



Interpersonal Meaning in Political Slogans (1990–2024): A Cross-National SFL Analysis of Western and South Asian Countries

Research Article

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Publication Details

Received: July 25, 2025**Accepted:** August 20, 2025**Published:** September 30, 2025

Abstract

Political slogans are short, politically powerful expressions that are commonly used to express an ideological position, to mobilize people from various parts of the nation for electoral engagement, and to create a sense of national identity. This study investigates the interpersonal metafunction of political slogans based on Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). The 120 political slogans from selected western countries (the United States, Australia, the United Kingdom, and France) and South-Asian countries (Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh) were collected spanning the period from 1990 to 2024. This study focuses on the ways in which interpersonal meaning emerges as a function of the choice of mood, modality, appraisal resources, polarity, engagement and graduation in the dataset. The findings indicate that minor clauses, monoglossic engagement, force-based graduation and positive polarity are prominent interpersonal resources across the corpus. The analysed Western slogans show a greater inclination towards minor-clause constructions, collective identity, and focus-based graduation, whereas the selected South Asian slogans tend to



make greater use of declarative and imperative structures, obligation-oriented modulation, leader–audience alignment, and welfare-oriented appreciation. These findings suggest that the analysed slogans from Western countries build power, policy direction and institutional stability, following the propositional assertiveness of liberal democratic language. On the other hand, slogans from South Asian countries serve to build solidarity, emotional involvement and charismatic leadership. Furthermore, the study integrates the use of the UAM Corpus Tool with corpus-based method of cross-national comparison to highlight the use of interpersonal linguistic resources for relationship construction, power expression and ideology communication in distinct political contexts.

Keywords: Systemic Functional Linguistics, interpersonal metafunction, political slogans, appraisal theory, cross-national discourse analysis, modality, mood, corpus linguistics

1. Introduction

Political slogans are concise, memorable, and ideologically loaded forms of electoral communication. They condense complex political positions into brief messages that appeal to cognition and emotion while constructing political identities, framing issues, and mobilizing audiences (Chilton, 2004; Fairclough, 1995; Hart, 2010).

Political slogans have been examined in political communication, discourse analysis, sociolinguistics, and critical discourse studies for their roles in expressing power, ideology, identity, and persuasion (Charteris-Black, 2005; van Dijk, 1998; Wodak & Meyer, 2009). Research shows that slogans employ metaphor, evaluation, repetition, collective identity, and national appeals to achieve persuasive purposes (Charteris-Black, 2005, 2011; Chilton, 2004). In South Asian contexts, studies have particularly highlighted nationalism, leadership, collective identity, development, and emotional appeal (Ara, 2014; Baig et al., 2023; Kaleem et al., 2022). Research on Western political discourse similarly emphasizes rhetoric, persuasion, political identity, and electoral appeals (Atkinson, 1984; Charteris-Black, 2011; Chilton, 2004).

However, these patterns should not be treated as fixed regional characteristics. Political slogans are shaped by specific electoral, ideological, and sociocultural contexts, creating variation within and across countries. Existing research has also tended to examine individual countries or elections, with limited cross-national comparison. Studies of Pakistani slogans, for example, have mainly focused on particular parties and elections (Baig et al., 2023; Faiz et al., 2025; Kaleem et al., 2022), while research elsewhere has addressed political rhetoric, electoral communication, or national identity from more localized perspectives (Adhikari et al., 2024; Ara, 2014; Mayaffre, 2012).

A further gap concerns the systematic analysis of interpersonal meaning across national contexts. Few studies have integrated mood, modality, appraisal, engagement, graduation, polarity, and identity within a single analytical framework. Corpus-based SFL research on political slogans across an extended period also remains limited. The present study addresses these gaps by analysing 120 political slogans from Australia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, France, India, Sri Lanka, the UK, and the USA, covering 1990–2024. It examines how interpersonal resources construct authority, solidarity, evaluation, political identity, and audience alignment across these contexts.

1. 1 Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in SFL, developed by Halliday (1978, 1985) and further developed by Halliday and Matthiessen (2014). SFL views language as a social semiotic system in which meaning is created through contextual choices. Its three metafunctions are ideational, which represents experience; interpersonal, which enacts social relations; and textual, which organizes messages. The present study focuses on the interpersonal metafunction because political slogans simultaneously position speakers, audiences, and political values.

The interpersonal metafunction is realized through systems such as mood and modality. Mood includes declarative, interrogative, imperative, and minor clause structures, each establishing different speaker–audience relations (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014; Thompson, 2014). Modality expresses degrees of commitment to propositions, while modulation expresses obligation and inclination (Nuyts, 2001; Thompson, 2014). These resources allow political slogans to communicate certainty, authority, obligation, and commitment.

The study also draws on Appraisal Theory (Martin & White, 2005), which examines evaluative positioning through Attitude, Engagement, and Graduation. Attitude covers Affect, Judgment, and Appreciation; Engagement concerns alternative viewpoints; and Graduation scales evaluation through Force and Focus. These resources are particularly relevant to political discourse because they help construct identities, values, approval, disapproval, and audience alignment (Martin & White, 2005; Oteiza, 2017; White, 2018).

Finally, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) provides an interpretive perspective for relating linguistic choices to ideology, power, and sociopolitical context (Fairclough, 1995, 2003, 2010; van Dijk, 1998). Thus, SFL identifies interpersonal choices, Appraisal Theory explains evaluative positioning, and CDA relates these patterns to broader political meanings. Together, these frameworks provide a basis for comparing how political slogans construct interpersonal meaning across national contexts.

2. Review of Relevant Literature

Research on political slogans and political discourse covers diverse national contexts and analytical approaches. In Pakistan, Kaleem et al. (2022) found that lexical and rhetorical choices in political slogans contribute to ideological construction and voter persuasion. Baig et al. (2023) similarly showed that Pakistani slogans are strongly ideological, while Nawaz et al. (2024) highlighted their role in constructing national identity and collective solidarity. Faiz et al. (2025) further demonstrated how rhetorical devices such as alliteration, assonance, and metaphor enhance the memorability and persuasive force of Pakistani slogans. These findings support the broader view that political language functions not only to communicate political positions but also to persuade audiences and construct political identities (Chilton, 2004; Charteris-Black, 2005, 2011).

Research in South Asian contexts also highlights the influence of nationalism, identity, and political history. Rajagopal (2001) examined the relationship between political communication and Hindu nationalism in India, while Alam (2004) discussed the political and ideological dimensions of Indian public discourse. Adhikari et al. (2024) examined election pledges in India,

demonstrating the importance of political commitments in electoral communication. In Bangladesh, Ara (2014) situated political discourse within the country's broader political and developmental context. These studies indicate that political communication in South Asia is closely associated with national identity, political mobilization, leadership, and collective interests.

Western political discourse has been examined extensively through rhetorical, cognitive, and critical approaches. Charteris-Black (2005, 2011) demonstrated the importance of metaphor and rhetoric in political persuasion and identity construction. Lakoff (2004) emphasized the role of cognitive framing in activating ideological interpretations, while Chilton (2004) highlighted deixis, modality, metaphor, and spatial concepts in political discourse. Atkinson (1984) similarly demonstrated how linguistic and rhetorical choices contribute to political persuasion and audience engagement. Fairclough (1995, 2003, 2010) further showed how political language constructs relations of power, ideology, and legitimacy within broader sociopolitical contexts.

Appraisal and SFL research provides an additional perspective for examining interpersonal meaning. Halliday (1978, 1985) and Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) establish the interpersonal metafunction as a means of analysing how language enacts social relations. Martin and White (2005) extend this perspective through Appraisal Theory, particularly Attitude, Engagement, and Graduation. Subsequent research has applied appraisal analysis to discourse, including political and evaluative communication (Oteíza, 2017; White, 2018). Zappavigna (2014) further demonstrates how evaluative resources contribute to identity and affiliation in digital political communication. However, these approaches have been applied more extensively to speeches, parliamentary discourse, and digital communication than to short political slogans.

Despite substantial scholarship on political discourse, several gaps remain. First, much existing research is country-specific, limiting systematic comparison of interpersonal meaning across different sociopolitical contexts. Second, previous studies have often relied on critical discourse, rhetorical, or metaphor analysis, while comparatively fewer studies have adopted a corpus-based SFL approach to political slogans. Third, although Halliday's interpersonal metafunction and Martin and White's Appraisal Theory have been widely used to analyse political discourse, their integrated application to cross-national political slogans remains limited. Finally, there is limited systematic comparison of slogans from Western and South Asian countries across an extended period such as 1990–2024.

The present study addresses these gaps by analysing 120 political slogans from eight countries—Australia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, France, India, Sri Lanka, the UK, and the USA. Using SFL and Appraisal Theory, it examines how mood, modality, pronouns, Attitude, Engagement, Graduation, and polarity construct interpersonal meaning and how these resources vary across national contexts.

2.1 Research Objectives

This study aims to:

1. Examine how interpersonal meaning is constructed through mood, modality, appraisal, and pronoun choices in Western and South Asian political slogans (1990–2024).

2. Compare the interpersonal strategies used in Western and South Asian political slogans.
3. Examine how interpersonal linguistic choices construct authority, solidarity, and ideological positioning.

2.2 Research Questions

1. How is interpersonal meaning constructed in Western and South Asian political slogans during 1990–2024?
2. How do Western and South Asian political slogans differ in their realization of interpersonal meaning through mood, modality, appraisal, and pronoun choices?

3. Research Methodology

This study employs mixed-methods, corpus-based design to examine interpersonal meaning in 120 political slogans from eight countries covering 1990–2024. Quantitative annotation identifies patterns across the corpus, while qualitative analysis interprets their interpersonal and evaluative functions (McEnery & Hardie, 2012).

3.1 Research Design

A corpus-based mixed-methods approach was adopted, combining systematic annotation with qualitative interpretation. The analysis is grounded in the interpersonal metafunction of SFL (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014) and Appraisal Theory (Martin & White, 2005). This design enables systematic cross-national comparison while retaining attention to the political and sociocultural contexts of individual slogans.

3.2 Data Collection

The corpus comprises 120 political slogans, with 15 slogans selected from each of eight countries: Australia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, France, India, Sri Lanka, the UK, and the USA. The slogans cover the period 1990–2024 and were collected from official political-party sources, electoral materials, academic publications, and credible news archives. Purposive sampling was used to include major political parties and slogans from multiple electoral cycles.

3.3 Data Organization

Each slogan was coded for country, political party, election year, ideological orientation, and original language. For comparative analysis, the corpus was divided into two regional groups:

- **Western:** Australia, France, the UK, and the USA
- **South Asian:** Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka

This organization facilitated both country-level and regional comparison.

3.4 Translation Protocol

Slogans originally produced in French, Urdu, Hindi, Bengali, and Sinhala were translated into English for comparative analysis. AI-assisted translation was used as an initial translation resource, after which translations were manually checked against available official or published versions. Original-language slogans were retained in the corpus to preserve their linguistic and cultural context. Where necessary, translations were reviewed for semantic equivalence before annotation.

3.5 Corpus Annotation

The corpus was annotated using UAM CorpusTool (O'Donnell, 2008) according to a customized SFL-based annotation scheme. The scheme covered mood, modality, pronoun and identity construction, polarity, and Appraisal resources, including Attitude, Engagement, and Graduation. The analytical categories were derived from the interpersonal metafunction of SFL (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014) and Appraisal Theory (Martin & White, 2005).

3.6 Data Analysis

Following annotation, UAM CorpusTool was used to generate frequency counts and percentages for each analytical category. The quantitative results were compared across individual countries and the two regional groups. The qualitative analysis then examined representative slogans to explain how linguistic resources construct authority, solidarity, evaluation, identity, audience alignment, and ideological positioning. Interpretation was guided by SFL and Appraisal Theory, with CDA providing a broader perspective on the relationship between linguistic choices, ideology, and sociopolitical context (Fairclough, 1995, 2003, 2010; van Dijk, 1998).

The integration of quantitative distribution and qualitative interpretation provides a systematic account of both the frequency and function of interpersonal resources in the selected political slogans.

4. Discussion and Interpretation of Findings

The quantitative findings are obtained through UAM corpus-based analysis of political slogans from eight national contexts: Australia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, France, India, Sri Lanka, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America. The analysis examined interpersonal features across several SFL categories: the Mood System, the Appraisal System (Attitude, Graduation, and Engagement), Identity Construction, Modality, and Polarity.

4.1 Mood System

The Mood System analysis examines how political slogans distribute across five mood categories: imperative, declarative, exclamative, interrogative, and minor clause. These mood choices directly enact interpersonal positioning between political actors and their audiences and also encode the relations of authority, solidarity, and engagement (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014; Thompson, 2014).

Table 1: Mood System Distribution across All Countries

Mood Feature	Australia		Pakistan		Bangladesh		France		India		Sri Lanka		UK		USA	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Imperative mood	2	13.3	5	33.3	4	26.7	4	28.6	2	12.5	3	20.0	1	6.7	3	18.8
Declarative mood	1	6.7	5	33.3	1	6.7	2	14.3	8	50.0	0	0.0	2	13.3	5	31.3
Exclamative mood	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Interrogative mood	1	6.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	6.7	0	0.0
Minor clause	11	73.3	5	33.3	10	66.7	9	60	6	37.5	12	80.0	10	71.4	8	50.0

As shown in Table 1, minor clauses dominate the corpus across the majority of national sub-corpora, reflecting the elliptical and pragmatically compressed character of slogan discourse. Sri Lanka records the highest minor clause frequency (80.0%), followed by Australia and the UK (73.3% and 71.4%) which suggests a preference for contextually implicit messaging in these contexts. Representative examples include the Sri Lankan slogans *"Peace and Prosperity," "Strong Leadership,"* and *"Country First,"* the Australian slogans *"Jobs and Growth," "A Better Future,"* and *"New Leadership,"* and the UK slogans *"Forward, Not Backward," "New Labour, New Danger,"* and *"Long-Term Economic Plan."* These slogans rely on nominal or elliptical constructions rather than complete clauses to maximize rhetorical impact. In contrast, Indian slogans such as *"Abki Baar Modi Sarkar"* ("This Time, Modi Government"), record the highest declarative mood (50.0%). This pattern may be understood in relation to the broader political communication practices in India, where political messaging has been shaped by mass-mediated forms of public persuasion and ideological framing (Rajagopal, 2001). Pakistan records the highest imperative mood (33.3%), alongside Bangladesh (26.7%) such as *"Vote for Paddy Sheaf"* and *"Let Democracy Be Free"*. This trend of political discourse may reflect that developing-country slogans more frequently deploy directive speech acts that position political actors as commanding collective action. Exclamative mood is absent across all eight sub-corpora, confirming that political slogans do not employ this marked interpersonal structure. Interrogative mood appears exclusively in Australia and the UK (6.7% each), indicating a limited use of questioning as an interpersonal strategy in the present slogan corpus. This use of questioning can be situated within the broader interactional and rhetorical practices of political discourse, where questions may be used to engage audiences and challenge political positions (Atkinson, 1984; Fairclough, 2000).

4.2 Minor Clause Sub-types

Minor clauses are those kinds of clauses which do not carry full Subject-Finite structure and constitute the most frequent mood type in the corpus. Their internal structural variation across sub-types (nominal, adverbial/circumstantial, elliptical, vocative, interjection, and formulaic) reveals how different national contexts exploit the communicative potential of compressed discourse (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014).

Table 2: Minor Clause Sub-Type Distribution across All Countries

Minor Clause Type	Australia		Pakistan		Bangladesh		France		India		Sri Lanka		UK		USA	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Nominal	7	63.6	4	80	6	60	5	55.6	6	100	12	80.0	6	60.0	6	75.0
Adverbial/Circumstantial	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	10	1	11.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	30.0	2	25.0
Elliptical	4	36.4	0	0.0	1	10	2	22.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	10.0	0	0.0
Vocative	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	11.1	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Interjection	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Formulaic	0	0.0	1	20	2	20	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0

The findings presented in Table 2 reveal that nominal minor clauses dominate across all sub-corpora with Sri Lanka recording the highest proportion (80.0%), followed by Australia (63.6%). Nominal minor clauses function as condensed noun-phrase slogans that assert identity or value without predication. This is a form that particularly suits the declarative social function of political branding. Elliptical minor clauses are most prominent in Australia (36.7%), where shared contextual knowledge enables communicative compression. Adverbial/circumstantial minor clauses appear most frequently in the UK (30.0%) and the USA (25%) which appear to reflect circumstantially grounded political appeals characteristic of Western electoral communication. Moreover, Formulaic minor clauses appear only in Pakistan (20%) and Bangladesh (20%). It may suggest that the ritualized linguistic forms play a distinctive role in South Asian political communication. Vocative minor clauses appear exclusively in France (11.1%) in the present dataset, consistent with the tradition of direct address to the national collective in French republican oratory (Charaudeau, 2005). Interjection minor clauses are absent across all sub-corpora.

4.3 Appraisal System: Attitude Types

The Appraisal System (Martin & White, 2005) examines how language encodes evaluative stances through three Attitude sub-systems: Affect (emotional responses), Judgment (evaluation of human behaviour), and Appreciation (evaluation of phenomena, policies, and conditions). The distribution of these attitude types reveals the dominant evaluative orientations of political slogans across the eight national contexts. The present study also operationalizes the three Appraisal systems through corpus-specific subcategories developed for the analysis of political slogans.

Table 3: Appraisal System Distribution across All Countries

Attitude Type	Australia		Pakistan		Bangladesh		France		India		Sri Lanka		UK		USA	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Affect	2	13.3	4	26.7	4	26.7	9	60.0	3	20.0	3	20.0	3	20.0	5	33.3
Judgment	7	46.7	3	20.0	3	20.0	1	6.7	5	33.3	6	40.0	3	20.0	5	33.3
Appreciation	6	40.0	8	53.3	8	53.3	5	33.3	7	46.7	6	40.0	9	60.0	5	33.3

The distribution shown in Table 3 shows that Appreciation is the most prominent attitude type in Pakistan (53.3%), Bangladesh (53.3%), and the UK (60.0%). It also indicates that these sub-corpora predominantly evaluate policies, national conditions, and institutional achievements. Judgment dominates in Australia (46.7%) and Sri Lanka (40.0%) which reflects a stronger orientation toward

evaluating human conduct, moral behaviour, and institutional accountability. Affect is distinctively elevated in France (60.0%) which is the highest in the entire present sample. It may indicate the affective and emotionally resonant character of French republican political oratory. This finding can be situated within broader research on evaluative and rhetorical strategies in French political discourse (Charaudeau, 2005; Mayaffre, 2012). On the other hand, the USA presents a relatively equal distribution across all three attitude types (Judgment 33.3%, Appreciation 33.3%, Affect 33.3%), indicating a diverse evaluative pattern in the selected American slogans. This pattern can be situated within the broader tradition of American political communication, where ideological framing and persuasive evaluation play important roles (Hart, 1984; Lakoff, 2004).

4.4 Affect Sub-Types

Affect encodes emotional states and responses, and its sub-types such as Hope/Optimism, Fear/Anger, Patriotism, and Loyalty/Solidarity. These sub-types reveal the specific emotional registers through which political slogans appeal to voters across different national and cultural contexts (Martin & White, 2005).

Table 4: Affect Sub-type Distribution across All Countries

Affect Sub-type	Australia		Pakistan		Bangladesh		France		India		Sri Lanka		UK		USA	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Hope/Optimism	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	25	2	22.2	2	66.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	40
Fear/Anger	1	50	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	33.3	0	0.0
Patriotism	0	0.0	2	50	1	25	3	33.3	0	0.0	2	66.7	0	0.0	2	40
Loyalty/Solidarity	1	50	2	50	2	50	4	44.4	1	33.3	1	33.3	2	66.7	1	20

The findings in Table 4 reveal that Loyalty/Solidarity is the most widely distributed Affect sub-type across the corpus, present in all eight national sub-corpora. It highlights the universal function of solidarity construction in political communication. Representative examples include the Australian slogan "For All of Us," the French slogan "Together for the Republic," the Bangladeshi slogan "Vote for Paddy Sheaf," the Pakistani slogan "Long Live Bhutto," and the Sri Lankan slogan "Heart for the People." These slogans foster emotional affiliation between political actors and the electorate by emphasizing unity, collective commitment, and shared purpose. Other Affect sub-types, however, are more prominent in particular national contexts. Patriotism is also prominent in Sri Lanka (66.7%) and France (33.3%). The French pattern can be situated within the broader tradition of civic national identity (Brubaker, 1992), while the Sri Lankan pattern may be considered in the context of the country's post-conflict political environment (Goodhand & Klem, 2011). French slogans such as "Proud of France" and "United France," together with Sri Lankan slogans including "Country First" and "Protect the Nation," explicitly invoke national identity as a persuasive emotional resource. Hope/Optimism is notably present in Bangladesh (25.0%) France (33.3%), India (66.7%), and the USA (40%) as illustrated by French slogan "A Bright Future" which shows the optimistic future-oriented rhetorical mode characteristic of these national contexts.

Fear/Anger is comparatively restricted and appears exclusively in Australia (50%) and the UK (33.3%). Australian slogans such as "Stop the Boats" and UK slogans such as "New Labour, New

Danger" employ emotional appeals based on perceived threats or risks. It can be considered that adversarial emotional appeals are more characteristic of Western parliamentary political cultures.

Loyalty/Solidarity is prominent across several national sub-corpora. It accounts 66.7% of Affect features in the UK, 50.0% in Bangladesh and Australia, 50.0% in Pakistan, 44.4% in France, 33.3% in India and Sri Lanka, and 20.0% in the USA. Hope/Optimism and Fear/Anger are absent from several national Affect profiles that reveal distinct national distributions of emotional resources. These differences suggest that the selected slogans employ different affective strategies to construct emotional affiliation, national belonging, collective solidarity, and political positioning.

4.5 Judgment Sub-Types

Judgment evaluates human behavior, character, and social conduct through sub-types of Moral Evaluation, Justice, Accountability, and Ideology Alignment (Martin & White, 2005). These resources are particularly significant in political discourse, where the evaluation of political actors and institutional conduct is a central communicative function.

Table 5: Judgment Sub-type Distribution across All Countries

Judgment Sub-type	Australia		Pakistan		Bangladesh		France		India		Sri Lanka		UK		USA	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Moral Evaluation	1	14.3	0	0.0	1	33.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	16.7	0	0.0	3	60
Justice	3	42.9	2	66.7	2	66.7	1	100	5	100	1	16.7	3	100.0	0	0.0
Accountability	2	28.6	1	33.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	50.0	0	0.0	1	20
Ideology Alignment	1	14.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	16.7	0	0.0	1	20

The aforementioned Table 5 shows that Justice is the most prominent Judgment sub-type across the corpus, with the highest frequency in Australia (42.9%), Pakistan (66.7%), Bangladesh (66.7%), France (100.0%), India (100.0%), and the UK (100.0%). Representative examples include the Australian slogans "*A Fair Go for Australia*" and "*A Fair Go for Those Who Have a Go*," the Indian slogan "*Now Justice will be done*," and the UK slogan "*For the Many, Not the Few*." It may reflect a cross-national tendency in political slogans to evaluate institutional fairness and equitable governance as core political values.

Accountability is most salient in Sri Lanka (50.0%) , Australia (28.6%) and Pakistan (33.3%). It potentially may reflect post-conflict concerns for governmental transparency in Sri Lanka (Goodhand & Klem, 2011) and the accountability-oriented norms of Australian parliamentary culture. For example Sri Lankan slogans "*Good Governance*," "*End Corruption*," and "*Catch the Thieves*" explicitly evaluate political actors in terms of integrity and responsibility.

Moral Evaluation is most prominent in the USA (60%) followed by Bangladesh (33.3%), consistent with the moralistic and quasi-theological framing characteristic of American political communication (Hart, 1984). Slogans such as "*Battle for the Soul of the Nation*" and "*It's the Economy, Stupid*" evaluate political circumstances in normative terms by contrasting desirable and undesirable states of affairs.

Ideology Alignment appears in Australia (14.3%), Sri Lanka (16.7%), and the USA (20%), which signifies that explicit ideological positioning through Judgment is a marginal but cross-culturally present feature of political slogans. Examples include *"The True Believers"* (Australia), *"Mahinda's Vision"* (Sri Lanka), and *"Compassionate Conservatism"* (USA), all of which foreground ideological identity or political philosophy rather than specific policy objectives. Moreover, France, India, and the UK record 100.0% for Justice because each has only one identified Judgment sub-type category represented in the provided data. Therefore, these percentages should be interpreted in relation to the small number of Judgment features rather than as evidence that these countries necessarily use Justice more frequently overall.

4.6 Appreciation Sub-types

Appreciation evaluates phenomena, policies, systems, and national conditions through the sub-types of Development, Prosperity/Welfare, and Revolution/Change (Martin & White, 2005). These resources reveal the dominant policy-evaluative orientations of political slogans and the social conditions they invoke.

Table 6: Appreciation Sub-type Distribution across All Countries

Appreciation Sub-type	Australia		Pakistan		Bangladesh		France		India		Sri Lanka		UK		USA	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Development	3	50.0	2	25	3	37.5	0	0.0	2	28.6	1	16.7	1	11.1	3	60.0
Prosperity/Welfare	1	16.7	2	25	4	50	2	40	5	71.4	4	66.7	2	22.2	0	0.0
Revolution/Change	2	33.3	4	50	1	12.5	3	60.0	0	0.0	1	16.7	6	66.7	2	40.0

Table 6 demonstrates that Prosperity/Welfare is the most prominent Appreciation sub-type in India (71.4%), Sri Lanka (66.7%), and Bangladesh (50.0%). It reflects the centrality of welfare-oriented developmental promises in South Asian political communication. Representative examples include the Indian slogan *"Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas"* ("Together with All, Development for All"), the Bangladeshi slogan *"Democracy for Development,"* and the Sri Lankan slogans *"Peace and Prosperity"* and *"Vistas of Prosperity and Splendour"*. Such findings are consistent with postcolonial political discourses that foreground material improvement as a core electoral promise (Tharoor, 2012; Ara, 2014).

Revolution/Change is most salient in the UK (66.7%), followed by France (60.0%) and Pakistan (50.0%), indicating the prominence of transformative political narratives in these sub-corpora which is the highest in the sample. UK slogans such as *"Forward, Not Backward,"* *"New Labour, New Danger,"* and *"A Better Future"* can be identified as transformative political narratives that characterized the 1990–2024 period in British politics, including New Labour, Brexit, and post-austerity political movements (Fairclough, 2000). Development is most prominent in the USA (60.0%), followed by Bangladesh (37.5%) and Australia (50.0%), which demonstrates pragmatic-developmental political appeals in these contexts. By contrast, the French sub-corpus contains no instances of the Development sub-type. Instead, French slogans such as *"Proud of France,"* *"Together for the Republic,"* and *"United France"* predominantly emphasize patriotism, solidarity, and national identity rather than explicit evaluations of development or policy outcomes. This

pattern suggests a rhetorical preference for value-based appeals over development-oriented evaluation within the French corpus.

4.7 Identity Construction

Identity Construction examines the extent to which political slogans deploy social identity resources to construct audience positioning and collective belonging. The dominant form identified in this corpus is the Social Identity System, which encompasses pronominal and evaluative choices that construct shared group membership between political actors and their audiences (Martin & White, 2005; Wodak et al., 2009).

Table 7: Identity Construction Distribution across All Countries

Identity Type	Australia		Pakistan		Bangladesh		France		India		Sri Lanka		UK		USA	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Social Identity System	15	100.0	13	100	14	100	14	100	15	100	15	100	15	100.0	14	100

Table 7 reveals that the Social Identity System dominates across all eight national sub-corpora. Pakistan records the lowest social identity frequency potentially reflecting a small proportion of slogans that operate through individual rather than collective identity construction. The universally high social identity orientation across the corpus suggests that the analysed political slogans primarily function as collective-address documents that construct shared identities between political actors and electorates, consistent with Fairclough's (2003) account of political discourse as an arena of social identity construction.

4.8 Identity System Sub-types

The Identity System sub-type analysis examines the specific forms of collective identity construction across three categories: Collective Identity, Leader–Audience Alignment, and National Identity. These pronominal choices encode distinct forms of social positioning between political speakers and their audiences (Chilton, 2004; Wodak et al., 2009).

Table 8: Identity System Sub-Type Distribution across All Countries

Identity Sub-type	Australia		Pakistan		Bangladesh		France		India		Sri Lanka		UK		USA	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Collective Identity	7	46.7	4	33.3	6	40.0	6	42.9	7	46.7	7	46.7	10	66.7	8	57.1
Leader–Audience Alignment	2	13.3	2	16.7	4	28.6	0	0.0	6	40.0	3	20.0	2	13.3	2	14.3
National Identity	6	40.0	6	50.0	4	26.7	8	57.1	2	33.3	5	33.3	2	13.3	4	28.6

Table 8 reveals that Collective Identity is the dominant pronominal strategy across the corpus, highest in the UK (66.7%), the USA (57.1%), and Australia (46.7%) which points to a preference for Western political communication for constructing broad social solidarity through inclusive community-oriented language (Fairclough, 2000). Representative examples include the UK slogans "Forward, Not Backward" and "A Better Future," the American slogans "Yes We Can" and "Build

Back Better," and the Australian slogans "For All of Us," "Jobs and Growth," and "No One Held Back, No One Left Behind." These slogans frame political objectives as shared collective aspirations rather than individual concerns.

Similarly, National Identity is most prominent in France (57.1%) which is the highest in present dataset followed by Pakistan (50.0%) and Australia (40.0%). French slogans such as "Proud of France," "United France," and "Together for the Republic" explicitly foreground the nation and republican values as the central focus of political persuasion. It is consistent with the distinctive civic nationalist tradition of French republican discourse (Brubaker, 1992). On the other hand, Leader–Audience Alignment is most salient in India (40%), followed by Bangladesh (28.6%), which may reflect a comparatively stronger populist-charismatic dimension of Indian electoral politics wherein leaders construct direct personal identification with mass audiences (Alam, 2004; Rajagopal, 2001). Indian slogans such as "Abki Baar Modi Sarkar" ("This Time, Modi Government") and "Phir Ek Baar Modi Sarkar" ("Modi Government Once Again") exemplify this strategy by centering political persuasion on the leader rather than the collective or the nation. This alignment pattern is substantially less marked in all Western sub-corpora.

4.9 Polarity

Polarity analysis examines the distribution of positive and negative evaluative orientations across the corpus. In political slogans, polarity choices reflect the fundamental rhetorical strategy of affirmation versus critique. It reveals how political actors position themselves relative to existing social and institutional conditions (Martin & White, 2005).

Table 9: Polarity Distribution across All Countries

Polarity	Australia		Pakistan		Bangladesh		France		India		Sri Lanka		UK		USA	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Negative	3	20.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	20.0	1	6.7	2	12.5
Positive	12	80.0	15	100.0	15	100.0	15	100.0	15	100	12	80.0	14	93.3	13	81.3

The findings in Table 9 show that positive polarity dominates across all eight national sub-corpora. This is consistent with the inherently affirmative and mobilizing function of political slogan discourse. Pakistan, Bangladesh, and France record 100.0% positive polarity, which indicates a complete absence of self-critical or oppositional discourse in these sub-corpora. The US, Australia and the UK also record near-universal positive polarity (81.3%, 80% and 93.3% respectively). For example, Pakistani slogans such as "Pakistan First," "Stability, Security and Progress," and "Repay Debt, Build Nation"; Bangladeshi slogans such as "Democracy for Development" and "Long Live Bangladesh"; and French slogans such as "Proud of France," "United France," and "Together for the Republic" all express exclusively positive evaluations. In contrast, Australia and Sri Lanka record the highest negative polarity in their slogans (20.0% each). Australian slogans such as "Stop the Boats," "Let's Stop the Waste," and "New Labour, New Danger" employ negative polarity to criticize perceived threats or political opponents. Similarly, Sri Lankan slogans such as "End Corruption" and "Catch the Thieves" frame electoral competition through opposition to corruption and criminality. This pattern may reflect both Australia's competitive two-party electoral system and Sri Lanka's post-conflict political tensions (Goodhand & Klem, 2011). The USA also records moderate negative polarity (12.5%) while UK shows 6.7%. Overall, the distribution indicates that

although positive polarity is the dominant evaluative pattern, negative polarity is selectively employed to construct criticism, opposition, and threat-oriented political appeals.

4.10 Modality

Modality analysis examines the distribution of Modalization (epistemic probability and usuality) and Modulation (deontic obligation and inclination) across the corpus. These modal resources calibrate the degree of commitment or obligation that political slogans encode which reveals whether they primarily assert propositions about the world or prescribe courses of action (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014; Nuyts, 2001).

Table 10: Modality Distribution across All Countries

Modality Type	Australia		Pakistan		Bangladesh		France		India		Sri Lanka		UK		USA	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Modalization	0	0.0	1	16.7	0	0.0	1	20	2	40	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	60
Modulation	3	100.0	5	83.3	4	100	4	80	3	60	3	100	2	100	2	40

Table 10 shows that modulation dominates modality across all national sub-corpora. Australia, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and the UK record the highest proportion of Modulation (100.0%), followed by Pakistan (83.3%) and France (80.0%). This deontic dominance suggests that political slogans across all eight contexts are more concerned with prescribing obligations and expressing political will than with asserting epistemic probabilities about the world. This pattern reflects the broader mobilizing function of electoral communication, as discussed by Chilton (2004). Modalization is most prominent in the USA (60%) and India (40%) followed by France (20.0%) and Pakistan (16.7%). This distribution suggests that epistemic calibration is a more visible characteristic of American and Indian political communication than of other national sub-corpora. Australia, UK, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka record zero modalization, which illustrates exclusively deontic modal commitment in these contexts. Overall, the findings demonstrate a stronger orientation toward Modulation than Modalization in the modality features identified across the corpus.

4.11 Modality Value

Modality Value assesses the amount of modal commitment on three different scales: at the extreme end one has a strong commitment (high value) or strong certainty (high value); in the middle, there is intermediate commitment or certainty (medium); and at the end, there is weak commitment or weak certainty (low). The feature enables the analysis of the force and uncertainty of modal expressions in political slogans in a range of political contexts (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014).

Table 11: Modality Value Distribution across All Countries

Modality Value	Australia		Pakistan		Bangladesh		France		India		Sri Lanka		UK		USA	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
High	0	0.0	1	100	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	100	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	100
Medium	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Low	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	100	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0

Table 11 reveals that High value was identified in Pakistan, India, and the USA, whereas France contained one Low-value instance. No Medium-value instances were identified across the eight national sub-corpora. Pakistan records one High-value instance, India records two High-value instances and the USA accounts three High-value instances while France shows one Low-value instance. An American slogan such as “We Decide Who Comes to This Country” expresses strong commitment and determination, while Indian slogans such as “Abki Baar Modi Sarkar” (“This Time, Modi Government”) and “Phir Ek Baar Modi Sarkar” (“Modi Government Once Again”) similarly convey a high degree of confidence and commitment. The only Low-value instance identified in France indicates a relatively weaker degree of modal commitment in that particular slogan. Australia, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and the UK contain no identified modality-value instances. Thus, the findings indicate that High modality value was dominant among the identified modality instances, particularly in Pakistan, India, and the USA, whereas Low value occurred only once in France. The absence of Medium-value instances suggests that intermediate modality values were not identified in the present corpus.

4.12 Modulation Sub-types

Modulation sub-types such as Obligation and Inclination have been studied as the two primary forms of deontic meaning in the corpus. Obligation encodes external necessity or duty directed at audiences, while Inclination encodes the speaker's internal commitment, willingness, or desire to act (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014; Thompson, 2014).

Table 12: Modulation Sub-type Distribution across All Countries

Modulation Sub-type	Australia		Pakistan		Bangladesh		France		India		Sri Lanka		UK		USA	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Obligation	3	100	2	50	3	75.0	2	50	1	50	3	100	2	100	2	100
Inclination	0	0.0	2	50	1	25.0	2	50	1	50	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0

Table 12 shows that Obligation is the most prominent Modulation sub-type across several national sub-corpora. Australia, Sri Lanka, the UK, and the USA record 100.0% Obligation, as no instances of Inclination are identified in these countries. Bangladesh records 75.0% Obligation, while Pakistan, France, and India record 50.0% Obligation. Inclination appears most prominently in Pakistan and France, where it accounts for 50.0% of the identified Modulation features, followed by Bangladesh and India (25.0% and 50.0%, respectively). Australian slogans such as “Let's Stop the Waste” and “Stop the Boats,” Bangladeshi slogans such as “Vote for Paddy Sheaf” and “Let Democracy Be Free,” and Sri Lankan slogans such as “End Corruption,” “Catch the Thieves,” and “Protect the Nation” exemplify this obligation-based rhetoric by explicitly directing or exhorting citizens to act. Inclination is entirely absent in Australia, Sri Lanka, the UK, and the USA, suggesting that in these contexts, modulation expresses external obligation rather than personal political commitment. The co-presence of both Obligation and Inclination in Pakistan, Bangladesh, France, and India suggests more rhetorically complex deontic structures in these sub-corpora, potentially reflecting both duty-based and commitment-based modes of political address (Chilton & Ilyin, 1993). For example, Pakistani slogans “Long Live Bhutto” and “Pakistan First” convey commitment and political alignment, while French slogans including “Together for the Republic” and “For All of Us” emphasize shared commitment and collective solidarity rather than obligation.

4.13 Engagement

Engagement analysis examines the distribution of Monogloss and Heterogloss across the corpus. Monoglossic texts present propositions without acknowledgement of alternative viewpoints, while heteroglossic texts dialogically accommodate or challenge competing perspectives (Martin & White, 2005). In political discourse, this distinction reflects the degree of dialogic openness versus authoritative assertion in communicative style.

Table 13: Engagement Distribution across All Countries

Engagement Type	Australia		Pakistan		Bangladesh		France		India		Sri Lanka		UK		USA	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Monogloss	15	100	14	93.3	15	100	15	100	15	100	15	100.0	15	100	15	100
Heterogloss	0	0	1	6.7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 13 confirms that monoglossic engagement is the dominant pattern across all eight national sub-corpora. It accords with the tendency of political slogan discourse to project authority through unilateral communication. All national sub-corpora except Pakistan record 100.0% monoglossic instances, whereas Pakistan records 93.3% monoglossic and 6.7% heteroglossic instances. For example, Sri Lankan slogans "Peace and Prosperity," "Good Governance," "Country First," and "Protect the Nation" demonstrate a complete absence of dialogic accommodation. Similarly, Indian slogans such as "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas" (Together with All, Development for All), "Abki Baar Modi Sarkar" (This Time, Modi Government), and "India First" may reflect the assertive, pedagogical rhetorical mode characteristic of Indian political communication (Rajagopal, 2001). The presence of the single heteroglossic instance in the Pakistani sub-corpus indicates a limited degree of dialogic engagement compared with the other national sub-corpora. Overall, the distribution demonstrates a strong preference for monoglossic assertion across the analysed political slogans, with explicit engagement with alternative voices or viewpoints occurring only marginally.

4.14 Graduation

Graduation concerns the scaling of attitudinal meanings through two subsystems: Force, which increases or decreases the intensity of evaluation, and Focus, which sharpens or softens category boundaries. These resources enable political slogans to calibrate the intensity, scope, and precision of evaluative meanings (Martin & White, 2005).

Table 14: Graduation Distribution across All Countries

Graduation Type	Australia		Pakistan		Bangladesh		France		India		Sri Lanka		UK		USA	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Force	9	60.0	10	71.4	11	84.6	14	93.3	14	93.3	10	66.7	8	57.1	9	60.0
Focus	6	40.0	4	28.6	2	15.4	1	6.7	1	6.7	5	33.3	6	42.9	6	40.0

Table 14 shows that Force-based Graduation dominates across all national sub-corpora, indicating that amplification of evaluative intensity is a prominent feature of the political slogans examined. France and India record the highest proportions of Force (93.3% each), followed by Bangladesh (84.6%) and Pakistan (71.4%). These findings suggest that the selected slogans in several South

Asian countries, as well as France, rely strongly on intensified evaluation to strengthen political claims and persuasive appeals. This pattern is consistent with research emphasizing the rhetorical and persuasive functions of political discourse (Chilton, 2004; Charteris-Black, 2005, 2011).

The French slogan “Ensemble, tout devient possible” (“Together, everything becomes possible”), for example, uses the absolute quantifier everything to expand the scope of the political promise. Similarly, the Indian slogan “Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas” (“Together with all, development for all”) uses the repeated all to construct an inclusive vision of national development. The Pakistani slogan “Vote Ko Izzat Do” (“Respect the Vote”) employs an imperative construction that presents respect for the vote as a direct political demand. Such linguistic choices illustrate how slogans intensify political values and position audiences toward particular political goals. This finding is also compatible with research on Pakistani political slogans, which identifies ideological positioning, persuasion, and political values as central functions of slogan discourse (Kaleem et al., 2022; Baig et al., 2023; Faiz et al., 2025).

In contrast, Focus-based Graduation is most prominent in the UK (42.9%), followed by Australia and the USA (40.0% each). This distribution indicates a relatively greater use of resources that sharpen evaluative boundaries. The UK slogan “A Real Chance for Real Change” repeatedly employs real to construct the proposed political alternative as authentic. The Australian slogan “The True Believers” similarly uses true to distinguish genuine supporters from others. The U.S. slogan “Change We Can Believe In” foregrounds credibility as a basis for evaluating the proposed political change. These examples demonstrate how Focus can contribute to the construction of authenticity, credibility, and political identity, dimensions closely associated with persuasive political rhetoric (Atkinson, 1984; Charteris-Black, 2011).

The comparatively low Focus proportions in India and France (6.7% each) and Bangladesh (15.4%) indicate a stronger reliance on evaluative intensity than on categorical precision. Rather than sharply defining evaluative categories, the slogans in these sub-corpora appear to prioritize the amplification of political claims, values, and promises. In the French and Indian contexts, this finding can be related to broader research emphasizing the rhetorical, evaluative, emotional, and electoral dimensions of political communication (Mayaffre, 2012; Adhikari et al., 2024; Goel et al., 2020).

Overall, the findings demonstrate that Force and Focus perform complementary interpersonal functions. Force enables slogans to strengthen political claims and maximize persuasive impact, whereas Focus helps construct sharper distinctions concerning authenticity, credibility, and political identity. The differences across countries should nevertheless be interpreted as tendencies within the selected corpus rather than fixed characteristics of Western or South Asian political discourse.

5. Conclusion

This study examined the construction of interpersonal meaning in 120 political slogans from eight Western and South Asian countries (1990–2024) using Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). UAM CorpusTool was used to analyse mood, modality, appraisal, identity, engagement, graduation, and polarity.

The findings indicate that political slogans primarily function as concise interpersonal resources for constructing authority, solidarity, and ideological positioning. Minor clauses were the dominant mood structure, reflecting the brevity of slogan discourse. Positive polarity, monoglossic graduation, and force-based graduation were also prevalent, suggesting a tendency toward certainty, positivity, and persuasive force.

Regional differences were evident, although neither group was internally uniform. Western slogans generally showed greater use of collective identity, minor clauses, and focus-based graduation, particularly in Australia, the UK, and the USA, indicating greater emphasis on evaluative precision and authenticity. South Asian slogans more frequently employed declarative and imperative moods, obligation-oriented modulation, leader–audience alignment, and welfare-oriented Appreciation, reflecting stronger tendencies toward political mobilization and audience engagement. These patterns, however, should be treated as corpus-specific tendencies rather than fixed characteristics of Western or South Asian political discourse.

The study contributes theoretically by demonstrating the applicability of Halliday’s interpersonal metafunction and Appraisal Theory to cross-national political slogans. Methodologically, it illustrates the value of combining UAM CorpusTool with comparative discourse analysis and provides a replicable framework for examining interpersonal meaning across socio-cultural contexts. A key limitation is the relatively small sample of 120 slogans from eight countries and the exclusive focus on the interpersonal metafunction.

Funding: This study was not funded in any shape or form by any party.

Conflict of Interest: The author declares that he has no conflict of interest.

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