An Analysis of Transitivity System Written by English Department Students

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Abstract: The research was conducted to identify the process types of transitivity systems used in the narrative texts written by English Department Students and to determine which process type of transitivity systems is used dominantly. This research was descriptive qualitative research on descriptive analysis. The research participants were students of the English Department. This research uses three research instruments, namely the researcher himself, narrative document files, and distribution sheet of process types. In collecting the data, the researcher used the documentation method and purposive sample technique to select the data. The data analysis was done with transitivity system analysis, adapted from the lecture of the Functional Grammar course, and then several steps based on thematic coding by Braune & Clark, were applied. The triangulation technique was used to get the dependability of the data through re-checking and expert judgment. The research found that the six process types in each text of the six narratives that were the data sample were not evenly used. Three process types, behavioral, verbal, and existential, are only used in several narrative texts written by English Department Students. Moreover, the six process types of transitivity system are realized in narrative texts written by English Department Students overall. The most dominant process is the material process, which occurs 155 times out of the 346 processes that emerged, followed by behavioral processes (8 or 2.31%), mental processes (100 or 28.90%), verbal processes (5 or 1.44%), relational processes (76 or 21.96%), and existential processes (2 or 0.58%).

Keywords: transitivity system, narrative text, systemic functional linguistics

INTRODUCTION

Learning a language is very important for everyone. People interact with other people through language; people speak or write in a language to share meaning. In linguistics, all languages have semantic content. Because of its semantic content, every word in a language relates to something in the real world that it can learn. However, it is challenging for the students to construct well-meaning sentences in writing because of some factors.

According to Richards and Renandya (in Falihah et al., 2022), "Students, of course, think that writing is challenging because they have to focus on various aspects such as thoughts, concepts, vocabulary, and grammar" (p. 77). These aspects are very important for students to pay attention to in communicating ideas and showing understanding of what is written. Students must have an idea, information, or concept that they wish to express in words before they can write (Thohir et al., 2023). Writing, therefore, necessitates a sense of purpose and direction. However, mastering the skill of writing can be difficult, especially when it comes to certain genres or types of texts.

Nunan (in Sribagus, 2019) said, "Writing is a process and also a product..." (p. 147). As a product, writing can be categorized based on genre, namely factual or fictional genre. Text that contains both genres is narrative. Narrative texts deal with the imaginary or real world and can be fictional or nonfictional (Pecheanu et al., 2014). Narratives can be fictional if the narrative text is in the form of fairy tales, romance, horror stories, fables, myths, or legends. In factual form, narratives can be in the form of history, a slice of life, or personal experiences in the form of written essays.

According to Rebecca (in Susilawati, 2017), a narrative text is a text that relates a series of logically and chronologically related events that are caused or experienced by factors (p. 103). The chronological order of events and issues is a crucial narrative component. Problems in the narrative are different from those in other texts. For example, in a descriptive text, the writer describes a person or object, whereas in a narrative text, the writer has to create a problem that the main character has to face and overcome.

In the English Department of the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, University of Mataram, students must take several writing lessons in stages. Essay writing is one of the writing courses English students take during semester 2 (Zamzam, A., 2023). The essay writing course gives students the knowledge and skills to write essays in English. According to Abrams (in Harliani et al., 2021), an essay is any short writing composition that attempts to discuss a topic, express a viewpoint, or persuade us to accept a thesis on any subject (p. 50). A narrative essay is an essay that contains a story. It is based on personal experience and is told from the author's point of view. In writing a narrative essay, students should pay attention to using the appropriate words so that the content is conveyed clearly. In this way, readers can easily understand the writing, and it can be used as study material to analyze the meaning of a text, one of which is by using the transitivity system.

Transitivity is a system that interprets the meaning of a clause, also called a clause system (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004, p. 181). According to Thompson (2014), transitivity applies to the method for describing all clauses, not just the verb (p. 94). It implies that when analyzing transitivity, the research must examine all clauses. Halliday (in Iwamoto, 2008) said transitivity is a part of the clause's ideational function. The clause's ideational function is concerned with "idea transmission" and "representing 'processes' or

'experiences': actions, events, processes of consciousness, and relations." (p. 66). It means that the transitivity system in the text represents the writer's experience.

In addition, Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) say that "a transitivity system interprets the world of experience into a manageable set of process types" (p. 170). A world of experiences refers to the text's importance, which reflects the writer's experience. Then, a set of process types that can be managed include material processes related to what is done and what happens; behavioural processes, which are a combination of material processes and mental processes; mental processes related to what is felt or the process of sensing; verbal processes associated with the process of speaking; relational processes related to how English operates with different existences; and existential processes related to the description that something exists or happens. The process itself is essential for transitivity.

Gerot and Wignell (2001) conveyed that the central aspect of transitivity is processes (p.41). In addition, Martin et al. (in Marbun et al., 2016) said that verbs represent processes. Verbs indicate the participants' roles and the function of the situation where discourse is produced and processed (Alhumsi., et al., 2021). The processes usually found in transitivity analysis refer to doing, occurring, seeing, feeling, thinking, and being and having.

Many researchers have carried out research related to the transitivity system on various research objects and subjects. One of them was the research conducted by Zein et al. in 2019, which analyzed the written narrative texts of English Department students at Muhammadiyah University, North Sumatra. The focus of this study has the same goal, namely the analysis of the process types in the narrative text. Besides, research on the transitivity system, especially in the English Department Students of Faculty Teacher Training and Education, University of Mataram, still needs to be enhanced. Therefore, a critical study of the use of the transitivity system, which can be indirectly analyzed in the narrative technique of university students, needs to be carried out.

Moreover, it is necessary to observe student writing products, especially narrative texts, which indirectly contain elements of the six process types of the transitivity system. The researcher chooses the narrative text to be analyzed using the transitivity system because the presentation varies by each author, indirectly influencing the different types of process types of transitivity systems used. This is because the frequency of use of each kind of process is determined by the language used in the context (Khalil et al., 2022). Hence, by analyzing clauses of a text using the transitivity system, students as writers or readers may understand all of the processes in a language and how writers in a writing product express their experiences in the world.

Analyzing transitivity systems in narrative texts written by English Department students is an important research topic that can provide valuable insights into how ideas are delivered and represented through language. By examining the transitivity systems used in narrative texts, researcher can better understand how students construct their stories and convey meaning to their readers.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research was conducted using a qualitative approach because it was intended to analyze the transitivity system process often used in students' narrative essays. The participants in this research were 91 students from 3 classes in the second semester of the English Language Education Program at the University of Mataram for the 2022/2023 academic year, who were selected through a data collection method using a purposive sampling technique. Data was collected through documentary techniques, namely by processing data from reading students' writing. Next, limiting the number of data samples taken was carried out through the elimination criteria stage, including text with the theme "personal experience," the number of words in the range "250 - 400", and finally, based on the high GPA level (3.50 - 4.00) based on the Decree of the Minister of Research, Technology and Higher Education Number 44 of 2015, as stated in the Academic Guidebook for the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, University of Mataram (2020, p. 24). The main instrument used was the distribution process types sheet.

According to Moleong (in Khumairoh, 2017), data analysis manages and organizes the data into a good pattern, category, and basic unit (p.51). Data is analyzed by identifying process types; text is classified into clauses. Then, the researcher classified these clauses into each process type. In the classification stage, researcher used six steps of thematic analysis by Braune & Clark.

The researcher describes the data by defining process types of transitivity systems by providing examples based on text analysis results. Finally, the researcher went through the source triangulation stage to determine the credibility of the data. The researcher used source triangulation to check the credibility of the data. Source triangulation is used to test the credibility of data, which is done by checking data obtained through several sources. The researcher analyzed the data obtained to produce a conclusion, and then an agreement (expert judgment) was requested.

The six stages of Braun & Clark's thematic analysis used by the researcher are as follows:
- Familiarizing with the data
- Creating the initial code of each process type
- Collating codes with supporting data
- Grouping codes into themes for each process type
- Reviewing and revising them
- Writing the narrative (conclusion)

(Ho, L., 2023)

The researcher highlighted each type of process types of data with a different color according to the code of each type of process type contained (see Table 1).

Table 1. The Rules for Giving Color to Each Process Type

Process Types	Label	Color	Criteria
Material	Ma		It can be probed by asking: 'What did x do?' or 'What did x do to y?'
Behavioural	Be		Behavioral processes represent the outer manifestations of inner workings, the acting out of processes of consciousness (e.g. people are laughing) and physiological states (e.g. they were sleeping).
Mental	Me		It makes more sense to ask: 'What do you think/feel/know about x?'
Verbal	Ve		It is a quote or report speech.
Relational	Re		Covers the many different ways in which being can be expressed in English clauses. - Intensive identifying: Identifying an entity by reference to some other entity, Meanings of symbolization. - Intensive attributive: Attributive realized by an adjective, A quality as an attribute.
Existential	Ex		It represents experience by positing that 'there was/is something.' In other words, it identifies as the structure involves using the word there.

(Criteria adopted from Halliday & Matthiesen, (2004) and Eggins, S., (2004))

RESULT AND DISCUSSION
Result

The researcher analyzed the distribution of process types of transitivity systems used in each student's narrative essay text. This analysis is based on the analysis of each clause. Each text analyzed consists of 20 – 50 clauses that match the research data criteria used by the researcher. Then, the researcher found the process types that students used in their narrative texts. The findings show that the process types that construct meaning to understand language use in every narrative text do not include the six process types of the transitivity system. This can be seen in the distribution of process types in the below.

Table 2. Data Distribution Process Types

Texts	Process Types						
	Ma	Be	Me	Ve	Re		Ex
					Attributive	Identifying	
Text 1	25	3	16	3	8	1	1
Text 2	27	2	13	0	9	4	0
Text 3	22	2	23	0	4	6	0
Text 4	27	1	25	2	14	5	1
Text 5	20	0	14	0	7	3	0
Text 6	34	0	9	0	8	7	0
Total	155	8	100	5	50	26	2
Percentage (%)	44.81%	2.31%	28.9%	1.44%	21.96%		0.58%

- 🟩 Material Process
- 🟦 Mental Process
- 🟥 Relational Process
- 🟦 Behavioural Process
- 🟨 Verbal Process
- ⬛ Existential Process

Table 2 shows that only two texts cover the six process types. Meanwhile, in the other 4 data samples, one or even three process types did not appear in the text. The three process types that do not appear include behavioral, verbal, and existential processes. In addition, the process type of transitivity system that is dominantly contained is used in each student's narrative text data, namely material process, because the material process is related to what happened and what x did as the actor in each clause in the text. It occurred 155 times, or 44.81%.

Furthermore, from the distribution table of the types of processes contained in the research data, the appearance of the numbers for each process type after being calculated does not depend on the number of clauses that are the basis of the analysis activities in this research. As explained, verbs are used to describe processes. Verbs indicate the roles of the participants as well as the function of the situation in which what is said is produced and processed. Therefore, in one clause, two or more types of process types can appear. In other words, analyzing specific processes is based on verbs that have meaning according to the criteria for each process type of transitivity system contained in the clause. Thus, a different number calculation appears with the number of clauses comprising each student's narrative text.

Discussion

Transitivity is a system that interprets human experiences through clauses repressed in the form of some process. Halliday and Matthiesen (2004) claim that "transitivity is a system that constructs the world of experience into a manageable set of process types." (p. 107). Verbs represent processes (Martin et al.). Material, mental, and relational are the main types of processes in the transitivity system. Meanwhile, the other three are called subsidiary process types (Halliday & Matthiesen, 2004, p. 258). The researcher has analyzed the narrative essay written by English department students. There are six process types found in the student's narrative texts. However, the distribution of the six process types in each narrative text written by English Department Students is uneven. This is because some process types only appear in some narrative texts as samples. The process types that do not appear in student narrative texts include behavioral, verbal, and existential processes.

In the fifth narrative text, "Precious Lesson from a Mistake," the author only uses the main process type to convey the incident and the author's feelings afterward. This text does not use behavioral processes related to human physiology or psychological behavior. Apart from that, there is also no use of verbal and existential processes in this narrative text, where the emphasis is on conveying the author's events and feelings (see figure 1)

La Hama text (Yusra, K., 2022).

Once upon a time, there was a little boy. His name was La Hama. He was very naughty and very spoiled. He also liked to buy things.
When a cake seller passed by and called out "cakes, cakes, cakes!", La Hama would cry to his mom, "Mom, Mom, buy cakes, mom" he cried. His mom said, "No darling, we don't have money". She said, "we are very poor". "No, Mom. I want cakes" La Hama cried. His mom bought them anyway.

When a fruit seller passed by and called out "oranges, oranges, oranges", La Hama would cry to his mom, "Mom, mom, buy oranges Mom". His mom said, "No darling, we don't have money". She said, "We are very poor". "No, Mom. I want oranges" La Hama cried. His mom bought them anyway.

One day his mom spoke to La Hama. "Hama, you have been very naughty," she said. "I want to become a dolphin," she said. She ran to the sea and La Hama ran after her.

When she arrived at the sea, she called for the waves. "Oh waves, come to me and turn me into a dolphin". "Wesh, ..." The waves came and touched her feet and legs. Suddenly, her legs turned into fins. "No mom, no mom" La Hama cried. "No, No, son, " his mom replied.

"Oh waves, come to me and turn me into a dolphin" "Wesh, ..." The waves came and touched her body. Suddenly, her body turned into the body of a dolphin. "No mom, no mom", La Hama cried. "I love you mom. I won't be naughty" he cried.

But, it was too late. His mom had become a dolphin. "Bye darling, bye darling" the dolphin waved a good bye. "Mama, mama, mama" cried La Hama

Figure 1. La Hama text

Details and total distribution of process types of transitivity system from the text "La Hama" can be seen in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Transitivity in La Hama text

Transitivity	
Process types	**Figure 1**
Material	16
Behavioural	9
Mental	5
Verbal	21
Relational	11
Existential	1
Total no. of processes	63

La Hama's text, which is analyzed using transitivity theory, also reveals that the dominant process type is verbal, as evidenced by the majority of characters' words. The verbal process, which includes verbal action processes like speaking, cannot be predicted despite the same text type. This highlights the common thread that the frequency of each process type cannot be predicted.

The research reveals that English Department students' narrative texts lack certain process types and have different dominant process types. Some transitivity processes also differ in text type. While narrative texts should be dominated by verbal processes, such as in La Hama, the research shows that English students' narrative texts are primarily dominated by material processes, indicating some action. The researcher concluded that the analysis of process types of transitivity systems in each narrative text written by English Department Students did not include the six process types of transitivity systems. Process types that do not appear to be used in several narrative texts written by English Department Students include behavioral, verbal, and existential processes. This can happen because it depends on how the author focuses on the story's content and the author's specific goals in the text, which are reflected in appropriate language.

Overall process types of transitivity system were distributed in 346 processes extracted from 210 total clauses in all narrative texts.

Analysis Model…

I	went	into the dining room
Actor	*Pr: Ma*	*Circ: Location*

because	I	was starving
Circ: Cause	*Behaver*	*Pr: Be*

because	I	couldn't imagine
Circ: Cause	*Senser*	*Pr: Me*

I	said	"Yes, I ordered fast food earlier."
Sayer	*Pr: Ve*	*Verbiage*

about	the ukulele	was	its beautiful woody red-brown color
Circ: Matter	*Carrier*	*Pr: Re*	*Attribute*

It	was	a veil
Value	*Pr: Re*	*Token*

There	was	no guarantee
	Pr: Ex	*Extent*

In the first table, analysis shows the writer uses a material process in the traditional verb and considers an action verb related to what is done and what happens. In this type of process, it can be seen from the process analysis that not just one participant is involved. Several participants are engaged in the material process, including the actor, goal, range, recipient, scope, client, and attribute.

In the second table example, the writer employs behavioral processes contained in verbs that express psychological and physiological behavior. The process analysis shows that only one participant is involved in the behavioral process in this type of process, that is, behavers and conscious ones in the behavioral processes.

In the third table analysis, the writer expresses a character's thoughts, desires, and motivations through mental processes contained in verbs. Participants in the mental process are called senser, who feels, think, or perceive as humans. The phenomenon is that other participants in the mental process are considered, felt, or recognized by the conscious senser.

In the fourth table analysis, the writer employs the verbal process found in the verb that expresses a quote or reported speech in a text. Participants in the verbal process are referred to as sayer, who is responsible for the verbal process; verbiage, which refers to a nominalized statement about the verbal process; and receiver, who is the one to whom the verbal process is directed in the clause, as explained in the transitivity theory of process types.

In the fifth and sixth table examples, the writer employs relational processes in verbs to reveal the character's identity, relationships, and personal growth throughout the text. The process analysis in both cases in advance shows that two types of participants are involved in each type of relational process

in this type of process type. In intensive identification, participants are called tokens, representing what is being and the value representing the token, as explained in the transitivity theory of process types. In attributive processes, on the other hand, the participants are referred to as carriers, as expressed by the verb be or the synonym and the attribute that is a carrier's classification.

In the last table examples, the writer uses an existential process to express experience by positing that 'there was/is something.' There is only one participant involved in the existential process, and that is extent/existent.

The frequency of process types shows that material processes account for 155 times or 44.81% in all the text. It becomes the most frequent type of process overall. This observation presupposes that the majority of the processes in the text are processes of doing, happening, or action. Followed by behavioral processes (8 or 2.31%), mental processes (100 or 28.90%) in the text indicates that cognition is concerned more than the other kinds of mental processes, verbal processes (5 or 1.44%), relational processes (76 or 21.96%), The less frequent process is an existential process. It occurs only 2 or 0.58%.

CONCLUSION

The analysis shows that the six process types in each text of the six narratives written by students majoring in English who were the data samples were not evenly used. In other words, three process types are used only in several narrative texts written by English Department Students. The three process types are behavioral, verbal, and existential. This can happen because it depends on how the author focuses on the story's content and the author's specific goals in the text, which are reflected in appropriate language. In addition, six transitivity processes are realized in narrative texts written by English Department Students as a whole from a total of 6 narrative texts as sample data. Namely material processes (155 or 44.81%), behavioral processes (8 or 2.31%), mental processes (100 or 28.90%), verbal processes (5 or 1.44%), relational processes (76 or 21.96%), and existential processes (2 or 0.58%). The most dominant process is the material process, which occurs 155 times out of the 346 processes that emerged. Narrative texts usually use material processes to convey meaning and tell the events plotted in the story. However, narrative text still needs other processes to build the story's plot to make it run well. Overall, analysis process types of transitivity systems can help students as writers in constructing meaning in their narrative by choosing an appropriate language to convey the meaning they mean.

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