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How Anonymous Users Attack: A Transitivity Analysis of Hate Comments in Cancel Culture on X (Twitter)

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Abstract

Cancel culture has emerged as a form of digital public punishment in which collective online reactions target public figures through criticism, boycotts, and hate comments. On X (Twitter), anonymous accounts may facilitate aggressive linguistic expressions by allowing users to conceal their identities. This study aims to examine how transitivity processes in anonymous hate comments construct blame, identity, aggression, and moral judgment in the cancel culture discourse surrounding the controversy involving Abidzar. Using a descriptive qualitative method, the study analyzes 10 anonymous hate comments collected from viral X threads related to the Abidzar controversy. The comments were purposively selected based on their relevance to the controversy and their explicit expressions of judgment, blame, or attack toward the target. The comments were segmented into clauses and analyzed using Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), particularly Halliday's transitivity framework. The findings indicate that material processes are the most frequently occurring process type, constructing direct actions and forms of symbolic attack, while relational processes construct negative identities and accusations, verbal processes amplify conflict and hostile expressions, and mental processes represent distrust and negative attitudes toward the target. These processes collectively construct a pattern of blame in which linguistic choices contribute to identity labeling, evaluation, emotional alignment, and representations of social punishment. The study suggests that transitivity analysis can provide a useful linguistic perspective for understanding how anonymous hate discourse constructs blame and aggression in digital cancel culture. Given the limited dataset of 10 comments from a single case, the findings are specific to the analyzed discourse and should not be generalized to anonymous users on X as a whole.

1. Introduction

The rise of cancel culture is inseparable from the rapid growth of social media, which now shapes the daily routines of nearly half the world's population. With users spending more than 7-8 hours per day online, platforms have become spaces not only for connection but also for conflict (Zahrai & Ballantine, 2022). Early definitions of social media emphasized user-generated content and community building, but more recent interpretations highlight its role in fostering virtual communities that amplify social interactions, both positive and negative. Within this context, cancel culture has emerged as a contentious practice praised for demanding accountability yet criticized for its lack of due process and potential to cause long-term harm (Fan et al., 2023).

Cancel culture is a contemporary social phenomenon that has gained prominence in the digital era, particularly through social media platforms (Janssens & Spreeuwenberg, 2022). It refers to the collective practice of boycotting, shaming, or ostracizing individuals, brands, or public figures for actions or opinions perceived as offensive, unethical, or harmful. Often framed as a form of "digital justice," cancel culture operates through massive online criticism, where reputations and careers can be destroyed in a matter of hours. While it is seen by some as a tool for accountability, it is also criticized for its excessive, disproportionate, and sometimes bullying nature (Accusation et al., 2023).

Although these practices may involve strong public criticism, cancel culture should not automatically be equated with cyberbullying, hate speech, or online harassment. Cancel culture refers more broadly to collective responses that seek to hold individuals or public figures accountable, often through public criticism, boycotts, or social exclusion. In contrast, cyberbullying generally involves repeated harmful behavior directed toward an individual through digital communication, while hate speech involves expressions that attack or promote hostility toward people based on particular identity characteristics. Online harassment refers to unwanted and harmful conduct carried out through digital platforms, whereas ordinary criticism may express disagreement or disapproval without necessarily attacking or degrading the person being criticized.

These distinctions are important because not every negative comment or act of public criticism constitutes hate speech or harassment. In this study, the term "hate comments" refers specifically to comments containing explicit expressions of personal attacks, negative judgment, blame, derogatory labeling, or hostile statements directed toward the target. Therefore, the study focuses on the hostile linguistic expressions appearing within a cancel culture incident rather than treating all forms of criticism or cancellation as hate discourse.

Cancel culture primarily unfolds on social media platforms such as X (formerly Twitter), Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook, where millions of users interact daily (Ilmu et al., 2025). These platforms provide the speed, reach, and anonymity that fuel cancel culture incidents, allowing collective outrage to spread rapidly across national and global boundaries (Khoirunnisa et al., 2023). In Indonesia, as in many other countries, cancel culture has become a common occurrence, with anonymous accounts often leading the charge in online boycotts and public shaming. The phenomenon is not confined to one region but is truly global, reflecting the interconnected nature of digital communities.

Among these platforms, X (Twitter) provides a relevant context for examining how language is used to express public judgment and hostility. Anonymity is particularly relevant to this linguistic investigation because users may communicate through

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pseudonyms or accounts whose real-world identities cannot be verified. This concealment may reduce the visibility of the speaker's personal identity while allowing the speaker to position themselves as an evaluator, accuser, or participant in collective criticism.

From a linguistic perspective, anonymity does not necessarily determine which grammatical processes users select; rather, it provides a communicative context in which agency, responsibility, and participant identities may be represented through language. For example, the use of first-person plural pronouns may construct a collective voice, while material processes may represent actions directed toward a target, relational processes may assign negative identities or attributes, verbal processes may convey accusations, and mental processes may express distrust or negative attitudes. Examining these linguistic choices can therefore provide insight into how anonymous users represent themselves, construct the target, and communicate blame or aggression.

To investigate these linguistic patterns, this study employs Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), particularly transitivity analysis. Transitivity is relevant because it examines how experience is represented through process types, participants, and circumstances within clauses. Rather than treating comments merely as expressions of negative sentiment, transitivity analysis makes it possible to investigate how grammatical choices represent actions, states, thoughts, and verbal expressions, as well as the social actors involved in those processes.

Through the analysis of participant roles and process types, the study examines how commenters position themselves and their targets, assign agency, construct negative identities, and represent acts of blame or aggression. Using Systemic Functional Linguistics, particularly transitivity analysis, the study focuses on identifying and classifying process types material, relational, and mental that construct narratives of blame and aggression (Business, 2015). In addition to these process types, verbal processes are also considered in the analysis because they appear in the research findings.

Despite the broader discussion of cancel culture as a social phenomenon, a focused linguistic examination is necessary to understand how anonymous comments construct blame and hostility through grammatical choices. The linguistic problem addressed in this study concerns how different transitivity processes represent social actors, actions, judgments, and relationships between commenters and the individuals they target. Accordingly, this study aims to examine the transitivity processes realized in anonymous hate comments and explain how these processes construct blame, identity, aggression, and representations of collective action. The study addresses the following research questions:

(1) What transitivity processes are realized in anonymous hate comments related to the cancel culture controversy involving Abidzar on X (Twitter)? (2) How do these transitivity processes construct blame, identity, aggression, and representations of collective action? The research uses a descriptive qualitative approach and focuses on ten anonymous comments selected from viral X threads related to the Abidzar controversy. The comments are purposively selected based on their relevance to the controversy and their explicit expressions of judgment, blame, or attack toward the target. Each comment is segmented into clauses and analyzed using the transitivity framework of SFL.

By focusing on this specific case and a limited set of comments, the study does not aim to represent all anonymous users or explain cancel culture as a whole. Instead, it seeks to provide a case-specific linguistic account of how transitivity choices construct hostile meanings in anonymous online discourse. The findings are expected to contribute to the application of SFL in digital discourse studies and offer insights for digital literacy education by illustrating how grammatical choices can communicate blame, negative identity construction, and linguistic aggression in online interactions.

2. Method

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach using Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), specifically transitivity analysis, to examine anonymous hate comments directed at Abidzar Al-Ghifari. Abidzar, a young Indonesian actor, faced cancel culture backlash after admitting he had not fully watched or read the original *Business Proposal* before starring in its Indonesian remake. The controversy triggered widespread criticism on X (Twitter), where anonymous accounts expressed disappointment and anger. To capture this phenomenon, ten hate comments were selected from viral threads discussing Abidzar's statement. These comments serve as the primary data for linguistic analysis.

The data were collected from October 10 to November 25, 2025. The incident was selected as the research context because Abidzar's statement regarding the original Business Proposal attracted public criticism and generated discussions on X (Twitter). The ten comments were selected using purposive sampling rather than random sampling. This sampling strategy was applied to obtain comments that were directly relevant to the research focus and contained explicit expressions of judgment, blame, or attack toward Abidzar. The selection was therefore based on the relevance and linguistic characteristics of the comments rather than their numerical popularity.

The data collection process involved identifying a trending cancel culture incident related to Abidzar's role in *A Business Proposal* Indonesia. Hate comments were gathered from anonymous accounts on X, focusing on those with pseudonyms or faceless profiles to ensure anonymity. Each comment was documented through screenshots and transcribed into clauses for analysis. The selection criteria required comments to be directly related to Abidzar's controversy and to contain explicit judgment, blame, or attack. This ensured that the dataset reflected authentic expressions of cancel culture discourse.

An account was considered anonymous when its real-world identity could not be verified by the researchers and it used a pseudonym or a profile that did not clearly reveal the user's identity. The presence of a pseudonym or a faceless profile was considered an indicator of anonymity, rather than sufficient proof of the account owner's identity. The comments were selected based on their relevance to the research objective and their explicit linguistic expressions of hostility, including personal attacks, negative judgments, derogatory labeling, and blame directed toward the target. The ten comments were considered suitable for this descriptive qualitative study because they provided relevant linguistic examples for examining the realization of transitivity processes and their communicative functions. The purpose of the sample was to obtain an in-depth analysis of the selected discourse rather than to achieve statistical representativeness of all comments on X (Twitter).

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For data analysis, each of the ten comments was segmented into clauses and classified according to Halliday's transitivity process types: material, relational, and mental. In this study, the ten comments served as the primary data sources, while the clause was established as the main unit of analysis. Therefore, a single comment containing more than one clause was treated as one comment but divided into separate analytical units. Each clause was examined in terms of its process type, participant roles, and circumstances where applicable.

This approach enabled the analysis to focus on how grammatical structures represented actions, identities, judgments, and relationships between the commenters and the target. Material processes were identified in comments expressing actions of destruction (e.g., "ruin your career"), relational processes in identity-based accusations (e.g., "you are unprofessional"), and mental processes in expressions of collective judgment (e.g., "we hate you").

The analysis considered Halliday's six transitivity process types: material, mental, relational, verbal, behavioral, and existential processes. Each clause was examined to determine the process type that best represented its grammatical and experiential meaning. The classification was not restricted to the three process types mentioned above, as verbal processes were also identified in the data. The process types were classified based on their linguistic characteristics and contextual meanings rather than solely on the negative or hostile content of the comments. The frequency of each process type was counted to reveal dominant linguistic strategies. Narrative interpretation was then applied to explain how these processes construct blame and aggression in cancel culture. Finally, validity was ensured through expert review, while reliability was supported by cross-checking consistency across the dataset.

Following the transitivity classification, each clause was further coded according to its communicative function within the context of cancel culture discourse. The coding focused on how linguistic choices were used to construct social attacks, resulting in categories such as identity labeling, conflict narrative, collective threat, social action, symbolic attack, moral legitimization, and claims of validity. These categories were developed through contextual interpretation by examining the relationship between the process type, lexical choices, and the intended meaning of each clause. The analysis was conducted iteratively to ensure consistency, while expert review and repeated cross-checking were employed to enhance the credibility and reliability of the findings.

To make the coding procedure transparent, each comment was first transcribed and segmented into clauses. Each clause was then classified according to its transitivity process type, followed by the identification of relevant participant roles and circumstances. For example, the comment "Abidzar sendiri bilang gak usah nonton" was examined by identifying its clause structure and the verbal process represented by the expression "bilang." The corresponding participant role and the projected message were then considered in the analysis. After the grammatical classification, the clause was interpreted in relation to its communicative function within the discourse. This procedure allowed the analysis to connect grammatical structures with the ways in which blame, judgment, and conflict were linguistically constructed.

3. Result

Table 1 presents the transitivity process types identified in the ten anonymous comments collected from X (Twitter). Each comment was examined to identify its grammatical processes and communicative functions within the context of the cancel culture controversy involving Abidzar. The initial classification identified material, relational, and verbal processes in the dataset. Some comments contained more than one grammatical process and therefore require clause-level examination to distinguish individual process instances.

Table 1. Transitivity Process Types and Attack Functions in Anonymous Hate Comments

No.	Clause	Process Type	Attack Function
1.	"Congrats abidzar jadi artis pertama yg kena cancel culture di Indonesia"	Relational process	Labeling identity & social status
2.	"Abidzar sendiri bilang gak usah nonton"	Verbal process	Build a narrative of conflict
3.	"U nantang kami ladenin"	Material process	Build a narrative of conflict
4.	"We give you a war"	Material process	Tthreat of collective action
5.	"Gila sengak bgt jadi aktor baru"	Relational attributive & relational identifying	Labeling identity & social status
6.	"Cancel culture harus dibudayakan di sini"	Material process	Social action
7.	"Kita menghasilkan aktor terbaik"	Material process	Legitimacy of moral goals
8.	"Kamu menang penghargaan sebagai artis pertama yg resmi kena cancel"	Material process & relational identifying	Labeling identity & social status
9.	"Boikotnya kami mah real"	Relational attributive	Claim of validity of action
10.	"Makan kesombonganmu itu"	Material process metaforis	Symbolic attack

Table 1 presents the results of the transitivity analysis conducted on the ten anonymous hate comments collected from X (Twitter). Each comment was segmented into clauses and classified according to Halliday's transitivity process types. In addition to identifying the dominant process type, each clause was interpreted based on its communicative role within cancel culture discourse, resulting in attack function categories such as identity labeling, conflict narrative, collective threat, social action, symbolic attack, and moral legitimization. Overall, material processes appeared most frequently, followed by relational and verbal processes, indicating that anonymous commenters tended to construct online attacks through actions, identity labeling, and the amplification of controversial statements. These findings provide the basis for the following discussion.

Table 2. Frequency and Percentage of Transitivity Processes

No.	Process Type	Frequency	Percentage
1	Material	10	71.43%
2	Relational	3	21.43%
3	Verbal	1	7.14%
4	Mental	0	0%

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5	Behavioral	0	0%
6	Existential	0	0%
	Total	14	100%

The percentage was calculated using the following formula:
Percentage = (Frequency/Total Number of Process Instances) × 100%

The results presented in Table 2 indicate that material processes were the most frequently identified process type, accounting for 10 out of 14 process instances (71.43%). Relational processes ranked second, with 3 instances (21.43%), while verbal processes appeared only once (7.14%). No mental, behavioral, or existential processes were identified in the analyzed comments.

The predominance of material processes indicates that the comments primarily construct the controversy through representations of actions and social responses. For example, expressions such as "nantang kami," "ladenin," "give you a war," and "dibudayakan" represent actions or demands directed toward the individual or the broader cancel culture situation. These linguistic choices frame the controversy as an interaction involving confrontation, retaliation, and social action.

Relational processes, as found in expressions such as "jadi artis pertama," "sengak banget," and "boikotnya kami mah real," function to establish descriptions, evaluations, and identities. Through these expressions, commenters position the individual or the act of boycotting within particular evaluative categories. Meanwhile, the verbal process in "Abidzar sendiri bilang" presents a statement attributed to the actor. This process is significant because it shows how an individual's previous statement is reproduced as part of the online controversy.

The findings suggest that the selected anonymous comments construct criticism and social attacks mainly through action-oriented expressions, followed by descriptions and evaluations. The frequency distribution provides descriptive support for understanding the linguistic patterns, while the interpretation of each process reveals how these grammatical choices contribute to the construction of blame, confrontation, and negative evaluation in the selected cancel culture discourse.

4. Discussion

Relational Processes

Relational processes are used to assign identities, attributes, or statuses to participants. In the dataset, clauses such as *"Congrats Abidzar jadi artis pertama yg kena cancel culture di Indonesia"* and *"gila sengak bet jadi aktor baru"* exemplify this process. These comments construct Abidzar's identity by labeling him as the "first actor canceled" or as "arrogant." Relational clauses function as social categorization, reducing a person to a stigmatized label. Thus, relational processes in cancel culture serve to fix identity in negative terms, reinforcing public judgment (Neshkovska, n.d.).

The comments construct Abidzar's identity by labeling him as the *"first actor canceled"* or as an *"arrogant"* newcomer. Such labels simplify a complex individual into a single negative characteristic that becomes easily recognized and repeatedly shared by the online community. Instead of encouraging discussion about the original controversy, relational clauses redirect attention toward the individual's character.

As a result, the person becomes associated with a stigmatized identity that extends beyond the initial incident. Relational processes contribute to the formation of public

perception by presenting subjective judgments as if they were objective facts. When similar labels are repeatedly circulated across social media, they gradually gain legitimacy and become accepted as part of the collective narrative. This repetition strengthens the social impact of cancel culture because audiences are more likely to remember the assigned identity than the context that originally triggered the controversy. In this way, relational processes support the spread of stereotypes and reinforce negative public evaluation (Zhang et al., 2023).

From the perspective of transitivity, relational processes demonstrate how grammar can shape social identity and influence public opinion. Rather than merely describing reality, these clauses actively construct it by assigning permanent attributes to the target of criticism. Once these identities are established and continuously reproduced, they become difficult to challenge or remove. Consequently, relational processes play a significant role in cancel culture by fixing individuals into negative social categories, reinforcing collective judgment, and sustaining long-term reputational damage.

Verbal Processes

Verbal processes involve acts of saying, reporting, or narrating. The clause *"Abidzar sendiri bilang gak usah nonton"* represents this type, as it reports Abidzar's own words to build a narrative of conflict. By quoting or paraphrasing, verbal processes highlight speech acts that become the basis for criticism. In cancel culture, verbal processes are often weaponized to amplify controversial statements. They transform individual utterances into collective evidence of guilt.

Beyond reporting speech, verbal processes also function as a framing device that guides how readers interpret the quoted statement within the conflict (Alharbi, 2021). When commenters repeat or paraphrase a public figure's words, they do not only transmit information but also reposition the speaker as a target of evaluation and judgment. The reporting clause becomes a gateway that links quotation with accusation, sarcasm, or moral assessment in the following clause. This pattern shows that verbal processes help shift a statement from neutral information into argumentative proof used to justify boycott, rejection, or ridicule (Welbl et al., n.d.). In cancel culture discourse, repeated verbal projections strengthen solidarity among commenters because the same quoted speech is circulated and reinterpreted as shared evidence of wrongdoing.

Material Processes

Material processes express actions, events, or physical acts that represent something being done or happening in the external world. In the dataset, clauses such as *"U nantang kami ladenin," "we give you a war,"* and *"makan kesombonganmu itu"* illustrate material processes because they portray actions directed toward the target of criticism. Rather than simply expressing opinions, these clauses linguistically construct actions of confrontation, retaliation, and symbolic punishment. Through material processes, commenters position themselves as active participants who are capable of carrying out consequences against the individual being canceled.

In the context of cancel culture, material processes function to transform emotional reactions into imagined collective actions. Expressions such as *"we give you a war"* do not necessarily indicate literal violence but metaphorically represent organized resistance and coordinated public attacks. Similarly, the clause *"U nantang kami ladenin"* frames the

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controversy as a challenge that demands a response from the online community. These linguistic choices create the impression that collective retaliation is both justified and inevitable, reinforcing the perception that cancel culture involves active social punishment rather than passive criticism.

Material processes also strengthen the sense of agency by clearly identifying both the actor and the action performed. The repeated use of collective participants such as *"we"* or *"kami"* emphasizes that the attack is carried out by a community rather than by isolated individuals. This collective representation legitimizes the actions taken against the target, suggesting that the outrage reflects the opinion of a larger group. As a result, the discourse constructs an image of unity and shared purpose, making online attacks appear more powerful and socially acceptable (Picarella, 2024).

Some material processes are expressed metaphorically to intensify symbolic aggression. The clause *"makan kesombonganmu itu"* does not describe a literal physical action but instead uses metaphorical language to express humiliation and moral punishment. Such expressions increase the emotional intensity of the discourse while avoiding direct physical threats. Through metaphorical material processes, language becomes a symbolic weapon that humiliates, ridicules, and devalues the target without requiring actual physical action. This demonstrates that material processes in digital communication frequently operate on both literal and symbolic levels.

From the perspective of transitivity, material processes reveal how grammar contributes to constructing narratives of collective punishment in cancel culture. These clauses shift online discourse from expressing feelings to portraying concrete actions, making public outrage appear executable and socially legitimate. By repeatedly representing actions of boycott, retaliation, and symbolic destruction, material processes sustain the momentum of cancel culture and encourage continued participation from other users. Consequently, transitivity analysis demonstrates that material processes play a significant role in transforming individual dissatisfaction into collective digital action, where language itself performs the function of social punishment.

Mental Processes

Material processes function as linguistic representations of actions and potential social punishment. Clauses such as "we give you a war" and "U nantang kami ladenin" construct confrontation and retaliation through action-oriented expressions. Meanwhile, the clause "boikotnya kami mah real" represents a relational process that emphasizes the asserted authenticity of the boycott rather than directly expressing an action..

Mixed/Metaphorical Processes

Some clauses combine multiple processes or use metaphorical language. For example, *"cancel culture harus dibudayakan di sini"* is a material process framed as a social directive, while *"boikotnya kami mah real"* uses relational attribution to claim authenticity. These hybrid clauses show how cancel culture discourse blends identity, action, and emotion. Metaphorical material processes like *"makan kesombonganmu itu"* intensify symbolic attacks, making language itself a weapon. Such combinations reveal the complexity of transitivity in online hate speech (Pluta et al., 2023).

Labeling and Identity Construction

Relational processes function to socially categorize individuals, turning Abidzar into a symbol of failure or arrogance. On social media, these labels spread quickly, shaping public perception beyond the original controversy and magnifying the negative image of the target. The act of labeling through language reinforces cancel culture's power to stigmatize, as identities are reduced to simplified and harmful attributes (Cruz, 2024). In this way, relational clauses do not merely describe a person but actively construct a social identity that is difficult to escape. Once these labels are repeated and circulated, they become part of the collective narrative, influencing how wider audiences perceive the individual. This demonstrates how cancel culture thrives on linguistic categorization, where grammar itself becomes a weapon of identity destruction.

Relational processes also highlight the permanence of stigma, as once someone is labeled "arrogant" or "the first canceled actor," the identity tends to stick in public memory. The repetition of such clauses across multiple accounts creates a sense of legitimacy, even if the accusations are exaggerated or unfounded. In the context of social media, relational processes thus serve as tools of symbolic violence, embedding moral judgment into everyday discourse. Ultimately, they reveal how language can transform personal controversy into a lasting social identity that defines the target within cancel culture.

Conflict Narratives and Amplification

Verbal processes function to amplify conflict by repeating or reframing statements. In Abidzar's case, his comment about not needing to watch the original series was circulated as evidence of disrespect. Social media thrives on such amplification, where one utterance becomes a rallying point for outrage. Transitivity analysis reveals how verbal clauses sustain cancel culture by keeping the controversy alive (Project, 2024).

The repeated circulation of the same utterance also illustrates how social media platforms encourage amplification through reposts, screenshots, and user commentary. Every repetition adds another layer of evaluation, allowing commenters to reinterpret the original statement with sarcasm, accusation, or moral judgment. Consequently, a single verbal act becomes symbolic evidence that is continuously reproduced to sustain collective outrage. From the perspective of transitivity, verbal clauses serve as mechanisms that connect the target's speech with broader narratives of blame, enabling the controversy to remain visible and relevant within online discussions.

Furthermore, verbal processes contribute to the formation of collective memory within cancel culture. Once a controversial statement is repeatedly quoted, it becomes the defining feature of the individual's public identity, often overshadowing subsequent explanations or apologies. This persistent circulation strengthens solidarity among commenters because the repeated quotation functions as shared evidence supporting collective judgment. As a result, transitivity analysis reveals that verbal processes play a crucial role in sustaining cancel culture by extending the lifespan of controversy, reinforcing public outrage, and transforming a single utterance into a lasting narrative of guilt and social punishment (Mohammad & Rahman, 2024).

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Collective Action and Threats

Material processes function as linguistic enactments of collective punishment. Clauses like *"we give you a war"* or *"boikotnya kami mah real"* dramatize social media users' intent to act against the target. These processes simulate collective aggression, making online discourse feel like a coordinated attack (Picarella, 2024). Transitivity highlights how grammar turns abstract outrage into imagined physical or social action.

This is also strengthen the sense of agency and group force by explicitly showing who acts and what action is directed toward the target. Commenters position themselves as active agents of boycott, retaliation, or sanction, which builds an image of organized resistance rather than isolated reaction. This action-focused pattern reduces distance between emotion and response, so hostility is framed as something executable. Through repeated material clauses, the discourse constructs a projected chain of actions that presents punishment as justified and imminent.

These processes also dramatize social media users' intentions by framing online criticism as coordinated action rather than isolated comments. The phrase *"we give you a war"* metaphorically represents conflict and collective resistance, while *"boikotnya kami mah real"* emphasizes the seriousness and authenticity of the boycott. Such expressions create the impression that the online community is united in pursuing the same objective. As a result, material processes transform individual dissatisfaction into a shared campaign against the target, making the discourse appear more organized and influential (Picarella, 2024).

Material processes strengthen the sense of agency by explicitly identifying who performs the action and who becomes its recipient. The repeated use of collective participants such as *"we"* or *"kami"* positions commenters as active agents of boycott, retaliation, or social sanction. This grammatical structure reinforces the perception that cancel culture is driven by collective effort rather than by a few outspoken individuals. Consequently, the discourse presents online punishment as the decision of an entire community, increasing its perceived legitimacy and social pressure.

Another important function of material processes is reducing the distance between emotion and action. Feelings of disappointment, anger, or frustration are immediately translated into concrete linguistic actions such as boycotting, fighting back, or imposing consequences. This action-oriented pattern encourages readers to perceive hostility as something that should be acted upon rather than merely expressed. The repeated representation of these actions contributes to the normalization of punitive behavior within online communities, where collective responses are framed as justified reactions to perceived wrongdoing.

From the perspective of transitivity, material processes reveal how grammar transforms abstract outrage into imagined physical or social action. The repeated use of action verbs constructs a projected sequence of punishment that portrays retaliation as immediate, reasonable, and socially supported. These linguistic patterns sustain the momentum of cancel culture by encouraging further participation and reinforcing the belief that collective action is both necessary and effective. Therefore, material processes play a crucial role in shaping online discourse, where language not only reflects social conflict but also actively constructs and amplifies it (KhosraviNik, 2022).

Emotional Validation and Moral Legitimacy

Mental processes function to validate collective emotions, showing that outrage is widely shared among commenters. By expressing hatred, distrust, disappointment, or disgust, users present their inner reactions as socially reasonable responses rather than personal bias (Traversa et al., 2023). These clauses foreground feeling and cognition, which helps frame cancel actions as morally grounded instead of impulsive. When many commenters repeat similar mental processes, the discourse builds an impression of emotional consensus that supports public sanction.

Metaphorical material processes further intensify this pattern by symbolically "consuming" arrogance or punishing pride, turning emotion into imagined consequence. Transitivity connects these emotions to actions and identities, demonstrating how language constructs a full cycle of perception, judgment, and attack in social media society, where feelings are not only expressed but also mobilized to justify collective digital punishment.

5. Conclusion

Particularly in the case of Abidzar Al-Ghifari, is deeply shaped by linguistic choices expressed through anonymous hate comments on X (Twitter). By applying Systemic Functional Linguistics, especially transitivity analysis, we were able to classify clauses into material, relational, verbal, and mental processes. Each process type revealed a distinct way in which language constructs blame, judgment, and aggression. Relational processes assigned stigmatized identities, while material processes dramatized collective threats and symbolic punishment. Verbal processes amplified controversial statements, and mental processes validated shared emotions of anger and distrust. Together, these processes formed a "grammar of blame" that sustains cancel culture dynamics. The findings highlight that language is not neutral but functions as a powerful tool of social attack. Ultimately, cancel culture discourse illustrates how grammar itself becomes a weapon in digital society.

Mobilize linguistic resources to reinforce cancel culture. Relational clauses labeled him as arrogant or the "first canceled actor," reducing his identity to a negative social category. Material clauses enacted threats such as "we give you a war," simulating collective aggression in virtual spaces. Verbal clauses repeated his own words to amplify conflict and sustain outrage. Mental clauses projected collective emotions, showing that hatred and distrust were widely shared among users. These linguistic strategies reveal how cancel culture operates not only through actions but also through discourse. The connection between transitivity and social attack demonstrates that grammar structures the very mechanisms of public shaming. In this way, cancel culture becomes both a linguistic and social phenomenon.

The implications of this study extend beyond the case of Abidzar and highlight broader issues in digital communication. Theoretically, it expands SFL research by applying transitivity analysis to online aggression, showing how grammar constructs moral judgment in cancel culture. Practically, it offers insights for educators, researchers, and mental health practitioners in understanding toxic online behavior. For educators, the findings can inform digital literacy programs that teach students to recognize harmful discourse patterns.

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For researchers, the study provides a framework for analyzing anonymity's impact on communication. For mental health practitioners, it sheds light on the psychological consequences of online mob dynamics. Cancel culture, while framed as accountability, often results in disproportionate punishment and emotional harm. Therefore, understanding its linguistic construction is essential for addressing its social impact and promoting healthier online interactions.

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