



# Transitivity Analysis of 'The Old Building' by Imdad Hussein: A Corpus-Based Study

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## Abstract

This study is based on the detailed analysis of the poem 'The Old Building' by Pakistani poet Imdad Hussein. This article proposes a thorough analysis of ideational metafunction under transitivity analysis. For this purpose, UAM tool was used for Transitivity analysis includes different processes and through these items, we can put a stance on any context with verb to subject and these processes involve six kinds: material process, mental process, behavioral processes, relational process, verbal process and weathering. This paper investigates the relationship between linguistic structures and its meaning in the literary poem through ideational metafunction, based on Gerot-Wignell (1994) and Halliday's (1995) model of transitivity.

**Keywords:** transitivity analysis of poem, The Old Building, corpus-based study, UAM tool, ideational metafunction by Halliday

## 1. Introduction

This portion explores the selection of relevant studies in different ways. This paper divides into the 5 major section. Section (1) briefly introduces systemic functional linguistics. Section (2) explores the relationship between language and context through transitivity-based studies. Section (3) is about research questions and methodology. Section (4) is all about transitivity analysis of the poem 'The Old Building' by Imdad Hussaini. Section (5) is about the discussion and conclusion.

The study of language and the theory of ideology as a social semiotic activity of language are two concerns which bear a close connection (Thompson, 1984). For the theory of ideology has commonly sought to examine the ways in which 'meaning' or 'ideas' affect the conceptions or activities of the individuals and groups which make up the social world. Thompson believes that while the nature and modalities of ideology have been analyzed in differing ways, it seems increasingly clear that the study of language must occupy a privileged position in any such analysis.

Social world, since it is primarily within language that meaning is mobilized in the interests of particular individuals and groups. The recognition of this close connection between the theory of ideology and the study of language has offered the possibility of linking the analysis of ideology to forms of linguistics which have focused on the nature of language and meaning, on the one hand, and on the forms of linguistics which have been applied to literary texts and social interaction, on the other. The task of accounting for the phenomenon of ideology has called for, and seems to require, an integrated approach to the nature and analysis of language in the social world (Hasan et al., 2005).

### 1.1 Significance of the Study

This research paper is highly significant because it reveals the transitivity element in the poem 'The Old Building' written by Imdad Hussaini. This paper aims to highlight the importance of Systemic Functional Linguistics in understanding a deeper level.

### 1.2 Limitations of the Study

This research is limited to only one poem 'The Old Building' by Imdad Hussaini and its results are also limited to this poem. The study of language in an early stage introduced a more or less technical notion of context in the humanities and the social sciences. Indeed, the notion of 'context' suggests that we deal with some phenomena related to text, discourse and language use. And, as we also saw in the previous chapter that how poem elaborates the mental state, notion, and 'context' often means either the 'linguistic context' or 'verbal context' of word, sentence or utterance, or these can be also the social or cultural context of these verbal expressions. Therefore, this paper examines in some more detail how the notion of context has been used in linguistics. Elaboration is given by focusing on the linguistic theory that has most consistently prided itself theory of context that is Systemic Functional Linguistics, founded by M. A. K. Halliday. This portion shows that the SFL approach to context is very Pivotal to understand the language.

The findings of this study are to link with the literature review. These findings strengthen the stance and approach of this research. Furthermore, this study will deal with the methodology and analysis explicitly. Further study of this article makes it clearer and valid stance this paper has provided an overview of the literature review related to the relationship between language, context, discourse and Transitivity analysis through different processes. This paper presents the theoretical framework and research design of the study by applying the Transitivity analysis on the poem 'The Old Building' by Imdad Hussein.



## 2. Literature Review

According to Halliday (1994) and Matthiessen (2004), Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) is a theory of language-centered around the notion of language function. Eggins (2004) notes that through the works of Halliday and his associates, SFL is recognized as a framework for viewing language as a "strategic, meaning-making resource" (p. 2). Halliday (1995) shows distinctively how people use language as a semogenic system in the form of text (spoken and written discourse). There are social aspects of language use. The context of the situation involves 'field', which describes what the text is about. The patterns of processes are conveyed by verbs in the Field.

In Matthiessen (2012), this paper states the introduction of SFL that is also socially accountable for applicable linguistic features. First, it just talks about the notions of language patterns and its uses but after then it also explicates the critical aspects of language with the help of CDA. That is why SFL is capable to delineate about the relationship between context and language also. Numerous examples can be cited, for example, many researchers have used O'Donnell's UAM tools and Wu's SysConc in research that has a socially accountable orientation. Whether we are concerned with applicable approaches in general or critical or positive ones in particular, we need to include both reflection and action in our paradigm; Halliday (1995) emphasizes that SFL "is explicitly constructed both for thinking with and for acting with" (p. 11).

In Bakuuro (2017), this paper explicates the SFL in broad meaning for language, linguistics, and grammar but the main notion about SFL in the domain of classification of processes is an act of meaning also to understand and to portraying the surface and deep structure of any sentence and utterance with its context to meaning. That is why SFL is not just concerned with the surface level of grammar but it also delineates the metafunction of meaning by putting the elements of communication in human life (Halliday, 1994, 2004).

Language use or function is the priority of SFL and it describes the language that functions in different ways, highlighting three main metafunctions: experiential, interpersonal and textual. The identified metafunctions stand for particular prototypes of meaning in the sentence, portraying language use as expressing experience, interpersonal relationships, and text organization. These three levels of meanings operate simultaneously in the clause; therefore, any separation of the strands is artificial to some extent. SFL helps to enable humans to communicate in a proper way to understand the basic structure of things.

In Mwinlaaru and Xuan (2016), this paper is presented as the two-portion to be recognized. The first is to systematically locate and profile available resources, in terms of theoretical guidelines and methodological procedures, in the extant literature to guide new research endeavors in this area. The second motivation is to profile developments in systemic language description and typology since the 1960s to show research areas that have been covered, limitations and challenges, and pointing to gaps for further research. Thus, the approach we adopt here is a meta-analysis rather than making typological generalizations.

In Beji (2016), this paper represents an explanation of the relation Context-Transitivity in a critical discourse analysis framework. The study is based on an application of transitivity on a specific discourse and mainly a deconstruction of its components in terms of the major participants, the processes and the prevailing circumstances. In brief, this study will unveil the context -ideological- that underlies the linguistic structure in the discourse (and after all any discourse) of Tunis Afrique Press in the coverage of the news of the regions in Tunisia for the period that extends from January to March 2013.

According to Gerot and Wignell (1994), grammar is a theory of language, of how language works and how is put together. Particularly, it is the study of wordings. Traditional grammar focuses on rules for producing correct sentences. But it has two main weaknesses. First, the rules it prescribes are based on the language of a very small group of middle-class English speakers. The second rule deals only with the most superficial aspect of writing. Formal grammar, moreover, views language as a set of rules which allow or disallow certain sentence structure. It also describes the structure of individual sentences. This can also show the grammar methods of Noam Chomsky (2014) but Halliday revolutionalized the idea by making the relation between language and context through the system of Transitivity.

### 2.1 Research Questions

- How the transitivity analysis of ideational metafunction is closer to Pakistani Literature?
- Is the UAM corpus tool is a valid tool to analyse Pakistani literature?
- To what extent the poem 'The Old Building' is more understandable after analyzing through transitivity analysis?

## 3. Methodology

This paper will follow the method comprised of a mixed-method approach. The mixed-method as qualitative and quantitative approaches will be used to see the analysis of this research. For the quantitative approach the corpus tool UAM will be used to analyze the schematic area of this poem in SFL which will determine the percentages at the end of the results. The qualitative approach will determine the area that is concerned with the contextual area of discourse in the domain of SFL. As such, this study follows in its analysis Halliday's transitivity system (1985), as he is considered as one of the most prominent theorists of text and context relationship as regards the development of CDA. After determining the type of process for each predicator, the percentages were then counted and compared one to another independently in each poem. From the percentages found, the researchers then elaborated and interpreted the processes found to explain the meaning behind the poems. So, this mixed-method will be used to analyze the categories in qualitative and quantitative criteria.

## 4. Results of the Study

The poem 'The Old Building' by Imdad Hussein is an imaginative poem in which the poet compares himself to an old and empty building in which all the doors and windows, all the lamps, cupboards, curtains, put up for sale to be auctioned, the poet discussed that there is no life all the mirrors and all the other things are going to sale. Only an empty building remains which can be demolished anytime.

The poet explains that the building is so devastating which is looks like so miserable, there is no charm, there are no colors of life in that building, he explains that he is totally broken and shatters he is just like that building which is full of garbage and waste there is no pleasure of life he explains that the desire to live happily is just like searching in vain for a buried treasure.

He describes that he has completely demolished just like an empty building which is broken in which bats hanging from the walls, which shows that this house is that much empty in which everyone can enter in it anytime and destroy it, there is no comfort no pleasure no happiness.

|                |                        |
|----------------|------------------------|
| I am           | like an empty building |
| <b>Carrier</b> | <b>Attribute</b>       |

The whole process is carrying the relational process in the first line of this poem, in which becoming, being, and possession fall under this process type. In this first line of the poem, the whole information is carrying by the carrier and information ends on the attribute which is like an empty building.

|   |
|---|
| In which all doors and windows, lamps, cupboards, curtains, mirrors and all |
| <b>Circumstance</b>   |

This whole information is the circumstance of location and place which describes the whole scenario of the building that everything is going to be auctioned. the building is so devastated.

|               |                            |                           |
|---------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| They ever     | reflected have been put up | for sale to be auctioned. |
| <b>Senser</b> | <b>Mental Process</b>      | <b>Phenomenon</b>         |

This line of the poem is carrying a mental process in which perception, cognition, and desideration falls under this process, all these categories fall under the mental process, the sensor must be human or animated so here 'they ever' considered sensor which is carrying the whole process and information ends on the phenomenon which is 'for sale to be auctioned'.

|                |                        |
|----------------|------------------------|
| I am           | like an empty building |
| <b>Carrier</b> | <b>Attribute</b>       |

The whole process is carrying the relational process in the first line of this poem, in which becoming, being, and possession fall under this process type. In this first line of the poem, the whole information is carrying by the carrier and information ends on the attribute which is 'like an empty building.'

|                            |                           |                   |                         |                                |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| The desires of its tenants | are                       | garbage and waste | searching               | in vain, for a buried treasure |
| <b>Carrier</b>             | <b>Relational Process</b> | <b>Attribute</b>  | <b>Material Process</b> | <b>Circumstance</b>            |

The first part of this sentence before and is carrying the relational process, in which becoming, being and possession falls under this process type. the whole information is carrying by the carrier and information ends on the attribute. the second process in this sentence. The material process in which happens and doing falls under this process in this sentence the second clause which is conjoined with and is a material process and the information ends on the circumstance which is a circumstance of purpose.

|              |                         |             |                     |                         |             |
|--------------|-------------------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------------------|-------------|
| They         | have pulled out         | every tile  | in the floor        | and left it             | naked       |
| <b>Actor</b> | <b>Material Process</b> | <b>Goal</b> | <b>Circumstance</b> | <b>Material Process</b> | <b>Goal</b> |

In this line of the poem the whole sentence carrying a material process in which happening and doing takes place, the whole process brings the action with the help of actor and goal. Goal is used for achieving and accomplishing any activity. Although circumstances have many types, here it refers to have location circumstances. Overall, the analysis is about that demolished building having no proper wall. There is nothing that made a person feel peaceful in that building and brings you happiness.

|   |
|---|
| What is there left in me? Nothing _____ |
| <b>Existential Process</b>              |

This sentence is carrying an existential process in which existential and existent falls under this process, it tells us about the existence of something or happening.

|              |                         |                     |
|--------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Bats         | hanging                 | from the roof       |
| <b>Actor</b> | <b>Material Process</b> | <b>Circumstance</b> |

In this line of the poem the whole sentence carrying a material process in which happening and doing takes place, the whole process brings the action with the help of actor and circumstance. Although circumstances have much time, here it refers to have location circumstance. In this line, the poet is talking about the devastating, colorless life, which has no comfort and pleasure.

|                   |                         |                     |
|-------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Cakes of cow-dung | drying                  | on the walls        |
| <b>Actor</b>      | <b>Material Process</b> | <b>Circumstance</b> |

This last sentence of the poem is the carrying material process as a whole. the whole process brings the action with the help of actor and circumstance. Although circumstances have many types, here it refers to have location circumstance. In the last line of the poem the poet explains the worst condition of that building and compare himself with that building. He says like this devastating building my life is also shattered and devastated. He further talks about the miserable life which has no charm, spark, comfort, and happiness but a dull and boring life just like an empty building.

## 5. Discussion

Transitivity analysis is the most widely used framework under Halliday's SFL. It has proved to have a diverse scope in text and discourse analysis. Transitivity analysis can provide a shred of comprehensive linguistic evidence for the readers regarding "who/what does what to whom/what?" thus, to arrive at a better understanding of the characters in a literary text.

Findings and analysis have been observed to expect a clear understanding of metafunction and word to word clause levels. The transitivity analysis of this poem reveals one major process that continuously appears throughout the poem. The most frequently used processes are the material process. This poem represents a more comparative and imaginary concept in which the poet relates himself to an empty building. He explains the inner hollowness of a person, the devastating condition of someone and for this purpose, He used an old building which is empty and full of miseries that building has no comfortable environment.

In this study Material process is the most frequent process. Relational, mental, existential processes are also involved in transitivity analysis of this poem through Gerot Wingell's and Halliday's model of transitivity. The most occurring Material process indicates the recurrent pattern of actions that the actors hold and carries out. Furthermore, the processes represent the oral interaction that is conducted under ideational metafunction.

## 6. Conclusion

While concluding this transitivity analysis of the poem through the UAM corpus tool, it gives a deeper and clear understanding of the literary as well as common persons. Transitivity analysis is the most widely used framework under Halliday's SFL. It has proved to have a diverse scope in text and discourse analysis. Transitivity analysis can provide a piece of comprehensive linguistic evidence for the readers regarding 'who/what does, what, to whom/what?', thus, to arrive at a better understanding of the characters in a literary text.

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