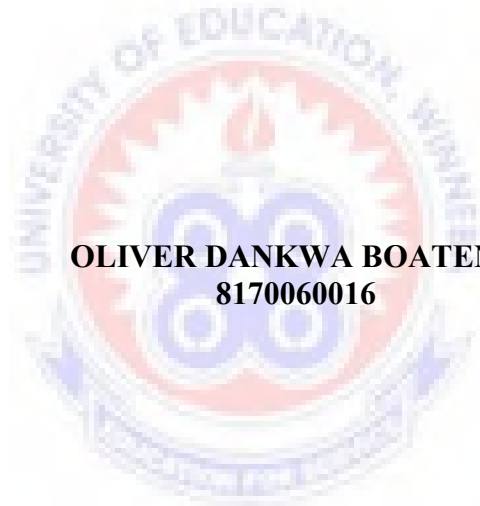


UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF THE LANGUAGE OF WEBSITES
OF UNIVERSITIES IN GHANA**



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**A thesis in the Department of English Education,
Faculty of Foreign Languages Education and Communication,
submitted to the School of Graduate Studies in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the award of
Master of Philosophy
(English Language)
in the University of Education, Winneba**

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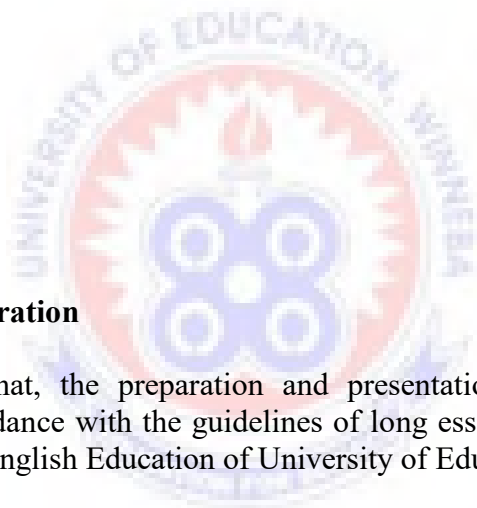
DECLARATION

Student's Declaration

I, Oliver Dankwa Boateng, hereby declare that, except for references made to other persons' work which have been duly acknowledged, this long essay is an original research undertaken by me and has not been presented in part or in whole for the award of a degree in this university or elsewhere.

Signature:

Date:



Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that, the preparation and presentation of this long essay was supervised in accordance with the guidelines of long essay supervision laid down by the Department of English Education of University of Education, Winneba.

Supervisor's Name: Dr Peace Chinwendu Israel

Signature:

Date:

DEDICATION

To Associate-Professor Johannes Yaw Sekyi-Baidoo of Centre for International Programmes of University of Education, Winneba and in memory of my father, Mr Prince Boateng.



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ABSTRACT

This study examined the language of websites of universities in Ghana and how they used language to represent themselves on their institutional websites. It relied on Fairclough's (1993; 1995a, 2001) approach to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) for its theoretical and analytical framework. Fairclough's approach to CDA allowed three-dimensional analysis which include textual analysis, process analysis and societal analysis. The first six premier universities in Ghana were purposively selected for this study, namely, University of Ghana, University of Cape Coast, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, University of Education, Winneba, University for Development Studies and Valley View University. The findings revealed the following: the universities built their institutional identities through the use of both textual and visual elements; the universities expressed their power to determine what to present to viewers of the website; the language on the websites were institution centred; the universities used similar texts that serve as promotional discourse; the websites contained elements that presented the universities with peculiar African (Ghanaian) characteristics. This study concluded by making some recommendations which would enable the universities in Ghana to know how they were represented on their institutional websites in order to improve their marketing strategies especially toward their visibility on the global front, better positioning on the international ranking and the attraction of international students.



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

The use of the worldwide web in information dissemination is very crucial to the twenty-first century. The rapid development of information technology makes information very accessible to the global world. Businesses, as well as institutions, use the worldwide web as means of advertisement. Website advertisement over the years has become the medium for marketing goods and services.

Since the 1990s, there had been some studies to analyse the use of World Wide Web (WWW) communication theories. Online advertising emerged in 1994 when Hot Wired sold the first banner ads to several advertisers. This boosted the revenue in the United States, estimated at of \$7.1 billion in 2001 which was about 3.1 percent of overall advertising spending. The dot-com bust declined or weakened many of the early online advertising industry players (Nosrati, Karimi, Mohammadi & Malekian, 2013). Fu and Pirolli (2007) indicated that the WWW has become a domain that opens the “possibility for psychological, anthropological, and sociological study of complex everyday human cognition”. With the introduction of WWW, there is a wide range of materials for research. The resources online can be utilized as the basis of research since they are now part of human experience.

Kent and Taylor (1998) explained the link between the WWW and the online dialogic communication. This study gave descriptions of the “non-existing-before features” that Web 2.0 carried with its appearance. To the agreement of many authors, the development of Web 2.0 was an enhancement of the WWW version with features like

User-generated content, interoperability, modularity, and the social dimension for the creation and sharing of information (Boyd & Ellison, 2007; Kaplan, 2012). Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) added that the Web 2.0 converted the use of the internet into a network platform which was supported by diverse applications to encourage the creation of collaboration communities. These new features were supported by technological developments that supported a more complex communication channel which provide global space for opinions, hypermedia, HD videos, blogs, podcasting, wikis, and news feeds, and all of which affected the structure of consumers' communication (Kent & Taylor, 1998; Corrocher, 2011; Lau & Liao, 2012).

The availability of the Web 2.0 increased the use of the internet for advertisement since all information could be shared over the internet. This has brought about different strategies for online advertisement. These include display advertising, search engine marketing, search engine optimization, social media marketing, email marketing, referral marketing, affiliate marketing, content marketing and inbound marketing. Institutional websites could combine most of these features at a time to advertise their goods and services. This has motivated many institutions to make good use of their websites to attract their targeted customers.

Nowadays website becomes an essential part of every profession. Website makes strong impact on the image of your company [and institution]. It is very important when you are more concern about exploring your business worldwide. Through website designing you will get identity, global presence and good business channel. Business without website means you are running business without having your visiting card; you can see your website as your visiting card. By effective profiling of your company [institution], products /services, you can build corporate image of the company in your business website (Shaik, 2005).

Universities across the world use their institutional websites to attract potential customers who include students and donors. Thus, like other organizations, colleges and universities compete for customers (i.e., students) and resources. However, competition goes beyond customers and resources. Organizations vie for institutional legitimacy and political power, which translates into economic and social fitness (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Consequently, to maintain institutional reputation, colleges and universities must rely on a variety of tactics in order to create a distinctive image, one that attempts to communicate to a number of audiences.

There is strong evidence that institutional websites serve as the tool to market institutions. Research suggests that 60% to 70% of college and university website access comes from external visitors, with prospective students among the primary visitors (McCollum, 1999; Middleton, McConnell & Davidson, 1999; Pooch & Lefond, 2001; Schneider & Bruton, 2004). Also, eighty-four percent of prospective students were reported to have used institutional websites to do research and find information on colleges and universities. This indicates that websites play a vital role in the college-choice process (e.g., Anctil, 2008; Hossler, 1999; Pooch & Lefond, 2001). College and university websites often serve as the first, if not the only impression of the institution for prospective students; in fact, Anderson and Reid (1999) stated that, “visiting university websites seems to have become a norm—with many people considering their visit to a university website as their first visit to the university itself” (p. 54). There is no doubt that today the effective management and planning of educational institutions require more than the traditional advertisement and identity development in newspapers, radio and television advertisement, as well as mounting of bill boards. The higher educational institutions must be crafty and

present messages which will coagulate the experience of the target group in order to get competitive advantage on the academic market, as well as alumni and donors.

Education in the twenty-first century is geared towards student-centred approach. In the light of this, all resources are to be user-friendly. Universities therefore use their websites to create modules for students. Libraries nowadays is hosted on institutional websites. Instructions on the websites lead the students to the appropriate area of interest. The academic page must be enriched with resources to interest the student. The textual and the visual elements on the website come together to form the visitor's impression. The representation does not only reflect the social trend, but also the institution's own tradition and reputation (Hoang & Lizana, 2015). Edu-Buandoh (2010) study on the Cooperate Strategic Plan of the universities in Ghana noted that the administrative discourse of public funded universities in Ghana has changed from academic discourse to a business discourse. The universities sought to attract donors as well as prospective students.

Recently, all the public universities in Ghana used online application for admission; this ensured regular visits of applicants to the websites of the universities. However, despite the online admission, which is not restricted to any geographical boundary, there is less international application. For instance, in 2017, out of the 15,506 admitted students to Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, only 268 were international students, which represented 1.73%. Also, out of the 27,239 students admitted to University of Ghana, only 745 students were international students representing 2.74%. University of Education, Winneba, University of Cape Coast, University for Development Studies, and Valley View University at their 2017 matriculations were silent on the number of international students. Although this

could be attributed to other factors such as the economic and social standard of living in Ghana, institutional policy makers should understand and design marketing strategies to attract the expected number of students.

As stated by Dorkenoo, Nyarko, Agbemava and Asimah (2015), tertiary institutions in Ghana were not using informative advertisements which help to improve the image of the higher education institutions in the creation of awareness and persuasion of audience. The higher education institutional websites consist of two main structures: content and development. The content deals with who and what is on the website. The content therefore must be purposely written to meet the target group and to inform. Persuasive and informative rhetoric form the basis for such content. The development answers the question, how. This includes functionality, innovation and visibility (Losonczi, 2012). There is no argument that how the development will be will be dependent on the target group and the information which forms the content; hence content and development are interrelated. There is the need to build academic reputation and college attributes which comprise the size of graduate orientation, technical orientation, fine arts orientation, and liberalness. This should be carefully crafted to arouse the interest of the prospective student to explore these avenues as many students utilize the social media and web for college search.

The analysis of the language of the higher educational institutional websites helps to bring to light the online appearance and reputation of that particular educational institution. Also the ideological presupposition that is hidden beneath the surface structure of the language use on the websites is unveiled. The choice of topic, purpose, relations and social distance is embedded in the language. This is determined by the choice of vocabulary, grammar and text structure. Words connect us to the

world of experience. The vocabularies or words therefore are the tools for encoding one's ideology. The choice of grammar adds experiential value to the choice of vocabulary. The ideological meaning of a text is exposed through the analysis of the process type of the verbs as well as the predominate participants with key consideration of the type of sentence, relational values and logical connectors. It should however be mentioned that themes are not only achieved through the use of words but also the style, outline of text, colour, images, forms and layout, (Pietikämen & Mäntynen, 2009), and these are also the focus of this research. The linguistic choice and the linguistic structure both projects institutional identity and institutional online presence.

This study therefore used Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to find out how universities in Ghana, through language use were represented on their institutional websites. CDA evolved from the critical theory of language with the focus on language as a form of social practice. Social practices had historical contexts for their production and interpretation to serve a particular interest. As explained by Bloor and Bloor (2007), "critical discourse analysis is interested in the way in which language and discourse are used to achieve social goals and in the part this use play role in social maintenance and change" (p. 2). CDA studies are not simply the study of language structures and text but they extend to the study of "people, institutions and organisations" and CDA approach establishes that the "relation between form and content is not arbitrary" but rather constrained by social, cultural and political constraints (Habib, Farahnaz, Akbar & Ali, 2015, p. 138). CDA perceives discourse as "a form of social practice" which uses language to express human experience and constructs social structures (Fairclough, Graham, Lemke & Wodak, 2004). This

makes CDA interdisciplinary and employs the eclectic approach to extract the inherent ideologies in intricate social phenomena.

There were a few studies using CDA to examine the websites of higher educational institutions. Chipper (2006) conducted a research on how Romanian universities represent themselves on their institutional websites. The findings were then compared to the discourses of higher institutions in UK, France, Germany and Italy. It was observed that the discourse of Romanian universities was affected by social change. The higher educational institutions communication were also the same as the enterprises but the educational institutions managed to create professional image.

When the discourse of Romanian universities was compared to the discourses of some European Union countries discourse, the local Romanian culture was still magnificent. The studies revealed that while young universities used conversational style in order to establish a relationship with potential students, the older were very official and conventional with their language use in order to create homogeneity.

Saichaie (2011) also examined textual and visual representation on the institutional websites of US colleges and universities of different control type, geographic location and admission selectivity. The study revealed that they made use of promotional discourse. The promotional discourse were similar which showed uncertainty and control of information. The similarities and uncertainties on the websites might confuse visitors in the decision making on college or university choice. The uncertainty was the result of limited information on the financial aid provided in the school, hence potential students might not know how they might finance their education. The institutions exercised control on the information that appeared on the website as they chose what to present, foreground, and exclude.

Hoang and Rojas-Lizana (2015) also examined how two Australian universities represented themselves through the use of language on their institutional websites. The study was a comparison of the way their institutional identity was constructed in their relationship with prospective students. The use of CDA helped to bring out the social factors which affected the discourse and their effects on social structures and relationships. After the study of the Home page, About Us and Future Student pages, the study confirmed that the two universities used promotional discourse to represent themselves and to attract potential students. Concrete evidence, such as logo, images, videos, numbers, testimonials and rankings were used to shape the institutional identity and to heighten their reputation. The language on the websites were presented in the conversational style in order to build public relationship. However, there were some differences. University of Melbourne placed emphasis on international prestige because it was an older university while Macquarie University concentrated on national prestige since it was a younger university. University of Melbourne used authoritative language with itself at the centre which created distance between the university and the students but Macquarie University made the students the centre of their discourse.

Universities in Ghana also utilize the institutional websites to build their global reputation. The language on the websites are worth studying to know how these reputations are built. According to Webometric Ranking (2018), University of Ghana topped the universities in Ghana but it was ranked 1555 in the world. Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology which was established with the purpose to improve science and technology in the country and the world was second in Ghana and ranked 1981 in the world. University of Cape Coast and University of Education, Winneba which produce graduate teachers for the country were ranked 3059 and 5513

in the world respectively. This study therefore examined the language of the universities websites to identify how they build their institutional identity and reputation, as well as create the kind of promotional discourse on their websites which could attract students and donors. The study took into consideration the mission and vision of the universities, as well as Ghanaian and marketability of the institutions as it examined the Home, About Us, Admissions, and Academics pages of the websites.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Universities in Ghana aim to become internationally recognized, yet the study of how the universities on Ghana build their institutional representation through language on their institutional websites has received less attention. According to Arina, Koke and Jansone-Ratinika (2017), “the university website provides an insight into the implementation of the educational process by representing the mindset, values, and positions of the individuals at the university”. However, as stated by Hoang and Lizana (2015), minimal works have been done on how these institutional websites used language to construct their institutional identity. Some works include Ancil’s (2008) worked on Selling Higher Education; Saichaie’s (2011) Representation on college and University websites: an Approach using Critical Discourse Analysis and Chipper (2006) who investigated how Romanian universities represent themselves on their institutional websites and then compared the discourse of Romanian universities with that of higher institutions in UK, France, Germany and Italy. Schimel, Motley, Racic, Marco and Eschenfelder (2010) through a survey realized that ninety-four percent of the student respondents examined the institutional websites before considering admission. Given the importance of institutional websites to both the prospective students and the universities, it was appropriate and timely to investigate

how universities in Ghana represent themselves through the use of language on their institutional websites.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to understand how the universities in Ghana represent themselves on their institutional websites. This study aimed to use CDA to identify the representation of universities in Ghana on their institutional websites. Universities across the world are competing for customers, i.e. students and donors, hence every university is striving to build a respectable reputation. Globalization has urged universities to develop new relationships and to shape their institutional identity so as to “stay relevant and competitive” (Hoang & Rojas-Lizana, 2015, p. 17). The use of university websites in building institutional reputation was evident in the works of Pook and Lefond, (2001); Adelman, (2006); Anctil, (2008); Carlson, (2010); Taylor and Morphew, (2010). Fairclough (2001) averred that careful and close study of language would not only describe and interpret representations but it would also help to establish how relationships, structures and processes which affect human are embedded in language.

1.4 Research Objectives

This research sought to:

1. investigate how textual and visual language are used by universities in Ghana to represent themselves on their institutional websites
2. identify the similarities and dissimilarities that exist in the language used on their institutional websites
3. examine the promotional discourse used on the institutional websites

4. examine which sections of the university community is prioritized on the universities websites.

1.5 Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the researcher.

1. How do universities in Ghana use textual and visual language to represent themselves on institutional websites?
2. What are the similarities and dissimilarities in the language used on the universities in Ghana's institutional websites?
3. How are the promotional discourses represented in the language used on the institutional websites?
4. Which section of the university community is prioritized on the universities' websites?

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study aimed to use CDA to identify the representation of universities in Ghana on their institutional websites. The study would be significant to universities to know how their visions and missions were presented on their institutional websites.

This study would help universities to improve their academic marketing on their institutional websites which would in turn keep the prospective student informed and may increase international students' application.

The findings of this study would be useful to university website managers.

1.7 Delimitation

This study covered institutional websites of six universities in Ghana namely, University of Ghana (UG), Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), University of Cape Coast (UCC), University of Education, Winneba (UEW), University for Development studies (UDS), and Valley View University (VVU). Also the study centred on Home, About Us, Admissions, and Academics pages of the websites.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

Education, which is popularly defined as the total process of human learning in which knowledge is imparted, skills developed and faculties trained, is no more provided as a service to mankind but, as the world's fastest growing business. Mok and Chan (2002) believe that "quality education is the character of the set of elements in the input, process and output of the school that provides services that completely satisfy both internal and external strategic school constituencies by meeting their explicit and implicit expectations".

Although education is seen as a social service in some countries or a fundamental human right, it is also seen by educational policy makers and administrators as a business. There is therefore the need for day by day planning and effort in branding and rebranding educational institutions to meet the educational needs of prospective students, both local and international. Educational institutions employ various marketing policies which can be classified as business promotion strategies (Hanover Research, 2010). Various forms of advertisement include newspaper advertisement, television adverts, online ads, and institutional website advertisement.

Anderson and Reid (1999) established that the university website was the first visit to the university by prospective students searching for higher education. It was the mouthpiece of the university to the outside world. All information concerning the university were published on the website. These information has a cognitive impact on the visitor to the website and create a mental impression. The representation on the universities websites did not only reflect the social trend but also the institution's own

tradition and reputation (Hoang & Lizana, 2015). The representation as a social construct demand thorough study to be able to make a claim. A critical approach to this study was very crucial. The study of representation should go beyond textual and content analysis. This was why there is the need to analyse the data as an institutional discourse from the critical perspective. This study, using the Critical Discourse Analysis as both a method and an approach helped to unearth social phenomenon. This chapter sought to review related literature.

This chapter, reviewed literature on globalization and higher education, marketization of higher education which included college choice processes, and the role of the website in higher education. Also the literature review focused on institutional identity built through language use and promotional discourses on the universities' websites. The research situated in the theoretical framework of Critical Discourse Analysis following Fairclough (2013), Wodak (1999), Van Dijk (1993), Bloor and Bloor (2007) among others.

Similar studies which include Chiper (2006), Saichaie (2011) and Hoang & Rojas-Lieana (2015) were also examined to establish the niche in the literature. Very few researches were found which were related to educational institutions in Ghana and even in West Africa. The results of other studies were therefore compared the findings in this research.

2.1 Globalisation and Higher Education

The term "globalisation" is widely used in different fields. As a result, it has been defined from different perspectives. Globalisation is defined as "a social process in which the constraints of geography or social and cultural arrangements recede and in

which people become increasingly aware that they are receding (Morrow & Torress, 1999)

Morrow and Torress (1999) viewed globalisation as “a social construct”. This means that globalisation is a social construct which makes people strive to break geographical and cultural boundaries. To do this, people must redraw their cultural and geographical identities and be willing to accept larger integration. Language as a core element of culture is also part of this process. There is the need to learn other languages and the willingness to teach others one’s language through a conscious effort. Others have come to love the Chinese language recently because of schooling in China. As part of the requirement, one must pass a course in the Chinese language as an admission requirement. Through education, the society becomes aware of globalisation and strives to meet its standards. In the twenty first century, globalisation uses education as a central form in which globalizing processes control “material and territorial place, space, cultures, identities, and relationships” (Singh & Han, 2005).

Another influential factor affecting globalisation is the global economy. Now and then every country is endeavouring to make effort to survive the swift changes in the economy. The new technologies must be deployed to amass the maximum profits. In Ghana, for instance, there are many Chinese nationals working in the various engineering fields. This has fostered good relationship between Ghana and China. Universities in Ghana also offer courses in the study of Spanish, German, Arabic, French, Swahili, among others, in order to foster good relationship with these countries and to ensure smooth trading activities. As societies become aware of their global needs, they enhances globalisation.

Evans (2011) viewed globalisation as a world of interconnectedness. The words used in the definition showed how quick globalisation was affecting the world. *“From the cultural to the criminal, financial to the spiritual”* was an indication of globalisation in all sphere of life. Both what the people cherish and what they do not cherish are all affected through globalisation. From the definition, globalisation is irresistible and hence policy makers should device ways to address this social phenomenon. The impact of globalisation is universal and affects all aspects of life.

The 2016 European Association for International Education (EAIE) conference created the impression which Ziguras (2016, p. 2) quoted as follows:

“What seems to have died is the European international education community’s faith in the inevitability of the cosmopolitan project, in which national boundaries and ethnic loyalties would dissolve over time to allow greater openness, diversity and a sense of global citizenship.”

The “faith in the inevitability of the cosmopolitan project” supports Held, McGrew, Goldblatt, and Perraton’s (1999) definition which asserts that globalisation is inherently progressive which develops as a result of worldwide interconnectedness, interdependence and cooperation between countries and regions. “That cooperation and competition at national and international level evolve in a matrix of strategic options and thus enhance complexity, the need for strategic management, leadership, and more autonomy” (Van der Wende, 2017)

Globalization is seen as a process of “international integration” which is the result of the “interchange of world views, products, ideas, and other aspects of culture.” To a greater extent globalisation has a “dramatic and rewarding” impact on the system of higher education in both developed and developing countries (Mishra, 2013, p. 40).

Mishra (2013) considered the impact of globalisation on higher education with an analysis of its opportunities and threats. She indicated that the process of “globalisation has had a significant transformation in the world of trade, communication, educational activities and economic relations, since the latter part of the 20th century”. Students’ choice of higher education is no more restricted to national boundaries. Due to this, policy makers of universities, as well as skilled and educated personnel, play vital roles in the economic growth of the world. There should be means to enhance access for migrants, map up programmes for cultural, ethnic and religious integration which will embrace all the diversities of global knowledge shared. Students who have the privilege to learn from different cultures or with groups of different cultures are likely to succeed in this global village. Intercultural learning enhances students’ competence and ability to be global citizens (van der Wende, 2017). It is also worthy of note that an intercultural university community enhances the reputation of the university. The university gains trust in the global world since graduates are able to fit into the society and impact the world. Although there may be the challenge of cultural integration, university policy makers should address it to ensure the attainment of maximum benefits.

Van der Wende, (2017) study of higher education systems in a global perspective indicated that more than 40% of PhD enrolment in the UK, Switzerland and the Netherlands are international students. Moreover, there was global increase in the dynamic and international competitive funding mechanism. UNESCO (2015) report (cited in Van der Wende, 2017) stated that “the production of scientific knowledge was shifting to the international level; the proportion of publications involving international collaboration has nearly doubled since 1996, reaching close to 20% in 2013.” This indicated that there was global attraction for higher education outside

one's country. This can highly be attributed to globalisation and increase of technology engendered competition between universities across the world. The advancement of technology has made it possible for global culture to improve students' interactions with other nationalities. The introduction of student visas and online universities help to engage international students.

Higher education in the wake of globalisation has received tremendous development. All higher educational institutions are changing their "past reality" and using it as a point of reference or departure. There is a fight for global recognition. Beerkens and Lub (2001) classified the approaches to globalisation as follows:

1. Global as a geographical concept distinguishing it from the local: global equals *world-wide*;
2. Global as a concept of power and authority distinguishing it from territorial sovereignty: global equals *not-territorial*;
3. Global as cultural concept distinguishing it from isolation: global equals either *uniformity* or *friction*.
4. Global as an institutional concept distinguishing it from national: global equals *cosmopolitan*.

To go global is to be known; to have good reputation worldwide, to have power and authority outside your geographical area, to conform to the current trend in the world, and to be cosmopolitan. The educational institutions should have information network which seeks to create a network society (Castells, 2000). For this reason, Hanover Research (2014) recorded that colleges and universities in both Canada and the U.S. competed for international students on a growing scale, "with Canada increasing its

international enrolments by 94 per cent over the last decade, and the U.S. increasing international enrolments by nearly ten per cent over last year” (p. 3).

In Africa, Mamdani (2007) stated “...there is no part of Africa that is the same as anywhere else because every part has its specificity”. Nevertheless, globalisation and the rise of new economies had a “blurring of boundaries among markets, states and higher education” (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). The international dimension of higher education was central on the agenda of international organisations and national governments, institutions of higher education and their representative bodies, student organisations and accreditation agencies (De Wit, 2011).

Also according to the Ministerial Round Table on Quality Education by UNESCO (2003),

Quality has become a dynamic concept that has constantly been adapted to a world whose societies are undergoing profound social and economic transformation. Quality education should therefore equip all people, women and men, to be fully participating members of their own communities and also citizens of the world (p. 1).

Although said some years ago, this is true for all generations. Ghana, as a nation, has had educational reform in the year 2019. Among the purposes of this reform was the need to equip the Ghanaian student to meet the needs of the global market. To ensure this, the new curriculum opted for practical skills training over memorization. In the Daily Graphic publication of 19th September, 2019, the Minister of Education, Dr. Matthew Opoku Prempeh is quoted as saying that Kumasi and Mampong campuses of the University of Education, Winneba will be merged to establish a National University of Skill Training and Entrepreneurial Development (NUSTED) to train teachers to feed the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) service. He envisaged that graduates from the TVET would get the required skills to harness the natural resources in the country to meet the demands of the world. As a

nation, there is every effort to be part of the global network through our educational system.

As cited earlier, Edu-Buandoh (2010) in his study of the Cooperate Strategic Plan of the universities in Ghana identified that the administrative discourse of public funded universities in Ghana had changed from academic discourse to a business discourse. The universities sought to attract donors as well as prospective students. Recently, the public universities in Ghanaian have begun to use online application for admission. This ensures regular visits of applicants to the websites of the universities. Also, the activities of the universities are advertised and reports published online to keep the public informed of issues pertaining to the universities. All that students need to know about the universities is published online. For the websites of universities like the University of Cape Coast, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology and University of Ghana, among others, there is a special section on for international students. This section is to brief the prospective international student on life on campus as well as the benefits he stands to gain when enrolled in the university. The message is purposely crafted to entice the prospective international student to apply to the university. As these universities in Ghana look for global recognition, it is essential for them to have good representation on their institutional websites.

2.2 The Role of Educational Institutional Websites in Higher Education

Hanover Research, (2014) which examined the recent trends and developments in higher education in relation to branding and marketing, recruiting and enrolment, and technology found that educational institutions now pay much attention to branding and marketing as compared to previous years. Among the mode of branding and

marketing, along with recruitment, online and digital space were seen as the largest areas of innovation and growth. They cited a survey by the University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth, which indicated “that nearly 100 percent of institutions polled use some form of social media as part of their marketing and overall operations” (p. 3). The research also found that “the most important social and online marketing is an effective and innovative website, which should be considered as „ultimate brand statement“” (p. 3).

Universities to a greater extent want to differentiate themselves from other competitor institutions. Perkins-Will white paper quoted by Hanover Research, (2014) said,

Today, effective strategic planning and brand management require more than traditional advertising, marketing or identity development. Institutions that craft, present and manage a unified brand message, experience and environment achieve a competitive advantage in recruiting, retaining and building loyalty amongst their students, parents, staff, faculty, alumnae and donors.

Also in Hanover Research, (2016, 2018), on the same theme, similar key findings were identified. According to their 2015 survey of college-bound high school juniors and seniors, 77%-78% of the respondents indicated that their perception of their college institutions was influenced when they visited the college websites. Among the key findings of both research works were the following:

1. There was more attention to branding and marketing than before;
2. Branding, marketing, recruitment had shifted towards online and digital strategies;
3. An effective and intuitive website, which was often “the ultimate brand statement” for the institution, was among the most important marketing tools in higher education.

It was an indication that the institutional branding and reputation was shifting to the online space with the institutional website being the major source of information for prospective students. Hence, communication of institutional brand to prospective students and stakeholders required careful and strategic crafting of the message with the appropriate verbiage to relate the reader or audience to the institution. That was why universities, like North Western University in the United States of America, had created Chief Marketing Officer (CMO) positions with the mandate to create and market the university (Morrison, 2013). Noaman (2012), noted that there were feasible ways to create university branding and reputation; this was heavily based on technology. Among the approaches expressed were: responsive website design, search engine optimisation and the use of web analytics. To meet these challenges, the Advisory Panel on Canada's International Education Strategy, Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada, August 2012 outlined the following strategies for marketing and recruiting students into Canadian universities.

1. Prioritizing specific markets - The provinces identified Southeast Asia, the Caribbean, the Middle East, and Africa as priorities beyond "the more established markets";
2. Extending the Canada brand – Because international students often select their country of choice first and then select the institution, universities should ensure to develop comprehensive communications strategies for prospective students from priority countries that promote the Canada brand "in all areas of marketing, media relations, event promotion, and digital communications."
3. Employing a sophisticated digital communication system, including a website that is easy to navigate, highlights the advantages of studying in Canada, and may include video testimonials of current international students, for example.

Social media resources such as China's version of Twitter, called Weibo, can also be very valuable marketing tools. (Cited in Hanover Research, 2014, p.8)

These practical steps were to ensure the universities attract the desired international students. Marketing higher education should have a focus on a target group and messages should be well designed to influence their decision to attend the university. The current trend in marketing required the use of „sophisticated digital communication system“ to reach the target group. The university website could not be exempted as it is the digital space for most students“ search for higher education.

Quinn (2013) referred to university website as the “ultimate brand statement.” To achieve this, he added that it had become common for universities to ensure their homepage had a clearly laid out portal to all of the content that students were looking for online. This meant websites often featured elements such as “well- placed navigation bars” and engaging visuals (e.g., slideshows, multimedia content, etc.), and ensure that “calls to action” (e.g., “Apply Now” buttons) featured prominently throughout the website experience.

Because of the high competitions among universities to attract students who are seen as customers, educational institutions use their cooperate principles for their operations in recruiting prospective students. As Ivy (2008) asserted that the growing variety of qualification offerings of competitive institutions, means each institution should differentiate itself and place more importance on student recruitment. For this to be successful, recruitment officers should understand the variety of elements of marketing theories relating to higher education and the process of student recruitment.

The American Marketing Association defined marketing as “an organizational function and a set of processes for creating, communicating, and delivering value to customers and for managing customer relationships in ways that benefit the organization and its stakeholders” (Helgesen, 2008). Marketing in higher education seemed to focus on relational marketing and reputational marketing (Helgesen, 2008). However, Hossler (1999a) (cited in Beneke and Human, 2010) noted that “most colleges and universities relied on name recognition and institutional visibility as the driving force of marketing efforts, although different techniques are employed”

Sevier (2001) cited Lloyd’s definition of the brand as the “sum of experiences customers have whenever they are exposed to a product or message” (p. 4). To add to this Sevier was of the view that a strong college brand must produce an emotional response of trust and confidence. He observed that the institutional brand seems to be almost the same and based on academics, quality and excellence, there should be a well-crafted information to produce significant response in students.

To better understand the significance of higher education institutional branding, one must study the impact of institutional branding in higher education on the college choice processes. To do this, one needs to remember that Anderson and Reid (1999), Hanover Research (2014, 2016, 2018) and Hershman and Lauderdale (2018), established that the university website had a major role in the college choice process for prospective students searching for higher education. Also Weiss (2008) added that institutional website provided the basis for engaging the user environment. Researchers, including (Kotler 1976; Chapman 1981; Litten 1982; Kotler & Fox 1985; Hossler & Gallagher, 1987) in the late 1970s, and early 1980s shifted their focus to finding out the college search processes that prospective students go through

to make a decision on which institution to attend. As the result of that, each proposed a procedure for students' college choice decisions. The processes were similar from person to person. For instance, Kotler (1976) identified seven stages which were: decision to attend, information seeking, specific college inquiries, application, admission, college choice and registration. Chapman (1981) also put them in other terms in five stages. They were pre-search behaviour, search behaviour, application decision, choice decision and matriculation decision. In the same manner, Litten's (1982) model of college choice process proposed a linear approach of deciding to attend, college aspiration, developing list of college to explore, gathering information, application to college, and enrolment at the college. In other words, there was need arousal, information gathering, decision evaluation and decision execution (Kotler & Fox, 1985) which were also similar to Hossler and Gallagher's (1987) predisposition, search and choice.

It is inevitable from the models of college choice processes noted that, after the decision to attend a college was made, the next step was to search for the appropriate institution. In the search behaviour, the student would make a list of the colleges he wants to attend and then search for information on them. The evaluation of the information was what influenced their decision on which college to attend. Among the key things that the prospective student would search for would be the admission selectivity, academic reputation, quality dimension, and college attributes (Chapman, 1981). It should be noted that the search stage was the time to visit the university or college websites, request for further information or visit the university campus. The first point of contact would be the websites. The student would go through the admission requirement of the college or university to identify which programme they could offer. When the search for programmes was done, the student would then check

the reputation of the school. Institutional reputation, according to McDonough and Antonio (1996) had a powerful influence on the student. The reputation of the university was built along with the quality dimensions and institutional attributes. These included the curriculum, social opportunities and sense of fit, proximity, etc. (Des Jardins, Ahlburg & McCall, 2008).

Researchers in the 2000s had examined the college choice process to find out the different perspective of the college choice process. Although their attributes were similar to those of the 1990s, there had been an additional factor in the college choice process (Kusumawati, 2010). Students after purchasing application forms still engaged in post purchase behaviour. They continued their search to further determine which institution they would attend when their applications were successful. At this stage, their satisfaction would mainly be based on the institutional characteristics. A thorough search would be conducted to be convinced of the school of their pride. Kusumawati (2010) summarised the student choice process where he compared the process during the 1990s to those of 2000s (See Appendix A).

Kotler and Keller's (2009) model which is more recent started from the problem recognition. The student would realise that there was the problem of choice to determine which higher educational institution to attend. This is what informed them to conduct a search for an institution. At the problem recognition stage, Moogan and Baron (2003) asserted that what was important for the student was the institutional reputation. This was also affirmed by Veloutsou, Lewis and Paton (2004) that, apart from the available courses and the campus, the most important factor that students sought was the university's reputation. In addition to that, Hoyt and Brown (2003), and Ho and Hung (2008) were of the view that the academic reputation of the

university was a major factor which determined the success of the institutional marketing strategies. Kusumawati's (2013) qualitative study of the factors influencing students' choice using a public university in Indonesia as a case study, observed that aside institutional reputation, the second most important factor was cost when students were searching for a university. Beneke, and Human's (2010) study in South Africa found that institutional reputation was the most important factor for students in deciding the university of study.

Ghana, is no exception. Afful-Broni and Noi-Okwei (2010) studied the factors influencing the choice of tertiary education in a Sub-Saharan African University. The purpose of the study was "to explore the factors that influenced the students' decision to enrol at U.E.W" (ibid. 3). The study noted among other factors, that availability of desired program, quality teaching and academic reputation were considered as the main reasons which influenced student's choice of university. This affirmed Helzelkorn (2009) position that "institutional reputation is a key driver of student choice." Institutional reputation included institutional achievement, status and type. The university achievements were key to the student for their confidence that they would be accepted in the society after completion. They wanted to know what alumni had achieved and what privileges were there for them. The ranking and societal perception of the school were also key. Every student wanted to associate themselves with highly ranked universities. Also the type of the university, public or private, was also a major factor. Public universities were highly preferable (Kusumawati, 2013).

The educational institutional website should build the reputation of the institution online for easy access (Simoes & Soares, 2010). The About Us, Admission, Academic, Finance section of the website and online courses articulate the values of

the university to the students. There should be a collection of institutional characteristics on the website of the university which will create a holistic impression on the mind of the prospective student. The message on the website should both be persuasive and informative. Informative messages should improve the image of the institution and build trust while the persuasive messages should persuade the student to choose the institution. Students in Ghana attending public universities pay less attention to the university websites although it is a little bit utilised in the private universities (Fosu & Poku, 2014).

2.3 Language Used on Institutional Websites/ Institutional Website Discourse

There is nothing as an innocent word because every word no matter how simple it sounds is loaded with meaning. For communication to have taken place, the meaning of a word or symbol is grasped and understood by the receiver (Umeogu & Ifeoma 2012).

The representation of an institution was the subjective goal and standard the institution strived to achieve and preserve. It was important to understand the mission, vision and reputation of an institution to know how they were represented. This brought the notion of possible self. Possible selves "derive from representations of the self in the past and they include representations of the self in the future. They are different and separable from the current or now selves, yet are intimately connected to them" (Markus & Nurius, 1986).

Representation also suggest a process whereby a pre-existing given, whether it be a physical object or philosophical abstraction, is translated so that it can be comprehended and experienced by a recipient, an observer, an audience (Ger-aghty, 2005) cited in (Umeogu & Ifeoma 2012).

The study of representation on institutional websites required the study of language since representation was constructed through language. Evan (2015) studied language and identity as discourse. The purpose of the study was „to show how self-concept is

constituted by the meanings of language and how it is reflected by language, not just in small-scale social interactions but also in larger linguistic-political discourses” (p. 3). From the study it was established that the study of language and identify required an interdisciplinary approach; through the sociolinguistic and psycholinguistics lenses.

Alvesson viewed organizations as „systems of persuasion“ where organizational actors are agents or rhetors that use language purposefully (Alvesson, 1993). Organisations used language to construct and share their subjective and institutional ideologies. These were developed and maintained through communication and interactions as language use was seen as political and persuasive.

Discourse analysis agree with rhetorical institutionalism on the assumptions that “discourse produces institutions, and that institutions constrain and enable action.” Discourse theorists contend that “discourses shared by community members construct institutions” (Green & Li, 2011). Pennycook (1994a), drawing on Foucauldian approaches, suggested discourse expresses the “ways of organizing meanings that are often, though not exclusively, realized through language. Discourses are about the creation and limitation of possibilities ... systems of power/knowledge within which we take up subject positions” (cited in Adnan, 2013). Language, according to Adnan, (2013) is not “a neutral avenue for individuals to communicate” but as explained by Norton, (2010) it is “understood with reference to its social meaning, in a frequently inequitable world” (p. 305). Bourdieu (1991), viewed language use as “an economic exchange which is established within a particular symbolic relation of power”. Language therefore constructs identity and „position and reposition self“. Llamas and Watt (2010:1) suggested that the interrelationship between identity and language “is a

fundamental element of our experience of being human. Language not only reflects who we are but in some sense it is who we are, and its use defines us both directly and indirectly”.

The college and university website is a major form of communication to prospective students and all stakeholders of the college or university community, as well as donors. It is in fact the primary means for prospective students to learn about the Institutions of Higher Educations (IHEs), and essential to the marketing practices of the institutions (Carnevale, 2005). The language used on the website of the university or college website is key to inform, persuade, and attract prospects. On the debate on the purpose of higher education, Arum and Roksa (2011) added that IHEs should focus their energy in promoting academic engagement with less emphasis on social aspect of college life experience.

The website messages should therefore have communicative qualities which are “distinctive and mission-specific” (Saichaie & Morphew 2014, p.502). Schneider and Bruton (2004), added that the messages should be purposefully well crafted and should be employed strategically. The messages should tell how the IHEs want to represent themselves to their prospective students. Pooch and Lefond (2001) recommended that arrangement of content of the website by a “target group” such as prospective student, campus landscape, among others, was more important than “function” such as academics, and admissions. This ensured that the information was consolidated for easy access to visitors with fewer clicks.

College and universities use language to market their identities and to establish relationships with students and also to promote institutional prestige. Language as a form of social behaviour is always situated in a social context (Fairclough, 1995b).

This was what Alvesson (1993) established as *classical and new rhetoric*. Classical rhetoric focused on how we use words. Language was seen as human resource to express experience in the world. On the other hand, new rhetoric focused on how words use us. The new rhetoric emphasised that words had power to influence the human mind and action. The combination of the classical and the new rhetoric helped one to understand the pragmatic and semantic use of words. It also helped one to understand the motives of linguistic expressions. Motives are “the linguistic expression of symbolic action or the infusion of motion with intent.” Motives describe both the purposes animating discourse as an ethical–aesthetic act, as well as the themes found within a discourse (Green & Li, 2011).

Studies on how students use educational institutional websites revealed that images were key element to communicating messages either explicitly or implicitly. Ramasubramanian, Gyure and Mursi (2002) established that architectural images and landscape on institutional websites shape the impression of students about IHEs. Students attributed the images to the legitimacy and credibility of the institution, as well as its academic prestige.

Kheovichai (2013) did a study on marketization in the language of the UK university recruitment using CDA and corpus analysis. He compared the universities and finance industry job advertisement. He explained that while the 1970s university and financial job advertisements were strikingly different, in 2010. University job advertisements were fundamentally aligned with those from businesses. Universities through their advertisements made use of evaluative adjectives to create their institutional reputation. The evaluative adjectives were grouped in seventeen categories which were size, growth, dynamism, reputation, rank, competitiveness, established, wealth,

vision, emotional appeal, caring, uniqueness, inclusivity, goodness and others (Kheovichai, 2013). The university growth was depicted in the expansion of campuses. Institutional reputation and rank, as well as competitiveness and global reach were also key. How well the university was known, status, superiority and success were key to attracting prospects. All the seventeen semantic categories are presented in Appendix B.

The study also analysed the “lexical bundle”. The term lexical bundles referred to “sequences of word forms that commonly go together in discourse and which are recurrent expressions, regardless of their idiomaticity, and regardless of their structural status” (Biber *et al.*, 1999). The analysis of the lexical bundles also revealed that “there are seven categories: 1) *Organization*, 2) *Applicant identification*, 3) *Job specification*, 4) *Attributive/ deictic bundles*, 5) *Soliciting a response*, 6) *Equal opportunity* and 7) *Others*” (p. 126). The first category which was organisation has to do with „organisational identification“ and „organisational desire“ (ibid). Applicants were identified as „candidate“ or the pronoun „you“. The job specification had to do with the attractiveness, knowledge, experience, degree among others while attributive or deictic lexical bundles focused on size, quality, form, time, place and textual location. Provision was made for responses from visitors of the websites by providing contacts and directives. Issues of gender, race disability also fell under equal opportunity.

Saichaie (2011) also has studied the representation on the websites of two Australian universities. From the studies, it was observed that both textual and visual language played important roles in the institutional representation on their websites. The studies agreed with Halliday (1985, 1994); Fairclough (1993, 1995a, 1995b) and Janks (2005)

that verbal processes had a crucial role in the message content. It is the verb that “describes various actions and demonstrates what the producer of the message wants to communicate to viewers. The processes of the verbs showed a sense of being (relational), doing (action), and sensing (mental)” (Saichaie, 2011). It was observed that the action and the relational verbs were predominantly used with the intention of presenting the visitor with a lot of options and to create a relationship with the visitor. The action verbs and their clauses were mainly used to project the “prospective student as powerful actor, one with multiple choices” which, however, also strengthen “promotional discourse by presenting different activities that encompass the “college experience,” an experience over which the student enjoys autonomy” (ibid). The relational verbs also mainly indicated “the intent of the producer to make one feel part of the institution and its culture” (Saichaie, 2011). This type of verb was seen mostly at the Admission and the Student Life pages of the websites.

Verbal processes on the website were parallel to the modality (Simpson, 1993). Modality is “a speaker’s attitude towards, opinions about, the truth of a proposition expressed by a sentence” (Simpson, 1993). The modalities communicate “possibility and uncertainty” using „may“ and „might“. This might give rise to vague representation. The modalities, together with the verbs, project the privileges as well as opportunities at the university as “the institutions use the content on the websites to construct a virtual billboard for the campus and the activities that contribute to its success and standing” (ibid).

In conclusion, the language of the websites of universities had changed over time with, more recently, focus on marketing. The use of persuasive language in building institutional image was prominent in the content of universities websites. The use of

adjectives and adjectivals helped to create a mental impression. However, the subject positions most often took attributes and serve as the entry of the text. What is placed as the subject should be carefully considered when building reputations while creating relationships.

2.4 The Promotional Discourse on Institutional Websites

IHEs focus on internationalisation has placed students and donors as the centre of their discourse, hence creating a genre which is similar to advertising. Bhatia (2005) (cited in Kong, 2006, p. 775) said that “of all the genres which have invaded the territorial integrity of most professional and academic genres, „advertising“ clearly stands out to be the most prominent instrument of colonization”.

The competitiveness of IHEs has rendered students to be seen as customers that need to be influenced to choose a higher educational institution. This has raised a promotional concern in higher education and hence promotional discourse has become a fast growing genre in most professional and academic discourse. Since discourse is shaped by society, professionals are seeking for innovative ways to use language to communicate their services to customers (students). Bhatia puts it as the “varied and innovative uses of lexico-grammatical and discursal forms and rhetorical strategies, these innovations are often used within rather outside the typical generic boundaries of promotional discourse” (Bhatia, 2005, p.2). In this case, promotion and advertising have become key component of the existence of higher educational institutions.

Through the choice of lexical items, grammar and syntactic structures, all the genres of universities such the prospectuses, posters, flyers, brochures, job advertisements as well as the homepages on the websites, consciously made use of promotional discourse (Askehave, 2007; Osman, 2008). This is the reason why corporate world

terms such as “clients”, “corporate identity”, “mission statement”, and “strategic plans” have surfaced in the discursive practice of IHEs (Askehave, 2007). This genre of higher educational discourse, according to Fairclough (1993) was to sell and promote the programs and activities of the university, as well as to persuade the prospective applicants to choose the university.

Fairclough (1995) compared the undergraduate entry prospectus of 1966-1967 to that of 1993. The conclusion was that “the 1966-1967 entry gave information about what was provided on a take-it-or-leave-it basis. In the 1993 prospectus, by contrast, the promotional function was primary; it was designed to „sell“ the university and its courses to potential applicants in the context of a competitive market” (1995, p. 156). This was in affirmation of his stance that the higher education discursive practices were “in the process of being transformed through the increasing salience within higher education of promotion as a communicative function” (1993). His studies paved the way and drew the attention of scholars to research on higher education genre. For instance, in 1998, Connell and Galasinski did an analysis of the mission statements of one hundred and forty-six higher educational institutions located in United Kingdom in the late 1990s. This was done through examining the structures, grammar and vocabulary of the mission statements. The findings indicated that the mission statements “both acknowledged *and* negotiated the political-ideological context”, and some universities “made lexical concessions to what may be regarded as commercial discourses” (1998).

Askehave (2007) also conducted a research to investigate the generic characteristics of four international students’ prospectus. The samples were from Finland, Australia, Japan and Scotland. This was done from the perspective of CDA using text-driven

procedure for genre analysis as is proposed by Askehave and Swales (2001). The findings agreed with Fairclough (1993) which says that “institutions of higher education come increasingly to operate as if they were ordinary business competing to sell their products to consumers” (1993, p. 143). The prospectus presented university experience which will satisfy the student to make a choice for the university since students are seen as customers and programmes must be marketed.

Osman (2008) also studied the re-branding strategies in university brochures of eleven Malaysian public universities as a promotional genre to determine the communication functions which advertise the university. She observed that there were “rebranding strategies” to change the conventional image of the universities to “competitive” and “market-oriented” (2008, p. 70). Both the works of Askehave and Osman indicated that there was the need to have a contemporary genre on higher education promotional discourse since this genre “has become an essential marketing tool to meet the demands of present day university policy” and „create competitive advantage” (Askehave, 2007)

Similarly, Hartley and Morphew (2008) conducted a content analysis of the themes in forty-eight viewbooks from U.S. universities. The findings indicated that most of the “institutions highlighted institutional context and features, academic and faculty, co-curricular opportunities, admissions and financial aid, value of education and the purpose of higher education”. The authors concluded with the statement that the viewbooks were to sell the institution of higher education as a product, hardly relating the experience as “something more cerebral, spiritual or educational” (p. 688).

Xiong (2012) studied discourse and marketization of higher education in China as a genre of advertisement for academic posts. The study focused on the ads for academic posts of forty-eight Chinese-language newspaper publications using Askehave and Swales's (2001) text driven re-purposing model of genre analysis. The study investigated the rhetorical moves and discourse strategies deployed by higher educational institutions in China, and the marketization of higher education in China. He identified six move constituents of advertisements for academic posts, which were "titling", "establishing credentials", "communicating future aspirations", "announcing posts and requirements", "offering remunerations and incentives", and "providing contact details". A detailed analysis of the six moves provided the following findings:

1. The establishing-credentials move played a crucial role in promoting the relevant institutions;
2. A striking rhetorical feature was the predominant use of quantified terms to introduce items such as academic programs and facilities, and incentives;
3. The branding strategy has been frequently adopted to publicize academic posts as well as cities where the institutions were located; and
4. Some face redressing strategies were used to lessen the power asymmetry constructed by the authorless bureaucratic discourse (Xiong, 2012).

Establishing credential moves was the attempt to persuade the reader by establishing the authoritative power of the institution. The institutions were "subjectified and treated as agents with aims and purposes" (p. 226). Also there was foregrounding of their geographical location and scenery in order to promote the colourful nature of the institution. This was in consonance with Osman (2008) study that Malaysian universities "employ the attraction of the tropical greenery to attract the attention of readers" (p. 67). Also quantitative terms were preferable in promoting the institutions.

The universities in the cities boasted of location, gaining reputation from mentioning of the location. However, universities outside the cities persuaded the reader through the use of „honourable titles“ such as „Heaven State“ or „International Garden City“, or National Excellent Tourist City“ (ibid). Another selling point was the history of the institution; people build reputations on what has been done. For a reliable institution and development of trust, the history of the institution has a major role to play. Students at the college choice stage considered what the IHEs have done to develop trust. Finally, to build bureaucratic and administrative hierarchies, these institutions used politeness and marketing strategies as a promotional discourse.

Yang (2013) studied the „Why choose us?“ page of forty university websites to examine “how the text is structured and what lexico-grammatical features are employed to realise its communicative functions.” There were both textual and a keyword analysis. The study also testified that IHEs used promotional discourse to promote themselves for international reputation. The keywords identified beard the features of promotional discourse and were used to echo the elements the university wishes to promote. The choice of language on websites was not accidental. Administrators made use of words which were informative and persuasive. The focus was to promote the institution to the outside world.

To ascertain this, the university homepage was studied by Atai and Asadnia (2015) based on a corpus of 210 texts from the first top five hundred universities ranked by the Academic Ranking of World Universities. The analysis was done through analysis of “their generic structures, move step constituents, and order of moves”. (p. 38). Like Osman (2008), Atai *et al.* (2015) also observed six moves which were “*source of reputation*”, “*Historical origin*”, “*Current status of development*”, “*Commitments*,

goals, and orientations”, “*Global state*”, and “*Services and supports*”. The universities first liked to establish their reputation by claiming authority and boasting of accreditation as well as “world-level academic centres”. To do this they showed their „scholarly status“, „influential contribution“, „honours and awards“, „hallmarks“, and „partnerships“ (p. 41). The historical origin presented the trace of historical events in the universities from their establishment. Historical academic excellence and leadership were key in this move. After the historical origin, the universities also appealed to the reader about the current state of the university. “The universities use this move to illustrate their superior position, condition, and function in comparison to other educational bodies. The move has five steps, including „identity“, „demography“, „educational infrastructure“, „community perspective“, and „location“” (p. 42). Next to current status of development were the institutional commitment, goals, and orientation. The universities established what they want to be in the future as compared to the current state. This made prospective students gained trust and wished to associate themselves with the future success of the universities. To attract international students, the universities announced international orientation and invitation for application. Services and supports were also provided on the homepages through availability of „extracurricular activities“, „facilities“, and „educational and financial supports“ (p. 43).

As discussed in chapter one, Hoang et al. (2015) also examined how two Australian universities represented themselves through the use of language on their institutional website. In their representation, there was the use of promotional discourse on the websites. For instance, there was the use of emotive and evaluative adjectives such as great”, “best”, “highest”, “biggest”, “largest”, “fantastic”, “up-to-date”, “cost-effective”, “outstanding”, “excellent”, “high-tech”, “exceptional” “leading”. Also

verbs such as “produce”, “offer”, “cater”, “bring”, “provide”, “equip” were used to “place institutions as sellers, as all of them evoke a giving action, and potential students as customers “. To present the university as goal oriented and performing action, there was the use of the active voice and material and relational process verbs. The use of the imperative mood on the websites was to serve as “attention-seeking device” which was common in promotional discourse and served as a call for action. In all, both the textual and visual elements on the websites had elements of promotional discourse in order to attract prospective students (p.9).

Bano and Shakir’s (2015) study on personal pronouns in About Us page of Online University Prospectus also provided evidence of how the grammatical use of personal pronouns exhibited “promotional linguistic feature” (p. 133). The About Us page which provided information on the achievement and physical looks of the university was very key in persuading the students. The message on this page should therefore be well crafted and presented to give the required emotive response. They used a multidimensional analysis tagger to analyse the use of the first person pronouns „I“, „we“, and second person pronouns „you“ and „your“ in five universities online prospectus. Through the use of both qualitative and quantitative analysis, they deduced that “universities use the features of first person pronouns more frequently than second person pronouns in About Us sections... the pronoun „we’ evokes camaraderie, unison, familiarity and friendship. It encompasses all the readers, generally”. The pronoun „I“ was also seen as expressing “self-focus” and “illustrates responsibility between the speaker and mutual conversation” (p. 138). The personal pronouns emphasised the university as the subject.

Zhang (2017) also studied the marketization of IHEs discourse; a genre analysis of the university website homepages in China. This research studied the About Us section of five university website homepages. From the studies, there were three communicative purposes of the About Us section of the university website homepage. These were welcoming, informing and promoting “which were fulfilled by seven rhetorical moves: welcoming, establishing credentials, describing administration, attracting attention, offering extra services, locating the service and soliciting responses” (p. 76). He also added that, “promotional elements in terms of both contents and linguistic choices have been employed to help construct a positive image of universities to stand out in the stiff competition in today’s higher education market in China” (p. 1).

All these research works indeed established that the language on the university websites cannot be analysed without examining the promotional discourse on the website. As the website operators communicated with the university community, as well as prospective students and donors, they employed promotion techniques to present the university. It was inevitable that the About Us section of the university websites had the content similar to advertising and agents were emphasised while relation was created with the reader. Both the textual and image elements on the website carried persuasive elements to attract the target group.

2.5 Studies on Representation on Higher Educational Institutional Websites

The university website provides people their impression about the university. Manzoor, Ahmed and Iqbal, (2012), held through their study of IHEs websites that all the students who participated in the survey confirmed they visited the university website at a point in time in their college choice process. There was therefore the need

to pay attention to what was represented on the institutional website. Until July 2009, Kabul Education University was without a website. There was the need to sell the university to the world in order to attract students and donors, create partnership and provide teaching resources for both staff and students. The Home page of the websites they created gave general information with five menus which were Home, About University, Admissions, Faculties and IT centre. The „About University“ provided the history of the university, administration and library while the administration section provided biographies and photos of the university’s administrators. There were also links to google and wikipedia as well as download sections for free antivirus, dictionaries, media player and anti-spies. This was the beginning as Barikzai (2009) identified that there was the need to improve on the website to attract more donors. He also attributed the less number of students to the absence of a website. Institutional representation on the websites of the university had a major decisive role to play in the student’s university selection (Barikzai, 2009).

Similarly, Saichaie (2014) conducted a content analysis to identify what higher educational websites revealed about the institution. The study examined how the textual and visual elements of the websites of twelve colleges and universities in the United States communicate to prospect students about the mission of those institutions of higher education. The college and university websites serving as the primary source of information about the college or university needed a thorough content investigation to reveal the representation created on the website (Carnevale, 2005). This research was motivated by the NACAC (2011) findings which indicated that eighty-four per cent of prospective students gathered information through university websites, the website being a major marketing medium.

The study analysed the websites under academics, campus aesthetics, fine arts, intercollegiate athletics, student life and value. The academic section emphasised the outcomes allied with the degree programmes, such as jobs, skills and credentials and “the personal, intellectual freedom permitted at the institution” (ibid, p. 511). The campus aesthetics was made up of images of the campus with a few texts as „generic descriptor“. To construct the beauty of the campus, images of buildings and landscape were used to display the size and scope of the university. Fine arts displayed the countless activities on campus. “These were presented as opportunities for students, whether academically, culturally, or for the purpose of entertainment” (p. 112). There were also images and texts to represent the sporting activities of the universities. The images established the accomplishments of the universities to attract the students who had interest in sports and also to build the university reputation. Images and featured texts of both classroom and co-curricular activities depicted the student life on campus. It was observed that the universities “utilized relational discourse as a method to connect with other students, the larger campus community, and/or an extension of what it meant to be a college student.” The financial aid content was mostly found on the same page with the universities ranking but with no information for prospects to calculate the cost.

The study, in conclusion, observed that the colleges and the universities portray themselves on the websites in a homogenous way, with similar promotional discourses although there were diversities. The websites also revealed the purpose of the colleges and universities and what they could do for the students. This was established through the institutional credentials provided on the websites.

Also Ho, Amri and Ooi (2015) study the websites of INTI International College, Penang, KDU College, Penang and Olypia College, Penang. They checked the layout, appearance, accessibility, space, content, accuracy, navigation, and current information. They observed that there were a few „promotional approaches“ used by Penang higher educational institutions. These included running of series of media, exhibition at conferences, visits of targeted markets, distribution of flyers and other promotional materials. They concluded that source and accuracy of content of the websites were trusted based on the prestige that the IHEs have established over twenty years mainly through their affiliations. These attributes to them had vital roles to convert the „potential customers to real customers“ (Ho, Amri & Ooi, 2015).

There are limited studies using CDA to examine the websites of IHEs. Chipper (2006) conducted a research on how Romanian universities represent themselves on their institutional websites. The findings were then compared to the discourse of higher institutions in UK, France, Germany and Italy. It was observed that the discourse of Romanian universities was affected by social change. Their communication was also the same as their enterprises but they managed to create a professional image. When the discourse of Romanian universities was compared to the discourses of some European Union countries discourse, the local Romanian culture was still magnificent. The study revealed that while young universities used the conversational style in order to establish a relationship with potential students, the older ones were very official and conventional with the language use, thus intending to create homogeneity.

Saichaie (2011) also examined the textual and visual representation on the institutional websites of US colleges and universities of different control types, geographic location and admission selectivity. The study revealed that they made use of promotional discourse. The promotional discourse was similar, showed uncertainty and control of information. The similarity and uncertainty on the websites could confuse visitors on the decision making on college or university choice. The uncertainty was the result of limited information on the financial aid provided in the school, hence potential students might not know how they could finance their education. The institutions exercised control on the information that appeared on the website as they choose what to present, foreground, and exclude.

Hoang and Rojas-Lizana (2015) also examined how two Australian universities represented themselves through the use of language on their institutional website. The study was a comparison of the way their institutional identity was constructed and their relationship with prospective students. The use of CDA helped to bring out the social factors which affected the discourse and their effects on social structures and relationship. After the study of the Home page, About Us and Future Student pages, it confirmed that the two universities used promotional discourse to represent themselves and to attract potential students. Concrete evidence such as logo, images, videos, numbers, testimonials and rankings were used to shape the institutional identity and to heighten their reputation. The language on the websites was presented in a conversational style in order to build public relationship. However, there were some differences. University of Melbourne placed emphasis on international prestige because it was older universities while Macquarie University concentrated on national prestige since it was a younger university. University of Melbourne used authoritative

language with itself at the centre which created distance between the university and the students but Macquarie University made the students centre of their discourse.

2.6 Brief Background of Higher Education in Ghana

The British government in 1943 established Commissions of Inquiry into the model of formal university education in the British Colonial countries. These commissions were the Asquith and Elliot Commissions. The commissions' recommendations led to the establishment of the University College of the Gold Coast in 1948 to award degrees of University of London (Effah & Senadza, 2008). The University College of the Gold Coast became autonomous in 1961 and it was renamed University of Ghana (UG). After UG came Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) which was formerly known as the College of Technology, Science and Arts (CTSA). CTSA was established in 1951 and began operation in 1952 with two hundred students transferred from Achimota College to the School of Engineering and the Department of Commerce. University of Cape Coast (UCC) was established on 15th December, 1962 with the mandate to train graduate teachers for the various secondary schools, teacher training colleges and technical institutions in the country.

Higher education in Africa was defined at the 1962 heads of university institutions' conference in Madagascar as "the post high school education for eighteen (18) years plus" (CODESRIA, 2018). This definition was adopted in Ghana until the establishment of the Universities Rationalisation Committee in 1987 to have a comprehensive review of university education in Ghana. The term "tertiary education" was adopted to refer to the universities and other post-secondary education establishments including technical and vocational institutions such as polytechnics.

The university education system in Ghana received a massive boost in the year 1987 following the recommendations of the University Rationalisation Committee (URC), with Prof. Esi Sutherland Addy as the chairperson. The committee recommended the establishment of a university in the northern part of Ghana and the amalgamation of a number of institutions into one tertiary education institution which became the University of Education, Winneba (UEW). UEW was established by putting together a number of institutions to form the University College of Education, Winneba, to also train professional and competent teachers for teaching institutions such as pre-school, basic, senior secondary school and non-formal education institutions. University for Development Studies (UDS) Studies was also established in the northern parts of the country.

Since then, there have been established universities. The table below lists up the public universities in Ghana.

Table 1: Public universities in Ghana

Name of University	Establishment Date	Regional Location
University of Ghana	1948	Greater Accra
Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology	1952	Ashanti
University of Cape Coast	1961	Central
University of Education, Winneba	1992	Central
University for Developmental Studies	1992	Northern
University of Professional Studies	1965	Greater Accra
University of Mines and Technology	2001	Western
University of Health and Allied Sciences	2011	Volta
University of Energy and Natural Resources	2012	Bono

Source: Wikipedia (retrieved on 20th November, 2019)

In addition to these universities, there are other professional institutes which include: Institute of Professional studies, Ghana institute of Languages and The National Film and Television Institute. In addition to these universities and professional institutes, there was ten polytechnics in Ghana but, recently, eight have been upgraded to Technical Universities. Nine additional professional institutions have been given university status to run degrees. In 2008, the thirty-eight teacher training colleges were transformed into Colleges of Education to award Diplomas, by Parliamentary Act 778 of 2008; currently, the Colleges of Education have been mandated to award degrees. There are also a good number of nursing training schools across the country. As indicated by Kwakwa, Arthur and Obeng (2012), the higher education system in Ghana is also supported by the private universities. The premier private university in Ghana is Valley View University established in 1979. There are several accredited private universities in Ghana mostly affiliated to the public institutions.

IHEs in Ghana are entrusted with the responsibility of “providing access to affordable education to accommodate all qualified students for postsecondary education” (Goode, 2017, p.1). However, despite the efforts of both government and private engagement in the establishment of institutions of higher education, there is still challenge when it comes to access to higher education. The higher educational institutions lack the required infrastructure to accommodate the qualified students who apply to the institutions. Also the socio economic background of the students serves as a hindrance for students to apply for higher education since there are just a few funding organisations; to support the needy student (Atuahene & Owusu-Ansah, 2013). The selection is also based on the student’s socio-economic status since the major indicators for admission are based on the student’s “academic ability and the quality of SHS attended (Yusif, Youssof & Osman, 2013, p. 7).

For the universities in Ghana to meet the global challenge of access to higher education, there is the need to sell the universities to prospective donors and students. The universities should therefore make a conscious effort to build their university reputations on the institutional website. As the government of Ghana wants to introduce free Wi-Fi to both tertiary and secondary schools, it means that students in the senior high level may start their search for tertiary institutions online. When this happens, the first point of contact may be the universities' official websites. As indicated in chapter one, the percentage of international students in Ghana is very low. There is therefore the need for the higher education institutions in Ghana to examine the global presence and design policies to build their global image.

2.7 Theoretical Framework

Foucault (1972) defined discourse as “practices that systematically form the object of which they speak.” To him, discourses are made up of signs but what they do is more than the use of these signs to designate things. Parker (1992) also explained discourse as the collection of meaningful text. The text was a product of communication. This included both word and images used in communication. As Anctil (2008) aptly stated, “image is not everything for colleges and universities, but it is close. The image people have of an institution influences so many of the decisions they will make and the actions they will take as a result of that image.” Kress (1993) added that “all signs are equally subject to critical reading for no sign is innocent.”

Discourse analysis involves a close examination of text, including visual imagery and sound as well as spoken or written language. It is concerned with both the form of the text and its usage in social context, its construction, distribution and reception. It aims to understand and reveal the meanings and social significance of the text (Smith and

Bell, 2007). To do this, we must explore the text by examining the constituents of the text (Fairclough 1992; Parker, 1992). The examination of the constituents and the ideological implication of text demand diverse theories to investigate the reproduction of ideology in language. Critical Discourse Analysis studies institutions, gender, political and media discourse to bring to bear the hidden connection and causes (Fairclough, 1992; Wodak, 2001).

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) started with the launch of van Dijk's journal „Discourse and Society“ in 1990. CDA traces much of its success from the pioneering work of analysts like Norman Fairclough, Teun van Dijk and Ruth Wodak. Fairclough (1992b), in editing his book, „Critical Language Awareness“, uses the term Critical Discourse Analysis without abbreviation to „CDA“. Fairclough views CDA as a form of Critical Language Study. After three years of this publication, he also publishes a book with „The Critical Study of Language“ as subtitle. One outstanding difference between Discourse Studies and CDA is the constitutive problem-oriented interdisciplinary approach of CDA (Fairclough, Graham, Lemke and Wodak, 2004). CDA as a critical theory to language study sees the use of language as a form of social practice where social actors are restricted to particular historical contexts and existing social relations. CDA “goes beyond a simple content analysis and strives to unearth the complex and varied process of meaning-making manifested in and with text” (Richardson, 2007). The positioning of text is important to understanding social structures since textual positioning projects or negates one's interest. CDA blend textual analysis with detailed social analysis by referring to extra linguistic factors, including culture, society and ideology. In this respect, there is a “dialectical relationship between a particular discursive event and the situation(s), institution(s)

and social structure(s) which frame it” (Fairclough *et al.*, 2013). Whatever the individual speaks or writes is determined by the society and has social effects.

Critical Discourse Analysis seeks to unearth how ideological presuppositions are hidden underneath the surface structures of language choices in text (Machin & Meyer, 2012). These ideological assumptions guide the individual to evaluate, provide guidance through action, and should therefore be logically coherent (Wodak & Meyer, 2009).

Critical Discourse Analysis is based on Halliday’s Systematic Functional Linguistics (SFL) and Roger Fowler’s Critical Linguistic Approach (Fairclough, 1992). It focuses on the “dynamic interplay between text production, the text itself, and text interpretation” (Coffin, 2001). Halliday (1976, 1978, 1985), Systematic Functional Linguistics led to critical linguistics where choice of words and word combinations reflect ideological forces. The critical linguistics was later surpassed by social semiotics of Hodge and Kress (1988) and Critical discourse analysis by Fairclough (1989, 1992, & 1995) and van Dijk (1993). CDA is concerned with of the construction of certain discourses which show identity. The textual analysis in CDA leads to identification of “representation, identity and stereotyping of group or individuals” (Fairclough 1992, p.65). CDA allows analysis of persuasive language in an attempt to uncover dominating social powers in a discourse. As indicated by Coffin (2001, p. 99), CDA, is “an approach to language analysis which concerns itself with issues of language, power and ideology”.

As expanded in van Dijk (1993), CDA is more interested in pressing discourses with the hope of bettering understanding of these social issues. It therefore applies theories, methods and descriptions which are relevant to the realisation of such socio-political

goals. Due to this, CDA makes use of multidisciplinary approaches to analyse distinct social issues that notwithstanding, all these approaches show the “relationship between text, talk, social cognition, power and culture” with the success being measured by how effective and relevant the approach is in “contribution to change” (p. 253).

Fairclough and Wodak (1997, 271–280) summarized the main canons of CDA as follows:

1. CDA addresses social problems
2. Power relations are discursive
3. Discourse constitutes society and culture
4. Discourse does ideological work
5. Discourse is historical
6. The link between text and society is mediated
7. Discourse analysis is interpretative and explanatory
8. Discourse is a form of social action.

The concern of CDA is to address issues in the society especially issues of power relations. The society has created relational power among members and these powers are exerted in the daily interactions of the people. Over time, power becomes part of norms of the society and builds up the societal culture. The individual is ideology is shaped by the power they can exert and through text exhibit their control over others. CDA seeks to establish how power is enacted through discourse by providing interpretation and explanation to this social concept. Fairclough (1995, p.98) presented a model for CDA which consists of inter-related processes of analysis.

These processes were grouped into three inter-related dimensions of discourse which were:

1. The object of analysis (including verbal, visual or verbal and visual texts)
2. The processes by means of which the object is produced and received (writing / speaking/ designing and reading/ listening/ viewing) by human subjects
3. The socio-historical conditions which govern these processes.

Each of these dimensions requires a different kind of analysis namely:

1. Text analysis (descriptions)
2. Processing analysis (interpretation)
3. Social analysis (explanation).

Fairclough's three inter-related dimensional processes of analysis presented the researcher the ability to analyse text from different perspectives to uncover the hidden ideologies. The description of the text gave the general and literal overview of the text. After this stage, the researcher gave the interpretation of the text to show the interaction and relationship between texts and to examine the process of producing the text. The last stage, which was social analysis, offered explanation to the interaction and the relationship between the text and the social context, by establishing the social practices.

Cheng and Ho (2014) presented critical discourse analysis following the idea of Biber *et al.* (2007) as analysis of "language in use", "linguistic structure" and "social practices and ideological assumptions associated with language and/or communication." The analysis of language in use was the examination of the language structures which were used in the communication. There was the study of variant language structures and the choice of one over the other. The main focus was

on phrasal and clausal syntax. Ideologically, it was the examination of how language structures are used for communication. The description of specific text or the exploration of language structure use from the socio-cultural perspective in “particular communication event” is what was referred to as the analysis of social practices and ideological assumptions associated with language and/or communication (Biber *et al.*, 2007).

As van Dijk (1993) indicated, there was no specific direction or unitary theoretical framework for CDA. The analysis of editorials was different from the analysis of conversation as the analysis of political speeches was different from the analysis of lessons in school. However, CDA must have related aims to unearth power relations. According to him, CDA bridged the gap between micro and macro level of language analysis, and sees power as control. Language use, discourse, verbal interaction and communication belongs to the micro level of the social order” while “power, dominance, and inequality between social groups are typically terms to elong to a macro level of analysis” (p. 354). In CDA analysis, there is the interplay between the micro and the macro analysis of language. Hence, through CDA, all the facets of language analysis are brought to bear to identify how power is enacted in discourse.

There are different ways of enacting power in discourse. Power is enacted by the dominant group. The dominant in this case deals not with number but the powerful depending on the context. The context includes the situation, setting, participants, on-going actions, mental representation, social or institutional role, knowledge, goals, attitudes, opinions and ideologies. The context gives power to the dominant group to control the public discourse. Other discursive conditions such as the „function of structures and strategies of the text or talk itself” can enact power over the other. The

style, form and meaning of text can be controlled by the context and the dominant group. For instance, in the court, the style, form and content of the conversation change because of the context. The powerful group which include the lawyers and judges tries to control the talk and hence creates inequality. CDA therefore, studies how these discursive structures control the mental models of the communicants most importantly on text and talk.

In conclusion, CDA offered the opportunity to analyse language (both textual and visual) from multidisciplinary perspective. The university website which is a medium for communication is used to inform and persuade the visitors to the website. The universities through language represent themselves on the websites. They exhibit their power and authority through the information provided and institutional attributes. Methodologically, using Fairclough's approach to CDA which offered three dimensions of analysis enabled the researcher to do descriptive analysis of the textual and visual elements, interpret the goal of the contents of language and the function of its parts in order to identify the connection between language and social structures, and also focused on the social analysis which was the interpretation of the social discourse of the data. This theory helped the researcher to identify the representation on the institutional websites of universities in Ghana.

2.8 Summary of Literature Review

This chapter reviewed the literature on globalisation and higher education, role of educational institutions websites in higher education, language use on institutional websites /institutional websites discourse, promotional discourse on institutional websites, representation on higher education institutional websites, brief background of higher education in Ghana and the theoretical framework of this research. Form the

literature, it has been established that the university website played a key role in advertising the university and used language which were promotional in nature. The reputation of the university was established through the choice of lexical items on the websites. Universities in Ghana have spent less time in researching on the institutional reputation from linguistic point of view. The choice of CDA as the theoretical framework is very efficient in analysis this social discourse. Using Fairclough's three inter-related dimensional processes ensures good description, interpretation and explanation to the institutional representation and hence guides the researcher to answer the research questions.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology in the research. The research attempts to explore the representation of universities in Ghana on their institutional websites. The theoretical and methodological approach adopted in this study is that of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). This chapter gives overview of the research approach, research design, population and sampling techniques as well as methods of data collection and analysis.

3.1 Research Approach

This study analysed qualitatively the language used (textual and visual) on the institutional websites of the six premier universities in Ghana using CDA based on Fairclough's Three Inter-Related Dimensional Process. Kress and van Leeuwen Visual Analysis Rubric is also used for the visual analysis. To study the representation of universities through language use on their institutional websites, a qualitative analysis was deemed appropriate. Qualitative research was defined as "a form of systematic empirical inquiry into meaning" (Shank, 2002). He used the term *systematic* to mean "planned, ordered and public", study which followed agreed rules in qualitative research. It was also *empirical inquiry*; meaning there was an enquiry in the world of experience and making meaning from these experiences. It involved an *interpretive and naturalistic* approach. "This meant that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them" (Denzin and Lincoln 2000, p.3). Creswell (2003) asserted that, "qualitative research is emergent rather than

tightly preconfigured” (p. 181). A qualitative analysis therefore “values subjectivity and reflexivity” (Braun & Clarke 2014). This helped to understand the social context which affects social practices and meanings which were constructed socially by both institutions and participants (Fairclough, 1995). It also helped to discover the meaning people attribute to events they experience (Merriam, 1998).

Chouliaraki and Fairclough highlighted that “the theory of CDA is a synthesis of theoretical positions and cannot be separated from method” (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999 cited in Mogashoa, 2014). These two components were “mutually informing and developing each other”, so that „the ways of analysing “operationalise” – make practical – theoretical constructions of discourse in (late modern) social life, and the analysis contributed to the development and elaboration of these theoretical constructions” (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999). CDA was suitable for investigative research, such as this current study; it offered means to describe, analyse, and interpret textual and visual representations at local, institutional, and societal levels (Askehave, 2007; Chiper, 2006; Fairclough, 1995, 2001; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006; Hall, 1997).

3.2 Research Design

CDA goes beyond traditional discourse analysis by not only seeking to describe language in use, but also to analyse, interpret, and explain the significance of the relationship of representations embedded in discourse. It uses linguistic methods and involves the analysis of both coherence, which is the meaning constituted in texts, and cohesion which is the components of textual surface. This differs from content analysis which focuses on coherence with a more non-linguistic traditional approach (Titscher *et al.*, 2000). The content analysis may omit some important themes and

nuances which limit its examination of meaning (Graber & Smith, 2005). Due to this, CDA was used as the research design. CDA as research design will provide a more complete representation of a phenomenon and how they are socially constructed. CDA is therefore more appropriate to analyse the universities representation on the institutional websites.

3.3 Population

There were twenty-six accredited public universities in Ghana and other accredited higher educational institutions, these universities and colleges served as the larger population for the study. Out of these institutions, this research studied the websites of the first six premier universities in Ghana which included a private university. These universities were University of Ghana, The Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, University of Cape Coast, University of Education, Winneba, University for Development studies and Valley View University. The choice of six institutional websites was necessary to help the researcher conduct a close analysis through the exploration of CDA (Askehave, 2007; Pitts, 2004; Silverman & Marvasti, 2008). Also the use of CDA required the multiple collection of data and repeated examination of the data to identify the entrenched representation in the language and image of the websites (Rogers, 2004).

The study centred on the Home, About Us, Admissions, and Academics pages of the websites. These sections of the university websites were key in building their institutional reputation and attracting prospective students and donors. The Home was the page that welcomes the visitor to the website. It gives the first impression to the visitor and hence very key to ideological development of the both the website operator and the visitor. The „About Us“ page introduced the visitor to the university

by presenting the history of the university, its mission and visions, and what the university offers to the society. Admission page was the main marketing page on the website to present the programmes offered and to entice the prospective student to choose the university.

Another page of the university's website that prospective students and donors explore is the Academic page. It was expected that the faculties and programmes offered in the university were well presented with convincing attributes. The Financial Aids pages supported the Admission pages to present the support that the student can get from studying in the university. Since students and alumni were key in the university community, this study explored how they were represented in this page of the university's website.

3.4 Sampling Technique

This study employed the purposive sampling of data. The purposive sampling gave "insight and in-depth understanding" of the topic of interest. It involved selecting data which would provide rich information for analysis considering the issue, subject or phenomenon. "The logic and power of purposeful sampling lie in selecting *information-rich cases* for study in depth" (Patton, 2002, p.230). Purposeful sampling was also seen as an appropriate technique for researchers who want to investigate online material such as websites and web pages (Creswell, 2003; Flick, 2009; Gee, 2005).

The websites of the first six premier universities in Ghana were selected and the websites were freely accessible to the public. They also provided hybrid features which characterise the semiotics practice of current institutional website promotions and information delivery.

3.5 Methods of Data Collection

Fairclough (1995) framework for CDA of communicative events which involved the three overlapping dimensions of text, discursive practice and sociocultural practice was used to find out the representations of the universities on the institutional websites. There were also visual components analysed using Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) Visual Analysis Rubric considering actors, goals, interactions, means, and symbolic attributes. The focus was mainly on how these representations promote the universities' aims, vision and mission as well as advertise the university to the rest of the world. With this background, the data (both textual and visual) were collected from the websites.

To carry out this study, there was multiple data collection on the above pages of the websites from the month of November, 2019 to February, 2020. This time period was selected because the universities were in session as well as have opened admissions. When the admission was opened, the websites were updated regularly to attract and inform prospective applicants. The multiple data collection allowed the researcher to examine the changes in the representations in both language and image. Also the multiple data collection strengthens the validity of the data.

The online webpages were captured and saved for further analysis. Offline copies were created to maintain both the textual and visual components.

3.6 Data Management

In this study, to be able to establish the representation of the universities in Ghana on their institutional websites, there was both textual and visual analysis of the data collected from the various websites. Both the textual and the visual analysis were choices that the universities made to build their online reputation. Following

Fairclough's (1995) framework for CDA, the data collected were analysed in accordance with the three inter-related processes; text analysis, process analysis and social analysis.

3.6.1 Textual analysis

Text analysis is a process of making meaning in context (Halliday and Hassan, 1976). To better achieve the purpose of this study, the textual analysis was done based on Halliday's „transitivity“ and thematic analysis. The „transitivity“ analysis revealed the process type and the thematic analysis revealed how the universities usher the prospective students and donors to the university experience. Mati and Lubbe (2007, p.411) explained transitivity as “a fundamental and powerful semantic concept and generally refers to how meaning is represented in the clause.” Transitivity explains how the speakers encode “mental picture of reality and how they account for their experience of the world around them” (Ibid). Fairclough (1995) as cited in Mati and Lubbe (2007, p.411) said “transitivity focuses on the relation between the actor and the affected participant in process or event presented in the sentence.” Transitivity according to Halliday (2004) had three components – process, participant, and circumstance. The process was the event described by the writer. The type of process was determined by the type of verb. It had six different types:

1. Material process – doing and happening
2. Behavioral process – behaving
3. Mental process – sensing, feeling, thinking
4. Verbal process – saying
5. Relational process – attributing, identifying
6. Existential process – existing

The participants were the subject or object involved in the process. Circumstance also referred to when, why, where, and how the process was done. Simpson (1993:88) observed that the process was indicated by the verb phrase, the participant by the noun phrase and the circumstance by adverbial and prepositional phrases. Circumstance elements also included “a wide range of semantic class, comprising extent, location, manner, cause, contingency, accompaniment, role, matter, and angle, as well as their subcategories” (Adjei & Ewusi-Mensah, 2016). The transitivity analysis was drawn from Kondowe (2014) (cited in Adjei & Ewusi-Mensah 2016, p. 40). The procedures for analysis were:

1. the text was parsed into its constituent clauses;
2. processes were then isolated, and determined which participant was doing each process;
3. determined what sorts of processes they were, and which participant was engaged in which type of process.

Halliday’s Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) presented linguistic choices in the form of experiential (ideational) which talked about the experience in the real world; interpersonal for constructing and maintaining social contact; textual for effective organization of communication (McCabe & Heilman, 2007, p.1). All these linguistic choices were to help achieve the communicative purpose as “experience in the real world is expressed through the linguistic choices that website operators make. Events are reconstructed through discourse” (McCabe & Heilman, 2007, p.1).

Fries (1983) was of the view that "there are good and sufficient internal grammatical reasons to say that the beginning is special for some reason." Indeed the point of entry into any discourse was very special which might to a higher extent depict the writer’s

or speaker's ideology. Ideology informed and assisted individuals and institutions in their interpretations of discourse in the world as systematically organized statements. Beliefs and values were expressed in the way one entered discourse.

To put this in other terms, Davies (1997) averred that Theme initiates "the semantic journey" of the clause, and "if a different starting point is chosen for the journey, a different journey results" (as cited in (McCabe & Heilman., 2007). This meant that the Theme served as the pivot on which the Rheme rotated. The choice of a Theme indicated the writer's ideology and the point he or she wishes to enter into the world of experience.

Consequently, Brown and Yule stated that the first item of an utterance, as a Theme or a topic, had the ability to influence the interpretation of the elements that followed (Brown & Yule (1983). Halliday (1985) said "the textual function of the clause is that of constructing a message" and the Theme-Rheme structure is the "basic form of the organization of the clause as message".

Themes may also be categorized based on the three metafunctions. These are: ideational Theme, interpersonal Theme and textual Theme. When ideational items are brought to the thematic position, we refer to them as topical Themes. The topical Theme may be a participant, process or circumstance. Interpersonal Themes represent the thematisation of the items which involves the personality and identity of the person. These include vocatives, personal feeling, human relations and comments on a proposition. The textual Theme also refers to how the speaker arranges the different parts of the text into a meaningful experience. It may consist of continuatives, structural and conjunctive elements which provide links to ideas.

To achieve a holistic Critical Discourse analysis, Janks' (2005) rubric for linguistic analysis were also explored to analyse other aspects of the linguistic text to bring out the true representation of the universities on their institutional websites. Janks (2005) Linguistic Analysis Rubric provided the means for linguistic analysis which included analysis of modality, voice among and other resources for linguistic analysis as presented in Appendix C.

3.6.2 Visual analysis

Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996, 2006) took the view that "image, colour, music, typography and other visual modes are similar to language and they can simultaneously fulfil and realize the three broad communicative metafunctions as language does". Images and all other visuals were seen as modes of representing the ideational world and hence choices were made to communicate using visuals. Hailing from the Hallidayan School, they were of the view that grammatical forms were resources used to encode the interpretation of experience and social actions. They explained "visual grammar" as a "*general grammar of contemporary visual design in "Western" cultures, an account of explicit and implicit knowledge and practices around a resource, consisting of the elements and rules underlying a culture-specific form of visual communication*" (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). They acknowledged that images and visuals were forms of text which could represent social action to establish a relationship between producer, viewer and the object presented, hence could fulfil Halliday's three metafunctions: ideational, interpersonal, and textual. To link these to images and visuals, the three metafunctions were considered as representational, interactive and compositional respectively. Visuals involved the message exchanged between the „represented participants“, those who were in the visuals, and „interactive participants“, who participated in the communication act

(Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). The visual structures mediated between the real life experience and form social interaction. The choice of visuals and the meaning associated with visuals were culture specific and motivated by motives. The participants in communication strived to make their messages „maximally understandable“ in a given context. The choice of expression was therefore carefully selected to ensure it was transparent enough for participants. Since communication takes place in social structures; there were power differences which drive the interpretation of participants. There was the representational system that shaped the interpretation of the ideas by the participants hence the study of visual grammar required a „critical“ discipline such as CDA (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006).

The visual analysis in this study focused on the representation established with the images and visuals of the university websites. The choice of images found on the websites, how the images were organised and located to interact with visitors in terms of close or distant view were considered. The visuals found on the websites included both video and still images. These visuals were believed to contribute to the representation created on the website. Tracing these visuals helped to identify the similarities and differences in the representation of these institutions. These visuals also served as promotional discourse images on the websites. The analysis was guided by Kress and van Leeuwen“s Visual Analysis Rubric as seen in Appendix D.

The description and analysis of the written text and the visual text occurred simultaneously, which was consistent with other research works which used CDA to examine textual and visual text (Askehave, 2007; Hall, 1997; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006, Sachaie 2011).

After the textual and visual analysis, Fairclough's second dimension involving the analysis of the process for the production, interpretation and consumption of text were done. The interpretation stage unveiled the "ideological framing" of the language used which sought to affect the "cognitive, social and ideological resources" of participants. Attention was paid to the speech act, coherence, and intertextuality which served as a connection between text and society (Blommaert 2005). The third dimension, social analysis, was the explanation stage where a larger picture of what was presented in the text in relation to other societal and academic resources in the derivation of meaning and assertion of power were analysed. The interpretation and explanation were based on the combination of both the textual and visual resources on the websites (Askehave, 2007).

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter presented the methodology of the study. The study was a qualitative study which used CDA as the theoretical and analytical framework. The purposive sampling of the first six universities was to bring out elements of the universities' representations. The sample of six universities was sizable for close examination. The data was collected on multiple occasions to provide a fair view of the representations. Fairclough's Three Dimensional Interpretative Analysis Framework was used to aid the analysis of the data. The process analysis included textual analysis and visual analysis of the data.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 Introduction

This study examined the representation of universities in Ghana on their institutional websites. This chapter provides the analysis and the discussions of the data collected based on Fairclough's (1993, 1995a, & 2001) conceptual framework which comprises textual (descriptive), process (interpretive), and societal (explanative) analysis.

Firstly, the general description of the websites of the universities is given and then taken in sections for textual analysis. The textual analysis focuses on both the textual data and visual data. The textual data, is analysed using Jank's, (2005) Linguistic Analysis rubric which is a summation of Fairclough's, (1993, 1995a, 2001) and Halliday's, (1985, 1994). This requires the analysis of descriptors such as word selection, sentence structure, use of verbs, modality, voice, subjects and sequence of information. The visual data is also analysed descriptively based on their general attributes, types of actors and page design.

The process analysis which is the second dimension, involves the interpretation of the data in relation to the producer. This takes into consideration Fairclough's (2001) interpretative analysis Framework (see Table 2) which focuses on the content of the language, subjects, the relations and connections between the language and the larger society.

Table 2: Fairclough’s Interpretive Analysis Framework

Content	Subject	Relation	Connection
What’s Going On?	Who’s Involved?	In What Relations?	What’s the Role of Language in What’s Going On?
Activities, Topics & Purpose (e.g., verbs, modalities, voice)	Subjects (e.g., institutions, actors, buildings) & Types (e.g., white, nonwhite, female, male)	Composition (e.g., angle, distance) & Sequence (e.g., top, bottom, centre)	Themes & Genres that connect to larger social structures.

Source: Fairclough, N. (2001). *Language and power* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Longman.

The third dimension involving the societal analysis is the explanation of the data from the “larger cultural, historical, and social discourses surrounding interpretation of data” in relation to building of institutional identity (Saichaie, 2011).

The university website is among the three most used sources of information (Simoes & Soares, 2010). As it has been established from Chapter two, the universities use both text and visuals as means to represent themselves on their institutional websites. The visual component of the website makes it attractive, sums up and adds to information. To be able to analyse visuals using CDA, Kress and Van Leeuwen’s (2006) the visual analysis rubrics which have been explained in chapter two are used. The focus of the visual analysis is on descriptors and features of visual elements such as actors, setting, action, and location, types of actors such as male, female, white, non-white, staff, and students; and the page design consisting of font, spatial relations, graphics, angle, background, header and footer as explained in Saichaie (2011). The visuals are collected from the Home, About Us, Admission and Academic pages of the sampled website. It is observed that Financial Aid and/or Scholarships, and Campus Life are mainly under Admission or About Us pages. The analysis of such is done in relation to the pages on which they are found. There is initial descriptive analysis of the various pages, and there is a subsequent process and societal analysis

(for both textual and visual elements). This is in line with previous works on visual analysis such as Askehave (2007); Hartley and Morphew (2008), and Saichaie (2011).

4.1 General Description

Globally, higher educational institutions seek global presence through their institutional websites and other promotional activities. The universities in Ghana are no exception. The universities in Ghana use their institutional websites to reach out to the outside world especially prospective students, donors and other educational institutions. In doing so, similar webpages are found on their websites which relate to other universities across the world. Every website has a Home page which welcomes the visitor to the site. The Home page contains the name and logo, as well as, the navigation menu of the website.

On the website of all the universities in Ghana selected for this study, there is a colourful Home page with a header which contains the logo with the name of the university and main navigating menu. There is also news and announcements on the Home page, as well as a footer. All the websites studied, in addition to the Home page have the „About Us“ page which describes the institutions in terms of their missions, visions, status, policies, location, history, size of campus and academic reputation. There are also webpages for Admissions which seek to promote the university and to direct the prospective applicant to the application processes and the entry requirements. Webpages on academic issues also project the programmes offered in the university. Some of the universities, such as UCC, UG and KNUST provide detailed descriptions of the programmes offered in the various faculties and departments. The Research and Publication webpages also provide links and citations of the researches conducted by researchers of the university community. The

webpages addressing students are also found on the websites. UG focuses on Freshman information as part of the main menu, instead of students. The student or Freshman webpages also indicate the financial aids and obligations in the university. Among other webpages found on the websites are International Programmes, Media and Press, Staff, Alumni, Contact and Social Media handles. These webpages are similar to webpages in other studies (Saichaie, 2011; Saichaie & Morphew, 2014; Hoang & Rojas-Lizana, 2015).

These pages on the websites deploy both textual and visual elements to establish their claims. There are often images with a few textual elements and a call for action which directs visitors to further readings, mainly textual. All the websites have the colour white as part of the interface, combined with either blue, black, green or red, or a combination of two of these colours, plus white as in figure 1 and 2 below.

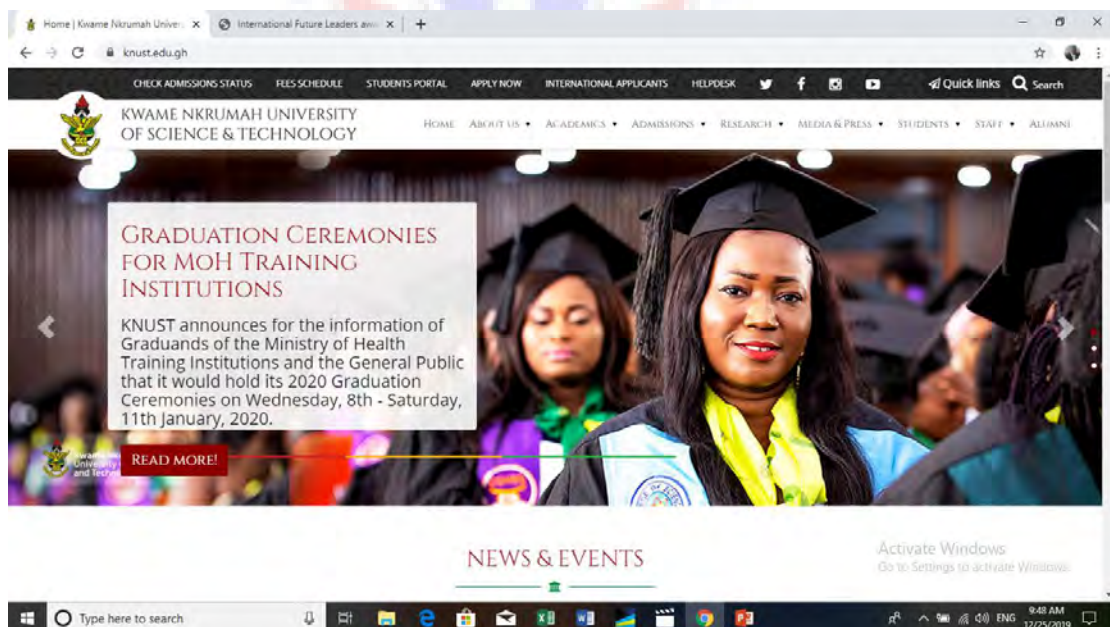


Figure 1: KNUST homepage. Retrieved from knust.edu.gh on 25/12/ 2019

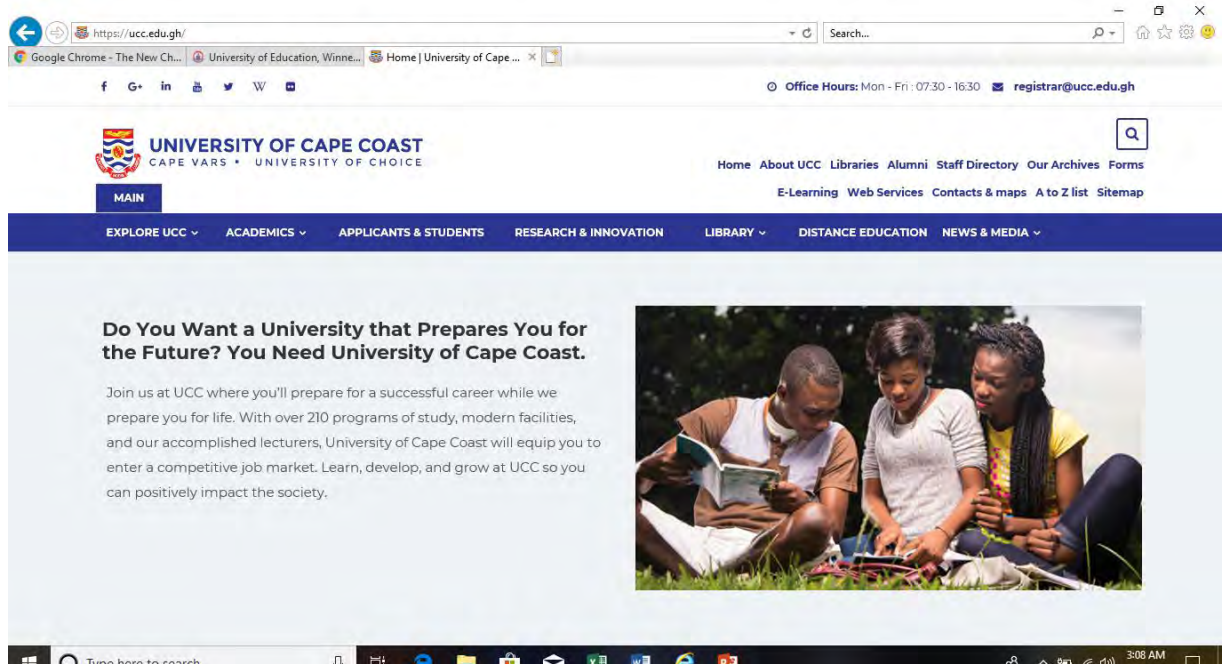


Figure 2: UCC Homepage. Retrieved from ucc.edu.gh on 25/12/ 2019

4.2 Textual Analysis

4.2.1 Home page descriptive analysis

The use of language as discourse on the institutional websites of the universities in Ghana reveals their institutional reputation through their claims, engagements and achievements. The Home page is indeed the „Billboard“ of the university which seeks to advertise the products of the institution. The institutional accomplishments through the staff and students are all presented to enhance the image of the institution.

4.2.1.1 Welcoming

Valley View University, welcomes the visitor with “You are here: Home.” And then there is a Happy New Year wish which is also seen on UDS Home page at the beginning of the year. This creates an interpersonal relationship with the visitor. Then it is followed by a video tour of the campus. This video comes with the quote of Harry Firestone “You get the best out of others when you give the best from yourself.” This

quote is to inform the visitor of the University's willingness to offer its all for the success of students and all stakeholders. It is also written on the video interface, "Take a Tour, Campus Life", to entice the visitor to watch the video tour of the university. UG, on the other hand, presents Admission advertisement for "2019/2020 (Admissions), Graduate Entry Medical Programme & EMBA, Graduate Regular & Sandwich" with a call to action; "Apply Now" to persuade the visitor to apply. Admission promotion is seen on all the samples each offering similar invitation and with call to action. UCC does not use rotating images but the website welcomes visitors with the interrogative statement "Do You Want a University that Prepares You for the Future? You Need University of Cape Coast." This is also followed by an invitation to join the University for their personal development and growth.

4.2.1.2 Rankings

UG makes the claim "UG RANKED 151-200, The World University Rankings Golden Age." UG is not specific on its current ranking in the world but gives a range which may be deceptive. The range of 50 makes the visitor find it difficult where to place UG. KNUST, however, makes a similar claim but with specific figures "KNUST has been ranked as the best University in Ghana and West Africa, 14th best on the African Continent and 706th best university globally by the US News & World Report." Notwithstanding KNUST position on the various rankings, they consistently claim to be the best or among the best. Apart from UG and KNUST, all the other samples were silent on institutional rankings.

4.2.1.3 News and events

UDS allocates rotating images for accommodation information "Detail information on accommodation on all campuses for freshers." Three other rotating images are for

conference announcement. Conference announcements are seen on the Home page of all the other institutions, inviting staff and students to conferences, seminars and training. UEW showcases its interaction with the society by dedicating a rotating image with the inscription “UEW Management Graces Okyenhene’s 20th anniversary Grand Durbar.”

The News, Events and Announcements reinforce the institutions achievements and identity. The use of institutional subjects builds the universities’ identity and provide positive reputation. However, the subjects are mostly the university, staff, departments and societies. The samples consist of only a few announcements and events which are directly related to students. Students as actors are seen in a large group with others as part of the achievement of the university. For instance, “UCC Debate Society Presents GUDC Trophy to the Vice Chancellor.”, “KNUST Medical School Debate Team Wins 2019” and “KNUST Observes International Day of Persons with Disabilities.” In these instances, the students are not projected but rather are seen as participants in the university activities and achievements. It is worthy to note that four of the samples do not have any news, events or announcement relating to students. They all emphasize the activities and achievements of the university. The universities’ names and key offices are therefore often used as subjects. VVU captions “Our Achievement” with the claim “The primus inter pares and pace setter in quality higher education amongst private universities.” This is reinforced by data on enrolment, programmes, campuses and students. This is also similar to UDS claims where the size of the University is established by the data on enrolment, programmes offered, faculties/schools/institutes, and campuses. The News and Events also establish the university’s reputation by announcing collaborations with educational

and research institutions as well as projecting research publications and centres to emphasise the institutional mandate and contribution to knowledge.

4.2.1.4 Alumni

The discourse on the Home page is also built relying on glories of alumni intellectual abilities and affiliations of other institutions. As seen in the claims: “UEW Alumnus Spearheads Curriculum Reforms in Ghana.”, and sections such as “Meet our Alumni” and “Spotlight” on UDS and UCC homepages respectively. These sections promote the high achieving alumni of the universities as they celebrate them. The six personalities on this section of UDS Home page were either professors or highly ranked politicians, mainly members of parliament. Their individual achievements are highlighted to uplift the image of the university as a place for positive training. UCC Home page spotlight also feature staff. The samples indicate that UCC celebrates the Professors they have produced with the claim “We want the whole world to know about you today, smile you under the spotlight.” The Home page highlight of Alumni achievements serves as a promotional discourse to entice the prospective applicant who desires to achieve something great in the future.

4.2.1.5 Language use on the home pages

The language on the Home page is often made up of phrases; e.g. Home, Admission, Academics, Research, Students, Staff, Events, About Us, Fee Schedule, International Applicant, Apply Now, Top Story, Quick Links, Latest News, Research News. Two words with ampersand e.g. Research & Innovation, News & Media, are seen only on UCC Home page. Simple clauses are also used to introduce and caption news and events with images. Examples are “UCC, University of Alabama and Central University Hold 1st symposium”, UDS Elects First Alumnus Pro-Vice Chancellor”,

“UEW Research Team Visits Europe on a Collaborative Project” “UG launches 20 for 20 Campaign”. These phrases and clauses besides captioning the images also serve as hyperlinks.

4.2.2 About us page descriptive analysis

The About Us page of the university websites presents a promotional discourse which highlights the historical background, the mandate, and the vision and mission of the university, as well as the achievements and its traditions. The discourse on the About Us page reinforces the claims on the Home page.

4.2.2.1 Establishment

The establishment of the university and its transitional period form the historical background while the vision and the mission express claims they envisage in the future. The achievements of the university serve as a bait to persuade prospective applicants to apply to that university. The tradition of the university also includes its global, continental, regional and national recognition, the size and beauty of the campus(es), life at campus, famous faculties and departments, institutional affiliations, sports, publications, ability to train students for leadership, and diversity of programmes and institutional actors.

All the samples studied begin the history or profile of the university with the founding year and mostly with the Parliamentary Act or Ordinance for the establishment. For example, “The UEW was established in September, 1992 as a University College under PNDC Law 322.”, “The University of Science and Technology succeeded the Kumasi College of Technology which was established by a Government Ordinance on 6th October, 1951. It started operation officially on 22nd January, 1952 with 200 Teacher Training students transferred from Achimota, to form the nucleus of the new

College”. UG and UDS add the purpose for the establishment of the university with the claim:

“The UG, the premier university and the largest university in Ghana, was founded as the University College of the Gold Coast by Ordinance on August 11, 1948 for the purpose of providing and promoting university education, learning and research.”

“UDS is Ghana’s first public University in the North. It was established in May, 1992 by the Government of Ghana (PNDC Law 279) to “blend the academic work with that of the community in order to provide constructive interaction between the two for the total development of Northern Ghana, in particular, and the country as a whole.”

However, VVU which is a private university began the history with the date of establishment and agency responsible for its establishment. Much effort is made to link the university to the Adventist Church which is the founder.

“VVU was established in 1979 by the West African Union Mission of Seventh-day Adventists. In 1997 it was absorbed into the Adventist University system operated by the West Central Africa Division (WAD) now West Central African Division of Seventh-day Adventist with headquarters in Abidjan, Cote d’Ivoire. The Ghana Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, (organized in 2000), serves as the local manager of the University.”

The transitional period of the university is also key to its institutional reputation. Institutions like VVU, UG, UEW, and UCC show their affiliations, their establishment from other renowned institutions which build the trust of prospective applicants. Words are crafted to show the independence of the universities, but through thorough stages and transitions which ensure academic and administrative excellence. The choice of verbs like **attained**, **upgrade**, and **granted** to express the academic and administrative freedom gained shows the standard of quality education they offer. The current state of the university is the result of the accumulated institutional success, an upgrade of the existing structures and programmes, and

independence granted based on merit. For example, “Then in 1997, the National Accreditation Board (NAB) of the Ministry of Education in Ghana granted Valley View College national accreditation, thus permitting her to award her own degrees.” Also UCC states: “On October 1, 1971, the College attained the status of a full and independent University, with the authority to confer its own degrees, diplomas and certificates by an Act of Parliament ...” and UEW adds: “On 14th May, 2004 the University of Education Act, Act 672, was enacted to upgrade the status of the University College of Education of Winneba to the status of a full University.”

4.2.2.2 Achievements

The About Us pages of the samples studied focus less on explicit presentation of achievement, with the exception of VVU. VVU provides a list of the achievements of the university. This may be because it is a private university and its reputation is built on achievements. Some of the achievements attributed to the entire VVU are listed. For example, VVU is

1. The First Chartered Private University in Ghana
2. The First University in Ghana to train the Ghana Police in Computer Security and Cyber Forensics
3. The Best Private University in the Year 2013 (Ranked by 4ICU)
4. The Private University with the Highest Number of Publications
5. The Only Eco-Friendly University in Africa

Other achievements attributed to specific departments also include: “The Nursing Licensure Exam pass in 2015 was 97%.” VVU list of achievements is to help build institutional image and identity as among the high achieving universities among

private universities. These claims are tangible and therefore have the higher possibility of influencing visitors to the website.

UG, on the other hand, boasts of being “the leading university in Ghana” through the statements on the number of research institutes, students, international links and international students” admission to the university. For instance, “The UG, has over the years built an image as one of the continent”’s reputable universities which makes the UG the first choice for academics, researchers and students.” UG claims to have over 38,000 students and links with universities in Africa, Europe and North America with international students from over 70 countries across the world. The successes of UG are measured based on their international reputations and recognition. This is a motivator to prospective students since the outcome of their education will be accepted worldwide.

KNUST, UCC, UEW and UDS do not show explicit list or mention achievements, but rather, emphasise what they are poised to do. KNUST displays: “endeavour to maintain and strengthen our position as the premier Science and Technology University in the country leading in generating and exchanging new knowledge in innovation and technology, and offering service to government, industry and society.” To do this, they state that “We are dedicated to exhibiting the highest standards of professional ethics and integrity, efficient utilisation of resources and a culture of accountability and responsibility in all our operations” UCC also “seeks to pursue excellence through the creation of standards in teaching, intellectual inquiry, engagement and professional practice and offers opportunities to its employees and products in a manner that empowers them to be agents of change.” These claims and others found on the About Us pages of these four institutions are what they seek to do but real experience and achievements are not presented. However, one may be

attracted to their core values without demanding evidence of their successes and attributes such as campus size and beauty.

4.2.2.3 Global Recognition

The About Us pages are also utilised to make claims to the worldwide, continental, and national visibility of the universities. This is done through the use of words and phrases like **national, in Africa, other African countries, world-class, international, other parts of the world,** and **worldwide**. UEW makes claim to its national and continental relevance by stating ways of achieving their aims by “placing emphasis on subjects which are of special relevance to the needs of the educational system of the country and for national development.” And also “provide opportunities for higher education especially teacher education for students from other countries in Africa.” Likewise, all the other institutions make claims to continental and global relevance or achievements in addition to the national contributions. For example, UG has its vision “to become a world class research-intensive University over the next decade” and UCC with similar vision “to be a University with a worldwide acclaim that is strongly positioned for innovative teaching, research, outreach and professional development.” UDS also has for its vision “... to be a Home of World Class Pro-Poor Scholarship.” In addition, KNUST has the vision “[t]o build on KNUST’s leadership as the premier Science and Technology University in Ghana and to be among the top ten universities in Africa. However, KNUST makes a strong claim that “It has within the short period of its existence become an important centre for the training of scientists and technologists not only for Ghana, but also for other African countries as well as from other parts of the world.” And so “[t]he KNUST is a world-class academic centre of excellence, spearheading West Africa’s pursuit of technological advancement.” The first claim is substantiated by the facilities in the campus that

enhance the academic development of the students and the university as a whole. The second claim also is buttressed on the size and the beauty of the campus which can compete with universities across the world.

4.2.2.4 Renowned faculties

The aim of establishing a particular university comes with the desired faculties. Almost all universities have faculties that they cherish and which form part of their history. These faculties are the spine of the universities. Universities in Ghana, are no exception. All the samples studied, with the exception of UEW, mention departments and/or the faculties they cherish. VVU in the wake of its recent cherished Faculty of Science singles out some departments from that faculty with the statement “We have a high demand for our Computer Science/Information Technology and Nursing Graduates by organizations.” to express how demanding these programmes are to the relevant organisations. KNUST outlines the establishment of the various schools, faculties, colleges and departments. For example, “In October, 1952, the School of Engineering and the Department of Commerce were established and the first students were admitted.” The school of Engineering and the Department of Commerce are the first to be established. UG mentions its five colleges and other renowned institutes like Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research, Centre for Tropical, Clinical Pharmacology and Therapeutics, Regional Institute for Population Studies, Institute for Environmental and Sanitation Studies, and the Institute for Statistical, Social and Economic Research.

UCC also states that “The University started with two departments, namely: Arts and Science. These departments developed into Faculties in 1963. In order to achieve the set objectives, in 1964, the University created two more Faculties, namely: Education

and Economics & Social.” UDS also “began academic work in September 1993 with the admission of forty (40) students into the Faculty of Agriculture, (FoA), Nyankpala.” It should however be mentioned that apart from VVU, the other sampled universities mention the establishment of the faculties or departments without showing their contribution to the success of the university.

4.2.2.5 Campus scenes

A serene environment provides a conducive environment for studies. Universities display their wealth and size in relation to their campuses. The samples examined through the various linguistic forms display the beauty of the campuses and the facilities which endow the universities the ability to host their programmes. UG and UDS utilise visual images to display the beauty of their campuses while the other samples use both visual and written text. UEW present a list of its campuses: “... operates from four (4) campuses: the college of Technical Education located in Kumasi, the College of Agriculture, located at Mampong, the College of Languages Education, located at Ajumako and the Winneba Campus where the main administration is also located.” Much is not said about these campuses but visual views are given. VVU and KNUST also show not only the beauty of their campuses but also its benefits to the students’ success in the university and for the future development of the university.

“VVU is located at Oyibi, 31 km from the city of Accra, and 13 km from Adenta, a suburb of Accra. The serene atmosphere and the hilly surroundings provide the necessary tranquil, conducive to serious academic work. The vastness of the University land (335 acres) constitutes an important guarantee for future physical development”.

KNUST adds:

“Our campus is located at a very ideal place inside the city of Kumasi. With an estimated eight-mile square of aesthetic beauty, a rising and falling landscape, state of the art buildings, a wide range of trees, long stretches of well-cut lawns and very conspicuous flora prettification, our community provides the right atmosphere for the holistic development of students.”

UCC has two sites for their campus and the description of the campus extends to the Cape Coast city. Cape Coast is a historical city being the first capital city in the pre-independence history of Ghana and a home of culture.

The Southern Campus or Old Site is uniquely situated in the heart of the hilly settlements of “Apewosika” and “Kokoado” in the Cape Coast metropolis close to the shores of the Atlantic Ocean, providing a daily comfortable sea breeze. The site sits on high ground above sea level providing a beautiful bird’s eye view of the ocean. The setting up of the University campus within these communities has opened them up to a lot of socio-economic activities.

Other themes are also identified, which include sports, publication, training for leadership, and diversity. These are not universally used. For instance, VVU expresses the numerous sporting activities that the student can participate in. Nevertheless, the achievements of these sports are not mentioned but they are seen as a social interaction for the release of stress. UEW also shows its contribution to knowledge through the showcase of their publications on their website. KNUST, UCC and VVU also express their diversity of the programmes and campus life. KNUST asserts that they “ensure an environment of understanding and respect for cultural diversity and equal opportunity among students and staff. We uphold academic freedom in our quest to advance the frontiers of knowledge and in our attempt to attain self-development.” UCC also shows the diversity of the programmes they offer which help to achieve the aims and mandate of the university. UCC is of the view that “today, with the expansion of some of its Faculties/Schools and the

diversification of programmes, the University has the capacity to meet the manpower needs of other ministries and industries in the country” VVU claims to “admits qualified students regardless of their religious background, provided such students accept the Christian principles and lifestyle which forms the basis for the University’s operations.”

4.2.2.6 Language use on the about us pages

Language use on the „About Us“ pages of the universities’ websites is to build the identity and reputation of the universities, as well as serve as promotional discourse. Their historical background, independent and established systems of administration, campus aesthetics, and famous faculties build the image of the universities and attract prospective students. The choice of complex sentences gives the universities the room to add more attributes in one statement. For example, UCC utilises the complex structures to establish the need for a legislature bill to establish them in order to review the mandate of the university.

“Besides the need to give legal backings to current practices in the University as well as ensuring consistency with Constitution of Ghana, the passage of the Bill would also position the University to meet new challenges and demands of the Ghanaian Society and beyond and to keep pace with the developments in the higher education environment.”

The use of the first person personal pronoun plural „We“ is shows the collective effort of the institutional actors for the establishment and achievement of the universities. „We“ often takes the subject position to represent the university where the name of the university or its referent is not mentioned. This makes the discourse on the About Us pages institution centred. Less attention is given to students on the About Us pages. When students are mentioned, the institutions are actors and they just personalise the discourse for the purpose of promotion.

4.2.3 Admissions descriptive analysis

The textual elements on the Admission pages of the sampled websites centre on themes relating to promotional discourse. The promotional discourse centre on the claims of the university as a provider of service, programmes offered, financial aid, institutional size, diversity, international exchange and social networking, student development, and application guidelines. The sole purpose of the Admission pages is to give information to the prospective students to entice them to choose those institutions. In doing this, the universities through the textual and visual element prove their worth and strength to provide quality education. The language being promotional in nature establish relationship with the prospective students. The instructions are simple and directional and require less computer skills. The Admission pages add to the Home and About Us pages to establish the universities as reputable institutions with the purpose of persuading the prospective student.

Higher educational institutions see their students as customers and engage in marketing strategies to entice the prospective student. In doing this, they advertise the university as providing services worth buying. Students must know the offer and the totality of the benefits of enrolling in their programmes. The various samples exhibit this through the establishment of the products/services they provide. The common products the universities offer are the academic programmes. These programmes are listed on the Admission page for prospective students to scroll through for their selection. The programmes are categorised into faculties and departments for easy access. Further details of the programmes are given on the Academic page. Some of the samples promote other services which are related to the development of the student. For example,

“At VVU, we motivate, build the potential and ability in each person for further study, by providing you with not only academic opportunities, but with challenging learning environment that will make you suitable for industry.”

VVU claims to build the prospective student’s capabilities in order for them to achieve academic excellence and get better job in the future. VVU presents a claim from the About Us page that there is a high market for their graduates; this is to buttress and explain the offer they provide.

UCC admission promotion is a section on the Home page. UCC uses similar attributes as their promotional tool. For example, “Join us at the UCC where we focus on serving the needs of students, nurturing and challenging them to grow socially, physically, morally and intellectually.” Likewise, the other universities make similar claim. UG’s focus is on the financial aid that the university provides to support the students in addition to the programmes. For example, UG states that “through the Students Financial Aid Office (SFAO), the university makes every effort to provide financial aid to qualified Ghanaian undergraduate applicants with limited finances.” KNUST focuses on the administrative service that they provide to prospective students to facilitate their application: “We are keen on facilitating your application and admission process to enable you study with us”. This administrative assistance entices students to apply to the university simply because the admission process seems easy and they are likely to be admitted. UEW focuses on the programmes they offer through the various modes of delivery. It claims: “The University runs over 100 Graduate, Undergraduate and Certificate programmes through the Regular, Part-Time, Distance and Sandwich modes.” The services that the universities provide have an impact on the decision-making of the prospective student. While one may opt for a university where the admission process is so simple, another may opt for a university

that has curricular activities that ensure the total development of the student, yet another may opt for the university that has links with industry.

Financial aid is one of the key factors that prospective students consider in the college choice process. The cost of university education is a burden on students and they look for institutions that offer financial assistance to help them complete their programmes. The samples studied link the Financial Aid Services with the Admission page to give prospective students what they can offer while they make their decision on the university. The samples with Financial Aid provision on the Admission page have links to scholarships provided within the university. The offers are made available to students and the universities are ready to assist them to secure the funds. For example, UG states that “through the Students Financial Aid Office (SFAO), the university makes every effort to provide financial aid to qualified Ghanaian undergraduate applicants with limited finances.” KNUST also has the Students' Financial Services Office which “among others, explore, solicit and offer financial assistance to students from Less Endowed Schools, as well as, Needy but brilliant Students studying in the University.” UG, KNUST and VVU have the Students' Financial Services Office section which uses invitational language to invite students for support. UEW, UDS and UCC provide lists of available scholarships for students to apply.

The text on the Admission pages of the sample also reveals the size of the universities in terms of their student population, international students, social network, international exchanges and the diversity of campus life. The universities focus on the student population and the competent leaders they train as well as their contribution to knowledge. UCC, UG and KNUST, however, display their

international worth. UCC Admission page claims that the Centre for International Education “activities include international students and staff exchanges, research collaborations and publications, and information sharing, all aimed at enhancing the international image of the University.” Therefore, “Over the years, the Centre had fostered links with institutions of higher learning from the USA, China, UK, Sweden, Germany, Liberia, Nigeria and Senegal, among others.” The number of international students and exchanges are however not mentioned. Similarly, UG asserts that “UG students come from across Ghana, Africa and throughout the world, representing diverse perspectives, experiences, backgrounds and cultures.” The mixture of international and national students provides diversity in campus life. KNUST adds “International and national students have developed a friendly union over the years and co-exist as a family... Students from all over the World come together here and the Professors really use the diversity to open up class discussions.” The universities ascribe the increased number of the international students to the quality education they offer which has built their international reputation. It is therefore not surprising when KNUST claims that “There is a large multi-cultural international community in KNUST as a result of the high standard of education. It is not surprising many internationals far and wide find KNUST the best choice University to further their education.”

4.2.3.1 Language use on the admission pages

The universities employ relational language to establish a relationship with the prospective student as well as extend invitation. For example, in establishing relationship with students, VVU says “[y]ou have your grades, certificates and you have researched and chosen your dream course. Now you are probably wondering how to stand out from the thousands of would-be students vying for places in

universities...” Others offer what they have and then extend invitation to the prospective student. KNUST, after elaborating on the diverse culture on campus concludes “Join us, let's learn together, come, and share your culture.” UCC also first extends the invitation before elaborating on the programmes, facilities and staff: “Join us at the UCC where we focus on serving the needs of students, nurturing and challenging them to grow socially, physically, morally and intellectually.” The Admission page also utilises clause complexes to make claims about the universities, and making references relating to the prospects at the same time. Simple sentences are used to provide information on the admission application process. Programmes under various faculties and schools are also listed for the prospective students. Simple nominal phrases and simple sentences are attached to images to introduce the programmes.

4.2.4 Academics descriptive analysis

Universities are academic institutions of higher studies. Among the purposes of the universities’ establishment is one of training students for leadership positions to enhance the development of the nation and to contribute in global leadership. This purpose is achieved through the establishment of academic departments and programmes for specific field of study. Students, in the college choice process, examine the programmes in the various institutions to determine which of them offer their preferred course. It is expected that the Academic page of the website sells the university programmes.

However, in the samples studied, universities in Ghana pay less attention to the overview of the academic page. UCC, and UDS do not have overview of the Academic page, UG has a two-line overview while VVU, UEW and KNUST provide

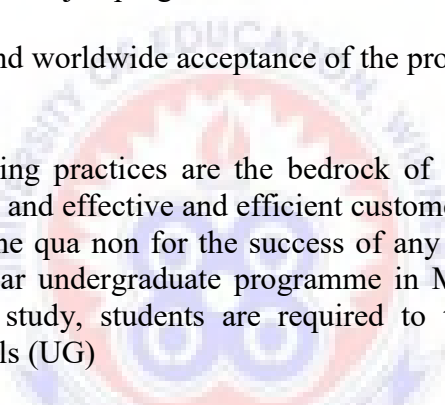
brief introductions. UG's introduction is a statement that UG "has four colleges, each with several schools and departments. All the colleges offer programmes for both undergraduate and graduate studies." VVU focuses on the achievements of the academic departments, students and alumni, and the University itself. For example, for achievements of departments, we have: "Codeplex of VVU emerged as the only group to have successfully entered into the Microsoft Ghana Imagine Cup Competition and also was to represent Ghana in the global competition in 2013."; about the achievements of students and alumni: "The First University in Ghana to develop and use its own School Management System developed by current/past students of Valley View"; and about the achievements of the University itself: "VVU is the first to develop and implement its own Biometric Authentication System." This form of academic overview gives assurance to the prospective students that the university is a high achieving university and one which motivates its students for innovative work. There is also the opportunity for of international-national connections through the competitions that the university participate in.

UEW, on the Academic page, outlines ten ways the University shall achieve its purpose. UEW is seen as actor to ensure the success of its students. It determines the components of its academic programmes, ensures practical and appropriate methodology in lesson delivery and develops teaching and learning materials for teaching in the University and other educational institutions.

KNUST continues to project itself as the number-one university in Ghana on its Academic page: "Proudly Ghana's No. 1 University and seeking to maintain academic excellence; – one of our hallmarks." The overview is a promotional discourse to introduce their programmes. After mentioning that it offers undergraduate,

postgraduate and distance learning courses, KNUST asserts that these programmes are „carefully“ categorised into six colleges with an ultra-modern library and ICT centre and other research facilities which show that “KNUST delivers a high standard of education which reflects the pedigree of a University poised on attaining a status of being No. 1 in Africa.” Other promotional language include the following: “Academic related issues, especially on studying and research, has never been this convenient. This hallmark is evident in our ever increasing affiliate institutions. We are the home of academic excellence.”

The description of the major programmes is centred on the programme reputation, duration, objectives and worldwide acceptance of the programmes. For example,



Astute marketing practices are the bedrock of successful enterprises the world over and effective and efficient customer management is also an absolute sine qua non for the success of any business enterprise... This is a 4-year undergraduate programme in Marketing. In the first two years of study, students are required to take courses such as Language Skills (UG)

The Civil Engineering department at KNUST is well represented on various national and international committees, reflecting our reputation and ensuring our continuing influence on the civil engineering profession. (KNUST)

In almost every organisation, whether private or public sector, the work of accountants is very useful to provide accountability over their stewardship. Additionally, as a nation, there is shortage of qualified accounting personnel. Graduates from this programme will feed in as accounting personnel and managers in both private sector and public sector organisations. (UCC)

UDS, however, provides only a list of programmes under the various faculties but, unlike the others, the links do not serve as hyperlinks to lead you to the department and programme page. UEW has the names of the departments as hyperlinks but it provides only admission requirements for the programmes. The Academic pages of

the sample can be said to be insufficient since less information can be retrieved from the page.

4.3 Visual Analysis

4.3.1 Home page descriptive analysis (Visual)

As has been explained earlier, the Home page is the bill board of the website which links the visitor to all pages on the website. The Home page design should therefore be attractive to the visitor as well as provide vital information. The simplicity or complexity of a Home page either attracts or repels customers. In marketing the university, the Home page should be friendly to the prospective students and easy to navigate. The visual themes identified from the Home pages are summarised in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Visual themes from the sample

VISUAL THEMES	EXAMPLES
Institutional Attributes	Logo, Ranking, Management Activities, Affiliations, Social Support
Academic Programmes	Research Publication, Conference Flyers, Academic Collaborations,
Achievements	Alumni Success, Clubs and Society's Success, Departmental Success
Congregations	Graduation, Honorary Degree Conferment, Matriculation
Campus Aesthetics	Trees, Lawns, Buildings, Flowers, Entrance, Roads, Pavements
Student Life	Studying, Practical Works, Walking, Lab Works,

The themes identified on the Home page of the samples show the institutions' identity and students' life on campus as well as alumni achievements. The institutions use their logo as part of the header to catch the attention of the visitor. After the header,

the universities create rotating images to announce important events or display institutional attributes. For example, UG uses a rotating image well-designed to present the University as among the best in the world (see figure 3).



Figure 3; UG ranking. Retrieved from ug.edu.gh on 29/11/ 2019.

Most rotating images are focused on admission, campus beauty and conferences. The universities use the flyers as advertisement with the focus of selling the activities of the universities and building their reputation. VVU provides a video which features the campus buildings and environs. The video provides close view, distant view and aerial view. This helps to better capture the ecological nature of the VVU campus as seen in Figure 4 below.

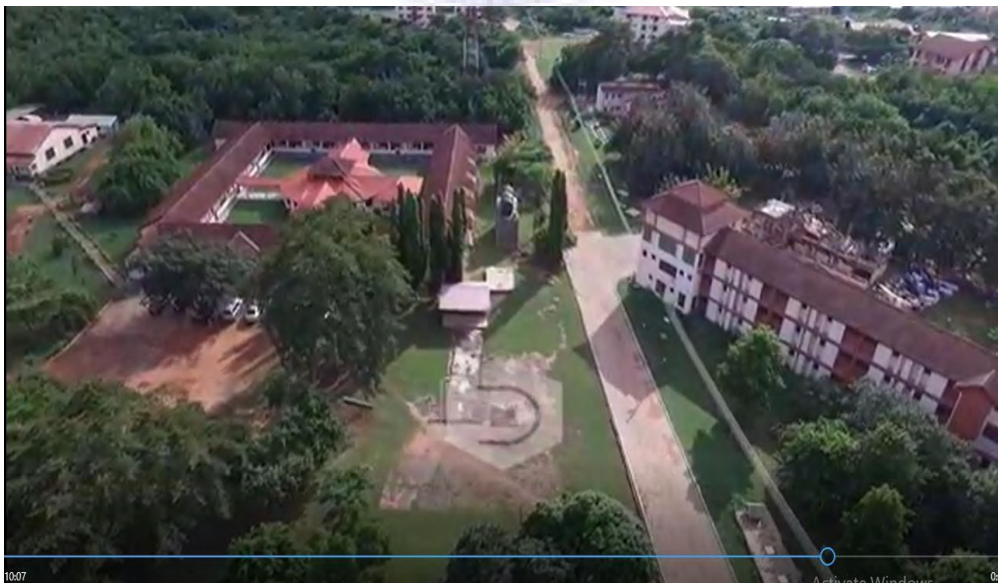


Figure 4: A view of VVU campus from the video. Retrieved from vvu.edu.gh on 08/01/2020

UCC does not make use of rotating images but uses a picture of students learning on lawns as the first image on the Home page. This picture (in figure 5) is attached to text for admission promotion. Students seen on the Home page are all related to admission and exhibit what they have studied in labs and field works. There is no picture on interior of classrooms or buildings. The focus is on the outside beauty of the campus.

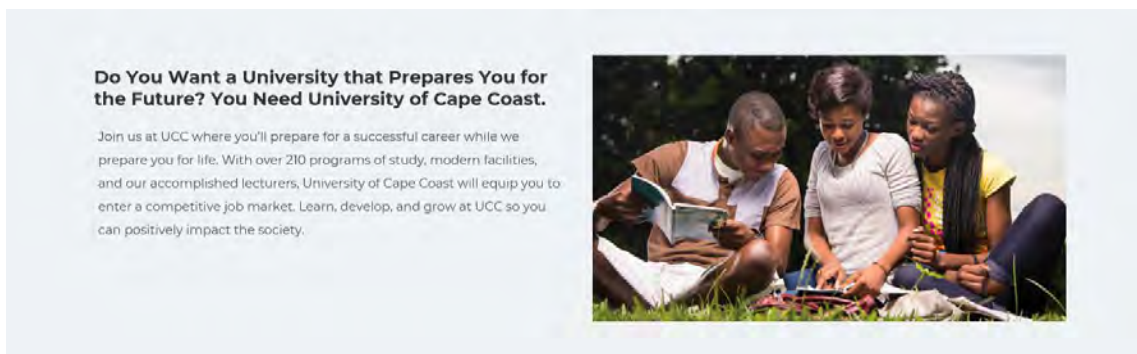


Figure 5: UCC home page admission promotion. Retrieved on 8th December, 2019. From uuc.edu.gh

4.3.1.1 Types of actors

There are 75 images with 173 human actors identified in the Home page samples. VVU Home page does not use visible human actors. People are seen walking in the video but because of the long distance, their identity cannot be seen. UCC and UEW have an image each in groups. The individuals identified on the websites are high achieving staff members, students, and management. Male actors are 123 representing 71% and Female actors are 50 representing 29%. Non-whites are 166 representing 96% while only 7 whites appear on UEW Homepage representing 4% of the total human actors on the home pages. This indicates that the dominant group on the home pages are males and non-white actors. There is no fair representation of gender on the homepage. The presence of more non-white actors is consistent with Saichaie (2011)

because the sampled universities are situated among non-whites. The summary is provided in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Types of Actors on Home Page

	UG	KNUST	UCC	UEW	UDS	TOTAL
Number of Actors	24	41	36	29	43	173
Males	12	25	23	23	40	123
Females	12	16	13	6	3	50
Non-White	24	41	36	22	43	166
White	0	0	0	7	0	7

4.3.1.2 Page design

Universities in Ghana cherish the representation of colours in the proclamation of institutional identity. The common colour in all the samples collected is white which symbolises „academic purity“, followed by blue which is a symbol of academic excellence. These colours and their interpretations are based on beliefs in Ghanaian societies, hence adopted by the universities. “Academic purity” stands for the genuineness and quality of all achievements in the institution, while “excellence” represents the achievements and perfection in delivery of services.

The Header of the websites provides the logo and the navigating menu of the website. The Logos are placed in close proximity for easy view. They are mainly on the left corner of the Header with bright colours to attract the attention of the visitor. The samples use horizontal navigating menu. The navigating menu includes: Home, About Us, Academics, Admissions, Students, Staff, Research, and Library. There are other links like Social Media Handles, Alumni, and Quick Links. VVU includes stories, resource ventures and Life@ VVU as part of the links. Likewise, UG and KNUST add International Programmes and Media and Press respectively. These serve as hyperlink to other sections of the website. A sample is seen in figure 6.

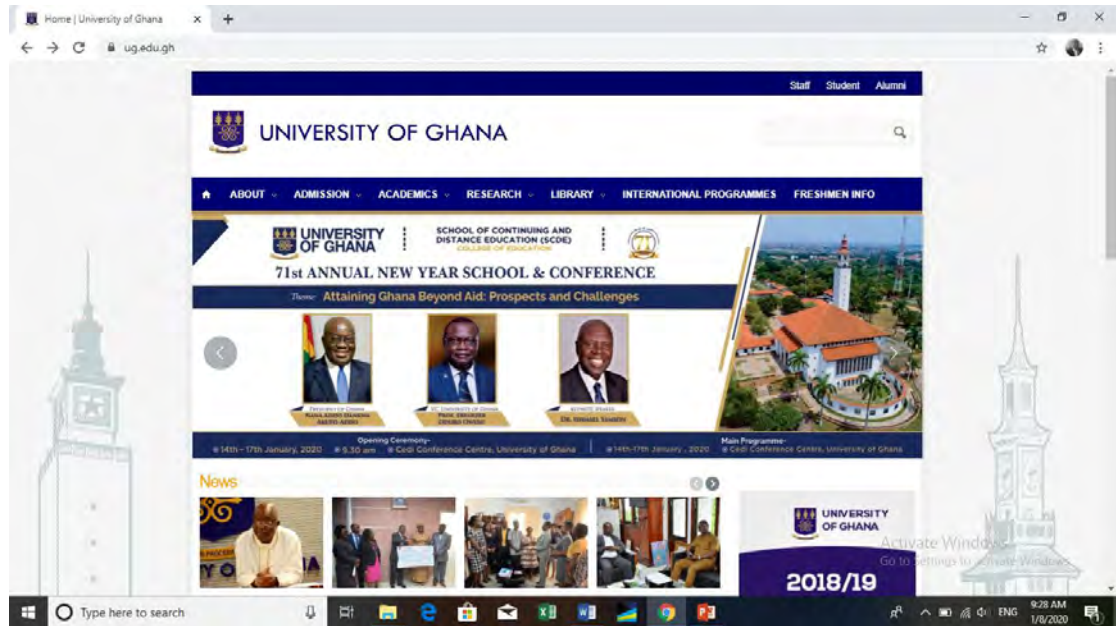


Figure 6: UG ‘Home page image’ retrieved on 8th January, 2020 from ug.edu.gh

All the samples, with the exception of UCC, use rotating images. These come immediately after the header. The rotating images are utilized to project the activities of the universities. The rotating images feature the aesthetics of the university campus, ranking, admission advertisement, congregations, conferences, social responsibilities and institutional activities. News and Events present images attached to the captions and brief introduction of the news and events. These images are “below the fold” (the images are not in full screen but need to be clicked on to get the full size picture (Lynch & Horton, 2009)). The News and Events centre on the activities of the universities, including workshops, congregation, internal elections, students’ competition, honours, conferences, collaborations, research activities, and students’ financial aid. UG has a sider which provides featured links to other news on the website. After the News and Events is the footer which provides hyperlinks to information such as contact, admissions, academic calendar, research policies and reports.

4.3.2 About us page descriptive analysis (Visual)

Few images are used on the About Us pages of the sampled websites. Institution like UCC do not attach any image to the description about the University. UG and VVU use only an image while KNUST, UEW and UDS use 13, 10, and 6 images respectively. The universities position images relating to campus scenery, architecture, administrators, old emblem and students and (the repetition of) institutional logo. UG presents a night view of the campus to show the beauty of the campus at night. The image captures the Balm Library from a distance to have the scene around the Library serene and comfortable. This helps to display trees, flowers and lawns which beautify the campus as seen in figure 7. Likewise, KNUST provides seven different scenes of the campus separated by a white space. The layout allows each image to stand out. The campus scenes are focused on their stadium, hall of residence, entrance, roads and roundabouts decorated with flowers, and administration (see figure 8). VVU also provides campus scenes with some students walking but focuses on only one female, and UEW and UDS provide images of buildings on the campuses. UEW also features pictures of administrators, publication and KNUST provides images of the old Crest with past students.

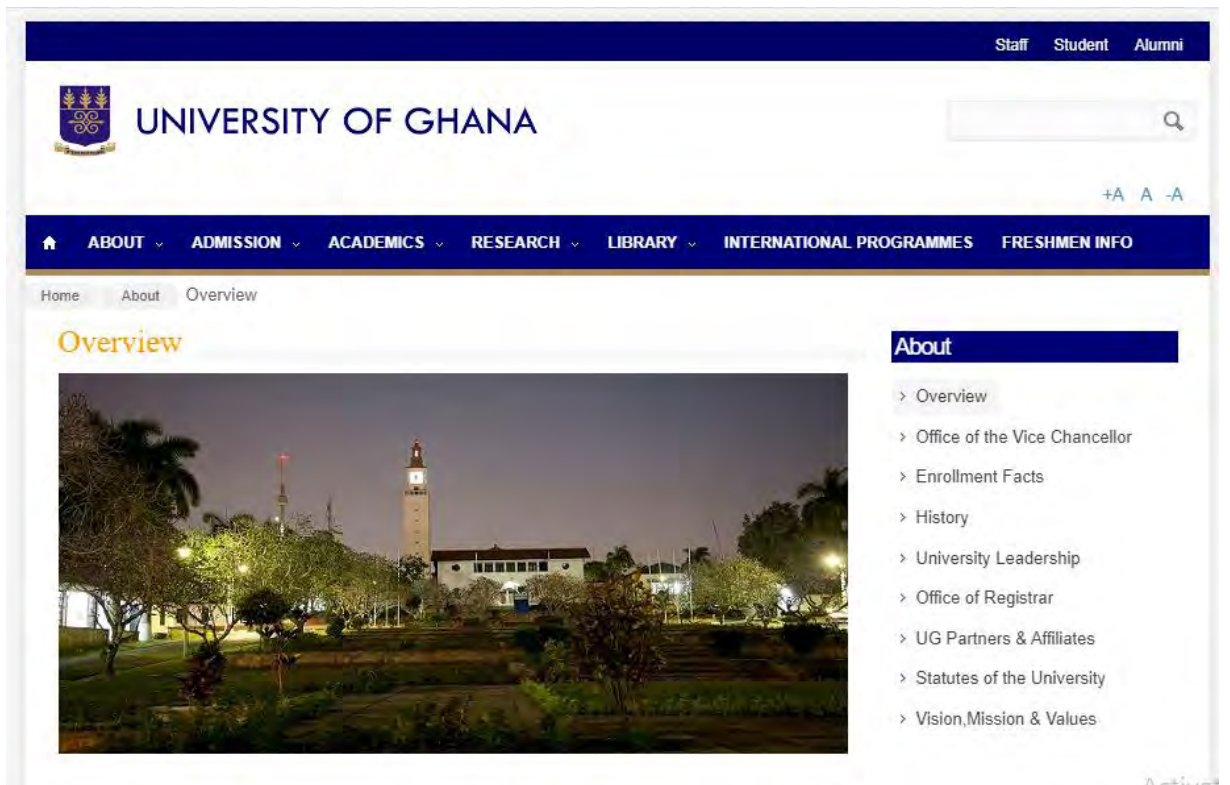


Figure 7: UG 'About Us image' retrieved on 8th December, 2019 from ug.edu.gh/about/overview

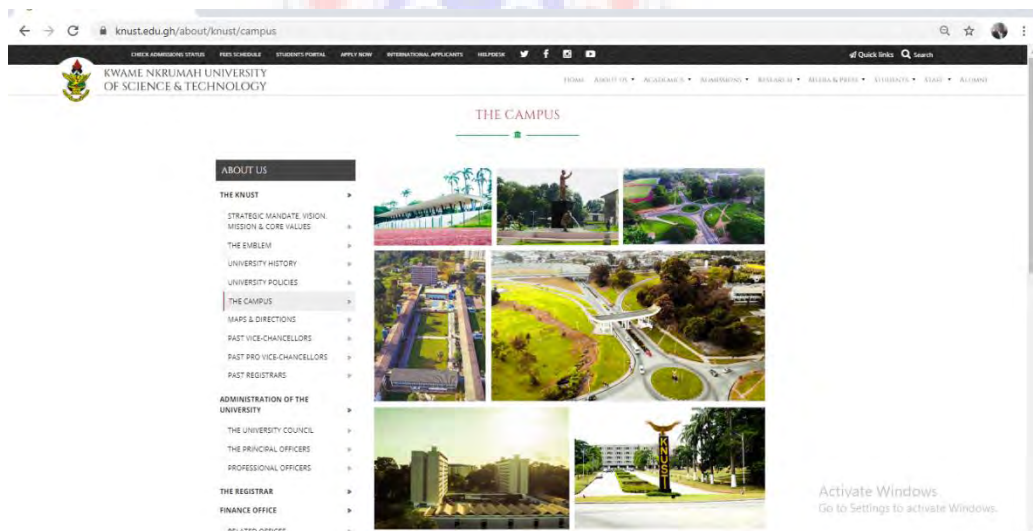


Figure 8: KNUST 'About Us image' retrieved on 8th December, 2019 from knust.edu.gh/about/knust/campus

4.3.2.1 Types of actors

A total of 31 images are used on the About Us pages of the sampled universities. UDS and UG do not use human actors but focus on campus buildings and their aesthetics. VVU image focuses only on one female actor with others who are blurred (you can see an image of another female and male walking) as presented in figure 9. KNUST has 9 human actors and they are all males. UEW uses 14 actors – 13 males and a female.

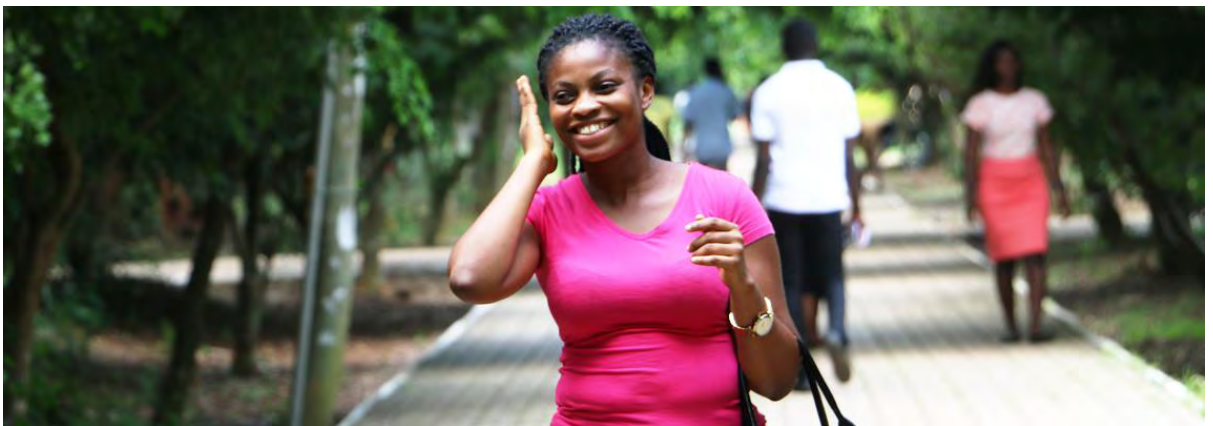


Figure 9: Life @ VVU Retrieved from vvu.edu.gh/index.php/about/life-@-vvu on 08/01/2020

4.3.2.2 Page design

The images on the About Us pages are consistent with the Home page images. The appearance of the About Us page is similar to the Home page; however, the About Us page is more dominated by words in comparison with the Home page. The universities still maintain their colours and headers. The images focus on the campus scenes and buildings to project what the universities offer and their serene environments for studies. The greenish nature of the campus beautifies the About Us page. UG is seen as the greenish campus as seen in the figure 8. The About Us page navigating menus are placed as sidebars to create more space for images and text. UDS uses buildings as background for their headings, as seen in figure 10.

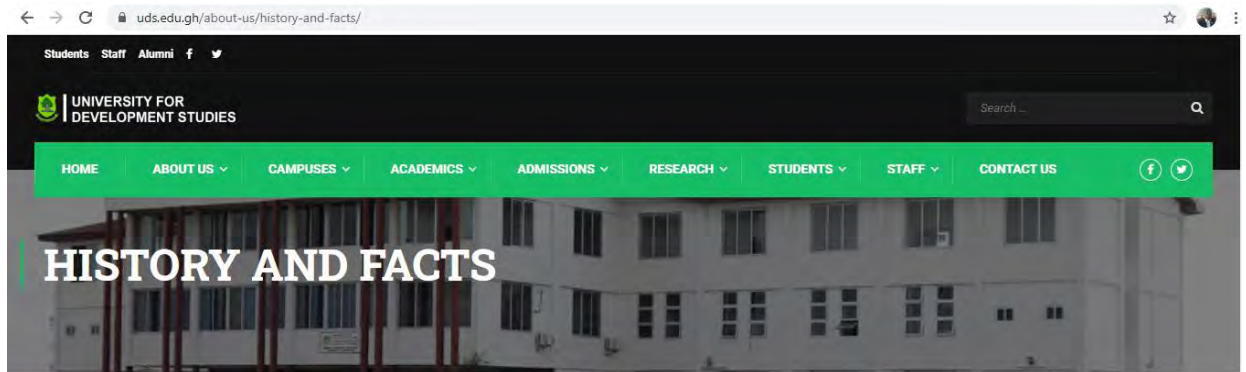


Figure 10: UDS About US. Source: uds.edu.gh/about-us/history-and-facts/ on 08/01/ 2020

4. 3.3 Admissions descriptive analysis (Visual)

The Admissions pages of the sampled websites use visuals and features hyperlinks to academic programmes, entry requirement, how to apply, admissions procedure, financial aid, student life and admission portal. The identified themes on the Admissions pages are campus aesthetics, academic programmes, students' interaction and activities, university ranking, and international recognition. The admission pages are linked to international programmes which open new tab to give detailed information on international programmes and student activities. The International Programmes or education pages are utilised purposely for institution world-wide recognition. VVU does not have any image on the pages relating to admissions. UCC does not have admission as part of the navigating menu but uses "Applicants & Students". The instructions are beneficial to both current students and applicants. Because of this, my search on Admissions extends to the websites with student pages. However, UCC does not use any image on the „Applicants and Students“ page but provides three images on the international education page. This is because UCC Admissions promotion is on the Home page of the website.

UG, and UEW produce a colourful admission page with pictures attached to the various categories of programmes offered. UG welcomes the prospective student with a look at the beauty of the campus from the air to reinforce their ranking claims as seen in figures 11 and 12 below. UEW provides images of students studying and successful grandaunts in the various categories of academic programmes (see figure 13). UDS and KNUST use an image each; a distant view of students in auditorium and students in a practice room respectively.

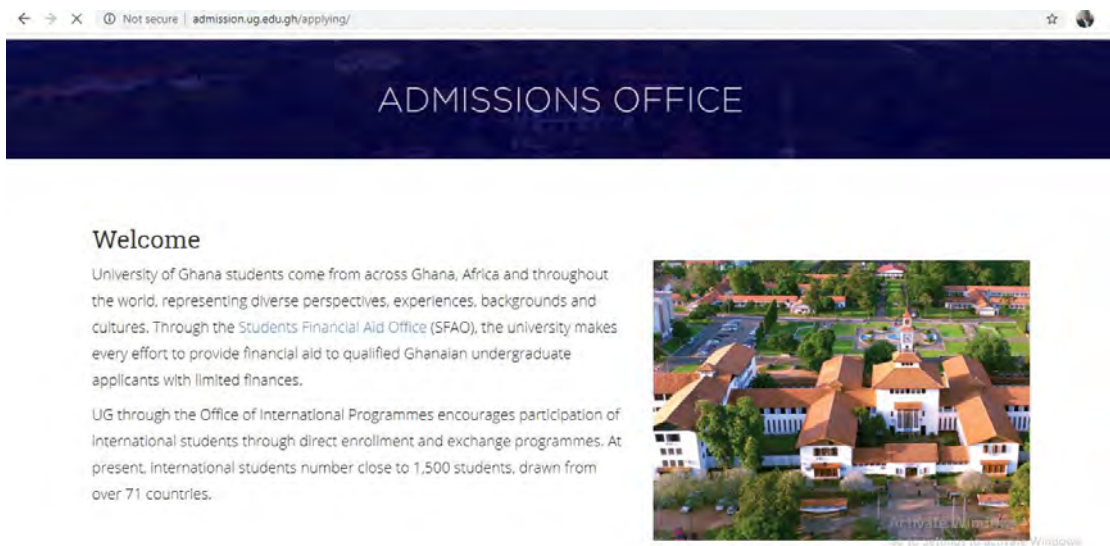


Figure 11: UG Admission page. Retrieved from admission.ug.edu.gh/applying on 08/01/2020

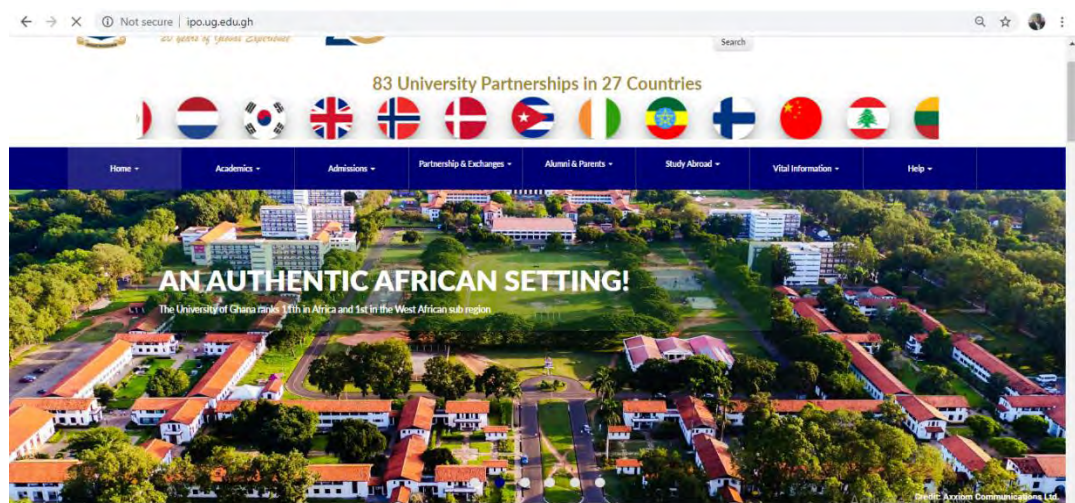


Figure 12: UG International programmes page. Retrieved from ug.edu.gh on 08/01/2020



Figure 13: UEW admission page. Retrieved from uew.edu.gh/admissions on 29/11/2019

4.3.3.1 Types of actors

A total of 37 images appear on the Admissions pages. UG uses the highest number of images, 25 images. The others use few images. From the 37 images, 103 actors are identified, 48 males and 55 females. There are only 17 white actors identified representing 16.5% and Non-whites 75 representing 83.5%. A summary of the actors is seen in the table below.

Table 5: Types of actors on admissions page

	UG	KNUST	UCC	UEW	UDS	TOTAL
Number of Images	25	2	3	7	1	37
Males	20	6	2	20	-	48
Females	27	8	7	13	-	55
Non-White	36	14	3	33	-	86
White	11	0	6	0	-	17

The actors are mainly students engaged in activities such as excursion and sports (e.g. in figure 14, 15 & 16) or who have successfully completed their programme (as seen in figure 12).



Figure 14: UCC International education page. Retrieved from ieo.ucc.edu.gh on 29/1/2019



Figure 15: KNUST Admissions page. Retrieved from knust.edu.gh/admissions on 29/11/2019

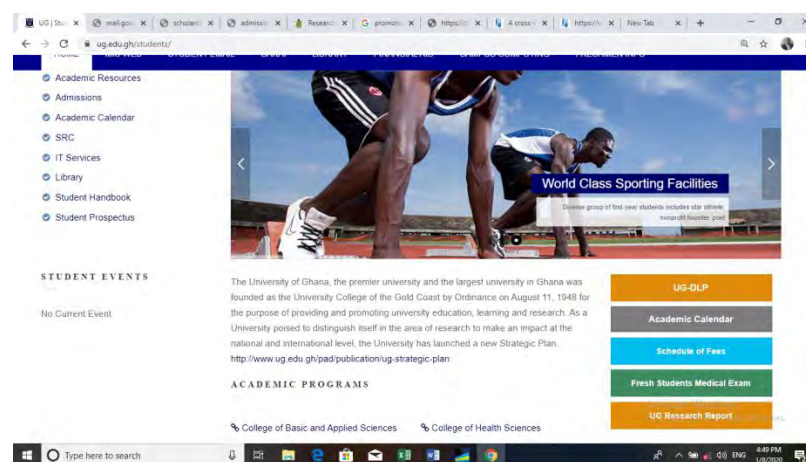


Figure 16: UG Students page. Retrieved from ug.edu.gh/students/ on 29/11/2019

4.3.3.2 Page design

The Admission page is the reinforcement of the Home page and the About Us pages. The universities provide admission guidelines to students on their applications. Students are directed to texts serving as hyperlinks with images. UEW places the images for the various programmes side by side but UG presents them vertically on the left with call to actions on the right. UG utilises five rotating images to establish its international activities. These images introducing the text are „below the fold“ while the primary images are „above the fold“. KNUST and UDS place the images „above the fold“ before the text. The image first catches the attention of the prospective students before proceeding to read the text. UEW, KNUST and UDS use the right side to provide additional links relating to admissions. The colours on the Admission pages are greenish which project a serene atmosphere for studies. Sections are also provided for admission guidelines as seen in figure 17 below.

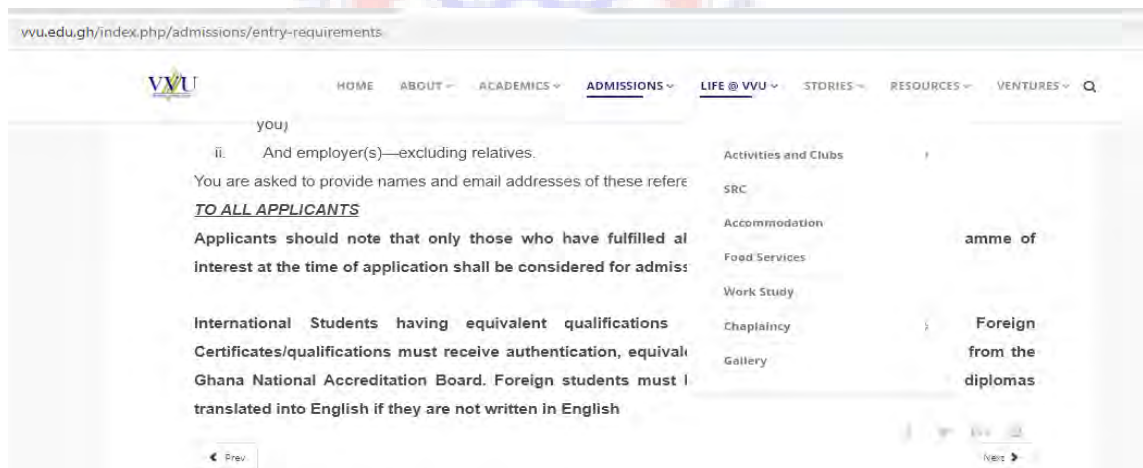


Figure 17: VVU admission page. Retrieved from vvu.edu.gh/index.php/admissions/entry-requirement on 29/11/2019

4.3.4 Academic majors and programmes descriptive analysis (Visual)

The Academic Majors and Programmes use few images on the webpages. The images display the intellectual works of actors in the various departments. Most of the images

feature actors engaged in academic work (e.g. studying, laboratory works, and field works), students and members of the department and departmental building facilities. The actors in the images are mostly dressed in their professional attire and are engaged in practical work and illustrate the future prospects of the students from the department (see example in figure 18 and 19).

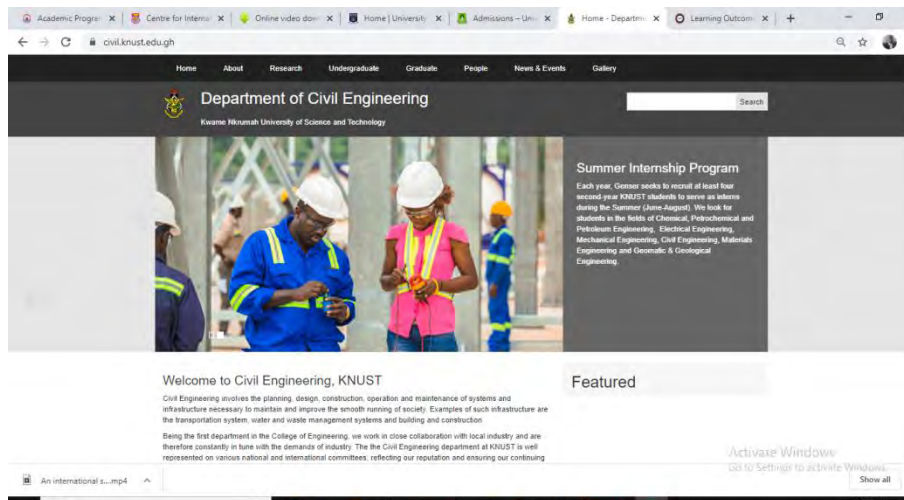


Figure 18: KNUST department of civil engineering page retrieved from civil.knust.edu.gh on 08/1/2020

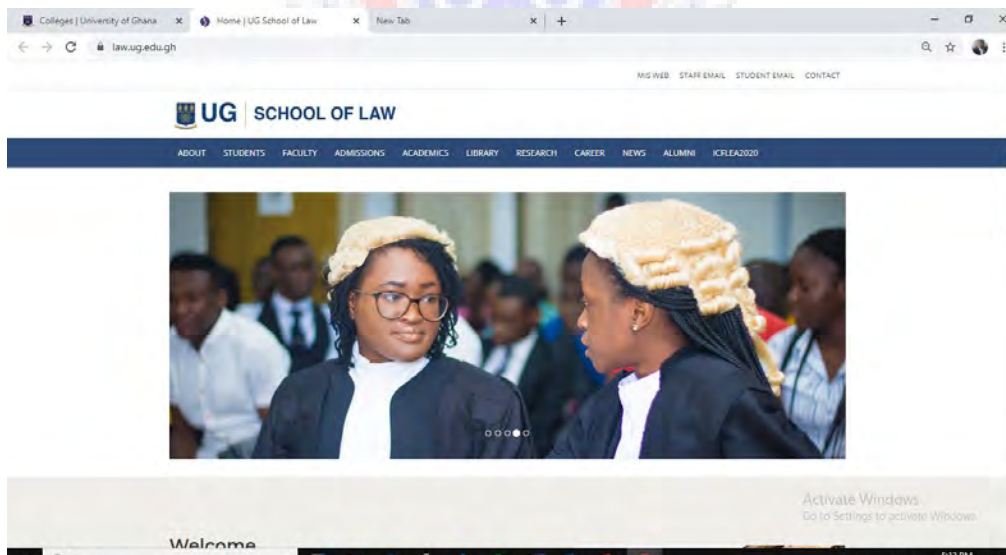


Figure 19: UG School of Law page. Retrieved from law.ug.edu.gh on 08/01/2020

4.3.4.1 Types of actors

There are 19 images appearing on the sampled webpages with 33 identified actors. There are group images taken from a distance on UG and UCC academics pages. UG images are all dominated by females (see figure 20). Only two white actors are identified from the sampled images. There are 19 male actors and 15 female subjects on the images on the academic pages. VVU uses only a female actor inserted in a lab image as seen in figure 21. UEW, VVU and KNUST provides an image on the main academic page. UEW and KNUST however, use four actors on the main academic page with two male and two females each, which exhibit gender equality (see figure 22). This is an indication that while UEW and KNUST focus on empowering both genders, the other universities pay less attention to gender equality.

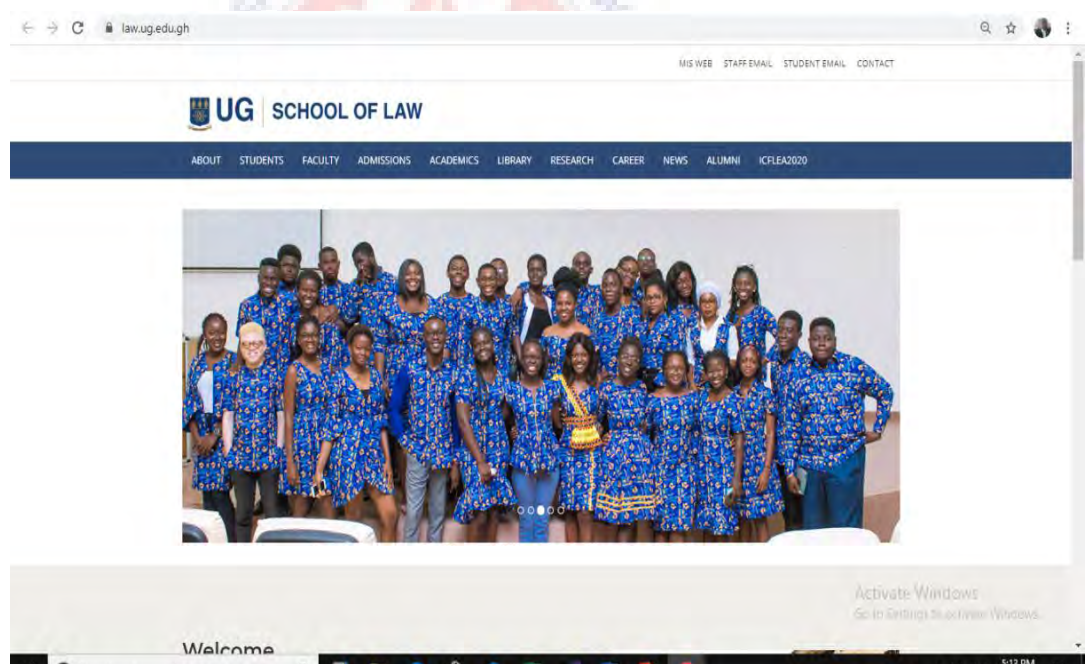


Figure 20: UG School of Law Page. Retrieved from law.ug.edu.gh on 08/01/2020



Figure 21: VVU Faculty of Science page. Retrieved from fos.vvu.edu.gh on 08/01/2020

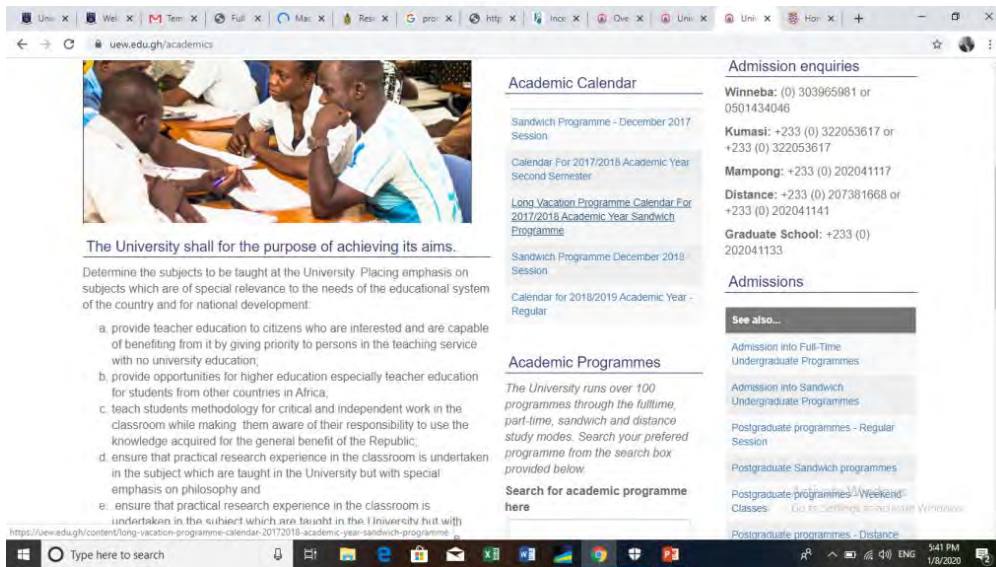


Figure 22: UEW academics page. Retrieved from uew.edu.gh/academics on 08/01/2020

4.3.4.4 Page design

The Academic and Major Programmes pages are made up of texts to describe academic programmes. These include the overview of the programme, course description, career opportunities and the entry requirements. The few images on the main academic pages which are mainly aligned at the top-centre of the textual component or beside the text. The major themes identified are lists of academic

programmes, and the practical and interactive studies in labs and other practice houses and fields. The header and footer of the webpages remain constant. KNUST has the Student Financial Office and the list of affiliated institutions under Academics. UEW provides sections for academic calendar, academic programmes and admissions enquiries on the academic page. The samples utilise siders to provide hyperlinks to other details needed from the website.

4.4 Process and Societal Analysis

With the objective of identifying the representation of universities in Ghana on their institutional websites, this section presents Fairclough's process and the societal analysis of the sampled data. Universities as explained in chapter two see students as customers and hence the universities offer products. This has led to the marketization of higher education to attract prospective students (Kheovichai (2013)). The process analysis allows the interpretation of the data to determine the construction of language on the websites and the societal analysis presents the explanation of the data in relations to the larger social structures and norms through the application of CDA. The process analysis uses Fairclough's Interpretative Analysis Framework which consists of analysis of the content of the language (both textual and visual), subjects, relationship of actors, and the connection between the message and the social, cultural, and historical discourse which surrounds the data. The second aspect relates the data to its explanation in relation to social practices and structures in building institutional identity. This kind of analysis is in line with previous CDA researches on higher educational marketization (Askehave, 2007; Chipper, 2006; Fairclough, 1993; 1995a; Hoang & Rojas-Lizana, 2015; Saichaie, 2011).

4.4.1 Content of the language

The examination of the content of the language is to reveal “what is going on?” in the data. This considers the components of the language and the purpose of the message, i.e. the topic. The components of the language include the analysis of verbs, modality and voice (Fairclough, 2001; Halliday, 1985). Verb usage has a very crucial role determining the content of a message. The verb is the pivot of the experience which expresses the actions and what the institutions intend to communicate to the visitor. From the sampled data, the verbs express the sense of doing (action), being (relational), sensing (mental) and existing (existential) (Halliday, 1994; Janks, 2005). The dominant verb types from the sample are action verbs and relational verbs. A few mental and existential ones are used to appeal to the imagination of the visitor and to show the existence of facilities respectively. The action verbs present the universities as offering products to the students. Action verbs such as „operate“, „relocated“, „offer“, „admit“, „develop“, „support“, „prepare“, „research“, „motivate“, „won“, „create“, „promote“, „provide“, „maintain“, „administered“, „contribute“, „give“, „transform“, „determine“, „upgrade“, „teach“, „address“, „establish“ are used. The universities are the agents that provide services to the students. The students are seen as recipients of the actions of the universities and act according to the norms of the universities. For example, “At VVU, we motivate, build the potential and ability in each person for further study, by providing you with not only academic opportunities, but with a challenging learning environment that will make you suitable for industry.” UG also adds, “We will create an enabling environment that makes UG increasingly relevant to national and global development.” The representations such as these establish the students as customers and the universities as providers of services that the student may choose (Askehave, 2007; Fairclough, 2001; Helgesen, 2008; Saichaie, 2011).

The relational verbs are used to establish relationship with the viewer. The use of relational verbs “indicates the intent of the producer to make one feel part of the institution and its culture” (Saichaie, 2011). The institutions as producers must establish relationship with prospects such as prospective students to invite them to appreciate the culture of the university and to choose the university. Relational verbs make the viewer feel part of the university experience. For example, VVU Home page has “You are here: Home...wishing you a happy new year.” UCC also similarly writes, “Do you want a University that prepares you for the future? You need University of Cape Coast. Join us at the UCC where you’ll prepare for a successful career while we prepare you for life.” KNUST’s admissions last sentence reads “Join us, let's learn together, come, share your culture.” This form of representation makes the viewer feel part of the experience since they are called to action. It has the power to let the viewer relate with the message (Saichaie, 2011) and also the imperative mood serves as attention seeking device which is an element of promotional discourse (Hoang & Rojas-Lizana, 2015).

The universities also use the active voice in the construction of their messages. The use of the active voice helps them to bring the universities to the focus of the message. The universities or their faculty members, students and departments which serve as actors are focused on, using the active voice. For example, “UCC seeks to pursue excellence through the creation of standards in teaching, intellectual inquiry, engagement and professional practice.” UDS’s faculty description reads “The Faculty of Education (FoE) offers programmes which are purposefully designed to respond to on-going teaching and learning, research and dissemination.” The representation using the active voice is an indication of the power or the ability of the universities to act to enhance their reputation.

4.4.2 Modality

Simpson (1993) suggests that, “Modality refers broadly to a speaker’s attitude towards, opinions about, the truth of a proposition expressed by a sentence” (p. 47). The modality of a phrase mostly signifies possibility and uncertainty (Halliday, 1985; Fairclough 1995b). „May“ and „might“ are often used to express possibility and uncertainty. „May“ and „might“ appear only eight times from the samples and seven of them occur on the Student Financial Aid sections of KNUST and UG, and once on UG’s programme description. The 7 appearance on the Financial Aid sections are not meant to show uncertainty in acquiring financial aid but to show the uncertainty of the future of needy students if not given the loan. For example, we have this from UG’s Financial Aid section: “We will provide financial assistance to students who, without such assistance, may not be able to readily access or meet educational and other expenditure at the University.” The universities are certain of providing financial support to students in need. Aside the use of modality which raises concern of uncertainty, there are also vague representations on the websites. Here is an example from UEW admission page: “The University runs over 100 Graduate, Undergraduate and Certificate programmes through the Regular, Part-Time, Distance and Sandwich modes.” Such a representation means that the University does not even know the exact number of programmes it runs. The Universities as producer do not know the number of products they are selling to customers (students). Meanwhile they regulate these programmes (Fairclough, 2001).

The overall purpose of the language used on the universities’ websites constructed through the use of the verbs and voice are to promote the activities and reputations of the universities. The universities sampled build their reputations from the establishment of the university, the size (land, programmes and population),

institutional rankings and achievements, diversity of university life, affiliate institutions and the campus aesthetics. The Home Page as a billboard presents the campus and activities of the universities to the visitor and the About Us page reinforces that through the history and achievements of the university. The Admission page links them together to promote the universities to influence the choice of the prospective student. The webpages also make use of images which contribute to building the image of the university. Various actors are deployed to represent the university community. The human actors found on the websites are all in good mood, laughing, talking, sharing ideas, and walking happily across the campus. The buildings and the campus sceneries are seen to be green and conducive to studies.

However, there are some variations in language usage. UCC focus from the Home Page through the About Us to the Academics are all centred on Admissions. UG and KNUST both claim to be striving for international recognition and claim to be the best in Ghana. For example, KNUST writes “Proudly Ghana's No. 1 University and seeking to maintain academic excellence; ... delivers a high standard of education which reflects the pedigree of a University poised on attaining a status of being No. 1 in Africa.” UG on the other hand also mentions on the international programmes page that “The UG ranked 11th in Africa and 1st in West Africa.” However, there is a contrast because another rotating image also claims “UG is 1st in Ghana and 2nd in West Africa” and “UG ranked 151-200”, the World University ranking. For the world ranking, source is provided though the exact position is not mentioned but a range given. KNUST’s claim and UG’s other claims are all without source. To view this from the lens of CDA, it can be said that the universities have the power to say what they want on their institutional websites. They have control over the use of language

and determine what should be on the website. Their powers are sometimes abused as statements of deceit and vagueness are found on the websites.

4.4.3 Subjects

Weeden (1997) states that “subject position accounts for how individuals construct the sense of self using language” (p, 32). A message cannot be understood without the subject and the type of actors involved. As has been established from the descriptive analysis of the various web pages of the universities, there are active actors, both textually and visually. Textually, the universities mostly use themselves as actors and provide their attributes. The name of the university or the personal pronoun „we“ and „our“ are often used as subjects. In the case where the university is not the actor, a college, faculty, department or administrative office sometimes serves as the actor. Students and student societies are used as subjects when they are attached to images on the News section to announce their success. The thematic analysis of the textual elements indicates that topical themes are mostly used on the websites. The use of topical themes where the thematised item is part of the message give the institutions the ability to position themselves at the subject position since they are the actors.

Visually, the universities used actors as subjects of images. It should be noted that all the actors are cheerful and happy, engaged in activities as explained in the descriptive analysis. This is to show the joy and excitement of being part of the university. Out of the 173 actors on the Home pages of the samples, 123 are male representing 71% and 50 are females representing 29%. The non-white actors are 166 representing 96% and white actors 7 representing 4%. This is an indication that the male actors dominate the website. The number of non-white actors against white actors is inconsistent with other works such as Saichaie (2011). This is not far-fetched as the sampled

universities are all situated in Ghana, a black nation, and the number of international students is comparatively low.

The vast difference between the non-white and the white representation in the images does not mean the universities do not welcome diversity. That the universities welcome diverse lifestyles is mainly expressed textually. Example from KNUST and UG admission respectively are “Students from all over the World come together here and the Professors really use the diversity to open up class discussions.” and “UG students come from across Ghana, Africa and throughout the world, representing diverse perspectives, experiences, backgrounds and cultures.” Despite this, from CDA perspective, the universities do poorly in representing the white actors virtually, in order to ensure diversity. Textually, they claim to embrace diversity but they fail to show it visually on the websites (Morphew & Hartley, 2006; Taylor & Morphew, 2010).

4.4.4 Relationships

This section presents the relationship between the textual and visual elements found on the websites to establish the universities’ institutional representations built on the websites. This section takes into consideration the textual representations of the relationship of actors in the sample data and visual features such as image act, angle, distance, setting, size.

4.4.4.1 Textual representations of relationships

The textual representations of the samples are similar to previous works such as Askehave (2007); Fairclough, (2001); Kheovichai, (2013); Saachaie, (2011). The universities use personal pronouns in the form of “we” and “you” to generate a relationship with visitors. As explained earlier, the universities are seen as actors of

the actions and hence the use of “we” to refer to themselves as agents or initiators of the actions that affect the individual. For example, UG’s Financial Aid states “We will ensure that assistance is provided in an effective, timely, fair, and equitable manner to all who qualify.” and KNUST states “We are dedicated to exhibiting the highest standards of professional ethics and integrity, efficient utilisation of resources and a culture of accountability and responsibility in all our operations.” A few uses of “we” take subject positions with attributes, without performing action. For example, VVU states “We have a high demand for our Computer Science/Information Technology and Nursing Graduates by organizations.” This form of representation is found on the admission pages to show the willingness of the universities to support the applicants (Askehave, 2007).

The samples also reveal the use of “you” on the websites of the universities mostly to refer to the applicants. Askehave (2007) states that ““you” is associated with the actor as the recipient of an action or states the emotional condition of the viewer.” For example, UCC states “Do You Want a University that Prepares You for the Future? You Need University of Cape Coast.” and KNUST states “We update you on general and specific admission information ranging from undergraduate studies through postgraduate studies to distance learning.” There is also a different use of “you” to position the applicant as one with an option to decide. For example, VVU states “Now you are probably wondering how to stand out from the thousands of would-be students vying for places in universities?” and UG adds “If you are unsure about any of the criteria stated above, please contact the Students Financial Aid Office.” The representation in this form presents the applicant as the benefactor of services and the one with the power of choice (Askehave, 2007; Saichaie, 2010).

4.4.4.2 Visual representations of relationships

The visual representations of relationships cover the image act, angle, distance, setting, size. The image act refers to what “the image wants something from the viewers – wants them to do something (come closer, stay at a distance) or to form a pseudo-social bond of a particular kind with the represented participant” (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). From Kress and van Leeuwen (2006), images provide an offer or demand the establishment of a relationship with the viewer. Offertory and demanding images are present on the webpages but offertory images are in the majority. Offertory images are images that are composed to give information and to serve as objects of contemplation. An example is seen in figure 23. These images bring to perspective what the producer wants the viewer to associate themselves with (Askehave, 2007). The compositions where the subjects are “demanding” attention or addressing the viewer are less used. They are used together with text to call the attention of the view and to welcome them, as seen in figure 24.

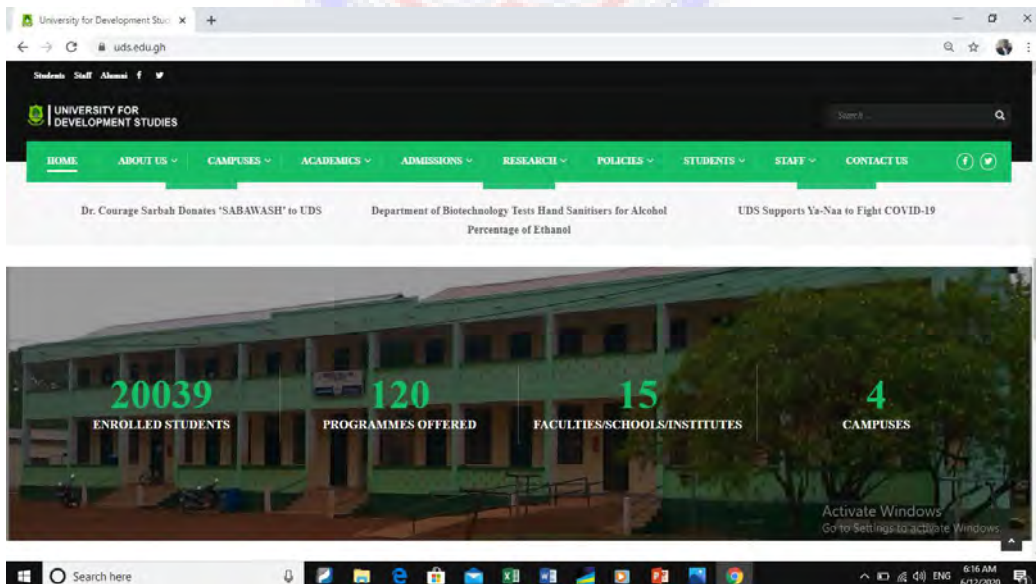


Figure 23: Offertory image Retrieved from uds.edu.gh on 22/12/2020

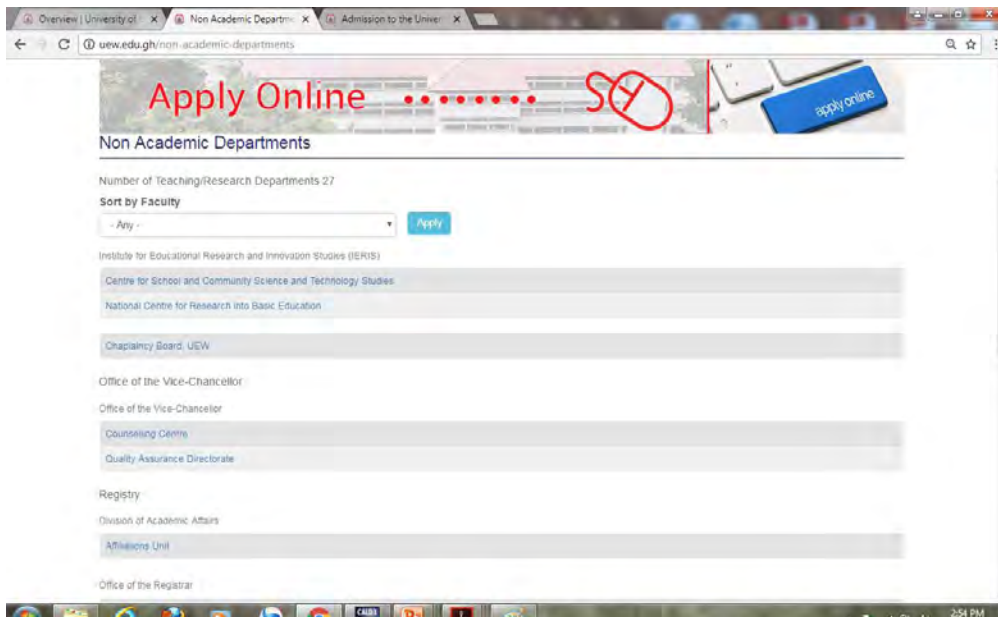


Figure 24: Demanding image Retrieved form uew.edu.gh/non-academic-departments

The images from the sample are mostly taken from the same level (eye-line) angle from either the front or the right. The horizontal level is to give equal relationship between the viewer and the subjects in the image to enhance the relational discourse found within the textual representation (e.g. figure 24) (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). However, the VVU campus video utilises high angle visuals which “gives the viewer power over the actors in the image” (Saachaie, 2011) (see figure 24).

Distance relationship also plays a very important role in the formation of representation. The images are shot ranging from close, medium and longer distance. Close distance as described by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) is “an arm length which the actors in the image touch one another.” This fosters a welcoming environment for the viewer to feel that the actors are happily living together and ready to share knowledge as seen in figure 25. Medium shots are mainly used to shoot a group of actors at a glance. These are mainly used for the images attached to news and events. They are reinforcing images so only a glimpse is needed to know the

event took place as seen in figure 27. Longer distance shots are mainly used to present the beauty of the campus and surrounding buildings. These long distance views provide the viewer a view of the lawns, flowers, trees and the conducive environment surrounding the buildings (see figure 28).



Figure 25: Close shot actors. Retrieved from knust.edu.gh on 29/11/2019



Figure 26: High shot image. Retrieved from vvu.edu.gh on 29/11/2019

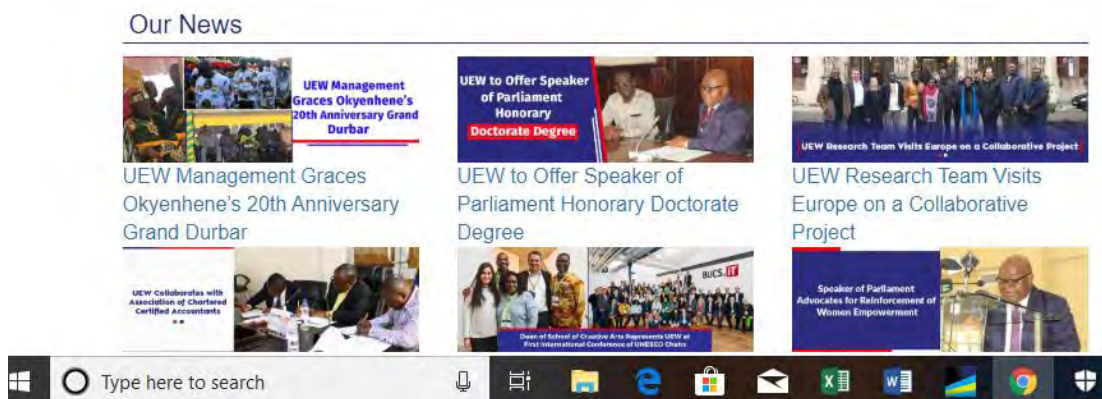


Figure 27: Medium shot for news Retrieved from uew.edu.gh on 29/11/2019

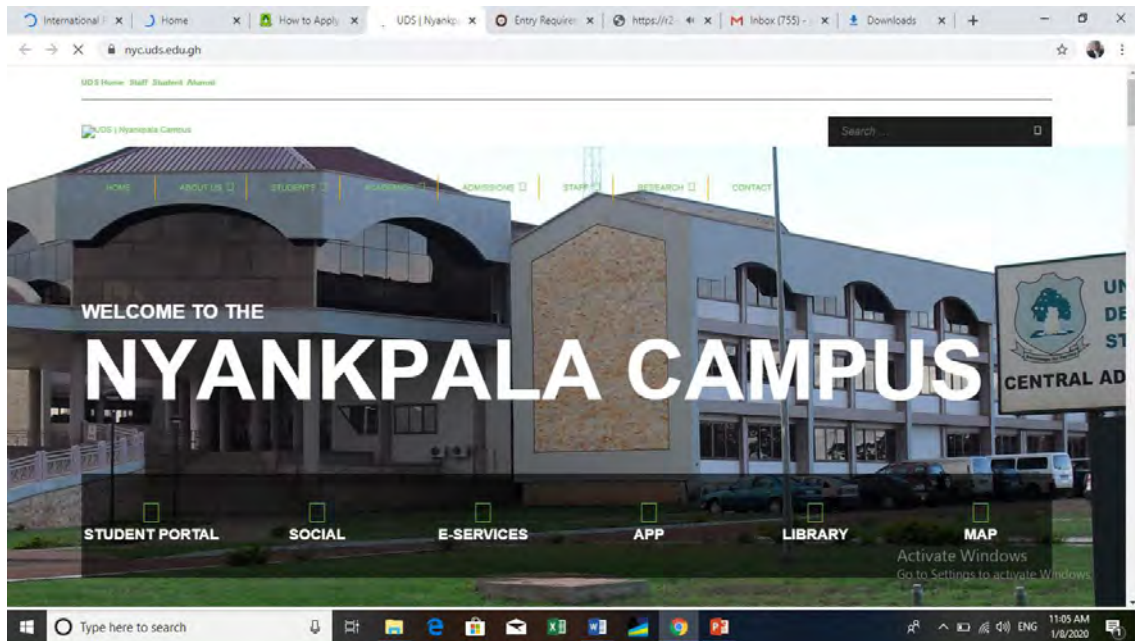


Figure 28: Long distance shot Retrieved from nyc.uds.edu.gh on 29/12/2019

The placement, sequence and size of the images are also crucial in creating relationship with the viewer. Images are placed according to their values. The websites use both horizontal and vertical placement and sequencing of images. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) present both Three-Column vertical and horizontal triptych. The vertical triptych has vertical arrangement from Ideal, Mediator to Real. The universities representations on the websites are in line with the literature. The institutions place their salience items on top such as the logo, followed by the main navigating menu and mostly rotating images announcing current news and upcoming events. The content of the websites is placed at the rear. The news and events sections are also placed horizontally. The information on left is the given and the right is the new. This arrangement of images allows the universities to place images as they deem necessary to arrange them (Lynch & Horton, 2009). Placement and sequencing is also in relation to size. What the universities want to focus on and give value is what is enlarged and what has less value is made smaller. The images that appear smaller are

often hyperlinks and become bigger when you click to read (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006).

From CDA perspective, the universities create relationships with viewer on their website based on what they provide and what they want to offer. The power is with the universities to make their claims and the viewer's responsibility is to relate to the text and visuals created. The universities claim their reputation with the use of the pronoun "we" and refer to the viewer as "you", beneficiary of their services. The power to determine the image act and other visual properties is in the hands of the universities and they bring to focus what they want to share with the visitors.

4.4.5 Connections

Connection answers the question "What's the role of language in what's going on?" (Fairclough, 2001). It connects the role of language in the data to the larger social structures that establish it, hence examination of text in a situational context. In the growth of globalisation, for universities to "stay relevant and competitive", they must engage in developing relationships and building international reputation (Hoang and Rojas-Lizana, 2015, p.17). Universities now have moved from academic discourse to business discourse in their promotional media Edu-Buandoh (2010). Because of this, the issue of representation is linked to the promotional discourse on the websites. All the programmes and the activities of the universities are to sell the university and persuade prospective applicants to select the university. The universities present their establishment and independence, achievements and enrolment statistics to establish their size. Images of buildings and campus aesthetics are to show the holistic environment the universities can offer to assist the prospective applicants to achieve their aims.

The webpages are designed to allow the prospective applicant surf through easily to know more about the university. All the universities include search engines on their websites as well as social media handles. These allow the prospective student to access desired information easily. The universities have similar navigating menus with key menus including Home, About Us, Admission, and Academics. The universities also make similar claims in promoting themselves. The following table summarises the adjectives used to promote themselves. The following table summarises the adjectives used to promote themselves.

Table 6: Adjectives used as promotional discourse

1. SIZE e.g. vastness, largest, several, panorama, biggest, wide,	9. ESTABLISHED e.g. first, premier, oldest, independent, authority
2. GROWTH e.g. growing, highest, new, ever-growing, increasing, expanding,	10. VISION e.g. entrepreneurial, sustainable, research-intensive, practically-oriented
3. DYNAMISM e.g. challenging, dynamic, transformed, updated, field based,	11. EMOTIONAL APPEAL e.g. serene, holistic, pleasant, undulating, beautiful, honest, ideal, verdant, natural
4. REPUTATION/ACHIEVEMENTS e.g. outstanding, home-built, track-record, reputable, model, professional, competent	12. CARING e.g. friendly, enabling, refreshing, cherished, freedom, self-develop, nurturing, relationship,
5. RANK e.g. top, world-class,	13. UNIQUENESS e.g. unique, only, specialised
6. COMPETITIVENESS e.g. leading, countless, numerous, first choice	14. INCLUSIVITY e.g. eco-friendly, multi-cultural,
7. GLOBAL REACH e.g. international, worldwide, global, world-class	15. GOODNESS e.g. excellent, good, best, qualified, experienced, quality, highest standard
8. INNOVATIVENESS e.g. new, diverse, innovative, modern, interdependence, practical	

A Critical Discourse Analysis of the connection created from the language usage indicates that the universities exercise control and power over what they reveal on the website and they seek to gain global reach by seeing the prospective students as customers or clients. This in turn gives power to the prospective students since they

have the power to choose which university to attend. The kind of promotional discourse on the website is what can convert the “potential customers to real customers” (Ho, Amri & Ooi, 2015). Further details are provided as part of the societal analysis.

4.5 Societal Analysis

The societal analysis as the third dimension of Fairclough’s framework is to give explanation of the relationship that exists between the language used and social practices and structures (Fairclough, 2001). Bourdieu (1991) sees language usage as “an economic exchange which is established within a particular symbolic relation of power”. The language used on websites builds the reputation and identity of the universities. Through discourse “Self” is established as “Self” has to do with the use of language to construct one’s identity” (Joseph, 2010). This section discusses the institutional representations that the universities build on their websites in the larger social context. These include establishment of credentials, provision of information and persuasion, campus lifestyle, diversity, and control of actors.

The surge in globalisation has impacted on higher education across the world. In Ghana, since the establishment of the first university in 1948, the country has strived through various reforms to strengthen the educational system in order to compete with the rest of the world. UG which is the first university in Ghana was established under the British Government to provide and promote university education, learning and research. As a University College, it was initially affiliated to two institutions in Great Britain namely: Inter-Universities Council (for guidance on its broad policy), and University of London (for approval and control of details of degree regulations). It gained autonomy in 1961 to run its own degrees. UG is therefore the premier

university in Ghana. VVU which was established in 1979 is the first private university in Ghana. The claim of authenticity and the credible award of degrees of universities in Ghana is traced to their establishment. The older universities are seen as established and respected in the society. The longer period of existence also gives them great alumni base that prospective students can associate themselves with. The success of the alumni is linked to the academic and programme reputation of the university which is a key influencer of students' college choice (Afful-Broni & Noi-Okwei, 2010).

All the universities sampled in their history trace their establishment to their independence and emerging faculties. To claim to be the best among others, their world reputation in terms of ranking are also utilised by UG and KNUST. UG has the vision "[t]o become a world class research-intensive University over the next decade." and KNUST has the vision "[t]o build on KNUST's leadership as the premier Science and Technology University in Ghana and to be among the top ten Universities in Africa." In response to their vision, these universities project their international recognition as evidence of their claim. Representation in this form gives positive impression about the universities and hence builds their reputation (Hung, 2008).

As mentioned earlier, the university website is among the three most used source of information (Simoes & Soares, 2010). The information on the websites is to inform and persuade the prospective applicant to choose the university. The information on the websites of the universities is "products" that they are selling. This product is what differentiates the university from other universities; hence what influence the decision of the prospective applicant. The universities' advertisement of programmes on their websites gives the prospective applicant an impression of the opportunities at

the university. The geographical location, landscape, facilities and the campus aesthetics presented on the websites attract applicants to the university. The sampled universities therefore display their campuses as a marketing tool for the university. Linguistic elements, including the use of adjectives in table 6, are means of persuasion. The use of action and relational verbs provides what the universities can offer and to relate to the prospective applicant. This form of representation presents the university as producer and has the ability to sustain the university and train student (Gee, 2005).

The campus lifestyle of the universities in Ghana is presented on the representation of the universities on their institutional websites. On a typical Ghanaian campus, students are usually found walking on the campus. It is not surprising that the actors found on campus are walking with friends and conversing. The campus provides a ground for social network where one cares for another. Students do not live in isolation but rather are seen as a united community. The close relation of faculty members and student actors in images depicts the cordial relationship that exists among the students and the faculty members. This adds to the fact that the educational products that the universities offer are not in isolation, but are coupled with beautiful and friendly environment and social network which enhance the individual's potentials. The universities spend less on co-curricular activities such as sports and athletics, and social services. The students with talents in non-academic activities are rarely displayed. It is only mentioned that the students can enjoy sports and join students' clubs and societies but less of these activities are displayed. This form of representation depicts the universities as solely academic institutions with discipline and hard work with less emphasis on leisure. The universities' classroom activities are

also not present on the websites but claims of conducive atmosphere are repeated. This representation without evidence becomes vague (Saichaie, 2011).

The embracement of diversity and provision of equal opportunity are key to the selling of universities. All the sampled universities embrace diversity in textual claims but less with visuals. The universities present their programmes to meet the diverse needs of the students and also present cultural diversity among the university community. As mentioned earlier, Ghanaian are believed to be hospitable and embrace and respect all cultures; however, the universities separate the whites from the non-whites. Most of the white characters found on the websites are on the international students" page. They mingle less with the non-whites. Gender is also not fairly represented as the male actors dominate the female. This gives social power to the males (Golden, 2007). This, from CDA perspective, is an indication that the universities preach diversity but less effort is made to ensure diversity on campus.

4.6 Conclusion

The universities show that they have control over actors. The textual and visual representation indicates the power of the universities to determine the subjects and actors that are presented on their websites. This serves as a marketing tool for the universities. As institutions with authority, the universities position themselves as subjects serving students who are customers. Students" power is controlled with the choice that is available. This is in line with CDA studies on higher education marketing (Askehave, 2007; Fairclough, 2001; Saichaie, 2011).

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter provides the summary of the research findings in relation to the research questions and suggests areas for future research into representation of universities in Ghana on their institutional websites. The purpose of this study is to examine the language use in representation of universities in Ghana on their institutional websites.

The study is necessary because of the rise in competition among higher educational institutions to build international reputation in order to compete for products (students) from the international market. Due to globalisation, universities have developed new relationships to build identity in order to “stay relevant and competitive” (Hoang *et al.*, 2015). Accordingly, Arina *et al.* (2017) opine that “the university website provides an insight into the implementation of the educational process by representing the mind-set, values, and positions of the individuals at the university”. Studies have also confirmed that the university website is the first visit of people to the university (Anctil, 2008; Schneider *et al.*, 2004; Anderson *et al.*, 1999; Hoang *et al.*, 2015; Saichae, 2014). Therefore, there is the need to examine the websites of universities in Ghana to identify their representation on their institutional websites since, to the best of my knowledge, minimal work has been done in this area.

The study uses CDA as both theoretical and analytical framework. CDA seeks to identify how ideological presuppositions are hidden underneath the surface structures of language choices in text since language structures are representations of the identities of social actors (Fairclough, 1992; Machin & Meyer, 2012). Using CDA, Fairclough’s three inter-related dimensional process analysis model is used to analyse

the texts to uncover the different levels of ideological representation. The three-dimensional process requires the analysis of object (including verbal, visual or verbal and visual texts) the processes by which the object is produced and received (writing / speaking/ designing and reading/ listening/ viewing) by human subjects and the socio-historical conditions which govern these processes.

To achieve this, multiple textual and visual data are retrieved from the sampled websites. The websites are available and accessible to the public. The screenshots of the web pages are taken as pictures and organised in PowerPoint for each institution. The offline copies of web pages are saved as well for easy accessibility and for verification of the screenshots. The researcher then conducts text analysis, process analysis and societal analysis. The textual elements are parsed into clauses and transitivity analysis is done to identify the verb processes. A thematic analysis is also conducted to identify what appears as the themes of the clauses. This helps to identify the process the universities use to construct their identity. The visual elements are analysed using Kress and van Leeuwen's (2006) visual analysis rubrics which provide analysis for salience, image act, angle, distance, size and their social implications.

5.1 Summary of Findings

The findings indicate that the universities in Ghana have their visions to gain international recognition and global presence. To achieve their visions, the universities' websites (a) build institutional identity through the use of both textual and visual elements, (b) exhibit the power of the universities to determine what to present to viewers (c) use language which is institutional centred (d) serve as billboard to inform and persuade visitors, (e) use texts that serve as promotional discourse, (f) present their institutions as actors who shape the actions of students and

faculty members, (g) have male actors dominating females and (h) have more non-white actors than whites.

5.1.1 Use of textual and visual language to represent UNIVERSITIES in Ghana

Research question one of this study is: how do universities in Ghana use textual and visual language to represent themselves on their institutional websites? The universities in Ghana in their quest to gain global presence use their institutional websites as the means to reach the global world. In constructing their institutional identity, the universities use both textual and visual elements. Textually, the universities present themselves as subjects, use action verbs to establish themselves as producers and relational verbs to relate to the visitors of the websites (Fairclough, 1995a, 2001; Halliday, 1994; Janks, 2005; Sachaie 2011). The universities in Ghana, like others, are producers of academic products and see students as customers (Fairclough 2001). As producers, the universities have the power to enact what is found on the website. By taking the subject position, the universities construct their self-identity on their websites (Weeden, 2017). They have the power to act and influence the behaviour of others. The universities' use of "we" and "you" to represent themselves and others respectively, places them powerful than others in the sampled text. The universities announce their establishment, size, academic programmes and achievements, news and events and admissions on their websites all of which serve as promotional discourse which builds institutional identity.

The universities also seek to establish themselves as home for academic excellence through focusing on visuals which project the academic conferences, administrative news and events, campus aesthetics, building facilities, students' interactions, and dynamism of their academic programmes. The images on the Home pages present the

universities as academic institutions with the sole focus on academic work. They focus mainly on conferences, admissions and news concerning the universities. The About Us adds the campus aesthetics and building facilities while the Academic and Admission present academic-related issues mainly with students in their various practice-rooms. The purpose of this form of representation is to promote the universities (Fairclough, 2001; Saichaie, 2014).

The language used (both textual and visuals) on the websites presents the institutions as African universities with the power to control and sustain themselves, embrace diversity and hence use promotional language to advertise their services. The universities textually show the diversity of campus life and programmes. Visually, there is a separation of the white people from non-white people since the whites are found mainly on the International Programme" pages. Studies by Saichaie (2011) and Hoang et al., (2015) which are situated among whites environments found more white actors, but this study situated among non-whites (Africa) has non-whites dominating. This means that there is no fair representation of "Others" on the Ghanaian universities" websites.

5.1.1 Similarities and differences in language use

Research question two says: What are the similarities and dissimilarities in their language use on their institutional websites. A similar promotional language is used on the websites of the universities. The webpages of the universities are similar. They all have a common colour which is white. The universities" logos are placed on the left side of the header where they can be easily noticed. The websites display similar horizontal navigating menu and make use of rotating images. The events mostly announced by the rotating images are conferences and admissions. The Home pages

are dominated by images which make them attractive to the visitor. The images are introduced by simple clauses, mainly in the active voice. The Home pages have similar layouts from header to rotating images, news and events, announcements, other promotional elements and footer. The discourse on the websites serves as a marketing tool for the universities (Askehave, 2007; Fairclough, 1993; Zhang, 2017).

The About Us focuses on the establishment of the universities and makes use of complex sentences to compound attributes. Attributive adjectives are mostly used to express the size, vision and mission, and academic wealth of the universities. To achieve this end, the personal pronoun “we” is used as subject. Relational language is also used on the Admissions pages to create relationships with the prospective students. The prospective students are referred to as “you” with the power to choose. The universities therefore present an invitation to prospective students to accept their offer and the language used is friendly (Zhang, 2017). The presentation of offers leads to the study of modality. There are a few expressions of uncertainty such as “may” and “might”. However, a critical analysis reveals that the modals lead to vague expressions. For instance, UCC’s description of their Bachelor of Commerce programme says: “as a nation, there is shortage of qualified accounting personnel” without providing evidence or source of that assertion. Also KNUST’s campus description asserts that their “campus is located at a very ideal place inside the city of Kumasi.” What KNUST describes to be ideal is not known to the viewer since the name of the location is not mentioned, hence the statement becomes vague. The universities made some claims without substantiating the claims. This leaves the judgement of such claims to the visitor (Saichaie, 2011).

The universities' websites are dominated by non-white actors probably because they are situated in Ghana, a black nation. Also, male actors dominate female actors on the websites. The issue of gender and diversity on campus is only evident in the textual elements but it is not really depicted in the visual elements. The universities use their "semiotic resources to represent principal institutional participants" so the major actors in the universities dominate the website (Wang, 2016).

A few differences appear in the use of language on the websites. VVU, as a private university shares some differences with the public universities. For instance, in narrating the profile of the university, VVU focuses on the achievements of the university unlike the public universities whose profiles reinforce their establishment. Also, UG and KNUST use language to establish themselves as established universities with global recognition based on the world universities' rankings. The other institutions, however, do not comment on their global recognition in term of world ranking. UCC uniquely does not have a webpage on admissions. The admission promotions run through all the webpages of the website. The visitor is greeted with admission promotion on the Home page. UCC does not use rotating images on the Home page since that section has been allocated to admission promotions. This makes it difficult for the prospective applicant to decide on which university to attend based on the language used on the websites (Durgin, 1998)

5.1.3 Promotional discourse on the websites

Research question three states: How are the promotional discourses represented in the language used on the institutional websites? The language on the universities' websites is for promotional purposes. All the webpages reveal the purpose of promotion either textually or visually. From their Home pages, the universities start

admission promotion to invite prospective students to apply. The rotating images announcing conferences and events are to entice the visitor to know what is happening in the university. The news and events add to the activities found in the university and what the viewer should expect when they join the university. This immerses them in the university life. The frequent use of visuals is to create impression on the mind of the visitor and viewer (Anctil, 2008; Askehave, 2007; Hartley & Morpew, 2008). The placement of logos and the university's colours reinforces institutional identity (Anctil, 2008; Zhang & O'Halloran's study, 2012). Images displaying campus life, beauty and buildings have high salience which is a tool for promotional messages and communication (Askehave, 2007; Fairclough, 1993, 2001; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006; Ramasubramanian *et al.*, 2002).

The universities present themselves as actors and trace their current glories from their root. The representations of the universities are similar to other studies (Atai *et al.*, 2015; Osman 2008). As actors of the message, the universities build the trust of the viewer. The use of personal pronoun “**we**” to refer to the university shows collective effort in the universities achievements and, hence, the source of the institutional reputation (Bano & Shakir, 2015). After showing the source of institutional reputation, the universities provide their historical origins and link them to the “current status of the university, commitments, goals and orientations.” They further develop their global presence and promote the services and supports that they can offer (Atai & Asadnia, 2015). In establishing these, the universities make use of adjectives to qualify themselves. The adjectives mostly show their gains and what they envisage doing. The use of adjectives summarised in Table 6 in chapter four build the institutional reputation (Hoang & Rojas-Lizana, 2015).

Another source of promotion on the Home page is the celebration of high achieving alumni. As part of the college search process, prospective students make inquiries on the reputation of the university and the global acceptance of certificates. The celebration of the success of alumni gives the prospective students confidence in the university. University alumni base is a resource to the university and serves as a marketing tool to others. One will choose a university that after graduation will get support from alumni through recommendations and other benefits. All the universities present their alumni as a promotional message which is in contrast with Klassen's (2001) view that "lower ranked schools use images featuring alumni profiles."

Diversity is a key component of promotional discourse on the websites. The universities offer diversity in academic programmes and student life. The universities define diversity in relation to the multicultural nature of the campus life and the variety of programmes offered. However, VVU's expression of diversity is based on religion and intellect, probably because it is owned by a religious organisation. The issue of diversity is placed strategically to enact the ideology the university wants to present (Taylor & Morphews, 2010). Most of the universities disregard diversity in the visual representation but express diversity textually which agrees with (Saichaie, 2011). This is consistent with other studies where representations of diversity seem vague (Hartley & Morphew, 2008).

The universities' rankings serves as promotional discourse on the websites. This is however minimally used. Only UG and KNUST projected their international ranking. The insertion of ranking from third-party publication "suggests that the institution is trying to associate affordability to something tangible" (Anctil, 2008; Hoang et al., 2015). UG and KNUST claiming to be the best universities in Ghana and striving to

be the best in West Africa and Africa, and to be among the best in the world, is a good step since the ranking of the universities is linked with the academic quality of the universities (Saichaie, 2011).

Finally, prospective students in the university choice process consider the financial support available at the university of choice (Kusumawati, 2013). The Financial Aid pages provide information on the affordability of university life. The universities link Financial Aid pages mainly with Admission pages or Academic pages. All the universities display some form of financial support or scholarship. UG, KNUST and VVU show willingness to provide financial support to students but the details of the support are not provided. The student is left in a state of perplexity in deciding which university has the best offer since no figures are provided (Fairclough, 1995a; Hartley *et al.*, 2008; Janks, 2005).

5.1.4 Prioritisation on the universities websites

Research question four states: Which section of the university community is prioritized on the universities' website? The analysis of the data reveals that the discourse on the universities' websites is institution centred. The representation where the universities concentrate mainly on institutional attributes creates a gap between the universities and prospective students (Hoang et al., 2015). For instance, the universities are actors on the Home pages and About Us pages which provide information about the universities. None of the news and events found on the sampled websites solely provides information on students' activities. In some places where news and events about students are seen, they form just a part of a larger group. It is only on the Academic and Admission pages that students are minimally addressed through the use of the personal pronouns "we" and "you" with some invitational

messages (Fairclough, 1993 & 1995a). The visuals focus on the campus aesthetics, buildings, and university's management and staff. Only one image of athletics is found on the websites. The students' classroom interactions are not seen on the websites. Images of students' groups are attached to academic programmes on Academic pages but the textual elements describing the programmes do not provide the students' experiences. The representations on the websites of the universities provide power to the universities' administration to define the role of other actors (Wang, 2016).

5.2 Conclusion

The sampled universities represent themselves on their institutional websites through the use of textual and visual elements. An examination of the discourse on the websites reveals their Ghanaian identity as they use more non-white actors. The public universities boast of their establishment by an act of parliament and employ various promotional discourses, such as establishing institutional reputation through rankings, campus aesthetics, student population, building facilities, programmes offered, and presenting themselves as actors and subjects of their discourses. The universities seek international recognition and hence express the diversity of campus life on their websites. Diversity is mainly linked to multiculturalism which is often vaguely represented (Hartley *et al.*, 2008; Saichaie, 2011; Taylor *et al.*, 2010).

This study is significant to universities because it enables them to know how they are represented on their institutional websites in order to improve their marketing strategies especially toward the attraction of international students. The application of CDA to provide the process and societal analysis of the websites is equally useful to university website managers. The university website is the global image and

marketing tool for the universities and hence needs much attention (Zhang, 2017). The universities in Ghana should pay much attention not only to the Home pages and About Us pages but should also develop the Admission and the Academics pages.

5.3 Recommendation

The analysis of higher educational marketization reveals that the colleges and universities are shifting from academic discourse on their websites to marketing discourse (Zhang, 2017). As a result, they deploy language (both textual and visual) to enact their representations which build institutional identity and attract prospective students (van der Wenden, 2017). In the light of the findings, the study makes the following recommendations:

- The universities should use conversational language on the websites to establish relationship with viewers.
- The universities should substantiate their claim of diversity since studies indicate that intercultural learning enriches students' competence and ability to develop as global citizens (van der Wenden, 2017).
- The Academic pages should have an overview that promotes their programmes.
- The list of academic programmes should have hyperlinks and attention should be placed on the programmes description page.
- Cost of university education should be updated regularly on the websites and financial aids should be quantified to assist prospective students to make informed decisions.

- Publications from the universities should be placed on their institutional websites to enhance easy access and to promote the universities as research institutions.
- To build institutional reputation, the universities should include university rankings from third parties and the sources should be provided.
- The visuals on the websites should include classroom arrangement and interactions to establish the students' experience in the universities.
- The web design should minimise the use of bright colours on the Home page when blurring images.
- More images should be used on the Admission and Academic Pages to reinforce the textual elements.

5.4 Suggestion for Further Studies

Globalisation has changed the universities' website discourse to marketing discourse (Fairclough, 2001; Kheovichai, 2013; Xiong, 2012). This has given rise to studies on the websites of universities to unearth the ideologies presented on the websites (Hoang and Rojas-Lizana, 2015; Wang, 2016). This study utilised CDA as both theoretical and analytical framework to address how universities in Ghana represent themselves on their institutional websites. The study is limited to five public universities and a private university.

Further studies may include more private universities to do a comparative study of the discourse on the public and the private universities websites. This is because the inclusion of one private university in the sample revealed a slight difference and hence there is need to do more comparative studies to substantiate the differences.

The first university in Ghana traces its root to the British government. The mission and vision of the university was created by the British government. A comparative study of the universities in Ghana and universities in Britain may help to identify the impact of the British colony on the discourse of universities in Ghana.



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- UG Home page <https://www.ug.edu.gh/>
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

MODEL OF THE STAGES IN CONSUMER DECISION MAKING AND STUDENT CHOICE

Authors	Consumer Decision Making and Student Choice Model					
Engle, Blackwell and Miniard (1995; 2001)	Need Recognition	Information Search	Evaluation Process	Outlet selection and purchase		Post purchase process
Schiffman and Kanuk (2007)	Need Recognition	Pre-purchase Search	Evaluation of Alternatives	Purchase		Post purchase evaluation
Kotler and Keller (2009)	Problem recognition	Information Search	Evaluation Alternatives	Purchase Decision		Post purchase behaviour
Perreault and McCarthy (2005)	Need-want awareness	Search for information	Set Criteria and evaluate alternative solutions	Decide on solution	Purchase product	Post purchase evaluation
Chapman (1981)	Pre-search	Search	Application	Choice	Enrolment	
Hanson and Litten (1982)	Deciding to go to College	Investigating Colleges	Application, Admission and Enrolment			
Jackson (1982)	Preference		Exclusion	Evaluation		
Hossler and Gallagher (1987)	Predisposition		Search	Choice		
Kotler and Fox (1985)	Initial decision to investigate college	Information gathering	Evaluation and elimination of choices to generate set of options	Choice		

Source: Kusumawati, A., (2010). *Privatisation and Marketisation of Indonesian*

Public University: A Systematic Review of Student Choice Criteria Literature.

Proceedings of the Indonesian Students International Conference, Melbourne:

School of Business and Law, Victoria University, 16-18 July 2010.

APPENDIX B

SEMANTIC CATEGORIES

1. SIZE e.g. large, biggest, sizable	10. WEALTH e.g. well-resourced, profitable, lucrative
2. GROWTH e.g. thriving, growing, expanding	11. VISION e.g. research-led, entrepreneurial, ambitious
3. DYNAMISM e.g. dynamic, vibrant, active	12. EMOTIONAL APPEAL e.g. exciting, impressive, attractive
4. REPUTATION/ACHIEVEMENTS e.g. successful, recognized, renowned	13. CARING e.g. collegiate, supportive, helpful
5. RANK e.g. world-class, top, top-tier	14. UNIQUENESS e.g. unique, distinctive, specialized
6. COMPETITIVENESS e.g. leading, competitive, world-leading	15. INCLUSIVITY e.g. inclusive, affirmative
7. GLOBAL REACH e.g. global, international	16. GOODNESS e.g. excellent, good, best
8. INNOVATIVENESS e.g. innovative, new, modern	17 OTHERS e.g. purpose-built, well-developed
9. ESTABLISHED e.g. established, integrated, traditional	

Source: Kheovichai, B. (2013). *Marketization in the Language of UK University Recruitment: A Critical Discourse Analysis and Corpus Comparison of University and Finance Industry Job Advertisements*. (Dissertation for Doctorate) University of Birmingham, Birmingham, West Midlands, UK.

APPENDIX C

JANKS LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS RUBRIC

Linguistic feature	Explanation	Data
Lexicalization	The selection/choice of wordings. Different words construct the same idea differently.	
Overlexicalization	Many words for the same phenomenon.	
Lexical cohesion	Created by synonymy, antonymy, repetition, and collocation.	
Euphemism	Hides negative actions or implications.	
Transitivity	Processes in verbs: are they verbs of? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>doing</i>: action and material processes • <i>being or having</i>: relational processes • <i>thinking/feeling/perceiving</i>: mental • <i>saying</i>: verbal processes • <i>physiological</i>: behavioral processes • <i>existential: experiential</i> 	
Voice	Active and passive voice constructs participants as <i>actors</i> or as <i>reactors</i> to actions. Passive voice allows for the deletion of the agent.	
Nominalization	A process is turned into a thing or an event without participants or tense or modality. Central mechanism for reification.	
Quoted speech	Direct speech (DS) Indirect speech (IS)	
Mood	Is the clause a statement, question, offer or command?	
Modality	Social authority and degrees of uncertainty Modality created by modals (may, might, Could, will), adverbs (possibly, certainly, hopefully) intonation, tag questions.	
Pronouns	Inclusive: we/exclusive we/you Us and them: othering pronouns Sexist/non-sexist pronouns: generic "he" The choice of first/ second/third person.	
Sequencing of information	Logical connectors: conjunctions set up the logic of the argument. Sequence sets up cause and effect. Conjunctions are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Additive</i>: and, in addition • <i>Causal</i>: because, so, therefore • <i>Adversative</i>: although, yet • <i>Temporal</i>: when, while, after, before 	

Source: Janks, H. (2005). Language and the design of texts. *English Teaching: Practice and Critique*, 4(3), 97-110.

APPENDIX D

KRESS AND VAN LEEUWEN VISUAL ANALYSIS RUBRIC

Visual feature	Explanation	Data
Descriptors	A basic description of the visual elements such as: actors and carriers; angle; colors; graphics; font; page design; perspective; settings; spatial relationships.	
Actor	The active participant(s) in an action process is the participant(s) from which the vector emanates or which is fused with the vector.	
Goal	The passive participant in an action process is the participant at which the vector is directed	
Interactors	The participants in a transactional action process where the vector could be said to emanate from, <i>and</i> be directed at, both participants.	
Reacter	The active participant in a reaction process is the participant whose look creates the eyeline.	
Transactional reaction	An eyeline vector connects two participants, a Reacter and Phenomenon.	
Non-transactional Reaction	An eyeline vector emanates from a participant, the Reacter, but does not point at another participant.	
Setting	The setting of a process is recognizable because the participants in the foreground overlap and hence partially obscure it; (e.g. soft focus, over/under colour saturation) and overall darkness or lightness between foreground and background.	
Means	A process used to create image (e.g. photograph, graphic, logo).	
Symbolic Attributes	Symbolic Attributes are made salient in the representation in one way or another. For instance, by being placed in the foreground, through exaggerated size, through being especially well lit, through being represented in fine detail or sharp focus, or through their conspicuous colour or tone.	
Symbolic Suggestive	Symbolic Suggestive depictions are not represented as a general essence rather than a specific instance. Visuals of this nature may use soft focus, blending of colours, outlines or silhouettes.	
Sequencing of information	Sequence sets up cause and effect. placement of images on a page (e.g. high, low).	

Source: Kress, G., & van Leeuwen, T. (2006). *Reading images: The grammar of visual design*. London, UK: Routledge.