

The Corporate Voice of the New Higher Education: The Private Discourse of Capital in California State Universitiesⁱ

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Abstract

This study explores the discourse, and identifies the predominance of the language of commercial capital now dominating the two State University Systems in California, the State University of California and the University of California. Data for analysis were from the webpages of the thirty-three campuses of these systems. Lexical analysis was used to identify discourse patterns. Findings showed lexical choice/lexical fields, overlexicalization, modality, nominalization, personification, justification, and quantification strategies occurred systematically. Several discourse strategies were dominant to change the role and the operations of these public universities. As a conclusion, California State University Systems, within an isomorphic manner rather than using diverse forms, are growing as corporate and commercialized entities relying on deliberative discursive power relations.

Keywords: *higher education, critical discourse analysis, neoliberal universities, California state university systems*

Background

The economy of California is by far, the largest in the United States, with a \$3.0 trillion gross state domestic product in 2018. If California were a sovereign nation it would rank as the world's fifth largest economy, ahead of the United Kingdom,

but behind Germany. It is also a case study of the state where mass higher education was focused on twin goals of mass, universal inexpensive college, and coordination with economic development. Here we will discuss the so-called Master Plan of 1960 established a system renowned for its accessibility, and copied by other states, and nations, and how its goals have been distorted. State policy makers have been impressed with the linkage between the “California Idea,” which married open access with excellence, satisfying the growing international public demand internationally, for higher education. The shifting dominance of discourse in policy documents is important evidence for exploring the diminishing rhetoric of equal educational opportunity, central to the new higher education. This case has relevance for students of all international state systems of higher education during this globalizing moment.

The discourse of the neoliberal world is assumed tailor-made for the university. Concepts like globalization, knowledge society, knowledge economy, innovation, entrepreneurial universities and accountability are invoked and unquestioningly adopted by universities. External controlling bodies continuously add on new discourse and create new context for these institutions like university rankings, top universities creating a competitive arena. Within this new context, universities have to adopt the discourse of the neoliberal world to be able to act as business. Resistance to this change is risk taking and means being out of the game even for the well-established, deep-rooted universities. The dichotomy of the universities is being between the tradition and transformation that they cannot stick to traditional roles anymore and the discourse they exist with. Adopting the language of transformation is the new form of existing and competing. The primary concern of this study is to search for the changing discourse of the university critically. California State Universities were chosen purposely as the California region houses “top ranking” universities which created the Silicon Valley. These universities also become the engine of

transformation towards a neoliberal understanding in public institutions. Transformation emerges with discourse as it represents the mind-set of the institutions.

Globalization occurs in a context where various symbols of power are represented in language patterns. Power symbols of language behaviours through discursive adaptations change attitudes in universities. New discourses construct relations with governments and labour market. Within these relations, new forms of discursive patterns are created changing the direction of expectations of the societies and forms of thinking in the academic world. Owing to government policies and market relations universities rapidly become the advocates of this change, distancing themselves from being social institutions and public responsibility. This kind of positioning has created new types of relationships between these institutions and the state. As nations compete based on their knowledge and innovation systems, higher education plays a key role as it is transformed from being a predominantly social institution with a local or sub-national mission to being the cornerstone of economic policy with geopolitical responsibilities” (Hazelkorn, 2017, p.1). There is also the factor of academic capitalism as the way public universities respond to neoliberal tendencies to treat higher education policy as a subset of economic policy (Slaughter and Rhoades, 2000). Academic capitalism has influenced strategies of higher education in the direction of market-like activities. As Slaughter and Rhoads stated, "Knowledge becomes a critical raw material to be mined and extracted from an unprotected site; patented, copyrighted, trademarked, or held as a trade secret, then sold in the marketplace for profit" (2004, p.4). Commonality and reliability of education as a public good then are risked by with legitimizing business strategies such as extending capacity, part-time faculty, copyright and information technology.

Neoliberalism has influences on policy and practice of higher education. Economic crisis fits higher education leaving the institutions bound to the self-income and dependent on external revenues. On one hand neoliberal policy has increased the emphasis on corporate methods, means, goals and objectives, with the public interest as simply equivalent to the private interests of capital. However, this new emphasis comes with a price. Corporations, upper- and middle-income taxpayers are increasingly shifting the burden of schooling costs back to students of working-class families, to taxpayers with increasingly precarious jobs, flat wages, who face steadily rising costs of housing, and living generally. A good example for this is the story of Proposition 13 in California in 1978, which eventually caused a massive funding crisis in Californian public education and became one of the historic markers of the neoliberal turn in the global North (Connell, 2013). Proposition 13, officially named the People's Initiative to Limit Property Taxation, was an amendment of the Constitution of California enacted during 1978, by means of the initiative process. California voters approved the initiative on June 6, 1978. One of the most dramatic outcomes of this Initiative has been a sharp reduction in spending on education which meant decreased per student public expenses in the years following passage of Proposition 13. Since 1981-1982, California consistently has spent less per student than the rest of the U.S (Sonstelie, Brunner & Ardon, 2000).

For neoliberalism, there are dominant norms such as efficiency and measurement-based ethic of cost-benefit analysis, which finally define the social and educational transformation. The idea of the consumer is important, as education is a product to consume (and to sell). Education is considered as a tool for employment, for gaining work skills defined for design works. Direct or indirect pressure for change is strong by all means, if not a voluntarily accord for universities as Fairclough pointed out “institutions accord with market operations... making departments more financially autonomous using managerial

approaches such as staff appraisal and training, introducing institutional planning, and giving much more attention to marketing” (1993, p,143). Particular discourses of power relations constitute basic elements of this change. A certain type of power relations is in charge to characterize production, accumulation, circulation, and functioning of higher education discourse. Discourse is the main architect of relation building process between universities, governments, and markets. Discourses actually are multiform in relations of power, which permeate, characterize and constitute the social body.

Theoretical background

Globalization has partly occurred because of changes in technology and science, which have brought many parts of the world closer together through developments in forms of technology as they have influenced information, communications, and travel (Olssen & Peters, 2007; Van der Walt, 2004). For universities, relations with the state have elements of *disciplinary power*, a fundamental instrument in the constitution of economy-based relations with global strategies and of the type of society that is its accompaniment function through its own discourse (Foucault, 1977b p. 93). How relations of domination are structured is an important dimension of this discursive relation: “Power domination is organized into a more-or-less coherent and unitary strategic form leads a multiform production of relations of domination, which are partially susceptible of integration into overall strategies” (p.142).

Discourse provides ways of producing and representing the knowledge about a particular topic, a particular historical moment in not only the texts but also vocabularies, sets of thoughts, or sayings and signs that reflect reality. A discourse analyst should understand subjects are created in discourses: “discourse is not the majestically unfolding manifestation of a thinking, knowing, speaking subject” (Foucault, 1972a, p.55; 1977b; Sidhu 2006, p.27; Van der Walt, 2004).

Even in simple textual forms, discourse bears meanings, imagination, social practices and thoughts. The rules that govern the discourse are powerful in determining the consciousness of those addressed to that is their intended audience. For universities the importance of these processes is powerful in transforming social practices, thoughts and structures as the students and academics are the subjects aimed at this change. Cases of discursive events referring to the same object, share the same style and support a strategy a common institutional, administrative or political drift and pattern will belong to the same discursive formation (Hall 2001, p. 73; Cousins and Hussain 1984, pp. 84-85). Organizational laws, rules, norms and behaviours are aligned and realigned according to the discourse of hegemonic power as action, and ideology and power are inseparable parts of discourse. There is a link between power, control, and discourse: “discourse occurs in an ideological process and within the relations of power and control” (Fowler et al., 1979, p.186). The systems of capitalization of the academy are produced in this way. As the academy is capitalized, management is divorced from democratic leadership and from the public good. From this point of view, power should be examined in two moments of power relations – *Dominio* (coercion) and *Direzione* (consensus) (Gramsci, 1971). For universities, both *dominio* and *direzione* are basic institutional strategies to implement power relations. They readily adopt the practices of new-institutionalism, essentially the coercive forms that involve political pressures and the force of the state, providing regulatory oversight and control (Dimaggio and Powell 1983; Mizikaci 2010) in consensus with the government.

Analysis of power relations is one aspect of critical discourse studies while ideology is another. In all power relational discourse, there is a dominant context, which defines how status, power, ideology, and control are distributed. Text and talk are constructed within this domain. For example, neoliberal policies influence neoliberal practices of their advocates through shared discourse

particularity, and in turn, this discourse reproduces the system of neoliberalism (Van Dijk 2008a, 2012). Building power relations are operative and linked to the operations of academic capitalism as “academic capitalism” sees groups of actors— students, faculty, administrators and academic professional— as using a variety of state resources to create new circuits of knowledge that link universities to the new economy” (Slaughter & Rhoades 2004, p.1). This means for a university, for example, expanding managerial ability to host external resources (mainly corporate), a new type of investment in research infrastructure for the new economy and investment in infrastructure to market institutions (like campus techno-parks), products and services to students. This perspective illustrates a formulation of a multidimensional structure:

Power relations → new discourse → academic capitalism in policies and operations

As the growing neoliberal influences made considerable changes in higher education institutions, it is necessary to emphasize how discourse links to policy building and operations. Here academic capitalism indicates the “acted” or operationalized form of power relations through discourse. Within this perspective, any analysis of the discourse of universities will essentially consider multiple factors influencing the process of this relational discourse change. Thus, it is imperative to analyse different types of power relations align with collateral discourses and change patterns in universities. Power relations are defined to the extent that university’s ability to exercise accordingly within the regimen of these phenomena (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997; Van der Walt, 2004; Van Dijk, 2008b). Dominance causing from power relations are enacted and reproduced by subtle, routine, everyday forms of text and talk that appear natural and quite acceptable. Thus, discursive strategies have a role to legitimate control, naturalize the

relations, especially relations of inequality (Van Dijk, 1993, 2012; Fairclough, 1993).

The Public University System in California

California is committed to college opportunity as stated in the Master Plan for Higher Education (MPHE) with its goals including access, affordability, equity, and quality (Kerr, 2001). Two prominent university systems in California today are California State University (CSU) System and University of California (UC) Systems. Having 33 university campuses altogether, presently, these two systems enroll more than 700,000 students and employing 70,000 faculties and staff (Table.1). The main difference between these two systems is that CSU is an education-focused university while UC is a research university as stated in their official documents: “CSU promotes student success through opportunity and a high-quality education” and “UC is the only world-class public research university for, by and of California”.

Table 1. (table 1. At the end of the doc.)

Again, the “California idea” envisioned a system of public research universities, comprehensive four-year undergraduate campuses, and open-access community colleges:

The California Idea: the goal of broad access combined with the development of high quality, mission differentiated, and affordable universities first articulated by California Progressives. Historically, this system has been a great success, with an ability to grow with the state's population and effectively meet rising demand for access to university... Over the past two years, public funding for universities has been reduced by some \$1 billion. Tuition and fees have climbed, but have not produced sufficient revenue to mitigate large budget cuts. The University of

California and the California State University have limited enrolment for the first time and in the midst of growing enrolment demand (Douglass, 2000, p.1).

According to Geiser and Atkinson (2010) the system, however, has a decidedly poor record of college completion and 4-year baccalaureate degree attainment. Besides, California ranks just 43rd among the 50 states in the proportion of its college-age population who earn 4-year college degrees (p.2). Within this context, it is crucial to address how these goals have changed direction towards neoliberal goals and divorced from the systems' "public" positioning, and from the "social contract". It is important to identify the role of discourse strategies and discourse production processes for changing operations for the good of subjects other than public.

The aim of the study

In this study I analysed discourse of public universities in California to seek for corporate, marketised and capitalized predispositions and discursive power relations in universities using critical discourse analysis approach. The study aims to identify how the CSU and UC produce and use business and corporate strategies through adapting discourse. Thus, become academically capitalized divorcing from being a social institution. For this aim, it explores the official texts in the webpages of the universities. A close examination of the homepage texts i.e. twenty-three CSU and ten UC campuses was done.

Methodology

Critical discourse analysis is a relevant choice for the aims of this study as it is in search of the discourse of universities to the extent that it (1) address academic capitalism and neoliberal policies can be planted in the fields of discourse(2) constitutes to the development of a new university culture and (3) is ideologically produced. The discourse for higher education, the power relations are important

indicators of changing roles and policies in higher education. Foucault (1972a) describes discourse as not only the texts but also vocabularies, sets of thoughts, or sayings and signs that reflect reality. Thus choosing critical discourse analysis in such a study means that there is a link between the discourse of universities and the society and this discourse is a form of social action within the context it occurs. As critical discourse analysis literature has not offered a defined methodological specification (Wodak & Meyer, 2016), a purposive method was produced in this study. The stages are as follows:

- Choosing the text for analysis
- Compiling units of analysis
- Applying lexical analysis
- Synthesizing results

According to this framework, first, texts were chosen purposively from the official websites of CSU and UC (www.csu.edu and www.uc.edu) and thirty – three campus. Second, main units for the analysis were defined in topical hyperlinks namely "overview, about, rankings, fast facts, facts and figures, reports, innovation, strategic plan, leadership, chancellor, president, the administration". Third, seven lexical categories were identified as lexical choice/lexical fields, overlexicalization, modality, nominalization, personification, justification, and quantification. Lexical categories were analysed as they relate to discursive strategies for building neoliberal ad academic capitalist aims. Analysis of the lexical elements was done on the discursive choices appeared as words and forms in the texts. These chosen words and forms allow the author to highlight some kinds of meanings and to background others (Machin and Mayr, 2012). Finally, results of the lexical analysis were discussed.

Text Analysis

Text analysis is, according to Fairclough, (2003, p. 3), an essential part of discourse analysis, which allows an integrated linguistic and discourse analysis of written and printed texts. Analysis of lexical elements is a common method as it is used to analyse the linguistic elements allowing discursive interpretations. For these reasons, analysis of lexical elements was chosen as an analysis approach in this study. Lexical choice/lexical fields, overlexicalization, modality, nominalization, personification, justification, and quantification were the main elements of analysis.

Analysis of Lexical Elements

The lexical analysis was done with reference to several methodological approaches and descriptions (Machin and Mayr, 2012; Fairclough, 2003, 2010; Trew, 1979a, 1979b, Davies, 2001; Aaker, 1997; Hanby, 1999; Fournier, 1998). The analysis demonstrated how discourse strategies were built up at the lexical level and how these patterns can relate to creating a new type of university discourse. The analysis resulted in seven categories: lexical choice/lexical fields, overlexicalization, modality, nominalization, personification, justification, and quantification. These elements are embedded in the discourse and discourse is realized with these patterns.

Lexical choice/lexical fields: Choice of lexical items are ideological and can emerge from influences by relations of an institution with other entities (Fairclough, 2003, 2010, Trew, 1979a, 1979b). Lexical choice also determines how the text is produced and how lexical fields establish the face of the text. Analysis of lexical choice is simply asking what kind of lexical field is being created and looking at the kinds of word choices found in texts and their signification (Machin & Mayr, 2012). In the homepages and campus web pages of UC and CSU systems, lexical fields were established using numbers, statistics,

facts, figures, and rankings. Under the subtitles “facts and figures” reference to ranking results, student, graduate, faculty and staff numbers, numbers of facilities, classrooms, jobs provided is featured extensively. In such a numeric-focused discourse, wide use of relative (more than all others) and absolute (high or excessive degree) superlatives (Bobaljik, 2012, p. 2) is also observed. These lexical fields identify product and measurement-oriented strategies within a cut-throat competition for students and financial resources universities function like industries (Goldman, Goldman, Gates, Brewer & Brewer 2004). Product orientation is linked to measurement. Measurement provides control over the actions and thoughts. Industry business highly deals with a number of sellers and buyers, costs, revenues, and products. Here a similar measurement activity reflects in universities as they define themselves with numbers of students, graduates, personnel, costs, and revenues. This lexical choice also relates to the definition of quality as Green (1994) defines it “the subject of quality is linked inextricably with the concept of measurement... They will never achieve genuine quality if, in trying to measure the extent to which they satisfy their customers' needs, they use sloppy measurement techniques” (p. 69). On the other hand, this type of lexical choice evidently is a result of relation with the actors out of university that eventually dominates a market-oriented discourse.

Another dominant lexical field is the extensive use of ordinals. Ordinal numbers (“*st*”, “*nd*”, “*rd*”, and “*th*”) occur tens of times in one hyperlink with reference to metrics and ranking systems. In a UC Riverside text, it reads, “the university was ranked at high levels in five ranking systems in 2015”. UCSF, similarly reports five national and international “leading benchmarks” results with twenty-two highly ranked program entries under the title of “rankings.” *Best, most, top* are common segments creating lexical fields. Phrases are generally about success and greatness of the university. In a UC Irvine text six superlative words *best, first, fastest-growing, greatest increase* take place with reference to several

ranking reports. UC San Francisco uses *best* many times in mission statement as in “At UC San Francisco, we are driven by the idea that when *the best* research, *the best teaching*, and *the best patient care converge*, we can deliver breakthroughs that help heal the world.” In all 33 university websites, the lexical field was characterized by similar patterns. These are “elite university, academic quality, teaching excellence, distinctive faculty,” are the highlighted forms. Similarly, the most used words and phrases can be summarized as excellence and innovation, growth and expansion, meet the expectations of..., strategic vision, roadmap, leadership, high quality, collaboration, networking, new knowledge, global society, globally, take pride, champion, public mission, highest quality, a global leader, no.1, top 10, highest score, stakeholders points of distinction, honours, award programs, rewards, awards. These numerical scores and relative rank orders operate as a disciplinary tool (or paper panopticon) that draws the universities into number order, comparing their economic performance scores over time and their ranking in relation to each other (Foucault, 1977).

Overlexicalization is using same words, synonyms of one word or certain lexical structures more than one expects. Use of overlexicalization strategy is evident especially in the homepages of the CSU and UC systems. CSU uses the synonyms of success and achievement in five different forms, and that of opportunity, quality, and excellence more than ten times. UC has an extensive use of local and global domains e.g. words “California” and “world” repeating them eleven times in a single text. CSU prefers to use the concept of “nation” instead of the name “California” or “world”. According to Machin and Mayr, overlexicalization can be an evidence of some kind of moral awkwardness or attempt to over-persuade” (2012, p.222). From this perspective, a doubt may arise about CSU’s success orientation and excellent services as well as UC’s world-wideness. One will understand that UCS is a university for success and achievement and opportunities with quality and

excellence while UC is for research, and technology in California and worldwide. Another aspect of overlexicalization is the use of the language of economy related words. CSU, in quick facts link, gives a detailed paragraph to explain the system's economy focus:

California's dynamic, *knowledge-based economy* is envied the world over. The analysis provided on this website and the 2010 CSU Impacts report represent an update to the 2004 report. They provide a current picture of the *CSU's economic* contributions related to *workforce*, and the growing areas of sustainability and applied research. They underscore that the CSU is central to *California's economy* and directly or indirectly impacts *everyone* in the state. For every \$1 *invested* by the state, the CSU generates \$5.43 for California's *economy*. CSU-related *spending* generates more than \$17 billion in *economic impact* in California which supports 150,000 jobs in the state. The CSU, more than any other public or private university in the state, provides more *job-ready* graduates to California's *competitive industries*... which account for nearly *5 million jobs* in the state. The CSU is at the forefront of creating jobs for the emerging "green workforce," educating future leaders in environmental fields and sustainable practices. The CSU's research and technology parks pair *business* with education, creating new sources of *competitive* advantage and revenue for the state's industries. ...The *economic* impact of the California State University is unparalleled. The CSU provides jobs, prepares the future *workforce*, and creates innovative *products* and services for the state that will build and sustain its *economy*...

In this piece of information, there are sixteen words and phrases related to the economy (italicized).

Modality. Models are an indication of an author's commitment to the truth of a statement or necessity (Machin and Mayr, 2012, p.220). Both epistemic (probability) and deontic (necessity) modality are the indicators of commitment to the truth the text aims to convince people. It functions to create an explicit

authority discourse about the truthiness of a given situation. Especially in CSU texts, use of the modal “is” refers to a deontic modality linked to necessity as in the use of present tense “educates, employs, stretches.” For example, “The path to a college degree starts early. Here's what you need to know, starting as soon as sixth grade” (CSU homepage). This sentence shows the authority of the given university over prospective students. Modality is the most common lexical pattern used in all web pages examined.

Nominalization. This is a linguistic strategy of concealment i.e. the use of verb processes represented in the form of nouns thus excluding of who did what to whom and tense. In this way, processes and activities are turned into states and objects (Fowler, et. al.1979; Machin and Mayr, 2012Fairclough, 1993). Nominalization can be used as an ideological tool concealing the agent, either backgrounded or left out completely. Van Dijk states that “by means of the use of specific nominalizations- by specific elite authors, and in specific contexts- that may be used to express and convey a distorted view of social events, namely the obfuscation of the problematic role of powerful actors in society... Such a biased representation, especially in public discourse (of the symbolic elites in politics, media, science, education, corporations, etc.), is especially problematic because it may influence the way citizens represent social events”. (2008, 822-823). Linguistically, phrases and segments of competition in webpage texts either are verbs or nominalized, i.e. they lack an agent. In CSU and UC texts, nominalization embeds external actions and operations while both universities use limited nominalization for their own actions. Use of nominalized competition and excellence are frequent words for external issues in both systems' web pages. On the other hand, CSU uses “compare to”, “rank high”, while UC uses “earn”, and “win” without nominalization for their internal actions. Following excerpt is an example of nominalization:

Impaction at the CSU. A campus or major is impacted when there are more qualified applicants than available spaces to accommodate them. A number of campuses and degree programs are impacted, which may affect your plans to attend the CSU.

Here the use of "impaction" obscures the actors and those most nearly touched by policy, the--"who does what and when." In the case of CSU and UC web pages by removing the doer, especially for the external actions, the readers' vision is narrowed down and channelled to an imaginary university, which is described as an abstract entity. Then an image of the university from outside is magnified. In such cases, the reader will have an image of the complete institution.

Personification refers to a state of ascribing human characteristics to an entity, non-human body. According to this, relationships relate human characteristics to an institution or a brand (Fournier, 1998). It also shows who do an important action and who is influenced by this action (Machin and Mayr, 2012). Personification as an organizational behaviour is common in a corporate culture and directed to stakeholders for marketing strategies. It is a produced discourse to gain a corporate personality. Research on personality traits of brand and corporate has shown competence (being reliable, successful, leader, corporate and confident) is a common trait as corporate personality (Davies, et al. 2001; Aaker, 1997; Hanby, 1999; Fournier, 1998). In both UC and CSU webpage texts a corporate personality is created using personification strategy widely, especially emphasizing the university with positive characteristics. CSU and UC webpage texts address positive traits of a person as in "excellence is in *our* DNA" or "*we* are home to five Nobel laureates ... all four of *our* professional schools..." (UCSF) and "...At Cal State LA *we* provide transformatively..." Additionally, UC texts involve pronoun "we, us, our" extensively: "*We* are here to shine a light on

what's possible... UC has expanded the horizons of what *we* know about ourselves and *our* world". "*Our* campuses are routinely ranked among the best in the world, but *our* reach extends beyond campus borders". CSU Dominguez Hills announces: *Our* students, faculty, and staff are some of the best and brightest". These are typical personification strategies.

Justification is a discourse strategy used to persuade the reader by justifying what is presented, thus, shows a good reason for doing so. In CSU and UC texts, a reference to regional, national and international rankings, organizational reports, and all types of metric systems were referred to as dominant lexical structures. At UC Davis the text "rankings" presents the achievements gained by the unit program or section in national and international rankings while in a UCSF text it reads: "...many graduate programs consistently *rank* among the best in the country, according to the latest surveys by U.S. News and World Report". In almost all of the webpages, there is a hyperlink related to facts and figures, rankings, metrics, and reports presenting results of "reliable" measurement sources. The most cited documents for justification are (1) international rankings (Times Higher Education rankings, QS world universities), (2) state-wide and nation-wide rankings, metrics, and indexes (U.S. News & World Report rankings, New York Times, Washington Monthly, Social Mobility Index, US News & World Report, Sustainable Campus Index, Money Magazine), (3) national and local foundations and associations (The National Science Foundation), and (4) other accreditation companies and state and local level reports (Best Value Colleges Report).

Quantification refers to the extensive use of numeric and factual lexical elements in a text. This strategy can be contrasted explicitly with vaguer, less precise, more subjective qualitative version of events for several purposes i.e. hiding or "unmentioning" other information, persuading or misdirecting the reader (Potter

& Wetherell, 1994, p.56). It also enables the author/institution make claims easily. These claims, thus first direct the reader towards an image of the powerful institution. Then the reader not necessarily should seek for whether the power is an illusionary case or not, a result of constructed discourse or not. Thus, quantification in establishing lexical field is purposeful in that facts and figures connote powerful traits of the university, bigness is justified with real, factual phenomena. This discursive strategy also functions to explain quality with quantification i.e. with extensive lists of the numbers of students, graduates, staff, Nobel laureates, research centres, results of rating scales, performance indicators etc. Taking into consideration the fact that enrolment rates in general and that of ethnic groups are remarkably low (Total growth in California higher education enrolment has decreased from 67% in 1960 to 14% 2005 within 45 years (Callan, 2009), quantification is used as a hiding strategy through construction of factual accounts (percentages, actual numbers and fractions) in the text. Quantification strategy patterns are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. (at the end of the doc.)

Quantification is further related to a hiding strategy. In both universities' homepages, discourse elements are used to emphasize certain roles and identities of the institutions while some aspects are not stated. Especially race, ethnicity, and migration are highly emphasized under the headings of "opportunity" and "inclusive excellence". Information given in the text opposes with reality: Latino populations' enrolment is low and these groups representation at these two system universities are dramatically decreased in the last 40 years. "A continued racial gap in both high school graduation and college participation. Latinos and African American ninth-graders continued to be much less likely to attend college than white and Asian students (Burdman, 2009; p. 30). It is interesting to over-emphasize inclusiveness and embed it

with excellence. Because both systems are highly selective: only the top eighth of California's higher school graduates are eligible for UC while CSU accepts only the top third (PPIC, 2017, p.2; Kerr, 2001; Callan, 2009). The contradiction between what is given through discourse and what is reality is clear in the following extract from CSU homepage:

Opportunity

The CSU creates an opportunity for the diverse students of California to reach their educational goals ..., opening the doors of college to more than 66,000 additional students since 2010.

Inclusive Excellence

.... This commitment to "inclusive excellence" is manifested in students who make up the most ethnically, economically and academically diverse student body in the nation reaching higher levels of success than ever as completion rates continue to reach all-time highs. The university continues to invest in strategies to close achievement and opportunity gaps for underserved and low-income students.

Here, the reality of opportunity gap between the races is hidden by creating a new discourse i.e. highlighting the opposite: *the most ethnically, economically and academically diverse student body* (used 2 times) and *close achievement and opportunity gaps for underserved and low-income students*.

Purposeful ignorance of the reality of the California State University systems is insisting in a similar discourse: CSU Humboldt's mission statement writes "...We offer them access to affordable, high-quality education that is responsive to the needs of a fast-changing world. We serve them by providing a wide array of programs and activities that promote understanding of social, economic and environmental issues." Here, affordability is conflicting to public good principles

and reflects an unreal situation. No public university in California is affordable without loans to all.

Another hidden discourse strategy is, among all numeric statements, that no mention of tuition fee and other expenses to be paid by the students or families. The absence of certain elements in a text refers to leaving out information purposefully to hide or avoid the meanings those elements may serve ends of revealing the unwanted behaviour of the targeted groups. Here there is no reference to tuition fees even though the students are to act as consumers through their voucher systems. Tuition has doubled in the past decade, from \$6,000 a year for California undergraduates in 2005 to \$12,192 in 2014. Under the new plan, California resident undergraduate tuition has increased to \$13,900 in 2019. This amount reaches up to \$35,000 with other living expenses. For the non-residents of California the tuition fee doubles (University of California, 2019). The decline in the enrolment rates in California public university systems is also left out. “In 1985, about 58 percent of California’s high school graduates went straight into a public university. Twenty years later, the figure had dropped to 46 percent, according to the California Postsecondary Education Commission” (Burdman, 2009; p. 30).

Here we can revisit the reality that the funding of education is a major responsibility of the state as education is a public good, and the state budget is based on public tax. Public money goes to the public. This is neither a reward nor a favour. Neither is because of university’s good relations with labour market or corporate. Why does a university need these strategies to convince to host its natural audience? In addition, to what extent the discourse created with lexical strategies do not represent the real situation of the public university system in California today?

To summarize, the lexical analysis of the texts shows that both California public university systems create a discourse using lexical properties of numeric lexical fields, active and imperative use of modality, personification, nominalization, justification, over-lexicalization, and quantification. As a result, texts use linguistic strategies that appear normal and neutral on the surface but may be ideological and seek to shape the representation of events and persons for particular ends (Fairclough and Wodak, 1977). A certain lexical strategy is created as a “map” in the texts where a reader, following the signs, find foregrounded and surpassed areas; areas of focus, areas of interest and what is backgrounded as well as operations.

A summary of lexical analysis is given in Table 3 below.

Table 3. (Table 3 at the end of the doc.)

Discussion

This analysis attempted to show what discourse elements critical to power relations become dominant in university texts. The analysis displayed how particular discourse systematically dominates institutional strategies in communication with the public as well as the operations. Discourse is operational (Fairclough, 2003) as found in universities' close interaction with corporates, **corporate entities** taking part in the rankings and another type of competitive grounds ambitiously and using same measurement strategies with corporates. Findings are also compliant with some critical perspectives on the discourse of universities towards a neoliberal and capitalist dimension.

Many areas of discourse addressed a connection to neoliberal policies defined by non-university institutions. An institutional determination for creating neoliberal discourse was common. Influencing factors address historically defined power

relations and institutional policies. Main actors of power relations are *the government*, which defines the financial maintenance with budget policies, and, *the economic actors* that define the labour market policies and operations. University upholds the role of labour force provider and knowledge producer within its large-scale social and institutional context. This three-dimensional power relation implants the discourse created. For this to happen, language is a powerful way to legitimize power relations, especially if these relations are not serving for the social responsibilities and the public role of the university. The analysis also showed strategies for adopting neoliberal discourse are critical. An extensive and purposeful use of lexical patterns from lexical choice to hiding was common. Through these strategies, normalization and legitimation processes are fulfilled. As a result, neoliberal university discourse creates a context to naturalize the organization of the university for the purposes of generating capital from its actions and productions i.e. knowledge, research, education, and services.

Neoliberal discourse also functions for the creation of “discursive isomorphism” making the texts concentrate on a common discourse. Isomorphism is the tendency of one system to reflect the dimensions of another. Here there is this tendency where the systems, which structure universities, and inter-university systems reflect the systems of incorporated private commercial institutions. The law of institutional isomorphism operates in discursive isomorphism, which occur through mimetic, coercive and normative discourse strategies. Mimetic processes require emulative activities of the business and corporates while coercive isomorphism emerges from social norms, state mandates, financial reliance or contract law. Normative isomorphism relates to professional relations and cooperation with accreditation agencies, businesses, corporate and/or certification boards (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983; Meyer and Rowan, 2006; Mizikaci, 2010). In addition, mimetic, coercive or normative discursive isomorphism justifies the ways of legitimating i.e. how operations align with the

laws of the market economy; the motto is “what is common is just.” Discursive isomorphism has additional outcomes:

- Legitimizing dependence of the university on externally determined goals and actions
- Masking/hiding social contract and commitment to public interest role of the university (given emphasize in California’s 1960 MPHE)
- Creating an illusory discourse to establish a university image different from what it is in reality as in “California's dynamic, knowledge-based economy is envied the world...”
- Normalizing business-like and corporate behaviours e.g. competition and commercialization, economy, excellence
- Misleading public about the university’s actions i.e. “CSU is the country’s economy leader”
- Normalizing isomorphism among universities within the same system, which impedes creativity and variety in strategies and programs.

As a result, even though each campus stands as an independent structure claiming they are different from others and “best”, their discursive strategies do have emulative characteristics for the single goal of neoliberalism: marketing knowledge and education service. Discursive isomorphism has also a function of contextualization. Operations and strategies are embedded in the context in a way that new policies and strategies are introduced with a new discourse in the same context that is historically thousands of years back to the foundation of the university. For this to operate there is a need for recontextualization process.

As for the importance of creating such common strategies through discursive isomorphism and neoliberal discourse Foucault (1972a) mentions about discourse power. Discourse is not only the texts but also vocabularies, sets of thoughts, or

sayings and signs that reflect reality (cited in Sidhu 2006; 27). Beyond existing only as textual forms, discourse bears meanings, imagination, social practices and thoughts. The rules that govern the discourse are powerful in determining the consciousness of those addressed to that is their intended audience. For universities the importance of these processes is powerful in transforming social practices, thoughts and structures as the students and academics are the subjects aimed at.

Results of conceptual analysis reveal that competitiveness and excellence discourses target talent to lure undergraduate and graduate programs. Talent is related to elite i.e. well educational background, origins from a relatively wealthy family background. This result refers to breaking the promise of the social contract “the guarantee that all California citizens who can profit from higher education should have access to it.” (Kerr, 2001) Early signs of neoliberal influence already projected today’s higher education divide: back to 1990s, the middle class in California dwindled drawn so sharply along ethnic lines and more families were among the poor. This does not only undermine the productivity and international competitiveness of the California economy but also threatens the social and political stability of the state (Benjamin & Carroll, 1998).

Consequently, discourse in Californian public university systems:

- Provides political and ideological implications and can be critically analysed as a textual production process
- Is created/contextualized with the influence of external forces rather than public good and social responsibility
- Has a function for normalizing non-public policies and activities of the institutions

- Is a powerful parameter to change public thinking in the direction that competition and commercialization are natural and inevitable activities of public universities so that these strategies and activities are perceived as something to respond rather than a question?

Future research can focus on making in-depth analysis and discussion of discourse issues in higher education research within a larger scope such as national and international levels. Multi-dimensional analysis such as visual and other media discourse is necessary for better understanding of how discourse elements are powerful in changing minds and behaviours. Multimodal discourse analysis i.e. how images, photographs, and diagrams accompanying text may also provide an understanding of meaning and ideology created in the web pages. This kind of analysis would be contributive as such visual elements are an important part of web pages.

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TABLES

Table 1. UC and CSU Systems

Facts	UC	CSU*
Founding year	1868	1857
Campus	10	23
Students	238.000	478.683
Faculty and staff	19.000	50.000
Alumni	1.7 million	3.2 million

Source: *calstate.edu factbook 2017

Table 2. Comparison of Quantification Strategies at CSU and UC

CSU	UC
<p>[CSU] is the nation’s largest four-year public university system, with 23campuses and eight off-campus centers.</p> <p>Educates the most ethnically, economically and academically diverse student body in the nation.</p> <p>Is renowned for the quality of its teaching and preparing job-ready graduates.</p> <p>Educates approximately 478,640 students.</p> <p>Employs more than 50,800 faculties and staff.</p> <p>Stretches 800 miles from Humboldt in the north to San Diego in the south.</p>	<p>10 campuses</p> <p>5 medical centers</p> <p>3 national laboratories</p> <p>150 academic disciplines</p> <p>600 graduate degree programs</p> <p>61 Nobel laureates</p> <p>20,000 UC extension courses</p> <p>430,000 jobs supported</p> <p>\$46.3 billion contributed to California economy</p> <p>Secures \$7 in federal and private dollars for every \$1 in research funding provided by the state of California.</p> <p>The [UC] opened its doors in 1869 with just 10 faculty members and 38 students. Today, the UC system includes more than 238,000 students and more than 190,000 faculties and staff, with more than 1.7 million alumni living and working around the world.</p>

Table 3. Lexical Properties in CSU and UC webpage texts

Lexical analysis		
	CSU	UC
Lexical fields: numeric property	Use of superlatives, facts, and figures, numbers, statistics; use of positive presentation in superlatives	Definition of activities at national, worldwide and universal levels; The claim of leading change and impact through research
Overlexicalization	Extensive use of success and achievement, opportunity, quality, excellence in a single homepage	Use of California and the world (eleven times) in a single homepage
Modality: mostly active voice and imperative	Active use of verbs: Is the nation's... Educates... the university is the social actor as the doer of verbal behaviours	Use of active verbs in catchphrases: "Illuminate", "Educate", the university is the social actor as the doer of verbal behaviours
Nominalization	External operations: "competition" Clauses identifying internal stories are not nominalized: "compare to", "rank high".	External operations: "completion", "excellence" Clauses identifying internal stories are not nominalized: "earn", "win".

Personification: type of given identity	University is a person “we”, “our”, “us”	University is an inanimate subject: “It”, “the CU”
Justification	Reference to regional, national and international rankings, organizational reports, and all types of metric systems	Reference to regional, national and international rankings, organizational reports, and all types of metric systems
Quantification	Extensive use of quantifiers: explaining quality with quantification	Extensive use of quantifiers: explaining quality with quantification

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Notes

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