

# Tracing Institutional Identity: A Language-Based Analysis of State Universities' Mission and Vision Statements

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## ABSTRACT

Mission and vision statement plays a pivotal role in conveying an institution's identity, goals, priorities, and aspirations. In the increasingly competitive field of universities and colleges, mission and vision statements are their strategic edge, keeping their institutions relevant and aligned with the global and national educational trends. This study explores the recurring themes, linguistic choices, rhetorical strategies, and discourse structures of mission and vision statements from thirteen (13) state universities and colleges (SUCs) from Region III in the Philippines. The researcher used a qualitative approach and content analysis tools—lexical density, lexical diversity, and metafunctions of language from Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). Four (4) themes emerged from the statements which were used to appeal to their stakeholders and position themselves as centers for sustainable and inclusive development. Key findings from the study revealed that SUCs in Region III use language in shaping their identity, creating an impression that mission and vision statements are more than formal academic texts, but a strategic discourse filled with numerous linguistic and rhetorical strategies. The unique choice of words and phrases also creates a more personalized feel, enabling the universities to stand out among others despite having the same themes, structures, and progression. Furthermore, the study was able to discover a strong alignment of SUCs to several national and global educational frameworks and development goals such as Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2023-2028, United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs), and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Education 2030 Vision. This study contributes to the expanding field of educational linguistics and discourse analysis by offering meaningful and in-depth insights as to how universities leverage mission and vision statements as strategic communication tools for conveying their identity, purpose, values, and priorities while also potentially influencing their path and decision-making.

**Keywords:** higher education, institutional identity, linguistic analysis, rhetorical strategies, mission and vision

## INTRODUCTION

Higher education institutions (HEIs) play a significant role in achieving national development as they serve as the training ground for responsible and effective leadership and professionals who are expected to propel the country's workforce and economy. Each HEI crafts vision and mission statements which convey their identity, values, and strategic directions for their overall operations. These statements are held with utmost importance that "accreditation agencies demand them, strategic planning is predicated on their formulation, and virtually every college and university has one available for review" (Morphew, 2006). These statements are continually revised by HEIs along with their curricular offerings and goals as response to mandates of the State, challenges and needs that emerge, and search for strategic positioning in an increasingly competitive environment. Crafting and revising these statements demand attention, efforts, and resources because some institutions hold the statements as paramount to their legitimacy, while others may just view them as "rhetorical pyrotechnics—pretty to look at perhaps, but of little structural consequence" (Morphew, 2006). Regardless of the opposing views, vision and mission statements of HEIs are windows to the soul of the institutions, and the language they use in these statements speaks a lot about philosophy and character. Most studies on institutional statements are conducted on the contexts of their policy implications and strategic planning (Schaap & Gonzales, 2023; Píkl & Dreven, 2024), with less focus on the role of language in writing them.

Analyzing the language used in the mission and vision statements of HEIs provides valuable insights into how state universities and colleges construct and convey their institutional identity, priorities, plans, and aspirations to the stakeholders. Linguistic choices, rhetorical strategies, and discourse structures embedded in these statements not only reflect the universities' goals, but also reveal broader socio-cultural and ideological influences. By analyzing these textual elements, the researcher can uncover recurring themes, power dynamics, and the ways in which universities position themselves within the educational landscape.

This study seeks to examine common linguistic patterns, identify key themes, and assess how language reflects institutional priorities and values. By doing so, the study will contribute to the growing field of educational linguistics and discourse analysis, offering a fresh perspective on how state universities use language to define their role in society. However, despite their significance, there is limited research on the linguistic and rhetorical structures used in these statements and how they reflect the institutional identity of state universities.

For this purpose, the study aims to explore and analyze the mission and vision statements of state universities and colleges (SUCs) in Region III (Central Luzon) of the Philippines. There are a total of thirteen (13) SUCs located in seven (7) provinces in the region—with three (3) SUCs in Pampanga, two (2) each in Bulacan, Tarlac, Nueva Ecija, and Zambales, and one (1) in Aurora and in Bataan. These universities also have shown notable performance in university rankings (EduRank and AD Scientific Index) with institutions sitting in top 50 to top 200 of the rankings out of 229 (EduRank) and 334 (AD Scientific Index) universities. Taking into consideration that SUCs in Region III are performing well in university rankings, it is worth exploring how the mission and vision statements drive them in achieving their long-term or short-term goals and objectives and how they shape the identity of the universities as educational institutions. This study can be beneficial in understanding and strategically formulating mission and vision statements to make them more effective in achieving universities goals and highlighting their unique quality and identity.

## Research Questions

This study aimed to explore the language used in state universities' mission and vision statements to understand how they construct and communicate their institutional identity. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the common linguistic patterns and structures found in the mission and vision statements of state universities?
2. What rhetorical strategies are employed to convey institutional values and goals?
3. How do lexical choices and discourse elements reflect the identity and priorities of state universities?
4. In what ways do these statements align with national and global educational trends?
5. What differences and similarities exist among the mission and vision statements of various state universities in terms of language use and thematic focus?

By addressing these questions, the study will provide insights into the role of language in shaping institutional identity and contribute to a deeper understanding of how state universities use linguistic strategies to define their mission and vision.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Systemic Functional Linguistics for Text Analysis

Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) was first introduced in the 1960s by Michael Halliday, also known as M.A.K. Halliday (O'Donnell, 2012, as cited in Almurashi, 2016). It is a theory of language, often used in the field of language education, that investigates how language functions to convey meaning. SFL views the use of language as functional and its purpose is to create and convey meanings, and meanings are heavily influenced by the social and cultural context of an individual (Nordquist, 2021).

Halliday emphasizes that language has evolved and continuously growing in response to what he called the social-functional needs or the metafunctions of language—which are Ideational or the need to express experience and connect to society, Interpersonal or the need to convey emotions and thoughts and explain what is going on around, and textual or the need of organizing words to properly convey meaning (Marschall Eirence, 2021).

Aside from the three metafunctions of language, register and context is also an important key element of SFL. Register and context relates the choice of language based on the situation and how it is heavily related to the context (Zhang, 2013). Register is divided to three aspects:

Field (topic) answers the main questions like what is going on or where it is happening; basically, the subject or the matter of concern. This will also define the technicality of text whether written or spoken. If the field is technical, it tends to use formal words or informal words when talking casually with a friend or acquaintance.

Tenor (relationship between them or tone) refers to the relationship of the speaker and the listener of the message. This is related to the individual's status, social role, and power dynamics (Eaton, 2018). This can also include the tone of the speaker or writer ranging from polite to impatient or angry. One common example, the speaker will use more appropriate and formal words and polite tone when having conversation with someone superior at work.

Mode (channel) is the individual's chosen channel of communicating their message; this can be in written or spoken form.

Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics has been used for teaching and helping students to learn English as a second language (Zhang, 2013). In the context of the study, SFL can support and help unfold potential patterns in the analysis of the rhetorical patterns of mission and vision statements of the state universities in Region 3.

### **Density, Diversity and Institutional Identity**

Mission and Vision statements are different from each other, but equally important in representing an organization or institution. It is a crucial and necessary component that shapes the objectives and identity of an organization (Feder, 2023). These statements serve as a guide for every member of the organization. This also serves as a framework for organizations and institutions in crafting policies that effectively align in their best interest. Each universities has its own mission and vision statement for this very purpose—to establish its identity and explain why an institution exists and what it aims to do in the future (Cowen & Winston, 2019). The problem is that in most schools and universities, these statements are drafted for the sake of just having them (Bolling, 2022). Thus, it does not clearly carry the ambition, purpose and direction of the organization. Moreover, most of the mission and vision statements are either generic or too abstract (Kraaijenbrink, 2024).

However, content analysis tools such as lexical density and lexical diversity can help thoroughly analyze these statements. Lexical density's purpose is to measure how informative a text is, while lexical diversity measures the vocabulary of the text based on how many different or repetitive words are used (Scott, 2025). These statements are typically short, so using abstract and somehow generic statements makes it easier for institutions to create a mission and vision statement to appear inspirational and motivating. Relative to this, in a study that explored the linguistic patterns of mission and vision statements of universities and their effect on policy making of universities and the overall performance of their students, the result shows that the readability, relatability, and complexity of mission and vision statements have shown positive effect on the universities performance in university rankings (Cortés et al., 2022).

In conclusion, for a university to be able to clearly present its identity, purpose, and goals, it must strategically formulate its mission and vision statement that prioritizes addressing the stakeholders, students, and its educational and administrative staff. Ultimately, it is of utmost importance to strike the right balance in avoiding making these statements abstract and generic, while using complex words that carry concrete meaning, for members of the university and those who plan to join it might have difficulty understanding them.

## Key Findings

Recent studies in the past five years have shown how mission and vision statements were strategically created to polish the identity of the university, and the benefits of incorporating these statements to the universities official publications (digital or traditional). The following summarizes the key findings and studies relevant to this study.

Table 1: Summary of identified key findings from gathered related studies.

Author	Year	Title	Key Findings
Loyack, S.	2025	How Mission & Vision define Higher Education - A Qualitative Case Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The mission and vision of higher education institutions is sometimes “lost” as other themes related to education emerged.</li> <li>Mission and Vision statements are more effective in presenting the HEIs purpose and future growth if it is consistently affirmed in online platforms and publications.</li> <li>In the era of digitalization, an institution is defined by its mission, vision, and online presentation.</li> </ul>
Sulastri et al.	2021	Optimizing the Vision and Mission of Schools in Learning Leadership Based on Action Learning Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target Audience must be considered in drafting mission and vision statements, this includes the students, stakeholders, employees, and citizens.</li> <li>The proper choice of words is important in creating an effective and good mission and vision statement.</li> </ul>
Manning, K. D.	2021	Text Analysis of University mission statements in East Asian world-class universities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>East Asian Universities that are globally recognized put a big emphasis on themes and aspects related to university management, social, culture, and history and less emphasis on stakeholders and inclusion of students.</li> </ul>
Sakellarios, M. D., & Gann, D.	2024	Critically Evaluating Mission and Vision Statements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Due to recent trends, universities center the theme of their mission and vision statements to students.</li> <li>Mission and Vision statements affect how a university is perceived by the general public.</li> <li>Keeping the mission and vision statements up to date can be a chance for the university to address new trends and incorporate new goals and objectives of the university.</li> </ul>

## METHOD

### Research Design

The study used a qualitative approach to explore linguistic cues and rhetoric patterns existing in mission and vision statements of state universities in Region III. All thirteen (13) mission and vision statements were thoroughly analyzed with the help of analytical and content analysis tools—lexical density, lexical diversity, and the three metafunctions of language from SFL—ideational, interpersonal, and textual. The lexical density in this study was used to understand if the statements use a lot of content words and how they affect the comprehensibility of the statements. Meanwhile, lexical diversity was used in this study to analyze the different

vocabulary used in mission and vision statements of each university and evaluate if the universities used a lot of complex words or generic and abstract words. With lexical density and diversity, the statements were categorized based on their complexity and abstractness. On the other hand, the metafunctions of language from Systemic Functional Linguistics helped identify how the statements were delivered using whether passive or active voice, who and how they address the community and the public, and lastly, how they present and compose their ideals, goals, and identity. Mission and vision statements were examined using the content analysis tool that eventually led to answering the research questions of the study. These tools aided in identifying the rhetoric and linguistic patterns employed in the mission and vision statements and how they reflect the identity and goals of the universities.

## Data Collection and Analysis

The researcher finalized the list of universities included in the study that resulted in a total of thirteen (13) higher education institutions. To get the necessary data for this study, the researcher accessed the official pages and websites of state universities in Region III, Central Luzon, the Philippines, to download and secure a copy of their mission and vision statements. These statements are in English, and the latest versions are commonly found on the “About Us” section of their websites open for the public.

Table 2: List of State Universities in Region III with their Mission and Vision Statements.

SUCs	MISSION	VISION
PHILIPPINE MERCHANT MARINE ACADEMY (PMMA)	The Academy is a dynamic and inclusive government maritime learning institution that provides education and training, conducts research, and undertakes needs-based extension programs to develop competent, competitive, and ethical leaders and professionals with a deep sense of patriotism, responsive to the needs of the industry, promoting sustainable economic progress and national security.	By 2028, the Philippine Merchant Marine Academy shall be host to Centers of Excellence in maritime education, training, and research, sustained by a smart campus environment, producing ethical and patriotic maritime leaders and professionals capable of occupying vital positions in shipping companies, national maritime organizations, and international maritime bodies, and actively promoting maritime industry development, safety, security, and sustainability.
BULACAN STATE UNIVERSITY (BuSU)	Bulacan State University exists to produce highly competent, ethical and service-oriented professionals that contribute to the sustainable socio-economic growth and development of the nation	Bulacan State University is a progressive knowledge-generating institution globally recognized for excellent instruction, pioneering research, and responsive community engagements.
PRESIDENT RAMON MAGSAYSAY STATE UNIVERSITY (PRMSU)	The PRMSU shall primarily provide advanced and higher professional, technical, and special instructions in various disciplines; undertake research, extension and income generation programs for the sustainable development of Zambales, the region and the country.	PRMSU shall be a premier learner-centered and proactive university in a digital and global society.
CENTRAL LUZON STATE UNIVERSITY (CLSU)	CLSU shall develop globally competitive, work-ready, socially-responsible and empowered human resources who value life-long learning; and to generate, disseminate, and apply knowledge and technologies for	CLSU as a world-class National Research University for science and technology in agriculture and allied fields.



	poverty alleviation, environmental protection, and sustainable development.	
NUEVA ECIJA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (NEUST)	Advance knowledge generation and innovation, produce globally outstanding graduates, and transform communities towards inclusive progress	A globally renowned University as champion of sustainable societal development through ethical and empowered human resources.
PHILIPPINE STATE COLLEGE OF AERONAUTICS (PhilSCA)	PhilSCA continues to produce world-class professionals in the Aviation Industry through quality instruction, research, extension, resource management and industry partnership.	PhilSCA is leading Higher Education institution in Aviation Sciences with a balanced Liberal Arts and Technology.
TARLAC AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY (TAU)	TAU is committed to improve the quality of life through the production of globally competent graduates and relevant technologies in the service of society	TAU as one of the top 500 universities in Asia
DON HONORIO VENTURA STATE UNIVERSITY (DHVSU)	DHVSU commits itself to provide a conducive environment for the holistic development of students to become globally competitive professionals through quality instruction and services; innovation and research towards the sustainable development of society.	DHVSU envisions of becoming one of the lead universities in the ASEAN Region in producing globally competitive professionals who are capable of creating, applying and transferring knowledge and technology for the sustainable development of humanity and society.
PAMPANGA STATE AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY (PSAU)	PSAU: An Agricultural University that Enables and Empowers Employees, Students and Other Stakeholders toward Greatness, Excellence and Prosperity	To be a Responsive Premier State Agricultural University for Humane and Blissful Development
BATAAN PENINSULA STATE UNIVERSITY (BPSU)	To develop competitive graduates and empowered community members by providing relevant, innovative and transformative knowledge, research, extension and production programs and services through progressive enhancement of its human resource capabilities and institutional mechanisms.	A leading university in the Philippines recognized for its proactive contribution to Sustainable Development through equitable and inclusive programs and services by 2030
AURORA STATE COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY (ASCOT)	ASCOT shall produce globally competitive, ethically upright and gender - responsive graduates in the fields of arts and sciences, forestry, agriculture, education, information technology, industrial technology, engineering, marine and environmental sciences by promoting quality instruction, research, extension and production towards sustainable development.	A Globally-recognized Scientific and Technological University by 2027
BULACAN AGRICULTURAL STATE	Provide excellent instruction, conduct relevant research and foster community engagement that produce highly competent	A globally-engaged higher education institution of agriculture and allied disciplines.

COLLEGE (BASC)	graduates necessary for the development of the country.	
TARLAC STATE UNIVERSITY (TSU)	TSU shall develop highly competitive and empowered human resources fostering responsive global education, future-proof research culture, inclusive and relevant extension programs, and sustainable production projects.	A globally competitive university recognized for excellence in sciences and emerging technologies

After gathering all the mission and vision statements of the SUCs, the researcher then proceeded to analyze the statements using the content analysis tools. The analysis involved several key steps:

1. The mission and vision statements were analyzed by looking for keywords that can be found in most of the statements. The analysis included multiple readings and coding to identify the recurring themes.
2. Then, the statements underwent three (3) analysis that correspond to the objectives of the study. With linguistic choice as the first analysis, identifying the linguistic choices and how these choices affect their statements. Under the linguistic choice, the researcher was able to answer whether the statements are: (1) concrete or abstract, (2) complex or direct, (3) lexical selection and modals, and (4) passive or active.
3. Followed by examining their rhetorical strategies—ethos or how the statements show the credibility of the universities, pathos or how the statements evoke the emotions of the stakeholders and the community, and lastly, logos or how the statements are logically structured and formulated to serve the purpose and the goals of the universities.
4. The final stage was the analysis of the discourse structures of the statement. It was divided into two—the thematic progression and intertextuality and references. For thematic progression, the researcher analyzed the general-specific, cause-and-effect relationship, and the problem-solution structure of the statements. Meanwhile, for intertextuality and references, the researcher uncovered the relationship of the texts with each other and how they create meaning, as well as how the statements reference the existing government and international goals for development and education. The analysis was guided by the three (3) content analysis tools to ensure that the analysis was done objectively.

## RESULTS

There were four (4) main themes emerged after an in-depth analysis of the mission and vision statements of the thirteen (13) SUCs; (1) Global Competence and Recognition, (2) Sustainability and Societal Development, (3) Innovation, Technology and Research, (4) Developing Human Skills, and Leadership (see TABLE 3). Aside from themes, the mission and vision statements were further broken down and analyzed including intertextuality and references.

The results showed "Global Competence and Recognition" as the first theme that emerged from this analysis. This reveals that many of the universities in the study have mentioned their aspirations to become globally recognized, internationally relevant, and on par with global standards by producing globally competent students. The results showed that universities tend to use words and phrases associated with the theme such as "globally recognized," "world-class national research university," "globally renowned university," and "one of the top 500 universities in Asia." Eleven (11) out of thirteen (13) universities have included this theme in their statements; six (6) universities have included it in their mission and vision statement, while five (5) universities included it in either of their mission or vision statements. The responsibility and the desire to contribute to the continuous development of society are strongly manifested as twelve (12) universities have shown the second theme, "Sustainability and Societal Development." This theme showcases the commitment of universities to not only contribute to individuals' academic growth but also position themselves as institutions that care for the community and society. Associated terms and phrases in this theme are "poverty alleviation," "sustainable socio-economic growth," "sustainable development," and "inclusive progress." The third theme, "Innovation,

Technology, and Research,” was identified after eleven (11) universities referenced the theme with terms and phrases like “pioneering research,” “advance education and research,” “knowledge generation and innovation,” “aviation sciences,” “future-proof research culture,” and “relevant technologies.” The result shows that in the era of digitalization, the universities envision themselves as centers for generating knowledge and technological innovations by cultivating students who are skilled in research. The last theme that emerged from all thirteen (13) universities was “Developing Human Skills and Leadership.” This theme has shown that despite differences in identity, purposes, and goals, the universities aim to produce high-quality professionals who are ethically and morally upright. The theme was identified due to universities’ consistent reference to “competent graduates,” “ethical,” “service-oriented,” “gender responsive,” “life-long learning,” and “empowered human resources.”

Table 3: Recurring Themes in SUCs’ Mission and Vision

Themes	SUCs with the theme	SUCs without the theme	Total
Global Competence and Recognition	PMMA, BulSU, PRMSU, CLSU, NUEST, PhilSCA, TAU, DHVSU, ASCOT, BASC, and TSU	PSAU, and BPSU	<b>11 out of 13 universities</b>
Sustainability and Societal Development	PMMA, BulSU, PRMSU, CLSU, NUEST, TAU, DHVSU, PSAU, BPSU, ASCOT, BASC, and TSU	PhilSCA	<b>12 out of 13 universities</b>
Innovation, Technology, and Research	PMMA, BulSU, PRMSU, CLSU, NUEST, PhilSCA, TAU, DHVSU, BPSU, ASCOT, and TSU	PSAU and BASC	<b>11 out of 13 universities</b>
Developing Human Skills and Leadership	PMMA, BulSU, PRMSU, CLSU, NUEST, PhilSCA, TAU, DHVSU, PSAU, BPSAU, ASCOT, BASC, and TSU	-	<b>13 out of 13 universities</b>

The mission and vision statements were carefully analyzed using the three (3) content analysis tools. For linguistic choice, the statements were evaluated whether they are abstract or concrete, complex or direct, their tone, lexical choice and use of modals (see TABLE 4 for summarized results). The results show that all the mission and vision statements were written in abstract language. After careful analysis of the statements using lexical density, the researcher found out that due to the short nature of mission and vision statements, the universities prefer to use abstract words and phrases such as “patriotism,” “knowledge-generating,” “sustainable societal development,” and “empowered and future-proof” to communicate broad and timeless aspirations of universities. Tied with the abstractness of the mission and vision statements was the selection of the most fitting words, or the lexical selection of universities to express their identity, broad ideals, and goals. Like the theme, Global Competence and Recognition, the universities used different words and phrases like “globally excellent” and “world-class.” The research also evaluated whether the statements are complex or direct as part of linguistic choice. Results showed that five (5) universities—PMMA, PRMSU, CLSU, DHVSU, and BPSU have structured both of their mission and vision statements in a complex manner, using multiple clauses and combining them into one idea or sentence. Meanwhile, TAU, PhilSCA, PSAU, and BASC used direct sentence structure for either mission, vision, or both statements of their university. On the other hand, four (4) universities—BulSU, NUEST, ASCOT, and TSU have both complex and direct mission or vision statements. BulSU and NUEST have direct structures for their mission statements and complex structures for their vision statements, and vice versa for ASCOT and TSU. The lexical selection and the complexity or directness were identified using lexical diversity.

Applying the Interpersonal Metafunction from SFL, the researcher determined if the universities use passive or active voice in crafting these institutional statements. This pertains to the strategy applied by universities in delivering their mission and vision statements and establishing relationships with its stakeholders. The results showed that out of thirteen (13) universities, only TAU used passive voice in their mission statement. In their



mission, the university stated, “TAU is committed to improve the quality of life through the production of globally competent graduates and relevant technologies in the service of society.” The word “committed” is used to describe what the university experiences and not what it actively does, making the tone of the mission statement formal and institutional indicating a distant interpersonal relationship with its stakeholders. On the other hand, the rest of the universities used active voice, creating a closer, more engaging, and personal interpersonal relationship with their stakeholders. It can be observed that universities use words and phrases like “commits itself,” “exists to produce,” and “shall produce,” and these phrases put the universities as the primary subject that acts. In contrast, for vision statements, NUEST, BPSU, ASCOT, and TSU use passive voice, as their vision statements are inclined to state the universities' desired recognition and growth, making the interpersonal relationship distant but direct. Generally, the results showed that most of the universities used active voice in their vision statements with statements that put the universities as doers of the action and clearly communicated the universities envisioned future for their stakeholders, nation, and community.

Finally, the modals used by the universities are identified by looking at how the universities express their future goals, beliefs, and aims that they want to achieve. The ideational metafunction helped the researcher identify the relationship and use of modals in the university statements. PRMSU, CLSU, ASCOT, and TSU utilize the word “shall” in their mission to emphasize the universities obligation and commitment. While other universities do not use modal words like shall [commitment], must [obligation], and may or can [possibility], the ideational metafunction of universities is indirectly implied by using terms like “commits itself” or just directly telling their ideations without the use of modals. The results showed that PRSU and PMMA are the only universities that used shall in their vision statement, indicating a clear and formal obligation. In contrast, many of the universities do not use modals for their vision statements but use different structure strategies in expressing the visionary and ideational intent. DHVSU and PSAU use a declarative format, showing their assertiveness and adding clarity with their vision. The phrases “DHVS envision of becoming...” and “To be responsive...”. While universities like BulSU and CLSU use a descriptive strategy in conveying their envisioned future for the university with phrases like “is a progressive knowledge-generating...” and “CLSU as a world-class...”.

Table 4: Linguistic Choices of SUCs

SUCs	Abstract or Concrete		Complex or Direct		Active or Passive		Modals
	Mission	Vision	Mission	Vision	Mission	Vision	
PMMA	Abstract	Abstract	Complex	Complex	Active	Active	Shall (commitment)
BulSU	Abstract	Abstract	Direct	Complex	Active	Active	none (but uses “exist”)
PRMSU	Abstract	Abstract	Complex	Complex	Active	Active	Shall (commitment)
CLSU	Abstract	Abstract	Complex	Complex	Active	Active	Shall (commitment)
NUEST	Abstract	Abstract	Direct	Complex	Active	Passive	none (but uses command-structure)
PhilSCA	Abstract	Abstract	Direct	Direct	Active	Active	none (but uses “continues to produce”)
TAU	Abstract	Abstract	Direct	Direct	Passive	Active	none (but uses “committed to”)
DHVSU	Abstract	Abstract	Complex	Complex	Active	Active	none (“commits itself”)
PSAU	Abstract	Abstract	Direct	Direct	Active	Active	none (“enables”, “empowers”)

BPSU	Abstract	Abstract	Complex	Complex	Active	Passive	none (but uses an assertive structure)
ASCOT	Abstract	Abstract	Complex	Direct	Active	Passive	Shall (commitment), Will (willingness and possibility)
BASC	Abstract	Abstract	Direct	Direct	Active	Active	none (but uses imperative tone)
TSU	Abstract	Abstract	Complex	Direct	Active	Passive	Shall (commitment)

Following the linguistic choices, the researcher studied the rhetorical strategies employed by the universities in their mission and vision statements by looking through the ethos, pathos, and logos (see TABLE 5). The results have shown that in mission statements, universities prioritize showing appeal to ethos (credibility) and logos (logical reasoning) tied with the recurring themes discovered by the researcher, themes like global competence and recognition, and innovation, technology, and research. On the other hand, pathos, or the appeal to emotion, is minimal and subtle, referencing patriotism, confidence, and empowerment with cue words like “socially responsible,” “greatness,” “excellence,” and “prosperity.” Moreover, the vision statements of universities have shown a strong inclination towards ethos and logos, establishing the institutions’ credibility, authority, trustworthiness, reputation, and leadership roles. Meanwhile, just like in mission statements, the vision statements of universities have a subtle and minimal appeal to emotion or pathos. With words like “empowerment,” “sustainable development,” and “inclusivity” that somehow invoke emotional appeal to stakeholders.

Table 5: Rhetorical Strategies

Rhetorical Strategies	SUCs
Ethos (Credibility)	SUCs have shown a strong appeal to ethos, emphasizing their capabilities and authority.
Logos (Logical Reasoning)	SUCs have also shown a strong appeal to logos by presenting their structured goals and plans.
Pathos (Emotional Appeal)	All the SUCs have a minimal and subtle appeal to emotions in their mission and vision statements.

Finally, discourse structures of institutional statements were put under consideration. For thematic structures, the researcher also used the textual metafunction in identifying how the universities used language in organizing their statements and making them cohesive, structured, and meaningful (see TABLE 6). The results have shown that all institutions followed the general-to-specific structure, with their mission statements starting with broad ideas and closing with specific and targeted ideals and goals. For example, PMMA started its mission with a broad statement, “The Academy is a dynamic and inclusive government maritime learning institution...” followed by a specific function of the university “that provides education and training, conducts research, and undertakes needs-based extension programs to develop competent, competitive, and ethical leaders and professionals...”. This general-to-specific structure allows the universities to explain their complex ideas, allowing the readers to understand the statement gradually. The mission statements have also shown a cause-and-effect relationship. Positioning the universities’ commitment and initiatives as the cause and the effect is developed leadership and skilled professionals that contribute to the sustainable development and societal progress of the nation. The result problem-solution structure is also implied and stated in the statements addressing the challenges experienced by the country or institution and positioning themselves as solutions through their educational initiatives like the “future-proof research culture” of TSU, “quality instructions” of PhilSCA, “production programs” of BPSU, and “income generation programs” of PRMSU. In vision statements, the institutions also follow the general-to-specific structure, but the difference is it is more focused on the aspirations of the universities as reflected in the four (4) main themes of the statements. Cause-and-effect

relationship, and problem-solution structure are also evident like in mission statements where the university positions itself and its initiatives as the cause and solution to problems.

Table 6: Discourse Structure: Thematic Progression

Thematic Progression	SUCs	Explanation
General-Specific	PMMA, BulSU, PRMSU, CLSU, NUEST, PhilSCA, TAU, DHVSU, PSAU, BPSU, ASCOT, BASC, and TSU	All institutions follow a general-to-specific structure, beginning with broad goals (such as producing competent graduates or fostering development) and narrowing down to specific strategies like instruction, research, and community engagement.
Cause-and-Effect Relationship	PMMA, BulSU, PRMSU, CLSU, NUEST, PhilSCA, TAU, DHVSU, PSAU, BPSU, ASCOT, BASC, and TSU	They each demonstrate a cause-and-effect relationship, showing how their educational and research initiatives lead to the development of skilled professionals who contribute to societal progress, economic growth, and sustainable development.
Problem-Solution Structure	PMMA, BulSU, PRMSU, CLSU, NUEST, PhilSCA, TAU, DHVSU, PSAU, BPSU, ASCOT, BASC, and TSU	A problem-solution structure is also evident, as the institutions recognize key challenges like the demands of globalization, the need for inclusive education, and the pursuit of sustainable development. These institutions proactively address such issues through specialized academic programs, targeted research initiatives, and a sustained commitment to community-engaged service.

For Intertextuality, the results show that all the mission statements of the thirteen (13) universities in this study have referenced and are aligned with the national and global educational frameworks. For the national educational framework, the universities have aligned themselves with the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2023-2028. The framework focuses on human capital development, inclusive growth, ethical governance, and technological innovation. This is evident with the themes and keywords present in the mission statements of the universities. For the global educational framework, the results show that universities consistently reference the goals existing in the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). However, it is noticeable that universities focused only on three SDGs, which are SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 8 (Decent Work), and SDG 9 (Innovation). Additionally, the universities also integrate some of UNESCO's Four Pillars of Education, reflecting the principles of transformative and ethical learning. These connections are identified with keywords and phrases from the previous analysis done by the researcher with lexical selection, recurring themes, and rhetorical strategies. The vision statements also show a strong resonance with global and educational frameworks namely—PDP 2023-2028, Commission on Higher Education (CHED) Outcome-Based Education (OBE), UN SDGs, UNESCO's Education 2030, and sector-specific standards for universities like PMMA, PhilSCA, and ASCOT which specialize in maritime and aviation programs.

## DISCUSSION

The analysis revealed several linguistic patterns and structures in the statements of SUCs. In the results section, it is mentioned that most of the statements are abstract, meaning they contain a high amount of content words (nouns, adjectives, and verbs), implying that the statements have higher lexical density. The constant use of abstract words like “development,” “innovation,” and “sustainability” is one of the common linguistic patterns in the mission and vision statements. Abstract words helped the universities to communicate broad ideals and goals while also maintaining short and meaningful statements. Since the statements contain abstract words, the statements are considered complex rather than direct. This is further proven with the lexical selection of universities that use words that require the readers to be slightly knowledgeable in English vocabulary to understand and comprehend the statements. This linguistic pattern nods to one of Halliday's Metafunction of

Language from SFL, that is, the ideational metafunction tying in higher-education academic text, which contains a lot of content words. Essentially, mission and vision statements use language to represent complex ideals, goals, and institutional identity in compact, short, and information-rich texts.

Despite the absence of modals in most statements, it is notable that commitment, possibility, and obligation are implied by SUCs in a subtle and minimal way. With the help of dense vocabulary that states the universities' aspirations, identity, and goals and active voice which puts the institution as the center and doer of the actions, the institutions were able to address and align the expectations of its internal and external stakeholders.

The analysis was also able to identify the rhetorical strategies employed by SUCs to communicate their values and goals. In both mission and vision statements, the universities prioritize the appeal to ethos and logos, which shows their aim to communicate their credibility, goals, and strategies on how they are going to achieve these goals by stating their ideals, values, facts, and evidence that establish their ability as an educational institution. Ethos, or the appeal to their credibility, relates to the interpersonal metafunction of SFL. Universities establish relationships with their stakeholders by building their credibility and authority through mission and vision statements. Meanwhile, logos nods to ideational metafunction by presenting logical reasons, facts, and arguments that persuade the readers through language. On the other hand, the analysis revealed that appeal to emotions or pathos is always subtle in these statements; however, with textual metafunctions, the universities were able to appeal to the readers' emotions of patriotism, motivation, and empowerment with active tone, vivid imagery, and storytelling. The only notable difference between mission and vision statements is its aim to do with readers. The mission statements use the emphasis on ethos and logos to build trust, rationality, and logical clarity, while vision statements use ethos and logos to make their statements appear more goal-oriented with minimal emphasis on emotions.

The third research question seeks to understand how lexical choices and discourse elements reflect the identity and priorities of SUCs. The lexical choices like “globally,” “top 100 in Asia,” and “service-oriented,” and discourse elements—cause-and-effect relationship, general-specific, and problem-solution—show that SUCs place themselves in the center of their aspirations and goals. This also reveals how the universities wanted to see their institutions, faculty, and students on a national and global level. Overall, the lexical selection and discourse elements found in mission and vision statements function not just as language but as strategic identity branding that shapes how universities communicate themselves to their stakeholders and society. Their employed strategies in choosing and incorporating discourse elements reflect their calculated and intentional effort to stand out in the higher education field while keeping their institutions aligned with global and national educational goals that revolve around inclusivity, global relevance, technological innovation, and sustainable development.

The fourth research question is in line with national and global educational trends that are mainly discussed in the recurring themes and intertextuality section in results. The use of keywords like “inclusive progress,” “poverty alleviation,” “holistic development,” “sustainable development,” and “national growth” exhibits a clear alignment of SUCs to both national and global educational frameworks and trends. Nationally, the statements reference the educational goals set by PDP 2023-2028 and CHED OBE and globally, the statements align with UN SDGs and UNESCO's Education 2030. The statements also put an emphasis on research, technological and scientific innovation, and lifelong skills, which reflect the trends found in globally top-ranking universities, which are evaluated based on their reputation, research outputs, and scientific contributions. As mentioned in the introduction, the thirteen (13) universities rank well in the Philippines and Asia, proving their commitment and alignment with educational trends.

Lastly, this study seeks to know the differences and similarities that exist among the mission and vision statements in terms of language use and thematic focus. The study revealed notable similarities and differences in the statements of the thirteen (13) SUCs. One of the most distinct similarities is the consistent use of abstract words and diverse vocabulary, resulting in a high-density academic language reflecting the strategic nature of the institutions. Additionally, it was observed that there were four (4) recurring themes found in almost all of the statements, which are (1) Global Competence and Recognition, (2) Sustainability and Societal Development, (3) Innovation, Technology and Research, and (4) Developing Human Skills and Leadership. These themes are similar to the findings of several studies that concluded that universities in Asia tend to put emphasis on



internationalization and global competitiveness (Manning, 2021; Dumanig & Sumaco, 2019) and underscore aspiration for growth and international standing (Efe & Ozer, 2015).

Most of the universities also use similar structures where their mission or vision starts in a broad or general statement followed by goal-oriented and specific statements. The statements also prioritize appeal to ethos and logos and minimal or subtle appeal to pathos. On the other hand, the differences are mostly due to lexical selection and the SUC-specific priorities and goals. PMMA, PhilSCA, PSAU, CLSU, and ASCOT used program-specific terms, as could be observed on the following:

*“...occupying vital positions in shipping companies, national maritime organizations, and international maritime bodies, and actively promoting maritime industry development, safety, security, and sustainability.” - PMMA*

*“...leading Higher Education institution in Aviation Sciences with a balanced Liberal Arts and Technology.” - PhilSCA*

*“An Agricultural University that Enables and Empowers Employees, Students...” - PSAU*

Moreover, there is an observed difference in the tone and aspiration of universities. Other universities' ambition is broad and general, like in the case of PSAU, DHVSU, and CLSU; while other universities focus on measurable, practical and service-oriented goals like PMMA, TAU, and BulSU.

Broad and General	Measurable, Practical, and Service-oriented Goals
“To be a Responsive Premier State Agricultural University...” - PSAU	“By 2028, the Philippine Merchant Marine Academy...” - PMMA
“DHVSU envisions of becoming one of the lead universities in the ASEAN Region...” - DHVSU	“TAU as one of the top 500 universities in Asia...” - TAU
“CLSU as a world-class National Research University...” - CLSU	“... exists to produce highly competent, ethical and service-oriented professionals that contribute to the sustainable socio-economic growth and development of the nation.” - BULSU

Furthermore, another difference that was identified is the target audience of the statements of the universities. BPSU and PRMSU use terms like “regional development,” placing greater emphasis on local growth and national impact. In contrast, most of the universities place importance on global recognition and international reputation.

The findings of this study prove that language in academic texts functions as more than just describing the mission and vision of the SUCs, but they also function as a strategic text that influences the direction, decision-making, plans, and priorities of institutions. Thus, drafting or revising institutions' mission and vision statements ought not to be the sole responsibility of the administration but may also involve all the stakeholders. This collective effort will make sure that statements are clearly understood and effectively represent the aspirations of the entire academic community. The vocabulary diversity, discourse structures, complexity, and abstractness of statements reveal the efforts of universities to position themselves as the center of the current educational trends. By incorporating linguistic and discourse analysis into existing and relevant academic text in the form of mission and vision statements, this study contributes to a growing field of educational linguistics as it offers new and valuable insights into how language is used to create meanings and how universities define their role to their stakeholders and society through these texts.



## CONCLUSION

The study was able to identify four recurring main themes from the mission and vision statements of SUCs; (1) Global Competence and Recognition, (2) Sustainability and Societal Development, (3) Innovation, Technology, and Research, and (4) Developing Human Skills and Leadership. These recurring themes reflect how SUCs in Region III align and position themselves in the current global and national educational trends and consistent with the findings of similar discourse studies in the region. The analysis also revealed that the statements are strategic institutional texts that aim to introduce the university's aspirations, identity, goals, and commitment to service to the public and stakeholders of HEIs. Moreover, it also revealed that despite having almost the same themes, goals, and references to global and national educational and development frameworks, the linguistic choices of universities in the study made them stand out and different from each other.

Moreover, the study was able to alleviate the research scarcity on language analysis on these statements, different from other studies that focus on investigating mission-vision statements in the context of policymaking. Since it was determined that the identity and aspirations of an institution are revealed in their vision and mission statements, university officials may take pains and place additional prudence in formulating and revising these institutional texts, for they offer the public a window and the academic community a guide to the university's path. While the findings offer rich, content-specific insights to the growing field of educational linguistic and discourse analysis, the scope was limited to region-specific SUCs. Future researchers may extend the scope to other national universities and may include private-owned universities. The study is also limited to studying the statements only, so future researchers may also explore the possible influence of these statements on the success and growth of universities or how they correlate to their rankings in Asia and the world.

Overall, the study highlights the power of language in creating meaning and shaping the identity of an institution, specifically in the academic field. It also highlights the strategic use of language in communicating credibility and authority with stakeholders and society. Having said this, institutions of learning may make use of the mission and vision statements as an opportunity for branding for their schools and strategically putting across their philosophy, advocacy, and identity to the public. The insights produced by this study can guide other universities and institutions, at large, in crafting strategic, purposeful, and relevant mission and vision statements. In a time where institutions create mission and vision for the purpose of having it, this study affirms the importance of a meaningful statement that will keep their institution on the path they aim for.

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