



Transitivity Analysis of AJ Hoge's Short Story "Day of the Dead"

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Abstract

This study analyzes a short story created by AJ Hoge, a well-known English Materials creator of effortless English learning with his short story. It aims to reveal how meanings are constructed and what characterizes the story. Transitivity system, a framework of Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), is used as an analytical tool. The data are gathered from the short story entitled "Day of the Dead". This study employs qualitative descriptive analysis incorporating SFL into the methodology and Transitivity system analysis. This study finds that the creator employs all six Process types of Transitivity i.e., Material, Mental, Relational, Behavioral, Existential, and Verbal Processes. In constructing meanings, the six Processes are manifested in the three elements of the story: orientation, sequence of events, and reorientation. The employment of the six Processes is as an effort to expose learner to the clause as representation completely, that is to provide learners with all possible represented experiences through Processes that may happen in the world. The dominant Process of Material becomes the characteristic of the text and meets the linguistic features of recount text.

Keywords: *short story; systemic functional linguistics; transitivity analysis*

Introduction

The use of short story as a resource of language teaching offers both literary awareness and a better linguistic understanding for learner because of its simplicity with only a few characters without long or detailed description of story setting. AJ Hoge, an English Language Teaching (ELT) practitioner and English Materials developer, employs the concept of simplicity in short story in teaching English to get an effortless and simple way to master spoken English. Previous research confirms that AJ Hoge's strategy in teaching English provides simple inputs of linguistic features in term of vocabulary, contraction, nouns, sentences, and repetition (Sujatmo, 2012). The strategy gives comprehensible inputs and natural approach of language learning (Basari, 2011). Furthermore, Ali (2020) suggests that the teaching Material resource gives considerable results that emphasize ideas for simple language inputs. Those studies are concerned with AJ Hoge's short story in term of linguistic features, natural approach of comprehensible language learning, and the

simplicity of language input. However, no study particularly explores meaning construction and the language features of the short story. Such kind of study is essential for further confirmation in revealing what beyond the story and what makes it eligible as English Materials resource. Given the current understandings, the present study poses two research questions: 1. How are meanings in AJ Hoge's short story constructed? 2. What characterizes the discourse of the story? This study focusses on these two questions from Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) perspective.

SFL is defined as the theory of choice in any act of communication (Jaelani & Sujatna, 2014). It considers language as a meaning-making resource and a social semiotic system (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004). The linguistic theory examines how people use language to construe and create meaning to fulfil their communicative purposes in social contexts (Martin and Rose, 2003). SFL emphasizes the function of language. Some functional linguists contend that the goals for which a language is employed impact its structure (Roberts & Spencer, 1993). Functional means that language system must serve in the structure and organization of language at all levels. The language organization is achieved via Metafunction. Metafunction can reveal how language works and how speaker or writer generates language output of both spoken and written. It conveys the intended meanings by relating words to the world. Halliday & Matthiessen (2004) state that experiences of the world are translated into words, which are subsequently translated into meanings. This concept is essential to explain how the semantic system of language is organized.

Emilia, E, Moecharam, N., & Syifa, I (2017) assume that there are three Metafunctions in SFL: ideational meaning, interpersonal meaning, and textual meaning. Ideational meanings are meanings about ideas and realized in the system of Transitivity. Interpersonal meanings are meanings about social relations and realized in the system of mood. Textual meanings are meanings about what makes language contextually and co-textually relevant and realized in the system of thematic progression. The aims of this study are to investigate how a writer constructs meanings in a text and what characterizes the text. Therefore, ideational meaning with its Transitivity system is employed as the framework in the short story analysis.

Transitivity is the system to analyze ideational meanings. Transitivity outlines that what we experience is a reality and comprises Processes of sensing, doing, saying, being, and having. The three primary parts of Transitivity are the Process (verb), the Participant (subject or the person doing the action), and the conditions related to the adverbial group (Syed, Nazir, Hafiz, & Shahbaz, 2021). Transitivity is a system that shows how the Processes achieve the context. In Transitivity, languages operate with some system of types of Process, some repertory of doing and happening, sensing and saying, being and having (Halliday & Webster: 2009). Emilia, E, Moecharam, N., & Syifa, I (2017) assume that the grammatical system in Transitivity achieves the experiential meaning of the clause and becomes the resource for interpreting and expressing events, happenings, goings-on, Mental states, sayings, behaviors, and relations of different kinds. Transitivity is generated with Processes as its central of analysis. The term Processes refer to verbs in explaining what is going in the context of event.

The idea is that the small number of syntactically critical semantics influence Transitivity systems. Transitivity also explains how one person's actions influence another person or the patient (Roberts & Spencer, 1993). It may be examined for all texts (Wahyuni & Hamzah (2019) and (Yolanda & Zaim (2021). Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) asserts that six Processes: Material, Mental, Relational, Linguistic, Behavioral, and Existential Processes, help Transitivity analysis carry out its intended purpose. Every Process in Transitivity has a unique collection of components.

1. Material Process

Gerot & Wignell (1995) explain that Material Processes are the Processes of doing. These Processes express the idea that the participant physically does something or takes actions, which are usually concrete actions. In this Process, the participant who does something is the Actor, and the Goal is the participant to whom the Process is directed.

Example 1.

Jenny	threw	her book
Participant	Process	Participant
Actor	Material	Goal

The participant *Jenny* is labelled as Actor, who physically does something with the Material Process *threw*. *Her book*, the participant to whom the Process is directed, is labelled as Goal.

2. Mental Process

Mental Processes contain the meaning of thinking, feeling, and perceiving, such as to understand, like, hurt, and other similar things. In this Process, the participant roles are Senser and Phenomenon. The Senser is a conscious being that can think or see consciously. In contrast, the Phenomenon is the one that is sensed.

Example 2.

My mother	likes	Banana
Participant	Process	Participant
Senser	Mental	Phenomenon

The one who feel something is called Senser. In this example, Senser is labelled to *my mother* because she *likes* something. *Banana* is the thing that my mother likes and then is labelled as Phenomenon.

3. Relational Process

This Process involves states of being and having. Eggins (2004) mentioned that Relational Processes are where things are stated to exist about other things. The Processes which establish identity are Identifying Processes, while Processes that assign a quality are Attributive Processes. Each Process has its participant role. In attributive, the participants are Carrier and Attribute, while the participants of identifying Processes are Token and Value.

Attributive and identifying Processes has slightly different Processes or verb.

Sometimes it is difficult to determine whether the Process included in the attributive or identifying Process. However, there is a difference that may make it easier to identify both Processes. Attributive Processes are reversible, while Identifying Processes are not. If attributive Processes are reversed, the clauses will not make sense.

Example 3.

Hoggart	is	the fattest one here
Participant	Process	Participant
Carrier	Identifying	Value

Example 4.

Hoggart	is	very fatty
Participant	Process	Participant
Carrier	Attributive	Attribute

The Process *is* in example 3 is classified as Identifying because *the fattest one here* is the identity for *Hoggart*. If the clause is reversed to *the fattest one here is Hoggart*, the meaning still makes sense. However, the Process *is* in example 4 is classified as attributive because *very fatty* is the identity for *Hoggart*. Therefore, if the clause is reversed to *very fatty is Hoggart*, the meaning does not make sense.

4. Behavioral Process

Behavioral Processes are Processes of physiological and psychological. This Process relates to physiological and psychological behavior, such as breathing, smiling, watching, laughing, and other similar things. This Process is described as a midway between Material and Mental Processes (Egins, 2004). The participant of behavioral Process, called Behavior, is a conscious being that can feel, think, or see. Nevertheless, it differs from Mental Processes since Behavior is in action, not sensing. In this Process, mostly there is only one participant who is Behavior. However, sometimes in a clause, there is a Range that specifies the scope of the Process.

Example 5.

He	sneezes	loudly
Participant	Process	Participant
Behavior	Behavioral	Circumstance

Example 6.

She	took	a nap
Participant	Process	Participant
Behavior	Behavioral	Range

The participants *he* and *she* are labelled as behavior because the Processes *sneezes* and *took* refer to human behavior. The range *a nap* is the scope of the Process.

5. Existential Process

Existential Processes are the Processes of existence. It simply states that something exists. This Process is expressed by existing verbs, 'be', 'exist', and 'arise'. The only participant in existential Processes is called existent.

Example 7.

There	is	a pimple on the woman's face
Process		Participant
Existential		Existent

There is not labelled as participant because it has no representational function. It is needed because English requires a subject. The process *is* is labelled as existential process and *a pimple on the woman's face* is labelled as existent.

6. Verbal Process

Verbal Processes are Processes of Verbal action or saying or symbolic signaling. In Verbal Processes, the participant who is the speaker must appear. Three participants may or may not appear in the clause: The Receiver, Target, and Verbiage. Sayer is the participant that has the responsibility to do the Verbal Process, so that is why this participant has to appear in every Verbal Process. Sayer has to be able to signal, yet it does not have to be a conscious being. The receiver is the one to whom the verbalization is addressed. In comparison, the target is acted upon verbally (insulted, complimented, and other similar things). The last is verbiage, which is a name for the verbalization itself.

Example 8.

He	said	that	he	believed	her
Participant	Process		Participant	Process	Participant
Sayer	Verbal		Senser	Mental	Phenomenon

Example 9.

Justin	told	Kim	about his past
Sayer	Verbal	Receiver	Verbiage

Example 10.

Sam	scold	Dick
Sayer	Verbal	Target

In example 8, 9, and 10 *He, Justin, and Sam* are Sayers that have the responsibility to do the Verbal Process. *Kim* is the receiver to whom the verbalization is addressed. *About his past* is verbiage which is the name about the verbalization. *Dick* is the Target who is acted upon verbally insulted by *Sam*.

The six types of Process in the framework of Transitivity are used to determine how a writer employs or arrange sentences to accomplish a particular objective. It may clarify the writer's use of language to convey their views (Pramono, 2019). Processes are crucial because they express meanings of each clause or sentence in Transitivity. Additionally, verbs are aware that it might be difficult for authors to choose the correct verb for a specific context (Kencana, Hikmah, & Gemilang, 2022).

This research focuses on the ideational meaning by using Transitivity system. The researchers put the short story by AJ Hoge on the analysis of Transitivity system of Halliday's theory. Transitivity system is used to find the dominant Process in the

story along with its meaning construction and reveal the text characteristic of the story.

Method

This research uses qualitative descriptive analysis to investigate the type of Processes employed in AJ Hoge's short story "Day of The Dead" to reveal how meanings are constructed and what characterizes the discourse. This research incorporates SFL into its methodology and Transitivity system analysis. To obtain the data, this research involves the short story which consists of 32 clauses. The analysis of the research is concerned with the organization of the clauses in the data, the types of Process, and the segmentation analysis within the framework of Transitivity system. This research entails the following steps:

- a. The texts were broken down into a clause level,
- b. The components of Participants and Processes are categorized,
- c. The components of Processes, the central to Transitivity, are then calculated,
- d. Once the calculation is accomplished, an interpretation within the ideational meaning and text genre is conducted,
- e. The segmentation analysis of each Process is then displayed.

Results and Discussion

Based on the data analysis within the framework of Transitivity system of SFL, it reveals that the overall 32 clauses involve the six types of Processes: Material, Mental, Relational, Behavioral, Existential, and Verbal Processes. Table I shows the data analysis by categorizing the Process of each clause.

Table I. The Analyzed Clauses and The Types of Process

No	Analyzed Clauses	Types of Process
1	I arrive in Guatemala on The Day of the Dead, November 1st.	Material
2	I'm curious about this holiday,	Mental
3	so I go to the cemetery	Material
4	to see	Mental
5	what's happening	Relational
6	What I find is quite interesting.	Relational
7	The atmosphere is like a party.	Relational
8	There are people everywhere.	Existential
9	Families are sitting around the graves of their dead ancestors.	Material
10	They clean the graves	Material
11	and add fresh flowers.	Material
12	I walk through the cemetery	Material
13	and admire the beauty of all the colorful flowers.	Mental
14	There is also color in the sky,	Existential
15	because many kids are flying kites.	Material
16	Some families are having a picnic next to the graves.	Relational
17	They eat, drink, and chat together.	Material
18	People laugh and smile.	Behavioral
19	In the Unites States, cemeteries are always somber	Relational
20	We certainly never have festivals or parties next to graves.	Relational

21	We don't laugh or play music	Behavioral
22	or fly kites in cemeteries either.	Material
23	I find that	Mental
24	I prefer the Guatemalan approach.	Mental
25	I like the way they remember	Mental
26	and celebrate those who have passed away.	Behavioral
27	I like that they acknowledge death, instead of denying it the way Americans do.	Mental
28	I like that	Mental
29	there is life, as well as death, in their cemeteries.	Existential
30	Guatemalans call it "The Day of the Dead",	Verbal
31	but it is also a day	Relational
32	a day to appreciate life.	Behavioral

The generic structure of the data has three elements: orientation, sequence of events, and reorientation. The orientation of the story in which the participant arrives at Guatemala begins is construed by Material Process. The Material Process also sets the scene. In clause 2, the curiosity of the participant about the holiday is realized in Mental Process. The orientation of the story is followed by a sequence of events. **The first** event happens in clause 3 in which the participant goes (Material Process) to the cemetery to see (Mental Process) what's happening. Clause 6 uses Relational Process to describe what is happening in the cemetery. Clause 7 to 11 act as the supporting ideas for clause 6 by employing Relational, Existential, and Material Process. **The second** event happens in clause 12 in which the participant uses Material Process *walk*. **The third** event happens in the clause 13 in which the participant uses Mental Process *admire*. The following clauses are used to support the event by employing Existential, Material, Relational, Behavioral, and Mental sequentially. Clause 30 to 32 is the orientation, a punchline or the climactic conclusion of a story. The distribution of Processes is described in table II.

Table II. Distribution of Processes

Types of Processes	Number of Clause
<i>Material Processes</i>	1, 3, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15, 17, 22
<i>Mental Processes</i>	2, 4, 13, 23, 24, 25, 27, 28
<i>Relational Processes</i>	5, 6, 7, 16, 19, 20, 31
<i>Behavioural Processes</i>	18, 21, 26, 32
<i>Existential Processes</i>	8, 14, 29
<i>Verbal Processes</i>	30

Distribution of Processes in table II is arranged from the larger to the smaller number of distributions. The number of clauses shown in the table above, whether Material, Mental, Relational, Behavioral, Existential, and Verbal Processes, are the number extracted or described in table I. The clause with one type of Process such as Material in clause 1 is supported by the other kind of Process type such as Mental Process in clause 2 and so forth. This indicates that the author of the story employs not only one types of Process in conveying ideas in the discourse but also various types of Processes to enrich and expose learner to the experience of the world view.

However, domination of a Process would happen to characterize the text. Table III shows the involvement of types of Processes and the calculation of each number of the clause.

Table III: The Percentage of Process Distribution

Types of Processes	Percentage (%)
Material Process	28.125%
Mental Process	25%
Relational Process	21.875%
Behavioral Process	12.5%
Existential Process	9.375%
Verbal Process	3.125%
Total	100%

Table III shows the percentage of each Process employed in analyzed text: Material Process (28.125%), Mental Process (25%), Relational Process (21.875%), Behavioral Process (12.5%), Existential Process (9.375%), Verbal Process (3.125%). The subsequent highest placement frequency was the Relational Process (9 occurrences or 21,875%), and the Verbal Process (1 occurrence or 3.125%). It reveals that Material Process occurs most frequently in the analyzed text. In contrast, Existential, Verbal, and Behavioral Processes have a low appearance.

The dominant Process of Material meets the linguistic features of recount text with personal recount as the type. Several aspects of linguistic features or the lexicogrammar of recount text according to Gerot and Wignell (1995) are focusing on specific participants, use of Material Processes, circumstances of time and place, use of past tense, and focus on temporal sequences. However, the unique thing found in the data is that the author uses present tense instead of past tense. This is to manipulate the story for further learning activity where the author provide some modified questions in the past tense for the learner.

For example:

Statement : *I arrive in Guatemala on The Day of the Dead, November 1st.*

Question : *Did I arrive in Guatemala?*

Question : *What day did I arrive in Guatemala?*

Question : *Where did I arrive on November 1st?*

Statement : *I am curious about this holiday, so I go to the cemetery to see what was happening.*

Question : *Was I angry about this holiday?*

The author uses WH and Yes/No questions to invite learner to answer and describe the questions based on the statement of fact. The modification is used as an act of understanding personal experiences in a chronological order with meaningful choice of word by learner. The exposure of all Process types into the story is essential for the success of understanding various experience in the world. The other essential features that should be taken into account are including other types of participants in each Process of the clauses. The following segmentation of each Process in the clauses further reveal how meanings are realized.

The Segmentation Analysis of Material Process

Material Process is a Process of Material doing, event, or workflow that represents an event. Material Processes are realized with verbs denoting physical activity. It can be seen in the data sample below.

Data 1. *I arrive in Guatemala on The Day of the Dead, November 1st.*

I	Arrive	in Guatemala on The Day of the Dead, November 1 st .
Actor	Material	Circumstance

As seen in data 1 above, the Material Process is *arrive*. Since the Process is the Material, the participant must be an actor. The "I" used participant refers to the actor and "in Guatemala on The Day of the Dead, November 1st" refers to the circumstance of time. There optionally is an entity to which the Process is extended or directed. The entity which may be done is the Goal or Circumstance.

The Segmentation Analysis of Mental Process

Mental Processes are the Processes of the senses, that is, the Processes that explain perception, affect, cognition, and desire.

Data 2. *I prefer the Guatemalan approach.*

I	prefer	the Guatemalan approach.
Senser	Mental	Phenomenon

The verb of the Mental Process is *prefer*. It constitutes the features of cognition in the Mental Process, which indicates that the senser tends to take action about the choice of senser. The participant *I* refers to the senser and the *Guatemalan approach* refers to the phenomenon.

The Segmentation Analysis of Relational Process

The Relational Process is the Process of being that shows the relationship between the strength and extension of meaning. The participants is labelled as values. It can be seen in the data 3 below.

Data 3. *The atmosphere is like a party.*

The atmosphere	is	like a party
Token	Identifying	Value

As seen in data 3 above, the verb of the Relational Process is "**is**", it indicates the identifying Relational Process of the participant, which shows that the actual situation is affected because of the treatment of people around. The participant of *the atmosphere* refers to the cemetery of their dead ancestors, shown as a value.

The Segmentation Analysis of Behavioral Process

Behavioral Processes are Processes that exhibit physical and psychological behavior, and behavioral Processes are similar to participants' Processes in terms of performing behaviors, and Mental Processes and language-like in terms of cognitive tasks. The Process by which the participant behaves by speaking. The behavioral Process has Behaver and Phenomenon (optional) members, and the Mental behavioral Process has actions and goals. It can be seen in the data sample below.

Data 4. *We don't laugh in cemeteries either.*

We	don't laugh	in cemeteries either.
Behaver	Behavioural	Circumstance

As can be seen in data 4 above that the verb of the behavioral Process is **don't laugh**. It constitutes the features of the behavioral Process which indicates that people in cemeteries do not deserve to laugh at other people's deaths. The participant **we** refers to the first and the third persons in cemeteries as the behaver.

The Segmentation Analysis of Existential Process

The existential Process is a Process that shows the existence of something. The existential Process is similar to the Relational Process in the Relational and the existential Process refers to the existence of something. This existential Process does not involve any active participants. This part only analyzes the Process. It can be seen in the data sample below.

Data 5. *There is also color in the sky,*

There	is	also	color	in the sky
	Existential		Existent	Circumstance: place

There is not labelled as participant because it has no representational function. It is needed because English requires a subject. Data 5 shows the existential Process is indicated by **is and color is the existent**.

The Segmentation Analysis of Verbal Process

Verbal Process is those in which a notice or declaration is presented. Both Sayer and Verbiage are involved in the language Process. It can be seen in the data sample below.

Data 6. *Guatemalans call it "The Day of the Dead"*

Guatemalans	call	it	"The Day of the Dead"
Sayer	Verbal	Receiver	Verbiage

The Process of the clause is **call**. The participant *Guatemalans* refers to sayer and *it* refers to Receiver. *The Day of the Dead* refers to the verbiage, the name for the Verbalization itself.

Conclusion

From the above segmentation, the author of the short story employs all Process types in constructing meaning to provide learners with various experiences that may happen in the world. All Processes employment gives learners rich of understanding about ideas. Learner understanding of how ideas are managed in the story is essential for them to imitate the organization of ideas the same way in the speaking practice. Not limited to the grammatical knowledge, learner also need to know how all Processes support one another in constructing the text. The results show that Material Process is the most abundant Process whose frequency is 9 of 32 clauses that makes 28.125%. The second most frequently occurring Process is the Mental Process 25%. The third Process is Relational with 7 occurrence or 21.875%. Similarly, behavioral, existential, and Verbal Processes constitute 4, 3, and 1 of the

total Process 12.5%, 9.375%, and 3.125% respectively. In constructing meanings, the six Processes are manifested to the three elements of the story: orientation, sequence of events, and reorientation. The dominant Process of Material becomes the characteristic of the text and meets the linguistic features of recount text. However, the use of present tense violates the normal realization of past tense in recount text. The author uses present tense to manipulate the story for further learning activity in which the author provides some modified questions in past tense with WH and Yes/No questions. The modification helps learner make a comparison of present and past tense.

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