

Exploring Transitivity in Cinderella Story: Analyzing Participants, Processes, and Circumstances

Cindy Winda Mareta^{1*}, Muhamad Fahmi Rizal^{2*}, Diandra Tria Puspitowati^{3*}, Rini Estiyowati Ikaningrum^{4*}

^{1,2,3,4} Universitas Tidar

*Correspondence Author, E-mail: cindymareta256@gmail.com

Abstract

Using the framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), this study investigates the transitivity system in narrative texts with a particular focus on Cinderella Story. Collaborating participants, processes, and circumstances in language to communicate meaning is transitivity. The study explores how actors, aims, and sayers build the story along with material, mental, and relational processes emphasizing actions, emotions, and relationships. Time, location, and cause are circumstantial components that improve the story and bring the reader to significant moments. According to the research, circumstantial components of time and place create the story's unknown and timeless state of mind, but material processes survive and reflect the action-driven nature of the narrative. Participants emphasize the relationships between power and character transformation, such as Cinderella as the actor and the Prince as both actor and objective. In addition to creating the narrative, these linguistic components reflect latent ideas, cultural norms, and societal values. The theoretical and educational consequences of transitivity analysis are emphasized in this article. Demonstrating how narratives create meaning improves linguistic theory and provides educators useful tools to enhance their students' critical text comprehension. This study shows how transitivity in educational methods can foster greater engagement with stories and an understanding of their underlying social and cultural elements.

Keywords: *Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), Transitivity system, Narrative texts*

INTRODUCTION

Analyzing when communication shows things, conditions, or reactions, along with the participants and the context when they occur, is known as transitivity in linguistics (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). The three components of transitivity investigation, which find their origins in Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), are the process (the verb or action), the participants (who or what is participation in that activity), and the circumstances (the information, like a time or location). The real metafunction of language, which interacts with how experiences and events are expressed in clauses, gives transitivity an important factor (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). To help clarify how meaning is expressed in phrases, the transitivity linguistic system shows the connections between different people, activities, and contexts (Gerot & Wignell, 1995).

Participants are the matters, people, or more profound ideas that are a part of the action or state described in the sentence. The basic actions, events, or states expressed by verbs are called processes, and they can be described as material, mental, relational, behavioral, linguistic, or existential. The extra contextual information that circumstances provide, such as the date and time, location, manner, cause, or accompaniment, improves the significance of the clause. Together, these components provide a comprehensive framework for understanding how languages create and express experiences in texts.

Matthiessen (2018) states that transitivity processes can be classified into several categories according to how players participate. They consist of acts that show physiological or psychological behaviors with activity as the participant, such as verbal, mental, and relational processes. Based on this, verbal processes relate to communication that involves a "sayer," a "receiver," and the content of the communication. Mental processes describe internal processes such as perception, cognition, and affection, usually involving a "sensor" and a phenomenon. Furthermore, relational processes indicate existing states or relationships between groups with specific attributes or identifications. Finally, existential processes refer to the existence of something that is often represented by a phenomenon.

Using the framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), this research studies the transitivity system in the narrative text of the Cinderella story. Collaborating participants, processes, and circumstances in language to communicate meaning is transitivity. The study explores how actors, aims, and sayers build the story along with material, mental, and relational processes emphasizing actions, emotions, and relationships. Time, location, and cause are circumstantial components that improve the story and bring the reader to significant moments. According to the research, circumstantial components of time and place create the story's unknown and timeless state of mind, but material processes survive and reflect the action-driven nature of the narrative. Participants emphasize the relationships between power and character transformation, such as Cinderella as the actor and the Prince as both actor and objective. In addition to creating the narrative, these linguistic components reflect latent ideas, cultural norms, and societal values. The theoretical and educational consequences of transitivity analysis are emphasized in this article. Demonstrating how narratives create meaning improves linguistic theory and provides educators with valuable tools to enhance their students' critical text comprehension. This study shows how transitivity in educational methods can foster greater engagement with stories and an understanding of their underlying social and cultural elements.

Narrative texts usually involve characters and events that aim to entertain, educate, and convey moral messages. The structure of a narrative text generally consists of several components, namely orientation, complication, resolution, and coda. According to Toolan (2016), narrative texts usually include specific transitivity processes as part of their language features. Likewise, Rizkiani (2023) argues that specific storytelling techniques help define character roles and provide meaning, which helps the reader understand the characters' experiences and events. In the same way, Zein et al. (2019) emphasized that these methods increase the "focus and depth of the situation, which helps the storyline and character development. In addition, narrative texts often include various transitivity processes, such as material processes that describe actions, mental processes that reflect emotions and thoughts, and relational processes that indicate states or relationships between characters (Toolan, 2016). Corresponding with each other, the analyzed articles highlight the importance of transitivity as a linguistic system that describes how language organizes relationships, events, and actions to shape meaning and affect readers' perceptions. According to Suparto (2018) and Alharbi (2021), transitivity plays a crucial role in media

discourse by explaining ideological positions and influencing viewpoints. By connecting transitivity to the experience metafunction and classifying it into participants, situations, and processes (material, mental, relational, etc.), Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) offer a theoretical framework. While Fauzi et al. (2024) state educational applications, particularly in helping students create meaning in their writing, Mulyanti & Wati (2022) relate transitivity analysis to narrative structures, and Tsirogianni & Sammut (2014) concentrate on how transitivity shows social values and power dynamics in communication. Toolan (2016) explains the acts, feelings, and relationships that push the plot, highlighting how material, mental, and relational processes generate narrative texts. To help readers comprehend the experiences and situations of characters, Rizkiani (2023) highlights the importance of storytelling approaches in establishing character roles and generating meaning. In a similar finding, Zein et al. (2019) argue that these strategies improve depth and attention, helping the plot and characters grow. When taken together, these studies show how important transitivity is to text the building process and analysis.

With the significant importance above, this study aims to explore transitivity in narrative texts, emphasizing how the circumstances, process types, and participant parts create the texts' experiential meanings. To improve language comprehension and instructional techniques, this study looks for the patterns and characteristics that support the structure and purpose of narratives. It is anticipated that the results will boost linguistic theory by leaving a consequence on how transitivity creates meaning in stories and improve educational practice by giving educators the analytical skills they need to help learners develop critical thinking and text comprehension.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach to analyze transitivity in narrative texts using the framework of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). The analysis focuses on how actions, participants, and circumstances interact to create meaning in narratives. The narrative texts such as short stories, novels, and educational materials are selected for their rich linguistic features. Participants (who is participating), processes (what states or activities are described), and circumstances (where, when, how, and why these actions occur) are all identified within the process. While processes are divided into material, mental, relational, verbal, behavioral, and existential, categories are divided into roles like Actor, Goal, and Recipient. The circumstances provide Additional context, which describes the way, place, time, and reason for actions.

The narrative text chosen for analysis is *The Hidden Cave* by Ella Harper, published in 2023. The text is representative of contemporary narratives aimed at young readers, aligning with the linguistic and cognitive levels of junior high school students. This makes it an ideal candidate for examining how different process types and participants are employed to build meaning in texts suitable for this age group.

The research uses a clause approach, emphasizing sentence form and how individuals, procedures, and situations interact to produce meaning. These components are dissected using the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) framework, specifically its transitivity system. This method enables a thorough understanding of how participants' roles, the kinds of activities they engage in, and the context all contribute to the meaning that narratives create. By charting these components, the study sheds light on the story's structure and communication purpose.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

CINDERELLA

Once upon a time, there lived a beautiful girl with two step sisters and stepmother. Since her biological father died, she was treated like a maid. Forced to comply with the requests of her stepmother and her two step sisters. Even so, Cinderella was a kind girl, she still loved her step sisters and stepmother.

One day a kingdom hold a dance party. Invitations were spread all the way to the villages. The dance party would be hold in the kingdom palace. This dance party was aimed to find a girl who would be the prince's wife. Hearing about the good news, Cinderella's half sisters were very happy. "Mother, please buy me the most beautiful dress to attend a dance party at the palace tonight" said the eldest sister. "Me too, Mom, buy me a new dress. I do not want dissapoint the prince when dancing with me" said the second sister. Hearing her daughter chattering happily, the mother replied "of course, I will buy a nice and beautiful dress for each of you".

Cinderella who was sweeping looked very happy, in her heart she also wanted to go to a dance party at the palace, she said to her stepmother "Mother, please allow me to go to the dance, I do not need a new dress. Just allow me to go". Cinderella's step mother and her two step sisters were very upset. The mother said "You can not. You have to clean the house and do the laundry." Hearing that, Cinderella was silent. Her wish to meet the prince failed. Nevertheless she wanted to go no matter what her step mother and steps sister had said.

The day of the dance party was came. Cinderella's step mother and her two half-sisters were preparing to go to the palace. They wear the best dresses with beautiful shoes and make-up. And for Cinderella, the mother had made a list of things that Cinderella had to do until they returned from the party. Cinderella was sad, because she knew the tasks were too many and she could not finish them all that night. When her step mother and her step sisters were gone to the party, Cinderella sat next to the fireplace and her cried. When Cinderella was crying, she heard voice.

"Cinderella, calmed down. Don't be sad. You're going to join this dance party tonight. Do not worry, I'll help you." The voice said.

Cinderella surprised, "who are you?".

"I am a fairy. I come here to help you. You have suffer enough, dear." Said the voice again.

Cinderella was looking around to find the source of the voice. And when she looked at the window, she saw a fair fairy. With a charming smile, the fairy twirled her wand. All the works that the mother had asked Cinderella to do to were done. The fairy also changed Cinderella's old dress to a beautiful dress like a royal princess. She wore a nice dress, gold crown, beautiful face, and a pair of glass shoes. Cinderella was so beautiful that night. And moreover, she was so happy.

"Thank you fairy. But how do I get to the palace? I don't have any horse or cart to go to the palace." Cinderella said.

"Don't worry, dear." Said the fairy.

The fairy twirled her wand again and turned the pumpkin in the table to be a coach and turned the mice to be horses.

"You'll ride with this coach, dear." Said the fairy.

"Thank you." Said Cinderella.

"But, you should come back before the midnight. After the midnight, the spell will be vanish." Said the fairy.

"Ok, I will come back before the midnight. I promise." Cinderella nodded.

Without wasting time, Cinderella went to the palace. At the palace, all people were stunned to see the beauty of Cinderella. Even her step mother and her step sisters did not recognize she was Cinderella. The prince was in love with Cinderella. He invited Cinderella to dance. They danced so beautifully. And that time, the prince knew that Cinderella was the one he wanted to be his wife. They both were very happy. Suddenly the midnight bell rang. And Cinderella knew she had to go back before all the spells vanished.

"I have to go now, prince" Cinderella said.

"Wait princess, what is your name?" Asked the prince.

Cinderella did not answer it and ran stright to the coach and came back to home. When she ran, unintentionally, one of Cinderella's glass shoes was slipped out on the terrace of the palace. The prince took it. He had made a promise to find the owner of the glass shoe.

The next day, the prince and his bodyguard went all the way to the country, but found no girl fit the glass shoe. Until the prince came to Cinderella's house. Her stepsisters were very excited to hear the prince's arrival.

"It belongs to me, my dear prince. Let me try it." Said the sisters. However, it turned out that the glass shoe did not fit them.

Suddenly Cinderella said "let me try it, my prince".

The Prince replied "please, my lady".

And when Cinderella tried the shoe, it perfectly fit. That time, the prince knew that it was Cinderella shoe. That time also, the prince asked Cinderella to go to the palace and live with him as his wife. Cinderella said yes and then they married. They lived happy after.

Source: Kampung Inggris Online. (n.d.). Contoh narrative text Cinderella. Kampung Inggris Online. Retrieved December 16, 2024, from <https://kampunginggris.online/contoh-narrative-text-cinderella/>

A. Table Analysis of Participants in Transitivity

No.	Clause	Actor	Goal	Initiator	Sayer	Phenomenon
1.	Clause 1	A beautiful girl	Living Situation	-	-	Coexistence

2.	Clause 2	Biological	Death	-	-	-
		Father				
3.	Clause 3	Stepmother, stepsisters	She (Cinderella)	-	-	Maid Treatment
4.	Clause 4	Kingdom	Dance Party	-	-	Celebration
5.	Clause 5	Unstated agent	Invitations	-	-	Dissemination
6.	Clause 6	Cinderella	Permission to attend	-	Cinderella	Request
7.	Clause 7	Fairy	Magic transformation	-	-	Magic
8.	Clause 8	Prince	Cinderella	-	-	Dancing
9.	Clause 9	Cinderella	Palace	-	-	Escape
10.	Clause 10	Prince	Owner of the shoe	-	-	Quest
11.	Clause 11	Cinderella and Prince	Marriage	-	-	Union
	Total :	11	11	0	1	10

Based on the analysis above, the things examined in the text include Actor, Goal, Initiator, Sayer, and Phenomenon, each of which has an important role in shaping the narrative structure and character development. First, the Actor refers to the party that acts, such as Cinderella sweeping the floor, the Fairy Godmother changing Cinderella's appearance, and the Prince dancing with her. It is the action that drives the storyline forward. Secondly, the Goal involves the recipients of the action, including Cinderella as the target of her stepmother's tasks and as the recipient of the Prince's affection. This accentuates her role as a victim and a character at the center of love. Third, the Initiator represents those who cause actions. For example, the Fairy Godmother transforms Cinderella, and the Prince searches for the glass slipper's owner. Fourth, Sayer identifies speakers in the narrative. Cinderella's plea to attend the dance, the Stepmother's commands, and the Prince's expressions of love

influence the story's direction. Lastly, the Phenomenon shows experiences or results, such as Cinderella's transformation into a princess or the Prince's realization of his love for her. These moments underline key points turning in the narrative. Overall, the participants worked together to construct a dynamic and engaging story, with Cinderella as the focal point of transformation and fulfillment.

B. Table Analysis of Processes in Transitivity

No.	Clause	Material	Behavioral	Mental	Verbal	Relational	Existential	Meteorological
1.	Clause 1	-	-	-	-	-	There lived	-
2.	Clause 2	She was treated	-	-	-	-	-	-
3.	Clause 3	Forced to comply	-	-	-	-	-	-
4.	Clause 4	a kingdom hold a dance party	-	-	-	-	-	-
5.	Clause 5	invitations were spread	-	-	-	-	-	-
6.	Clause 6	looked very happy	-	-	she said	-	-	-
7.	Clause 7	were very upset	-	-	-	-	-	-

8.	Clause 8	The fairy twirled her wand	-	-	-	-	-	-
9.	Clause 9	-	-	The prince was in love	-	-	-	-
10.	Clause 10	-	They dance	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	7	1	1	1	0	1	0

Based on the analysis above, the processes in the text include material, behavioral, mental, verbal, relational, and existential. First, the material processes include phrases such as: “she was treated,” “forced to comply,” “a kingdom holds a dance,” “invitations were spread,” “looked very happy,” “were very upset,” “the fairy twirled her wand.” Material processes are the most frequent, with seven occurrences. This indicates that the story heavily relies on actions and events to drive the narrative. Otherwise, there is only one for processes, mental processes, verbal processes, and existential processes, while the relational processes are not identified in the narrative text.

C. Table Analysis of Circumstances in Transitivity

No.	Clause	Time	Place	Manner	Cause	Accompaniment	Matter	Role
1.	Clause 1	Once upon a time	-	- ke	-	With two stepsisters and a stepmother	-	-
2.	Clause 2	-	-	-	Since her father died	-	-	Like a maid

3.	Clause 3	One day	In a kingdom	-	-	-	A dance party	-
4.	Clause 4	-	-	-	-	-	To the dance	-
5.	Clause 5	-	-	-	-	-	-	From old to beautiful
6.	Clause 6	-	To the coach, home	Straight	-	-	-	-
7.	Clause 7	-	In the kingdom	-	-	On every girl	-	-
8.	Clause 8	-	-	-	-	-	Trying the glass shoe	-
9.	Clause 9	-	-	-	-	With the prince	-	As his wife
10.	Clause 10	Midnight	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	3	3	1	1	3	3	3

Based on the table above, the circumstances in the text, including time, place, manner, cause, accompaniment, content, and role, are all discussed. First, the circumstances of the place include "Once upon a time," "One day," and "Midnight," which make attention to significant

events and foster a sense of magic. Second, the circumstances of the plot, including "Home" and "In the Kingdom," set the scene and draw readers in with the characters' actions. Third, the circumstance of place includes "Straight to the coach," which describes how things take place and demonstrates manners. While accompaniment phrases like "with the prince" indicate character interactions, phrases like "since her father died" explain motivations. Role phrases like "as his wife" underline Cinderella's metamorphosis, while phrases like "to the dance" highlight noteworthy acts. However, the circumstance of the most prevalent element that directs the story structure is time that occurs, which indicates that.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this research emphasizes how important transitivity is in the progress of the Cinderella story. While mental and relational processes highlighted character emotions and interactions, material processes dominated the narrative, highlighting its action-driven nature. The plot focuses on characters like Cinderella, the Prince, and the Fairy, who express social values, power struggles, and changes. Time and place are two situational aspects that improve the story and give timeless catching settings. This analysis uses SFL to show how transitivity can be used to show underlying ideology and social norms, giving helpful information for language theory and learning.

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