a noticeable spot in the scene of broadcast journalism.

The typical news interview includes a distinguishing collection of members, topics, and interactional structures. The interviewer is realized as an expert journalist and the interviewees have some connection with current news incidents—either as government authorities or as educated experts. The audiences have no dynamic part in the debate. The interaction regularly concentrates on matters identified with recent news occurrences, and it is very formal in nature and is overlooked basically through questions and replies (Clayman & Heritage, 2004).

News interviewers are required to follow certain essential models of interviewing features. Most critically, they are compelled to be objective in their work. Objectivity is an umbrella idea that includes factuality, stability between conflicting perspectives, and impartiality in presentation (Clayman & Heritage, 2004).

Furthermore, news interviews are instances of institutions. Institutions have features that make them distinct from other forms of ordinary talk, that is, asymmetrical speaking rights, lexical choice, and grammar (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006). The way that an institution makes the interviewee reply, generates his or her identity. The answers are affected by the questions that are being asked. In problematic and challenging topics, the interviewee may avoid answering such questions and, hence, accepting the responsibility. Therefore, they may make use of impersonal structures (van Dijk, 1988).

2.4. Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL)

The most prominent theory of language in CDA that is socially established and notified is systemic functional linguistics (SFL). SFL yields insights into the techniques in which language is socially realized and embodied in a culture which, consequently, becomes beneficial for its utilization in CDA (Mayr, 2008).

SFL is a theory of language that deals with the choices that are made available by the grammar of language. Whereas SFL represents the syntactic structure of language, it puts the functions of language as focal (i.e., what language does and how it does it), as compared to more structural approaches, which locate the components of language and their combinations as focal (www.isfla.org/semantics/definitions).

According to Halliday and Matthiessen (1999), the elements of a natural language are functionally varied: It includes an array of three discrete modes of meaning making (i.e., ideational, interpersonal, and textual). These functions of linguistic systems are labeled as *metafunctions*. The ideational metafunction deals with interpreting experience (Martin, 1992). The interpersonal metafunction deals with imposing interpersonal connections, with the selection and allocation of speech roles, with the mediation of perspectives, and so on. It is the origin of communication (Halliday & Matthiessen, 1999). The textual metafunction is an empowering one; it deals with coordinating ideational and interpersonal meaning as discourse—as contextualized and shared meaning (Halliday & Matthiessen, 1999).

Moreover, one of the most influential perceptions of experience is that it includes motion of incidents. This motion of incidents is divided into quanta of variations by the grammar of the clause. Each quantum of variation is represented as a *figure*—“a figure of happening, doing, sensing, saying, being, or having” (Halliday & Matthiessen, 1999, p. 150). All figures are made up of a process developing through time and of participants being straightly included in this process in some way.

All such figures are classified in the grammar of the clause. Clause is a means of contemplation, of establishing order in the unlimited difference and motion of incidents. The grammatical system by which this is obtained is that of *transitivity*. The transitivity system interprets the world of experience into an achievable set of *process types*. Each process type supplies its own variety for interpreting a special realm of experience as a figure of a specific type (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004).

2.5. Existential Clauses

According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2004), existential clauses show that something exists or occurs. Existential clauses are not widespread in discourse and 3%-4% of all the process types are existential. They provide particular and specific help to the diverse kinds of texts. The characteristics of existence are shown by *there* and the individuals are prepared for something to be introduced and new information to be indicated. They are similar to relational clauses from the aspect of having the verb *be*. A discrete circumstantial element of time or place is available in existential clauses:

1. *There was an old person of Dover.*
2. *There was a big, sort of platform, rock platform.*
3. *There is a fine collection of Celtic crosses.*

“The entity or event which is being said to exist is labelled, simply, existent. In principle, there can *exist* any kind of phenomenon that can be construed as a *thing*:

person, object” (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 258). The existent may be a being that exists and it could be physical or intellectual (Lam et al., 2010).

2.6. Relational Clauses

“Relational clauses serve to characterize and to identify” (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 210). They are inspected from above, enquiring the kind of experience they take to mean. “In a relational clause, things, acts and facts are not construed as phenomenon of consciousness” (p. 211). In a relational clause, things and events are interpreted as a participant that is arranged with another relational participant that comes from the realm of being. This is not being in the perception of having existence. In relational clauses there are two elements to the being. “Something is said to *be* something else, a relationship of being is set between two entities” (p. 211). It implies that in relational clauses there are always two built-in participants—two *be-ers*:

1. *The reason he went Syria is not primarily.*
2. *Al Qaeda in Yemen has had plots consistently.*
3. *This is why we have ramped up our aviation security.*

2.7. Grammatical Metaphor

Grammatical metaphor has originated and expanded within the theory of SFL. It is a term introduced as a kind of metaphor accompanying the more frequently realized lexical metaphor and two kinds are differentiated: ideational and interpersonal. Taverniers (2003) provides a description of grammatical metaphor as: (1) it can be a lexical mechanism, that is, a feature which belongs to the lexis or vocabulary of a language; (2) or it can be a grammatical phenomenon, that is, a special resource of the grammar of a language.

Conventionally, metaphor is considered as “variation in the use of words, that is, variation in meaning. In this sense, a lexeme with a certain literal meaning can have metaphorical, transferred uses or meanings” (Ravelli et al., 2003, p. 6).

This is a belief from below, taking the words as the beginning point and stating something about the meanings that these words accomplish. This belief can be accompanied by a stance from above. Here, the beginning point is a special meaning and the applicable question is the following: What are the various ways in which this meaning can be manifested or perceived? (Ravelli et al., 2003).

According to Martin (1999), in the process of grammatical metaphor, structures demand more than one level of explanation. In order to display the metaphorical nature of an incongruent utterance, it could be contrasted to a

corresponding congruent realization. The following comparisons demonstrate phenomena of this kind:

- *Ford was unhappy so Trillian left.* (congruent)
- *Ford's unhappiness led to Trillian's departure.* (metaphorical)
- *Zaphod was delighted so Trillian celebrated.* (congruent)
- *Zaphod's delight resulted in Trillian's celebration.* (metaphorical)

Various configurations are compared as alternative realizations of the same meaning. Their variation is analyzed in terms of their functional structures, and they can be placed on a scale of *congruency*—the metaphorical variants are termed *incongruent*. “The notion of congruency is characterized in terms of markedness: congruent expressions are the unmarked, typical realizations of the given meaning” (Ravelli et al., 2003, p. 13).

2.8. Nominalization

The systemic functional notion on nominalization is directly bound up with the concept of grammatical metaphor. Nominalization can be interpreted as the procedure that nonnominal structural units are formed to operate as nominal units. According to Thompson (2013), nominalization is “the use of a nominal form to express a process meaning” (p. 238). In other words, nominalization is the derivation of a nominal form from a verbal form. Nominalization is shown as a significant source for the formation of metaphorical as opposed to typical or congruent lexicogrammatical manifestations of semantic classifications. *The Cast's brilliant acting* as a nominalized structure, for example, is regarded as the metaphorical equivalent of the clause *The Cast acted brilliantly* (Halliday & Matthiessen, 1999).

Most notable about the systemic-functional approach to nominalization and in accordance to systemic concerns are the major roles that it appoints to the nominalization's paradigmatic characteristics. Taking into consideration an example, *Tom's cleaning of the kitchen* and *Tom's cleaning the kitchen* can be stated to agnate with *Tom cleans the kitchen*. It is demonstrated that, however, their semantic and syntactic characteristics are dissimilar notably, which can only be revealed by examining the nominalization's paradigmatic connections more directly. “Each nominalization should be viewed as the metaphorical counterpart of not one congruent agnate, but of a network of agnate structures, clausal and other” (Ravelli et al., 2003, p. 68).

It could also be stated that metaphorical relationship extends over a continuum. Symmetry is not the feature of metaphorical relationships. There exists a precise directionality to it, that is, one end of the continuum is congruent and the other is metaphorical (Halliday & Matthiessen, 1999). Basically, more congruent wordings

are much easier to be dealt with by young language users that are more regular. But the more technical knowledge develops, the more writers and readers are supposed to cope with uncommonsense ways of talking and relating the world. Moreover, this will result in condensation and complexity of the text (Thompson, 2013).

2.9. Passivization

Passivization and its opposite, activation, are the terms that originated in the works of Chomsky. Agentless passivization overlooks the actor and is discerned as an inevitable indicative of reader confusion. Passivization has no inherent meaning and meaning is derived from the context. As created by each hearer or reader, meaning is always the outcome of specific readers' deductive processes (www.grammar.about.com).

2.10. Research Questions

The following research questions were posed so as to fulfill the objectives of this study:

1. To what extent are English and Persian news interviews different in terms of existential processes?
2. To what extent are English and Persian news interviews different in terms of nominalization?
3. To what extent are English and Persian news interviews different in terms of passivization?
4. To what extent are English and Persian news interviews different in terms of relational processes?

3. Methodology

3.1. Design of the Study

The design of the present study was a qualitative research that employed naturally occurring data by using impersonal structures, that is, existential processes, nominalizations, passivizations, and relational processes as manifestations of institutional identities that each interviewee derives. Moreover, nominalization, as a grammatical metaphor, and equivalent congruent wordings were examined in both the English and Persian news interviews. Benwell and Stokoe's model of analysis (2006) for impersonal structures, and Halliday's SFL model of text analysis (2004) as the criterion for nominalization as grammatical metaphor, were drawn on.

3.2. Context of the Study

This study did not incorporate human subjects due to its nature. Twenty English and Persian news interviews comprised the corpus of this research. Owing to the fact that authentic and native texts have prior significance in the analysis of texts, these news interviews were picked out from the websites of English news interviews that were held on TV channels like *CBS*, *PBS*, *CNN*, *ABC*, *MSNBC*, *BBC*, and *NPR*, with English political figures like Ms. Clinton and Mr. Obama. The Persian news interviews were picked out from newspapers like *Khabar Online*, *Sharg*, *Arman*, *Aseman*, and *Tose Golestan*, with Iranian political figures like Mr. Rafsanjani, Mr. Ahmadinezhad, Mr. Larijani, and Mr. Zarif.

They all belong to the time span between 2010 and 2015. Some 10 English news interviews and 10 Persian news interviews that were approximately close in terms of length were investigated for the impersonal structures (i.e., existential processes, nominalizations, passivizations, and relational processes) and their frequencies as manifestations of institutional identities. The justification for selecting news interviews is that interviewees regard themselves as a member of the institution that they belong to, so they try to utilize impersonal structures when they face problematic topics and this leads to institutional identity that each interviewee achieves. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (1999) and *Farhang Sadri Afshar* (2002) were used for the English and Persian interviews in order to find the different parts of speech in analyzing nominalization as grammatical metaphors. The reason for the use of dictionary was to figure out the words that had both nouns and verbs as their parts of speech and the transformation of these verbs into nouns, that is, verbal forms to nominal forms.

3.3. Data Collection Procedure

To identify the instances of impersonal structures in the news interviews, the researchers took the English news interviews' transcriptions from TV channel websites. In order for the transcriptions to be reliable, we examined the oral news interviews and checked against the present transcriptions. The Persian news interviews were selected from Persian newspaper websites. Afterwards, we read both the English and Persian news interviews meticulously. After deriving and verifying impersonal structures (i.e., existential processes, nominalizations, agentless passivizations, and relational processes), congruent wordings of nominalizations were established. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (1999) and *Farhang Sadri Afshar* (2002) were used for the English and Persian interviews in order to find the different parts of speech in analyzing nominalization as grammatical metaphor. It is worth noting that the heads of the noun phrases were distinguished in both languages based on their own grammar in the process of identifying nominalizations.

4. Findings

4.1. Responding to Research Question # 1

The first research question aimed to analyze the existential processes that are available in both English and Persian news interviews. According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2004), existential processes show that something exists or occurs. The texts of the 10 English and 10 Persian news interviews were analyzed. There were vast and varied about the number of the existential processes, but because they were lengthy, only five instances were selected from each language in order to be studied more deeply and meticulously. Figure 1 demonstrates the results:

1. *There is not any doubt in my mind.*
2. *There are a lot of other moving parts to this.*
3. *There may be a perspective.*
4. *There have been seven other committees in the Congress.*
5. *There had been breaches.*

۶. اگر یک جایی خستگی و ناراحتی بوده.

۷. خود خواهی بیشتر است و تحجر هم در آنجا است.

۸. در کتابخانه مجلس به اندازه کافی سند بوده.

۹. همه ی آزادی ها خیلی و بیشتر از آنچه فکر میکنید وجود دارد.

۱۰. مصداق های زیادی وجود دارد.

The following sentences are the English translations of the Persian examples:

11. *If there have been tiredness and disturbance.*
12. *There is more selfishness and petrification exists there, too.*
13. *There had been enough documents in the parliament.*
14. *All the freedoms exist more than what you think.*
15. *There are a lot of referents.*

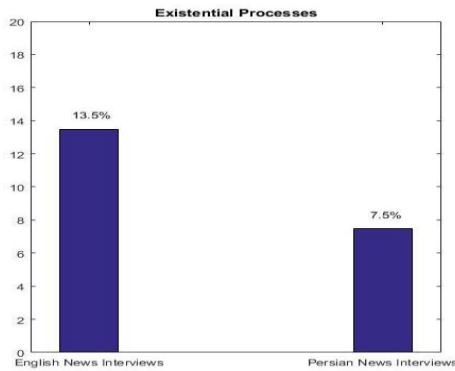


Figure 1. Total Existential Processes in English and Persian News Interviews

Existential processes demonstrate that something exists and is present (Lam et al., 2010). Existential processes, as an element of the transitivity system, are analyzed based on meaning. Therefore, both the English and Persian news interviews were examined based on the meanings that convey the concept of existence. As shown in Figure 1, the English news interviews with the existential processes of 13.5% outruned the Persian news interviews with the existential processes of 7.5%. In fact, the English news interviews relied on the existential structure more than the Persian news interviews.

4.2. Responding to Research Question # 2

The second research question pertains to the concept of nominalization as an element of impersonal structure. This study incorporated only the transformation of verbs into nouns that function. Nominalization was examined in both the English and Persian news interviews. The instances were identified and their congruent equivalences were written. It is worth noting that congruent equivalences are relative and depend on context. For the sake of analysis, the heads of the noun phrases were identified and studied. Afterwards, *Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary* (1999) and *Farhang Sadri Afshar* (2002) were utilized in the English and Persian news interviews, respectively, for figuring out the parts of speech of words to see if they were transformed from verbs into nouns. There are different and diverse kinds of nominalizations and they are complex and complicated, but the aim of the present study was to examine the ones that impersonalize—forms that show the shift from verbal units into nominal units are opted for.

Table 1. *CBS Interview With Hillary Clinton*

Metaphorical	Congruent
1. Many people view what this initial <u>decision</u> might suggest.	They have <u>decided</u> it initially.
2. The <u>elections</u> have gone too long.	They <u>elected</u> .
3. General McChrystal's <u>assessment</u> was that it is deteriorating.	General McChrystal <u>assessed</u> .
4. Our <u>challenge</u> will be in working for the future.	We have <u>challenged</u> them.
5. No more <u>attacks</u> come out of Afghanistan. They don't <u>attack</u> .	

Table 1 demonstrates the samples of nominalizations and their congruent equivalences in *CBS* interview with Hillary Clinton on October 6th, 2009. Five instances were picked out from this interview.

Table 2. *Sharg Interview With Zarif (1)*

Congruent	Metaphorical
آنها ما را نگران کرده اند.	۶. نگرانی ها افزایش پیدا میکند.
مردم بی اعتماد شده اند.	۷. این بی اعتمادی که در کشور وجود دارد.
ما مذاکره کرده ایم.	۸. مذاکرات باعث ثبات خواهد شد.
آنها اینگونه فکر می کنند.	۹. این افکار همچنان ادامه دارد.
ما بر برجام صفر نمره خواهیم داد.	۱۰. نمره ی برجام صفر خواهد شد.

The following sentences in Table 3 are the English translations of the Persian examples in Table 2:

Table 3. *Sharg Interview With Zarif (2)*

Metaphorical	Congruent
6. <u>Disturbance</u> increases.	They have <u>disturbed</u> us.
7. This <u>distrust</u> that exists in the country.	People <u>distrust</u> them.
8. The <u>negotiations</u> will cause stability.	We <u>negotiated</u> .
9. These <u>thoughts</u> still continue.	They <u>think</u> in such a way.
10. The <u>grade</u> of JCPOA will be zero.	We <u>will grade</u> JCPOA zero.

Table 3 demonstrates samples of nominalizations and their congruent equivalences in *Sharg* interview with Zarif on November 11th, 2015. Five instances were picked out from this interview.

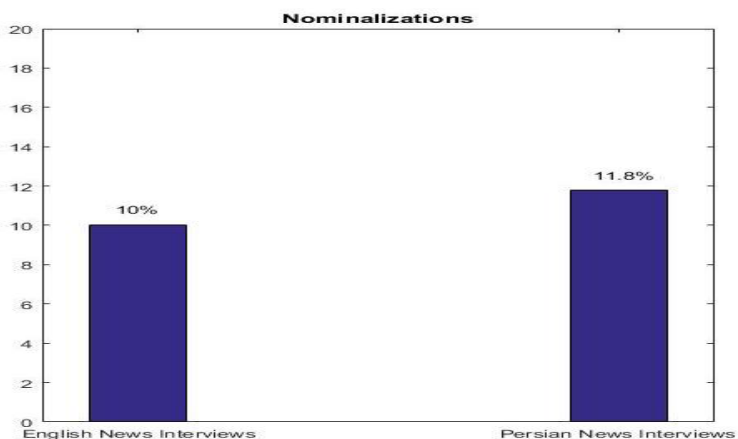


Figure 2. Nominalizations in the English and Persian News Interviews

It was demonstrated that the Persian news interviews with nominalization instances of 11.8% outran English news interviews with nominalization instances of 10%. In this study, nominalization was analyzed as an act which verbal processes are transformed into nominal units that function as the performer. As stated earlier, nominalization results in condensation, reduction, and loss. The doer of the process is the major loss. The doer can be pointed out by different types of attributes. Also, clauses basically need a subject but, in nominalizations, attributes are not required. The justification for nominalization to be in accordance with the ideology of science and of formal/academic writing is its impersonalized processes (Thompson, 2013).

4.3. Responding to Research Question # 3

The third research question dealt with the concept of agentless passivization, whereby the performer of the action is not stated. The figures below demonstrate examples and the results. Due to the lengthy list of passivizations, only five instances were chosen from each language:

1. This region of the world is often referred to Afghanistan region.
2. It is embedded in a region that includes Iran.
3. Al Qaeda is degraded.
4. We were attacked on 9/11.
5. A society that may not want to be transformed.

۶. بخشی اصلاح و بخشی قوی تر شد.

۷. همان وقت که مجلس تشکیل شد.

۸. شروطی برای رهبری دیده شده.

۹. ساختار خوب تنظیم شده.

۱۰. تصویر ناصحیحی که از ایشان ساخته شده.

The following sentences are the English translations of the Persian examples above:

6. Some part is reformed and some is strengthened.
7. The time that the parliament was formed.
8. Some conditions were set for the leadership.
9. The structure is well formulated.
10. The false image that is made of him.

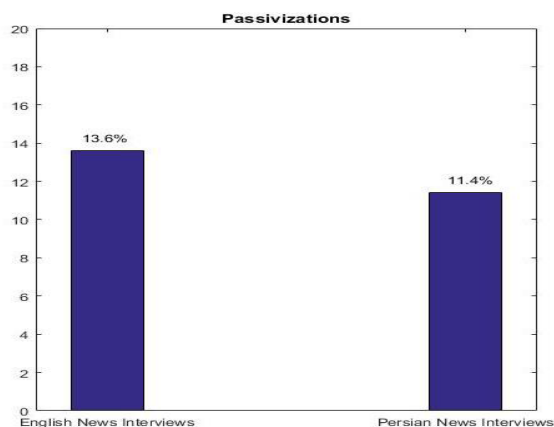


Figure 3. Passivizations in the English and Persian News Interviews

Figure 3 shows that the English news interviews included more passivizations than the Persian news interviews (i.e., the English news interviews contained 13.6% and the Persian news interviews contained 11.4%).

4.4. Responding to Research Question # 4

The fourth research question examined relational processes in both the English and Persian news interviews. The recognition of relational processes depends on the meaning that is driven from context. Due to the lengthy list of relational processes, only five relational processes were exemplified from each sample and the following tables and figures demonstrate the results:

1. India is one of the most critical areas.
2. The president is right.
3. Pakistan is who are now in a fight against those who threaten them.

4. It is still alive and well.
5. What their ultimate goals are may not be clear.

۶. اما نگرانی بزرگشان این است.

۷. حرف من با همه این است.

۸. در مجلس که بودم سعی می کردم هر دو را مراعات کنم.

۹. آخرین روز اسم نویسی بود.

۱۰. محکومیت او این بود.

The following sentences are the English translations of the Persian examples above:

6. But this is their biggest anxiety.
7. This is my word with everyone.
8. When I was in parliament, I tried to observe both.
9. It was the last enrolment.
10. This was his condemnation.

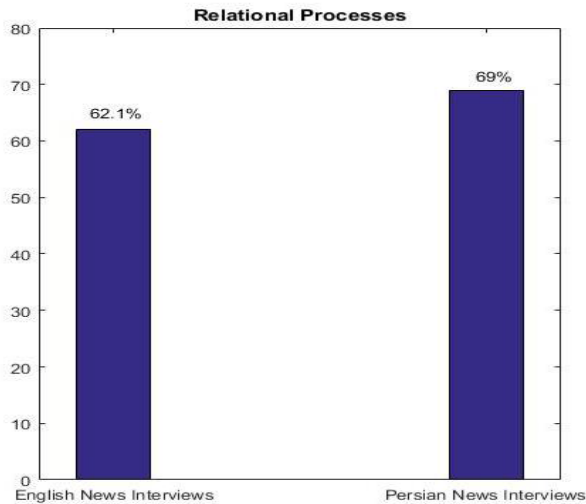


Figure 4. Relational Processes in the English and Persian News Interviews

Figure 4 indicates that the Persian news interviews include more relational processes than the English news interviews. The Persian news interviews consisted of 69% and the English news interviews consisted 62.1% of frequencies. Relational processes show experience as being, rather than doing or sensing (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). It is worth mentioning that the relational processes in the Persian

news interviews were examined by Persian verbs (e.g., بودن، داشتن) and this was distinguished by taking their meanings into account.

Generally, comparing the English and Persian news interviews was based on impersonal structures that are manifestations of institutional identities. In the English news interviews, the frequencies are as below:

1. Relational Processes
2. Existential Processes
3. Passivizations
4. Nominalizations

In the Persian news interviews, the frequencies are as below:

1. Relational Processes
2. Nominalizations
3. Passivizations
4. Existential Processes

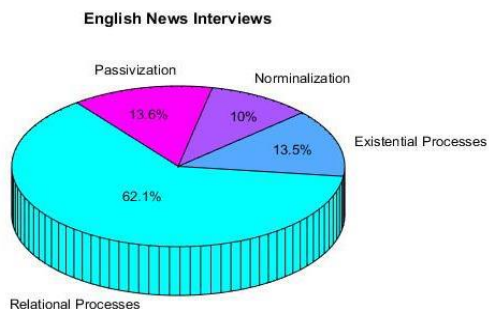


Figure 5. Impersonal Structures in the English News Interviews

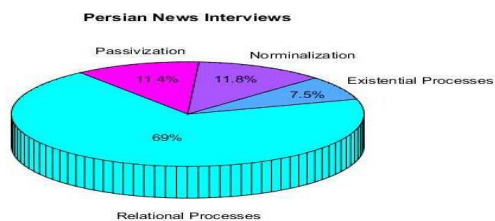


Figure 6. Impersonal Structures in Persian News Interviews

5. Discussion and Conclusion

5.1. Discussion

The first research question addressed the existential process as an element of impersonal structures in both the English and Persian news interviews. According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2004), existential processes are about existence and are identified by *be* to exist or happen. Only one participant exists in these clauses: the existent. The need for subject is shown by *there*, but *there* does not have experiential meaning. In other words, it functions in a way that refrains from the potentiality of a second participant in a clause. It could also be stated that the representation of the existent, as included in any goings-on, is given up by the speaker and this renunciation is signaled explicitly by peculiar structural patterns. Furthermore, other features regarding the existent can be given only in circumstantial elements that are less primary to the meaning of the clause (Thompson, 2013).

The findings of this study are in line with Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) because it is stated that existential processes are not prevalent in discourse and 3% or 4% of all the process types are existential processes. As specified by the gathered data, the existential processes in the English news interviews were the second prevailing element and, in the Persian news interviews, they were the fourth. The frequencies were 13.5% and 7.5%, respectively. These existential processes in both news interviews were not in connection with each other and, for Persian, it was the lowest. Therefore, Persian political figures resort to existential processes as a way of impersonalizing their speech and evading the problematic topics the least among other three elements of nominalizations, passivizations, and relational processes.

The second research question addressed nominalization as an element of impersonal structures, that is, by excluding the human doer. According to Halliday and Matthiessen (1999), nominalization is defined as “turning processes and qualities into things” (p. 314). This impersonalization extends over the verbs that present processes. Indications of conclusions and revelations of insights are features of nominalized meanings without necessarily mentioning the human being who is, in fact, construing the meaning (Thompson, 2013). The nominalized structural units’ congruent patterns were also shown. According to the data gathered, nominalization in the English news interviews was the fourth prevalent element and, in the Persian news interviews, it was the second. The frequencies were 10% and 11.8% in the English and Persian news interviews, respectively. As a matter of fact, English political figures resort to nominalization as a way of impersonalizing their speech and avoiding problematic topics the least among other three elements of existential

processes, passivizations and relational processes. In problematic topics, the interviewee tries not to take responsibility and wants to extend it over the institution that he or she belongs to. Consequently, the interviewee impersonalizes his or her speech (i.e., nominalization is one way of impersonalizing) and this drives the person to get the identity of the institution that he or she comes from.

The third research question dealt with passivization as an element of impersonal structures in both the English and Persian news interviews. Agentless passivization was considered and the performer of the action was absent. In the English and Persian news interviews, the frequencies were 13.6% and 11.4%, respectively. It was concluded that agentless passivization was the third prevailing element in both the English and Persian news interviews, and both English and Persian political figures fall back on agentless passivization as a way of avoiding problematic topics. Nominalizations, agentless passivizations, relational processes, and existential processes are ways of impersonalizing when interviewees encounter problematic topics that they do not want to take responsibility.

The fourth research question dealt with relational processes as an element of impersonal structures in both the English and Persian news interviews. According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2004, p. 210), “relational clauses serve to characterize and identify” that show experience by being. A relationship exists between two elements and the process functions to reveal that a relationship exists. Only one participant exists in the real world; however, there are two elements on each side of the relationship (Thompson, 2013). In the English and Persian news interviews, the frequencies were 62.18% and 69%, respectively. Relational processes were the highest prevailing element of impersonal structures in both the English and Persian news interviews. Therefore, both English and Persian political figures mostly use relational processes among other impersonal structures and, consequently, they have the highest frequencies.

Generally, it could be stated that, in the English news interviews, relational processes had the highest frequencies and nominalizations had the lowest frequencies among elements of impersonal structures as manifestations of institutional identities. In parallel with this, in the Persian news interviews, relational processes had the highest frequencies and the existential processes had the lowest frequencies as elements of impersonal structures in institutional identities. The identity that a person derives from an institution makes the person use impersonal structures.

Because this study was relatively distinctive in its comparative nature and used news interviews as its corpus, the researchers had difficulty finding corresponding and relevant studies. By not taking into account the interview nature of this study and resorting to the concept of news, the findings of this study for Persian

are in line with Marin-Arrese and Martinez-Caro (n.d.) by the use of impersonal structures that correspond to Persian and Spanish, that is, existentials, nominalizations, and agentless passivizations. It is shown below that both have identical frequencies (number 1 the highest and number 3 the lowest distribution):

1. Nominalizations
2. Agentless Passives
3. Existential Processes (Persian)

1. Nominalizations
2. Agentless Passives
3. Existential Processes (Spanish)

On the other hand, the findings for English and Spanish are not in line with each other and have different frequencies (number 1 the highest and number 3 the lowest distribution):

1. Existential Processes
2. Agentless Passives
3. Nominalizations (English)

1. Nominalizations
2. Agentless Passives
3. Existential Processes (Spanish)

It could be concluded that the Persian news interviewees in this study were politicians who tried to stick to their own institution's perspectives by using impersonal structures and gaining their own identities. Their trend is in parallel with the Spanish interviewees. They both used the same structures identically. On the other hand, the English news interviewees were politicians who used a different trend and gained their identity by not overlapping to the Spanish interviewees.

The contributions of this study stem from the corpus that is selected and the comparative nature that it has. It is a relatively unique study in its own right that incorporates impersonal structures in news interviews and is peculiar in comparing and contrasting nature with Persian. Its implications can be stated as follows:

(1) Activating learners' critical thinking and teaching them how to be critical in every piece of word that they hear or read. In other words, impersonal structures make students understand the hidden ideologies in the news and news interviews. Reading critically does not definitely imply that you should criticize what you read. Reading and thinking critically do not convey asserting that ideas are somehow defective and erroneous, but critical reading entails becoming involved in what is read by asking questions like *What the writer is attempting to say* or *How the main reasoning is being manifested* (www.writing.utoronto.ca).

(2) Getting acquaintance with the concepts of impersonal structures helps learners to become native-like and professional writers. According to To, Le, and Le (2013), writing, as one of the two productive skills, is regarded as more complex and baffling for learners to learn because it is a complicated process of making use of grammatical structures so as to indicate the writer's opinions influentially. Furthermore, spoken language is learned intuitively, whereas the written form is generally taught and intentionally learned. In writing, content is demonstrated densely, whereas in speaking content is sparser. Hence, improving students' recognition of nominalization is significant in academic writing and English teaching. In academic writing and scientific discourse, it is acknowledged that nominalization influences the register of text excessively. Therefore, teaching this notion to students will help them to adapt their writing styles. Moreover, their writing will be cohesive, concise, and formal by using nominalization; and it strengthens them in various ways in the academic pieces of writing and tests. As a matter of fact, greater attention should be given to teaching nominalization in the English language curriculum. L2 researchers believe that the following hints could be fruitful for the future studies.

1. Applying impersonal structures in different institutional settings like news, courtrooms, education, and so on,
2. Applying impersonal structures in different languages and comparing and contrasting them with English,
3. Investigating nominalization as grammatical metaphor in different institutions and stating their congruent equivalences and their process types.

As a qualitative study, the data were extracted manually; then, the study incorporated subjectivity, although all attention was paid to be consistent in the data collection procedure. This study is limited in its scope, as well. Therefore, the conclusions are limited to this study and cannot be generalized. Also, because this study was comparative and the theory of impersonal structures was applied on both the English and Persian news interviews, there were complexities in application to Persian. The English news interviews that were broadcasted on TV programs and the Persian news interviews that were published in newspapers were analyzed due to lack of having access to English newspapers.

5.2. Conclusion

Institutional identity, as a newly proposed concept within CDA, requires more research. News interviews are instances of institutions that imbed power relations within them (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006). According to van Dijk (1988), when interviewers ask problematic topics from interviewees, they may not take the responsibility and reply on impersonal structures. Benwell and Stokoe (2006) believe that the impersonal structures are attainable by investigating existential processes,

nominalizations, passivizations, and relational processes and their interpretations highly depend on context. In the present study, some 20 English and Persian news interviews were selected and the interviewees' responses were analyzed based on these elements. The results demonstrated that English political figures use relational processes at the highest and nominalizations at the lowest, and Persian political figures use relational processes at the highest and the existential processes at the lowest. This study has significant implications in ELT as a way of ameliorating the ways that English is taught.

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